

A Roman Burial at Cold Ashton, Gloucestershire

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In February, 1935, the gardener at Cold Ashton Manor, Mr. Taylor, was digging in the garden to the west of the house when he came upon a stone coffin containing a male skeleton. The coffin had no cover and was filled with earth. It was 6 feet 2 inches long externally, 5 feet 8 inches internally, the external breadth was, at the shoulder 1 foot 10 inches, in the middle 1 foot 9 inches, and 1 foot 2½ inches at the foot. The sides were about 2½ inches thick. It was round-headed, coarsely carved of a soft oolitic stone, said by the local builder to be a bastard Bath stone.

Two waterpipes crossed the coffin, and they were placed in position at different times a good many years ago by a local workman who said that he had no idea of the existence of the coffin, although its sides had been considerably cut away to allow for the passage of the pipes. The coffin lay to the north and south, with the head to the north. There is a drainage hole at the foot. Nothing except the skeleton and a quantity of soil was in the coffin. The skull was dolichocephalic and the stature of the individual, estimated by the long bones, just over 5 feet in height.

The writer was enabled to examine it *in situ* owing to the kindness of Mr. Frank Stevens, C.B.E., F.S.A., of the Blackmore Museum, Salisbury, and of the owner, Mrs. Mounsey. The coffin and the skeleton are being kept in a specially prepared cement bed in the garden of the Manor, on the spot at which they were found.