

#### 4. "EARTH-HOUSE" AT NAVERSDALE, ORPHIR.

In spring 1943 Mr Bichan, tenant of Swanbister, Orphir, informed me that in the previous harvest he had lit upon a curious structure in a field on Naversdale, Orphir, about 300 yards north-east of the farmhouse. From the details given by him it is plain that here once again is one of those mysterious "earth-houses" similar to several found of recent years in Orkney.

<sup>1</sup> *Inventory of Orkney*, No. 625.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, Pl. XX, 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxiii. p. 71, No. 28.

A roundish hollow has been excavated down into the subsoil. At intervals of approximately  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet rough pillar-piles of stone have been erected round the periphery, on which and on one centrally sited pillar rest large flat roofing flagstones. The "room" thus formed is roughly 10 feet in diameter by 2 feet 9 inches to 3 feet in height. Earth again about a foot or more deep covers the roofing slabs up to the general surface-level of the field. Nothing seems to have been found in the "earth-house."

In most, if not all, of these buildings previously found, some at least of the supporting pillars have been single large blocks of stone. Here such large lumps have probably not been easily procurable, and built pillars have been used instead.

H. MARWICK.