This study uses the perspectives of what might be termed the 'empirical tradition' of British landscape archaeology that developed in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in industrial archaeology, to explore the early modern history of the garden landscapes formed by British colonialism in the eastern Caribbean, and their place in the world.
Researchers backdate the male remains known as the "Red Lady of Paviland" (discovered in 1823) by 4,000 years to 29,000 years BP, making it the earliest known human burial in Britain.[20]. Meanwhile the eastern fringe of the Caribbean is also unattended by the Spanish, apart from occasional raids in search of slaves. The British are the first to acquire valuable footholds in this region. They establish settlements in St Kitts (1623), Barbados (1627) and Antigua, Nevis and Montserrat (by 1636). By far the most profitable French possession in the region, and indeed the most productive of all the Caribbean sugar-producing colonies, is the western half of Hispaniola, under French control from 1664 and known as Saint Domingue. By the late 18th century 90% of the people in the colony (numbering some 520,000 in all) are slaves from Africa. Sugar plantations in the Caribbean were a major part of the economy of the islands in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Most Caribbean islands were covered with sugar cane fields and mills for refining the crop. The main source of labor, until the abolition of chattel slavery, was enslaved Africans. After the abolition of slavery, indentured laborers from India and other places were brought to the Caribbean to work in the sugar industry. These plantations produced 80 to 90 percent of the sugar.