

A Saxon Burial at Evercreech

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At the end of January, 1934, workmen digging in the quarry of Messrs. Mead and Sons, Evercreech, found, about 5 inches below the surface, remains of a human skeleton. Near the feet, which lay towards the east, was an iron knife, a piece of bone, and a sherd of buff-coloured pot, of a fine paste, and with a rim at an angle to the vertical height. The bones were scattered as though they had been interfered with by the plough. Two more bones had been turned up six months previously, but none had been seen on any other occasion. The skeleton was incomplete, but was obviously that of a man of fairly short stature but of a thick-set build. The femur head measured 54.5 mm. None of the long bones was complete, so that the stature could not be estimated. The humerus had an intercondylar foramen. The fragments of skull were not sufficient to reconstruct the cranium, but it was probably dolichocephalic. The knife was of an Anglo-Saxon type, 153 mm. long and 25 mm. broad.

The interest in the discovery rests on the tradition, retailed by a man of the village eighty years of age, that when he was a boy of ten years of age he remembered that the spot was supposed to be haunted. Before the railway was built a path ran across the field to a stone stile and the ghost used to appear there and follow the path for about thirty yards and then disappear. This story was recounted by the old man before he was told where the bones had been found. The ancient path ran near the grave, and was diverted when the railway was made. This account of the ghost was given by Mr. C. Woodborne. The position of the grave was: ordnance sheet 6-in Somerset sheet LIV, N.W. Long. $2^{\circ} 3' W.$ (east of), Lat. $51^{\circ} 9'$ (south of).

The opportunity to view the site was due to the kindness of Messrs. Mead and Sons, and of the Director of the Bristol Museum.