

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN  
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



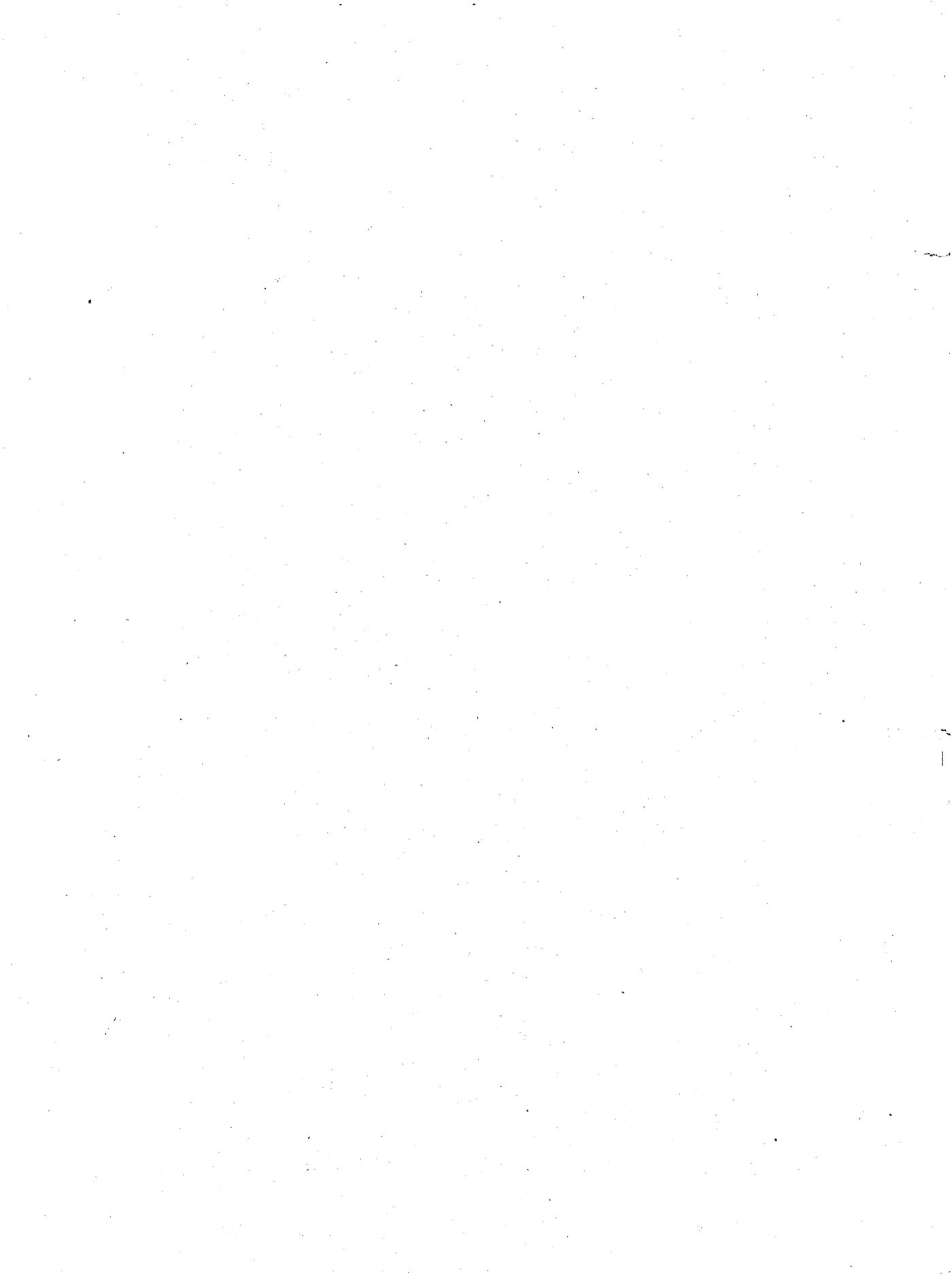
VOLUME LIV

JANUARY 1960 TO DECEMBER 1960

CAMBRIDGE  
DEIGHTON BELL

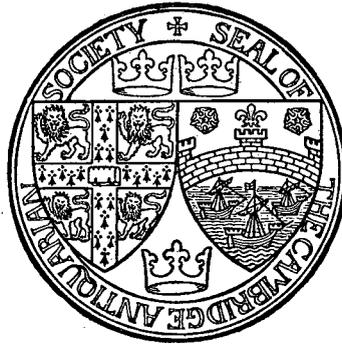
1961

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY  
(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN  
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LIV

JANUARY 1960 TO DECEMBER 1960

CAMBRIDGE  
DEIGHTON BELL

1961

*Published for the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (incorporating the Cambs and Hunts  
Archaeological Society) by Deighton Bell, 13 Trinity Street, Cambridge*

*Printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Cambridge  
(Brooke Crutchley, University Printer)*

## CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1960-61</i>	page vi
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1959</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1959</i>	viii
Obituary Notes	I
<i>By G. H. FINDLAY and G. H. S. BUSHNELL</i>	
The Excavation of a <i>Bos primigenius</i> at Lowe's Farm, Littleport	3
<i>By F. W. SHAWCROSS</i>	
Neolithic Pottery from the Great Ouse Valley	17
<i>By H. J. M. GREEN</i>	
Bronze Age Cremation Urn at Rabbit Hill, Lakenheath	19
<i>By GRACE BRISCOE, F.S.A.</i>	
The Aldwick Iron Age Settlement, Barley, Hertfordshire	22
<i>By M. D. CRA'STER</i>	
Iron Age Weaving Combs from Cambridgeshire and Suffolk	47
<i>By NORMAN SMEDLEY, M.A., F.S.A.</i>	
A Romano-British Site at Orton Longueville, Huntingdonshire	50
<i>By G. F. DAKIN</i>	
Roman Godmanchester, Part II: The Town Defences	68
<i>By H. J. M. GREEN</i>	
Roman Cremation Groups from Godmanchester	83
<i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.</i>	
An Early Twelfth-century Building at Eynesbury, Huntingdonshire	85
<i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.</i>	
Early Medieval Godmanchester	90
<i>By H. J. M. GREEN</i>	
A Thirteenth-century Architectural Sketch from the Hospital of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge	99
<i>By MARTIN BIDDLE</i>	
A Medieval Squabble	109
<i>By J. F. WILLIAMS</i>	
The Victoria County History of Cambridge	112
<i>By JOHN ROACH</i>	
Archaeological Notes	127
<i>By M. D. CRA'STER and C. F. TEBBUTT</i>	

## BRONZE AGE CREMATION URN AT RABBIT HILL, LAKENHEATH

GRACE BRISCOE, F.S.A.

ON 20 February 1960 the presence of a very large inverted collared urn was disclosed by ploughing to a depth of 9-10 in. instead of the usual 7 in. The plough had struck the base and smashed about 2 in. of it. It could be seen that the urn contained pieces of bone. The surrounding area was cleared and the pot removed without further damage. Nearly all the broken sherds were recovered and enabled a full restoration of the base. The urn had been placed on solid chalk. There was no discoloration of the soil.

The soil is light and sandy around the findspot (National Grid Ref. 7157 8425), which lies on a slight slope facing the valley of the Little Ouse to the north and within a few yards of black fen soil. The area is rich in archaeological remains, for it lies at the junction of chalk and fen where springs of water from the chalk formed an attraction for early settlers. To the south-east, 330 yards away, a pit has been explored containing sherds of 'giant' beaker and rusticated wares;<sup>1</sup> immediately to the north there is an area, about 300 by 100 yards, dotted with remains of Early Iron Age A settlers; intermingled with these are the remains of three Romano-British kilns and other evidence of Roman habitation. The urn findspot lies directly in the path of the New River to be cut in the near future.

The urn is well proportioned and carefully made. In general shape it resembles closely the urn with primary burial recovered from Sheeplays in Glamorgan,<sup>2</sup> except that the top of the rim is flattened with an internal bevel decorated in the same manner as the collar and neck. The overhanging collar is slightly concave internally, and externally is occupied with closely set, twisted cord impressions arranged in herringbone fashion. This effect is repeated on the neck. Just below the shoulder a single line of cord impressions is laid horizontally. The shape of the collar suggests a date in the early part of the Middle Bronze Age.

The body is almost conical, the walls about 12 mm. thick. The urn weighs 23 lb., is 19½ in. high, rim diameter 14 in., base 5½ in. The internal surface is not burnt black, and there is only some discoloration in the middle part.

A search of the regional museums and the literature (admittedly not exhaustive) has revealed two cremation urns of slightly larger size. One is in the Norwich Museum (unpublished), approximately 20 in. high, irregular and roughly made, the

<sup>1</sup> G. Briscoe, *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. LIII, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. Fox, *Life and Death in the Bronze Age*, fig. 67, p. 133.

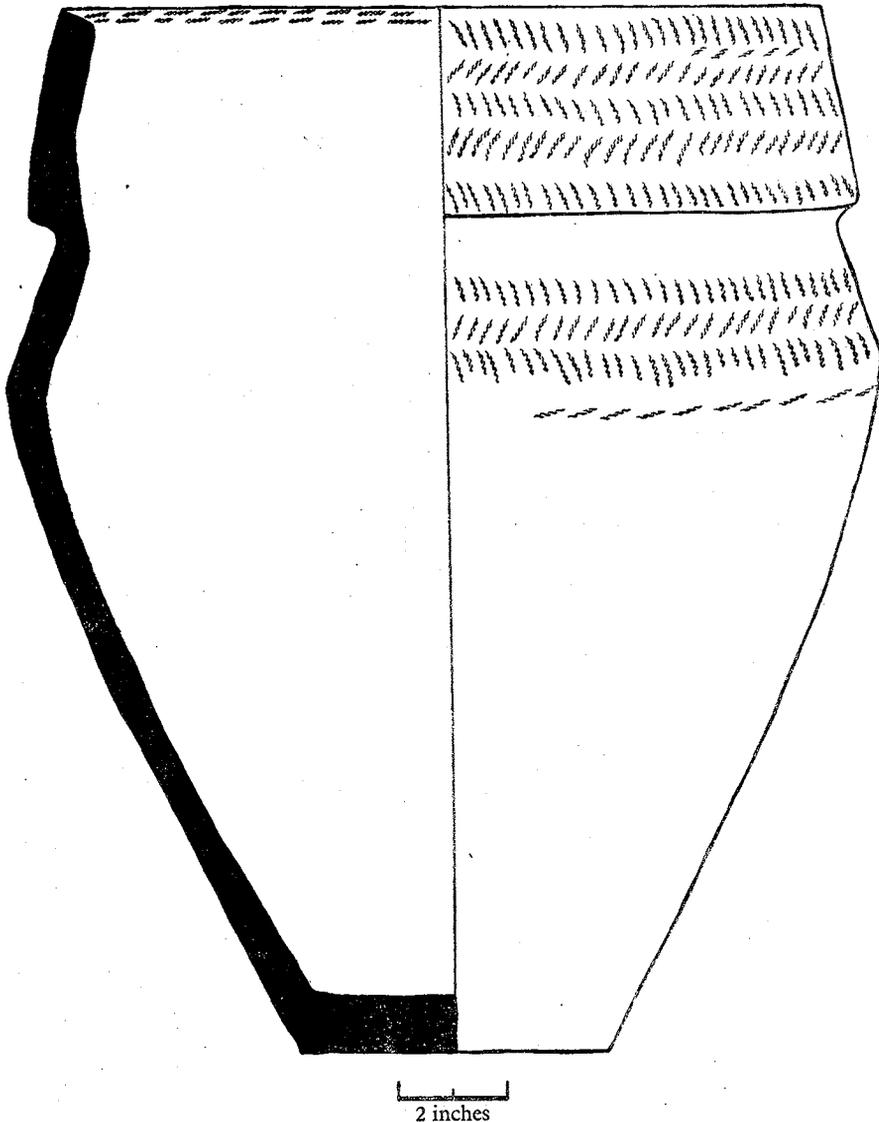


Fig. 1. Cremation urn from Lakenheath.

other is illustrated in Abercromby,<sup>1</sup> *Bronze Age Pottery*, also 20 in. high, from Dorset.<sup>2</sup>

In 1953 a small cremation urn, 9½ in. high, was found at How Hill, Icklingham.<sup>3</sup> In shape and decoration it resembled the Lakenheath urn except that the neck had been left free of ornament. The lower part of the internal surface was burnt hard and black, suggesting a deposit of bones while they were still hot. This urn is in the

<sup>1</sup> Abercromby, II, pl. LXV, no. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Ian Longworth notes an even taller urn, 22·4 in. in height, from the Black Howes, Stanghow Moor, Skelton, Yorks, N.R. (B.M. Reg. no. 76 4-10 25).

<sup>3</sup> G. Briscoe, *Proc. C.A.S.* vol. XLVIII, p. 7.

Elveden Estate Museum. The Lakenheath urn is in Mildenhall Museum, presented by the finders, Mr Dennis Flack, Mr W. Morley and Ron Morley.

Mr Brothwell of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology kindly examined the cremated bones; his report is appended.

#### CREMATED REMAINS FROM RABBIT HILL, LAKENHEATH

The bone fragments varied considerably in size from 3-4 mm. to over 50 mm. There was also a considerable difference in the degree of calcination, and some bone fragments were little more than blackened. At the other extreme were fragments of a porcellanous texture, displaying the typical twisting and fissuring of bones submitted to relatively high temperatures. The general impression is that some parts of the body (or bodies) were in close contact with the combustible material while other parts were only charred.

As is usually the case with cremated bone, some fragments were easily identified, while others could only be provisionally assigned to a bone (or group of bones). The following bones of the skeleton were identified: (1) more than twelve phalanges, probably from both the hands and feet; (2) a carpal bone; (3) remains of at least twelve teeth, mainly represented by broken roots: one molar crown, however, is complete; an unusual feature—for the heat commonly strips off the enamel from the underlying dentine; (4) part of the sacrum and the remains of at least three or four other vertebrae including the axis; (5) a number of rib fragments; (6) four metatarsals, including one of the big toe; (7) two or three large pieces of humerus; (8) numerous pelvic fragments; (9) parts of at least one femur; (10) about half of a clavicle; (11) small pieces of scapula; (12) radius and (?) ulna; (13) a talus bone; (14) numerous skull fragments, representing at least both temporals, parietals, a maxilla, occipital, mandible, frontal, and a wormian bone.

In all the material so far noted, there was no evidence for thinking that more than one adult was represented, the degree of development of the linea aspera on a femoral fragment suggesting that the person was a male. Also, the fact that the bones represent various parts of the body suggests that all the body was cremated.

Evidence of an immature individual was, however, present. Two long-bone shaft fragments (? femur and tibia) showed that one individual had been cremated who still possessed separate epiphyses. Also, a number of skull fragments (from various parts of the vault) were very thin and contrasted noticeably with other larger (adult) pieces. The fragmentary nature of this material makes an age estimate very difficult, but it does seem likely that the child was under 10 years of age.

D. R. BROTHWELL

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

VOLUME LIV  
JANUARY 1960 TO DECEMBER 1960

20s. net.

## CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1960-61</i>	page vi
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1959</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1959</i>	viii
Obituary Notes	I
By G. H. FINDLAY and G. H. S. BUSHNELL	
The Excavation of a <i>Bos primigenius</i> at Lowe's Farm, Littleport	3
By F. W. SHAWCROSS	
Neolithic Pottery from the Great Ouse Valley	17
By H. J. M. GREEN	
Bronze Age Cremation Urn at Rabbit Hill, Lakenheath	19
By GRACE BRISCOE, F.S.A.	
The Aldwick Iron Age Settlement, Barley, Hertfordshire	22
By M. D. CRA'STER	
Iron Age Weaving Combs from Cambridgeshire and Suffolk	47
By NORMAN SMEDLEY, M.A., F.S.A.	
A Romano-British Site at Orton Longueville, Huntingdonshire	50
By G. F. DAKIN	
Roman Godmanchester, Part II: The Town Defences	68
By H. J. M. GREEN	
Roman Cremation Groups from Godmanchester	83
By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.	
An Early Twelfth-century Building at Eynesbury, Huntingdonshire	85
By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.	
Early Medieval Godmanchester	90
By H. J. M. GREEN	
A Thirteenth-century Architectural Sketch from the Hospital of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge	99
By MARTIN BIDDLE	
A Medieval Squabble	109
By J. F. WILLIAMS	
The Victoria County History of Cambridge	112
By JOHN ROACH	
Archaeological Notes	127
By M. D. CRA'STER and C. F. TEBBUTT	