

# The Tollund Man Mystery



A

This body was found in a peat bog on Tollund Fen in Denmark in May 1950. Two men were digging peat for burning. As they worked they suddenly saw in the peat layer a face so fresh they thought they had come across a recent murder.

They called the police. The men carefully removed the peat from the body till more of him could be seen. The man lay on his right side as if he was asleep. He wore no clothes, except for a pointed skin cap and a smooth hide belt. His hair was cut short. Round the neck was a rope noose and an iron neck ring. It was drawn tight around his neck and throat.



B

These items were not found on the Tollund man but are similar to those around his neck. The item on the right is a rope noose and the item on the left is a neck ring. Iron Age people buried neck rings with their dead as an offering to the Spring Goddess.



E

An Earth Goddess of Spring Statue found in a Bog

The German tribes hang traitors from trees and drown cowards in fens under piles of sticks.

The German tribes worship the Goddess of Spring. Every Spring a cart carries a statue of the Goddess in a procession. Afterwards the cart and statue are washed by slaves, and then the slaves are sacrificed.

D

C

## SCIENTIFIC REPORT

### AGE

The heart and other organs were healthy. The wisdom teeth had grown. These kinds of teeth appear in people around 20 years old.

### THE STOMACH

The man had eaten soup at least 12 hours before he died. The soup was made up of seeds that were connected only with the Spring.

### DATE OF BURIAL

When they dug the grave some plants had got trapped under the body. These type of plants were about 2,000 years old.

# Tasks to complete

## Quick questions (answer in a full sentence)

1. Who found the body?
2. Where was the body found?
3. What did they find on the body?



## Detailed questions

4. What evidence in the SCIENTIFIC REPORT (source C) suggests that the man did not die of old age or disease?
5. Examine source B. What do you think killed this man?
6. How long ago do you think the body was buried and what is your evidence?

## Going further

The text from source D was written around 97-98 A.D. by Tacitus, a Roman, in his book about Germanic tribes.

7. The German tribes once lived in Denmark. The body was a German, the smaller box from source D tells you why he might have been killed. Complete the following sentence:

**“Source D suggests that the man might have been killed because...”**

8. Now look at the larger box in Source D and E. Do they suggest a different reason why the Tollund Man was killed. What is this reason? Complete the following sentence:

**“Yet, the other part of Source D and E suggests that the man was killed because...”**

9. Now look back at the SCIENTIFIC REPORT (source C). Is there any evidence in it that agrees with the idea that Tollund Man was part of a sacrifice? Write a sentence explaining what the evidence is.

10. Now write a report about what YOU think happened to the Tollund Man. Remember to use evidence to back up your suggestions.

You might like to use the following sentences:

“I think ... happened because of what it says in Source...”

“In my opinion, I feel he was murdered - I think this because...”

“Whilst we can't be certain, Source ... makes me think he was ...”