

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
**Cambridge Antiquarian Society,**

OCTOBER 1925—MAY 1926

WITH  
**Communications**  
MADE TO THE SOCIETY

VOLUME XXVIII.



**Cambridge :**  
DEIGHTON, BELL & CO., LTD.; BOWES & BOWES.  
LONDON : G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.  
1927

*Price Twelve Shillings and Sixpence net.*

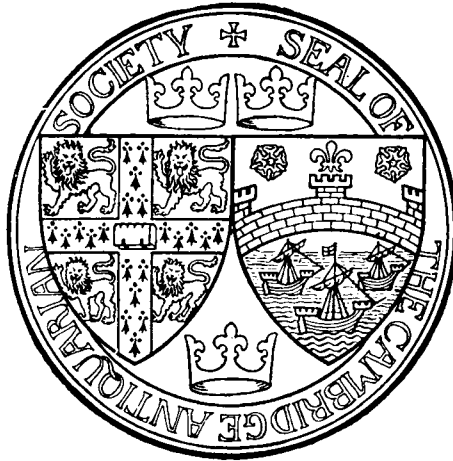
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY  
PROCEEDINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS

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REPORT ON HUMAN BONES FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY AT BURWELL EXCAVATED BY MR LETHBRIDGE IN 1925-26.

By W. L. H. DUCKWORTH, M.D., Sc.D.

(Communicated 31 May, 1926.)

The human bones from Mr Lethbridge's excavations at Burwell in 1925 and 1926 came to the Anatomy School in two consignments. The former of these comprised skulls and bones from the first 24 graves examined, and to these specimens this report has reference. The remainder, some 12 or more individuals being represented, awaits the completion of the processes of cleaning and repair. The crania of the first consignment appear to me to include representatives of several types. None of them has yet been found to be peculiar to Burwell. Some allow of close comparison with examples assignable to the pre-Roman period. Others are comparable to specimens of the Roman period. They suggest that the invasions by Saxons commenced much earlier than the V century A.D.

The skulls themselves fall into three main groups to which two others are subsidiary. Skulls to which the female sex is assigned fall into the two latter.

Of the three main groups two may be described as characterized by the "globose" appearance of the brain-case. This however is of the dolicho-cephalic order though its narrowness is not pronounced. The specimens thus grouped are subdivisible into larger and smaller sub-groups according to their absolute dimensions. The stature of these individuals is judged to have been of moderate degree, without examples of extremes in either direction.

The third group contains crania which are much more definitely narrow (than those just described). The brow-ridges of these skulls are more prominent, and the associated skeletons include bones denoting distinctly tall stature in two or three instances.

It seems probable that the men with skulls described above as "globose" will be found representative of the invaders traditionally termed "Saxon." But the point here insisted upon is the variety of the specimens, and the indication thus given of the simultaneous presence of several types of mankind. So far no specimen has been found identifiable with the Long Barrow type, and there is quite definitely a lack of the round-headed or brachy-cephalic type found so frequently in sites connected with former monastic establishments in this neighbourhood and some others.

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