



MR PHILIP DICKINSON

# SKELETON FOUND IN TRENCH MAY BE ROMAN

The skeleton of what seems to be a Roman was unearthed by a mechanical digger on a site in Godmanchester last week.

The digger operator was 29-year-old former grave yard worker Trevor Jones, of 12 Green Leys, St Ives whose first reaction was; "Look here, we have got a human skull."

The bones were only four feet down in a gas pipe trench 60 yards from the A604 Cambridge road. Lying beside the long gone Roman was an earthenware pot, a vital clue for pinpointing the age.

The skeleton was taken to the pathological laboratories at Peterborough District Hospital where Dr Stanley Tarlton, consultant pathologist confirmed it was "ancient".

There have been varying opinions on whether the skeleton, which was badly fragmented, was Roman or even pre-Roman. But Mr Philip Dickinson, the local expert on Roman excavations, who has been put in charge of the investigation, believes it is Roman.

He is relying heavily on the evidence of the pot to give him a

firmer indication of its age. County Archivist, Dr Patrick Locke, said the position of the pot in relation to the bones when they were found holds the key. He said: "The pot was found waist high and this leads me to believe it is pre-Roman."

Mr Dickinson thinks there may be more remains in the area. He said: "It is near the line of Ermine Street and is a very good position for Roman finds. The Romans always used to bury their dead by the side of the road for sanitary reasons, instead of disposing of them in the towns."

First reports were that the skeleton was six foot long. Mr Dickinson said; "Romans would normally be no taller than five foot six. He must have been a giant for those days."

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