Burial Practices in Northern England c. A.D. 650-850: A Bio-Cultural Approach

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, two horizons have been identified in the funerary archaeology of the middle Anglo-Saxon period (c. A.D. 650-850): the cessation of apparently pagan practices and the beginning of churchyard burial. However, it is increasingly apparent that churchyard burial did not become the norm until the 10th century, and that the preceding period is characterised by a diverse range of funerary practices and burial locations that have scarcely begun to be understood.

This thesis investigates the funerary rites of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 from northern England. First, a corpus of cemeteries from the region and period of study was collected, and the funerary rites that characterise them described. A variety of different cemeteries, and a range of different practices relating to the form of the grave, position of the body and the provision of grave elaborations or grave goods were identified. The funerary practices of middle Anglo-Saxon England are conventionally summarised by the "final phase" model, but when considered in light of evidence from northern sites, the model was found to be too restrictive to accurately reflect the true variability of burial rites that characterise northern cemeteries. Second, in order to investigate funerary rites further, a bio-cultural case-study of burial practices at six major cemeteries was undertaken (Adwick-le-Street; Ailcy Hill, Ripon; Norton Bishopsmill School; Pontefract; Spofforth; and Thwing). This integrated evidence from funerary rites with osteological data regarding age at death, biological sex, health and lifestyle, in order to investigate the provision of burial practices at these cemeteries. This study revealed several significant patterns in the identities of individuals afforded certain forms of burial, and particularly, individuals

afforded burial in certain locations within the cemetery. The study concludes by presenting a wider context for these patterns in relation to the funerary rites of early medieval Britain.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 7

LIST OF TABLES

ABBREVIATIONS FOR PRIMARY SOURCES

CE	Wulfstan's *Canons of Edgar* (Fowler 1972)
Confessio	St Patrick's *Confessio* (Hood 1978)
HAB	*Historia Abbatum* by Bede (Plummer 1896)
HE	Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Colgrave and Mynors 1969)
HSCuth.	*Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Anonymous) (Johnson South 2002)
LS	Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* (Skeat 1881)
LSW	*Life of St Willibald* by Hunberc of Heidenheim (Noble and Head 1995)
VSCeol.	*Life of St Ceolfrid* (anonymous) (Whitelock 1955: 697-707)
VSCuth.	*Life of St Cuthbert* by Bede (Colgrave 1940)
VSW	*Life of St Wilfrid* by Eddius Stephanus (Colgrave 1927)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the funerary rites of the period A.D. 650-850 in the north of England. This dataset has received limited attention, and the thesis takes advantage of a large corpus of recently excavated sites from the region that have yet to be incorporated into large-scale analysis. The relationship between funerary rites and the identities of the individuals to whom they were afforded is considered, using analysis of skeletal remains to provide evidence of sex, age at death, health and lifestyle. The first chapter provides, first, an outline of the period and area of the study. Second, there is an overview of the aims of the research. Finally, the methods by which a site survey was conducted are outlined, followed by an overview of the results of this survey.

The 7th-9th centuries in England have long been characterised by significant changes in funerary rites. The developments in burial practices during this period are conventionally linked to far-reaching transformations in religious, political and social life brought about by the conversion to Christianity (Evison 1956; Hyslop 1963; Lethbridge 1936: 27-29; Meaney and Hawkes 1970). The funerary rites of this period are traditionally characterised by the "final phase" model (Boddington 1990; Hyslop 1963; Leeds 1936). This model mainly draws upon evidence from the south east of England to describe and account for the changes observed in burial rites from the early Anglo-Saxon period, focussing in particular on the implications of conversion to Christianity. The possibility of differences in the character and development of funerary practices between southern and northern England have been largely ignored,

and in consequence, the relevance of the "final phase" model to contemporary sites further north has received extremely limited attention.

1.1 The period of study

The Anglo-Saxon period is conventionally divided intro three phases of approximately equal duration: the early Anglo-Saxon period c. A.D. 450-650; the middle Anglo-Saxon period c. 650-850; and the later Anglo-Saxon period c. 850-1066. These chronological brackets have long provided archaeologists with frameworks for their research, relating as they do to such major events as the Germanic migrations, the conversion to Christianity and the age of Viking influence, respectively, all of which are deemed to have had significant impacts on burial practices. The middle Anglo-Saxon period was chosen as a focus of study for this thesis in response to several recent developments. First, early and late Anglo-Saxon burial practices have received increased attention in recent years, and it was felt that the period between the 7th and 9th centuries would benefit from further, specific investigation. Second, recent contributions to the study of cemeteries c. A.D. 650-850 have highlighted several areas of potential interest, which have yet to be sufficiently addressed. Andy Boddington's 1990 paper, which reviewed the so-called "final phase" model – the model by which funerary rites of the middle Anglo-Saxon period have been characterised – undermined many widely held assumptions about this period. Boddington's model was developed over 20 years ago, before the period of rapid growth in the identification of archaeological sites that accompanied the development of commercial archaeology, and therefore, there now exists a considerably larger dataset with which to test the model. Yet, as recently noted by

Nick Stoodley (2007: 154), Boddington's work has still to be tested against this substantial dataset. Finally, that there remain significant limitations to our understanding of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices is illustrated by Helen Geake's (2002) most recent paper reviewing the burial rites of the 7th-8th centuries. This paper demonstrated several significant gaps in archaeological understanding of this period by posing a series of as yet unanswered questions regarding the apparent invisibility of artefacts dated to the early 7th century in burials, the decline in masculine-linked grave goods during the 7th century and the relationship between furnished graves and churchyard cemeteries.

1.2 Terminology

Throughout this research several terms are used with specific meanings that require definition here. The term Anglo-Saxon is utilised to refer primarily to a chronological period that encompassed the 5th to 11th centuries in England. The widespread use of the term in a similar context within early medieval archaeology supports and necessitates its use here. In this thesis it is important to stress that the term Anglo-Saxon does not imply any distinctive cultural or ethnic traits pertaining to any group of people who may have migrated from the continent during the 5th century, but is used purely as a chronological period.

The placement of thresholds between chronological periods in any study are largely arbitrary, and are often chosen to fit best the needs of individual pieces of research, and therefore a variety of terms have been utilised for the period c. A.D. 650-850 by different scholars. The term "middle Anglo-Saxon" has been used in this study as it permits the 7th-9th centuries to be treated as a separate entity (Geake 1997:

1; Wilson 1976: 4). It should be noted, however, that the term "conversion period" has also been utilised to describe the same time period (Geake 1997). The "conversion period" is defined by Helen Geake (1997: 1) as "the time period covered by the process of conversion to Christianity in England", and therefore is not appropriate for the present study for two reasons. First, the period considered in this study runs well beyond the time of conversion and second, some areas of northern England are unlikely ever to have had significant pagan populations, but remained Christian throughout the 5th-7th centuries (see chapter 2.1). Other studies have used "final phase" to refer to an analogous period, taking inspiration from the "final phase" model that has traditionally characterised funerary practices during this time (Boddington 1990; Leeds 1936) (see chapter 2.2). In this study the term "final phase" is reserved only for description of the "final phase" model and is not used to refer to a chronological period. Further discussion of the "final phase" model is included in chapter 4, where its utility is considered.

1.3 The historical and landscape context of northern England c. A.D. 650-850

The north of England at the beginning of the middle Anglo-Saxon period had emerged from a time of constantly changing borders and rulers into an unstable hegemony. The core of the region had previously existed in a state of uneasy division between the two kingdoms of Bernicia and Deira that lay east of the Pennines between Hadrian's Wall in the north and the Humber Estuary to the south (Figure 1.1). The kingdom of Northumbria had emerged through the campaigns of Æthelfrith (d. 616), one of a line of Bernician kings with expansionist policies, who had gained control over the kingdom of Deira to the south and extended his kingdom westwards

into Gododdin and Strathclyde. The territory remained united under both Bernician and Deiran rule in the ensuing decades (Rollason 2003: 6) and, indeed, the 7th century saw the Northumbrian kings continue to subjugate vast areas to the north of the river Tweed and west of the Pennines (Campbell 1992: 54). At its greatest extent between A.D. 650 and 850, Northumbria extended from the Firth of Forth to the Humber on the east and as far west as the Irish Sea between the Solway Firth and modern Aryshire (Rollason 2003: 8) (Figure 1.2). The collapse of Northumbria in the 860s followed a period of political instability and short reigns, and after York fell to the Viking Great Army in A.D. 866/7, the kingdom fragmented into three separate territories: an area to the south of the River Tees; lands between the Tees and the Firth of Forth; and an area west of the Pennines (Rollason 2003: 9). Northumbria, therefore, formed an entity, although not necessarily a politically stable one, throughout the middle Anglo-Saxon period.

The mid-7th century traditionally marks the beginning of a period of increased literacy in England; thus for the first time since the decline of the Roman Empire, contemporary textual evidence can be integrated with the archaeology (Dumville 1989: 214). Documentary evidence for the 7th to 9th centuries is scarce and severely limited in its scope, yet few other areas of England have as rich a record as Northumbria (Higham 1986: 243; Rollason 2003: 13). These texts – such as Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, works documenting the *Life of St Cuthbert* by Bede and an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and the *Life of Bishop Wilfred* by Stephen of Ripon – are considered products of what is often dubbed the "Golden Age of Northumbria" (Kendrick 1938: 119), a period during the 7th and 8th centuries when the north east of England stood at the forefront of literary and cultural developments in both England and Europe. The unusually rich corpus of literary evidence for the period c. A.D.

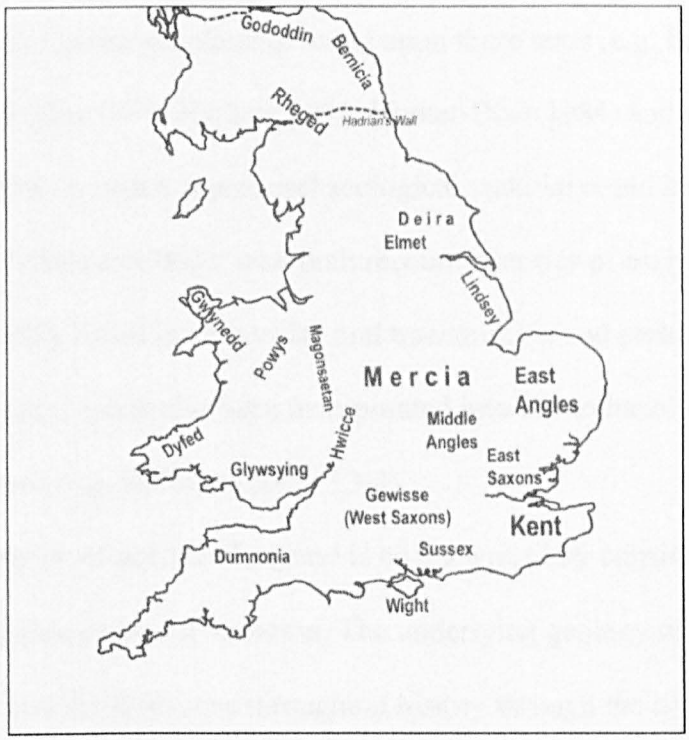


Figure 1.1. The kingdoms of Britain c. A.D. 600 (from Yorke 2008: map 1).

Figure 1.2. The kingdoms of Britain c. A.D. 800 (from Yorke 2008: map 2, with additions).

650-850 has led to copious scholarship based upon these texts (e.g. Brooks 2000; Dumville 1977; Eagles 1979; Higham 1993; Hunter-Blair 1984) and the creation of historical narratives, in which scarce archaeological material could be contextualised. The evidence of Gildas and Bede, who both recount histories of early Anglo-Saxon England, presumably based in vernacular oral transmission and perhaps also now lost written sources, has in particular been incorporated into the archaeological narratives of northern England (e.g. Rollason 2003: 13-4).

The landscape of northern England is characterised by considerable geographical and topographical variation. The underlying geology of a region naturally impacts on the landscape throughout history through the determination of soil types, vegetation, faunal populations, raw materials and ultimately human occupation patterns. Sedimentary and volcanic rocks, underpinned by the older granites, make up some of the most mountainous areas in northern England: the Cumbrian fells and the Cheviots. The bulk of the Pennines are later carboniferous sedimentary deposits, as are the moors and forests of modern Northumbria and north Cumbria. The coastal lowlands of west Cumbria, Northumbria and Durham coincide with the coal measures (Figure 1.3). The far north has a higher proportion of mountainous terrain than any other region of England, and therefore is likely to have been a dominant factor in settlement patterns in the Anglo-Saxon period and throughout human history (Higham 1986: 5). Although the lowlands are most likely to have supported significant Anglo-Saxon populations, there were probably few landscapes that had not been settled and drawn into regional economies (Hooke 1998: 139). This assumption is supported by evidence from upland sites such as

Simy Folds, Upper Teesdale (CD)[1] where remains of occupation were encountered at an altitude of 350m on Holwick Fell and radiocarbon dated to A.D. 600-1020 by early medieval charcoal deposits (Coggins 2004: 1, 331). At this site, stone was favoured as a construction medium in a pragmatic adaptation to a harsh climate with little available timber (Coggins *et al.* 1983).

1.4 Geographical focus of the study

The focus of this study on the geographical region of northern England has been chosen to reflect the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria c. A.D. 650-850. Ideally, the boundaries chosen for archaeological studies should accurately reflect contemporary divisions of either a political or physical nature, for example documented political boundaries or natural barriers like the sea or mountain ranges. To use modern national and county boundaries to define a study area would be anachronistic. The available northern historical sources can be used to infer general geographical thresholds, in particular the broad locations of the early medieval kingdoms (for examples of reconstructions see Hooke 1998: 45; Reynolds 1999: fig 17; Rollason 2003: 8; Yorke 2008 maps 1 and 2), although it must be noted that 7th-9th century charters and law codes – records traditionally used to reconstruct political boundaries – are scarce and non-existent for this region respectively (Rollason 2003: 16). Utilising available documentary evidence, the boundaries of this study area were selected to be roughly concurrent with the furthest reaches of the documented political control of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria (Figure 1.4). At its

[1] See appendix 1 for abbreviations used for county names throughout this thesis. For the counties of sites included in the corpus in the present study see tables 1.1-1.4. Where sites not included in the corpus are discussed, their counties are noted in the text when first mentioned.

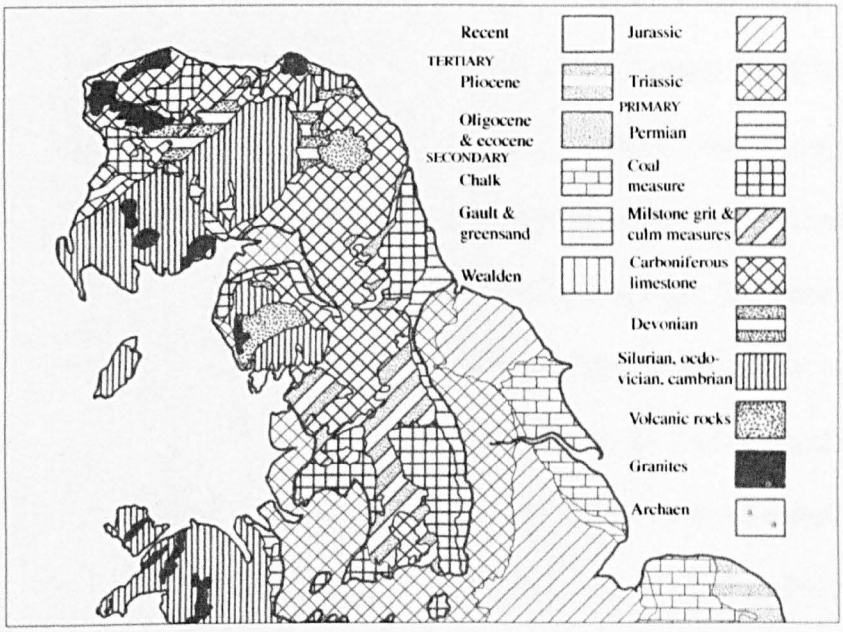


Figure 1.3. Geological map of northern England (from Hill 1981: 4, with additions).

Figure 1.4. Counties included in the present study (grey outlines) and extent of Northumbria c. A.D. 800 (from Yorke 2008: map 2, with additions).

greatest extent, Northumbria comprised the modern English counties of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Yorkshire (including North Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire), Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire.[2] The southern counties of Scotland also, for a short time, fell within the boundaries of Northumbria, although they have not been extensively included in this study due to time constraints, which did not permit the search for unpublished sites that has been undertaken for the rest of Northumbria. Where possible, however, evidence from sites in southern Scotland is included in discussion, especially from Whithorn (DG), as the funerary practices there were found to be very similar to those at many northern English sites and, importantly, a detailed and comprehensive publication was available (Hill 1997a).

This study focuses on northern England for several reasons. First, studies of the middle Anglo-Saxon period have traditionally avoided this area, preferring to focus on the more frequently encountered and elaborately furnished cemeteries of the south and east of England (e.g Evison 1956; Hyslop 1963; Leeds 1936; Lethbridge 1931; 1936; Meaney and Hawkes 1970). In other cases, scholars do include northern sites in their research, but are prevented by a variety of factors from affording them as full consideration as southern cemeteries. For example, Helen Geake (1997) explicitly includes sites from across the whole of England in her study of conversion period cemeteries, but as her research is focussed on grave goods, the generally poorly-furnished northern cemeteries rarely contribute much to her arguments. A focus on northern England seems particularly timely given that the Anglo-Saxon period as a whole in the north of England has received renewed attention in recent

[2] Throughout this study modern geographic counties (post-1996 ceremonial counties) have been used to permit future researchers to identify up-to-date information regarding the geographical location of sites. The area of this study coincides with the pre-1974 historic counties of Cheshire, Cumberland, County Durham, Lancashire, Northumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire.

years (e.g. Buckberry 2004; Hadley 2000b; 2002; Hawkes and Mills 1999; Lucy 1998; 1999) and it is intended that this study will contribute to this growing scholarly trend. The need for more in-depth study of early medieval northern England continues to be highlighted, for example, in her recent review of Anglo-Saxon Christianity in northern England, Rachel Newman (2002: 154) has argued generally that:

> there should be far more strenuous attempts to think in terms of Northumbria as an entity rather than simply in terms of individual counties (as perhaps the present system encourages); this will require some vision ... but it can and should be achieved when research priorities are being considered.

Indeed, the volume *Northumbria's Golden Age*, a substantial collection of 34 papers focussed on early medieval northern England did just this, including an overview of Northumbrian burial by Sam Lucy (1999: 12-43). Other archaeologists are also beginning to capitalise upon the potential for studying Northumbria as a unit. For example David Petts and Sam Turner (in press a) are currently editing a volume entitled *Early Medieval Northumbria*, featuring a variety papers on aspects of landscape, settlement, burial and the Church, including the papers *Social and biological "status" at the Bowl Hole burial ground, Bamburgh* (Groves in press a), *Yeavering: thirty years on* (O'Brien in press) and *Re-evaluating early medieval Northumbrian contacts and the "coastal highway"* (Ferguson in press). Finally, and crucially for this thesis, there has been a notable increase in the corpus of cemeteries dating from A.D. 650-850 in northern England in recent years. The importance of this new material is reinforced by comparison with the situation in 1980, when Roger Miket (1980: 289-305) reviewed the cemeteries from northern England dating to c. A.D. 650-850 and published his pessimistic conclusions that only three cemeteries

across the former territory of Bernicia had been excavated, recorded or archived to standards considered acceptable at the time he was writing (the late 1970s).

1.5 Research questions

The thesis, first, sets out to assess the quantity and quality of the evidence for burial practices c. A.D. 650-850 in the north of England. In order to address this, a site survey was conducted based on published gazetteers and consultation with Historic Environment Records to collate all available data. The results of this exercise are summarised below (sections 1.6 and 1.7). Next, the characterisation of burial practices in northern England c. A.D 650-850 is undertaken. This involves consideration of the location of the cemeteries in the landscape of the region as a whole, the form and character of individual cemeteries and the occurrence of rites within individual graves. This analysis is presented in chapter 3. The applicability of both traditional and current models of 7th- to 9th-century burial practice to the evidence from northern England is then assessed. This is achieved through a critique of the literature pertaining to middle Anglo-Saxon funerary practices in light of the evidence collated from northern cemeteries, and is presented in chapter 4.

This broad review is then followed by a more detailed analysis of a sample of cemeteries from the study region. In particular, the extent to which funerary provision relates to aspects of the identity of the deceased is investigated. This aim was met through a bio-cultural study of six major sites from the region (Adwick-le-Street, Ailcy Hill Ripon, Pontefract, Norton Bishopsmill School, Spofforth and Thwing, see chapter 5). This bio-cultural study investigates the expression of individual and group identity in the burial rites of middle Anglo-Saxon England by

seeking to determine whether certain burial forms were considered appropriate for only a restricted group within society and by investigating who such individuals were, through the use of osteological and palaeopathological evidence for sex, age at death, stature, health, lifestyle and activity. Spatial analysis is also undertaken on the same six case-studies in order to determine whether there was a hierarchy of spatial organisation or a conceptual division of space within cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850. It is then considered whether use of space in the cemetery could be related to the identity of individuals buried there, or the forms of burial practice provided in certain locations. This analysis is presented in chapter 6. This thesis concludes with a detailed discussion of several key aspects of burial practices in northern England c. A.D. 650-850 that places them within their wider context and seeks to explore their meanings (chapter 7).

1.6 The site survey

For the purposes of this study it was necessary to collate all available evidence for Anglo-Saxon funerary practices from the north of England. Data were collected for all cemeteries containing burials that could be dated to the Anglo-Saxon period for the modern counties of Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Yorkshire (consisting of North Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire), Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire. These data were used in the characterisation of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices and consideration of the funerary landscape in chapter 3, and provided an initial step in the selection of the six case-study cemeteries included in the in-depth bio-cultural analysis in chapters 6 and 7.

An initial survey was undertaken of all Historic Environment Record (HER) databases in the study region. In several cases this search included personal visits to the HER offices where their databases could be searched, which were particularly valuable as staff were able to furnish information about current excavations and in-progress publications. In other cases, data had already been collated by HER staff. In the case of County Durham and Northumberland, a HER search could be performed by accessing the online database at Keys to the Past.[3] The database was searched for all burials, cemeteries or funerary sites that were recorded as dating to within the Anglo-Saxon period. At this stage of research, evidence pertaining to all Anglo-Saxon burial sites dated to between the 5th century and the mid-11th century was collected, as HER databases rarely differentiated between early, middle and late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. The HER records were supplemented for the purposes of this study by a survey undertaken by the author of the National Monument Record (NMR) database, available online at the Pastscape web-site.[4] Every care was taken to ensure searches were conducted using all keywords under which Anglo-Saxon burial sites might be entered, using the website's own guide to the use of keywords. Where possible, data for cemeteries was also cross-referenced with that taken from gazetteers of Anglo-Saxon burial (in particular, Buckberry 2004; Geake 1997; Lucy 1998; Meaney 1964).

The database produced as a result of the initial site survey identified 310 sites from across the Anglo-Saxon period. It was then necessary to refine this list to include only sites at which funerary activity could be demonstrated during the period A.D. 650-850. This was performed by omitting sites which were not in use at any time between the dates of 650 and 850. For example, Castle Eden (CD) was omitted

[3] http://www.keystothepast.info/
[4] http://pastscape.english-heritage.org.uk/

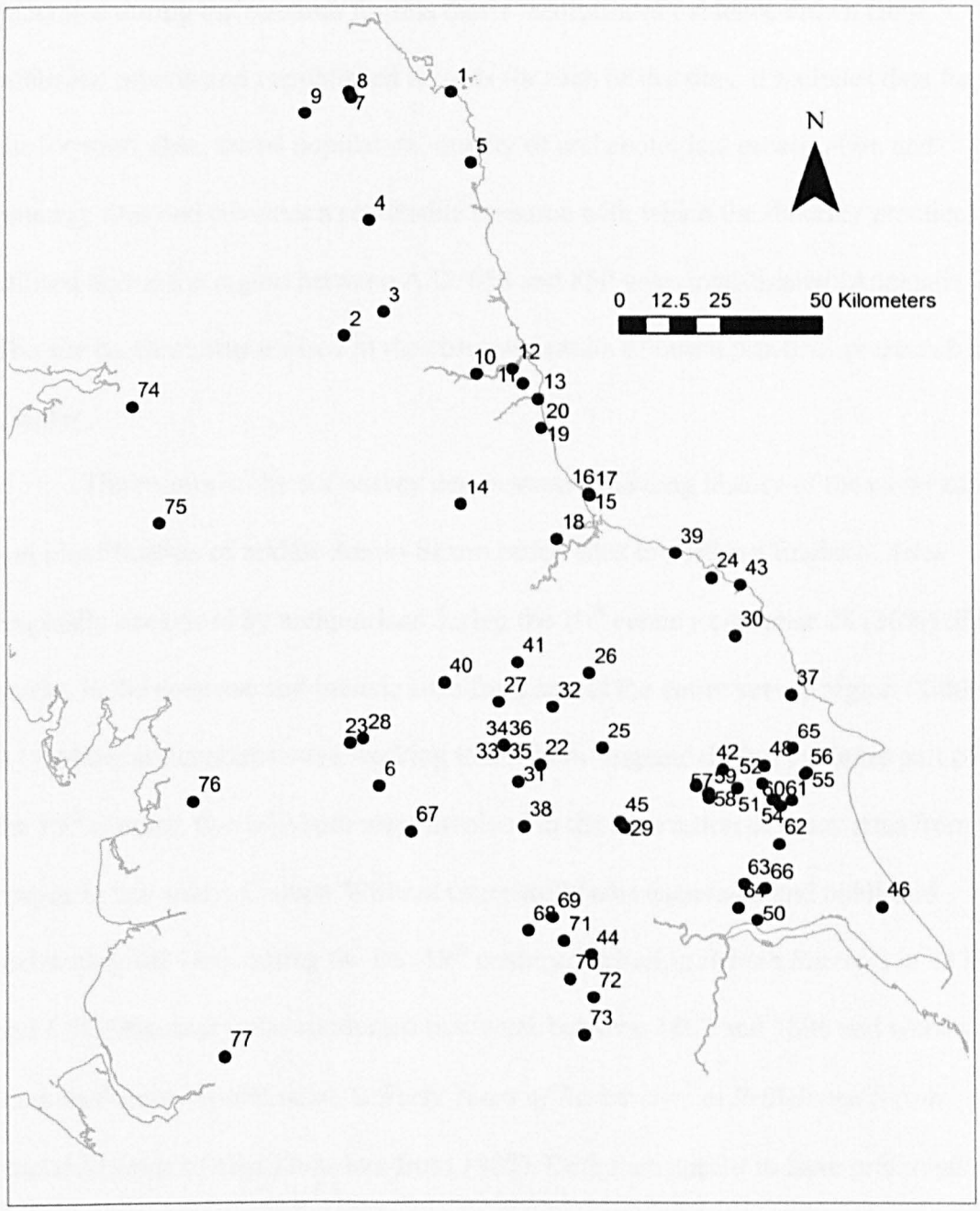
from the database as it was dated to between the 5th and 6th centuries and had almost certainly been abandoned by A.D. 650, whereas Black Gate was included because, although many burials appear to have been made between the 9th and 12th centuries, some earlier interments were radiocarbon dated to between A.D. 650 and 850; thus the cemetery was apparently in use for all of the middle and later Anglo-Saxon periods (Diana Mahoney-Swales *pers. comm.).* Sites with Viking associations, such as Ormskirk (Cu), were deemed to post-date the period of interest, as these are likely to date to no earlier than the late 9th century. In any case, there were not at all representative of the normal range of practices in northern England during the middle Anglo-Saxon period and, thus, were excluded from analysis. One site that it seems particularly regrettable to have to omit is Catterick (NY). Bede (HE ii, 20) refers to *Catraeth*, which by the 7th century was one of the royal vills of Northumbria and the location where Bishop Paulinus baptised local people in the river Swale in c. A.D. 627. This important settlement remained into the 8th century, when Simeon of Durham recorded the marriage of King Æthelwold and Queen Æthelthryth at Catterick in A.D. 762 and the destruction by fire of the settlement in 796 (Whitelock 1955: 242-7). Archaeological excavation has encountered numerous cemeteries in the area of Catterick (Wilson *et al.* 1996), however none appears to date to later than 650 (the latest grave was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 410-660), and are therefore excluded from the present study.

The dating of many sites proved to be problematic. Radiocarbon dates were rarely available, and most site chronologies, particularly those from excavations in the 19th and early 20th centuries, were based upon stratigraphic and typological dates (see below for further discussion of the dating of the sites included in this study). Although typological dating can be relatively reliable for well-furnished cemeteries

(Geake 1997: 7), many sites identified in the present study are sparsely furnished, if not totally unfurnished. It is notable that the earliest excavations of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England dated many of the cemeteries concerned to the 7th or early 8th centuries. This is apparently the result of the reliance upon dates obtained from artefact typologies, and is likely to have resulted in only cemeteries where styles of grave goods were familiar being assigned dates. It is possible that some 8th- to 9th-century cemeteries were wrongly assigned earlier dates because they contained grave goods that, at the time they were excavated and interpreted, were believed to indicate pagan practices, and that unfurnished 8th- to 9th-century cemeteries were not assigned Anglo-Saxon dates at all. For example, at the cemetery at Lamel Hill, unfurnished burials were initially believed by the excavator to be of Roman date (Thurnham 1849). Sparsely furnished or unfurnished cemeteries excavated during the 18th and early 19th centuries, if indeed any such cemeteries were excavated at all at that time given that elaborate furnishings drew the most attention from archaeologists, are not represented in the corpus of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 available to modern researchers. Little could be done to mitigate the problems caused by limited dating evidence at some sites. The availability of both detailed site chronologies and radiocarbon dates was, however, considered important for the sites chosen for the bio-cultural study (see chapter 5.1).

1.7. Results of the site survey

The site survey resulted in the production of a database of 77 sites from northern England that could be demonstrated to have been in use at some point between A.D. 650 and 850 (Figure 1.5) (Appendix 2). The site database that was



1 Bamburgh
2 Barrasford, Chollerton
3 Capheaton
4 Hepple
5 Howick Heugh
6 Lowick
7 Milfield North
8 Milfield South
9 Yeavering
10 Black Gate
11 East Boldon
12 Jarrow
13 Wearmouth
14 Binchester
15 Hartlepool Church Walk
16 Hartlepool Cross Close
17 Hartlepool Back Gladstone St.
18 Norton Bishopsmill School
19 Seaham Flower Field
20 Seaham Hall Lodge
21 Acklam Wold, Greets Hill
22 Aldborough
23 Arncliffe
24 Barnby
25 Crayke
26 Hawnby
27 Howe Hill, Carthorpe
28 Kettlewell
29 Lamel Hill, Belle Vue House
30 Lilla Howe
31 Occaney Beck
32 Pudding Pie Hill
33 Ripon Ailcy Hill
34 Ripon Deanery Gardens
35 Ripon Ladykirk
36 Ripon St Marygate
37 Seamer Moor
38 Spofforth
39 Street House Farm
40 Thornton Steward
41 Viewly Bridge
42 Wharram Percy
43 Whitby Headland
44 Womersley
45 York Minster
46 Burton Pidsea
47 Kemp Howe, Cowlam
48 Cottam
49 Driffield, Routh Hall
50 Elloughton, Mill Hill
51 Fimber
52 Garton-on-the-Wolds
53 Garton II
54 Garton Station
55 Kilham Back Lane
56 Kilham Middle Street
57 Kirkby Underdale Mortimer B4
58 Kirkby Underdale Painsthorpe Wold
59 Kirkby Underdale, Uncleby
60 Kirkburn barrow C38
61 Kirkburn II
62 Lockington
63 North Newbald
64 North Cave, Everthorpe
65 Thwing
66 Walkington Wold
67 Addingham
68 Ferry Fryston
69 Ledston
70 North Elmsall
71 Pontefract
72 Adwick-le-Street
73 Conisbrough
74 Carlisle Cathedral
75 Dacre
76 Jubilee Tower, Quernmore
77 Winwick

Figure 1.5. All middle Anglo-Saxon sites from northern England included in the present study.

generated during the research for this thesis incorporates evidence drawn from published reports and unpublished records for each of the sites. It includes data for site location, date, burial population, quality of archaeological preservation and funerary rites and provides a searchable resource with which the funerary practices utilised across the region between A.D. 650 and 850 were investigated (Appendix 2). The site database was utilised in the characterisation of burial practices presented in chapter 3.

The results of the site survey demonstrated the long history of the excavation and identification of middle Anglo-Saxon burial sites in northern England. Sites originally excavated by antiquarians during the 19th century comprise 28 (36%) of the entries in the database and include sites from across the entire survey region (Table 1.1). Many antiquarians were working in northern England during the latter part of the 19th century, two of whom were involved in the excavation of many sites from the corpus in this study: Cannon William Greenwell (who excavated and published archaeological work during the late 19th century, including *British Barrows* in 1877) and J. R. Mortimer (who conducted fieldwork between 1863 and 1896 and whose most well-known publication is *Forty Years of Researches in British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire* from 1905). Both men appear to have preferentially selected visible monuments such as barrows for their investigations and in consequence their sites tend to be associated with prehistoric monuments. Both also appear to have taken the trouble to explore thoroughly the areas they excavated and to record their findings in great detail. Thus a relatively large number of graves were excavated at their cemeteries, which were published in full. Mortimer's excavations (1905) included Anglo-Saxon cemeteries amongst the Bronze-Age barrows at Garton including, for example, Garton II, where 56 graves in two groups on slightly different

orientations were excavated in proximity to the Bronze-Age barrow C34. Several graves in one of the groups were richly-furnished with grave goods including jewellery, knives and buckles, which appeared to be 7th century in date. In contrast, graves from the second group were mostly unfurnished, and therefore might be later in date. Mortimer also excavated at Garton-on-the-Wolds (also known as Garton Slack I), where between 57 and 59 individuals with occasional furnishings were recovered from an Iron-Age earthwork known as the "double dyke". Coins discovered in a bag in one grave provide a date for this burial after c. A.D. 720-725 (Mortimer 1905: 55, 247-57). Several other Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, many of which can also be dated to the 7th-8th centuries by their grave goods, were also excavated by Mortimer. These include Painsthorpe Wold, Kemp Howe and Acklam Wold. Garton-on-the-Wolds is the only site amongst this antiquarian sample for which a date can be confidently assigned, in this case, based on numismatic evidence. At other cemeteries, including Greenwell's sites at Hepple, Howe Hill, Uncleby and Ferry Fryston, assemblages of grave goods suggest that they were in use between A.D. 650 and 850.

Barrasford, Nb	A single burial, excavated before 1875 in a Bronze-Age barrow, contained a silver ornamented shield boss, sword and knife. Dated to the 7th century on the basis of grave goods (Lucy 1999: 39; Meaney 1964: 198).
Capheaton, Nb	"Many cartloads of bones", a hanging bowl, ring and some copper pieces were recovered from a mound some time prior to 1813. The finds suggest a 7th-century date (Lucy 1999: 39; Meaney 1964:198).
Hepple, Nb	Several burials were found with an ear-scoop, workbox chain, tweezers, earring and barrel-shaped bead before 1877 (Greenwell and Rollaston 1877; Lucy 1999: 39; Meaney 1964: 199).
Lowick, Nb	A 7th century seax in the British Museum may be connected with three burials excavated in a similar location in Lowick (Lucy 1999: 40; Miket 1980: 297-8).
East Boldon, TW	An inhumation was encountered in a rock-cut grave with a gold and garnet brooch/buckle suggesting at 7th-century date (Åberg 1926: 56, 194; Lucy 1999: 39; Meaney 1964: 83).

Hartlepool Cross Close, CD	Material recovered from building work between 1833 and 1932 included burials in rows containing human remains with the heads resting on stones and carved name-stones (see below for details of later excavations) (Bell 1844; Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 77-9; Gage 1836; Scott 1956: 197 Sharp 1833).
Acklam Wold, NY	At least 6 inhumations (4 flexed, 2 extended) were excavated in a chalk pit during the 19th century. Burials were well furnished with beads, gold and garnet inlaid jewellery, a sword, buckles, knives and a ladle and bowl. These artefacts have been assigned a 7th-century date (Geake 1997: 188).
Hawnby, NY	The burial of a ?woman was excavated from a barrow before 1865. A large bronze bowl, pins, brooches, beads and a knife were also recovered, dating the burial to the c. 7th century. Further burials were also found in other mounds on this site (Geake 1997: 198-90).
Howe Hill, Carthorpe, NY	Human remains were found in a gravel pit in 1865 by Greenwell. The individuals were: an adolescent with four beads; an adult female with a knife and bronze tag; and two further crouched inhumations, one with a knife and bronze buckle. The burials were dug into a natural mound. The grave goods suggest a middle Anglo-Saxon date (Buckberry 2004: 452; Geake 1997: 189).
Lamel Hill, Belle Vue House, NY	A report of excavations on Lamel Hill, York was published by Edward Thurnham in 1849. Between 20 and 30 skeletons, appearing to Thurnham (a medical doctor) to be both males and females, were excavated from a mound along with a large pottery vessel containing what, at the time, was thought to be vegetable matter. Many iron fittings were recovered, which may have been the remains of coffins or chests. One grave contained chalk, however it is difficult to determine whether this was in the fill, or whether the grave itself was lined with chalk. The site was determined to be Christian, due to the absence of grave goods, but it was unclear at that stage whether the burials were Roman or Anglo-Saxon. There is also no clear indication of whether the pottery vessel was associated with the burials (Thurnham 1849).
Lilla Howe, Fylingdales, NY	Some time before 1871 a secondary burial in a barrow was recovered with silver-ornamented strap ends and gold jewellery, suggestive of a 7th century date (Elgee and Elgee 1933: 185-6; Lucy 1999: 38). The grave has been suggested to be that of Lilla, a theign of Edwin who died c. 625, however there is no reliable evidence linking this individual to the burial (Buckberry 2004: 456).
Pudding Pie Hill, NY	Three inhumations and cremated remains were encountered in a barrow in 1855. Grave goods dating to the 6th-7th century were recovered including a shield boss, dagger and spearhead (Buckberry 2004: 471; Elgee and Elgee 1933: 183; Meaney 1964: 269).
Seamer Moor, NY	Human remains were encountered during quarrying in the 19th century. One complete burial was excavated in 1857 along with disturbed rings, beads, garnet-set gold pins and an annular brooch with zoomorphic decoration. Helen Geake (1997: 190) suggests these could be what she calls "Conversion period" (c. 600-850) artefacts.

Womersley, NY	A single skeleton with a gold filigree and garnet pendant was excavated in 1860 by Thomas Bateman. The pendant may be 7th century (Geake 1997: 191; Lucy 1999: 38).
Burton Pidsea, EY	Two skeletons were recovered in 1818 with blue glass, gold earrings and a ring. Probably 7th century (Buckberry 2004: 418; Lucy 1999: 35).
Fimber, EY	Anglo-Saxon burials were discovered from 1863-84 around Fimber church. The barrow on which the church was built appears to have been a focal point for a c. 7th-century cemetery, dated by finds such as a late penannular brooch and a spear. Some of the burials are recorded as crouched (Buckberry 2004: 423; Lucy 1999: 35).
Garton-on-the-Wolds, EY	Between 57 and 59 individuals with occasional furnishings were recovered from an Iron-Age earthwork known as the "double dyke". (Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1999: 36; Mortimer 1905: 264-70).
Garton II, EY	Two groups of graves, 56 interments in total, on slightly different orientations, were excavated in proximity to Bronze-Age barrow C34. Several graves were richly furnished with grave goods including jewellery, knives and buckles, which appeared to be [late?] 7th century in date, but others from the second group are probably later, perhaps 8th century (Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1999: 40; Mortimer 1905: 247-57).
Kemp Howe, EY	Mortimer excavated a round barrow in 1878 to reveal six unfurnished graves. Two were crouched and the remainder flexed (Geake 1997: 158; Meaney 1964: 292) (see below for details of later excavations).
Middle Street, Kilham, EY	Over 100 skeletons were found on the site of the Methodist chapel in Kilham in 1819, and a further 40 were encountered in 1907 (see below for details of later excavations) (Buckberry 2004: 430).
Lockington, EY	Excavations inside St Mary's church in 1893 uncovered 21 inhumations, at least 12 of which appeared to have stones at the sides of the head. One was accompanied by a glass and amber necklace and large fibula. These forms of burial practice suggest both early and later Anglo-Saxon burials are represented, and therefore may indicate continued use of the site during the middle Anglo-Saxon period (Buckberry 2004: 435).
North Newbald, EY	The remains of adults and juveniles were recovered in the late 18th century. Shephard re-excavated in 1901 finding three inhumations with brooches, beads, knives and keys. These grave goods, in particular a seax recovered from one grave, are probably 7th century (Buckberry 2004: 537; Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1999: 36-7).
Kelleythorpe Kirkburn, barrow C38, EY	The barrow was excavated in 1851, then again in 1870 and 1872 by Mortimer. A total of 34 inhumations were discovered with grave goods dating to the 6th or 7th centuries (Buckberry 2004: 434-5; Lucy 1998: 130; Mortimer 1905: 271-83).
Painsthorpe Wold I, Kirkby Underdale, barrow 4, EY	Between six and 20 inhumations were discovered over the course of the 19th century. The latest two were excavated by Mortimer, one extended the other crouched, with an annular brooch, beads a bronze workbox and the remains of a chatelaine, probably 7th-century in date. (Lucy 1999: 36; Geake 1997: 158-9; Mortimer 1905: 114-7).

Painsthorpe Wold, Kirkby Underdale barrow 102, EY	Mortimer excavated a single crouched inhumation accompanied by an iron knife from barrow 102 in 1867. This may be middle Anglo-Saxon (Buckberry 2004: 431; Eagles 1979: 209, 439; Mortimer 1905: 132-4).
Uncleby, Kirkby Underdale, barrow X, EY	Greenwell excavated 76 individuals, mostly flexed or crouched, in 71 graves secondary to a Bronze-Age barrow. Goods included annular brooches, bead strings, pendants, knives, swords and workboxes. The burials were dated to the 7th century based on these grave goods (Buckberry 2004: 432; Geake 1997: 159; Lucy 1998: 129; 1999: 36).
Ferry Fryston, WY	Greenwell barrow 71 was excavated to reveal at least four secondary inhumations, including one probable weapon burial described as "in armour" (Greenwell and Rollaston 1877: 371-2; Lucy 1999: 38). Probably early to mid-Anglo-Saxon.

Table 1.1. Antiquarian excavations of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England.

During the first half of the 20th century, the excavation of only seven (9%) new sites dating to between A.D. 650 and 850 took place (Table 1.2). Three of these were only single inhumations: a burial with a iron spearhead by a standing stone at Barnby; a skeleton interred with an Anglo-Saxon pot at Routh Hall, Driffield; and a male furnished burial with grave goods dating to the 7th century or later from Occaney Beck. Larger cemeteries discovered between 1900 and 1950 included Howick Heugh with 15 inhumations and grave goods including Anglian-style beads, and Elloughton, where men, women and children were buried haphazardly, some prone and one headless, but still furnished with grave goods indicative of a 6th- to 7th-century date (Geake 1997: 157-8; Keeney 1939; Lucy 1999: 35, 39; Meaney 1964: 287-8).

Howick Heugh, Nb	Quarrying between 1928-30 revealed at least 15 inhumations, variously orientated and mostly crouched. Grave goods included a few knives, spearheads and some Anglian beads of probably 7th-century date (Keeney 1939; Lucy 1999: 39; Meaney 1964: 199).
Barnby, NY	A single burial with an iron spearhead was uncovered in the 1930s at the base of a standing stone. The burial is possibly early to middle Anglo-Saxon (Buckberry 2004: 449; Meaney 1964: 282).
Occaney Beck, NY	A single inhumation was discovered in 1949 in a sandpit in a grave lined with limestone slabs. The individual was apparently a 25-35 year old male accompanied by annular brooches with style II animal heads, which are dated to after c. 600 (Geake 1997: 8, 190; Lucy 1999: 38).
Kikrburn II, Eastburn, EY	A single inhumation was discovered in 1936 and several grave goods were also recorded including a sword, knives, seaxes, a gold and garnet tab, brooches, buckles and a iron key, indicating several more disturbed graves. These burials have been dated to the 7th-9th centuries (Buckberry 2004: 433; Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1998: 129-30).
Middle Street, Kilham, EY	Excavations in 1928 encountered two skulls and a possible lead coffin near to where excavations in the late 19th century had encountered human remains (see above and below for details of other excavations) (Buckberry 2004: 430).
Routh Hall, Driffield, EY	In 1935 a skeleton accompanied by a fragmentary pot was excavated near Routh Hall. The pot was of early to middle Anglo-Saxon date (Buckberry 2004: 421; Eagles 1979: 428; Lucy 1998: 128).
Mill Hill, Elloughton, EY	An inhumation cemetery was uncovered in 1940 on the top of Mill Hill. Men and women buried in unusual positions, including prone, and one skeleton was headless. A child burial also appeared to have been placed in a sack. Grave goods included brooches, buckles, beads and tools, suggesting a 6th- to 7th-century date. Audrey Meaney (1964: 287-8) interpreted this as a "battlefield" cemetery (Geake 1997: 157-8; Lucy 1999: 35).

Table 1.2. Excavations of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England that took place between 1900 and 1950.

The frequency of the discovery of new sites increased dramatically during the 1950s, and has continued to increase decade by decade since. The quality of dating and recording also increased aided, respectively, by the introduction of radiocarbon dating (Arnold and Libby 1949) and the development of more accurate osteological methods (for example see the work of Calvin Wells during the 1950s and 1960s, including his book *Bones, bodies and disease*, published in 1964). Between the

1950s and 1980s, 25 (32%) of the sites identified in the present study were excavated (Table 1.3). Investigations began at several significant Minster sites recorded in Anglo-Saxon documentary records – Hartlepool, Wearmouth, Jarrow, York and Ripon – and the large cemeteries discovered at these locations (although not fully published until more recently) were to increase vastly the available corpus of middle Anglo-Saxon burials, particularly those dated to the 8th and 9th centuries (Cramp 2005; Daniels and Loveluck 2007; Hall and Whyman 1996; Phillips and Heywood 1995). Substantial cemeteries that could be associated with royal and high status middle Anglo-Saxon sites were also excavated at Thwing (Manby in prep.) and Yeavering (Hope-Taylor 1977). The availability of documentary records of occupation at monastic and high-status settlements connected with these newly excavated cemeteries permitted the development of site chronologies based on historical events, however these vary in reliability. The foundation and development of both Wearmouth and Jarrow are documented by Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*. At both cemeteries the stratigraphic relationships between burials and buildings constructed at documented dates has allowed the development of robust site chronologies and the separation of Anglo-Saxon burials from those of a later date (Cramp 2005). In other cases, in contrast, the reliance upon documented events to provide cemetery chronologies has proved problematic. At Yeavering, Brian Hope Taylor (1977: 258) appears to have relied upon events in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* to date the many phases of burial. For example, the recorded reversion to paganism of the Northumbrian court at the time of King Edwin's death (A.D. 632-3) (HE iii, 1) is considered to mark the origin of the string graves in the eastern cemetery. As these events are likely to have had only indirect effects upon funerary practices at Yeavering, Hope-Taylor's chronology should be treated with caution. The

excavation of several new sites in the 1950s-1980s provided a wealth of information regarding burial practices c. A.D. 650-850. For example, at Kemp Howe investigations during 1967-8 revealed a further 12 burials to the six excavated in 1878, of which five were in coffins, and cut into the barrow ditch. Radiocarbon dates permitted the site to be dated to c. A.D. 725-45; previously it had not been dated with any precision as there were no grave goods recovered (Buckberry 2004: 419).

Milfield North, Nb	Five graves were excavated inside and around a Neolithic henge in 1975. Skeletal remains were poorly preserved as a result of the acid soils. All but one grave contained grave goods including brooches, buckles and knives positioned as if worn on the body. A chatelaine complex and a further buckle and knife were recovered from the henge ditch. These items probably represent six burials dating to the 6th-7th centuries. Further interments were excavated from a nearby henge at Milfield North (see below) (Scull and Harding 1990: 1-11).
Milfield South, Nb	Excavations at Milfield South, a Neolithic henge just over 1.5km south of Milfield North, also encountered human remains. Of a suspected total of 45 graves located inside the henge, 24 graves were excavated to reveal largely unfurnished interments. The few knives and buckles that were recovered suggest a 7th- to 8th-century date. It appears that burial at Milfield North and South may have been consecutive (Scull and Harding 1990: 11-22).
Yeavering, Nb	A multi-phase burial and settlement sequence was excavated in the 1950s and 1960s at Yeavering. At least 386 graves were identified. Burials were located in a western (earlier) and eastern (later) zone, variously associated or aligned with a ring ditch with a central post, standing posts, buildings and other graves. The human remains were destroyed by acid soils, however in some cases impressions remained of where the bodies had lain. Certain graves were well furnished with grave goods including knives, buckles, animal bones/teeth and a wood and bronze object, interpreted as a *groma* (a Roman land surveying tool), but the majority were unfurnished. Dating of the site has been based upon comparison of the character of the funerary rites with other sites in the region (Milfield, Bamburgh) and documentary evidence from Bede. This suggests Yeavering was a burial site between the 6th century (at the very earliest) and the 8th century, with the majority of burials at both eastern and western cemeteries appearing more indicative of 7th-or 8th-century practices (Hope Taylor 1977; Lucy 2005).

Back Gladstone Street, Hartlepool, CD	The cemetery, discovered along the line of a pipe trench, was excavated in 1964, to reveal four complete inhumations and a quantity of charnel from between 11 and 21 males, females and children. In some cases stone blocks were placed around the grave-cut, in once example to form a complete cist. Graves were unfurnished except for nails (possibly from coffins) and one Roman melon bead. Radiocarbon dates of A.D. 660-810 and 660-800 at the 95% confidence level were published in 2007 (Anderson 2007: 217-8; Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 93-4).
Church Walk, Hartlepool, CD	Sections of a large cemetery were excavated in 1972 and 1976, exposing burials zoned into four groups: elderly males, infants, a focal cluster of mixed demography and graves with stone edgings. A trench seemed to indicate a boundary to the site in the northeast corner. Radiocarbon dates taken at the time of excavation indicate the main period of use was between A.D. 660-980 (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 82-93; Marshall 2007: 213-216).
Black Gate, TW	A cemetery within the remains of the Roman fort *Pons Aelius* was excavated between 1972 and 1992. A total of 660 burials were excavated with burial rites including cist graves, grave markers and head/foot stones. Numismatic dating from nine coins spanning the period A.D. 810-985, suggest that burial began in the 9th century. This has recently been supported by radiocarbon dates, falling mainly between the 7th and 11th centuries. A castle, built in A.D. 1080 enclosed an area of burials and further interments were made intermittently within the castle walls until the 13th century (Nolan and Harbottle in press).
Jarrow, TW	The cemetery, excavated between 1963 and 1978, was associated with the Anglo-Saxon Minster and included 132 inhumations that could only be dated broadly between the mid-7th and 11th centuries based upon site phasing and documentary records. Graves were largely unfurnished but some contained coffins or stone arrangements (Cramp 2005: 18; Lowther 2005).
Wearmouth, TW	Burial appears to have begun at Wearmouth at the time of the Minster's foundation in A.D. 673, or perhaps slightly before, and ended by the 11th century. The phasing of the cemetery was reconstructed using stratigraphic relationships with the buildings and datable finds such as Anglo-Saxon coins dated to c. A.D. 790-830 and 843-4. In total, 417 Anglo-Saxon inhumations (168 *in situ*) were excavated between 1959 and 1988. These were largely unfurnished but sometimes in coffins or chests (Cramp 2005: 15; Cramp and Lowther 2005).
Aldborough, NY	The NMR records that a single, possibly female, burial with 7th century graves goods including girdle hangers and a bronze box was excavated the 1950s, overlying the footings of a bastion inside the Roman fort. Another burial with an iron knife was found in a different part of the fort and Audrey Meaney also records cremation urns discovered in the area during the 18th century (Buckberry 2004: 450; Meaney 1964: 282).

Crayke, NY	The remains of 16 inhumations were excavated in the area of Crayke Hall in 1956. These were sealed by 14th-century deposits, but could not be more accurately dated (see below for details of later excavations).
Deanery Gardens, Ripon, NY	Three burials were excavated in 1977, 80m north of Ripon Cathedral and 60m south of the Ladykirk site (see below). All were west-east and unfurnished, but a gold and garnet roundel known as the Ripon Jewel, dated to the 7th century, was recovered nearby from an unstratified context. It is possible that these burials are outliers of the Ladykirk and Minster cemeteries (Buckberry 2004: 468; Hall and Whyman 1996: 130-6).
St Marygate Ripon, NY	Excavations on east side of St Marygate church in 1974 revealed eight unfurnished west-east burials. These probably form part of the Ladykirk cemetery (see below for details of later excavations).
Ladykirk, Ripon, NY	A two-celled building and a small cemetery of 36 burials were recovered in excavations in 1955 to the west of St Marygate church. This was identified as the site of the Ladykirk. It is possible that burials from both the Deanery Gardens and St Marygate sites belonged to this cemetery. Burials have been dated by four 9th-11th-century bone combs and fragments of 8th-9th-century stone sculpture recovered from the cemetery (Buckberry 2004: 469; Geake 1997: 190; Hall and Whyman 1996: 124-30).
York Minster, NY	Anglo-Saxon burials were excavated in the transept and around the walls of York Minster between 1969 and 1973. A wide variety of funerary practices were identified, including chests, coffins, charcoal burials, stone-lined graves and elaborately carved stone markers and covers. Radiocarbon dates were recovered from five individuals suggesting burial took place between the 8th and 12th century. These dates confirmed the chronology indicated by coins from 9th century and stylistic features of the carved stone (Philips 1995: 75-92, table 8).
Cottam, EY	An isolated skull with no mandible, showing signs of exposure and weathering was excavated from a pit in the late Anglo-Saxon settlement site at Cottam during excavations between 1993-9. The skull was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 647-877 but a coin in the fill of the pit was dated to c. 858-862, confirming the suggestion that the skull had been kept above ground for some time before burial. It has been suggested that the skull belonged to an execution victim from the earliest Anglian occupation of the site (although there is no osteological evidence of decapitation) and was buried close to a gallows, which perhaps stood in the pit (Richards 1999: 1, 34-7, 92-4).
North Cave Everthorpe, EY	A number of skeletons were found in 1958 with grave goods including a blue glass pendant, glass and amethyst beads with one individual and a finger ring and knife with another. Probably 7th century (Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1999; 37).
Garton-on-the-Wolds, EY	The site originally recorded by Mortimer was re-excavated in 1959. A further seven burials were recovered, one with an iron knife and another with a group of eight sceattas (c. mid 8th century) in a purse (Buckberry 2004: 426; Geake 1997: 158).

Kemp Howe, EY	The barrow excavated by Mortimer in 1878 was re-excavated in 1967-8, revealing a further 12 burials cut into the barrow ditch. Five burials were in coffins. Radiocarbon dates indicate burials were made during the mid-8th century (Buckberry 2004: 419; Lucy 1998: 128; Meaney 1964: 285).
Back Lane, Kilham, EY	The burial of a child with two annular brooches and a bronze pin was excavated prior to 1979. The grave goods have been dated to the 6th or 7th century (Buckberry 2004: 430; Eagles 1979: 438; Lucy 1998: 129).
Middle Street, Kilham, EY	Excavations in 1976 and 1989 on the site of the Methodist chapel, where a cemetery had been excavated in the 19th and early 20th century, revealed further west-east and extended inhumations. Ten articulated individuals and a further 29 represented by charnel were recovered from the two excavations. Radiocarbon dates were recently obtained, indicating the cemetery was in use between A.D. 690 and 940 (see above) (Buckberry 2004: 430).
Thwing, EY	Excavations took place at Paddock Hill, Thwing between 1973 and 1987. An Anglo-Saxon cemetery containing 132 burials and the remains of a complex of high-status, Anglo-Saxon buildings were located inside a Bronze-Age ditched enclosure. A variety of funerary practices were represented, including burials in coffins and chests, grave markers and some grave goods including beads and knives. A small wooden building and three large post-holes were located in a north-west area of the site. Radiocarbon dates suggest that the cemetery was used between the 7th and 10th centuries (Manby in prep.).
Walkington Wold, EY	A group of 12 secondary inhumations were excavated in a Bronze-Age barrow in 1967 and 1969. These were characterised by seemingly careless burial on diverse alignments. Reanalysis of the human remains, published in 2007, confirmed that at least four individuals had been decapitated around the time of death, and thus that the site was a so-called "execution" cemetery. Radiocarbon dates from three individuals indicate that burials were made intermittently from the 7th to 11th centuries (Buckberry 2008; Buckberry and Hadley 2007).
North Elmshall, WY	A male burial, flexed and accompanied by a spearhead and gilt-bronze belt fitting was excavated in 1962. The grave goods were dated to A.D. 600-700 by the British Museum (Buckberry 2004: 494; Geake 1997: 191).
Jubilee Tower, Quernmore, La	A burial in a wooden coffin was excavated in 1973 during construction of a car park. The acidic conditions had preserved a coffin formed of two canoe-shaped halves enclosing the remains of a woollen shroud and human hair and nails. Radiocarbon dating of the timber suggested a 6th-8th century date (Edwards 1973; White 2001).

Table 1.3. Excavations of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England that took place between 1950 and 1980.

Another 25 sites (32% of the sites considered here) have been excavated and assigned middle Anglo-Saxon dates between 1980 and the present (Table 1.4). Many of these were rescue excavations, or since the introduction of PPG 16 in 1996, developer-funded investigations. Activity appears to have been particularly high in North Yorkshire, where 14 new sites have been encountered, compared with only one new excavation in East Yorkshire, an area where Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been traditionally investigated frequently. This latter site was Garton Station, an Iron Age square barrow cemetery with interments furnished with 7th- to 8th-century grave goods inserted into and around the extant monuments (Stead 1987). Several major sites have been investigated in recent years including the presumed Minster cemeteries at Carlisle, Crayke, Dacre, Ripon and Whitby, and the cemeteries apparently linked to high status communities at Bamburgh and Street House. A significant number of cemeteries excavated since 1980 appear to have served lay communities, for example Addingham, Norton Bishopsmill School and Village Farm Spofforth. Importantly, these provide an insight into funerary practices that were used away from the major religious or high-status communities during the 7th-9th centuries. Modern excavations have regularly obtained radiocarbon dates for their sites and, therefore, the cemeteries excavated since 1980 provide a particularly valuable addition to the corpus in the present study (Table 1.5). Only in recent years have a large number of the sites excavated during the second half of the 20th century been published in full (e.g. Cramp 2005; Daniels and Loveluck 2007; Hall and Whyman 1996; Phillips and Heywood 1995). This has been extremely beneficial to the present study, as it has made readily available a large corpus of well-excavated, comprehensively recorded sites with chronologies based on radiocarbon dates.

Carlisle Cathedral, Cu	A three-phase cemetery of 41 individuals was excavated outside the west end of Carlisle cathedral in the 1980s. Artefacts encountered included buckles, strap-ends and a pendant whetstone with a silver capping, mostly 10th century in date. Some individuals were buried in iron-bound coffins. One strap end was dated to the 9th century and a radiocarbon date indicated the cemetery was used from the 8th century (Gaimster *et al.* 1989: 174; Geake 1997; 148).
Dacre, Cu	Excavations in the 1980s encountered a cemetery of at least 300 burials to the north of the modern church. No remains of the stone Anglo-Saxon Minster recorded by Bede were found, but some timber buildings were excavated. Acid soil conditions resulted in the destruction of the majority of the skeletal remains, however numerous iron coffin fittings, dated to the 9th century or earlier, were identified. The recovery of some locks suggested that some of the containers were chests. Dating evidence was also provided by one sceatta (c. 738-57) and five stycas (from c. 830-854). The western edge of excavations contained no burials but instead encountered signs of industrial activity: hearths, loom-weights and window glass (Newman 1989).
Bamburgh, Nb	Excavations between 1997 and 2006 of the Bowl Hole cemetery, amongst the sand dunes south of Bamburgh Castle, identified an extensive cemetery from which 93 individuals and a quantity of charnel were recovered. There were an unusually large number of prone burials (23%) amongst the population. Several cist graves were identified and grave goods were rare, excepting a few buckles and knives. Animal bone, fish bone and marine shells found both in graves and in pits across the site may represent the remains of funeral feasts. It is hypothesised that the cemetery served the population of the high-status Anglo-Saxon settlement at Bamburgh recorded in early medieval documents. Radiocarbon dates obtained from two individuals suggest the cemetery was in use between A.D. 560 and 730 (Groves in press a; in press b; *pers. comm.).*
Binchester, CD	At least 44 inhumations were excavated from the Roman fort prior to 1983. Radiocarbon dates indicate the burials were made during the 8th and 9th centuries (Cramp 1983: 268).
Bishopsmill, School, Norton, CD	Excavations in the area of a proposed extension to Bishopsmill School, Norton in 2003 revealed 98 graves and one pit containing human remains (a total of 107 individuals). Ironwork recovered from at least 10 graves indicated that some individuals had been buried in chests. Grave goods were scarce but included a copper-alloy finger ring and a fossil crinoid interred with a child. Four radiocarbon dates centred on the 7th-10th centuries (Johnson 2005).
Flower Field, Seaham, CD	Six trenches were excavated between St Mary's church and Seaham Hall Lodge in 1999 in order to explore the extent of burial across St Mary's headland. A total of 26 inhumations were encountered, most seemingly shrouded and one buried in a chest. The funerary rites identified at this site are similar to those at Hall Lodge, suggesting a date of c. 7th-10th century (NAA 2001).

Hall Lodge, Seaham, CD	Excavations in the grounds of Seaham Hall Lodge in 1997 revealed 10 inhumations, all of which were adults. These were recorded *in situ*, then reburied. All burials were plain earth graves. Radiocarbon dates suggested that these burials dated to A.D. 660-880. The inhumations are probably associated with the burials excavated from Flower Field to the south (Adamson and Abramson 1998).
Cross Close, Hartlepool, CD	Excavations by Time Team in 1999 encountered one further grave from the Cross Close cemetery, previously excavated between 1833 and 1932. The cut was north-south and contained a single articulated skeleton and charnel from at least three other individuals. Radiocarbon dates obtained from the *in situ* burial and the charnel indicated the burials were made c. A.D. 640-940 (Daniel and Loveluck 2007: 79).
Arncliffe, NY	A copper reliquary box dating to the middle Anglo-Saxon period was found by a metal detectorist. Excavations nearby found fragments of human bone from at least two individuals (Buckberry 2004: 449).
Belle Vue House/ Lamel Hill, NY	Further investigation in 1983 on the site of Thurnham's excavations (see above) revealed 38 more inhumations. Five were recorded as decapitated and a further three as having had a foot, hand and fingers removed. Subsequent assessment has suggested that they were not injuries inflicted during life, but are more likely post-mortem damage. One of the burials was accompanied by a knife and buckle and one young child may have been a coffined interment (Briden 1983; 1984; Gundula Müldner *pers. comm.).*
Crayke, NY	Excavations by York University in 1983 revealed further burials relating to the cemetery excavated in 1956. A minimum number of 15 individuals, including men, women and children were present. One burial was radiocarbon dated to the 8th-11th century. One post-hole may have held a grave marker. It has been postulated that burials belonged to a much larger cemetery (whose existence has not, however, been proven by excavation) associated with St Cuthbert's monastery, founded in 685 (Adams 1990: 43; Buckberry 2004: 455).
Kettlewell, NY	An unaccompanied burial was encountered during the erection of a pylon in 1997. The individual was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 660-780 (Buckberry 2004: 460).
Ailcy Hill, Ripon, NY	Parts of a large cemetery covering Ailcy Hill were excavated in 1986-7. At least 37 graves and remains of at least 140 individuals from three identifiable phases of burial were recovered from mainly plain earth graves. In some cases individuals had been buried in coffins or chests, and one stone-lined grave contained a buckle and knife. Demographic profiles and burial practices on the hill led the excavators to suggest the cemetery was initially a mixed lay burial ground, then used by a male-dominated monastic community and later the place for the burial of the "socially excluded". Radiocarbon dates suggest the hill was used for burial between c. A.D. 560 and 990 (Hall and Whyman 1996).

Spofforth, NY	An inhumation cemetery was excavated at Village Farm, Spofforth in 2001. Considerable damage had been done by the cutting of foundation trenches through the site, however the remains of at least 180 recognisable individuals were recovered, along with large quantities of charnel. The burials, some of which appear to have been made in chests, clustered to the south side of a stone structure. Grave goods were extremely rare, and include pins and an 8th century sceatta. This coin, in combination with typological dating of the chest fittings, indicates the cemetery was in use during the 8th-9th century. Radiocarbon dates acquired from nine interments just prior to the completion of this thesis all centre around A.D. 650-850 (NAA 2002).
Street House Farm, NY	Excavations at a cemetery at Street House began in 2004, and are still ongoing. Rows of graves were encountered inside Iron-Age and Roman ditched enclosures. The 109 graves form an irregular square within the prehistoric enclosures and are in proximity to an Anglo-Saxon mound and a sunken-featured building. Bone did not survive well, but several graves contained elaborate furnishings including a sword with decorated scabbard and gold jewellery of Kentish style. A bed burial, presumably of a high-status female, was also identified with grave goods including several pendants, a jet pin and a small box. The grave goods indicate a date in the second half of the 7th century (Sherlock 2008).
Thornton Steward, NY	A cemetery was excavated in 1996 in advance of a pipeline 100m west of St Oswald's church. The population comprised 17 articulated and 12 disarticulated individuals, both adults and juveniles, and a single undated cremation. Iron objects, many unstratified, suggest coffins and chests were used as containers for bodies. A geophysical survey may indicate a ditched boundary to the north of the cemetery. Radiocarbon dates of A.D. 660-810, 680-900 and 810-1020 confirm stylistic dates from the metalwork that suggested a 7th-9th-century date for the burials (Adamson and Abramson 1997).
Viewly Bridge, NY	Excavations in advance of the construction of a water pipeline in 2003 uncovered 33 inhumations and charnel from many more. At least five graves contained ironwork indicative of burial in chests. Typological dating of the chest fittings suggests an 8th-century date, and this concurs with radiocarbon dates of A.D. 670-880, 660-870, 640-780 and 660-860 obtained from four individuals (Paul Johnson *pers. comm.*; NAA 2005).
Wharram Percy, NY	Excavations in 1990 identified the burial of a neonate on the up-cast from a sunken-feature building. A collection of butchered sheep bones and a veined stone found nearby have been interpreted as a food-offering and marker respectively. This individual was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 600-760 (Buckberry 2004: 477; Geake 1997: 190; Milne and Richards 1992: 20, 79, 84-5).

Whitby, NY	Excavations since 1994 have encountered an enclosure, cemetery and buildings thought to relate to the Anglo-Saxon Minster established by Oswy in 657. As of 2000, 144 graves had been excavated containing the remains of men, women and children, evidence for coffins and a few grave goods such as shroud pins, quartz stones and a sceatta dating to A.D. 700-740 (Buckberry 2004; English Heritage 1999).
Garton Station, EY	Excavation of an Iron Age square-barrow cemetery in 1985-6 encountered 35 secondary Anglo-Saxon burials in rows, both between the barrows and cut into the Iron Age features themselves. Grave goods were particularly rich and varied, including a bronze cauldron and iron cauldron stand, gold and silver jewellery, a hanging bowl, ladle and spearhead. These furnishings suggest at 7th-8th-century date. The Iron Age date of a large enclosure around the cemetery is debated, and John Blair has suggested in may be contemporary with the burials (Blair 1995: 9-10, Buckberry 2004: 426-7; Geake 1997: 158; Lucy 1998: 128; Stead 1987; 1991).
Addingham, NY	Excavations in 1989 60m to the west of the present church identified 56 graves in four rows. Some graves, particularly on the western side of the cemetery, were empty and others, mainly on the east had been reused for further interments. This evidence was used to suggest a focal point to the cemetery just outside the eastern boundary of excavation. There was a clear, but undefined boundary to the site in the north east. Iron fittings recovered from the cemetery indicate that four coffins were used, and many inhumations were positioned in a manner indicative of shrouding. Radiocarbon dates recovered from burials were A.D. 790-1020, 660-880 660-890 and 670-980 (Buckberry 2004: 491; Adams 1996).
Ledston, WY	Excavation of the foundations of small square stone structure in 2008 revealed the disarticulated remains of an infant. The remains were radiocarbon dated to the 7th-8th century (Ian Roberts *pers. comm.*).
Pontefract, WY	Two areas of burial on Tanner's Row and The Booths in Pontefract were excavated in rescue conditions prior to development in 1985-6. At least three phases of burial were identified amongst the 197 inhumations that were largely unfurnished. A pair of tweezers and a 1st-century Flavian coin were the only grave goods. Many individuals appear to have been buried in coffins or chests. In the final phase of burial a stone building was constructed within the cemetery, and this was later extended into a two-celled structure. Radiocarbon dates of A.D. 591-771, 550-710 and 830-1220 indicate the cemetery was used between the 7th and 10th century and beyond (Wilmott 1987; in prep.).

Adwick-le Street, SY	Excavations at Adwick-le-Street, near Doncaster in 2008 encountered 37 graves containing articulated skeletons. Some burials contained stones and grave goods including knives, buckles, glass, human teeth and quartz pebbles. A single radiocarbon date indicated burials were made between A.D. 660 and 780 (Harvey 2008).
Conisbrough, SY	The SMR records excavations in Conisbrough Church that revealed two burials: a north-south burial and a cist grave with a charcoal lining. The north-south burial may be Anglo-Saxon, perhaps pre-8th century, but the record describes it as stratigraphically lower than a charcoal burial, which is a rite generally considered to be later Anglo-Saxon or medieval (Buckberry 2004: 488).
Winwick, Warrington, Ch	In excess of 809 graves were excavated on and around a barrow on Southworth Hall Farm in 1980. The burials were mainly in plain-earth graves, but in some cases coffin stains were detected and in one case stones were placed around the head of an individual. Dating evidence is extremely limited, as no grave goods were encountered and no radiocarbon dates were obtained, however the character of the site is similar to western British cemeteries of the early medieval period (Freke and Thacker 1987-8).

Table 1.4. Excavations of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England between 1980 and the time of the survey conducted in this study (2008).

Site	Number of individuals	Number of individuals dated	Date range
Addingham	Minimum number between 41 and 81	4	Radiocarbon dates were taken from four individuals between 1991 and 1996. Burial 93 was dated to A.D.880-990 to 1σ and 790-1020 to 2σ, burial 104 was dated to A.D. 670-790 to 1σ and 660-880 to 2σ, burial 120 was dated to A.D. 670-860 to 1σ and 660-890 to 2σ and burial 192 was dated to 720-900 to 1σ and 670-980 to 2σ (Adams 1996: 181).
Adwick-le-Street	37	1	A single radiocarbon date obtained during the preliminary investigation of the site dated skeleton 1 to A.D. 660-780 A.D. to 2σ (Claire Coulter *pers. comm.*).
Ailcy Hill, Ripon	140 individuals in total	5	Dates were obtained for burials from all three phases of burial. Skeleton 1064 (phase 1) – A.D. 560-660, skeletons 1045 and 2006 (phase 2) – A.D. 660-810, A.D. 680-880, and skeletons 2005 and 1044 (phase 3) – A.D. 660-860, A.D. 780-990. All dates are to 2σ (Hall and Whyman 1996: 80, 88).
Binchester	44	-	Rosemary Cramp records the excavations prior to 1983, noting that radiocarbon dates centred on the 8th-9th centuries, but not recording the actual dates obtained (Cramp 1983: 268).
Black Gate, Newcastle	660	16	Radiocarbon dates were being processed at the time of this study. Dates obtained thus far (16 individuals) range from A.D. 211-357 (sk 99) to 1015-1155 (sk 175), but the majority fall within the 7th-11th centuries. Confirmed middle Anglo-Saxon burials include skeletons 422 (A.D. 670-900), 660 (A.D. 667-780), 477 (A.D. 799-883) and 368 (A.D.808-973).

Bowl Hole, Bamburgh	93	2	Dates from two individuals excavated in 1999 were A.D. 560-670 (sk 130) and 640-730 (sk 129) to 2σ (Groves in press a). One further date of A.D. 650-790 from skeleton 134 is unpublished (Paul Johnson *pers. comm.*).
Carlisle Cathedral	41	1	A single date from a skeleton excavated in 1985 indicates that the cemetery was in used between A.D. 680 and 820 (750±70) (Gaimster *et al.* 1989: 174).
Cottam	1	1	The disarticulated skull found in a pit in the settlement site was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 684-775 to 1σ and A.D. 647-877 to 2σ (Richards 1999: 92).
Crayke Castle Garth	c. 15	1	Two dates were taken from skeleton 24: 1909±80 BP and 1140±70 BP. These were combined and calibrated to give 880-990 at 1σ and 770-1020 at 2σ (Adams 1990: 38-9).
Hartlepool Back Gladstone Street	4 articulated and a minimum of 11 from charnel	2	Two dates were taken from skeletons 43 and 60 in advance of the Hartlepool publication in 2007: 1285±35 BP and 1290±35. These were calibrated to 660-810 and 660-800 at 2σ and 680-780 at 1σ (both dates) (Marshall 2007).
Hartlepool Church Walk	72 articulated and a minimum of 16 from charnel	5	Five dates were taken at the time of excavation (1970s): 1710±60, 1160±79, 1200±90, 1440±90 and 1310±90 BP. Four returned Anglo-Saxon dates: A.D. 680-1020, 650-1020, 420-780, 610-890 at 2σ and A.D. 770-990, 690-970, 530-670, 650-780 at 1σ. The fifth date was earlier, A.D. 130-440 at 2σ and 240-420 at 1σ (Marshall 2007).
Hartlepool Cross Close	14 individuals pre-1960 and a further 4 were excavated in 1999	2	The articulated skeleton excavated in 1999 was dated to A.D. 690-890 to 1σ and 660-940 to 2σ.The charnel remains that stratigraphically predate this individual were dated to A.D. 650-690 to 1σ and 640-780 to 2σ (Marshall 2007).

Kemp Howe	20	-	Jo Buckberry's gazetteer records that radiocarbon dates from skeletons at Kemp Howe centred around the 8th century (Buckberry 2004: 419).
Kettlewell	1	1	A radiocarbon date of A.D. 660-780 to 2σ was obtained for this individual (Buckberry 2004: 460).
Middle Street, Kilham	150 *in situ* and a further 29 from charnel	2	Dates for two burials were obtained as part of Jo Buckberry's research into later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries: A.D. 720-980 and A.D. 690-940 to 2σ (Buckberry 2004: 430).
Ledston	1 fragment	1	The exact dates are not available to the author at present, however they centre around the 7th and 8th century (Ian Roberts *pers. comm.*).
Bishopsmill School, Norton	107	4	Samples from four individuals returned radiocarbon dates of A.D. 660-790 (sk 190, phase 1), 680-890 (sk 330, phase 3), 650-770 (sk 333, phase 3), 710-910 or 920-960 (sk 417, phase 3), all to 2σ (Johnson 2005: 111).
Pontefract	197	3	Three radiocarbon dates were obtained: A.D. 591-771 (sk 267, phase 1), 550-710 (sk 519, phase 1) and 830-1220 to 2σ and 940-1100 to 1σ (sk 548, phase 2). These dates were taken from the original reports from the radiocarbon lab in the Pontefract archive, held at WYAS.
Quernmore	1	1	The wooden coffin produced a radiocarbon date of A.D. 534-754 to 1σ and A.D. 424-864 to 2σ (White 2001).
Seaham Hall Lodge/ Flower Field	10 from Hall Lodge and 26 from Flower Field)	2	Two radiocarbon dates were obtained from skeleton 16 and 19 from Hall Lodge. These were A.D. 670-780 and 680-790 to 1σ and A.D. 660-790 and 660-880 to 2σ (Adamson and Abramson 1998: 5). Two further individuals from Flower Field (sks 7 and 37) were dated to A.D. 680-940 and 770-1000 (Paul Johnson *pers. comm.*)

Village Farm, Spofforth	180 *in situ* plus large quantities of charnel	9	Nine radiocarbon dates were acquired just prior o the completion of this thesis. These were A.D. 770-970 (sk 51), 660-780 (sk 69), 660-810 (sk 229), 660-830 (sk 247), 880-1020 (sk 276), 670-870 (sk 286), 680-890 (sk 368), 660-780 (sk 419) and 680-880 (sk 429) all to 2σ (Gail Hama *pers. comm.*).
Thornton Steward	29	3	Three individuals were radiocarbon dated. Grave 066 to A.D. 660-810, grave 058 to A.D. 680-900 and grave 069 to A.D. 810-1020, all to 2σ (Adamson and Abramson 1997).
Thwing	132	8	Eight individuals were radiocarbon dated during the late 1980s. The dates obtained were A.D. 230-860 (sk 89), 380-670 (sk 54), 567-970 (sk 16), 590-853 (sk 5), 650-890 (sk 97), 670-1010 (sk 38), 670-1030 (sk 3) and 680-1030 (sk 48), all to 2σ (Manby in prep.). These were recalibrated by the present author.[5] These recalibrated dates are A.D. 228-880 (sk 89), 376-680 (sk 54), 580-906 (sk 16), 574-831 (sk 5), 656-890 (sk 97), 674-993 (sk 38), 673-1030 (sk 3) and 758-1028 (sk 48), all to 2σ.
Viewly Bridge			Four radiocarbon dates were obtained from skeletons 1022, 1621, 1627 and 1666. These were A.D. 670-880, 660-870, 640-780 and 660-860 respectively (Paul Johnson *pers. comm.*).
Walkington Wold	12	3	Three radiocarbon dates were obtained from skeletons 11, 8 and a humerus associated with skeleton 13. These provided dates of A.D. 655-765, 985-1020 and 780-960 to 1σ and A.D. 640-775, 900-1030 and 775-980 to 2σ respectively (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 312).

[5] Radiocarbon dates are given as conventional radiocarbon ages (Stuiver and Polach 1977), calibrated using OxCal v.4.1 (Bronk Ramsay 2009) and the calibration curve of Reimer and colleagues (2004).

Wharram Percy	1	1	The neonate was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 600-760 to 2σ and a group of sheep bones thought to be associated with the burial were dated to A.D. 541-663 to 2σ (Milne and Richards 1992).
York Minster	109 burials	5	Charcoal from six graves in the pre-conquest graveyard was radiocarbon dated. The dates obtained were A.D. 789-953, 816-841/854-983[6], 869-1032, 893-1016, 878-1031 and three dates for the final sample between 977 and 1158, all to 1σ. Values to 2σ for these samples were A.D. 696-997, 717-742/754-1021, 819-837/856-1164, three dates for the same sample between 783 and 1122, 891-1218 and three dates for the final sample between 779 and 1158 (Phillips and Heywood 1995: table 8).

Table 1.5. Details of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from northern England for which radiocarbon dates are available. All dates are calibrated unless stated otherwise. (Note: to 1 sigma =68% confidence, 2 sigma = 95% confidence).

[6] At York Minster, some samples produced two or three sets of dates as a result of fluctuations in the calibration curve. In these cases there was the possibility that single samples dated to one of several mutually exclusive date ranges.

Many HERs have large numbers of undated cemeteries with small numbers of graves that are west-east aligned, with few or no grave goods and occasional evidence of coffins (Hadley 2000b: 212). As the targeted radiocarbon dating undertaken by Jo Buckberry and Dawn Hadley has recently shown (summarised in Buckberry 2004), some of these can be assigned Anglo-Saxon dates. It is likely that many more of these cemeteries exist in the "undated" sections of HERs. This prospect is perhaps all the more possible for the north of England, where academic interest in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries has traditionally been comparatively limited. In consequence it is possible that there may be many more excavated cemeteries that could not be assigned a date based on burial practices and have not been radiocarbon dated that were in use between the 7th and 9th century.

It is widely acknowledged that the distribution of sites recovered by archaeological excavation is influenced both by patterns of modern land use and trends in the methods, research foci and locations in which archaeological fieldwork takes place (Hamerow 2002; Hamond 1980: 193-216; Young 1994). In light of these issues, the following section investigates the forms of bias that might affect the corpus of cemeteries c. A.D. 650-850 identified in the present study. The first point to make is that it is notable that very few cemeteries have been identified in the western part of the sample area (Figure 1.6). The paucity of early medieval cemeteries in western England in general is well known and is frequently attributed to the acid soils, which dominate the region and lead to the poor preservation of human bone. In Helen Geake's (1997) gazetteer of cemeteries dating to A.D. 600-850, for example, the north west is represented by only two sites, both in Cumbria, whereas there are 47 sites documented from across the north east. Whilst the present study has identified two further sites from the north west, Winwick and Quernmore,

at neither is human bone preserved (Freke and Thacker 1987-8; White 2001). The tendency for cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 to have limited ranges of grave goods will have compounded the problems associated with identifying sites west of the Pennines, as cemeteries will rarely have been identified as find-spots of grave goods or dated to the 7th-9th centuries by the presence of artefacts.

It needs to be considered whether the distribution of sites across different terrain was influenced by excavation bias. In order to investigate the intensity of archaeological activity across northern England the locations of all excavated archaeological sites (i.e. not just cemeteries) in northern England recorded at the NMR was mapped against the terrain of the region (Figure 1.7). This revealed that archaeological activity has been undertaken over the vast majority of the region. Only in the highest peaks of the Pennines, Cheviots and Cumbrian Fells, is there a notable paucity of sites, which in part reflects the lack of modern development, and in these cases it is plausible, although not provable, that occupation in the past was also limited in these areas as a result of the hostile landscape. A possible source of bias in the sample of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries available for analysis may relate to the activity of archaeologists in the north of England. The sites considered in this study were excavated between the early 19th century and the present, thus it can be expected that the changing exigencies of excavation – from the antiquarian's personal interest to modern commercial archaeology – will be reflected in the numbers of sites and the locations in which they have been encountered (Figure 1.8). Clusters of sites excavated in the 19th century can be found in East Yorkshire and Northumberland, and these tend to be on higher ground, away from current urban areas or road networks These clusters represent the activity J. R. Mortimer and

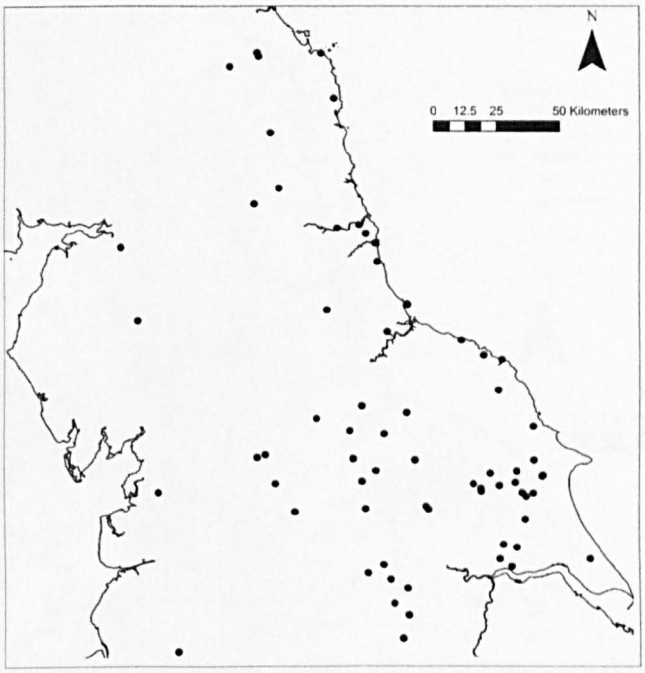


Figure 1.6. Distribution of middle Anglo-Saxon sites in the sample from the present study.

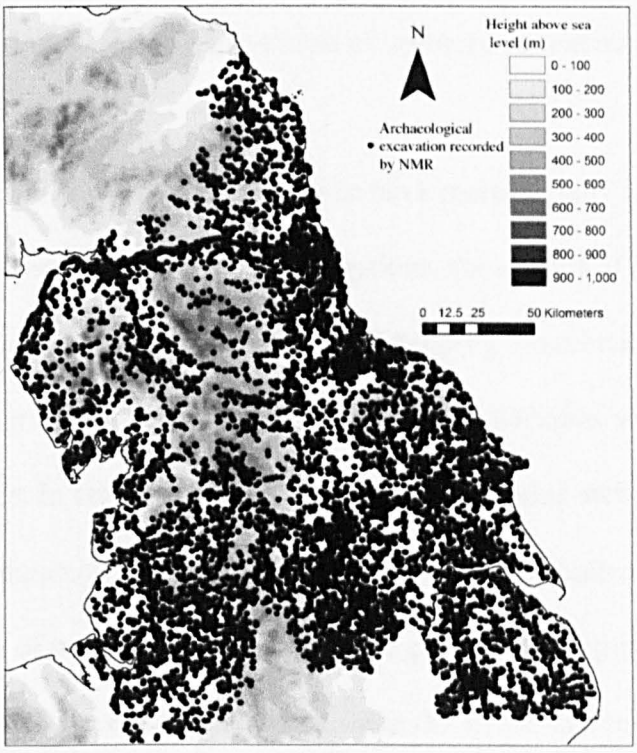


Figure 1.7. All excavations undertaken in northern England, recorded by the NMR, mapped onto the relief of northern England.

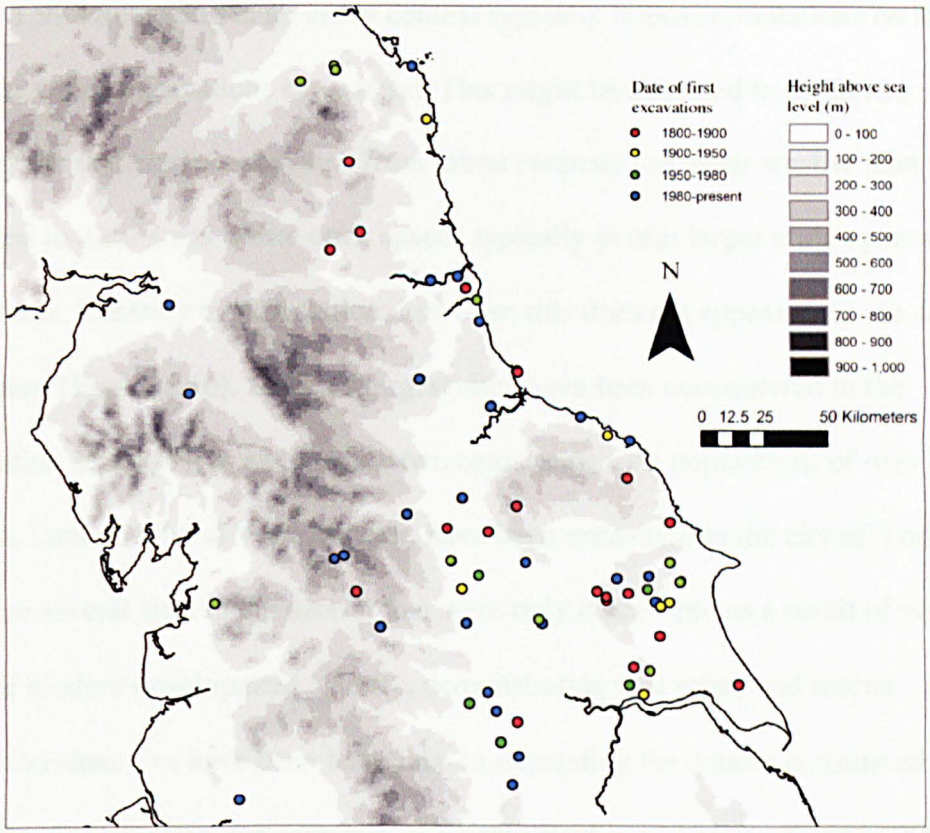


Figure 1.8. Dates of first excavations of northern cemeteries on relief.

Canon William Greenwell who both appear to have preferentially selected visible monuments such as barrows for their investigations. As a result, it is not surprising that more remote and rural areas, where such upstanding monuments would be expected to have survived better and remained more identifiable, were those targeted by these individuals. In contrast, rescue and developer-funded archaeology, which has increased in frequency in recent years, tends to occur in modern urban areas, where the majority of modern development takes place. The majority of sites located in modern urban areas have been excavated since the 1970s as a result of rescue or commercial excavations during urban development, however, under a quarter of cemeteries collated in this study are located in modern urban areas (25, 23%), so it does not appear that the present sample is biased towards excavations in towns

(Figure 1.9). Excavating in an urban context typically imposes limitations on the area over which excavations can extend. This might be expected to result in a tendency for cemeteries excavated from urban contexts to appear smaller than those excavated in rural areas where open spaces typically permit larger scale open-area excavations. Contrary to expectation, however, this does not appear to be the case in this dataset (Figure 1.10). Some of largest sites have been encountered in the conurbation around Newcastle, while two cemeteries with populations of over one hundred, Lamel Hill and York Minster, have been excavated in the city of York. There are several sites in the dataset that were only discovered as a result of various forms of modern development activity, demonstrating that urban and rescue excavation strategies have been beneficial in expanding the dataset considered in this study. For example, the cemetery at Viewly Bridge was encountered in 2003 during the excavation of a pipeline trench between Ainderby Steeple and Bullamore (NAA 2005: 2), which revealed only the graves that lay within the strip of land disturbed by the pipeline. In sum, excavation has been extensive across the north of England, and has, by virtue of intensive archaeological activity and of the varying motivations of archaeologists over the last 200 years, not significantly favoured one form of landscape over another. The paucity of sites in western areas remains an issue, but is principally linked to preservation and therefore not easily remedied.

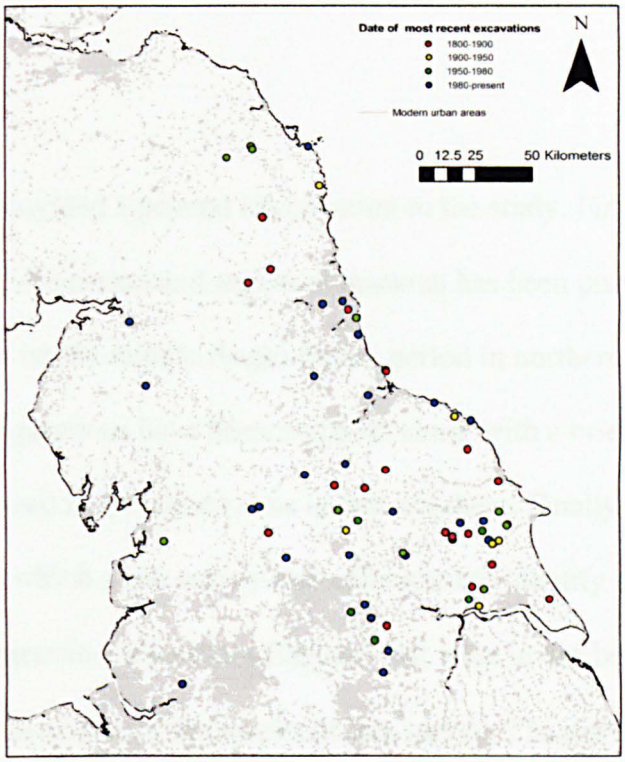


Figure 1.9. Location of cemeteries excavated at various dates in relation to modern urban areas.

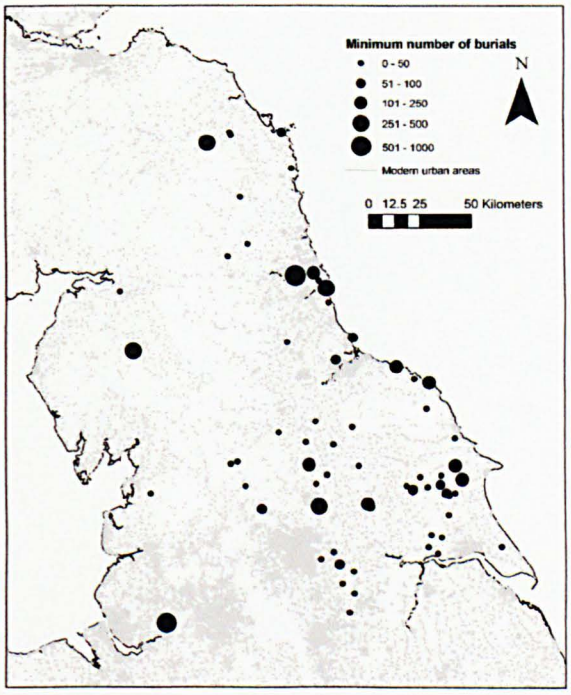


Figure 1.10. Location of cemeteries of various populations in relation to modern urban areas.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has provided a general introduction to the study. First, a brief characterisation of the period and region of research has been provided to justify the focus of this thesis on the middle Anglo-Saxon period in northern England. Next, the main research questions have been outlined, along with a brief outline of how the research presented in this thesis aims to address them. Finally, the methods have been presented by which a site survey was conducted to identify the available evidence from cemeteries in northern England that were in use between A.D. 650-850, alongside an overview of the results of this survey. The next chapter provides a context for the study by reviewing evidence for funerary practices in Anglo-Saxon England.

CHAPTER 2

THE BURIAL RITES OF ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

This chapter reviews the scholarly literature regarding the burial practices of Anglo-Saxon England. First, a context for understanding 7th-9th century funerary rites is provided, with a brief discussion of the characteristic burial rites of the early and later Anglo-Saxon periods. Next, the evidence concerning the burial rites of middle Anglo-Saxon England is reviewed in much greater depth. The purpose of this section is to familiarise the reader with the development of archaeological understanding of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 and, thus, to provide a basis upon which subsequent chapters will build. A main focus of this chapter is the literature dealing with so-called "final phase" burials. The term was apparently coined by E.T. Leeds (1936: ch 6), and it has, to a large extent, become synonymous with the middle Anglo-Saxon period. Leeds' original proposition was subsequently developed by other archaeologists into a fully-fledged model for burial rites of the 7th to 9th centuries. The development of the "final phase" model is considered in detail in preparation for a critique and evaluation of its utility as a model for northern English cemeteries of the 7th to 9th centuries in chapter 4.

2.1 The contrast between early and late Anglo-Saxon burial practices

Modern archaeological convention divides the Anglo-Saxon period (c A.D. 450-1066) into three chronological phases: early (c. A.D. 450-650), middle (c. A.D. 650-850) and late (c. A.D. 850-1066), which are traditionally characterised by distinctive

funerary rites. Early Anglo-Saxon burial practices have been extensively studied and only a brief review is necessary here (e.g. Lucy 2000; Stoodley 1999a). Burial in early Anglo-Saxon England is characterised by both cremations, typically in urns, and inhumations, not infrequently in the same cemetery. Many burials of both sorts were interred with a wide range of grave goods. These include dress accessories such as brooches and buckles, and also knives, which are likely to have been attached to belts. A wide array of jewellery is also found in burials of this period, including various forms of necklace and pendant (Brush 1993; Lucy 2000: 40-46; Owen-Crocker 1986: 55-63) (Figure 2.1). Weapons such as swords, spears and shields are widely found (Härke 1989), as are apparent offerings of animals or food (Lee 2007; Lucy 2000: 90-5) and various vessels, including buckets, glasses and bowls (Geake 1997: 83-92; Lucy 2000: 55-7). The structure of the grave could be equally as varied as the items placed within. Structural features in early Anglo-Saxon graves included integral features such as sockets and ledges, and external ditches, post arrangements and mounds (Hogarth 1973; Shephard 1979; Williams 1997; 1998) (Figure 2.2). The dress accessories and jewellery, in particular, were the subject of the creation of the typologies that characterised much early research into Anglo-Saxon burial rites (e.g. Åberg 1926; Leeds 1913). A major focus of this research was the arrival of Germanic settlers in the wake of the collapse of the Roman Empire, typically identified on the basis of comparison of artefacts found both in Britain and on the continent (Lucy 2000: 163-70). With the growth of interest in the symbolic nature of burial in the second half of the 20th century, investigation of the relationships between material goods and wealth, status, ethnicity, age and gender was undertaken (e.g. Alcock 1981; Arnold 1980; Hawkes 1973: 186-7; Shephard 1979). It has been noted that

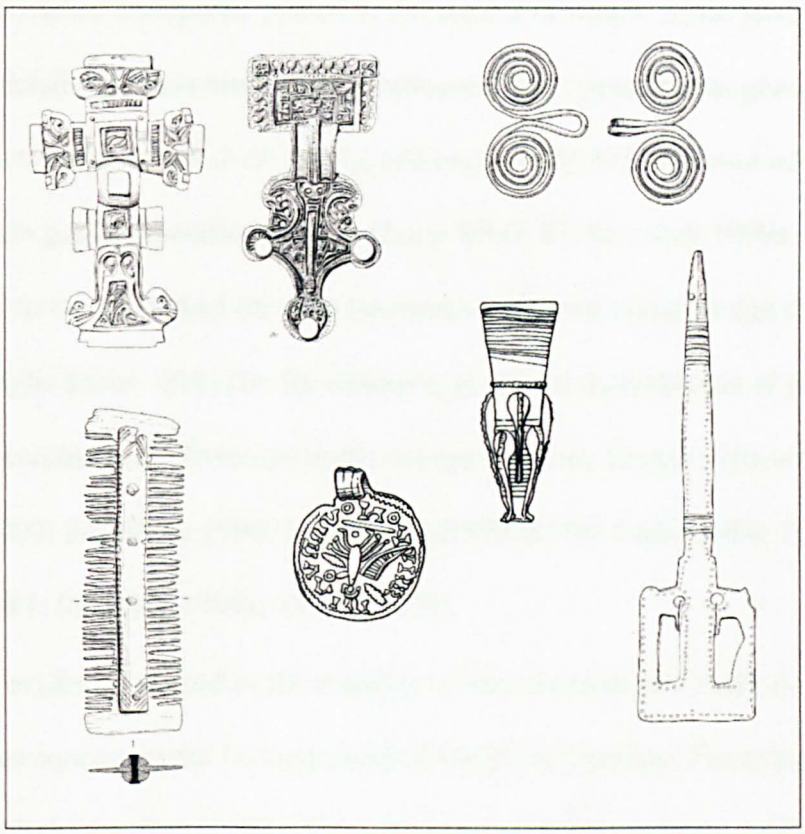


Figure 2.1. Examples of early Anglo-Saxon grave goods (after Lucy 2000: 28-61).

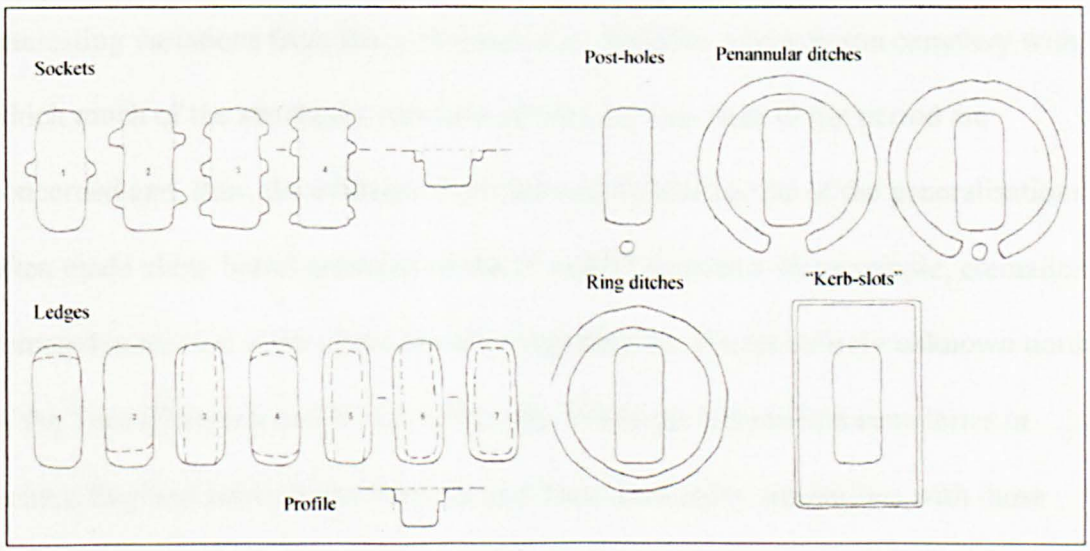


Figure 2.2. Structural features from early Anglo-Saxon graves (after Hogarth 1973: 110-112).

weapons were most commonly placed in the burials of males, while jewellery was mainly restricted to female burials. It is, however, also apparent that gendered burial displays were not accorded to all adults, and many early Anglo-Saxon adult graves do not contain gender-specific artefacts (Lucy 2000: 87; Stoodley 1999a: 76). The early Anglo-Saxon furnished rite also frequently reflected apparent age thresholds in the early Anglo-Saxon lifecycle; for example, gendered assemblages of grave goods are rarely provided for individuals under the age of about 12 years (Brush 1993; Crawford 2007: 84; Härke 1990; Lucy 1998; 2000: 87-90; Pader 1980; 1982; Richards 1987; Stoodley 1999a; 1999b; 2000).

The evidence utilised in the majority of this research into early Anglo-Saxon funerary rites concerns sites located south of the River Humber. For example, in the research of Nick Stoodley (1999: 12-13) on age and gender in early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, only two of 46 sites included in the analysis were located north of the Humber, Norton (CD) and Sewerby (EY). Yet more northerly sites present some interesting variations from the archetypal early English Anglo-Saxon cemetery with which much of the standard overviews of funerary practices of the period are concerned and, thus, the evidence from the region belies some of the generalisations often made about burial practices of the 5th and 6th centuries. For example, cremation cemeteries are rare north of the Humber, and they are almost entirely unknown north of the Tees (Sherlock and Welch 1992: 30). While the inhumation cemeteries in eastern England between the Humber and Tees have many similarities with those further south, in the regions further north and west inhumations are, in contrast, rarely furnished. Graves in the latter regions often comprise stone cists, which are formed by the placement of stone slabs around the grave cut, and sometimes also above and below the body to form an enclosed box, although wooden coffins have

also been identified (Alcock 1992: fig 12.1) (Figure 2.3). The influence of native British practices, the growth of British Christianity and varying levels of interaction with more southerly Anglo-Saxon influences are considered to be the main determinants of the funerary rites of northern and north-western England between the 5th and 7th centuries (Carver 1998; Loveluck 2002: 141, 145-8; 2007: 187; Petts 2002: 24). The varied influences upon burial rites during the early Anglo-Saxon period in northern and western England are exemplified by graves at Appleton-le-Street (NY), Spaunton (NY), Blackhall (CD) and Castle Eden. Here grave goods characteristic of more southerly practices of the 5th-6th centuries were included in cist burials, which are characteristic of northern and western Britain. For example, at Appleton-le-Street a cist grave on Hepton Hill contained a burial with gold earrings, an amber necklace, a food vessel and a comb, while at Spaunton a man was buried in a cist with a small pot and beads (Lucy 1999: 30, 32). This apparent mixture of regionally-distinctive practices is encountered across northern England and into southern Scotland, for example as far north as Hallowhill (Fi) (Loveluck 2002: 135; Proudfoot 1996) (Figure 2.4).

In most regions, the later Anglo-Saxon period, conventionally from c. A.D. 850 to 1066, is characterised by a very different burial rite from the early Anglo-Saxon regions that is often associated with the gradual development of churchyard burial. The comparative dearth of grave goods and a widely held belief that Christian burial was both egalitarian and uniform (Carver 1999: 3; Geake 1997: 127; Hodder 1980: 168) appears to have long dissuaded researchers from affording later Anglo-Saxon burial rites the same intensive interest bestowed upon earlier, ostensibly pagan, practices. When churchyard burial emerged in formerly pagan regions in the 7th century, the use of grave goods did significantly decrease, and burials in the

Figure 2.3. Cist burials from The Catstane (ML) (from Cowie 1977-8: plate 10).

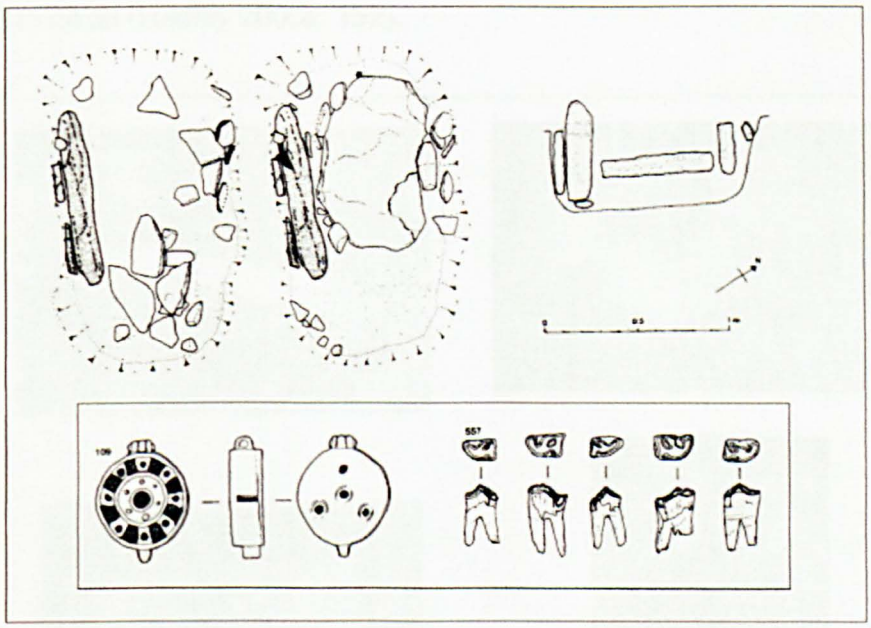


Figure 2.4. Cist 54 from Hallowhill with a selection of the grave goods encountered within (after Proudfoot 1996: 410, 419).

vicinity of churches rarely contain artefacts. However, a wider range of alternative practices developed, including elaboration of the grave structure, with linings of various materials, containers and grave covers (Figure 2.5). The marking of the grave for posterity utilising stone grave markers became more frequent, especially in northern England, in the 10th century (Boddington 1996: 13; Buckberry 2004; 2007; Hadley 2000a; 2000b; 2002; Lang 1991; Thompson 2004). These grave variations are not apportioned in the same way as earlier rites, with a seemingly greater concern to project familial connections, social status and attitudes reflecting the new religion (Buckberry 2004; Craig and Buckberry in press; Gittos 2002: 201; Hadley 2004a; in press; Reynolds 1997; Thompson 2002; 2004). Christianity appears to have provided a new arena for the expression of social and economic identities, but had not altered the desire to do so (Hadley 2000a: 152).

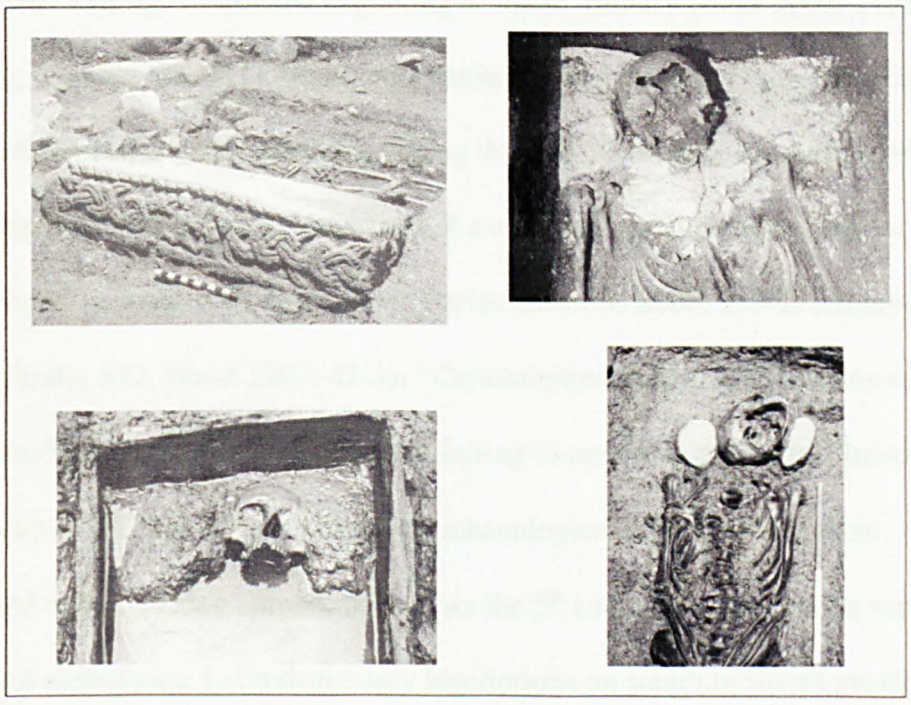


Figure 2.5. Examples of later Anglo-Saxon grave elaborations, clockwise from top left: stone sarcophagus from York Minster (NY) (from Phillips and Heywood 1995: 81); chalk lining; wooden coffin with organic pillow; stones beside the head, all from Barton-upon-Humber (L) (from Rodwell 2007: 24, 26).

Further north, in the regions where burial practices were influenced by rites from northern and western Britain, the transitions in burial practice seen in more southerly cemeteries during the Anglo-Saxon period were not so pronounced. Some cemeteries, particularly those north of the Tees, were characterised by unfurnished, extended inhumations in earth-cut graves throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. There is compelling evidence, both documentary and archaeological, that a Christian infrastructure was present in some areas of western Britain throughout the 5th and 6th centuries, and therefore there is the possibility that burial practices in these regions were influenced by pre 7th-century Christianity (Frend 1996; 2003: 79-91; Morris 1983: 19-48; Petts 2003; Thomas 1971: 10-47). Gildas – a cleric who wrote a history of England in the 6th century – gives the impression that Christianity continued to develop without interruption in some areas of Britain from the Roman period to the time he was writing, around the beginning of the 6th century (Blair 2005: 11; Sharpe 2002: 82; Yorke 2008: 111). Moreover, Patrick – an ecclesiastic who spent time in both Scotland and Ireland and wrote during the mid-5th century – provides evidence in his *Confessio* indicating the existence of a church hierarchy and provincial synods during the 5th century in British areas (Charles-Edwards 2000: 216-22; Sharpe 2002: 81; Confessio, S13, Hood 1987: 42-3). [1] Communities of British Christians were also familiar to Bede, who chastised them for failing to preach to their non-Christian neighbours (HE i, 22). Several forms of archaeological evidence have been associated with Christian communities from the 5th and 6th centuries, with varying degrees of confidence. Latin dedicatory inscriptions on standing stones provide a strong indication of Christian presence, although reveal little about ecclesiastical

[1] Patrick refers to clerical intellectuals who supported him in his desire to become an ecclesiastic, indicating both an organisation in change of church appointments and a church hierarchy during his lifetime.

organisation or structure (Knight 1992: 45; Thomas 1971: 98-131). The remains of small churches or cemeteries enclosed by curvilinear boundaries, most commonly encountered in Wales, Ireland and south-west England, are widely considered to be early Christian sites, although can rarely be closely dated (Blair 1992 fig 10.2; Morris 1983: 25; Thomas 1971: 50). In addition, the cist burial rite, where extended, unfurnished burials were placed into grave lined with stone slabs, is often linked to British Christianity (Blair 2005: 16-7; Cessford 1999: 151; Morris 1983: 28-33; O'Brien 1999: 38-43; Proudfoot 1998).

To what degree British Christianity was already embedded in the territories that were subsumed into the kingdom of Northumbria during the 7th century is difficult to establish. Stones carved with Christian symbols or inscriptions dating to the 5th to 7th centuries are rare in northern England, occurring mainly in a cluster running from eastern Cumbria north into central southern Scotland (Blair 2005: 14; Morris 1983: 29) (Figure 2.6). Despite their rarity, in some cases inscriptions provide a strong indication of the presence of British Christianity in the north, for example at Kirkmadrine (DG) where a 5th-century monument reads "here lie the holy outstanding priests that is Viventius and Mavorius" (Blair 2005: 17; Thomas 1971: 107) (Figure 2.7). The presence of a British Christian monastic community from c. A.D. 500 in south east Scotland is demonstrated by both documentary and archaeological evidence from Whithorn. Bede (HE iii, 4) records Whithorn as the seat of St Ninian, a Briton who was consecrated into the Roman Church in Rome in the early 5th century, and who established the community at Whithorn whilst preaching to the southern Picts. Archaeological excavation of several small areas of the site has revealed a double, curvilinear enclosure system surrounding graves, shrines, and presumably the main church, that developed between c. A.D. 550-730

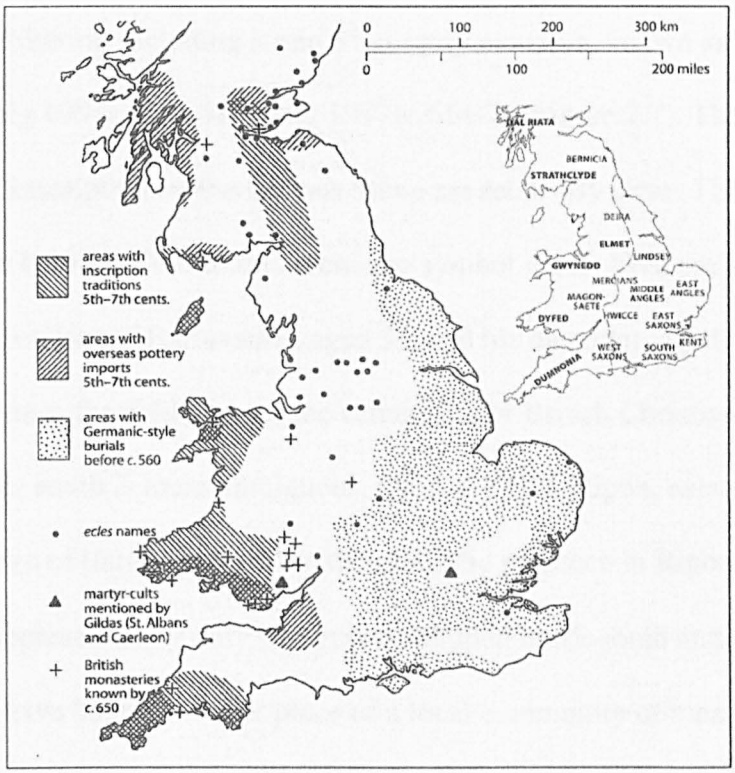


Figure 2.6. The distribution of evidence of early Christian activity across the UK (from Blair 2005: 14).

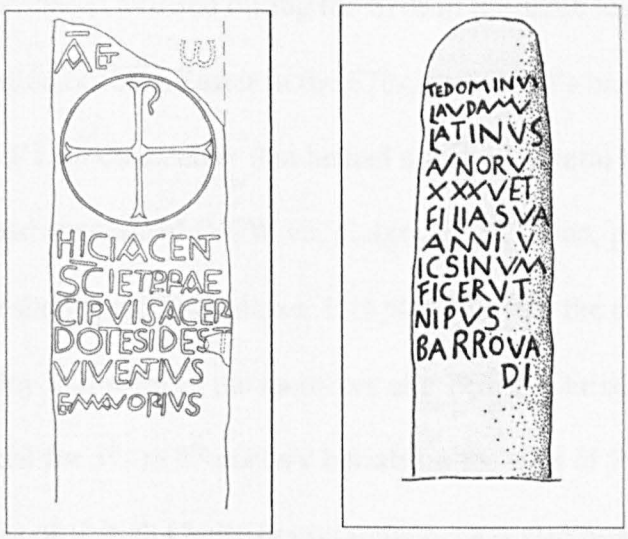


Figure 2.7. The Kirkmadrine stone (from Blair 2005: 17) and the Latinus stone (from Thomas 1971: 99).

(Hill 1997b: 27-30). Several carved stones dating to the 5th-7th centuries are recorded from the area of Whithorn, including a mid 5th-century example, known as the Latinus Stone (Craig 1997a: 433-41; Craig 1997b: 614-7) (Figure 2.7). The Christian associations of the inscription on the Latinus Stone are relatively clear. The inscription, located below a Constantinian chi-rho symbol reads: "We praise you, the Lord! Latinus, descendant of Barravados, aged 35, and his daughter, aged 4, made a sign here".[2] In contrast, the evidence for the cemeteries of British Christian communities further south is more ambiguous. On Ailcy Hill, Ripon, excavation identified two phases of burial that predate the monastic presence in Ripon. The first phase of burial is represented by only two graves, aligned north-south and after this, the hill appears to have been the burial place of a local community of men, women and children (Hall and Whyman 1996: 120) prior to the establishment of a Minster in c. A.D. 671-8. Bede (HE iii, 25; v, 19) indicates that Ripon was the location of a Monastery following Celtic Christian doctrine prior to the establishment of a Northumbrian Minster under St Wilfred during the 670s in the same location. Moreover, at the dedication of this Minster in the 670s, St Wilfrid's biographer, Stephen, records Wilfrid's announcement that he had acquired several holy places that the British clergy had abandoned (VSW vii, Colgrave 1927) and, presumably, Ripon was one of these abandoned holy places. It is plausible that the earliest two phases of burials on Ailcy Hill were of the members of a British Christian community. The potential for 5th- to 7th-century burials on the sites of 7th century Minsters to be the graves of British Christian communities has also been discussed at Whitby. The evidence for this suggestion is, however, sparse, comprising a 4th- to 5th-

[2] The original inscription is "TE DOMINVM / LAVDAMVS / LATINVS / ANNORVM / XXXV ET / FILIA SVA / ANNIV / ICSINUM / FECERVNT / NEPVS / BARROVA / DI". The translation used here is from the Whithorn Priory Museum website, http://www.whithornpriorymuseum.gov.uk /whithorn/whithornhome/whithornab out/whithornmuseum/whithornlatinusstone.htm.

century gaming piece and late-Roman pottery amongst later graves on the headland (English Heritage 1999). Whilst it is plausible that the locations of British Christian communities could have attracted later, Northumbrian Minsters, the archaeological evidence provided in support for this is often lacking.

Place-name evidence has been used to trace the locations of northern Christian churches originating in the 5th and 6th century. The name *Eccles-* – interpreted as a Brittonic word for a church – is found in clusters across Britain, particularly in West Yorkshire, Lancashire/Cheshire and also in south-east Scotland (Blair 2005: 27; Faul 1977; Petts 2002: 42-5). Various tentative attempts to supplement this place-name evidence by the archaeological identification of British churches in northern England have had little success. One particularly tantalising example is the oval churchyard at Bramham (WY). Church sites with curvilinear boundaries are characteristic of early Christian sites in Wales and the south east of England and are often thought to betoken early religious foundations. However, aside from its oval form, there is no supporting evidence to indicate that Bramham was a British Christian site (Morris 1983: 28; Ryder 1993: 17-18) (Figure 2.8).

The unfurnished cist burial tradition has been widely associated with British communities in northern England and southern Scotland (Alcock 1992; Cessford 1999; O'Brien 1999: 38-43 Proudfoot 1998) (Figure 2.9). Cist burials appear intermittently in northern English cemeteries during the Anglo-Saxon period, but their unfurnished nature has traditionally made them very difficult to date closely. Where dating evidence has been obtained, it supports the suggestion that cist burial was a long-lived, indigenous tradition in the north. Cists have been encountered at Romano-British sites – for example, at Catcote (CD) and Newton Bewley (CD), both of which were abandoned by the 5th century – and in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries dating

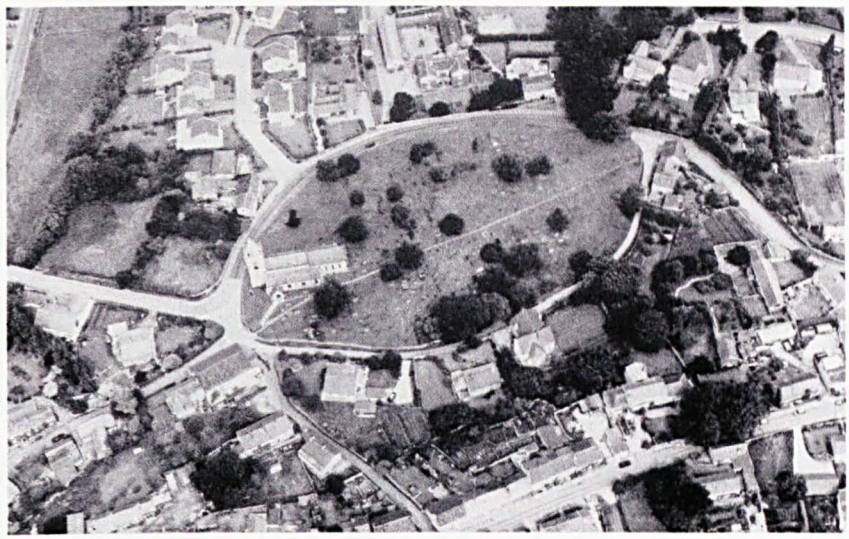


Figure 2.8. An oval, possibly "Celtic" Christian, monastic enclosure at Bramham (from Ryder 1993: 18).

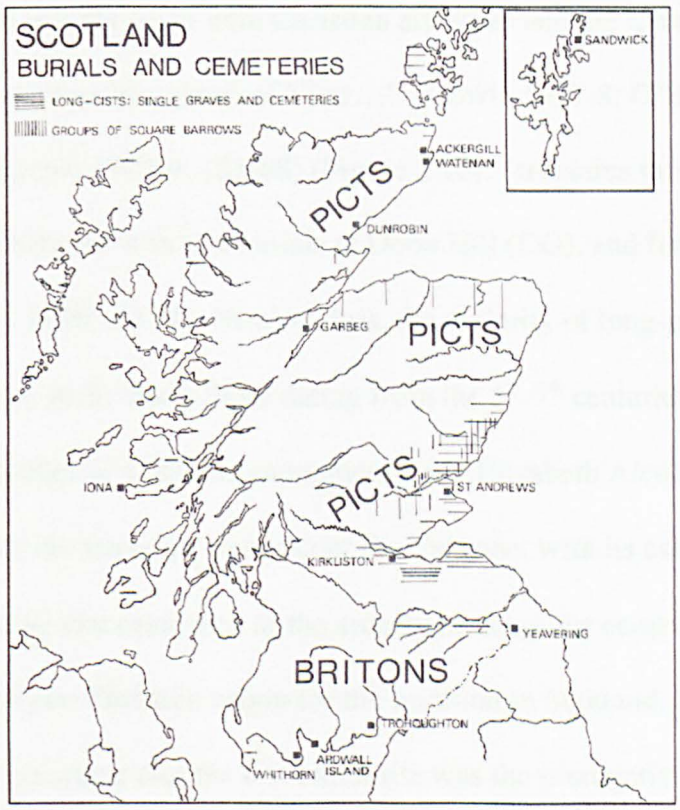


Figure 2.9. Early medieval burial forms across Scotland (from Alcock 1992: 126).

to between the 5th and 11th centuries – for example, cist burials were radiocarbon dated to the 5-6th century at Catterick, the 7th-8th century at Bamburgh and the 9th-12th century at Black Gate (Groves in press a; in press b; Nolan and Harbottle in press; Platell 1999; Diana Mahoney-Swales *pers. comm.*; Wilson *et al.* 1996: 45-6). The long-lived cist burial rite appears to indicate a significant degree of continuity in burial practices used by some communities in northern England, but how confidently can we link the cist burial rite to Christian beliefs? Evidence from the long-cist burial tradition of southern Scotland provides some confirmation that the cist burial rite was widely used by Christian communities. This evidence includes the association of cists cemeteries in Fife with Christian inscribed stones and early church sites. At the Catstane (ML), for example, a group of cist burials radiocarbon dated the 5th-7th century focused on an upright stone with Christian affinities and the Latin inscription "In this tomb lies Vetta the (?daughter) of Victr..."[3] (Cowie 1997-8; O'Brien 1999: 40; Rutherford and Ritchie 1972-4: 183-88) (Figure 2.10). Structures interpreted as churches occur in cemeteries with cist burials at Doon Hill (DG), and further south at Yeavering (Proudfoot 1998: 69-71). Nevertheless, the majority of long-cist cemeteries in Scotland, particularly those dating from the 5th-7th centuries, have no associations with churches or Christian monuments, and Elizabeth Alcock (1992: 126-7) has argued that the tendency to consider the Catstane, with its early Christian inscribed stone and long-cist cemetery, as the archetypal long-cist cemetery may have served to mask a pre-Christian origin for the tradition in Scotland. It appears to be overly simplistic to assume that the cist burial rite was the prerogative of British Christian communities.

[3] The original inscription is "IN...OC...T...MVLO IAC..T VETTA F VICTR...". The possible translation used here is from Rutherford and Ritchie 1972-4: 185.

Figure 2.10. The Catstane (from Cowie 1977-8: 203).

2.2 The characterisation of cemeteries c. 650-850

Understanding of the nature and significance of the burial practices of the middle Anglo-Saxon period has emerged gradually over a long period of time. In the 18th and 19th centuries, burials that we now recognise as belonging to the 7th-9th centuries were, in fact, often assumed to date to the Roman era, as Roman coins were commonly encountered as grave goods (for example see the work of Bryan Faussett in the 1760s-70s (Fausett 1859; Hawkes 1990: 4)). The barrow burials of Kent were the first to be assigned to the 7th and 8th centuries by James Douglas in 1793, who associated motifs on grave goods with the early Christians (Douglas 1793: 122-131). Much of his work, however, went unnoticed, and remains dating from c. A.D. 650-850 continued to be assigned Romano-British or unhelpfully broad Anglo-Saxon dates for quite some time (Geake 1997: 84; Lucy 2000: 10). In the 1920s and 1930s T. C. Lethbridge researched the Anglo-Saxon burials of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire (Lethbridge 1926; 1927; 1928; 1929; 1931; 1936) and in excavations at Burwell (C)

and Shudy Camps (C) he identified a significantly different rites from those found at other Anglian cemeteries with which he was previously familiar. He initially considered the minimally-furnished Burwell graves to be a low-status example of the pagan ritual (Lethbridge 1926: 79), but later became convinced that the lack of standard "pagan" objects (most notably weapons and brooches), combined with late – generally 7th-century – typological dates for those objects that were encountered, placed them in the early Christian era (Lethbridge 1931: 82; 1936: 27-29). Lethbridge suggested that these cemeteries were founded away from "heathen" burial mounds at the insistence of the Church (Lethbridge 1931: 48, 82-3). He also reassessed previously excavated cemeteries in light of these conclusions, noting that Bryan Faussett's Kentish cemeteries, J. R. Mortimer's East Yorkshire sites and Baldwin Brown's site at Uncleby, were similar in character to those he had encountered in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and therefore may have represented similar processes occurring in other regions (Baldwin Brown 1903-15; Faussett 1859; Lethbridge 1931: 82-3; 1936: 27- 29; Mortimer 1905).

This interpretation contrasted with contemporary work in Oxfordshire, Kent and Cambridgeshire being conducted by E. T. Leeds (1931; 1936). Leeds' survey had encountered lavish, richly-furnished cemeteries in Kent which were typologically dated to the 7th century, but which did not fit with contemporary ideas of austere Christian rites (Leeds 1926: 97). Apparently independently of, and in complete contrast to, Lethbridge's work, Leeds (1936: 102) saw these sites as the last evidence of paganism "on the wane" in England. He coined the term "final phase" to describe the art styles of this early period of Christian influence (Leeds 1936: ch 6) and it is explicit in his work that Leeds viewed the "final phase" as a nationwide event. He notes that "the same phenomenon is encountered again in the midlands"

and draws upon evidence from more northern cemeteries such as that from Garton Slack, Painsthorpe Wold and Riby Park (L) in describing the characteristic grave goods and burial rites of the period (Leeds 1936: 100, 102).

The first series of additions to what was evolving into the "final phase" model were made in the late 1950s and early 1960s by another group of archaeologists working in the south east of England. They adopted Lethbridge's thesis, emphasising the distinctive nature and early Christian character of 7th- to 8th-century burial in a series of observations that sought to develop the chronology and context of the cemeteries. Vera Evison (1956: 93, 104, 108), for example, suggested that some of the artefacts encountered during her work at Holborough (K), especially cruciform objects, might be considered representative of Christian affiliation. She saw the decrease in grave goods evident from the 7th century as part of an inexorable trend that culminated with the universality of unfurnished graves in the 8th century (Evison 1956: 109). Miranda Hyslop (1963: 191) discussed a neighbouring pair of successive cemeteries at Chamberlain's Barn (Bd) as evidence of a physical break in the location of burial during the 7th century. The earlier cemetery was dated to the late 6th to early 7th century by its grave goods and was characterised by plain earth graves irregularly laid out on a variety of orientations with evidence that graves had cut each other (Hyslop 1963: 166). The later cemetery contained graves on a more regular orientation and arranged in rows with no intercutting. Hyslop (1963: 191) noted the difference in the number and types of grave goods between this later cemetery and the earlier site, in particular the frequency of pendants and rarity of brooches and weapons, which convinced her that the later cemetery was not established prior to the 7th century. This pattern of paired cemeteries of 6th- and 7th-century dates was later identified at several other sites including Winnall (Ha) (Meaney and Hawkes 1970),

Sancton (EY) (Faull 1976), Wakerley (Nh) (Cook 1978), Eastry (K) (Hawkes 1979) and Eastbourne (Sx) (Welch 1978). This evidence led to the deduction that during the "final phase" new cemeteries were established adjacent to older, early Anglo-Saxon ones. Both Evison and Hyslop adopted Leeds' notion of national uniformity, arguing that Christianity had sufficiently strengthened trans-national communications such that, in the words of Hyslop, "fashions at that time did not tend to develop on local lines" but were homogenous and spread widely across the country (Evison 1956: 108; Hyslop 1963: 193).

Some years later in her report on the Winnall cemeteries, Sonia Chadwick Hawkes (Meaney and Hawkes 1970) elaborated on the stimulus behind the developments of the "final phase", particularly the role of the Church. She considered that deposition of grave goods was a practice that, at first, the Church was prepared to "wink at" but that by the early 8th century even dress fasteners were frowned upon as the Church achieved greater success at "combating one of the outward signs of heathenism" (Meaney and Hawkes 1970: 53). In addition, Margaret Faull (1976) developed the suggestion made by Lethbridge and Hyslop that "final phase" cemeteries were on separate sites to their predecessors. At Sancton, she argued that multiple pagan communities utilised the cremation cemetery on the outskirts of the areas of inhabitation from the late 4th century to the 6th century, and that subsequently the burial focus was relocated to a series of smaller, mainly inhumation, cemeteries closer to settlements (Faull 1976: 233). However, there was no archaeological evidence for contemporary settlement at Sancton, and it was simply assumed that occupation during the middle Anglo-Saxon period was located under the present village. In sum, by the 1970s the "final phase" was considered the first step towards the coalescence of churches, churchyards and settlements in one

location, which was thought to have been universally achieved by the end of the 8th century (Evison 1956: 109; Faull 1976: 232; Meaney and Hawkes 1970).

In this way, a comprehensive model gradually developed to characterise burial practices c. A.D 650-850. It took into account the changes in burial rites, the chronological development of the Christian funerary tradition and its context within the wider social, political and economic changes of the period. Its main features were summarised by Hyslop (1963) as follows:

- Burial was in the form of inhumation not cremation
- Orientation was consistently west-east, graves were in regular groups or rows
- Barrow burials occurred
- A distinct group of sites were established in the 7th century under Christian influence
- The new cemeteries were located closer to contemporary settlements
- Most graves were not furnished or had only a knife. The character of the remaining grave goods changed, with fewer brooches, elaborate necklaces and weapons than in the fifth and sixth centuries, but an increased proportion of pendants, small buckles, thread boxes, scramsaxes and "sugar loaf" shield bosses
- Some artefacts might have had a Christian significance, for example cross ornamentation
- The changes that took place in burial rites were uniform across England
- The Church was responsible for changes in burial practice as it gradually stamped out unacceptable heathen rites

2.3 Development and criticism of the "final phase" model

During the 1980s and 1990s the "final phase" model was both re-evaluated and developed in light of new evidence. In particular, the pattern of cemetery relocation that had been identified in the 7th century was demonstrated not to be universal. Continuous burial sequences across the early and middle Anglo-Saxon period in one location were encountered at Buckland (K), Finglesham (K) and Bideford-on-Avon (Wa) (Evison 1987; Hawkes 1976), while Richard Morris (1983: 53-62) noted that characterisation of early and middle Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns in many regions was too limited to permit any relationship between them and burial places to be convincingly described in most cases. Moreover, increasing evidence had begun to emerge for cemeteries adjacent to some of the most well-known settlements in the early Anglo-Saxon period, such as West Stow (Sf), Mucking (E), Bishopstone (Sx) and West Heslerton; (Hamerow 1993; Haughton and Powesland 1999; Morris 1983: 53; West 1985); thus, the notion that it was only from the 7th century that the dead began to be buried near to settlements was called into question.

The dominant role of Christianity in dictating changes to burial practices during the 7th century was also questioned. The lack of references to funerary practice in contemporary documentary records was used to suggest that the Church had little interest in changing burial rites (Bullough 1983: 186), or at least that any demands it made, such as 7th- and 8th-century prohibitions of divination, fortune telling and the carrying of amulets (Meaney 1981: 255-67), were not disseminated to the general population and/or did not inform their actions. In addition to the abandonment of grave goods, west-east orientation of the grave was another indicator that had been thought to be a product of Christian influence (Hyslop 1963),

however it had become apparent than many pagan interments also took this orientation, and possibly Christian graves often varied from true west-east. It was concluded that "neither oriented burials nor an absence of grave goods amount to 'clear' evidence for the Christian identity of a cemetery" (Morris 1983: 51).

All of these issues were addressed in the first explicit review of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices in England by Andy Boddington (1990), who resurrected the term "final phase" from Leeds' work. His paper was a critical review of the development of the "final phase" model, and he concluded it with his own findings on the causes of change, which he dubbed a "new model for transition" (Boddington 1990: 196-7), and which was essentially a modified "final phase" model. This model can be summarised as follows:

- Grave goods decline in response to a variety of factors that are social, economic and religious
- Burial grounds were relocated in the 7th century, however this must be seen as a response to broader developments in the organisation of the landscape, and not just as an element of funerary rites
- The timing of change from pagan to Christian burial grounds was more localised than previously emphasised
- Places of burial and worship converge gradually, until "in the Christian period all cemeteries appear to be associated with churches"
- Pagan burial grounds normally lack a particular focus, whereas Christian burials tend to be focussed to the south and east of a church
- Evidence of boundaries in pagan cemeteries is scarce, whereas it is an "essential characteristic" of Christian burial grounds

- The church and cemetery as a unit is a less transient feature of the landscape than the preceding pagan cemetery
- Confinement and longevity of Christian burial grounds creates superimposed levels of burial, which tend to be absent from pagan cemeteries
- From the 7th century, at the time of reintroduction of barrow burial, emphasis is upon marking the grave above ground and "in perpetuity" rather than on display within the grave

Several new themes emerged from Boddington's work, and he presented evidence that contradicted the seeming universality of the "final phase" cemetery. In commenting on the argument that cemeteries were relocated in the 7th century, he emphasised that sites were continuously being created and falling out of use during the entire Anglo-Saxon period. Boddington also listed at least thirteen early Anglo-Saxon sites with a cemetery close to contemporary settlement evidence that contradicted the pattern previously identified of a separation between early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and contemporary settlements: they included Bishopstone, Catholme (St), West Heslerton, and Mucking (Boddington 1990: 195). Moreover, Richard Morris' (1983: 54) warning that limitations in our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon settlement landscape were a fundamental hindrance to developing an understanding of the relationships between settlement and cemeteries from the 7th century, were reiterated by Boddington (1990: 191). Boddington's paper noted regional differences in both the form and timing of the "final phase" and he also moved emphasis away from the rites and grave goods of the typical "final phase"

cemetery, towards characterisation of how ritual changed throughout the 7th and 8th centuries.

A few years after Boddington published his review of the funerary practices of the middle Anglo-Saxon period, Helen Geake (1992) also undertook a review of the funerary evidence from the period. Drawing on suggestions made by Boddington, she advocated a rejection of the reliance on the "final phase" model as one general depiction of homogenous, organised inhumation cemeteries for the entire middle Anglo-Saxon period, and, instead, argued that the period was characterised by a range of markedly different, but contemporary, forms of cemetery that she termed "final phase", "princely", "deviant" and "unfurnished" (Geake 1992: 84-9). "Final phase" cemeteries were described much as in previous studies, and considered by far the most numerous cemetery types of the period (Geake 2002: 149), but as only one of four different and contemporary cemetery types. Princely burials were characterised as some of the most elaborate funerary rites encountered between the 7th and 9th centuries, and included the construction of earthen barrows over elaborate burials with high abundances of grave goods. These burials had been variously interpreted as a defiant last stand against Christian influence by the pagan elite of the Saxon kingdoms (Carver 1992) or, alternatively, as an ostentatious alternative to churchyard burial for those with no ties to a local church (Morris 1989: 256). Barrow burial has also been described in terms of an act of monumental display linking elites to their lands, emphasising ancestral rites and reinforcing ownership (Van der Noort 1993; Williams 1998). In Geake's review, "deviant" burials were characterised by oddities: prone burials, mutilation, decapitation or binding and multiple or mass graves (Geake 1992 87-8). Lastly, cemeteries consisting of mainly unfurnished burials were characterised by Geake as comprising rows of west-east aligned graves

with few grave goods, excepting occasional small knives. These latter cemeteries were noted as having received little study, as their uniform and unfurnished nature required radiocarbon dating to determine a chronology. The relationship between cemeteries and contemporary churches was briefly noted, but Geake (1992: 87) did not attempt to distinguish church-associated unfurnished cemeteries from those apparently not close to a church.

Helen Geake (1997; 1999) has also explored the relationship between burial practices and the Church in greater detail in her discussion of furnished cemeteries. Noting a particularly strong classical influence in funerary assemblages from 7th-century furnished graves, she argues that grave goods are reflecting social changes across England that can be linked to the conversion to Christianity. In the south east of England, Christianity was introduced from the continent, bringing with it new cultural influences from Rome and the Mediterranean. The adoption of grave goods influenced by Roman styles does not appear to mirror the progress of conversion across England, but instead seems to occur at roughly the same time in Christian and pagan kingdoms alike (Geake 1999: 212). This evidence has been used to suggest that it was not Christian belief itself that stimulated the development of 7th-century funerary artefacts, but another large-scale process that occurred alongside conversion. Geake identifies this process at the development of dynastic kingship and the concomitant need to legitimise this new power through precedent. In a climate where Roman cultural influences had been re-invigorated by the Church, it seems hardly surprising that it was to their Roman heritage that unstable leaders looked to justify their authority. Geake (1999: 212) envisages the Roman influences on 7th-century grave goods as a result of the two interconnected processes of

Christianisation and the development of kingdoms, ultimately a consequence of the Church's influence, but not a symptom of Christianity.

Some of the most recent additions to the study of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices have focussed on the role of landscape in determining burial places and have expressed a growing desire to understand 7th- to 9th-century burial in its wider chronological and national context. Nick Stoodley (2007) recently addressed the issue of cemetery relocation in the 7th century through a small-scale landscape-based study at Portway, Andover (Ha). He focussed on the relationship between the 5th- to 6th-century cemetery at Portway East and the 7th- to 8th-century cemetery 800m to the west, and set them in the context of the wider landscape (Figure 2.11). The study supported Boddington's assertion that cemetery relocation might have more to do with developments to the landscape than religious change. At Portway it is hypothesised that the earlier cemetery, positioned alongside a boundary ditch constructed prior to the Anglo-Saxon period, was used to emphasise the continued relevance of this ditch as a land division from the 6th century (Stoodley 2007: 159). Relocation of the focus of burial to the later cemetery, in proximity to a Bronze Age barrow, is similarly suggested to have been used to consolidate a new western boundary (Stoodley 2007: 159-6). The use of cemeteries here to "reactivate" extant monuments as boundary markers is tied into developments in landscape use and the growth of the Portway territorial unit.

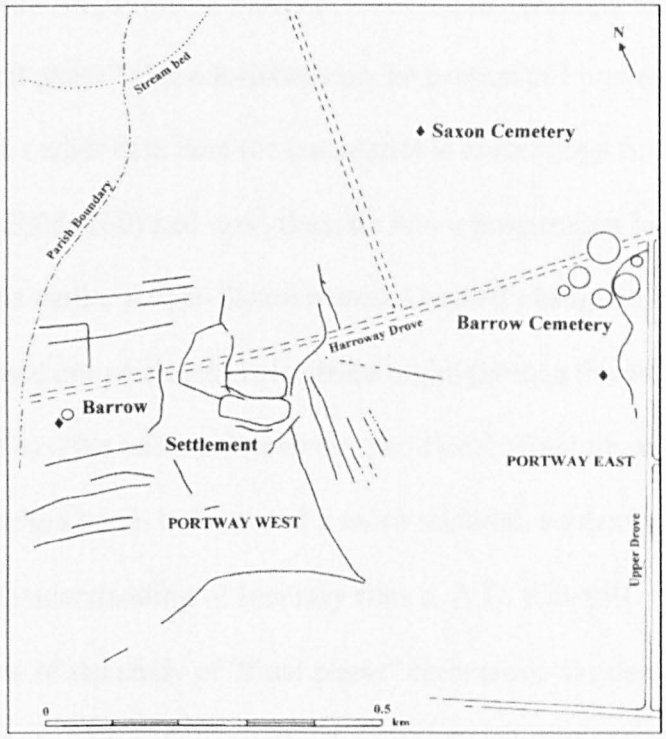


Figure 2.11. The Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Portway, Andover (from Stoodley 2007: 155).

The most recent contribution to the "final phase" debate is a second review paper by Helen Geake (2002), which explicitly characterises problems with our understanding of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practice, but does not specifically seek solutions to these problems. The problems highlighted are all implicitly related to grave goods, reflecting a trend characteristic of many studies of middle Anglo-Saxon burial. The problems she discusses include the issue of dating 7th-century funerary assemblages, the reasons for invisibility of 7th-century burial on the Isle of Wight, reasons for the decline in the display of masculine identity in the late 7th century, and how to determine the relationship between furnished rites and churchyard burial. In addition to posing a series of open questions, a significant general point is made. In drawing our attention to the variability of middle Anglo-Saxon practices Geake (2002: 146) considers that "they just don't make a coherent group". In fact, the

variability of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices is increasingly emphasised in recent work. "Final phase" characteristics may be present at Portway from the 6th century, at a much earlier date than the conventional chronology for Wessex would dictate (Stoodley 2007: 160) and may, thus, tie into a progression in burial practices with its roots in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period. Gradual change in burial practices prior to the supposed conversion has also been highlighted in the work of Audrey Meaney (2003). Thus, the universality of the traditional "final phase" model continues to be broken down in favour of a more regional, contextual and multidimensional understanding of funerary rites c. A.D. 650-850.

This review of the study of "final phase" cemeteries has demonstrated that the funerary practices, chronology and landscapes of burial sites c. A.D. 650-850 have all been investigated, yet there are some significant gaps in the scholarly literature. The most notable of these regards the origins of burial around a church. The concurrence of burial grounds and churches appears in many regions from the 7th century (see chapter 3.1), but is rarely afforded any detailed discussion as a characteristic of middle Anglo-Saxon funerary rites. Why this should be is not clear. There is a wealth of literature concerning Minster foundations from the 7th century, many with associated cemeteries (e.g. Blair 1988a; 1992; 2005; Cambridge and Rollason 1995; Foot 2006; Thacker 1992) and, as has been shown above, a similarly copious literature dealing with cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850, yet rarely are the two research areas integrated to any degree. This is not the case amongst later Anglo-Saxon studies (e.g. Buckberry 2004; Thompson 2004), so why the connection between churches and cemeteries is largely ignored in the middle Anglo-Saxon burial literature seems all the more mystifying. Two reasons, in combination, may have created this situation. It is only in recent excavations that possible church

structures have been identified within 7th- to 9th-century cemeteries outside of Minster contexts, and therefore only now is it clear that church cemeteries should be tackled as features of funerary practices used by those other than the ecclesiastical elite. Furthermore, it is plausible that the general paucity of grave goods in church cemeteries resulted in their omission from earlier studies that relied upon such items as evidence of cultural affiliation and date, and that this situation has simply been perpetuated through the decades. The lack of consideration of church cemeteries is discussed further in the critique of the "final phase" model presented in chapter 4.

2.4 Explaining middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices

The motivation for changes to burial practices is a theme that has run through all publications that address burial rites from c. A.D. 650-850. The dominance of the Church in dictating practices was integral to the early model, but increasingly questioned until Boddington (1990: 197) re-worked the "final phase" model and emphasised social and economic factors. In recent years political, economic and social factors have continued to be prioritised (Geake 1997: 135-6; Hadley 2000a: 153). The development of ascribed status and kingship (e.g. Arnold 1988; Bassett 1989; Yorke 1990) and, therefore, complex patterns of inheritance, may have deterred the removal of objects from circulation as grave goods and diminished the need for elaborate burial as a social tool. Yet the same developments may still have given rise to occasional lavish princely burials such as Sutton Hoo (Sf) and Prittlewell (E) in areas where power structures and political positions (both domestic and abroad) required renegotiation (Carver 2001: 1-22; 2002: 135-6; Geake 1992: 91-2). Helen Geake's (1999) more nuanced approach provides a valuable addition to

this debate by interlinking the development of kingship and the Church's influence into a model where society recreated a Roman identity, and as a result styles of grave goods took on classical elements. The arrival of Christianity also had enormous economic implications. Conversion will have been suggested to those who wished to maintain common ground and, therefore, trading contacts with the Christian kingdoms of England or the continent (Morris 1983: 46-8). Ecclesiastical ownership of land increased throughout the middle Anglo-Saxon period, with churches requiring grants of land for their upkeep (Blair 2005: 72-3). This may have fed back into the increasing importance of inheritance and property rites, with individuals and groups defining their territory and ancestral rites with burials under ancient mounds (Shephard 1979; Steuer 1989: 111-3; Van Der Noort 1993: 72; Williams 1998) or by the association of cemeteries with boundary features (Reynolds 2002; Stoodley 2007: 158-9). The role of territoriality was also considered by Helena Hamerow (2002: 123), who speculated whether "the establishment in the seventh and eighth centuries of so-called 'final phase' cemeteries, which were long assumed to represent a transitional stage between pagan and Christian burials ... in fact have more to do with the formation of estates than with religious conversion" and thus relate to wider changes in settlement patterns.

The religious motivations behind changes in burial rites have been neglected in recent times, as scholars sought alternatives to the earlier model's reliance on the role of the Church. But a few very recent considerations, though acknowledging the input of secular factors (whether mitigated by the Church or not), emphasise that religion still had a vital input into burial practices (Crawford 2004; Hoggett 2007; Meaney 2003; Thompson 2004). The burial arena has recently been emphasised as a place of superstition and cult activity and it is emphasised that typical Christian

burials of the later Anglo-Saxon period are not devoid of religious meaning, rather it is now argued that it was religion that may have directed stylistic changes in grave goods characteristic of the 7th century (Geake 1999: 209; Hadley 2009; Hoggett 2007: 33) and ultimately determined that they were no longer required. Economic, political and social factors, it is now suggested, do not fully explain why the burial sphere was chosen throughout the Anglo-Saxon period for material expression (Crawford 2004: 98).

2.5 Summary

This chapter has introduced archaeological evidence pertaining to burial practices across the Anglo-Saxon period. It has been noted that the rites of the early and later Anglo-Saxon periods are traditionally considered to be significantly different from each other, and that the middle Anglo-Saxon period has, as a result, been viewed as a transitional period between them. The earliest studies of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries by scholars such as E. T. Leeds and T. C. Lethbridge were valiant attempts to explain burial rites of the period, however they were limited theoretically by the reliance on culture-historical approaches. The focus of early 20th-century archaeology on material culture was to prove problematic, as it is a paucity of grave goods that characterises the period after c. A.D. 650. Reliance on historical models of the conversion and of the development of Christian ideologies led to the formulation of a model dictated by religious change and which could not allow for variation across regions (Evison 1956: 108; Hyslop 1963: 193; Leeds 1936: 100, 102). It was believed that as Christianity became universal, so too must its burial ritual. More recent reviews have, however, used the growing availability of evidence to criticise

and develop the model, creating a much more broad-ranging and nuanced "final phase" model, which sought to reflect the known diversity of middle Anglo-Saxon practices (e.g. Boddington 1990; Geake 1992; Morris 1983). In the next chapter the burial rites of middle Anglo-Saxon northern England are collated and described, and in chapter 4 a critique of the "final phase" model is presented in light of this evidence.

CHAPTER 3

FUNERARY PRACTICES IN NORTHERN ENGLAND, c. 650-850

In this chapter, the cemeteries and funerary rites of the 7th-9th centuries in northern England are discussed. A variety of different types of cemetery are highlighted, including those with and without churches, sites that reuse or are spatially associated with ancient monuments, and cemeteries or groups of graves where unusual rites might indicate that those buried there were excluded from normal burial provision. The discussion goes on to characterise the size and form of cemeteries dating to A.D. 650-850 before considering the variety of burial rites that were employed in them. Discussion of certain aspects of the burial practices identified here is resumed in more detail in following chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7), thus only a relatively cursory, descriptive outline is offered here. The data presented here are based upon the archaeological evidence accumulated in the site survey described above (chapters 1.6 and 1.7), thus all known middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are included in order to reflect the full extent of variation in cemetery form, funerary rites and location across the north of England between c. A.D. 650 and 850.

3.1 Cemeteries adjacent to churches

The traditional assumption that the churchyard cemetery became the norm by the 8th century is now widely considered to be erroneous (Davies 1982: 185-7; Hadley 2000a; Halsall 1995a: 246-7; 1995b: 61-3; Petts 2002: 43-4). Yet whilst churchyard burial cannot be considered fully developed until the 10th century, the association of

churches and burial grounds nonetheless becomes more common throughout the 7th-9th centuries (Blair 2005: 228). In the following discussion cemeteries with and without churches are discussed separately. This division does not imply that all cemeteries with churches are fundamentally and characteristically different from those without – they should not be considered to be mutually exclusive categories – but are distinguished here to facilitate subsequent discussion.

As discussed in chapter 2.1, it is possible that British Christianity survived in some form in the northern and western extremes of the study region, but even if this is so there is, as yet, no secure evidence for the existence of 5th- or 6th-century churches in the study region. Arguments for the presence of such churches on the basis of oval or circular churchyards – such as that at Bramham – must be regarded as tentative. The earliest secure examples from northern England of the association of a church and burial ground in one location date to the 7th century. For example, contemporary use of an adjacent church and cemetery has been established at Wearmouth from the 7th century. The building of St Peter's church between A.D. 674 and 676 is documented in Bede's *Historia Abbatum* and the anonymous *Life of St Ceolfrid* (HAB iv, HAB v, Plummer 1896: 390; VSCeol. 7, Whitlock 1955: 699). The church began as a limestone rubble and mortar two-celled structure, which was expanded considerably during the 7th-9th centuries (Cramp 2005: 66-72) (Figure 3.1). Burials at Wearmouth were distributed in rows and clusters to the south of the church, around a series of further Minster buildings. The earliest of the burials are cut by later monastic buildings, which have a *terminus ante quem* of A.D. 716, based on documentary records of their construction before Abbot Eosterwine's reburial in that year (LSCuth. 8, Colgrave 1940). The inclusion of animal remains in two graves in the north west of the cemetery – part of a horse skeleton in grave 61/18 and a

boar's tusk in grave 66/54 – is reminiscent of earlier Anglo-Saxon burial practices and therefore may also suggest an early date for the first burials (Fern 2007; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 80). Wearmouth's twin institution at Jarrow has similarly early origins recorded in contemporary documents. The chronology of the development of Jarrow is not so clearly recorded as for Wearmouth (Cramp 2005: 33), however it is apparent that Jarrow was founded eight years after Wearmouth, and St Paul's church built some two years later. Dating evidence for the development of the cemetery at Jarrow is limited. At least 132 burials from the cemetery that remained in use until 1880 could be phased to before the 11th century, as they were from a stratigraphic layer cut by Norman-period structures (Lowther 2005: 173), however, whether individual graves belonged to a period before the church's construction, during its use or after its abandonment in the mid-9th to mid-11th century could not be determined. There is some evidence to suggest that the first burials may even have pre-dated the construction of the ecclesiastical buildings at Jarrow, provided by graves furnished with single polychrome glass beads that could be attributed a date as early as the 6th or 7th century (Cramp 2005: 29, 259-61).

Bede also describes the foundation of Minsters in A.D. 640 at Hartlepool [*Heruteu*] (HE iv, 23) and in A.D. 657 at *Streanaeshalch*, which is widely identified with Whitby (HE iii, 24). Archaeological investigation at Hartlepool has encountered several cemeteries, the earliest of which contains graves radiocarbon dated to the mid-7th century (Marshall 2007: 215) (Figure 3.2). At Whitby, objects recovered from the southern Anglian enclosure cemetery may also suggest 7th-century burials on Whitby headland. A sceatta, dating to c. A.D. 700-740, was recovered from the cemetery area during the early stages of excavation, and a shroud pin has been dated to the period between the 7th and 9th centuries (English Heritage 1999).

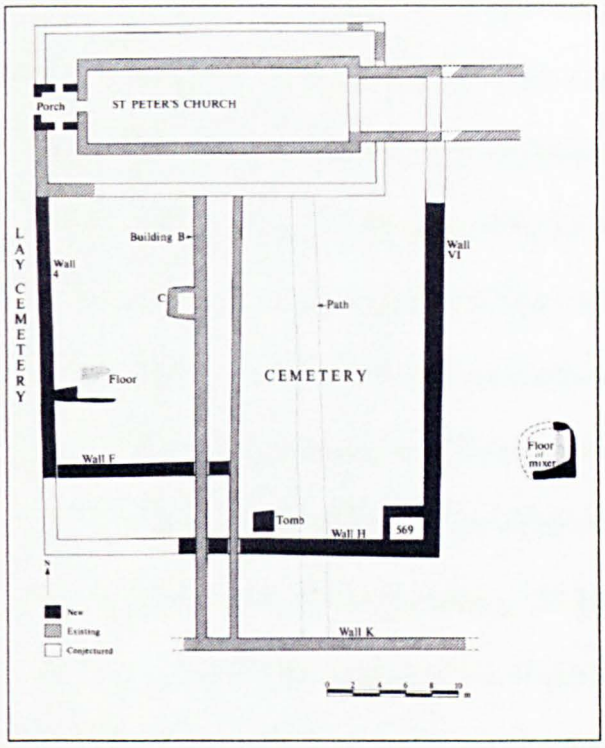


Figure 3.1. Plan of St Peter's Church, Wearmouth pre c. A.D. 716 (from Cramp 2005: 102).

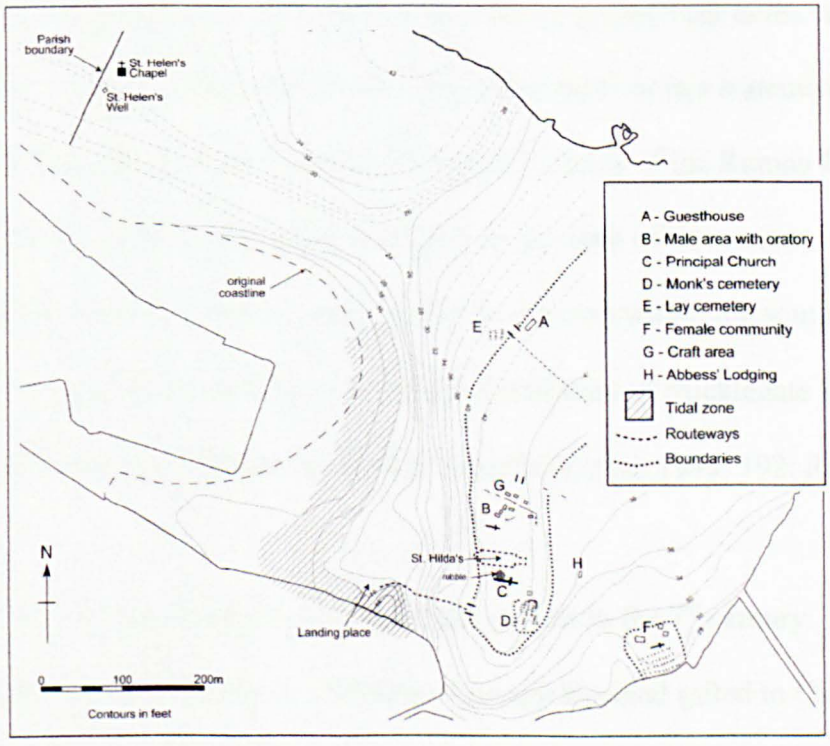


Figure 3.2. Anglo-Saxon activity on Hartlepool headland (from Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 174, with additions).

The 11th-century Minster at York is located over a large cemetery dating from the 8th century. Although no church was identified in the area of excavations, there are numerous accounts suggesting that York had a thriving Christian community and had gained several churches by the 8th century (Phillips and Heywood 1995: 10-11). The earliest presence of a church in York is documented by Bede, who describes the baptism of King Edwin by Paulinus in A.D. 627 in the wooden church of St Peter the Apostle, which Edwin had hastily built himself whilst a catechumen. The building was later extended in stone, and completed by Oswald after Edwin's death (HE ii, 14). The location of this church is not known from archaeological investigation, but there are several hints to its location in documentary sources. It is possible that the dedication to St Peter of both of Edwin's churches and the later Minster indicates that they were in the same location (i.e. the 7th century churches are located under the present Minster) (Rollason 1998: 134). Alternatively, records of land around St Peter's given to Cuthbert in A.D. 685 indicate that "the great gate" lay to the west of the church (HSC v, Johnson South 2002: 47). The "great gate" in this statement has been interpreted variously as: first, the *porta principalis dextra* of the Roman fort, meaning the church may have been located slightly to the west of the current Minster; second, the *porta praetoria*, meaning the church was within the southern quadrant of the Roman fort; and finally, an English translation of Micklegate Bar, which would place the church inside the Roman *colonia* (Carver 1995: 192; Rollason 1998: 140-1).

The Minster at Crayke also has documented origins in the 7th century. The site is listed in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* amongst the land gifted to Cuthbert on his election as Bishop of Lindisfarne and records that he established a community of monks in this location c. A.D. 685 (HSCuth. v, Johnson South 2002: 47).

Archaeological investigation at Crayke Castle Garth has provided a variety of supporting evidence for 7th-century occupation and burial in the area. In the early 20th century a bronze openwork cross pendant, an ironwork hoard and two fragments of stone sculpture were recorded. The pendant was assigned a late-7th century date and both the hoard and stone were stylistically dated to pre-900 (Adams 1990: 35). Only a small number of burials have been excavated at Crayke, and only one radiocarbon dated. The burial was dated to A.D. 770-1020 at two sigma (95% confidence), and therefore cannot be confidently associated with the earliest documented phases of ecclesiastical occupation on the site (Adams 1990: 42-3). Nevertheless, there was no evidence to suggest that this burial belonged to the first phase of burial on the site and, when the small scale of the excavations at Crayke are taken into account, it remains plausible that further, unexcavated burials may pre-date the 8th century.

A cemetery dated to the 7th-9th centuries on the basis of radiocarbon dates and a small number of associated artefacts on Ailcy Hill, Ripon is located c. 200m east of the supposed site of a church constructed "of dressed stones, supported with columns and complete with side isles" by St Wilfrid during the 670s (VSW xvii, Colgrave 1927: 34-7), whose crypt remains beneath Ripon Minster (Hall and Whyman 1996: 141; Taylor and Taylor 1965) (Figure 3.3). In addition, a two-celled structure, the Ladykirk, c. 150m north east of Ailcy Hill, may have been constructed as early as the late 8th century (Hall and Whyman 1996: 142). The Ladykirk was aligned west-east, and was a focus for burial. Dating evidence for these graves is limited to late 9th-11th century bone combs found during the 1950s excavations, but these derive from the latest burial phases and it, thus, appears that burial commenced in the 9th century, if not earlier (Hall and Whyman 1996: 130).

At many other sites in the study region there is tentative evidence for the association of burial with churches in the 7th or 8th century. At Village Farm, Spofforth the remains of several walls have been tentatively interpreted as a church or chapel, contemporary with, or slightly earlier in date than, the burials which were made from the 7th century (NAA 2002: 6). In plan, these foundations, which comprise a long east-west section and an enclosed square to the east, certainly appear to follow the form of a two-celled building of at least 15m in length (Figure 3.4). Significantly, perhaps, the burials congregate to the south and east of the structure, as was the case at Wearmouth and Jarrow, and is often the case at churchyard cemeteries from later periods (Blair and McKay 1985: 43; Boddington 1990: 197; 1996).

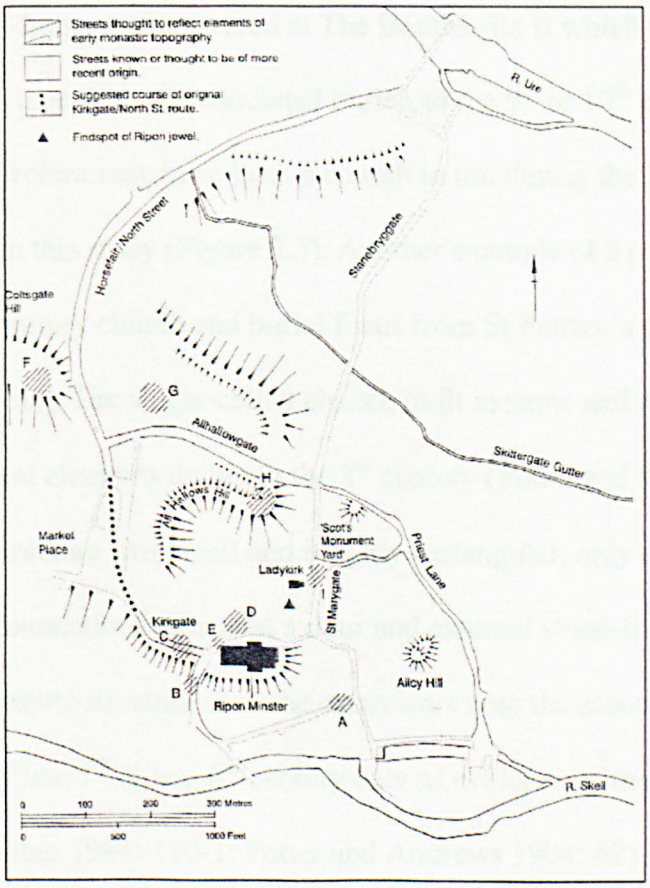


Figure 3.3. Anglo-Saxon activity in Ripon (from Hall and Whyman 1996: 139).

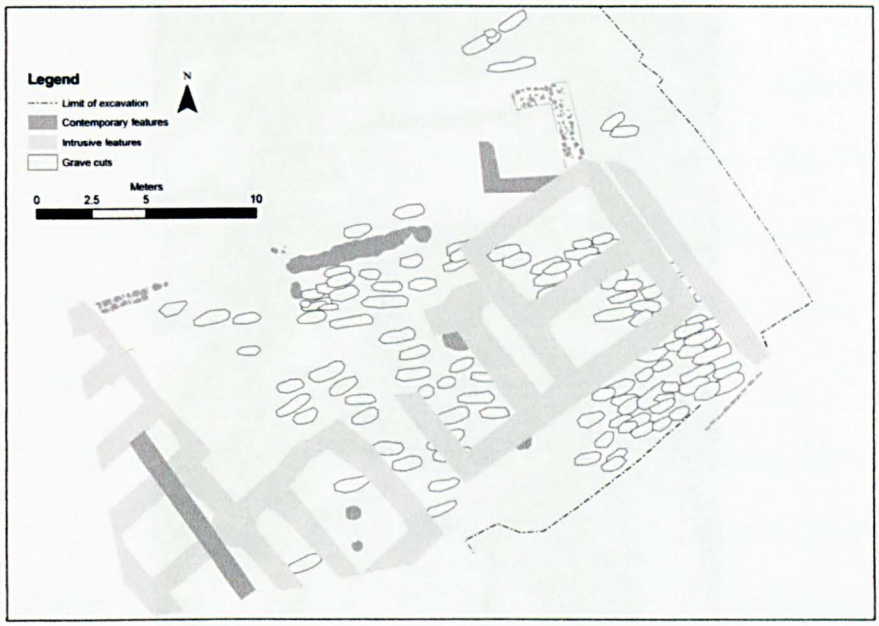


Figure 3.4. The cemetery at Spofforth showing the foundations (dark grey) of a possible two-celled building.

At Pontefract a building was discovered at The Booths site B which was dated, based upon a radiocarbon date from an associated burial, to the 9th or 10th century (Geake 1997: 191), and therefore may have been a church in use during the latter half of the period considered in this study (Figure 3.5). Another example of a possibly contemporary 8th-century church and burial focus from St Patrick's chapel, Heysham (La) is less convincing. The single-celled chapel, built in stone and rendered in plaster, has structural elements dating to the 8th century (Potter and Andrews 1994) (Figure 3.6). The structure was small and roughly rectangular, only c. 4m by 2.4m at its widest and the foundations indicated a door and external stone-footed platform at the western end. Despite its small size, the excavators note the association of a bird-headed sculpture of late 7th to late 8th century date as evidence of the building's date and high status (Cramp 1994: 110-1; Potter and Andrews 1994: 62). The main burial population at this site seems to be much later in date than the initial church, and

Figure 3.5. A stone building at Pontefract (Note the larger cell post-dates the phases of activity considered in the present study) (photo courtesy of WYAS).

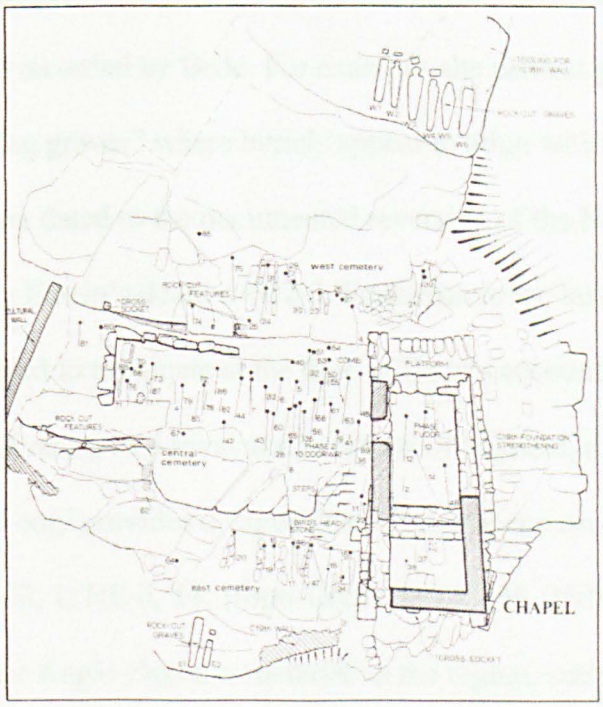


Figure 3.6. Structural remains of St Patrick's Chapel, Heysham (from Potter and Andrews 1994: 61).

contemporary with later phases of its construction in the 10th century. A series of rock-cut tombs are thought to be earlier than the main phase of burial, but due to their size and shape, they would have made impractical graves and instead may have been used as reliquaries (Thomas 1971). Therefore, despite its 8th-century origins as a Christian focus, St Patrick's Chapel may not have been a contemporary church and burial focus until the later Anglo-Saxon period.

All of the examples of churches discussed thus far have been stone structures: few wooden churches have been confidently identified at cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in this region. However, one of the best-known potential examples of an Anglo-Saxon wooden church was excavated in the far north, at Yeavering. Brian Hope-Taylor (1977: 252, 258) considered a series of orderly burials in the eastern cemetery within a fenced enclosure and associated with a rectangular wooden structure, dubbed building B, to be an associated church and burial ground (Figure 3.7). Dating for these graves is, however, obscure, having been initially based around the historical events recorded by Bede. For example, the earliest graves in the eastern cemetery – the "string graves" where burials appear to align with standing posts and a primary burial – are dated to the documented reversion of the Northumbrian elite to paganism after King Edwin's death c. 632-3. Furthermore the last phase of the same cemetery is considered to terminate at the time of Bede's account of the abandonment of Yeavering as a royal site in favour of Milfield, c. 3 km to the north east, although Bede only provides a vague date for this occurrence, some point after Edwin's death (HE iii, 1; HE ii, 14; Hope-Taylor 1977: 245, 258). Comparison of Yeavering with other Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the region, such as Bamburgh, Milfield North and Milfield South has been used to suggest that the eastern cemetery was, in fact, in use for much longer than Hope-Taylor envisaged, throughout the 7th

and into the 8th century (Lucy 2005: 139; Scull and Harding 1990: 22). The identification of building B as a church is not universally accepted, as the numerous burials encountered within it are not considered to be a standard feature of churches of this period (Lucy 2005: 139). Moreover, with our current limited corpus of middle Anglo-Saxon northern churches it is unsafe to assume that the rarity of internal burials reflects a universal practice. Indeed, although rare, the practice of burial within a church structure is documented in northern England from the 7th century. For example, Bede records the burials of Abbots Eosterwine and Sigfrith in the porticus and south of the sanctuary respectively at St Paul's church, Wearmouth and the burial of St Oswald's head inside the church at Lindisfarne (HE iii, 12; HAB xx, Plummer 1896: 395). It has been noted that burial inside a church during the 7th century appears to have been largely restricted to those of royal birth and churchmen and churchwomen, but that may have become an option for those of lower kingly ranks in the 8th century (Blair 2005: 229; Foot 2006: 313). It is apparent that Yeavering was a particularly high-status site, and it must be considered that the large number of internal burials may reflect the large number of high status individuals who sought burial in the eastern cemetery, and in consequence, a similar frequency of internal burials would not be repeated frequently in other 7th-century churches. In light of this evidence, Yeavering remains a viable candidate for the earliest churchyard cemetery in northern England. Another possible wooden church has been identified at Sprouston (Ro), a site just over the modern Scottish border. Here, aerial photography has identified the cropmarks of at least 380 graves clustered to the northern and eastern sides of a 4m by 7m timber building (Figure 3.8). This site has not been excavated, but may be another early medieval example of adjacent church and graveyard (Smith 1991: 280-1).

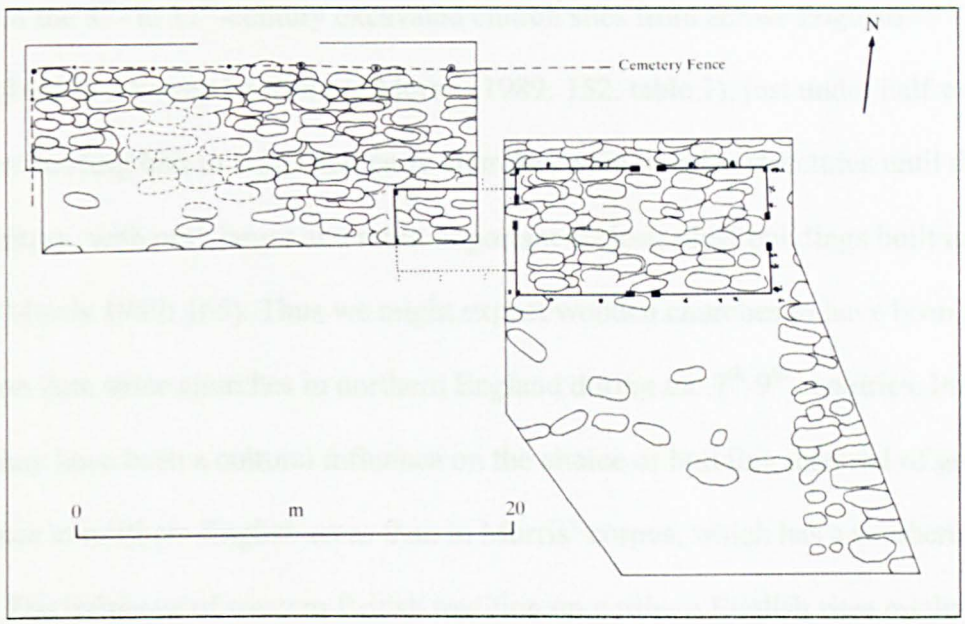


Figure 3.7. Building B, a possible 7th century wooden church, and burials at Yeavering (from Higham 1993: 134).

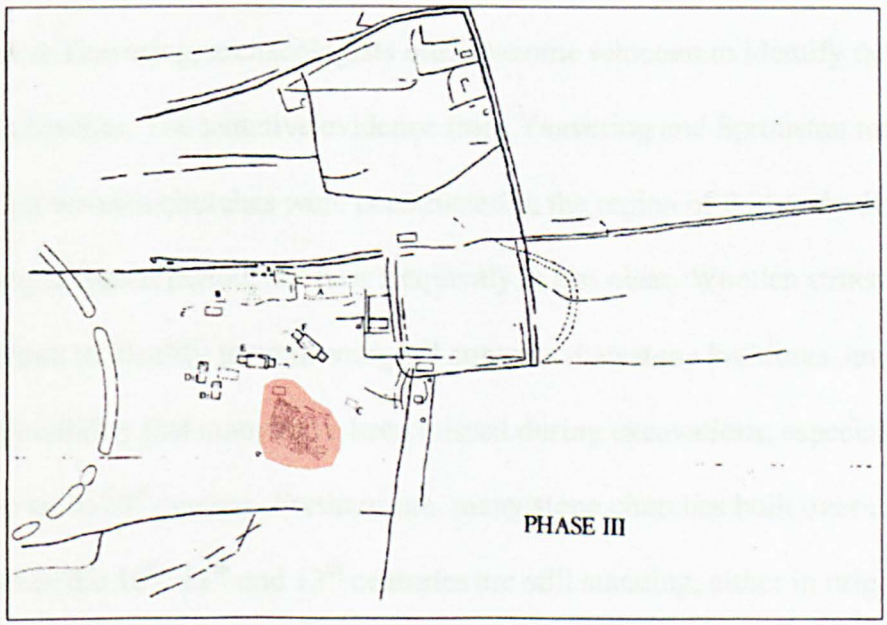


Figure 3.8. Cropmarks at Sprouston with possible early medieval church and burial focus (red) (from Smith 1991: 266, with additions).

Of the 8th- to 11th-century excavated church sites from across England highlighted in a survey by Richard Morris (1989: 152, table 1), just under half were wooden, leading him to argue that early churches were wooden structures until the 10th century, with only larger and more important ecclesiastical buildings built in stone (Morris 1989: 165). Thus we might expect wooden churches to have been more common than stone churches in northern England during the 7th-9th centuries. Indeed, there may have been a cultural influence on the choice of building material of greater relevance to northern English areas than in Morris' corpus, which has a southern focus. The influence of western British tradition on northern English sites might have increased the likelihood of there having been wooden churches in northern England, given Bede's description of Finan's 7th-century church on Lindisfarne as having been built in the manner of the Irish, "not of stone but of hewn oak" (HE iii, 25). However, there is only limited archaeological evidence for wooden churches in northern England. Despite this, when wooden structures are found in association with burials, as at Yeavering, archaeologists often become reluctant to identify them firmly as churches. The tentative evidence from Yeavering and Sprouston may suggest that wooden churches were constructed in the region of this study during the middle Anglo-Saxon period, but how frequently is less clear. Wooden structures are more difficult to identify in archaeological contexts than stone buildings, and there is a strong possibility that many have been missed during excavations, especially during the early 20th century. Furthermore, many stone churches built over earlier cemeteries in the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries are still standing, either in original (e.g. Thornton Steward) or altered forms (e.g. Barton-upon-Humber (L)), thus any earlier wooden structure located beneath would be difficult to trace (Adamson and Abramson 1997; Rodwell and Rodwell 1982).

The archaeological evidence for the association of burial with churches from the 7th or 8th century is reinforced by references in the historical record. In many cases, cemeteries utilised between A.D. 650 and 850 that were associated with churches can be demonstrated to have had Minster associations.[1] Some of the earliest literary evidence for burial associated with ecclesiastical sites comes from the north of England. For example, King Osuiu of Northumbria was buried at Whitby in 671 and bodily parts of kings Eadwine and Oswald were relocated from the battlefields where they were killed to churches at York and Lindisfarne respectively (HE iii. 12, 24; Blair 2005: 62). Many of the sites from the sample considered in the present study have documentary evidence linking them to religious communities, including Wearmouth, Jarrow, Hartlepool, Crayke, Whitby, Ripon, York and Dacre, and a significant number of the earliest excavated Minster cemeteries are in the north of England: for example, Ripon, Wearmouth, Jarrow and Hartlepool all have graves dated prior to c. A.D. 720 (Blair 2005: 242). It is common for excavators to hypothesise about the precise location of religious foci based on documentary evidence for Minster associations and the position of graves, particularly those of groups of neonates or infants, which have been noted to cluster along church walls in numerous middle and later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Boddington 1996, 55; Crawford 1999, 85-9; Hadley 2009) (see chapter 7.2.2 for further discussion). For example at Hartlepool it has been argued that the location of a church is indicated by a cluster of infant burials in the south-east corner of Church Walk cemetery (Daniels 1999: 112); while at Crayke the position of a church is inferred on the basis of the assumption

[1] In this case-study the broadest definition of a Minster is adopted: a site at which a community of priests or male and or female ecclesiastics lived communally and engaged in a variety of contemplative and or pastoral activities (Foot 1992: 212-3). Differentiating between different kinds of religious communities that may have existed in England during the middle Anglo-Saxon period is extremely difficult, and possibly anachronistic, therefore no attempt to do so is made here (Blair 1988b: 1; 2005; Cambridge and Rollason 1995; Palliser 1996; Rollason 1999).

that "it is a truism that cemetery burials spread out from a focal point" (Adams 1990: 443). Whilst these sites may well have had religious foci in the positions suggested, the assumption that their location can be predicted by features of the graves around them rely on, as yet, untested assumptions about the nature of burial practices c. A.D. 650-850 in the north of England. Hence, the assumption that juvenile graves were frequently placed in proximity to a religious focus and that cemeteries developed from a focal point are both investigated later in this research (see chapters 6.4 and 7.2.2).

Archaeological evidence for mixed cemetery populations of men, women and children from sites such as Hartlepool, Whitby, Wearmouth and Jarrow suggests that Minster cemeteries served both lay and ecclesiastical communities. Indeed, at Whitby, Bede records the burial of the abbesses, members of the royal family and "many other nobles" (HE iii, 24). Yet ecclesiastical and lay burials were commonly differentiated. There is, for example, extensive evidence from northern Minster cemeteries in use during the period A.D. 650-850 that the burials of ecclesiastics were spatially segregated from the burials of lay people. Evidence for separate cemeteries for ecclesiastics can be found at Ailcy Hill, Hartlepool and The Island, Barrow-upon-Humber (L). At Ailcy Hill, nine out of ten of the phase 2 burials are males (the tenth is unsexed), therefore it has been postulated that during the 7^{th}-9^{th} centuries the cemetery was exclusively for monks (Hall and Whyman 1996: 120). Evidence from Hartlepool suggests that multiple contemporary burial foci existed at Church Walk, Cross Close and Back Gladstone Street (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 74). Inscribed stones were found at Cross Close but not at the other two sites, thus it has been suggested that Cross Close had the higher status among the cemeteries and that the names inscribed on the stones, most of which are of females, may represent

nuns belonging to the documented double Minster. In contrast to this apparent preferential burial of churchwomen at Cross Close, a significant bias towards males in one particular cluster of burials at Church Walk might suggest the separate burial of male ecclesiastics at this site (Daniels 1999: 110; Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 74-82). A further example of segregated burial can be found just outside the region of this thesis at the Island, Barrow-upon-Humber. Excavations in the 1960s reportedly identified 30-40 male skeletons that could be linked to the community of the 7th-century Minster at *Ad Baruae* recorded by Bede (HE iv, 3), since they produced a single radiocarbon date of A.D. 650-810 (Hadley 2005). However, as it is unclear how comprehensive an osteological assessment was undertaken of this material, the apparent bias in this sex distribution should not be overemphasised (Hadley 2005).

Other archaeological and textual evidence suggests that ecclesiastics were not necessarily interred in separate cemeteries, but sometimes buried in certain locations in mixed cemeteries. Bede's *Historia Abbatum* records that monks were buried to the south of the church at Wearmouth (HAB viii; HAB xx, Plummer 1896: 285, 372; Cramp 2005: 32), suggesting that there may have been a physical division between ecclesiastical and lay burial zones. The archaeological evidence from Wearmouth presents a potentially more complex picture of segregated burial, but appears to confirm that separate burial zones did exist. The cemetery seems to have been divided by a north-south orientated structure (building B). To the east an exclusive cluster of males and juveniles was encountered and to the west lay an intensively intercut, mixed-sex cemetery. The former is argued to have been the cemetery of monks and novices, while the latter served the lay population (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 88). The area immediately south of the church did not, however, conform to this east-west division. The graves of men and women were spread across this area,

and included a burial with gold thread and a particularly well-marked grave with head- and foot-stones. It was suggested that this area was reserved for particularly high-status or otherwise special lay burials (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 88) (Figure 3.9).

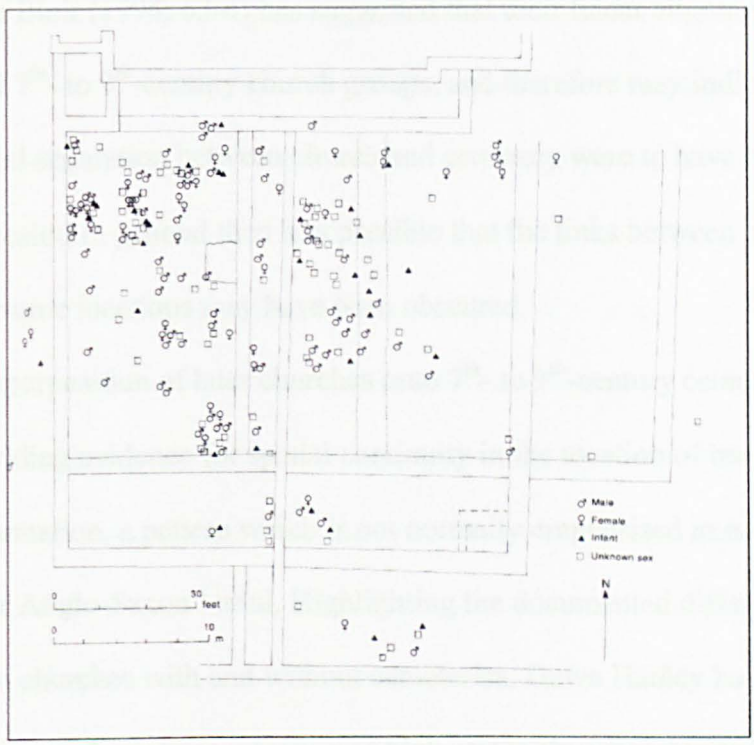


Figure 3.9. The sex of burials at Wearmouth showing a cluster of males to the east of the site (from Cramp 2005: 89).

There are few examples of cemeteries from northern England dating to c. A.D. 650-850 without recorded Minster associations where the archaeological evidence for a church is more than circumstantial, but even in these cases ecclesiastical associations cannot be ruled out. The majority of the examples included here focus on cases where the church and cemetery are in the same location, however it must be acknowledged that cemeteries may sometimes have been linked to churches some distance away. At Hartlepool, the Cross Close cemetery is located

at the very edge of the headland, but presumably had links to the Minster settlement 200m inland to the north. A comparable example from outside the study area is found at Bampton (O), where a group of burials dated to the middle Anglo-Saxon period, based upon a 7th-century bronze pin, lie over 750m to the east of two chapels and a holy well. The chapels cannot be confidently dated to before the 11th century, however, John Blair (1994: 63-4) has suggested that their linear alignment is reminiscent of 7th- to 9th-century church groups, and therefore may indicate an earlier origin. If spatial separation between church and cemetery were to have been the norm for the period in general then it is possible that the links between churches and cemeteries in some locations may have been obscured.

The superposition of later churches onto 7th- to 9th-century cemeteries is frequent, providing evidence for spatial continuity in the location of burial during churchyard formation, a pattern which is not normally emphasised in models of middle to later Anglo-Saxon burial. Highlighting the documented differences in law-codes between churches with and without cemeteries, Dawn Hadley has suggested that a cemetery may have been a feature of high-status churches during the 10th and 11th centuries, and thus has argued that by placing a church on an extant cemetery instant status could have been acquired (Hadley 2000b: 212). The earliest example of the construction of a church over a pre-existing cemetery in northern England possibly comes from Yeavering, where the early 7th-century wooden structure (building B), the function of which is admittedly debated, was erected over a series of earlier string graves and became the focus for further burials (Hope Taylor 1977 figs 31 and 32; Lucy 2005: 133). If building B at Yeavering *was* a church then it is the only known example of a wooden church superimposed on a cemetery from this region, however there are numerous examples of possible *stone* churches built on

existing middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, some more convincing than others, at Black Gate, Ripon Ladykirk/St Marygate, Pontefract and Thornton Steward (Adamson and Abramson 1997; Hall and Whyman 1996: 124-30; Nolan and Harbottle in press; Wilmott in prep.). None of these churches are closely datable, and there is a possibility that they are all later in date than the mid-9th century. In addition, at Jarrow it has been suggested that a groups of graves may pre-date the building of the Minster churches, however the graves are few and their dating evidence equivocal (Cramp 2005: 29, see above). These potential examples of churches sited over extant burial grounds do not provide convincing evidence that a similar practice to that identified by Hadley at a later date occurred in northern England prior to the end of the middle Anglo-Saxon period.

To summarise, the relationship between churches and cemeteries in the middle Anglo-Saxon period appears complex. The north of England had a thriving array of religious communities, many of which provided a place of burial from the mid-7th century. Rarely are there cemeteries with no recorded relationship with a religious community that can be confidently associated with the archaeological remains of possible churches. Whether this reflects a real pattern in the relationship between churches and cemeteries between the 7th and 9th century or is, to some degree, an artefact of excavation strategies and interpretative frameworks is unclear. Recorded religious communities have frequently attracted large-scale excavations as a result of their established documentary relationship with the Church. Moreover, archaeologists who encounter buildings in association with cemeteries are reluctant to identify them securely as churches if there is no written evidence to support such a deduction (Blair 1992: 264; 1996: 120-121). The identification of buildings in cemeteries as churches where documentary evidence is lacking, therefore, remains

problematic (for further discussion see chapter 7.4). Nonetheless, there is strong evidence for the origins of associated churches and cemeteries in the 7th century in northern England.

3.2 Cemeteries without churches

Despite substantial evidence for cemeteries associated with churches during the 7th-9th centuries, cemeteries without such associations are more numerous in the north of England. The vast majority of the cemeteries considered in this study have no evidence of churches. This is certainly not viable evidence of pagan character, as by no means everyone was buried near churches until at least the 10th century (Geake 1992: 86-87; Hadley 2000b: 209). Moreover, religious foci may have existed elsewhere than cemeteries. For example, Blair discusses preaching at Roman ruins (Blair 2005: 69) and the 9th-century *Life of St Willibald* states that the estates of many English lords had no church, but a "cross raised on high where daily prayers were said" (LSW, Noble and Head 1995: 146). Substantial post-holes that might have housed free-standing timber posts have been encountered at both Pontefract and Thwing (Manby in prep.; Wilmott in prep.), raising the possibility that free-standing posts may have provided a religious focus in some northern cemeteries dating to A.D. 650-850.

Some cemeteries in northern England without churches have varied forms of grave goods that are characteristic of the period c. A.D. 650-850 across England, including buckles, knives, pins, pendants, chatelaines, workboxes and bags containing small objects (Geake 1992: 84-5). Examples include the 7th-century barrow burials around Kirby Underdale and Garton, the late 7th- to early 8th-century

cemetery at Milfield South and the 7th-century graves at Sewerby. Sites across England where similar forms of grave goods are encountered tend to be dated to the 7th or early-8th centuries (Geake 1992: 84). In northern England at least 25 sites date to this period, the majority of which do have a range of forms of grave goods. The same variety of grave goods cannot, in contrast, be found in cemeteries that were primarily used during the 8th century. At sites such as Bamburgh Bowl Hole, Garton-on-the-Wolds and Thwing, grave goods are infrequent and largely limited to items which would appear to have been worn on the body: for example, buckles, knives, beads and coins, which in some cases appear to have been contained in purses suspended from a belt. Many other cemeteries of the 8th century and later are largely or entirely unfurnished, and it is tempting to see the burials in such cemeteries as representing a chronologically later practice that came after the gradual decline of grave goods through the 7th and 8th centuries. Two caveats must, however, be expressed about such a hypothesis. First, if British Christianity were to have survived during the 5th and 6th centuries in northern England, an early phase of unfurnished or sparsely-furnished cemeteries would be expected to exist that may share characteristics with western British cemeteries, and therefore not experience any significant change in furnishing throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. Second, whilst it is often assumed that cemeteries with grave goods are chronologically earlier than unfurnished cemeteries in many parts of northern England, there is increasing evidence from elsewhere, as a result of more intensive radiocarbon dating programmes, to suggest these were contemporary practices during the 7th-9th centuries (Scull and Bayliss 1999: 86). Indeed, a project at the University of Cardiff and Queen's University, Belfast entitled *Anglo-Saxon England c.580-720: the Chronological Basis*, is currently reviewing artefact typology and grave assemblages

from "final phase" cemeteries. This project is utilising the seriation of finds using correspondence analysis, and high-precision radiocarbon dating of selected samples, to explore the chronology of this period across the country (see Hines 2002 for similar analysis at Edix Hill (Ca)). The limited number of radiocarbon dates available for northern cemeteries (particularly furnished cemeteries) means that it is not yet possible to consider the chronological relationship between the furnished and unfurnished cemeteries considered in this study, but it is evidently urgently needed.

One specific form of furnished cemetery that appears sporadically across England during the 7th century has received particular attention from archaeologists: the high-status, lavishly-furnished, so-called "princely" burials. The occurrence of these elaborately-furnished burials during a period when the use of grave goods was generally in decline has been argued as an ostentations reaction to paganism or a statement of power and wealth utilised by a politically threatened elite (Carver 2001; 2002; Williams 1998). The north of England has only one example of princely burial to compare with those from south of the Humber at sites such as Benty Grange (Db), Caenby (L) and, most famously, Sutton Hoo and Taplow (Bk) (Bateman 1861; Carver 2005; Everson 1993: 94-8; Stevens 1884), however it is possible that other lavishly provided graves have yet to be found in the north, or that they were poorly excavated during the 19th century and their true character missed (Geake 1992: 85). An extensive cemetery was recently excavated at Street House inside an Iron Age and Roman ditch complex (Sherlock 2008). Several of the 30 graves contained elaborate grave goods of 7th-century date including items of gold and silver, and a bed burial (Figure 3.10). This latter grave, reminiscent of that from Swallowcliffe Down (Wi) (Speake 1989), was furnished with gold and gemstone pendants, a jet hairpin and a small box or casket. The Kentish style of the assemblage has been

interpreted in the context of political and marital links between the royal households of Northumbria and Kent (Sherlock 2008). If Martin Carver's (2002: 137-42) suggestion that East Anglian royalty created Sutton Hoo to demonstrate their authority in reaction to other powerful rulers is accepted, the unstable political hegemony in Northumbria during the middle Anglo-Saxon period may have created exactly the climate in which princely burials were articulated.

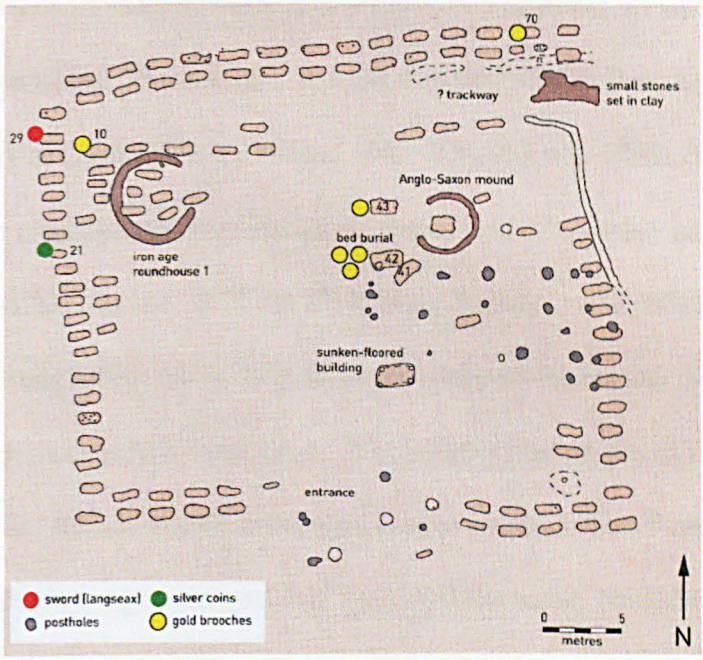


Figure 3.10. The c. 7th century cemetery at Street House (from Sherlock 2008: 31).

3.3 Cemeteries that reuse ancient monuments

Many cemeteries in northern England that date to c. A.D. 650-850 make explicit use of extant monuments, as burials are either inserted into them, or graves are aligned on them. Studies from across Britain have demonstrated that early medieval cemeteries utilised prehistoric barrows and extant monuments widely in both their settlement and ritual landscapes (Crewe *pers. comm.*; Petts 2002; Sheppard 1979;

Williams 1998). Middle Anglo-Saxon sites in the north of England are associated with several different types of extant monument. Barrows of a Bronze-Age date were the most common monument associated with cemeteries used between A.D. 650 and 850. At least 13 cemeteries or single burials in, or located in association with, barrows are found throughout the period, from the far north (e.g. Capheaton and Barrasford) to the south of the region (e.g. Ferry Fryston and Winwick), however many other types of monument were also reused. For example, at some time during the 7th and 8th centuries, 35 inhumations were inserted into an Iron Age square barrow cemetery at Garton Station (Stead 1987: 234-7; Lucy 1999: 20) (Figure 3.11). Neolithic henge monuments were reused by five 6th- to 7th-century burials at Milfield North and a possible total of 45 7th- to 8th-century burials at Milfield South (Scull and Harding 1990; Lucy 1999: 40-1). In both cases many of the burials were located within the henge monuments themselves. It is notable that the focus of burial shifted from the henge at Milfield North to another further south in the 7th century, yet the manner in which the henges were reused remained the same. In addition, burials were found in the vicinity of Roman forts at Binchester (Cramp 1983: 268; Lucy 1999: 42), Aldborough (Buckberry 2004: 450) and Black Gate, where the cemetery directly overlies the remains of the Roman fort of *Pons Aelius* (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 13). A single burial often attributed to the 7th century was also interred at a Roman villa at Dalton Parlours (Lucy 1999: 38; Buckberry 2004: 492), however the grave was dated on the basis of an annular brooch, which could equally be as early as the 5th century (Dickinson 1990: 286). In some cases, it appears that occupation could have continued at the Roman sites during the 5th and 6th centuries, and therefore it is difficult to judge whether the Anglo-Saxon burials found in proximity were actively reusing the Roman remains, or just part of a continuous sequence of

occupation in that location. The latter seems to have been the case at Binchester, where excavations are being undertaken at the present time (Norton and Boylston 1997: 17; David Petts *pers. comm.*). In other cases, it appears that occupation ceased in the late Roman or very early Anglo-Saxon period. The Roman occupation at Black Gate appears to have ended in the late-4th to early-5th century, and therefore here it can be suggested that burials located within or around the Roman remains are reusing the monument in the same manner as other Anglo-Saxon burials appropriate monuments from the Bronze Age or Neolithic (Nolan and Harbottle in press).

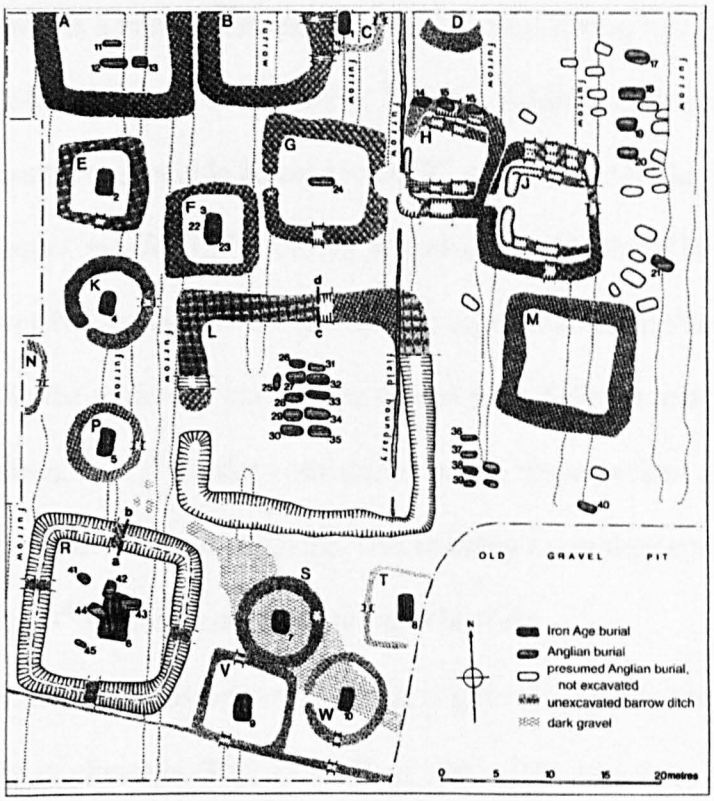


Figure 3.11. The cemetery at Garton Station (from Stead 1991: 127).

The vast majority of sites in northern England which reuse extant monuments date to the 7th century, supporting similar results identified in previous assessments for both England and western Britain (Lucy 1999: 20; Petts 2002: 44). Unfurnished

or poorly-furnished burials associated with extant monuments, that might perhaps post-date the 7th century, have received less attention in the literature (e.g. Geake 1992) and tend to be automatically assigned to the 7th century rather than any later (Hadley 2000b: 210). However, sparsely-furnished graves at several northern sites clearly post-date the 7th century. For example, at Thwing largely unfurnished burials, some dated to the 8th and 9th centuries by radiocarbon dates and a few associated grave goods, are located in a complex of Bronze-Age monuments (Manby *pers. comm.).* The group of cemeteries around the complex of barrows at Garton contain poorly furnished graves that can be dated to the early-8th century, for example at Garton-on-the-Wolds a burial contained a group of coins dating to c. A.D. 720-725 (Geake 1997: 158; Mortimer 1905: 246-57; 264-70). Additional examples of post-7th century monument reuse include Kemp Howe (8th century), Milfield South (7th-8th century) and Black Gate (8th-12th century). It is also possible that a huge cemetery consisting of over 800 burials covering a Bronze-Age mound and ditch complex at Winwick dates to the middle to later Anglo-Saxon period (Freke and Thacker 1987-8: 31). It is apparent that 7th-century cemeteries which reuse ancient monuments are known across the entire north of England, and in many cases they continue to receive burials during the 8th century, and in some cases beyond.

Reuse of extant prehistoric monuments is not solely limited to cemeteries without evidence of churches (Bell 1998; Blair 2005: 183, 188, Foot 2006: 101). At both Yeavering and Whithorn ecclesiastical foundations are superimposed upon sites of pre-Christian monuments (Hope Taylor 1977; Hill 1997b: 26; Lucy 2005: 143). The reuse of monuments in a confirmed Christian context is also suggested at Hartlepool and Whitby. At the former, the ecclesiastical Cross Close cemetery may have been intentionally located around a Roman signal station (Daniels and Loveluck

2007: xii, 81-2), and at the latter occupation on the headland prior to the early medieval period is suggested by Roman artefacts such as a 4th- to 5th-century glass gaming piece and late-Roman pottery including a complete red-slipped base, possibly from a small beaker (English Heritage 1999). In addition, at Spofforth, an antiquarian account of the late 1800s by William Grainge describes an ancient mound or barrow in the vicinity of the area now known to be the location of a 7th- to 9th- century cemetery, which may also have had an early church (Paul Johnson *pers. comm.*). The author mentions that ploughing had reduced the height of the mound, which may explain why no such feature has been documented in more recent times at Spofforth. These examples suggest that some of the ties that linked Anglo-Saxon burial ritual and ancient monuments remained relevant within the Christian milieu.

3.4 "Execution" cemeteries and "deviant" graves

A final group of burials in northern England are characterised by distinctive features, such as unusual grave forms and body positions and osteological evidence of execution or mutilation (Geake 1997: 87; Reynolds 1997; 2009). Andrew Reynolds (2002: 187) argues that the funerary evidence presents a progression from the acceptable inclusion of "deviants" in unusual graves *within* early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries to the ubiquitous exclusion of similar individuals, often in burials placed on administrative boundaries by the 10th century, when consecration rites that specify the need to exclude suicides, criminals and the unbaptised from Christian cemeteries take form (Gittos 2002; Reynolds 1999: 108; Morris 1983: 50). Sporadic examples of burials with unusual, or "deviant", characteristics have been known from earlier Anglo-Saxon cemeteries for many years (Hawkes and Wells 1975: 118; Hirst 1985:

38-43; Hope Taylor 1950; Horne 1933). For example, 5th- or 6th-century burials where "deviance" has been identified from osteological evidence suggesting mutilation include a decapitated individual from the 5th-century cemetery at Alfriston (Sx), a 6th-century male whose left hand had been severed from Westgarth Gardens (Sf) and another 6th-century interment from Lovedon Hill (L) where it appears the feet had been cut off (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 324; Reynolds 1997: 35; West 1988: 28). Jo Buckberry and Dawn Hadley note that despite the apparent reliance upon osteological evidence in these examples, in no case is supporting evidence for the injuries published. Indeed, identifying "deviant" burials can be extremely problematic when there is no confirmed evidence of execution or mutilation. One of the most famous cases of "deviant" burial from Sewerby aptly demonstrates this. The example is a vertical double burial in which a female of 35-45 years was found sprawled, prone, contorted and apparently "weighted down" with a stone, above the well-furnished, coffined burial of a younger woman (Hirst 1985: 38-40). Hirst (1985: 39, 41-3) argued that the upper individual was alive at the time of interment. Numerous alternative explanations of this burial have, however, since been published. Nick Reynolds (1988), in particular, clearly demonstrated several flaws with the argument for live burial. The stone recorded as weighing down the body is small and appears to have been recovered from below, not above the interment, an unlikely position if it was to have held the woman down during burial. Moreover, the raised position of her legs might as easily result from interment whilst rigour mortis was still in effect, or the positioning of the body into a small grave cut that was not detected during excavation, with the legs lying against the vertical edge (Reynolds 1988: 717). Another possible scenario explains the contorted position of the upper individual as resulting from muscular contractions characteristic of exposure to fire

(Knüsel *et al.* 1996) (Figure 3.12). In sum, it is apparent that a variety of scenarios could explain the evidence presented at Sewerby, and, in fact, the evidence does not best support an argument as dramatic as that favoured by Hirst.

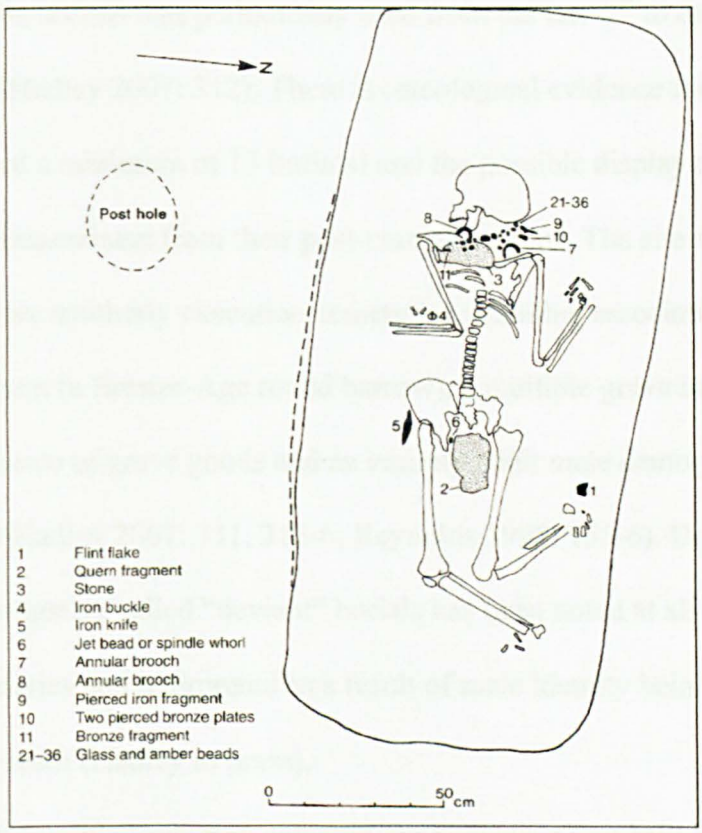


Figure 3.12. The "live" burial from Sewerby (from Lucy 2000: 79).

There is growing evidence, mainly in the form of radiocarbon dates, to indicate that the emergence of separate funerary provision for executed or otherwise excluded individuals emerged in the 7th-8th century. Andrew Reynolds (1997: 33-41; 2008: 20-4; 2009) has catalogued numerous examples of such execution cemeteries south of the Humber from the middle and later Anglo-Saxon period, including

Chesterton (Ca) (late-7th to 9th century), Guildown (Su) (c. 11th century), Meon Hill (Ha) (10th to 11th century) Staines (E) (late-7th/early-8th to 12th century) and Sutton Hoo (mid-7th to 11th/12th century). In contrast, only one cemetery is securely known from the north of England that has "deviant" characteristics, although there is a handful of other possible examples of execution cemeteries. The secure example is the recently re-analysed cemetery at Walkington Wold, which the acquisition of radiocarbon dates reveals was periodically used from the late-7th to early-11th century (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 312). There is osteological evidence for decapitation (four to six out of a minimum of 13 burials) and the possible display and reburial of crania in pits, disassociated from their post-cranial remains. The site shares other features with more southerly execution cemeteries including association with a pre-existing monument (a Bronze-Age round barrow), a multiple grave including three individuals, absence of grave goods and an entirely adult male demographic profile (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 311, 315-6; Reynolds 1998: 155-6). Dominance of adult males amongst so-called "deviant" burials has been noted at all known execution cemeteries and interpreted as a result of male identity being more sensitive to exclusion in death (Hadley in press).

Another possible execution cemetery was excavated on Mill Hill, Elloughton in the 1940's. There is no modern reassessment of this site and it is only mentioned in overviews and gazetteers (Geake 1997: 157-8; Lucy 1999: 35; Meaney 1964: 287-8; but notably not discussed in any detail in Reynolds'(2009) recent volume on execution cemeteries), but the description of individuals buried carelessly in shallow pits, some prone and one headless, and a child recorded as deposited in a sack, is suggestive of an execution cemetery. However, even if this is the case, whether it dates to as early as Walkington Wold is unknown. The latest phase of burial (late-8th-

10th century) at Ailcy Hill, Ripon has also been highlighted as unusual, and may also be the site of the burial of the socially excluded. A small number of male individuals were interred on notably divergent alignments from previous burials. These late burials also included the only triple burial from the site and an adolescent who had suffered distortion and fusion of the vertebrae, possibly due to spinal tuberculosis (Hall and Whyman 1996: 93). It is argued that in this late phase the former ecclesiastical cemetery was utilised by only certain sections of the population, possibly those whose status or appearance precluded churchyard burial elsewhere (Hall and Whyman 1996: 124). At Thwing there were two adult male burials with their "skulls in detached positions" found in short graves outside the northern boundary of the cemetery (Manby in prep.). At least one of the burials is thought to post-date an early 9th-century boundary feature (Dawes no date), and therefore can be argued to have been conceptually outside the cemetery. A recent osteological assessment of these skeletons identified no evidence of beheading (Garland no date) therefore it is unclear whether they were execution victims. Finally, a skull was found in a pit at the settlement site of Cottam. The skull was weathered in appearance and had become disarticulated from the mandible, both indications that it was already decomposing at the time of burial. Dating evidence seems to confirm that the skull was kept above ground from some time after death. The skull itself produced a radiocarbon date of A.D. 647-877, whereas the fill of the pit contained a coin dated to c. 858-862 (Richards 1999: 92-3).

Occasional burials within otherwise ordinary cemeteries of middle and later Anglo-Saxon date that appear to have had the hands and/or feet bound at the time of burial provide further, if less conclusive, evidence of "deviant" burial. Examples can be found at Black Gate (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 34) and Thwing (Manby in

prep.). At these sites a fragmentary prone burial and a prone burial of a mature female respectively were buried with their arms positioned behind their backs, as if their hands were restrained (Manby in prep,; Nolan and Harbottle in press: 34). In neither of these cases, however, is there any further evidence that these individuals were deviants. Unlike other examples where deviant burials were spatially segregated, the prone burials with possible tied hands at Black Gate and Thwing are centrally positioned within their respective cemeteries. In these cases, thus, burial form singles some individuals out as unusual, but does not provide conclusive evidence of "deviance". The use of burial rites to differentiate "deviant" or unusual individuals from the remainder of the burial population is considered in more detail in the bio-cultural analysis in chapters 6.4 and 7.2.3

3.5 Location, size and duration of cemeteries

It has rarely been possible to create a chronology of burial in any one location between the 7th and 9th centuries northern England, but the available evidence from across the region indicates that cemetery locations were not static. At Milfield North burial around a Neolithic henge ceased in the 7th century and began at roughly the same date just over a kilometre south at Milfield South (Scull and Harding 1990:1). Further examples of successive cemeteries can be found just outside the region considered in this study in north Lincolnshire. At Roxby-cum-Risby (L), two cemeteries were identified on Sheffield's Hill. The earlier, 6th-century, cemetery contained 43 inhumations and three cremations arranged in an apparently disorganised fashion, while the later cemetery contained 82 inhumations of late 7th-century date (Leahy and Williams 2001). At Barton-upon-Humber the cemetery at

Castledyke South was in use from the 6th to early 8th century (Drinkall and Foreman 1998). After this date it is not apparent where burial took place in the locality, before it commenced c. 300m to the north east at the site of St Peter's church in the 10th century (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982: 290; Waldron 2007: 6). It is perhaps the case that a third cemetery dating to between the late-7th to early-8th and 10th centuries exists elsewhere in the vicinity.

Within the study area, only one site provides a possible example of three cemeteries in use successively during the Anglo-Saxon period. At Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, the early Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Mill Lane continued in use into the early 7th century (Sherlock and Welch 1992: 105), at which time burial began at the Bishopsmill School site, a few hundred metres to the south west. This latter site was subsequently abandoned during the 10th century, possibly in favour of burial at the nearby 10th- to 11th-century church of St Mary (Daniels 1983: 27; Pevsner and Williamson 1990: 442; Sherlock and Welch 1992: 1). A more detailed bio-cultural study of these sites could provide valuable new evidence of changing burial practices in one location throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. It must be acknowledged that cemetery chronologies are rarely refined enough to determine whether two neighbouring cemetery sites were used successively or whether there was an overlap in use. Detailed radiocarbon dating of the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Ipswich suggested a significant overlap in use, especially between A.D. 600 and 700 at the Hadleigh Road and the Buttermarket cemeteries, that was not apparent from the original site phasing before intensive scientific dating was undertaken (Scull and Bayliss 1999: fig 5.5). It is possible that a similar process of overlapping cemetery use occurred at the successive sites in Norton, but is obscured by the broad

chronological brackets currently provided by typological, numismatic and limited programmes of radiocarbon dating.

Examples of continuity beyond the 9th century of cemeteries in use in the middle Anglo-Saxon period are rare. At Jarrow, burial appears to have began at, or just earlier than, the construction of the Minster in the mid-6th century, and continued through the medieval period until the last burials were inserted in the 1880s (Lowther 2005: 173). At Ailcy Hill the earliest, very disturbed phase of burial is dated to the 6th century and the latest phase to roughly the 11th century (Hall and Whyman 1996: 80, 88). The prominent location on a small hill may have helped attract communities to this site. Continuity of burial at cemeteries apparently founded in the 8th or 9th century is more common, for example at Black Gate, Ripon Ladykirk and York Minster and amongst others, burial begins around the 8th centuries and continues into the 11th and 12th centuries.

It is conventionally suggested that during the 7th century new cemeteries were established closer to settlement sites (Faull 1976: 232; Meaney and Hawkes 1970) (see chapter 2.2), but there is limited evidence from northern England to support this assertion. Although there is evidence for both settlement and burial around Milfield in Northumbria, it is not possible to reconstruct the relationship between the two (Figure 3.13). Cropmarks of a complex of buildings and enclosures have been identified on the eastern side of the River Till in Milfield. This site has been equated with the royal vill at *Maelmin*, recorded by Bede to have been the direct successor of Yeavering as a palace of the Northumbrian kings (HE ii, 14; Hope Taylor 1977: 277; Scull and Harding 1990: 22). The 6th- to mid-7th-century cemetery at Milfield north lies some distance away, just over 1km to the north of the cropmark site, but the 7th- to 8th-century cemetery at Milfield South is positioned immediately south of the

settlement site, only c. 150m south and west of a large enclosure (Scull and Harding 1990: 3, 22-3). Any attempt to draw conclusions about the relationship between the cemeteries and the settlement around Milfield is, however, problematic. There is no dating evidence for occupation at the cropmark settlement site, therefore it is unclear whether it was in use during the period where burials were made in the earlier northern cemetery. Moreover, the 1.3km distance between the settlement at Milfield and the cemetery at Milfield North may mitigate against them having been connected (Scull and Harding 1990: 23). There are several other settlements in the area that may have had, as yet, archaeologically unsupported links with the cemeteries at Milfield, including Thirlings, Yeavering and New Bewick (O'Brien and Miket 1991; Petts and Gerrard 2006: 63; Scull and Harding 1990: 23). In sum, the archaeological evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation around Milfield is comparatively plentiful, yet the relationships between settlement and burial sites in the region are, as yet, insufficiently understood to inform our understanding of cemetery location in relation to occupation sites in northern England.

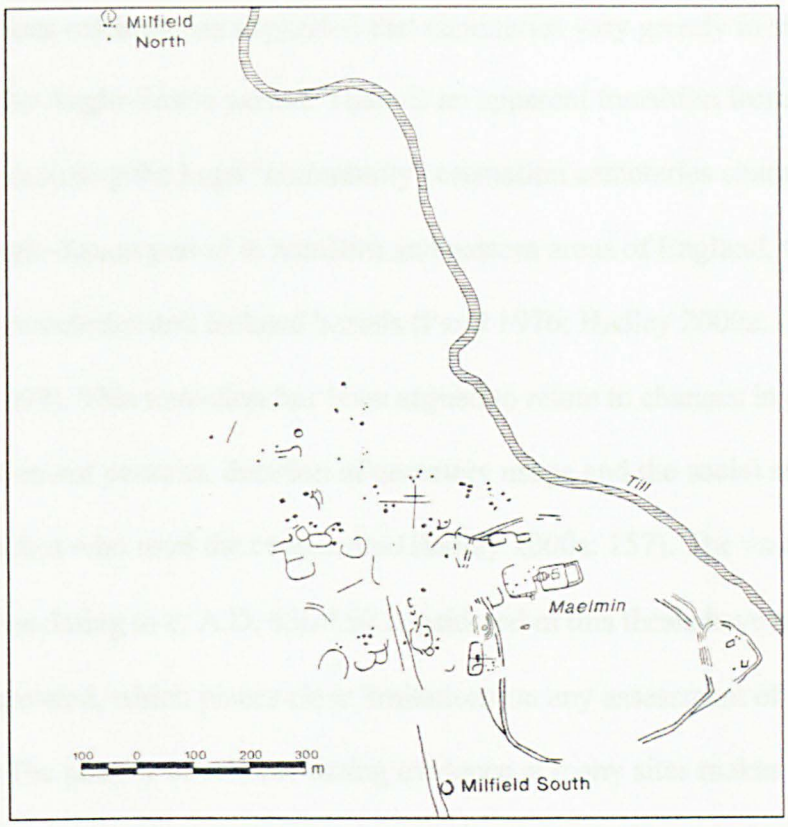


Figure 3.13. The cemeteries and cropmark evidence of settlement around Milfield (from Scull and Harding 1990: 3, with additions).

The relationship between occupation and burial evidence at Minster sites from the mid- 7th century is more conclusive. For example, at Hartlepool it has been possible to create a model of occupation that suggests close proximity between the monks and lay population apparently buried in Church Walk cemetery and the ecclesiastical inhabitation site. Both settlement and burial appear to have been located within a bounded zone on the highest part of the peninsula. Whilst this evidence suggests that contemporary cemeteries and occupation sites could be in close proximity the evidence from ecclesiastical sites cannot necessarily be assumed to reflect a general pattern that would also characterise secular settlement and burial patterns.

Previous research has suggested that cemeteries vary greatly in size throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. There is an apparent transition from larger cemeteries, including the huge "community" cremation cemeteries characteristic of the early Anglo-Saxon period in southern and eastern areas of England, to smaller inhumation cemeteries and isolated burials (Faull 1976; Hadley 2000a: 157; 2000b: 199, Lucy 1999). This transition has been argued to relate to changes in population size and settlement patterns, duration of cemetery usage and the social structures of the communities who used the cemeteries (Hadley 2000a: 157). The vast majority of the cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 considered in this thesis have only been partially excavated, which places clear limitations on any assessment of total burial population. The paucity of reliable dating evidence at many sites makes considering the size of populations served by these cemeteries difficult. For example, at Winwick over 800 grave slots were excavated in a cemetery that was estimated to contain over 1000 interments at its fullest extent (Freke and Thacker 1987-8: 31). It is suggested by the excavators that Winwick may have been in constant use between the 5th and 11th centuries, however, as there is no specific dating evidence for this cemetery, the date range suggested represents only the possible period of usage (Freke and Thacker 1987-8: 34). Nonetheless, it is apparent that the size of a cemetery is strongly influenced by the duration of its usage. There are several very large cemeteries in northern England where reliable dating evidence can be produced to suggest that they where in use during the 7th-9th centuries. In many cases, these sites were also in use for substantial periods either before (e.g. Winwick) or after (Black Gate, Jarrow, Pontefract) the middle Anglo-Saxon period.

In contrast to these examples of large cemeteries, there are also several examples of single, and apparently isolated, graves amongst the sample of 7th- to 9th-

century northern cemeteries. It is often very difficult, if not impossible, to determine whether these burials were isolated, or whether they were part of a larger cemetery that was not excavated, as many have been excavated in either rescue contexts (where it is either impossible or considered inappropriate to expand excavations to look for further burials) or over 100 years ago when the location of grave goods took precedence over the identification of a complete cemetery. For example, excavations in the 1860s at Womersley revealed only one inhumation with a pendant of 7th-century date (Geake 1997: 191), but we have no evidence to suggest whether excavations were either systematic or extensive. However, other examples of apparently isolated burials may genuinely have been isolated interments. These include a single 7th-century neonate inhumation that was located near a sunken featured building at Wharram Percy, and a single grave encountered at the base of a standing stone at Barnby (Milne and Richards 1992: 84-5; Meaney 1964: 282, Buckberry 2004: 499). Despite the paucity of reliable evidence for isolated burials in northern England, their existence should not be discounted. Extensive excavations of the land surrounding a 7th-century burial from Tattershall Thorpe (L) found no evidence of further interments. This unusual individual was buried with a range of metalwork which led David Hinton (2000) to associate the individual with smithying.

A further complication in interpreting the size of cemeteries c. A.D. 650-850, and quantifying the populations that they served, is the existence of multiple burial foci in one area that could have served the same settlement population. This pattern has been identified in ecclesiastical contexts (Hadley 2000b: 203-4), and is present in the north of England at Ripon (Ailcy Hill, Ladykirk, Deanery Gardens and St Marygate, although the latter two may be outliers of Ladykirk), Hartlepool (Church

Walk, Cross Close, Back Gladstone Street) and Whitby (Headland, Abbey Lands Farm). However, the clustering of cemeteries without known Minster links is also apparent in some areas, including, for example, the clusters of barrow burials in Kirby Underdale and Garton.

To summarise, attempts to investigate the location of cemeteries and size of burial populations in middle Anglo-Saxon England are curtailed by the difficulties in identifying successive cemetery sites, the limited settlement record and the rarity of complete cemetery excavation, and further complicated by the possibility of several contemporary cemeteries being used by a community at any one time. It seems plausible that patterns of settlement are interlinked with the duration and size of cemeteries, indeed association with a Minster site appears to ensure a substantial population and the longevity of a burial focus in some cases. Evidence for settlement for this period and region is currently extremely variable, poorly characterised and under-studied (Petts and Gerrard 2006: 63) and, thus, without a greater understanding of the settlement of Anglo-Saxon northern England, it would be unwise to draw too specific conclusions about the factors that determine cemetery location and size.

3.6 Cemetery boundaries

Evidence for cemetery boundaries from cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 from northern England is scarce. Despite their roles as a fundamental part of settlement topography in the Anglo-Saxon period (Reynolds 2003), previous reviews have concluded that boundaries around middle Anglo-Saxon and pre-8th century western British cemeteries are an uncommon feature (O'Brien 1999: 17-21, 114-16, 122-3, 135-9; Gittos 2002: 203; Petts 2002: 30, 32). In contrast, it appears Minsters, and

their associated burial grounds, were enclosed from the 7th century: for example, ditched enclosures have been encountered around monastic settlements at Whitby, Hartlepool, Coldingham and Beverley (Blair 2005: 196). There is strong evidence for cemetery enclosure in the later Anglo-Saxon period, when boundaries may become a delineating feature of consecrated church cemeteries, for example at Raunds Furnells (Nh) and Rivenhall (Es) (Gittos 2002: 202-3).

Over 20 years ago, Susan Hirst (1985: 20-4) raised concerns over the bias created by incomplete excavation of cemeteries and the archaeological invisibility of materials used to create boundaries. Few of the excavations considered here have apparently reached any form of boundary, and none has encountered them on all sides. In fact, only five provide limited evidence of purpose built cemetery boundaries: Hartlepool, Pontefract, Thwing, Bamburgh and Thornton Steward. A clear boundary to burial was defined along the northern and eastern edges of Church Walk cemetery, Hartlepool (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 84). One burial butts directly against this boundary but none are found beyond. A post-in-trench fence appears to have delineated the southern boundary at Pontefract during the 8th century (Wilmott in prep.: 26). A timber palisade is suggested to have bounded the cemetery at Thwing, although this cannot have been contemporary with all phases of burial as graves both cut through it and are cut by it (Manby in prep.). A ditch was located to the west of burials at the Bowl Hole, Bamburgh. That graves seem to peter out towards this ditch, and none occur to the west of it, suggests it formed a contemporary western boundary to the cemetery (Groves in press b). Finally, at Thornton Steward geophysical survey to the north of the cemetery identified a possible boundary ditch. All but one of the 7th- to 11th-century burials lay to the south of this feature (Adamson and Abramson 1997). Other landscape features were also

occasionally used as boundaries. For example, the burials at Milfield North and South are contained within Neolithic henges, and graves at Black Gate are delineated by an escarpment to the north, and a Roman wall to the north east of the burials (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 13). In contrast, several other sites dating to c. A.D. 650-850 provide evidence that they never had a boundary. The extent of burial was encountered to the north and east at Norton Bishopsmill School, to the north east at Addingham and to the north and west at Crayke with no evidence of a boundary. Moreover, at Adwick, the excavators believed that they had encountered the extent of burial on all four sides of the cemetery with no indication of a boundary feature (Harvey 2008).

Evidence for boundaries in middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England is severely limited and far from conclusive. The focus of older excavations and the exigencies of modern developer excavation are largely responsible for this paucity, although the archaeological invisibility of the material utilised for boundaries, if they existed, may contribute to an unquantifiable degree. The few examples of boundaries that have been encountered suggest extant monuments and topographical features were sometimes utilised. Alternatively, simple barriers may have been constructed out of wood, earth and/or stone, or as appears to be the case at several sites, no boundaries were utilised at all. Questions concerning cemetery boundaries in any detail remain unanswerable with the present dataset.

3.7 Cemetery foci

It has been noted above that in cemeteries with churches, the church building itself often formed a focal point for burials and that where extant monuments were

incorporated into funerary sites their form can influence the layout of graves. However, a much wider range of features had the potential to influence the spatial distribution of burials within a cemetery dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England. Small square structures are found in several middle Anglo-Saxon sites and appear to have attracted burials in their vicinity. It was noted above that these are sometimes considered to be small churches, but others have also been described as mortuary chapels or oratories. It is clear that their exact function requires more detailed consideration (see chapter 7). Regardless of their exact purpose, these structures undoubtably often form a focal point for burial. At Thwing, burials cluster to the east and south of a contemporary square wooden structure of unknown function, and at Whithorn a group of chest burials were found inside an 8th- to 9th-century stone-footed building and a group of children's graves clustered nearby (Hill *et al.* 1997b: 134-82).

In a Christian context, churches and chapels were not the only structural monuments that had the potential to provide a focus for burial. John Blair (2005: 226, 481-482) suggests that many different religious foci may have existed, including saints' wells, holy trees, cross-posts and pillars, and that these were widespread until ecclesiastical condemnations appear in the 10th- and 11th-century writings of, in particular, Ælfric and Wulfstan (CE xvi, Fowler 1972: 5; LS xvii, ll 139-135, Skeat 1881: 373-5; Blair 2005: 481; Meaney 1985: 486-7;). Moreover, several previous studies of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have emphasised the significance of standing structures such as banks, paths and boundaries in dictating cemetery topography (e.g. Boddington 1987: 418; 1996; Butler *et al.* 1975: 350; Wilmott in prep.: 26). A large, single post-hole from the 8th-century cemetery phase at Pontefract has been interpreted as a substantial marker or possibly a free-standing cross, measuring at

least 40cm square and sunk 2m into the ground (Wilmott in prep.: 28). In the areas excavated, burials were found to surround this possible monument and the only elaborate burial from this phase, containing a lock from a chest, was close to this structure (Wilmott in prep.: 36). A series of three large post-holes were also identified running north to south along the western-most edge of the cemetery at Thwing. As at Pontefract, these may have held substantial wooden timbers. Burials were densely packed along the eastern side of these post-holes, suggesting that whatever structures they housed formed a focus for graves. At Wearmouth there was a central path running across the cemetery, which was visible for at least some of the period of its usage. It is hypothesised that a series of crossing paths may have joined this (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 91). The use of a path in this context parallels the use of paths at other Minster sites such as Whitby and Whithorn, however, in these cases the paths divide buildings not burials (Blair 2005: 203). It is possible that paths of this sort were not included in non-ecclesiastical cemeteries until later periods, when examples are more numerous. For example, there is evidence for a 10th-century path through the cemetery at St Mark's, Lincoln (Gilmour and Stocker 1986: 15) and medieval and post-medieval tracks through the churchyard at Wharram Percy (Harding and Wrathmell 2007: 333). By dictating movement through a cemetery, it is plausible that paths had a significant effect on the layout and distribution of burials.

In some cases the existence of a focal point can be inferred from the distribution of burials within a cemetery dating to c. A.D. 650-850, although the nature of the focal point itself remains elusive. Burials at Church Walk cemetery in Hartlepool appear to form several groups characterised by different burial rites and demographic profiles, including a cluster of children, a group of older males that

might be monks, a distinct cluster of graves edged by stones and a focal group of interments that appear to cluster around a coffined burial (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 89, 91-3). Multi-focal cemeteries are known throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, for example, at Cannington (So) (5th-7th century) (Rahtz *et al.* 2000: 98-101; Williams 2006: 213) Castledyke South (L) (6th-8th) (Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 347) and Wharram Percy, where an intensive programme of radiocarbon dating has suggested that the earliest, 10th-century, phases of the cemetery were multi-focal and utilised the entire extent of the graveyard (Harding and Wrathmell 2007: 327). Nevertheless, the presence of a single focal point appears to be more frequent in cemeteries utilised during c. A.D. 650-850 than multiple foci. Indeed in some cases the desire to be buried in one particular place appears to have been very strong. At Addingham, excavations of a cemetery radiocarbon dated to the 7th-10th century revealed multiple empty grave cuts in the west of the cemetery and numerous multiple graves to the east (Figure 3.14). Traces of human bone found in the fills of the empty graves suggests that remains had been removed some time after burial and redeposited in graves further east as secondary interments (Adams 1996: 161-3). This evidence suggests an unexcavated focal point – perhaps a church, cross or special grave – towards the east of the site that held such a strong appeal that bodies were exhumed and relocated on at least nine occasions (Adams 1996: 184).

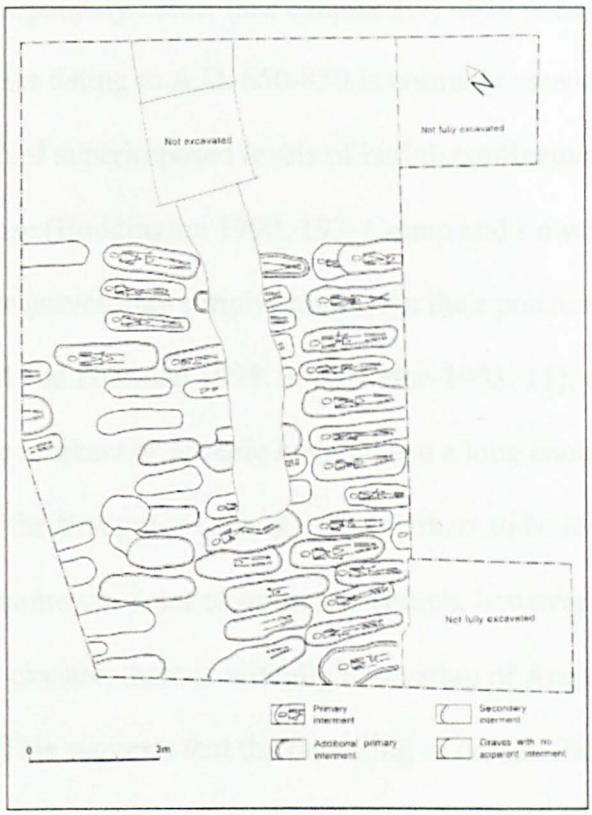


Figure 3.14. The cemetery at Addingham showing empty graves to the west (from Adams 1990: 162).

3.8 Intercutting of graves

Intercutting of graves is common in some cemeteries used during A.D. 650-850 in the north of England but almost entirely absent at others. It must be noted that intercutting burials and multiple burials are sometimes conflated, or at least not clearly differentiated, in site reports. For example, the caption under the illustration for graves 71/24-26 at Wearmouth describes them as "multiple graves" but it appears that there were distinct grave cuts with a single stone setting above (Camp and Lowther 2005: 86). In the present thesis, intercutting graves are defined as those where a later burial clips or disturbs an earlier interment. Where there is any suggestion that this was an intentional process, the graves are considered multiple

burials and dealt with separately below (see chapter 3.9). A high frequency of intercutting in cemeteries dating to A.D. 650-850 is normally considered to be the result of a combination of superimposed levels of burial, confinement of the burial area and longevity of use (Boddington 1990: 197; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 78). Impingement on earlier graves may simply result from their position having been forgotten (e.g. Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 337; Briden 1983: 11), as a result either of the absence of grave markers or of there having been a long enough interval between the cutting of the first grave for any grave markers to be lost. At Jarrow, intercutting is more common in areas closer to the church, however in other areas, such as under the later cloister, there is virtually no overlap of Anglo-Saxon graves (Lowther 2005: 186). This suggests that the favouring of certain focal areas for burial may provide a further explanation for intercutting.

The sample considered in this study has extensive evidence for intercutting of graves. Of the entire sample, 24 site reports explicitly state intercutting has taken place at some time during the cemetery's usage, whereas at only seven is there no evidence of intercutting. At Crayke and Addingham the lack of intercutting is convincingly explained by a combination of the use of grave markers, and a limited duration of burial in the excavated area (Adams 1990: 40-1; 1996: 182). Thus, there is nothing to suggest that had the cemeteries been used for longer, intercutting would not have eventually occurred, as at Pontefract, where phase 1 graves were neatly aligned in rows but were cut by later phases (Wilmott in prep.: 4). At Garton II barrow C34, evidence for a lack of intercutting is provided by the site plan. All graves are aligned in rough strings, end to end. However, the excavation was published in 1905 and the diagram has been stylised (for example the barrow is drawn as a prefect circle) (Mortimer 1905: 21), so it is difficult to accept this as a

realistic representation of the cemetery. The other examples where intercutting is rare, Walkington Wold and Garton Station, are both unusual cemeteries with small numbers of graves. In the former, a group of executed individuals were buried widely-spaced, both spatially and probably chronologically, over a Bronze-Age barrow (Buckberry and Hadley 2007) and at the latter, burials are inserted into a series of Iron Age square barrows (Stead 1987). Thus, it appears that only unusual cemeteries, or those used only for one phase of burial have no intercutting graves. Elsewhere it appears to have been the norm.

3.9 Multiple burial

The interment of two or more people in the same inhumation grave is termed multiple burial, however there are several forms that this can take. Multiple burials can be contemporary, where two or more individuals are buried together at the same time, or consecutive, where an already occupied grave is reopened to add another individual, or a second grave is intentionally dug directly over another. In addition, the spatial relationship between the individuals in a multiple burial can vary: for example two bodies may be buried side by side, or vertically, one above the other.

In the sample considered in this study, all forms of multiple burial are represented. The majority of examples are contemporary burials, including examples where two individuals were buried side-by-side, (e.g. at Garton-on-the-Wolds, Garton II, Norton Bishopsmill, and Viewly Bridge), and one above the other (e.g. at Milfield South, Black Gate, Spofforth, Garton II and Norton Bishopsmill). Contemporary double burial has similarly been found to be more common than consecutive forms in early Anglo-Saxon graves (Stoodley 2002: 106). There are also

examples of consecutive double burial amongst the sample considered in the present study. In some cases the insertion of a secondary burial at a later date disturbed the primary interment, for example at Bamburgh, where the remains of an elderly male were neatly cleared to the sides of a cist burial to allow the later insertion of a middle-aged female (Groves 2003) and at Thwing, where a significant number of graves were dug directly over others, disturbing the interments below (Manby in prep.). In two further cases of consecutive double burial, the underlying interments were not disturbed by the insertion of secondary individuals, but instead a second grave cut was directly positioned over the first. At Jarrow there are nine examples from the Anglo-Saxon phased burials described as "direct super-positioning" (Lowther 2005: 184). In these cases the excavators specifically note that a second grave was dug directly over another without disturbing it. This process also occurred in several graves at Norton Bishopsmill School, including one case where a contemporary double burial (grave 350) was dug directly over an older grave (grave 337) (Johnson 2005: 25). Whilst in some cases one form of double burial is characteristic of a particular site, as at Jarrow where there are no contemporary double burials but only vertical consecutive forms, in other cases all forms of double burial are represented at the same site, for example, contemporary side-by-side, contemporary vertical and consecutive vertical double burials all occur amongst the burials at Norton Bishopsmill School (Johnson 2005; Lowther 2005). In the majority of multiple interments, both individuals are supine and orientated in the same direction (e.g. Milfield South, Spofforth, Norton Bishopsmill School, Jarrow, Garton-on-the-Wolds), however there are notable exceptions. At Garton II a supine individual is buried beside a crouched interment and at Black Gate two middle-aged males are buried one above the other, one is supine and the other prone (Nolan and

Harbottle in press: 34). The only multiple interments orientated in different directions are at Norton Bishopsmill School, where three of the four vertical double burials have one individual aligned west-east while the other is east-west (Johnson 2005: 9).

Double burials are the most common form of multiple burial in the north of England during the middle Anglo-Saxon period, however there are a few examples of greater numbers interred in one grave. There is a triple burial at Walkington Wold, all of whom were males aged between 18 and 35 years who were interred side-by-side. Walkington Wold appears to have been used as a burial site intermittently between the 7th and 11th century, however a radiocarbon date from one interment in the triple burial suggested that was middle Anglo-Saxon in date (A.D. 640-775 to 2σ) (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 312). No individual had a cranium, although only one showed osteological evidence of beheading (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 317). Clearly the individuals at Walkington Wold were unusual, both due to their beheading and/or missing crania and location amongst other graves of execution victims. One further example of triple burial from the sample considered in this thesis may also indicate a link with a sinister meaning. It has already been noted that the latest phase of burial at Ailcy Hill was considered by the excavators to have served as a "deviant" cemetery (see 3.4). One of only two graves from this phase (3b, c. A.D. 780-990) is a triple interment with two adult males placed side by side and an adolescent, possibly another male, placed above (Hall and Whyman 1996: 93). Unlike at Walkington Wold, there is no indication here of any peri-mortem injury, but it is notable nonetheless that another triple burial appears in an unusual burial context at a cemetery in use during A.D. 650-850.

The data presented here suggests that all forms of double burial were a normal feature in cemeteries in middle Anglo-Saxon northern England, albeit one that was used for only a few individuals at any one site. Triple burial, however, appears in only two northern cemeteries utilised during the period A.D. 650-850, in contexts with "deviant" connotations. The identities of those afforded multiple burial in middle Anglo-Saxon England are considered in chapters 6.4 and 7.2.4.

3.10 Position of the body

The vast majority of sites in this sample are dominated by extended, supine inhumations. Whilst the extended, supine interment is one of the features most commonly associated with Christian burial, it appears that it is much more a general feature of the Anglo-Saxon period. For example, Karen Brush (1993: 221) identified that between 50 and 75% of 5th- to 6th-century burials in 45 cemeteries across England were also supine. The 7th-century cemeteries at Uncleby and Howick Heugh are unusual amongst the sample considered in the present thesis, as they mostly consist of crouched inhumations (where the knees are tightly flexed to the chest). Small numbers of crouched burials amongst the graves of otherwise extended individuals also occur infrequently. A small group of three crouched burials (2% of total interments) were encountered in a cluster in the south east of the cemetery at Wearmouth (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 82) and two crouched individuals (3%) were identified in different areas of the cemetery at Viewly Bridge (NAA 2005). Generally, however, crouched burials are absent from middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. In the north of England, crouched burial has been argued to represent culturally British individuals (Eagles 1979: 46; Higham 1992:184; O'Brien 1999:

69), but it is simplistic to consider burial position to be directly related to ethnic character (e.g. Lucy 1999: 14; 2000: 80) and crouched burial does not appear to be confined to the north, where traditional models would indicate a greater British cultural influence (Cramp 1988: 69-78; Faull 1977: 4-8; Miket 1980: 299).

Variation was also apparent in whether the body was laid supine, prone or on its side. Over half of the cemeteries where position was recorded have burials placed on their sides and nearly one quarter have examples of prone burial. Burial on the right side is more common than the left side at the majority of sites, and appears to be especially apparent at those associated with Minsters. Among the Anglo-Saxon burials at Jarrow there are roughly equal numbers of right-sided and supine burials, but no left-sided burials (Lowther 2005: 176-7) and at Black Gate and Wearmouth a notable disparity between right- and left-sided interments is also apparent (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 33-4; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 82). Other cemeteries where right-sided burial outnumbers left-sided examples include Spofforth, Viewly Bridge, and Garton-on-the-Wolds. Only two sites have more left- than right-sided burials, Seaham Flower Field and Norton Bishopsmill School, and in both cases the disparity in numbers of left- and right-sided interments is very small. Ten sites from the sample considered in this study have examples of prone burial. In most cemeteries, less than 5% of the burials are prone. The main exception to this pattern is at Bamburgh, where 23% of individuals were interred face down (Sarah Groves *pers. comm.)* In sum, extended, supine interments characterise the vast majority of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England. Crouched burial appears to become increasingly rare, and the only cemeteries in the region where it dominates have been dated to the 7th century or earlier. Inhumations where the body is flexed,

placed on the side or prone occur intermittently at many sites, but they are always in the minority.

3.11 Burial orientation

At the majority of northern middle Anglo-Saxon sites, the prevailing orientation for graves is west-east,[2] however graves on alternative alignments have been identified in many cemeteries. A small group of cemeteries stand out as having more mixed orientations than the majority of the sample, incorporating west-east and north-south aligned grave cuts, and many orientations in between. These are commonly furnished cemeteries of 7th-century date and include Uncleby and Howick Heugh. In other cases, the majority of graves may follow a uniform alignment, but not the standard west-east. At York Minster, for example, the 8th- to 12th-century burials are orientated northeast-southwest, following the orientation of the remains of the Roman basilica in which they are located (Philips and Heywood 1995: 80-1). At Hartlepool Church Walk, the majority of graves are aligned northwest-southeast, a pattern which reflects the orientation of all contemporary buildings at Hartlepool (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 69) but at Cross Close, a contemporary cemetery in close proximity, burials were orientated north-south. A small numbers of graves may be on a different orientation from the majority: for example, at Hartlepool Church Walk most individuals are interred northwest-southeast but one is southeast-northwest, while at both Seaham and Thornton Steward all burials are west-east except one which is east-west. Small numbers of interments are also on a reverse orientation to the prevailing west-east at Ailcy Hill, Pontefract and Lamel Hill.

[2] Henceforth west-east is used to describe a grave with the long axis aligned from west to east and in which the body is interred with the head to the west. The grave cut of an east-west burial is exactly the same as a west-east grave, however the body is interred reversed, with the head to the east.

Chronological variation in orientation has been identified at several cemeteries in use during A.D. 650-850. At Norton Bishopsmill, orientation changes from northwest-southeast in phase 1 to west-east in phase 2, then returns to the initial alignment in the more disorganised phase 3 (Johnson 2005: 9). A similar pattern occurs at Ailcy Hill, where phase 1 burials are orientated west-east, phase 2 burials average 280° (roughly northwest-southeast) and phase 3 burials vary between 255° and 281° (between southwest-northeast and northwest-southeast) (Hall and Whyman 1996: 73-6). In addition, at Thwing a group of southwest-northeast graves cut a smaller group of earlier west-east graves, suggesting two phases of burial on slightly different alignments (Manby in prep.). Orientation also alters between phases of burial at Jarrow, Whitby, Pontefract and Black Gate (English Heritage 1999; Lowther 2005; Wilmott in prep.; Nolan and Harbottle in press). Variation in grave orientation relating to the spatial position of graves within the cemetery is not so easily identified in the sample considered in the present study as variation through time. One example may be found at Winwick, where some graves in proximity to a Bronze-Age mound appear to take up an orientation that follows its contours, whilst others adopt a more uniform west-east direction (Freke and Thacker 1987-8), suggesting that, in this case, the location of the grave in the cemetery was the primary influence upon orientation.

Numerous explanations have been presented for the variations observed in grave alignment during the Anglo-Saxon period. There has been a long-standing assumption that Christian graves were consistently aligned west-east (e.g. Hyslop 1963: 191), implying that those that diverged from this orientation were influenced by pagan tradition. For example, Margaret Faull (1977: 5-8) equated northerly or north-easterly burials in the cemeteries of North Yorkshire with "native" British

individuals, as the Roman and Iron Age burials in this region followed that orientation. Grave orientation is also frequently assigned to a desire to align graves on topographical features. For example, Sonia Chadwick Hawkes (1976: 42) suggested that graves at Finglesham were orientated towards a settlement, but acknowledged that there was no archaeological evidence to prove the existence of any such occupation site. The different orientations of graves at Church Walk and Cross Close in Hartlepool were explained by the influence of two different focal structures, the settlement and a hypothetical standing monument respectively (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 79). Individual graves on unusual alignments have also been associated with "deviant" burials or unusual people (e.g. Hall and Whyman 1996: 98; Hadley in press; Wade-Martins 1980: 189).

Small variations about a prevailing grave alignment have been explained by the "solar hypothesis" which was first systematically applied to two middle Anglo-Saxon sites at Caistor-on-Sea (Nf) and Burgh Castle (Nf) (Rahtz 1978: 5; Wells and Green 1973) and a few years later at Finglesham (Hawkes 1976: 48). The solar hypothesis stated that the grave was aligned with the sunrise on the day of burial, thus explaining the slight variation in grave alignment in cemeteries by their association with the position of sunrise, which varied throughout the seasons. Further investigation has, however, criticised this hypothesis. The argument that there was a predominance of early spring and autumn orientations at Finglesham has been questioned, as this contradicts patterns of higher winter death rates observed in modern populations and amongst plague records from the 14th century (Brown 1983: 323). Furthermore, it has also been suggested that slight variation in grave alignment is more likely an artefact of random error that intention (Boddington 1990: 194; Brown 1983: 326). Conceivably, variation in grave orientation could be influenced

by a multitude of factors including a hiatus between burial phases, the establishment of a new burial focus, the introduction of different burial rituals, a reassessment of the compass points or even a different individual or group with the responsibility to orientate graves.

3.12 Grave markers, grave forms and containers for the body

The majority of graves c. A.D. 650-850 are earth-cut features in which the body was interred directly onto the earthen grave floor. These have been generally termed plain earth graves. However, it needs to be recognised that there are many forms of additional structural features – for example grave markers, linings, supports, covers – or containers – such as coffins – that can be identified in the archaeological record. Whilst stone survives well in archaeological contexts, wooden structures are unlikely to have been preserved in many cases. At the majority of the sites in the present study, wooden grave furniture has been identified by the presence of metal fittings, however, it is by no means certain that all wooden structures would have had metal components. Indeed, at the later Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Barton-upon-Humber, wooden coffins preserved in waterlogged burial conditions were shown to have been constructed with dowel pegs, not metal nails (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982: 301), and thus they would not have left any trace in most burial environments. In consequence it must be borne in mind that wooden structures may have been utilised in middle Anglo-Saxon grave construction more frequently than the archaeological record indicates.

Conclusive evidence for grave markers has been identified at several 7th- to 9th-century sites in northern England. Stone memorials were recovered from burial

contexts at the Minster cemeteries of Hartlepool Cross Close, Jarrow, Wearmouth and York (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 74-82, 93; Lowther 2005: 181-2; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 85-86; Wilmott in prep.: 14-15). For example, at Jarrow a rectangular slab of worked stone was propped against the end of an Anglo-Saxon grave with a packing stone to hold it steady (Lowther 2005: 181-2) and carved markers with 8th-9th-century style crosses and names were found at York Minster, Wearmouth, Jarrow and Hartlepool Cross Close (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 74-82; Lang 1995: 455; Okasha 1999: 113). The use of wooden markers can also be postulated at several other sites. For example, post-holes were encountered at the head and foot ends of graves at Black Gate (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 29), Crayke (Adams 1990: 39-40) and Thwing (Manby in prep.). Furthermore, the neat alignments of graves at cemeteries such as Milfield South and Addingham (Scull and Harding 1990: 22; Adams 1996: 181) strongly suggest that graves were marked for some considerable time by markers that have since disappeared.

That the use of grave markers constructed in both stone and wood can be demonstrated at cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 raises the question of what these different forms of marker signified. Stone grave markers appear mainly in Minster contexts and appear to reflect the religious affiliation or status of those buried with them. Indeed the names carved into stones at Wearmouth, Jarrow and Hartlepool appear to be those of ecclesiastics. For example, at Wearmouth a marker dated to the 8th century on stylistic grounds reads "Here in this tomb rests Herebericht the priest in the body" (Cramp 2005: 193). Name-stones from Hartlepool Cross Close encountered during antiquarian excavations at the head-end of graves, record six female names and two male names. The stylistic features of these name-stones date them to the 7th-8th century, which concurs with radiocarbon dates of A.D.

660-940 and A.D. 640-780 obtained from two skeletons from the Cross Close cemetery who were not buried with markers (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 79). The preponderance of female names fits well with our knowledge of the prominent female ecclesiastical community at Hartlepool during this period (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 133-42). In further cases at Jarrow, stones carved with personal names and dated to between the 7th and 8th centuries may also have served as grave markers (Cramp 2005: 197-199). Any similar assessment of the frequency and distribution of wooden markers is hindered by their poor preservation, however from the available evidence it is apparent that they were more widely used in a greater variety of cemetery contexts than stone markers. In addition to these examples of archaeologically visible markers, it must be noted that other, perhaps more transient, forms of grave marking may have left no trace, for example the covering of the grave with a small mound of earth.

Variation in the construction of graves is encountered at several sites. Occasionally graves themselves were cut into the bedrock. At East Boldon a 19th-century excavation identified a rock-cut grave, which was dated to the 7th century based on the presence of a gold and garnet brooch or buckle (Lucy 1999: 39). More frequently, stone is used as a structural material in the grave. The form of stone-lined graves varies considerably from site to site, from complete linings with lids and floors to partial slab linings and rubble packing. Excavations at Occaney Beck in the 1940s encountered a cist grave aligned west-east with a lining made of limestone slabs. The grave contained the remains of a possibly male individual and two bronze Style II annular brooches dated to the 7th century (Lucy 1999: 38). Several 7th- to 8th-century graves at Bamburgh also contained partial stone linings and lids (Groves 2006: 124). At Bamburgh the partial cists are more like grave-cuts lined with slabs

than representative of any conscious attempt to create a stone coffin, and it has been suggested that these containers may also have been partially wooden (Groves 2006: 124; in press a), although there is no archaeological evidence to support this hypothesis. A single grave lined with a limestone slab on the north side and a piece of sandstone on the west side was identified at Back Gladstone Street, Hartlepool (Daniels and Loveluck 2007: 94). In addition, five rubble-lined and mortared graves at Black Gate have been suggested to represent prototypes of the more uniform sandstone-lined graves from the post-Conquest phases of the cemetery (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 31). Stone cists occur frequently in south-east Scotland, Anglesey and Pembrokeshire during the entire Anglo-Saxon period (Alcock 1992: 125-6), and as noted in chapter 2.1, they are commonly linked to British burial practices. Unlike the southern Scottish examples of cist burial, which tend to appear in large numbers in so-called long-cist cemeteries, the cist burials noted amongst the present sample generally occur in small numbers amongst cemeteries where graves were otherwise of the plain-earth type. The examples of cist graves described here are encountered in the northerly counties of Northumbria, County Durham and North Yorkshire, where influences from the rites of southern Scotland can be expected to have been strong. It is plausible that cist burials such as those from Bamburgh and Black Gate were directly influenced by the cist burial rites of south-eastern Scotland.

The use of stones to surround or prop up parts of the body is widely known from later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (especially of the 10th and 11th century) but it appears that this practice has much earlier origins. At Pontefract a single burial from a phase of graves radiocarbon dated to the 7th-8th century had stones placed at the shoulders (Willmott in prep.: 14). Stone was also used in an unusual manner at Adwick-le-Street, also radiocarbon dated to the 7th-8th centuries, where an individual

was buried with a large limestone block over the torso and several other stones by the head (Harvey 2008) (Figure 3.15). At the 7th- to 8th-century cemetery at Hartlepool Cross Close, the antiquarian Gage (1836: 480) records that "the heads [of the burials] lay upon stones as upon pillows", and at Wearmouth, a wide range of stones were also placed at the head, feet and over the bodies of 27 interments dated to between the 7th and 11th centuries (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 85). Although not as frequent as at Wearmouth, stones in a wide range of positions were also found in Anglo-Saxon graves at Jarrow (Lowther 2005: 180). A final example where stones were placed in graves that may date as early as the 7th century is from Black Gate, where stones

Figure 3.15. Stone block over the torso of skeleton 2 from Adwick (photo courtesy of ARCUS).

were placed at either side of the head of 14 burials, while arrangements including head covers, described as "head boxes", were found in three graves (Nolan and Harbottle in press: 30). It appears that a variety of stone inclusions were utilised in burial rites during the 7th-9th centuries. These appear to be part of a relatively new

funerary practice that becomes increasingly common throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period. The exact function of these stones remains unclear. In some cases, most obviously when stones are positioned under the head, it appears that they served to support the body (Cramp 2005: 180; Nolan and Harbottle in press: 30). In other cases, it is plausible that stone supported organic grave inclusions, as was the case later at Barton-upon-Humber, where stones either side of the head of an individual supported a grass-filled pillow which had been preserved in waterlogged conditions (Rodwell 2007: 26-7). It is an important reminder of what may be missing from the archaeological record in most cases.

At Thwing, a variety of post-holes, sockets and ledges were included in the grave cut (Manby in prep.). These may indicate further forms of grave structure that were utilised in cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850. The kinds of features identified at Thwing are reminiscent of the range of grave structures identified by A.C. Hogarth (1982) at the early to middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery at St Peter's Broadstairs (K). The structures at St Peter's included "integral" grave features such as sockets, ledges, and floor slots and "external" features such as post-holes, different forms of ditches and kerb slots, and therefore presented a much greater variability than those identified at Thwing. Hogarth (1982: 111-5) suggested that these features at St Peter's may have supported organic grave covers, held posts that marked graves or supported some above-grave structure, and it appears plausible that the post-holes, sockets and ledges at Thwing performed a similar function.

Wooden containers are one of the most common features identified in burials during the period A.D. 650-850 in northern England. They have been positively identified at 21 sites in the sample considered in this study, and it is likely that poor preservation has resulted in them having been missed at other sites where excavation

was anything less than meticulous. Sites where interments were made in coffins span the entire 7th to 9th centuries and include cemeteries associated with extant prehistoric monuments (e.g. Garton-on-the-Wolds, Kemp Howe), churches (e.g. Wearmouth, Jarrow) and other forms of cemetery (e.g. Norton Bishopsmill, Viewly Bridge). Rarely, wood or coffin stains are preserved, permitting the shapes of coffins to be determined, for example: at Pontefract both parallel-sided and tapered coffins were identified. The latter is common at Anglo-Saxon and medieval sites including Barton-upon-Humber (Rodwell and Rodwell 1982) and *Hamwic* (Anglo-Saxon Southampton) (Morton 1992: 48). Another form of wooden container that appears particularly characteristic of 8th- and 9th-century northern cemeteries is the chest – a container with a hinged lid and, sometimes, metal straps, nails, locks and keys. Chest burials have been identified at 17 sites in the present sample, including Spofforth, Norton Bishopsmill, Ailcy Hill, Thwing and York Minster (Hall and Whyman 1996; Johnson 2005; Manby in prep.; NAA 2002; Phillips and Heywood 1995: 83) (see chapter 7.3 for further discussion).

It has been argued that, where coffins or chests are not found in every grave at a cemetery, their use may reflect personal attributes of the individuals who were buried in them (Hadley 2000a: 163). A relationship between social status and coffin burial has, for example, been suggested at the 5th- to 7th-century cemetery at Sewerby where four burials were made in coffins, three of which also contained elaborate grave goods (Hirst 1985: 32-3). However, whilst coffin burial can be considered a greater investment in the burial rite than a plain earth grave, not everyone buried in a coffin was necessarily high-status. Certainly, Bede refers to coffin burial for higher-status individuals in several instances, but in one case he mentions a servant whose

coffin had already been constructed before he made an unexpected recovery (HE iv, 19; HE v, 5; Buckberry 2004: 173).

The majority of middle Anglo-Saxon graves in northern England were not elaborated with archaeologically recoverable structures. While it must be borne in mind that an unknown number of graves may have incorporated features that have not survived in the archaeological record, the dataset considered in this chapter has provided sufficient evidence to characterise a variety of ways in which a proportion of middle Anglo-Saxon graves were elaborated. The forms of stone linings vary considerably across the region, and at some sites it appears this is dictated by influences from the northern- and western-British cist burial rite. Wooden containers can only be confidently identified where they incorporated metal fittings. The forms of these containers appear much more uniform across the region than stone elaborations and one particular rite involving burial in chests with hinged lids is encountered intermittently across the entire region during the 8th-9th centuries. The same wide variety of elaborations that have been noted amongst later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the region (Buckberry 2004) is not seen in the earlier cemeteries considered here, however some forms of elaboration more commonly associated with post-9th century practices, such as the placement of stones on or around the body, appear to have parallels in the 7th and 8th centuries.

3.13 Adorning the body

Decline in the use of grave goods is considered to be a fundamental feature of the transition between early and later Anglo-Saxon burial practices (see chapter 2.1). Eight of the 11 characteristics that Miranda Hyslop (1963: 190-1) identified as

defining the funerary rites of the 7th century explicitly deal with changes in grave furnishing.[3] The character and distribution of grave goods has also featured heavily in more recent studies of middle Anglo-Saxon burial (Boddington 1990; Geake 1992; 1997; 2002). As a result, there are many theories suggesting why changes in grave furnishing occurred. In research of the mid-20th century, the Church was credited with responsibility. The disappearance of grave goods was considered by Audrey Meaney and Sonia Hawkes (1970: 53) to be "a demonstration of the Church's success in combating one of the outward shows of heathenism". However, this fails to explain supposedly Christian, furnished, so-called final phase burials. It is unlikely that the Church was occasionally prepared to "wink at" burial with grave goods (Meaney and Hawkes 1970: 53) had this been at odds with Christian practices of the time (Hadley 2000a: 151; Samson 1999: 131). Alternatively, it has been argued that the Church did not care sufficiently about burial practices to issue rulings concerning their use (Bullough 1983: 186), but this suggestion is also questionable. The condemnation of the burial of holy items such at the consecrated host from medieval churches (James 1989: 26), indicates that Christian authorities did proscribe practices involving grave goods where they saw fit, so to suggest that they were indifferent to whether burials were furnished or not seems unsupported. Even churchmen were not exempt from burial with grave goods. The burial of St Cuthbert (d. A.D. 687) included textiles, a chalice, paten, ivory comb and a gold cross set with garnets amongst other items (Campbell 1982: 80-1; Hadley 2000a: 161), hardly the humble grave that would be expected had the church proscribed such grave provision. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the early medieval Church never widely

[3] The features of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices recorded by Hyslop that relate to grave goods are: a paucity of brooches; differences in form of necklaces including the materials used for beads and the method by which they are strung; the frequent occurrence of pendants; the use of lined pins to fasten garments; the presence of small, plain buckles; bronze or silver thread boxes with females; the rarity of weapons; and the high proportion of graves containing only a knife.

condemned grave goods (Blair 2005: 234). Thus we must look elsewhere to explain the changes in the deposition of grave goods seen in the archaeological record.

There are many examples of cemeteries utilised between A.D. 650 and 850 with varied assemblages of grave goods from the north of England. In some cemeteries, grave goods are numerous and encountered with the majority of interments. For example, at Milfield North, all but one of five burials contained grave goods, including iron and copper knives and buckles, annular brooches, pins and a chatelaine complex (Scull and Harding 1990: 9-11). At Street House several graves contained elaborate furnishings including a sword with decorated scabbard and gold jewellery of Kentish style (Sherlock 2008). One particular grave, presumably of a high-status female, was especially well furnished and included a bed, several pendants, a jet pin and a small box. In addition, at Lilla Howe a burial was inserted into a barrow with gold and silver grave goods, including a ring, brooch and strap ends (Elgee and Elgee 1933: 185-6; Lucy 1999: 38). Such furnished graves tend to be dated to the 6th and 7th centuries on the basis of stylistic affinities of the recovered grave goods (see above, 3.2). In other cemeteries the majority of interments and unfurnished and grave goods appear only intermittently. In many cases these sites have radiocarbon dates to support their chronologies, which centre around the 8th and 9th centuries. Glass and amber beads and a knife were found in the grave of a 40-45 year old female radiocarbon dated to A.D. 758-1028 at Thwing (Geake 1997: 159; Manby in prep.), at Pontefract, a pair of bronze tweezers were found in a grave from the second phase of burial which was radiocarbon dated to c. A.D. 840-1220 (Wilmott in prep.: 31) and at Adwick-le-Street the burial of a 18-25 year old female with a buckle was dated to A.D. 660-780 (Harvey 2008).

The forms of grave goods that occur across England in the 7th to 9th centuries have been comprehensively studied. Certain forms have been described as characteristic of middle Anglo-Saxon assemblages, including knives, gold and garnet jewellery, various forms of necklace, disc pendants and new forms of idiosyncratic finds such as beaver's teeth, crystal balls, glass beads and lumps of lignite (Boddington 1990: 181 Geake 1999: 203). Amongst the cemeteries considered in this thesis, certain grave goods were characteristic of the entire 7th- to 9th-century period. Knives, for example, were most common at sites where other grave goods suggested a 7th-century or earlier date (e.g. East Boldon, Acklam Wold, Market Weighton, Womersley, and Milfield North), but also appeared intermittently in largely unfurnished cemeteries, for which radiocarbon dates indicated 8th- and 9th-century use (e.g. Ailcy Hill, Thwing, Adwick-le-Street). In other cases certain forms of grave furnishings characterised a certain group of cemeteries. Many of the sites that were in use from the 8th-9th centuries and where a range of grave elaborations such as coffins, chests and grave linings were present, also included a distinctive group of grave goods. These include coins, beads, pebbles, pins and combs, and sometimes knives, buckles and rings. Certain objects that had appeared intermittently in 7th-century graves in the region, for example weapons, workboxes, chatelaines and brooches no longer appear in graves in these later cemeteries. Roman or Anglo-Saxon coins were recovered from three burials at Wearmouth, one each from Pontefract, Black Gate and Spofforth, and four from York Minster, all of which also included wooden containers (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 79; NAA 2002; Nolan and Harbottle in press.: 34; Phillips and Heywood 1995: 90-2; Wilmott in prep.). Beads made of glass or amber were encountered in two Anglo-Saxon graves at Jarrow, one of which was the coffined burial of a male, and at the neck of a woman in chest

burial from Thwing (Lowther 2005: 182-3; Manby in prep.). Quartz pebbles were encountered in 11 7th- to 8th-century graves at Adwick-le-Street (Harvey 2008) and in several graves at Whitby (English Heritage 1999; the precise number is not specified) (see chapter 7.5.1). Thus, smaller numbers of a more restricted range of different forms of grave goods occur in cemeteries where more varied grave elaborations are found, than occur in cemeteries without such elaborations.

Evidence for shrouded burials comes from three sources: the presence of the original shroud material; the position of the skeleton; or the occurrence of shroud pins. Only one example of a possible shroud cloth can be found in middle Anglo-Saxon northern England, at Quernmore. In the 1970s two burials in roughly boat-shaped coffins were excavated (Edwards 1973: 289-301). One contained a woollen cloth, over 5ft square, which contained the remains of human nail and hair but no bone (a result of the acid, waterlogged burial conditions which preserved the cloth). No further analysis was undertaken of this material, limiting the conclusions that can be drawn about its function, but its discovery, wrapped around the corpse in this case, suggests it was a shroud or winding sheet of some sort. In a detailed study on depositional disturbance at Raunds Furnells, Andy Boddington associated "parallel sided burials" (where ankles were no more than 10cm apart and no skeletal elements lay outside a line drawn from the shoulders to ankles) with tight shrouding (Boddington 1987: 36-7). Accordingly, bone position is considered indicative of shrouding at several sites from northern England. At Wearmouth, Seaham Flower Field and Spofforth several individuals were found in a compact position considered to have been due to shrouding (Cramp and Lowther 2005: 85; NAA 2001: 3; NAA 2002: 9; Hadley 2004: 110). At Viewly Bridge, the right shoulder of burial 1622 was "neatly bundled", and this was suggested to be evidence of the use of a winding sheet

or shroud (NAA 2005: 34). The identification of shroud pins can be problematic as similar pins were also used in clothing or as hair fastenings (Bailey in press: 48). Among the cemeteries considered in this study pins occur very infrequently, and at only two sites, Whitby and Black Gate, have pins that may have fastened shrouds been encountered. This rarity of shroud pins in northern English contexts makes it unlikely that shroud pins could reflect a "missing link between furnished and unfurnished graves" (Geake 1997: 66), however small numbers of pins do not dictate that shrouding was rare. If pins were preliminary or additional fasteners, to fix cloth before it was sewn, those that have been located archaeologically could have been those that were missed when the others were removed, or extras put in to strengthen the sewing (for a similar argument for later medieval shrouds see Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 110).

Shrouded individuals were placed in coffins as part of the later medieval burial rite (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 111), and the combination of both covering and container may have also been utilised in much earlier church associated cemeteries. Burials in compact positions characteristic of shrouding were found in coffins at Wearmouth (Boddington 1996: 35; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 85), suggesting that both rites were used together in some cases. Evidence for shrouds and coffins was also encountered frequently at the same sites, for example at Seaham Flower Field, Whitby and Addingham. Unfortunately it was rarely possible to determine from reports whether shrouds and coffins were definitely utilised in the same grave, and therefore it remains unclear how frequently shrouded burial were placed into containers in middle Anglo-Saxon graves.

It appears that the use of grave goods was never totally abandoned during the middle Anglo-Saxon period in northern England, although a decline in the number of

furnished graves and the range of goods utilised is apparent between the 7th and 9th centuries. The occurrence of shrouding is more difficult to determine as, although it is clear that it was a rite used in some cemeteries during the middle Anglo-Saxon period, the transience of the shroud material means that evidence is unlikely to have survived to be recovered archaeologically.

3.14 The landscape setting of cemeteries c. A.D. 650-850

The landscape setting of cemetery sites is an important component of funerary research (Parker Pearson 1993: 227). An exploration of the relationships between people, cemeteries and the wider landscape can compliment large-scale studies that seek to characterise funerary practices. Study of the positioning of the dead in the landscape can reveal the ways in which they were incorporated into social practices and cosmologies, including the barriers that were used to distance or protect the dead and the particular landscapes (for example, places, views, features) that were associated with them (Parker Pearson 1999: 124; Tilley 1993; 1994). The placing of the dead within the landscape is one of the most visible means by which communities can express links to ancestors, land and the living, and through this create a social geography that ties into social and cultural attitudes to both death and life (Hodder 1980: 162; Parker Pearson 1999: 141; Saxe 1970; Semple 2004: 139; Van Gennep 1960). The provision of a landscape context for funerary studies extends our focus away from the false boundaries set by the limits of excavation to view the cemetery in more real, holistic setting, one where people lived as well as died.

Studies of the Anglo-Saxon landscape are numerous and diverse. Common themes are economic and political forms of land use, incorporating natural resources,

settlement, farming, urban development, trade, routeways, boundaries, governance and defence (e.g. Hooke 1998; Pantos 2004; Reynolds 1999; 2002; 2003; Semple 2004; Williams 1999). Where study of the Anglo-Saxon landscape has been integrated with analysis of the locations of funerary sites, several major areas of research have emerged: first, the location and relocation of cemeteries (Boddington 1990: 181; Faull 1976: 232; Hyslop 1963: 191; Lucy 2000: 183) (see chapters 2.3 and 4.5); second, the topography and location of churches (Blair 1988a; 2005; Morris 1989); and finally, the locations in which extant monuments were reused as features within cemeteries (Bradley 1987; Lucy 1992; Petts 2002; Semple 1998; 2002; 2003; Williams 1997; 2006). The present discussion focuses on the former, the physical location of cemeteries within the landscape, as is appears to have been afforded comparatively less attention in recent years than the topographical setting of churches and locations of cemeteries associated with extant monuments.

Only one major study that explicitly addresses the physical location of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in northern England has been completed. In her study of 5th- to 8th-century cemeteries in East Yorkshire, Sam Lucy (1998) concluded that cremation cemeteries were more often found at higher altitudes on slopes facing south west and over 500m from water, whilst inhumation cemeteries were generally located on much more varied terrain but were found more commonly on sand or gravel terraces (Lucy 1998: 79-80). She also identified a trend towards increasing marginalisation of the dead between the 5th and 8th centuries, in the form of the location of cemeteries increasingly further from settlements (Lucy 1998: 99). Whilst this study was ground-breaking in its originality and scope, some objections to Lucy's conclusions can be raised. For example, she assumed that the distribution of cemeteries she identified reflected active choices made in the Anglo-Saxon period,

whereas, in fact, the distribution might have been influenced by biases created by selective excavation and differential preservation. Moreover, statistical methods were applied to small datasets in a way which provides misleading impressions of significance: for example, only four cremation cemeteries were used to suggest a statistically significant tendency for this type of site to be located far from water (Lucy 1998: 80, fig 7.40). Furthermore, Lucy (1998: 99) states that settlements contemporary with the cemeteries she discusses tended to cluster on low slopes and valleys. No evidence is provided to support this generalisation. In fact, archaeological evidence for the location of settlements in early to middle Anglo-Saxon Yorkshire is extremely limited (Richards 2000: 38) and unlikely to be comprehensive enough to permit the assumption that it presents a reliable representation of the real spread of settlement through the landscape. In sum, the way in which Lucy's study seeks to contextualise burial sites within the wider landscape is admirable, but it is sometimes unclear whether her results reflect decisions made during the Anglo-Saxon period or are a consequence of excavation strategies and the limitations of the dataset available at the time.

In the following discussion the landscape location of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England is investigated. In chapter 1.7, the dataset was interrogated for evidence of bias caused by selective excavation and differential preservation across the region. It was concluded that few cemeteries had been identified west of the Pennines, probably due to the poor preservation of human bone in the acid soils characteristic of the north west of England. Otherwise, it appeared that the excavation strategies had not overly biased the sample towards sites located in any particular kind of landscape. As a result, the dataset used in the present study is considered sufficiently representative of the actual distribution of middle Anglo-

Saxon cemeteries in northern England for conclusions to be drawn about the landscapes in which burial sites were located.

All of the cemeteries from northern England that were in use between A.D. 650 and 850 were mapped onto reconstructions of the landscape of early medieval England drawn from modern studies of the Anglo-Saxon period. These included maps of the natural landscape (relief, soil geology, land quality, waterways, forestation)[4] and the Roman road network.[5] Distribution maps were produced from the database of 77 cemeteries described in chapter 1.7 in ArcGIS 9.

Cemeteries in use during A.D. 650 and 850 were distributed widely throughout the lowlands of northern England (Figure 3.16). No sites were located on the highest land (over 500m above sea level) and only a minority were found on moderately elevated land (between 200-500m above sea level). Groups of sites were also clustered along the routes of large valleys such as Wharfedale. All but a small minority of cemeteries were located in or on the borders of champion land overlying drift or alluvial geology, generally considered ideal for arable farming (Figure 3.17). The minority not located near good agricultural land were found on the borders of moderate and poor lands, on the edge of moorland, fell and rough pasture, or on the coast. All of the largest cemeteries were located centrally on flat, good quality arable

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[4] Data for the natural landscape of Anglo-Saxon England was taken from a range of sources. Modern maps were used for the physical landscape, land quality, soil geology and waterways (Hill 1981; Roberts and Wrathmell 2002: 32, 34, 38, 64). It is generally acknowledged that these landscape features are unlikely to have changed significantly since the Anglo-Saxon period, therefore utilising modern maps to represent the physical landscape is adequate (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002: 37). Locations of Anglo-Saxon woodland were reconstructed from Domesday and place-name evidence for settlements ending in –leah, –hyrst, –thveit and –feld (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002: 20-21).

[5] The Roman road network used here was mapped by the Birmingham Roman Roads Project (available at http://www.brrp.bham.ac.uk/ maps/roads-in-britain.gif). It is acknowledged that this map does not take into account changes in the use of these routes since the 5th century.

land (Figure 3.18). In Cumbria, where good arable land is scarce, the larger cemeteries were positioned on the best arable land available. The limited number of sites located on higher and less agriculturally-productive ground tended to be smaller than the cemeteries on flatter, good quality land. However, given the lack of completely excavated cemeteries amongst this group, this pattern should not be overemphasised.

Comparison of the locations of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 with areas where place-name evidence suggests dense woodland may have existed, indicates that cemeteries tended to avoid such landscapes (Figure 3.19). Clusters of woodland-related names can be found around the western reaches of the River Tyne, southern Cumbria and an area running north between the modern cities of Sheffield and Leeds. These areas are largely mutually exclusive with the distribution of cemeteries. Extensive archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the area around Sheffield and Leeds, in particular, but as yet no evidence has been encountered for cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in these areas. It is perhaps the case that this region was woodland during the 7^{th}-9^{th} centuries and that this made it an inappropriate location for cemeteries.

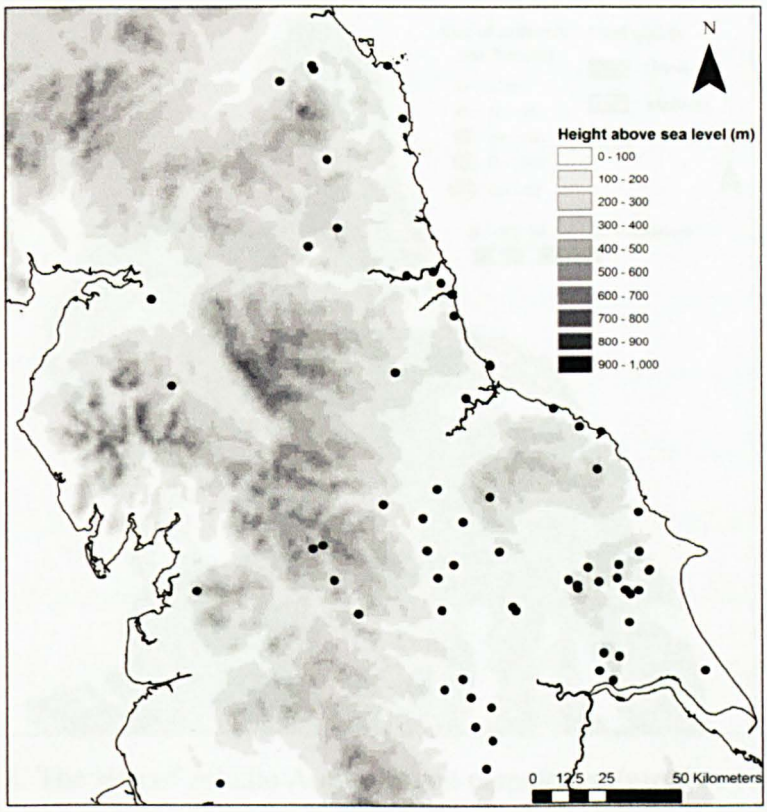

Figure 3.16. The location of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in relation to relief.

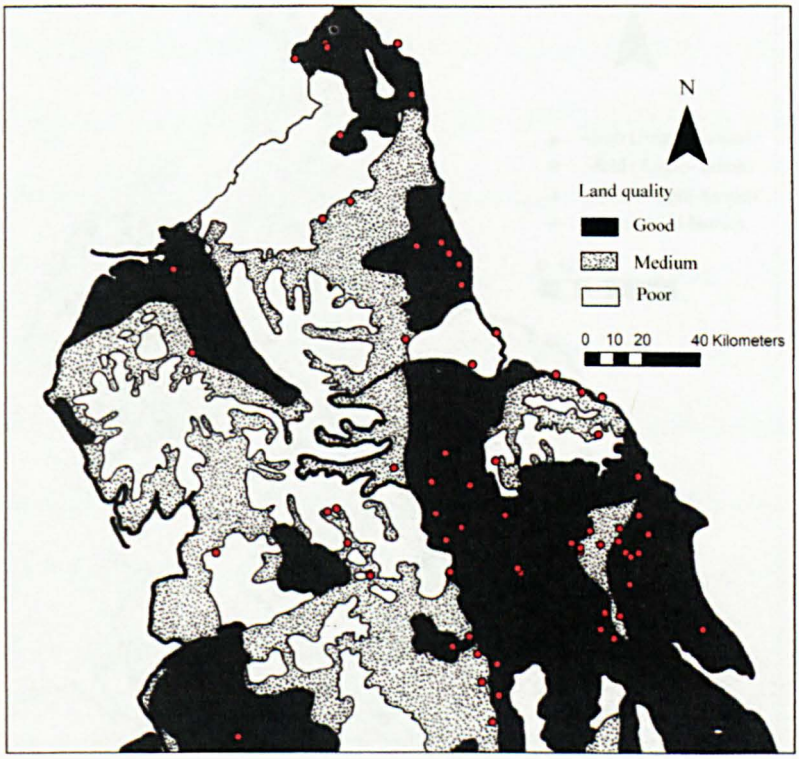

Figure 3.17. The location of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in relation to land quality.

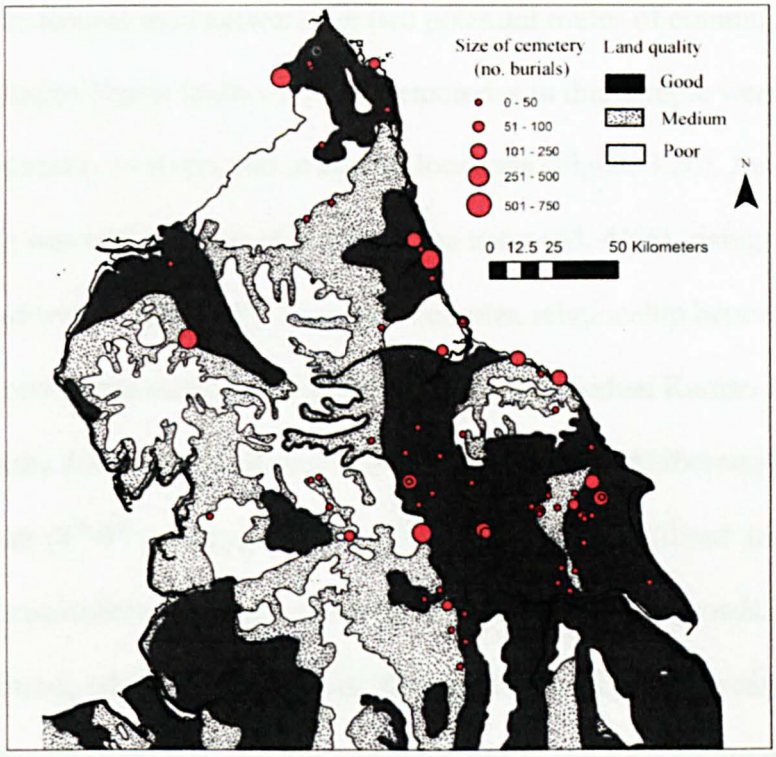

Figure 3.18. The size of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (number of excavated burials) in relation to land quality.

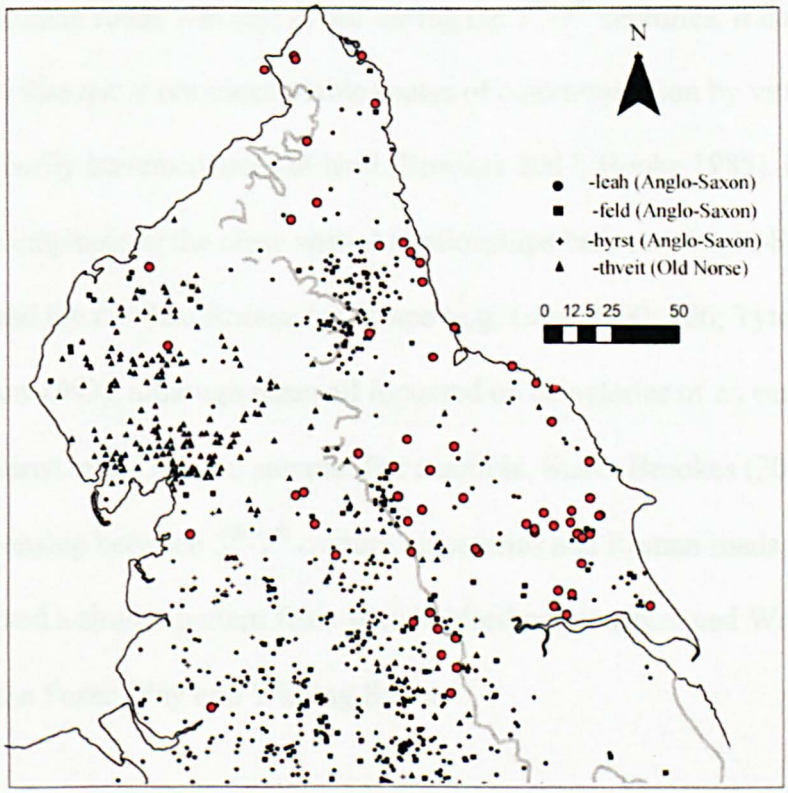

Figure 3.19. The location of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in relation to place-name evidence for wooded areas.

Rivers and the Roman road network are two potential routes of communication through the Anglo-Saxon landscape. The cemeteries in this sample were generally located in proximity to rivers and in coastal locations (Figure 3.20). Just under half of the sample was within 300m of a river or the coast (44, 41%), rising to 79% (85) within 1km of water (Table 3.1). There is a complex relationship between the locations of cemeteries dated to A.D. 650-850 and the residual Roman infrastructure. Two burial sites directly reuse Roman monuments: those at Aldborough (7th century) and Binchester (8th-9th century). However, whilst cemeteries utilised during A.D. 650-850 are encountered in areas served by a network of Roman roads, for example along Dere Street, which ran from York, through Catterick and Newcastle and then beyond Hadrian's Wall, few cemeteries are located in close proximity to the roads themselves (Figure 3.21). In fact, less than 20% of cemeteries are within 1km of a major Roman routeway (Table 3.2). Whilst it is not entirely clear to what degree the network of Roman roads was still in use during the 7th-9th centuries, it has been hypothesised that many remained viable routes of communication by virtue of their locations in easily traversed areas of land (Brookes 2007; Hooke 1985). Previous studies have emphasised the close spatial relationships between Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and the residual Roman landscape (e.g. Lucy 2000: 126; Tyler 1992: 73-5; Williamson 1993), although these all focussed on cemeteries of an earlier date to those considered in the present sample. For example, Stuart Brookes (2007) found a strong relationship between 5th-7th century cemeteries and Roman roads in east Kent, and highlighted a similar pattern from sites in Northamptonshire and Warwickshire sited along the Fosse Way and Watling Street.

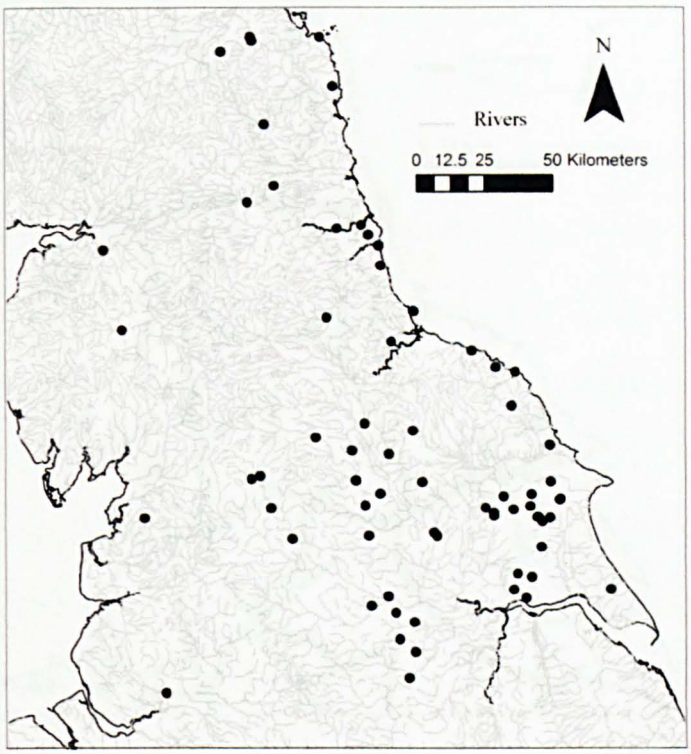

Figure 3.20. Middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in relation to major rivers.

Distance from water (m)	Proportion of cemeteries	
	%	Cumulative %
< 100	16	16
100-200	14	30
200-300	11	41
300-500	2	43
500-1000	36	79

Table 3.1. Distance of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from waterways.

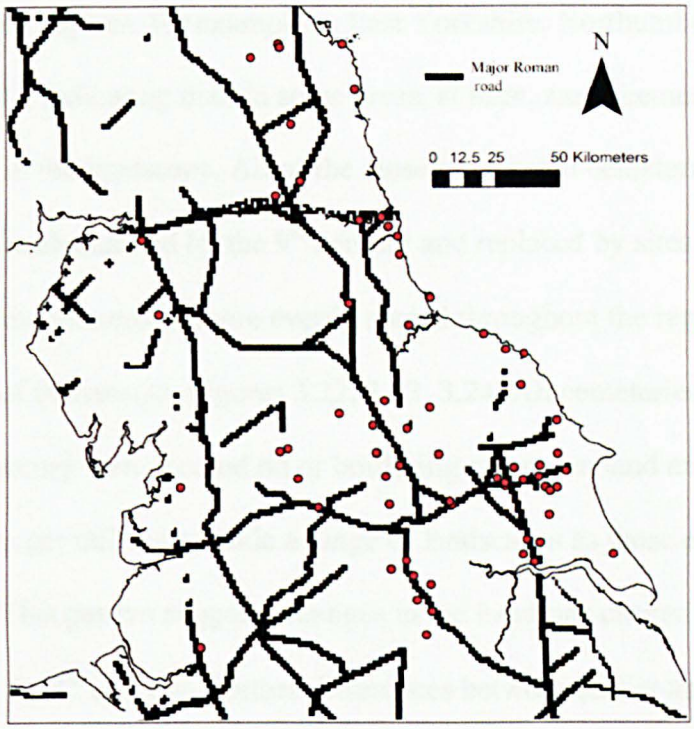

Figure 3.21. Middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in relation to major Roman Roads.

Distance from Roman road (m)	Proportion of cemeteries	
	%	Cumulative %
< 100	0	0
100-200	3	3
200-300	0	3
300-500	8	11
500-1000	8	19

Table 3.2. Distance of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from major Roman roads.

3.15 The location of cemeteries c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England: a chronological perspective

The evidence collated from northern England indicates changes in the character of funerary landscapes from the 7th to 9th centuries. During the 7th century, there were frequently multiple, small cemeteries (with under 50 interments) scattered unevenly throughout the landscape of northern England. These have been encountered closely

grouped in certain regions, for example in East Yorkshire, Northumberland and along Wharfedale, indicating that, in some areas, at least, small cemeteries were densely located in the landscape. All of the closely clustered cemeteries in use during the 7th century are abandoned by the 9th century and replaced by sites which are, in contrast, much less numerous, more evenly spread throughout the region and contain larger numbers of interments. Figures 3.22, 3.23, 3.24. All cemeteries established during the 8th century were located on or bordering champion land and these later cemeteries no longer utilised as wide a range of landscapes as those established in the 7th century. This pattern suggests changes in the locations chosen for burial grounds during the 8th century. Further differences between earlier and later cemeteries in this sample might be used to suggest that communities were using their burial sites in different ways. The multiple cemeteries in use from the 7th century identified in Northumberland and East Yorkshire, for example, present a wide variety of burial practices. These sites are also often small, suggesting they may have served small local populations. By the 9th century, the topography of cemetery sites has become restricted to two major forms: large community cemeteries and one large or multiple small cemeteries in one location, linked to an ecclesiastical centre. In both cases the size of the burial population associated with one funerary site, be that a single cemetery or an entire ecclesiastical complex, indicates that they served larger communities, perhaps from multiple settlements, for longer periods of time. The archaeological evidence for the relationship between cemeteries and Minsters in northern England from the 7th century is supported by documentary evidence for increasing input of the church into funerary rites. Indeed, late 10th and 11th century lawcodes highlight a conflict between long-established Minsters and relatively new parish churches over control of burial rites, implying therefore that prior to parochial

developments in the late 10th century, Minsters had held certain claims over the administration of burial, and the financial benefits this brought in the form of burial dues (Blair 1988b: 8).

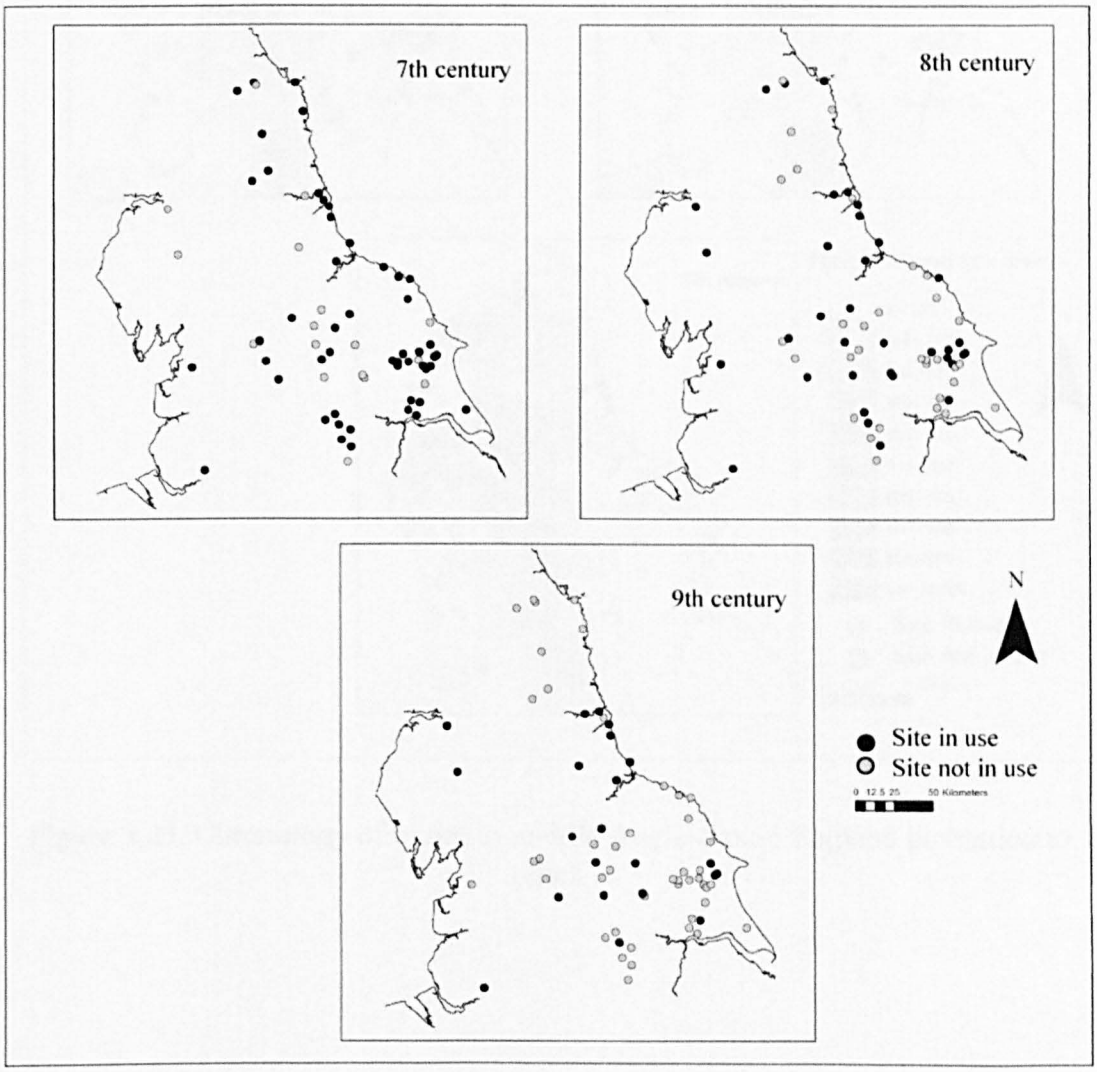

Figure 3.22. Chronology of middle Anglo-Saxon burial in northern England.

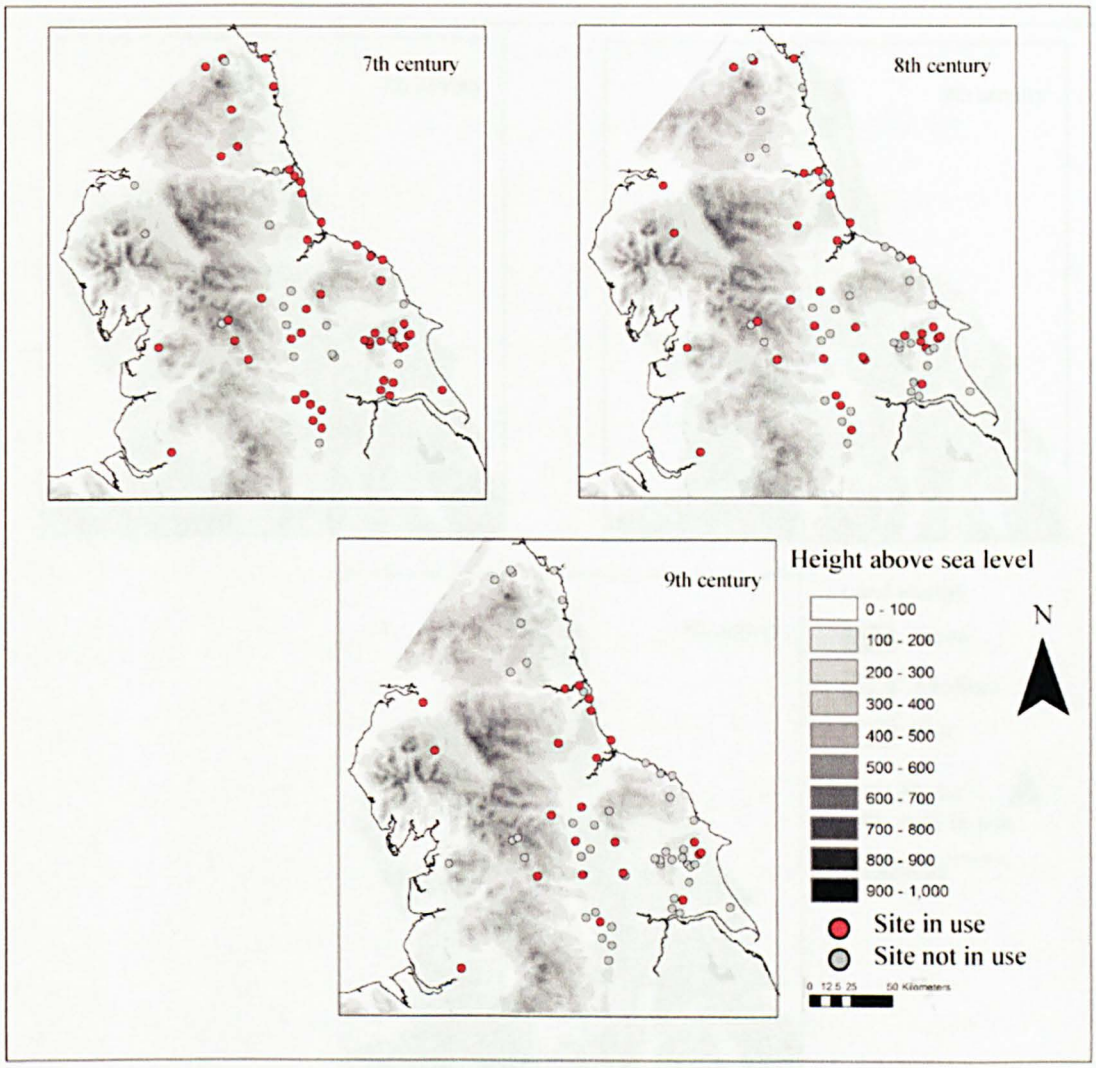

Figure 3.23. Chronology of burial in middle Anglo-Saxon England in relation to relief.

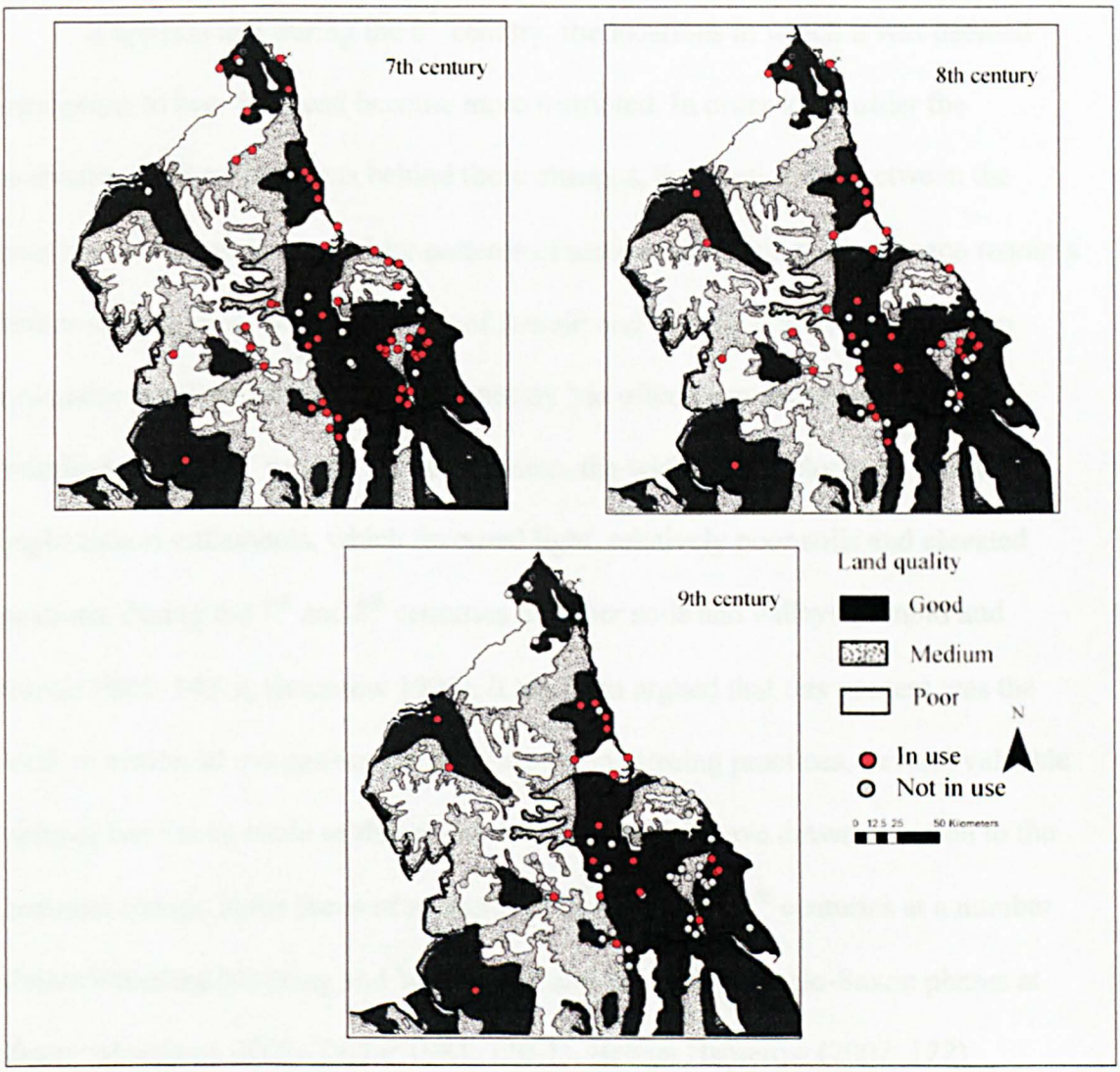

Figure 3.24. Chronology of middle Anglo-Saxon sites in relation to land quality.

It appears that during the 8th century, the locations in which it was deemed appropriate to bury the dead become more restricted. In order to consider the motivations and mechanisms behind these changes, the relationship between the locations of cemeteries and wider patterns of settlement within the landscape requires further investigation. Since the work of Arnold and Wardle (1981) Anglo-Saxon settlement development in the 7th-8th century has often been characterised by the "middle Saxon shift" model. This emphasises the widespread relocation of early Anglo-Saxon settlements, which favoured light, relatively poor soils and elevated locations, during the 7th and 8th centuries to richer soils and valleys (Arnold and Wardle 1981: 145-9; Hamerow 1991). It has been argued that this process was the result of territorial reorganisation, or advances in farming practices. Several valuable critiques have been made of the model, however, which have drawn attention to the continual change in the focus of settlements during the 5th-7th centuries at a number of sites including Mucking and West Stow, and the middle Anglo-Saxon phases at Maxey (Hamerow 2002; Taylor 1983: 120-1). Helena Hamerow (2002: 122) suggests that the shift towards locating settlements on heavier soils can be seen as one element of a more fundamental transition in settlement that took place during the late 8th and 9th centuries corresponding with a period of stabilisation of settlement, new forms of landholding, and more intensive farming processes. It must be emphasised here that the arguments forwarded for settlement shift are based largely upon evidence from southern England, and that settlement evidence for northern England during the middle Anglo-Saxon period is too scarce to permit similarly detailed investigation of whether the process of settlement shift occurred in the same manner further north. Nevertheless, the burial evidence presented above seems to suggest fundamental changes in the size and location of cemeteries during the 8th

century, which may indicate significant changes in settlement patterns did occur in northern England. The limited settlement evidence available supports this suggestion as, for example, at West Heslerton, the settlement that had persisted in the same area from the 5th-7th centuries was abandoned during the 8th century, presumably as a consequence of relocation elsewhere (Powlesland 2000).

The earliest established cemeteries in northern England that persist beyond the 9th century can be found at Minster sites. For example, at Ripon the burial sequence stretches from the 6th to 10th centuries on Ailcy Hill, and continues into the medieval period closer to the Minster itself, and at Jarrow burials were made between the mid-7th century and the 19th century. It is becoming increasingly clear that Minster cemeteries grew steadily during the middle Anglo-Saxon period across England (Blair 2005: 241-2), perhaps first serving monastic communities then attracting elite members of the laity. The presence of an early ecclesiastical focus appears to have dictated the rapid centralisation and permanence of burial at northern Minsters. John Blair (1988a: 52; 2005: 241) has suggested that the increasing clerical involvement in funerary rites may have stimulated a shift in the focus of burial itself, towards religious foci where the appropriate authority could be sought for a Christian burial. In addition, the establishment of larger community cemeteries in northern England from the 9th century might reflect similar developments: perhaps larger non-Minster sites, despite apparently not being located adjacent to a church, were administered under the auspices of a nearby Church institution such that the same motivations drew people away from older, established burial sites. Some of these cemeteries appear to gain a church at a later date, for example at Pontefract a possible church building is constructed within the cemetery in the 9th or 10th century. Yet others, such as Norton Bishopsmill, remain unassociated with any identifiable

religious structure throughout their use (see chapter 3.2). The motivations behind the desire for burial at Minster sites and in larger cemeteries from the 9th century may have been numerous. For the faithful laity, the draw of burial *ad sanctos* may have been strong, so also might have been the desire to follow a growing elite trend to be buried in sites with Christian associations. Alternatively, any settlement nucleation that may have occurred in northern England along the lines of that postulated further south, would have brought centres of population together such that larger community cemeteries might have served the population's needs better than their more dispersed predecessors.

The transition to Minster and larger cemetery sites was not universal, nor did the changes in funerary landscapes described here remain static. Dawn Hadley (2007: 198-9) has recently highlighted a series of small, short-lived, non-church cemeteries across England that were in use between the 8th and 10th centuries. This phenomenon is represented in the north of England at Kilham where two groups of burials, one to the west of the modern village which contained unfurnished burials in coffins and another in the centre of the village with graves radiocarbon dated to between the 8th and 10th centuries, appear to represent roughly contemporary, small and short-lived burial foci. It is apparent that these transient sites remained a part of the milieu of middle and later Anglo-Saxon burial, and thus an element of choice in burial location remained. At some sites included in this study, such as Crayke, Addingham and Dacre, amongst others from across England, the cemetery was partially abandoned around the 10th century. This phenomenon has been tied into an apparent nationwide shrinkage in Minster cemeteries during this period (Blair 1994: 72-3) that could be explained by several interrelated factors. A change in church status, perhaps from a large religious community to more of a local church, could

have reduced demand for burial within its associated cemetery. The establishment of new churches and cemeteries in the vicinity may also have caused fluctuations in the population requiring burial. Alternatively, the establishment of churchyard boundaries used to delineate and define consecrated ground could have restricted the size of cemeteries (Hadley 2007: 196; Gittos 2002: 202-4).

The model outlined above for the development of funerary landscapes during the middle Anglo-Saxon period in northern England need not imply that such changes were uniform across the region, nor that they occurred at the same time and by identical mechanisms. Nonetheless, between A.D. 650 and 850 fundamental changes seem to have occurred in the locations and topography of cemetery sites.

3.16 Summary

This chapter has presented an overview of cemetery form and burial practices in northern English cemeteries for A.D. 650-850. This has been complemented by a consideration of the landscape location of cemeteries during this period. The funerary rites of the middle Anglo-Saxon period were diverse, with variation in burial practices both within and between cemeteries. Nonetheless, some general patterns have been identified that characterise the development of funerary practices during the middle Anglo-Saxon period. Church cemeteries become more frequent between the 7th and 9th centuries, initially at Minster sites and then increasingly amongst sites with no ecclesiastical associations. Burial provision for deviants – with characteristic rites such as non-uniform bodily disposition and triple burial – became more segregated and ancient monuments continued to provide a desired location for funerary sites. Many cemeteries appear to have had strongly defined topographies,

with focal points that dictated the placement of graves. Whilst the majority of interment were supine, extended and orientated west-east, a wealth of variations in funerary practice were utilised across the majority of cemeteries between A.D. 650 and 850. These included crouched burial at some 7th century sites, intermittent prone burials and a tendency for right-sided to outnumber left-sided burials. The grave could be elaborated with wooden or stone containers and structures, and the body adorned with grave goods or wrapped in a shroud. Cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England were more commonly sited on good quality arable land, along rivers and land-based routeways, but only limited evidence is available to permit investigation of whether this was related to proximity to more dense areas of settlement. Throughout the 8th century cemeteries seem to become more stable, a pattern that reflects the process of settlement nucleation and the establishment of an ecclesiastical network in England throughout the 8th and 9th centuries. In the next chapter the evidence presented here is utilised in a critique of the utility of the "final phase" model as a representation of burial rites c. A.D 650-850 in northern England.

CHAPTER 4

THE "FINAL PHASE" MODEL: A CRITIQUE IN LIGHT OF EVIDENCE FROM NORTHERN ENGLAND

In chapter 3, the character of cemeteries dating to c. A.D. 650-850 in northern England was investigated in detail. The funerary rites utilised in them and their locations and context within the wider landscape were outlined. In this chapter, a critique of the "final phase" model (introduced in chapter 2.2) is presented in light of this evidence for burial practices in northern England. It has been noted by other researchers that there was a much more complex transition to churchyard burial in the north of England than the "final phase" model can account for (Hadley 2000b: 199; Morris 1983: 53-61), and in the following discussion this reservation is explored and developed. In the first section, some general criticisms of the "final phase" model are presented, relating, in particular, to the southern English focus of the model, the limitations of its chronology and the utility of the term "final phase" itself. This is followed by a discussion of some specific features of the final phase model in relation to the types, location, topography and burial rites of cemeteries of the 7th-9th centuries in northern England.

4.1 The focus on southern England

Investigations of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices have almost invariably focussed on material from the south of England. The originators of the "final phase" model, and, indeed, those that criticised or sought to develop it capitalised upon the

wealth of cemeteries in Cambridgeshire, Kent and East Anglia in particular. The differences between the burial rites in these regions and in more northern regions has been explored in the scholarly literature, particularly in relation to the influence of Celtic practices (e.g. Halsall 1995b; Loveluck 2002), yet the applicability of the "final phase" model itself to the whole of England has rarely been questioned[1]. It must be noted that northern cemeteries known to date to between A.D. 650 and 850 were extremely scarce during the majority of the 20th century (Faull 1977: 2; Miket 1980; Morris 1983: 58-9). Therefore, when Miranda Hyslop (1963: 190) stated that the "final phase" burial practices she had identified at Chamberlains Barn II "must soon have been felt in all areas of England", there was little evidence with which to test her hypothesis. Nonetheless, in the last thirty years the corpus of northern middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries has grown significantly, and it is remiss that the "final phase" model has not been interrogated with this new dataset until now.

From its very inception, the "final phase" model has emphasised homogeneity in the development of Christian rites across England, but the evidence utilised in the formulation of the model itself was far from copious, nor was it evenly spread throughout England. The assumption that "final phase" cemeteries occurred throughout England had, in fact, very little support from archaeological evidence and appears to have been based to a large extent upon assumptions that the conversion itself followed similar lines across the country and that Christianity brought wholesale and unified changes across society. Both of these suggestions have been robustly challenged (Bullough 1983; Geake 1992: 86-87; Morris 1983; Hadley

[1] Richard Morris (1983: 58) questions the applicability of the "final phase" across the whole of England in this statement: "Hyslop's assertion that these changes took place 'all over England' is...open to question, since her examples are few and the majority are distributed within the south and east of the country...In Shropshire and Cheshire, in Cumbria, and over parts of Northumbria, for example, it is not at all clear how the disposal of the dead was organised between the 5th and 8th centuries."

2000b: 209; Zadora-Rio 2003). Indeed, literary sources present a process of conversion in northern Britain that followed a very different trajectory to that in more southern areas of England. The conversion of Edwin (king of Bernicia, Deira and overlord of the Celtic kingdoms of southern Scotland from A.D. 616) is documented as having begun on the occasion on his marriage alliance with Kent and acceptance of the missionary Paulinus into his household, c. A.D 625 (HE ii, 9-17, 20; Blair 1984: 67; Higham 1993: 115). This early phase of conversion was under the direct influence of the Roman Christian Church that was dominant in the south of England. The influence of the Celtic Church, which had developed as a result of the continued presence of Christianity in western Britain and Ireland during the 5th-7th centuries, was to gain prominence under Oswald, who ruled from A.D. 634 and had accepted baptism from Scottish churchmen whilst in exile in the western Scottish kingdom of Dál Riata (Higham 1993: 127; Yorke 2008: 109-15). Oswald remained a committed patron of the Celtic Church, looking north for his clergy and establishing the Irish cleric Aidan at the monastery on Lindisfarne in A.D. 635 (HE iii, 2-3). The Celtic Church prospered until the Synod of Whitby, in A. D. 664, when the Easter controversy allowed Roman Christianity to assert itself (Higham 1993: 135). Thus the influence of Celtic Christianity on the development of the Church in northern England resulted in differences in the process of conversion to that which occurred in southern areas.

That the funerary rites which characterise the "final phase" were not the only, nor the most frequent, forms of burial rite during the middle Anglo-Saxon period in northern England has been demonstrated (see chapter 3), but the degree to which the "final phase" model fails to characterise appropriately northern rites runs much deeper than this. The universality of furnished graves, even in the early Anglo-Saxon

period, can be contested in certain parts of northern England. During the 5th and 6th centuries diagnostic Anglo-Saxon grave goods are rare north of the Tyne, and comparatively rare north of the Tees. Furnishings occur more often in isolated interments or in small numbers amongst otherwise largely unfurnished graves than in any context where we might be able to consider them part of a dominant rite (Loveluck 2002: 134-41; 2007: 186-7). This situation is in stark contrast to the burial traditions south of the Tees, in the territory of Deira, where burials of characteristically Anglo-Saxon furnished type abound from the 6th century. The presence of the funerary practices of western Britain, particularly the unfurnished cist burial tradition, also requires incorporation into our understanding of the changes in burial in the middle Anglo-Saxon north, as it is a frequently-occurring rite. Cist burials have been noted amongst the cemeteries considered in this thesis, particularly at sites located in the north of the study area where they may indicate connections to the extremely long-lived rites characteristic of early medieval western Britain (O'Brien 1999: 185). In short, the cemeteries of northern England, and the variations that they contain, have been widely neglected in research on the "final phase". It is apparent that northern and southern England experienced a very different process of conversion and that northern cemeteries of the 7th to 9th centuries are not always characterised by the same features as those from more southern sites. The assumption of the "final phase" model that burial practices and the factors that influenced them were homogenous cannot, in sum, be sustained.

4.2 The chronology of burial c. A.D. 650-850

During the development of what became known as the "final phase" model, it was frequently suggested that egalitarian and uniform Christian burial practices became the norm across England from the 8th century (Faull 1976: 232; Meaney and Hawkes 1970: 53). As a result, the chronological sequence of development from pagan to Christian burial rites was condensed into the 7th century, with little attention paid to variations in burial rites that might have characterised subsequent centuries. More recent contributions to middle Anglo-Saxon burial have extended focus into the early 8th century (e.g. Geake 2002), but there has been no explicit discussion of the length of time over which the conversion, and changes in burial rites that could be related to it, might have taken place. Current research suggests that characteristic features of Christian burial such as the delineation of consecrated ground, association of cemeteries with a local church and community cemeteries under parochial control were not ubiquitous until at least the 10th century, thus any intermediate period between characteristically pagan and Christian burial appears to extend well beyond the 7th century (Davies 1982: 185-7; Hadley 2000a; Halsall 1995a: 246-7; 1995b: 61-3; Petts 2002: 43-4). Moreover, Christian burial rites are no longer considered to have been either egalitarian or uniform in appearance, and recent in-depth study of the period of the 10th and 11th centuries has revealed burial rites as complex as those of the 5th and 6th centuries, albeit ones very different in form (Buckberry 2004; Hadley 2000a; 2000b; 2002). The diversity identified in later Anglo-Saxon funerary rites appears to suggest that "there was no such thing as Christian burial" (Thompson 2004: 32).

The analysis included in the previous chapter revealed that burial rites were diverse and varied throughout the period from A.D. 650 to 850 in northern England. In this period, this study has identified a gradual decrease in practices prevalent during the 6th century — such as the widespread (if not universal) use of grave goods and the appropriation of prehistoric monuments — and the emergence and increase of practices that were to be characteristic of later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, such as the presence of a church or the use of wood and stone to create containers and markers for the grave. However development of burial practices characteristic of cemeteries in use between A.D. 650-850 was not uniform, nor was it a simple progression from one burial rite to another. As a consequence, it can be suggested that the traditional chronology of the "final phase" model is too restricted to account sufficiently for the developments in burial practice between the 7th and 9th centuries, and that the changes of the 7th century described by the model are but a small part of a much more complex trend in burial rites which extends beyond the 9th century, in northern England at least.

4.3 The "final phase": a suitable term?

Following the work of Andy Boddington (1990), the term "final phase" is frequently used to describe the model for burial practices in the 7th and 8th centuries (e.g. Leahy 2007; Lucy 2000: 181-4; Stoodley 2007; Williams 2006: 30-1, 44). However, it should be noted that the phrase is not used universally in the archaeological literature on middle Anglo-Saxon burial. Boddington's review in 1990 implies that the work of scholars such as Hyslop (1963) and Faull (1976) made an active contribution to a "final phase" model, but whilst they did make a valuable contribution to

characterising the burial rites of the 7th century, it should be noted that neither scholar ever utilised the term "final phase" itself. Audrey Meaney prefers to divide graves into pagan and Christian burials in much of her research (1981; 2003) and Helen Geake (1992; 1997; 2002) has used the expression "conversion period" instead of "final phase" to describe the burials of c. 600-850. Indeed, the very appropriateness of the term "final phase" can be questioned. The "final phase" itself was a term invented by Leeds to describe 7th-century Anglo-Saxon art styles, and its application was based upon trajectories in the stylistic development of grave goods and his opinions of the relationship between grave furniture and nascent Christianity. In his discussion of "final phase" grave goods Leeds (1936: 98) considered them the last vestiges of pagan rites. Since the time of Leeds, however, the assumption that the "final phase" was pagan has been transformed, such that in the work of Evison, Hyslop, Faull and Meaney the burial practices of the 7th and 8th centuries are considered early Christian.

It is becoming apparent through the review provided in this thesis that the term "final phase" is extremely problematic. First, it is not universally used, and is often interchanged with a variety of other terms used by different authors. Second, it implies a specific point of change; that is, a point at which a "final phase" of one practice becomes the first phase of another. Leeds (1936) envisaged this as the break in pagan burial and the beginning of a Christian rite, but more recent studies have revealed a gradual change in practice that cannot be confidently associated with any specific event (Boddington 1990: 190-1). Moreover, as most authors since Leeds have assumed that the "final phase" of burial occurred within a Christian milieu, the term has become inherently contradictory – it was not a "final phase" of pagan burial but a "first phase" of Christian influence. Accordingly, in the present study the

gradual development and complex nature of funerary rites are emphasised, and it is argued that the term "final phase" misrepresents as a threshold between two distinct rites what is, in fact, a piecemeal development in burial practices during the 7th-9th centuries. Third, regardless of whether it is argued that final phase burials are pagan or Christian, the term implies a passive reaction by people to a process by which the Christian Church demanded wholesale alteration to burial rites. The great variety of burial places and practices identified in the preceding discussion indicates that there was a conscious selection of burial rites by a variety of individuals and groups in reaction to a variety of developments in middle Anglo-Saxon society. The "final phase" was not a passive process, but a period of active change in which the selection and discarding of a range of burial practices created a new and diverse burial rite.

Thus far, this critique has focussed on some general problems with the "final phase" model. In the forthcoming discussion a selection of the main features of the model are tested against the evidence collated in chapter 3 from northern England in order to present a more in-depth critique.

4.4 Types of cemetery

In his 1990 review, Andy Boddington presented ten components of a model for burial in the 7th century that he offered as a replacement for the model outlined during the 1960s and 1970s. He acknowledged that it was a preliminary model, neither "fully expounded nor validated" (Boddington 1990: 196) and, as such, if it is viewed as a replacement to the definitive statements of the "final phase" model, it appears rather vague. For example, the first element of Boddington's model states

that "grave goods decline in response to a variety of factors which are economic, social and religious in character" (Boddington 1990: 197). As a proposal for further investigation into these factors, this statement indeed provides a valuable stimulation to encourage researchers to think beyond religious issues, yet as part of an explicit model of burial it is too general. In some cases Boddington's statements are more specific and thus can be tested with the data presented here. For example, the fifth element of his model reads as follows:

> The adoption of Christianity leads to the convergence of the focus of worship and the place of burial. In the pagan period the temple and shrine were separate from the place of burial. In the Christian period all cemeteries appear to be associated with churches (Boddington 1990: 197).

There are elements of this statement that are both true and false for the dataset considered here. It is generally the case that the proximity of place of worship and cemetery increased during the 7th-9th centuries. Cemeteries with evidence for structures that might be a church become increasingly common throughout the middle Anglo-Saxon period and at Pontefract, Black Gate, Thornton Steward and Ripon Ladykirk/St Marygate churches are apparently added to extant middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries around the 9th century. However, the suggestion that all cemeteries are associated with churches in the "Christian period" is problematic. First, in studying middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries there is little indication of where the "Christian period" might begin. Second, the reliance upon defining burial rites as pagan or Christian in a period that is know to be transitional is also flawed, and indeed, something for which Boddington (1990: 196) criticises earlier studies. In sum, this aspect of Boddington's model unsatisfactorily attempts to define middle

Anglo-Saxon rites by a description of what occurred both before and after, but not of what occurred at the time.

Soon after, Helen Geake (1992) contributed an alternative approach to the characterisation of the cemeteries of the 7th and 8th centuries, classifying them into one of four cemetery types, each of which was associated with specific characteristics. She presented four categories of cemetery: "final phase"; "princely"; "unfurnished"; and "deviant" (see chapter 2.3). This provides an important addition to our understanding of burial practices in the 7th and 8th centuries as it acknowledged the presence of multiple cemetery types in addition to the traditional furnished form (the "final phase" cemetery). When applied to northern cemeteries, however, problems with this new model emerge. In the north of England there is, for example, only one clear example of an execution cemetery (Walkington Wold) (Buckberry and Hadley 2007), and apparently only one grave-goods rich princely cemetery, which is currently in the process of excavation at Street House (Sherlock 2008). Thus, to consider "deviant" and "princely" cemeteries as characteristic of 7th- and 8th-century burial practice in the north would be to over-emphasise the little evidence of these practices we have.

Geake described "deviant" burials as often being prone, bound at the hands or feet, in non-uniform burial positions and with evidence of possible ritual abuse or mutilation and, in contrast, defined "princely" burials as incorporating high-quality grave goods and often utilising a barrow or mound. These features are occasionally present in northern England, however rarely are they part of distinct cemeteries, but instead are incorporated into sites that would better fit Geake's categories of "unfurnished" or "final phase" cemeteries. For example, prone burials were identified in the Minster cemeteries at Wearmouth (six prone burials) and Jarrow

(one prone burial) (Lowther 2005: 176; Cramp and Lowther 2005: 82) and at Adwick-le-Street four burials with "deviant" characteristics, including prone positioning, the hands seemingly tied and large stones placed over the body, are included in a largely unfurnished cemetery (Harvey 2008). Additionally, it is suggested in this thesis that barrow burial is but one feature of a much wider trend towards the association of cemeteries with extant features in the landscape, thus it is not a characteristic of middle Anglo-Saxon funerary rites *per se*. It can, then, be suggested that, from a northern perspective, Geake's model affords a disproportionate amount of discussion to "princely" and "deviant" burial, which are both unusual and non-normative practices in northern England and, as a result, she under-emphasises the normative burial rites of the period.

"Final phase"-type cemeteries do certainly occur across the region, for example at Uncleby and Milfield North (Geake 1992: 84; Morris 1983: 55-6), but Helen Geake's definition (1992: 84-85) of the "final phase" cemetery was limited, focussing on differences in furnishings and glossing over variations in inhumation form, making it less a type of cemetery and more a specific size and form of assemblage of grave goods. In the majority of northern cemeteries grave goods are much rarer than the numbers Geake seems to consider the lower limit for "final phase" cemeteries: that is cemeteries with furnishings in around 50% of graves (Geake 1992: 84). Cemeteries are rarely completely unfurnished and they also have a great variety of grave forms, elaborations and above-ground features that characterise them. I would argue that neither of Geake's terms, "final phase" or "unfurnished" adequately characterise the situation in northern England. In consequence, Geake's definitions of the four types of "conversion period" cemetery are not ideal for categorising northern sites.

In the previous chapter, cemeteries associated with Christian sites or monuments were isolated for the purposes of discussion as a significant type of middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery in northern England. These included cemeteries at Minster sites and other cemeteries with churches. It is clear that, for the north at least, these cemeteries form as important and characteristic a group as the four types Helen Geake (1992) describes. Whilst she notes burials with churches briefly under the description of "unfurnished" cemeteries and in a later paper went on to discuss churchyard burial in greater detail (Geake 2002: 149-52), Geake clearly considers cemeteries with churches to be principally characteristic of the period *after* her focus in the 7th and 8th century, where they are rare in comparison with "final phase" type sites. In the present study, however, burial of both ecclesiastics and members of the lay community at a number of Minster sites, and the presence of a Christian focus such as a church in apparently lay community cemeteries, was noted on numerous occasions from the 7th century onwards (see chapter 3.1). Thus it is felt that all renderings of the "final phase" model, including Geake's most recent developments, do not pay sufficient attention to the vibrant monastic burial tradition that is found across northern England throughout the middle Anglo-Saxon period.

4.5 Cemetery locations

The location of middle Anglo Saxon cemeteries, both with respect to settlements and previous cemeteries, is an issue that is addressed by the "final phase" model, and is particularly emphasised by Boddington (1990: 197) in his desire to downplay the role of grave goods in characterising the burial practices of the period in favour of "the location and morphology of burial grounds". Evidence for the abandonment and

relocation of cemeteries in the 7th century, such as at Chamberlains Barn, Long Whittenham (O) and Sancton, was used by Miranda Hyslop and Margaret Faull to suggest that a new set of cemeteries were established during the 7th century under the influence of the Church that were smaller and shorter-lived than earlier Anglo-Saxon burial grounds, and it was inferred that these new cemeteries were generally closer to settlements than were 6th-century cemeteries (Faull 1976: 233; Hyslop 1963: 191). Uniquely for the "final phase" model, this belief about the relationship between settlements and cemeteries was developed using northern material in addition to data from southern cemeteries. In her discussion of the cemeteries at Sancton, Margaret Faull (1976: 233) argued that 7th-century cemeteries, such as Sancton II, were sited closer to contemporary settlement than their predecessors, such as the 6th-century cremation cemetery Sancton I. This account has already been criticised by Anglo-Saxon scholars in several ways. First, it is becoming increasingly apparent that settlement could be transient during the entire Anglo-Saxon period, with sites forming and being abandoned on a regular basis and that, therefore, the relationship between settlement and burial sites was complex and constantly changing (Boddington 1990: 191; Hadley 2007). Furthermore, Boddington (1990: 197) suggested that burial sites must be expected to relocate in response to developments in the wider landscape and at a rate that was largely dependant on local factors rather than national trends. In fact, northern examples are available of both repeated relocation of burial sites and also of significant continuity of burial. At Norton the cemetery at Mill Lane was abandoned in the 7th century, at which point burial began at Bishopsmill School where it continued until c. 10th century. At around the same time it is assumed that a new focus of burial was established at St Mary's church. Conversely at sites such as Pontefract and Thornton Steward the construction of a

church and further interments made over pre-existing burials indicates a significant degree of continuity.

It is also becoming increasingly apparent that the settlement landscape of northern England has been insufficiently studied and too poorly characterised for a general model about the relationships between cemeteries and settlements to be developed (e.g. see overview of Anglo-Saxon settlement archaeology by Reynolds 2003: 98-103). It has been assumed since the development of the model of gradually shifting settlements proposed by Hamerow (1993) at Mucking and also identified at Chalton (Ha), (Addyman and Leigh 1973), West Stow (West 1985), Catholme, (Loscoe-Bradley 1974) and Cowdrey's Down (Ha) (Millett 1983), that Anglo-Saxon rural settlements frequently relocated. However, there is increasing evidence to contradict this assumption, most notably from more northern sites, including evidence for apparent continuity of settlement at West Heslerton throughout the early and middle Anglo-Saxon periods (Powlesland 2000), at Flixborough (L) from at least the early 7th to the 10th century and beyond (Loveluck and Atkinson 2007: xiv), West Halton (L) during the early/middle Anglo-Saxon period (Dawn Hadley and Gareth Perry *pers. comm.*) and further south at Catholme from at least the early 7th to late-9th centuries (Losco-Bradley and Kinsley 2002: 123). It is too early to determine whether settlement continuity over several centuries was more common than has been previously allowed for and the limited settlement dataset presented in this thesis is insufficient to describe the relationships between cemeteries and settlements in northern England. Nonetheless, it is apparent that we cannot be categorical about the settlement landscape of northern England and, as a result, the conclusions of the "final phase" model in this respect must be considered insufficiently substantiated.

4.6 Cemetery topography

The earliest descriptions of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices do not emphasise the topography of the cemetery, preferring to focus instead on items buried with the corpse. Despite this, some comments relating to the form of burial and layout of cemeteries were made: burial was by inhumation not cremation and orientation was consistently west-east with graves in regular groups or rows (Hyslop 1963). The former point is valid for northern sites. Several arguments have been forwarded to explain variations in orientation of graves both between and within middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Earlier studies assumed that a west-east orientation signified Christian beliefs and this became one of the key criteria of the "final phase" model (Evison 1956; Geake 1992: 84; Morris 1983: 55-6), although scepticism of the link between orientation and Christianity is found as early as Leeds' initial study(1936: 96) and Hyslop's report on Chamberlain's Barn (1963: 192). Moreover it has long been clear that non-Christian burial rites also routinely utilised a west-east alignment (Faull 1977: 5; Boddington 1990: 191; Geake 1992: 85). Yet it is still common to encounter the assumption that west-east burial is a Christian characteristic even in modern reports: not, for example, the statement that "all of the burials [at Seaham Flower Field] were aligned east to west (sic) suggesting a Christian burial tradition" (NAA 2001:1).

The available evidence for boundaries around middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries presented in the previous chapter suggested a wider variety of strategies for delineating cemetery space than was noted by Boddington (1990: 197). The use of parts of prehistoric monuments as boundaries was identified in addition to the banks, fences and ditches Boddington described. He considered boundaries to be "an

essential characteristic of the Christian period" (Boddington 1990: 197), however evidence from the north suggests otherwise. Positive evidence for the absence of boundaries is rare and problematic, but was noted at Addingham and Crayke, both sites for which documentary evidence can suggest a Christian character. Documentary evidence for cemetery boundaries is provided by references to consecrated cemetery space. Rites for consecrating cemeteries, documented from the late 10th century, include ritual purification and demarcation of the cemetery through procession around its boundaries (Gittos 2002: 195). There is no evidence to suggest that these rites predate the 10th century in England (although, equally, no evidence to prove that they did not) and therefore it cannot be assumed that boundaries were a similarly essential feature of 7th-9th century cemeteries.

Boddington's assumption that Christian sites must be physically bounded relates to another of his "final phase" criteria: that superimposed levels, or generations, of burial occurred as a result of the confinement and longevity of cemeteries. It has been suggested that, in churchyard and urban cemeteries of the 7th to 12th centuries in south-west England, restricted cemetery space was a primary factor in the prevalence of disturbance of burials (Cherryson 2007: 138). It is clear that intercutting and superposition also occur frequently in northern middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries but that cemetery space restricted by boundaries cannot be the only explanation for the complex variety of relationships encountered between different phases of burial. Deliberate superposition of graves was encountered in the form of contemporary multiple burial at several sites, while the rarer practice of intentionally cutting a new burial into an older a grave was noted at Thwing, Jarrow, Bamburgh and Norton Bishopsmill School. These cases suggest that it was the grave or individual therein which was acting as a focal point for later interments rather than a

lack of space that was encouraging intercutting of burials. In addition, given the limited evidence that a physical boundary was utilised at many sites and evidence that focal features were common, it is perhaps more likely that intercutting is related to a hierarchy of cemetery space and the desire, rather than the need, to inter multiple bodies in certain areas of ground.

4.7 Burial rites

Helen Geake's (1992: 85) overview of conversion period burial practice concludes that "final phase" burials tend to be supine, extended or slightly flexed, with arms at the sides or folded over the body. Whilst this summary covers many of the burial positions seen during the 7th-9th centuries in the north of England, it fails to account for three significant aspects of the funerary practices of the region. The first is that variability is great both between and within cemeteries; in fact no cemetery conforms to Geake's generalisation exactly. The second is that burial on the side is a common rite and significant numbers of individuals are buried on their right side rather than their left in most cemeteries where this occurs. Third, there are small numbers of prone burials in both Minster cemeteries and cemeteries unassociated with churches, and not just in the one "execution" cemetery known from the region.

There is an overwhelming emphasis placed on the character of grave goods in middle Anglo-Saxon graves in most previous studies. For example, in her eleven point characterisation of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, Hyslop (1963: 191) includes only three statements that do not directly involve furnishings: west-east orientation; absence of cremations; and the use of primary or secondary barrows (see chapter 2.2). Moreover, the only large-scale doctoral thesis dealing specifically with

middle Anglo-Saxon burial in recent years is Helen Geake's 1995 (published in 1997) analysis of the grave goods of conversion period England. At many of the sites described in the previous chapter, grave goods are a rare feature of the burial rite, and instead, a huge variety of both above- and in-grave features are present. Thus, the reliance on grave goods as indicators of the character of middle Anglo-Saxon burials is not of great utility for northern cemeteries.

4.8 Summary

The characteristics of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices that have come to be known as the "final phase" model are of limited utility as a description of northern burial rites. It has been widely assumed that changes in burial that characterised the 7th century, at a series of cemeteries in southern England, were motivated by a supra-regional trend in religious belief that would naturally have affected the entire country, in the same way and to the same extent. In reviewing evidence for burial practices between the mid-7th and the mid-9th century, this research suggests that change in funerary rites was a complex and continuous process. Thus, any attempt to contextualise this with reference to social, economic and religious transformations requires consideration of the period after the 7th century. Furthermore, the evidence presented here suggests that developments in burial practices could be more local than the "final phase" model allows for. There is little evidence for regional coherence in either the character or the development of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices, suggesting a process of selection and piecemeal development instead of a supra-regional wave of change. That said, many features of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practice do appear across the entire region of study, and have parallels

amongst more southerly cemeteries, indicating a relatively widespread corpus of rites on which each community drew. In consequence, it can be suggested that no further attempts be made to develop or refine the "final phase" model. Any model that emphasises a coherent group of burial rites across England is doomed to inadequacy by its very attempt to normalise such a varied and vibrant period of funerary practices.

In following chapters this research goes on to investigate burial practices in middle Anglo-Saxon northern England in more detail through a bio-cultural study of identity, funerary rites and cemetery topography in a sample of northern cemeteries dated to A.D 650-850. This approach is intended to capitalise upon the varied nature of practices identified in this and preceding chapters, exploring their use and meanings by considering to whom they were afforded and in what contexts they were employed.

CHAPTER 5

THE CASE-STUDY SITES

In this chapter, an introduction is provided to the six sites that have been included in the bio-cultural study of funerary rites and social identity presented in chapter 6. First, the process by which a sample of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from northern England was selected is described; second, a brief overview of each site in turn considers evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity, historical context and dating; and third, the methods by which the analysis of the case-study sites was undertaken are outlined. Finally, a discussion of the character of the funerary practices encountered at the case-study cemeteries is provided, considering the topography of the sites, forms of grave, disposition of the body and the occurrence of elaborations and grave goods. An integrated analysis of the prevalences of the various burial rites and the spatial locations of the graves in which they occur within the cemetery is also included.

5.1 Selection of the case-study sites

In the general analysis of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices presented in chapter 3, every effort was made to include all of the sites from the site database in order to present the full variation in funerary rites that characterise the period in northern England. In this and the following chapter, a detailed characterisation and integrated analysis of funerary practices and an in-depth, bio-cultural analysis of the provision of the burial practices is undertaken. For these analyses, a sample of cemeteries

securely dated to c. A.D. 650-850 was required for which detailed records of all aspects of population composition, burial rites and site morphology were available. The requirement of detailed records automatically limited the choice of sites, as it prohibited the inclusion of many antiquarian excavations and those recorded or published in limited detail. Moreover, it was considered important here to present new data, and therefore sites where detailed analysis has already been conducted – for example sites used by Sam Lucy in her consideration of burial practices in East Yorkshire (1998) – were avoided. It was also considered best to avoid the sites in Lucy's work for other reasons. Most significantly, the majority of her sites were antiquarian excavations and therefore cannot be considered reliable in their presentation of osteological data, which is essential in this project.

Six sites were chosen to be analysed in the bio-cultural study: Adwick-le-Street, Ailcy Hill, Norton Bishopsmill School, Pontefract Tanners Row/The Booths, Village Farm Spofforth and Thwing (Figure 5.1). Details of the excavation of these sites are presented in Table 5.1. The sample was chosen to incorporate as much recently excavated or unpublished evidence as possible. This facilitates the development of new understanding of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices, both by drawing upon a wealth of older material that has unfortunately remained unpublished, and by capitalising upon the recent discovery and detailed excavation of large cemetery populations in the region. As a result, five of the six case-study sites chosen were either completely unpublished or only partially published at the time of this research. These were Adwick, Norton Bishopsmill School, Pontefract, Spofforth and Thwing. Adwick, Norton and Spofforth were particularly new datasets, all having been excavated within the last five years and Pontefract and Thwing were older excavations, but which remain, as yet, unpublished. The final site

included in the analysis was the published cemetery at Ailcy Hill, Ripon (Hall and Whyman 1996).

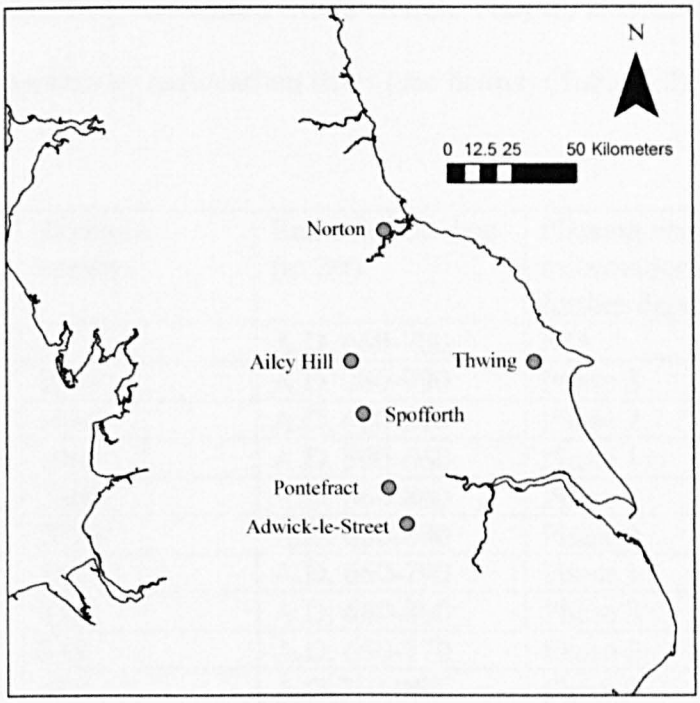

Figure 5.1. The case-study sites.

Site	Excavation details	Excavation type	Publication
Adwick-le-Street SY	Excavated 2007 by ARCUS, Sheffield	Commercially-funded excavation in advance of construction	Unpublished report held at ARCUS
Ailcy Hill, Ripon NY	Excavated 1986-7 by R.A. Hall and Mark Wyman	Research excavation funded by English Heritage	Full site publication in Medieval Archaeology 1996
Norton Bishopsmill School NY	Excavated 2003 by Tees Archaeology	Commercially-funded excavation in advance of construction	Unpublished report held at Tees Archaeology
Pontefract NY	Excavated 1985-6 by Archaeological Services WYAS	Rescue excavation and watching brief in advance of construction	Publication in preparation by Tony Wilmott and Ian Roberts
Spofforth NY	Excavated 2001 by NAA	Commercially-funded excavation	Unpublished report held at NAA
Thwing EY	Excavated by Terry Manby	Long-term research excavation of large multi-period site	Unpublished report in preparation by Terry Manby

Table 5.1. Details of the excavation and publication of the six case-study sites.

These six sites were selected for several further reasons. They represent a cross-section of the main forms of middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery identified in chapter 3: furnished cemeteries, cemeteries associated with churches and unfurnished cemeteries not apparently associated with a church. They all also have site chronologies supported by radiocarbon dates (see below) (Table 5.2).

Site	Skeleton number	Radiocarbon date (to 2σ)	Phasing and other dating information (see below for further details)
Adwick	1	A.D. 660-780	N/A
Ailcy Hill	1044	A.D. 780-990	Phase 3
	1045	A.D. 660-810	Phase 2
	1064	A.D. 560-660	Phase 1
	2005	A.D. 660-860	Phase 3
	2006	A.D. 680-880	Phase 2
Norton	190	A.D. 660-790	Phase 1
	330	A.D. 680-890	Phase 3
	333	A.D. 650-770	Phase 3
	417	A.D.710-960	Phase 3
Pontefract	267	A.D. 591-771	Phase 1
	519	A.D. 550-710	Phase 1
	548	A.D. 940-1100	Phase 2
Spofforth	51	A.D. 770-970	Zone A (western graves)
	69	A.D 660-780	Zone C
	229	A.D. 660-810	Zone B
	247	A.D. 660-830	Zone B, cuts 419
	276	A.D. 880-1020	Zone C
	286	A.D. 670-870	Zone B
	368	A.D. 680-890	Zone C
	419	A.D. 660-780	Zone B, cut by 247
	429	A.D. 680-880	Zone C
Thwing	3 (grave 2)	A.D. 673-1030	Cut by graves 3 and 7, cuts grave 10
	5 (grave 1)	A.D. 574-831	Cut by graves 2 and 10
	16 (grave 12)	A.D. 580-906	Cut by grave 7
	38 (grave 4)	A.D. 674-993	Cuts grave 5
	48 (grave 8)	A.D. 758-1028	N/A
	54 (grave 55)	A.D. 376-680	Cuts grave 53, 54 and 59
	89 (grave 65)	A.D. 228-880	Cuts palisade trench
	97 (grave 21)	A.D. 656-890	N/A

Table 5.2. Radiocarbon dates obtained from individuals from the six case-study sites.

A side issue concomitant with this dataset is the lack of settlement context. At only one of the six sites – Thwing (see below) – is there any evidence of where the population buried in the cemetery lived. Documentary evidence can provide some indication of the nature of inhabitation: for example Ailcy Hill appears to have been associated with a Minster site; Pontefract was a royal vill, and also possibly the location of a Minster; while both Spofforth and Norton were apparently secular rural settlements, however, our understanding of the nature of inhabitation in the region of these cemeteries remains limited.

The multi-disciplinary nature of the integrated and bio-cultural analyses undertaken in this thesis was felt to suit best the variable quality of the evidence presented at these six sites. To highlight but a few limitations: at Spofforth modern foundation cuts had destroyed a substantial quantity of the human remains (NAA 2002); at Adwick-le-Street the acid soil conditions adversely affected bone preservation (Harvey 2008); and at Pontefract and Norton only partial areas of what are suspected to have been much larger cemeteries were excavated. Nonetheless, by incorporating available data on all aspects of burial practices from these six sites in combination, a substantial dataset of 1183 burials was collated, of which at least some skeletal data were available for 1144, while grave location was identifiable for the majority. In cases where skeletal remains were poorly preserved, it was still viable to consider funerary rite and grave location in combination, thus, even poorly preserved or recorded graves were incorporated into the study and data loss during analysis was minimised.

In the following section, an introduction to the six case-study sites is presented. This is intended to provide an overview of the location, excavation and dating evidence for each site as a background to the discussion and integrated

analysis of the funerary rites identified at the six sites below and the bio-cultural analysis presented in the next chapter.

Adwick-le-Street

The cemetery at North Ridge Community School, Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster was excavated in 2007 by ARCUS. The site is, as yet, unpublished and the post-excavation analysis is in progress at the time of writing. The osteological report by Linzi Harvey and data tables regarding burial practices were made available to the author by ARCUS. The cemetery is particularly valuable as it is the only substantial burial site of 7th- to 9th-century date ever recovered from South Yorkshire, thus providing a starting point for the investigation of middle Anglo-Saxon funerary rites in this county.

There is no archaeological evidence for settlement contemporary with the cemetery in the area of Adwick-le-Street.[1] The earliest references to the village are found in Domesday Book where three individuals – Swe, Glunier and Archil – held 6 carucates of land with 3 ploughs, and Fulk, a tenant of Roger de Busli, had 2 ploughs, 12 villeins and 11 bordars with 5 ploughs and 9 acres of meadow in *Adewinc* (Page 1974: 256, Domesday fo. 320). In addition, Nigel Fossard of the Count of Mortain had half a carucate in the Strafforth Wapentake and 2 bovates and 1 plough in the Osgoldcross Wapentake, both in *Adewic* (Page 1974: 230: Domesday fo. 308). Domesday Book does not record a church at Adwick, and the earliest evidence for a church comes from the fabric of the parish church of St. Lawrence which dates to the 12th century (Page 1913: 163). Archaeological evidence for activity around Adwick during the later Anglo-Saxon period is provided by a single

[1] The village appears to derive part of its name from its proximity to the great northern Roman routeway, Ermine Street.

burial with copper-alloy and iron grave goods such as a pair of oval brooches, bowl, knife and key/latchlifter encountered during a watching brief east of the A638, the main route north from Doncaster (Speed and Walton Rogers 2004). The burial was not radiocarbon dated, but the grave goods are characteristic of a female Scandinavian burial of the late-9th century. Isotopic analysis of teeth recovered from the burial suggested that the individual was not local to South Yorkshire, but originated from either Norway or, perhaps less likely, north-east Scotland (Budd 2004: 61-3).

A total of 37 grave cuts and the remains of 37 individuals were recovered from the middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery site, which covered an area of c. 500m^2 (Figure 5.2). Intercutting of graves was rare and the majority of the archaeological material was excavated from *in situ* contexts, however, the human bone was generally poorly preserved, having suffered damage primarily from root action (Harvey 2008). The excavators thought that they had reached the full extent of the site in all directions, and therefore had recovered the entire cemetery population.

One radiocarbon date is, at present, available for the cemetery at Adwick (Table 5.2). This dates skeleton 1, a young adult male buried centrally within the cemetery, to A.D. 680-720. This date range concurs with typological dating of the grave goods recovered from graves 2 and 31 (see below, 5.4; Harvey 2008).

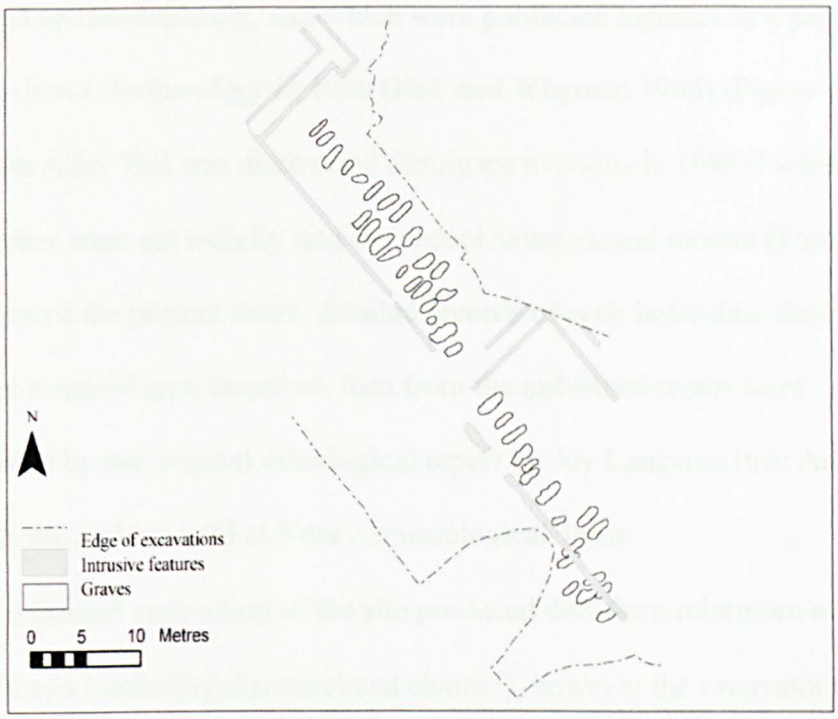

Figure 5.2. The cemetery at Adwick-le-Street.

Ailcy Hill, Ripon

Ripon was a documented site of monastic occupation from the 7th century. The *Vita Sancti Wilfrithi* by Stephen the Priest records the grant of the Minster at Ripon together with 30 hides of land by King Alhfrith of Deira to St Wilfrid shortly before the Synod of Whitby, which took place in A.D. 664 (VSW viii, Colgrave 1927: 16-7). At this time a monastery appears to have already existed on the site. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* describes how Alhfrith originally gifted land at *Inhrypum* to Abbot Eata of Melrose, but that the community abandoned the site when pressured to abandon their Irish derived practices of worship, before it was then passed to Wilfrid (HE iii, 25). There is, therefore, evidence from documentary records to suggest that the Anglo-Saxon Minster at Ripon appropriated a site originally occupied by a British religious community (see chapter 2.1). The cemetery at Ailcy Hill is one of a number of early medieval burial sites around Ripon Cathedral that have been

investigated archaeologically, and which were published together in a paper in the journal *Medieval Archaeology* in 1996 (Hall and Whyman 1996) (Figure 5.3). The cemetery on Ailcy Hill was discovered during excavations in 1986-7 when a series of small trenches were cut radially into the conspicuous natural mound (Figure 5.4). For the purposes of the present study, detailed records of each individual skeleton and burial were required and, therefore, data from the published report were supplemented by the original osteological report by Joy Langston (née Anderson) (1988) and site archive held at York Archaeological Trust.

The limited excavation of the site produced data for a minimum number of 189 individuals (including disarticulated charnel), however the excavators predict, if density of burial was uniform, that the northern slope of the hill alone may have contained c. 400 burials, and the whole site as many as five times this number (Hall and Whyman 1996: 124). Two areas on the summit, and five areas on the slopes of the hill, produced human remains. These burials could be phased into three relative phases, which were assigned dates by radiocarbon dating (Table 5.2). In addition, charnel recovered from the fill of some of these graves indicated an earlier burial phase. No complete *in situ* remains survived from this phase, although the remains of two north-south aligned features in area 1 were possibly the remains of the graves of these earlier inhumations (Hall and Whyman 1996: 73-4). The first *in situ* phase of burial (phase 1) comprised seven burials in area 1 and three in area 2. Intensive intercutting by later burials had resulted in at least 28 individuals from phase 1 inhumations being represented by charnel deposited in phase 2 grave fills. Phase 2 comprised eleven inhumations from areas 1 and 2 and seven inhumations attributed to phase 3.The latter phase consists of three graves that infill spaces between phase 2 graves (two in area 1 and one in area 2), and two that overlay them, all located in

area 1. Since they may represent two different chronological phases the excavators called these two groups of graves phases 3a and 3b (Hall and Whyman 1996: 76). The radiocarbon dates confirm that the infill burials in phase 3a may in fact be more closely associated with phase 2 than phase 3b (Hall and Whyman 1996: 88 fig 16). The latest burials from phase 3b produced one radiocarbon date of A.D. 780-990. As there is a reasonable chance they were made during middle Anglo-Saxon period as defined in the present study (i.e. before A.D. 850), they have been included in the dataset (Figure 5.5). The separate position of trenches 4, 7, 8, 12 and 15 down-slope from areas 1 and 2 prevented confident associative phasing of the burials encountered, and no radiocarbon dates were acquired for these burials. Fifteen *in situ* burials and large quantities of charnel were encountered in these areas.

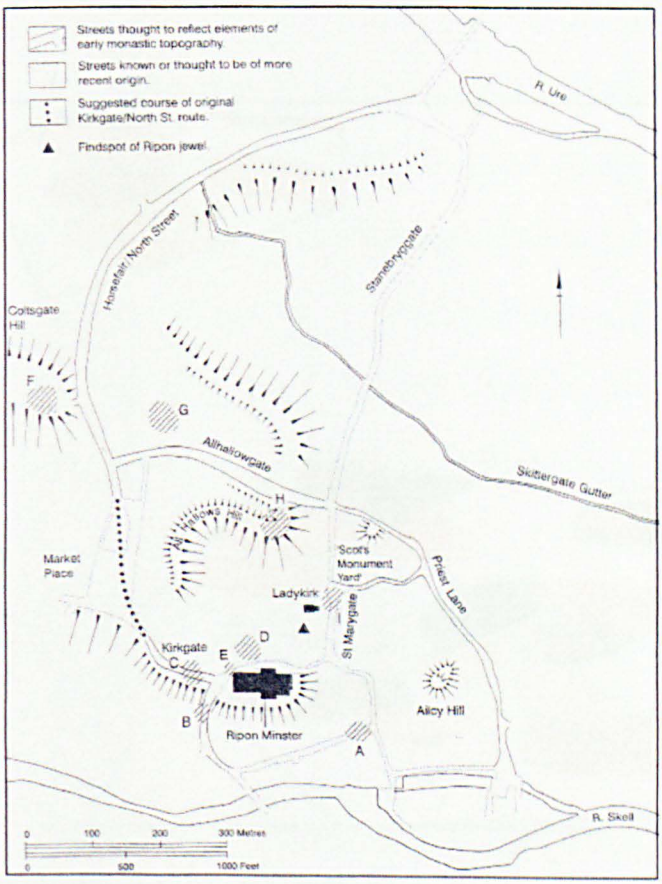

Figure 5.3 The location of Ailcy Hill (from Hall and Whyman 1996: 139).

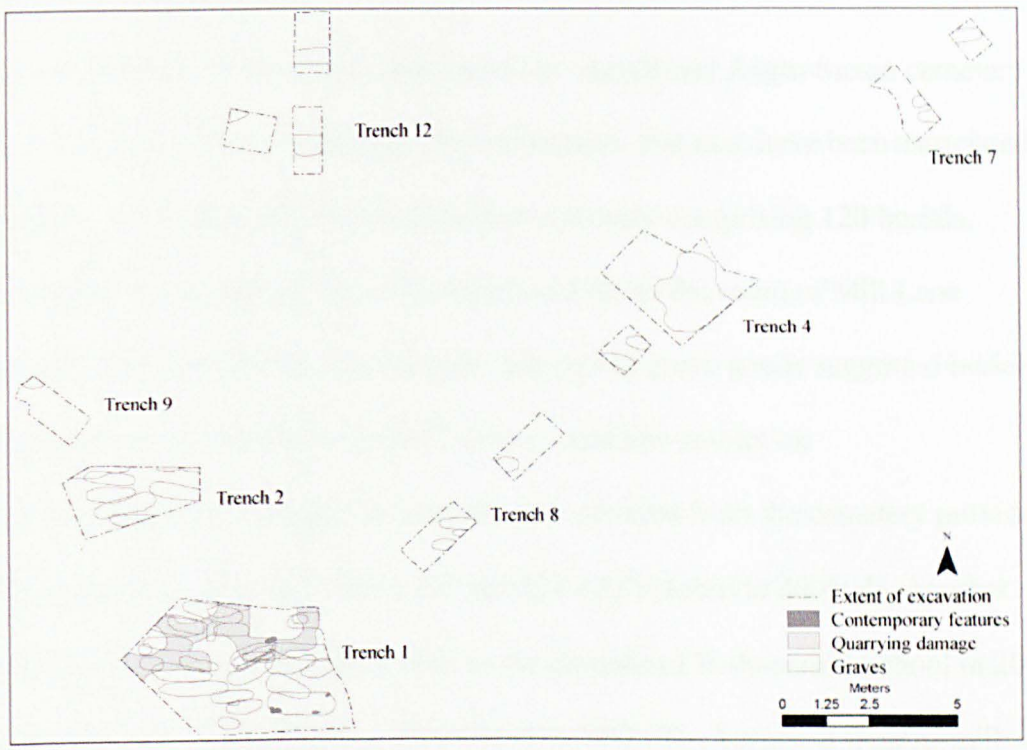

Figure 5.4. The cemetery on Ailcy Hill.

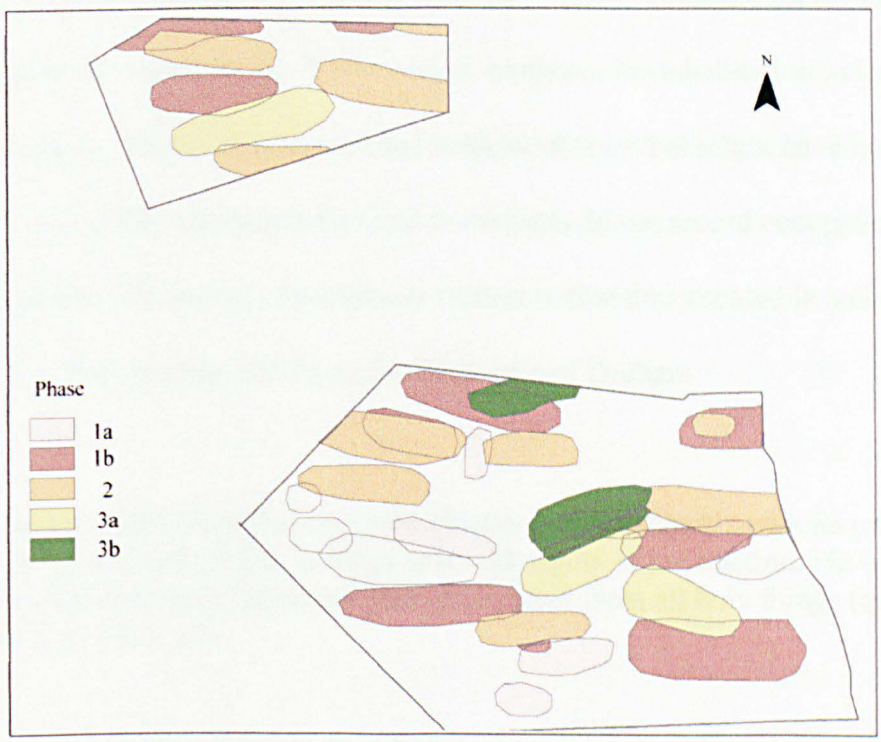

Figure 5.5. Phasing of burial on Ailcy Hill. (Only trenches 1 and 2, where phasing could be determined, are shown).

Norton Bishopsmill School

Excavations around Norton have produced two significant Anglo-Saxon cemetery sites but no archaeological evidence for settlements that may have been associated with them. An early Anglo-Saxon furnished cemetery comprising 120 burials, including three cremations, was discovered in 1982 to the south of Mill Lane (Sherlock and Welch 1992). Typological analysis of grave goods suggested burial took place from the mid-6th to mid-7th century and low-resolution thermoluminescence dating of pottery sherds recovered from the cemetery provided comparable dates of c. A.D. 560 ±290 and 470 ±300 (Johnson 2005: 4). Another Anglo-Saxon cemetery was excavated in the grounds of Bishopsmill School in 2003, 250m to the east of the cemetery discovered in 1982. The burials at Bishopsmill School were largely unfurnished and radiocarbon dates obtained from four individuals clustered securely around the 7th to 9th centuries (Johnson 2005: 111) (Table 5.2). Despite the relatively plentiful archaeological evidence for burial around Norton during the entire Anglo-Saxon period, evidence for inhabitation in the vicinity is scanty. There are no excavated settlement sites that might have housed the populations served by the cemeteries and documents do not record occupation in Norton until the 10th century. An estate at Norton is first documented in a charter from c. A.D. 994 granting the site to the Bishopric of Durham:

> And I Ulfketel, Osulf's son, grant Norton to St Cuthbert's with its produce and its men and all that belongs to it with rights of jurisdiction. He who alters this shall be cut off from any part of God and from all holy things (quoted in Daniels 1983: 27).

The wording of the text suggests that Norton was not just a village, but a significant estate during this period (Daniels 1983: 27). The estate is next mentioned in

Domesday as part of the lands of Hugh, son of Bladric (Page 1974: 205, 278; Domesday fo. 301, 328). The church of St Mary at Norton, located c. 500m north of Bishopsmill School, also post-dates both excavated burial sites. The church has been dated variously to the late 10th or late 11th century (Daniels 1983: 27, Sherlock and Welch 1992: 1), but contains fragments of sculptural stonework that have been dated to the early 10th century (Cramp 1984: 134). It is therefore possible that a Christian focus existed on the site of St Mary's during the 10th century.

The excavations at Bishopsmill School were conducted in advance of the construction of an extension to the south of the school building, therefore the extent of excavation was restricted to the areas at risk of destruction by foundations and the passage of heavy machinery (Johnson 2005: 1). A total of 98 graves were identified and 107 individuals were excavated (Johnson 2005: 8) (Figure 5.6). Three relative phases were identified among the burials: phase 1, the earliest phase, comprised 49 interments of which one was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 660-790; phase 2 included 29 interments; and phase 3, the latest phase, comprised 19 interments three of which were radiocarbon dated to A.D. 680-890, 650-770 and 710-960 respectively (Johnson 2005: 9, 111) (Figure 5.7). Human bones had been encountered previously across much of the school site, including in 1976 when the foundations for the school building disturbed skeletal material and what is described in an unpublished report as a fragment of chain-mail, and in 1994 when the discovery of more human bone prompted a small-scale excavation which recovered ten burials, one associated with a copper-alloy finger-ring and a ferrous strap, neither of which provided any dating evidence (Johnson 2005: 4). These finds suggest that burials covered a substantial area of the school grounds and indicate that the graves excavated in 2003 are only a proportion of a much larger cemetery that extended to the west and south (Johnson

2005: 8). None of the excavations on the Bishopsmill site are published, and records for the present study were taken from the comprehensive unpublished site report (Johnson 2005).

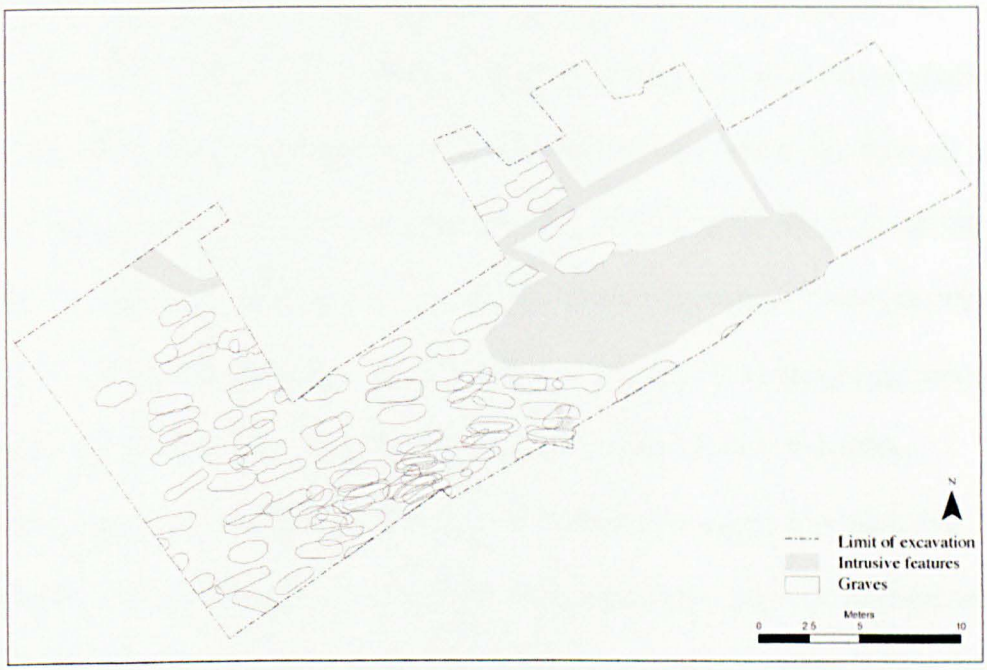

Figure 5.6. The cemetery at Norton.

Figure 5.7. Phasing of burials at Norton.

Pontefract The Booths/ Tanner's Row

The first reference to occupation in the area of Pontefract can be found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, although it is apparent that the site was known by other names in the early medieval period. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that King Eadred met with Archbishop Wulfstan of York at *Taddenssclyf*, or *Tanshelf*, in A.D. 947 (Roberts 2002: 9; Whitelock 1955: 203). Simeon of Durham, whose work dates to the early 12th century, notes that *Tanshelf* was the royal vill known as *Kyrkebi* in English and Pontefract in Latin (Faull 1981: 190; Roberts 2002: 9). Richard Morris (1989: 159-61) has reviewed the use of *Kirkby* type place-names. He argues that, first, it is a Scandinavian name (not English as suggested by Simeon) and, second, it is widely regarded as indicating the presence of a church at the time of the Scandinavian settlements in the 9th century, and therefore might be a tentative indication of an early church. Indeed there are several sites across Yorkshire with *kirk* or *kir(k)by* place-names, often with additional evidence – usually in the form of stone sculpture – that they were early churches. Kirkdale (NY), Kirkbymoorside (NY) and Kirby Hill (NY) are but three examples from a large cluster of Kirkby place names identified across the north east of England (Morris 1989: fig 35). In Domesday, Pontefract is included in the manor of *Tateshall*, which at this time is recorded as having a church (probably All Saints), priest and almshouse (Page 1907: 436-7). The Domesday record of 60 burgesses, three mills and a fishery indicates that later Anglo-Saxon Pontefract was a settlement with urban status (Roberts 2002: 10).

Reconciliation of the archaeological evidence with this documentary chronology has been limited and, until excavations began in the late 20th century, archaeological evidence for any activity at Pontefract was lacking. Evidence for pre-Conquest settlement is, nonetheless, particularly obscure. It is possible that

settlement in Pontefract was polyfocal and has thus far eluded excavation (Roberts 2002: 403; Wilmott in prep.: 36). Whilst settlement evidence is limited, funerary remains have been discovered in significant quantity around Pontefract on both sides of The Booths and at the Castle (Figure 5.8). Radiocarbon dates of A.D. 591-771, 550-710 and 940-1100 were obtained from three burials from the two sites on either side of The Booths and burials at the Castle centred around the 9th century (A.D 723-958 and 892-998). The burials from the castle are few in number, comprising only 11 *in situ* individuals and spatially separated from the burials at The Booths by over 100m. It is not clear whether The Booths and the Castle were one continuous cemetery, or whether the two sites represent separate contemporary burial foci, as have been identified at other locations dating to the middle Anglo-Saxon period, for example Hartlepool and Ripon (Roberts 1990: 3, 2002: 40). As a result of their small number and unproven links with The Booths, the burials from the Castle have been omitted from the present study. The excavations of the burials from The Booths have not been published but a full report on the site is currently in preparation by Tony Wilmott. The data utilised the present study was taken from this incomplete report and supplemented by the site archive held at Archaeological Services WYAS in Morley.

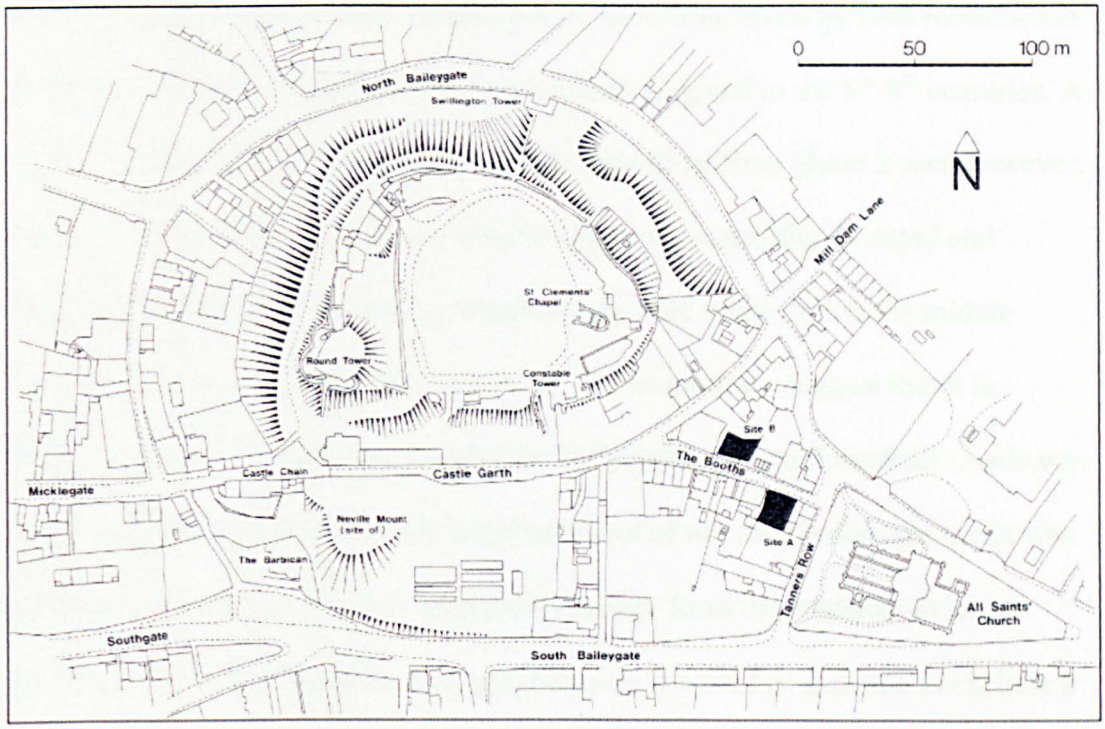

Figure 5.8. Anglo-Saxon activity in Pontefract (from Wilmott 1987: 341).

The excavation of the Anglo-Saxon burials from The Booths was conducted in rescue conditions during the 1980s. The site was split into two distinct trenches (known as site A and site B), while a series of burials between were recorded rapidly, but not excavated, during a watching brief. The watching brief burials are included in the site report being prepared by Tony Wilmott, but for the purposes of this study additional information was taken from the original excavators' notebooks, which included records of funerary rites and a cursory osteological assessment (Figure 5.9). Site A was only used for one phase of burial activity, which appears to correspond in layout and alignment with phase 1 at site B, however the watching brief burials appear to represent four phases of activity. Burials took place during phases 1-3 and the construction of a single-celled building took place in phase 3, which was then extended by the addition of a second cell in phase 4 (Figure 5.10). Two interments from the first phase of burials were radiocarbon dated to A.D. 597-771 and 550-710.

Phase 2 contained several chest burials, which have been dated by both radiocarbon and stylistic features at other sites across northern England to the 8th-9th centuries. A radiocarbon date of A.D. 940-1100 from one individual from phase 2 was, however, surprisingly late (Table 5.2). Phase 3 burials were not scientifically dated and therefore it is difficult to determine whether they were made during the middle Anglo-Saxon period as defined in this study. The excavators suggest that it is unlikely that the site was in use beyond the 11th century, when Pontefract Castle was constructed, although it is possible it had gone out of use long before the castle was built (Wilmott in prep.: 24-5). It regrettably unclear from the available evidence exactly when burial at Pontefract ceased, however it would be a shame to exclude a sites with demonstrably 7th-9th century burials from discussion solely because we are not sure when interments finished. Indeed, radiocarbon dates from phase 1 and the occurrence of chest burial amongst phase 2 burials both strongly indicate burials of middle Anglo-Saxon date. The possibility that phase 3 burials post-date the period of interest of the present study is, however, borne in mind during the following discussion.

Site A at Pontefract was located 15m south east of site B, separated from it by The Booths and an area of extensive destruction (Wilmott in prep.: 5). The total excavated population from sites A and B was c. 234, however if all of the burials recovered in Pontefract were part of one cemetery, and thus covered the area between The Booths and the Castle, the archaeologically recovered population would represent only a small sample of a much larger burial population, including an estimated 184 individuals lost in the area of destruction between sites A and B alone (Wilmott in prep.: 5).

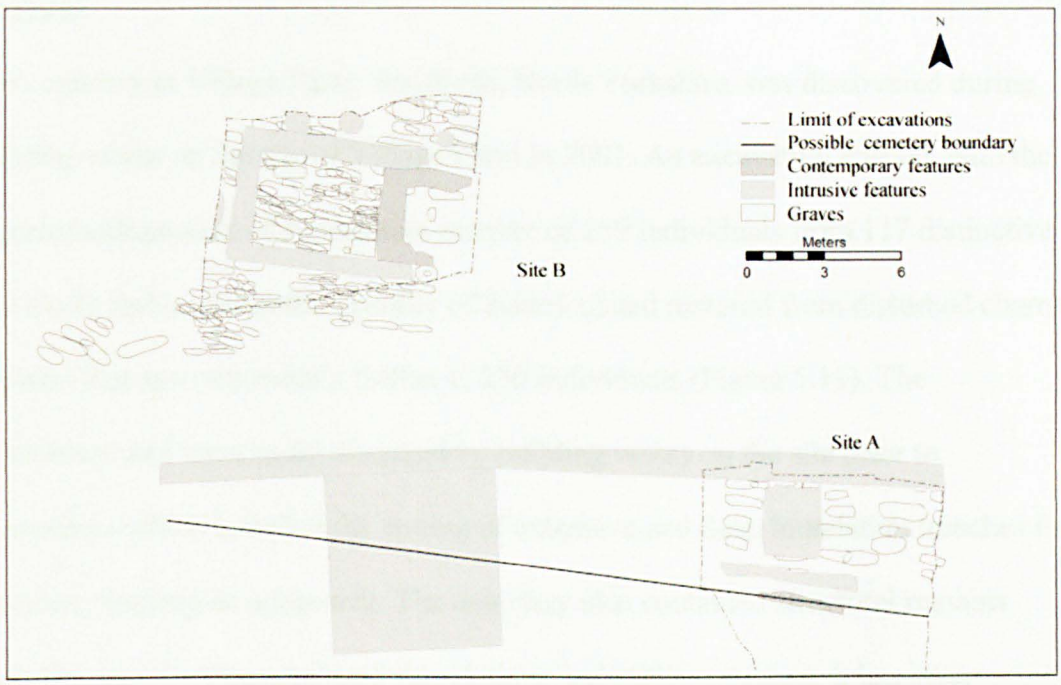

Figure 5.9. The cemetery at Pontefract.

Figure 5.10. Phasing of burials at Pontefract.

Spofforth

The cemetery at Village Farm. Spofforth, North Yorkshire, was discovered during building works on the site of Village Farm in 2001. An excavation ensued, with the eventual exhumation of a minimum number of 169 individuals from 117 distinctive grave cuts and a substantial quantity of disarticulated material from disturbed charnel deposits that may represent a further c. 250 individuals (Figure 5.11). The assemblage had been badly damaged by building works on the site prior to excavation, which included the cutting of extensive and deep foundation trenches for a modern housing development. The cemetery also contained structural remains including heavily truncated wall foundations and robber trenches. It has been hypothesised that some of these represent the remains of a contemporary church or chapel, although no record of such a structure exists in the Domesday survey (NAA 2002: 3-6; Page 1974: 261; Domesday fo. 322). The present All Saints church was built to the northwest of the cemetery site in the mid- to late-12th century, however the building does incorporate a cross fragment carved with interlace decoration thought to be of 10th-century date (Collingwood 1940: 240; Wood 1946: 32; note this sculpture is not recorded in the *British Academy Stone Sculpture Corpus*) which hints at the existence of a Christian focus of some significance in the area in the later Anglo-Saxon period (NAA 2002:17).

Spofforth was first documented in Domesday Book, in a brief account of the manor of Spofforth. Shortly before the Conquest, Spofforth was held by Gamelbar, a landowner of extensive means whose name appears frequently in Domesday records for Yorkshire. At the time of the survey, the manor comprised four carucates of land providing for nine villeins and 10 bordars (Page 1974: 261; Domesday fo. 322). The area was under the control of the Percy family from this time until the 14th century.

Evidence for occupation prior to the 11th century is scarce and there is no settlement archaeology from the early medieval period in the vicinity of the cemetery. Nonetheless, the place-name "Spofforth" hints at pre-Conquest origins. The two elements *spot* and *ford* are considered to have Old English origins, the former probably meaning "a small piece (of land)" (Gelling 1984: 249). Thus Spofforth is simply the place by the ford, although this does not reveal the nature of any Anglo-Saxon occupation.

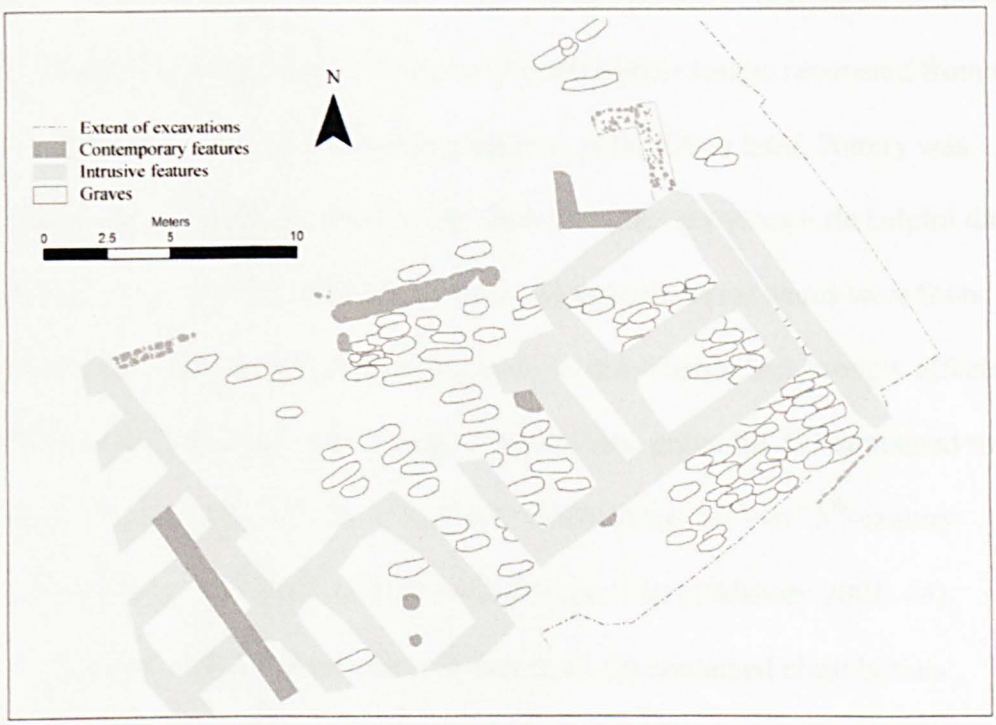

Figure 5.11. The cemetery at Spofforth.

The cemetery at Spofforth has yet to be published and only a brief report had been produced at the time writing this thesis. This report includes an osteological assessment of only 51 individuals and therefore was insufficient for the purposes of the present study. In consequence, the entire population was analysed by the author and a full osteological report produced (Craig 2009). Data regarding burial practices

and site plans were obtained from the site archive held by Northern Archaeological Associates, in Barnard Castle. In the available report, the cemetery was broadly divided by the excavators into two phases (earlier graves in the east and later graves in the west) and five zones based on *in situ* datable finds, spatial distribution of graves and an apparent shift in burial practice seen across the cemetery (NAA 2002: 20) (Figure 5.12). Radiocarbon dates were subsequently obtained from nine individuals from across the site (Table 5.2). These were A.D. 660-660-780, 660-780, 660-910, 660-830, 670-870, 680-880, 680-890, 770-970 and 880-1020, and, therefore, all centred upon the middle Anglo-Saxon period as defined in the present study. Moreover, a single mid 8th-century Northumbrian sceatta recovered from the fill of a grave also dates the eastern burials to c. A.D. 750 or later. Pottery was encountered in grave fills across the site. However, this provides little helpful dating evidence as small quantities of early-, late- and post-medieval wares were found scattered through grave fills, suggesting that site disturbance had strongly affected both their distribution and stratigraphy. For example, grave fill 231 contained small sherds of samian ware, 12th- to 13th-century Gritty Ware, 14th- to 15th-century ?Humberware and 18th-century Staffordshire-type ware (Didsbury 2001: 65).

The majority of the cemetery (zones B, C, D) contained chest burials characteristic of a middle Anglo-Saxon date. Unexcavated burials of a similar form appear to have continued to the south and east of the excavated area (zone E). Prior to the completion of the radiocarbon dating programme, the excavators had suggested that the lack of chest burials and greater uniformity of graves in zone A (the western-most graves) might indicate that they were chronologically later than the other burials, perhaps even post-Conquest in date. However, as one grave from area A was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 770-970 (sk 51), there is no evidence to

indicate there was any significant chronological gap between graves in zone A and further east. Indeed, highly uniform burials are not uncharacteristic of middle Anglo-Saxon burial practices; indeed at Addingham, where burials were radiocarbon dated to the 7th-9th century, all interments were uniform, neatly aligned in rows (Adams 1990: 181). The lack of chest burials in zone A appears to be a consequence of the spatial distribution of individuals afforded different funerary rites instead of chronological changes in burial patterns (see below, 5.4.3 and chapter 7.3).

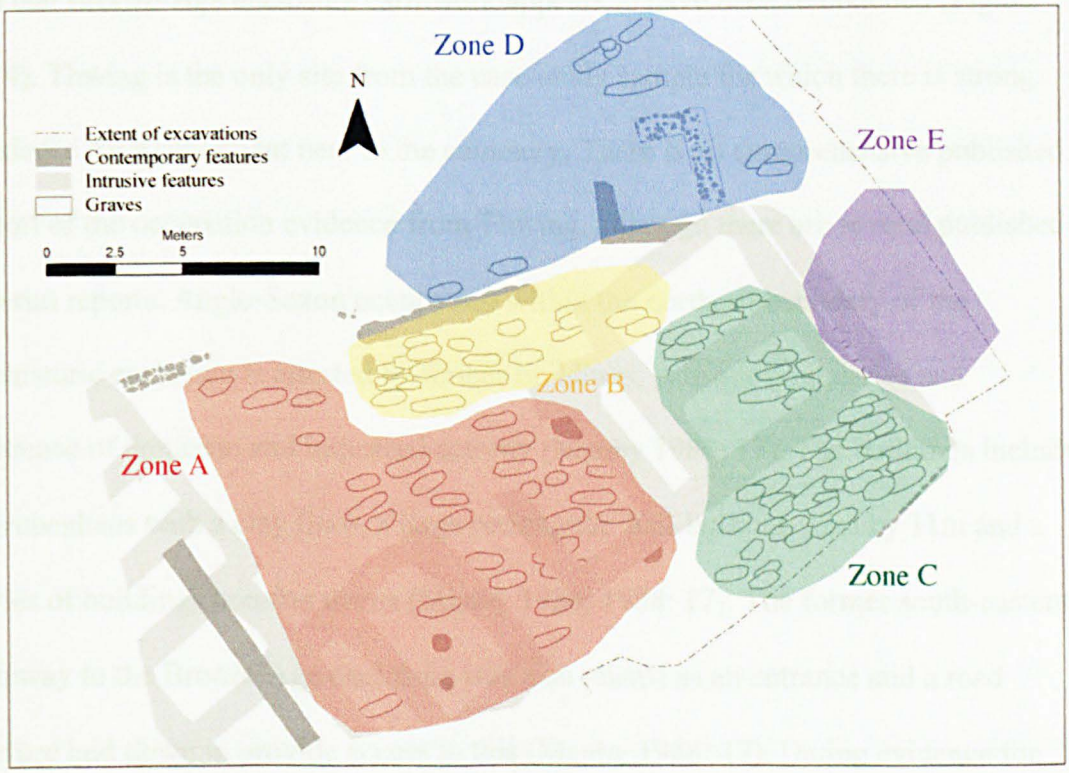

Figure 5.12. Zones of burial postulated by the excavators at Spofforth (after NAA 2002).

Thwing

A long and complex occupation sequence spanning the Mesolithic to early medieval periods has been identified archaeologically in the area of Thwing. The middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery is located on Paddock Hill, an impressive location on a scarp

slope, which enjoys panoramic views over the Great Wold Valley (Harding and Lee 1987: 171; Manby 1980: 321). The earliest activity on the site at Paddock Hill is represented by a late Neolithic circular double-ditched henge, over 100m in diameter (Harding and Lee 1987: 171). This was extensively remodelled with the backfilling of the original henge ditch, the construction of a new ditch, box rampart and a series of further ditched enclosures in the later Bronze Age, (Manby 1980: 231-2; Wardle 1992: 32) and the erection of a substantial circular timber building nearby (Figure 5.13). The henge and enclosure were reused during the Anglo-Saxon period, when the late Bronze-Age enclosure earthwork appears to have been remodelled (Figure 5.14). Thwing is the only site from the case-study sample for which there is strong evidence for a settlement near to the cemetery. There is no comprehensive published report of the occupation evidence from Thwing, although there are several published interim reports. Anglo-Saxon occupation within the northern boundary of the prehistoric enclosure is attested by timber buildings, palisade boundaries and evidence of domestic and industrial activity (Manby 1988: 17). The buildings include a grubenhaus with a clay floor, a large rectangular hall-building 22m by 11m and a series of buildings housing ovens (Manby 1986; 1988: 17). The former south-eastern gateway to the Bronze-Age enclosure was also reused as an entrance and a road surface laid down to provide access to this (Manby 1988: 17). Dating evidence for inhabitation within the prehistoric enclosure includes coins of the 8th century and wheel-made pottery, which is recorded as having been dated to the mid 9th-10th-century (Manby 1986: 4-5). However, the publication does not detail the ware-type of this pottery, so it is not possible confirm the accuracy of this date. A later Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area is recorded in Domesday, at both Thwing (*Tuenc* or *Twenc*) and nearby at Octon (Page 1974: 291, 323; Domesday fo. 322b, 382).

Paddock Hill is less than 1km south of the site of Octon shrunken medieval village and St Michael's church.

The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Paddock Hill, Thwing was excavated between 1973 and 1987, however the site remains unpublished. Access to the unpublished report, which is still incomplete, was granted to the author by the excavator, Terry Manby, and this thesis represents the first study in which a detailed analysis of the remains from Thwing has been undertaken since the unpublished report was begun. A total of 68 graves containing the remains of at least 132 individuals were recovered from an area of approximately 132 square metres, located within the outer bank of the extant Bronze- Age enclosure (Harding and Lee 1987: 182, figure 091; Manby in prep.: 2.4.1) (Figure 5.15). A series of structural features within the cemetery were identified, including three large post-holes, c. 50cm in diameter, along the western edge of the site and the trenched foundations of a small rectangular structure 3m by 4m in plan in the north-west corner of the cemetery. Two of the post-holes were found to contain packing slabs, which could have held substantial upright timbers. Whilst the chronological relationship between these posts and the graves could not be determined, Manby has postulated that they may have held free-standing wooden posts contemporary with the cemetery's use, and indeed the manner in which the burials cluster alongside the post-holes provides strong evidence that the two were contemporary. The small rectangular structure, located at the north-western extent of the cemetery, is cut to the north by a later palisade trench that provides a *terminus ante quem* for the building in the mid-9th century. The square building also contained a series of post holes, seemingly placed at random. Its tiny internal area makes interpretation difficult, however the excavator considered it to be a mortuary chapel. The function of such a building is, however, unclear. The digging of a wide

palisade trench across the northern extent of the cemetery during the 9th century indicates that structural additions continued to be made to the site throughout its use. The trench cuts two earlier graves and is also cut by two later interments, one of which was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 230-860 (sk 89, grave 65), and appears to have been dug into the ditch relatively soon after its construction.

Eight radiocarbon dates were produced for interments (Table 5.2). The majority of these dates centre around the 7th-9th centuries, however there is the possibility that burial began in the 6th century or earlier, suggested by two extremely broad dates of A.D.228-880 and 376-680 obtained from skeletons 89 and 54 respectively.

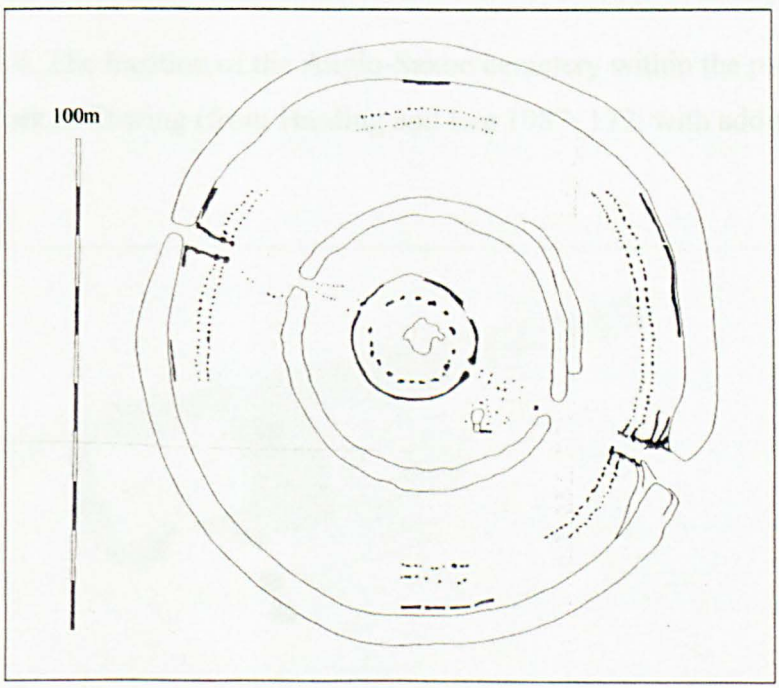

Figure 5.13. The prehistoric earthworks at Thwing (from Wardle 1992: 28).

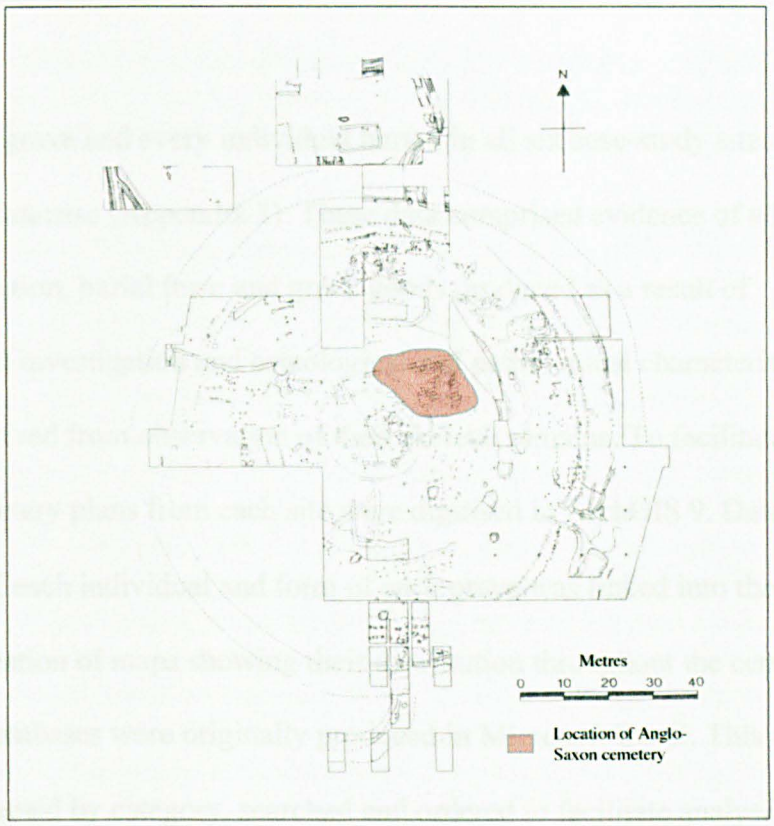

Figure 5.14. The location of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery within the prehistoric earthwork at Thwing (from Harding and Lee 1987: 172, with additions).

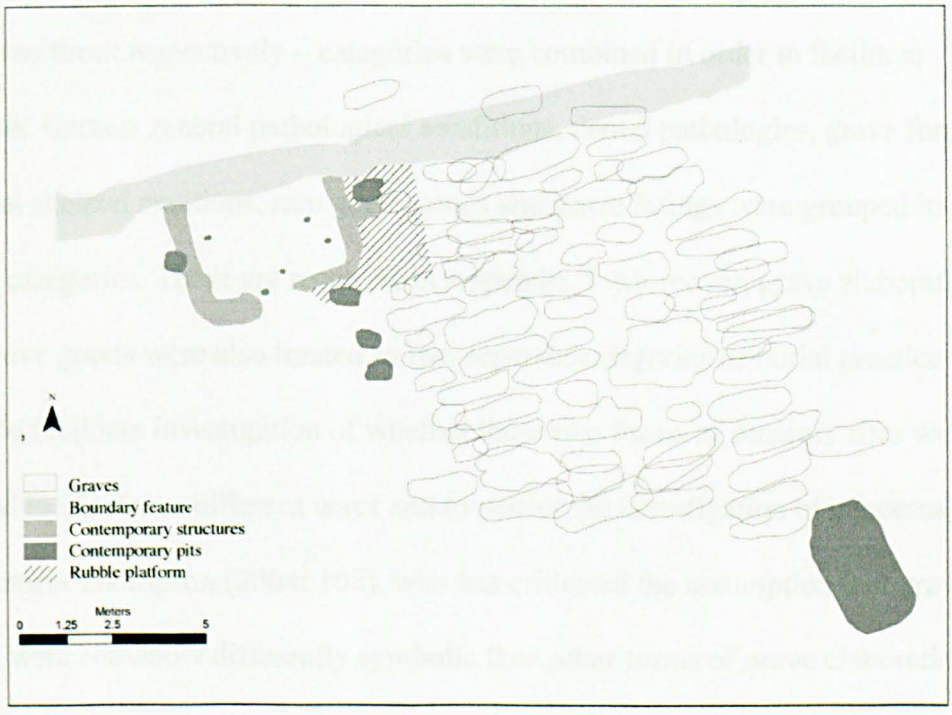

Figure 5.15. The cemetery at Thwing.

5.2 Research methods

Data for each grave and every individual buried in all six case-study sites were collated in a database (Appendix 3). These data comprised evidence of all aspects of grave construction, burial form and grave goods produced as a result of archaeological investigation and osteological and pathological characteristics of each individual derived from observation of their skeletal remains. To facilitate spatial analysis, cemetery plans from each site were digitised in ArchGIS 9. Data regarding the identity of each individual and form of each grave was linked into these plans to permit the creation of maps showing their distribution throughout the cemeteries.

The databases were originally produced in Microsoft Excel. This allowed the data to be selected by category, searched and ordered to facilitate analysis. The data were also coded and transferred into SPSS for statistical manipulation (see below, 5.3) (Appendix 4). In cases where different categories of data were rare in the dataset – for example pathological conditions such as leprosy and TB, which occurred once and three times respectively – categories were combined in order to facilitate analysis. Certain general pathological conditions, dental pathologies, grave forms, unusual skeletal positions, rare grave goods and grave linings were grouped into single categories. These are recorded in Appendix 5. Moreover, grave elaborations and grave goods were also treated as two separate categories of burial practice in order to facilitate investigation of whether these two forms of funerary rites were utilised in similar or different ways and to permit the investigation of concerns raised by Victoria Thompson (2004: 108), who has criticised the assumption that grave goods were somehow differently symbolic than other forms of grave elaboration, observing that:

It is unclear whether this division which defines some artefacts as grave goods and others as 'something else' is a dichotomy which would have been understood in the early medieval period.

The different burial rites included in each of these two categories are presented in Table 5.3. Every effort was made during this data manipulation to ensure like was being compared with like, however, in some cases, it was unclear which larger category a particular case might best fit. For example, locks were found in association with chest and coffin fittings in every case, therefore appear to be characteristic of grave elaboration, however keys were sometimes encountered in graves with no evidence of a container, thus whilst it might be expected that they do relate to the chest burial rite, it was thought best to include them as grave goods in analysis. As a result of this issue, raw data was always consulted during interpretation to avoid misrepresentation.

Grouped category	Includes:
Burial elaborations	Stone or wooden containers, nails, locks, stone or wooden linings, carved stone, marker post pipes, pits in the grave floor, steps or sockets in the grave walls, post holes
Grave goods	Keys, metal objects, worked bone or ivory, copper alloy objects, coins, glass, pebbles and stones, beads, fossils, teeth used as grave goods

Table 5.3. Grouping of various forms of grave elaborations, inclusions and grave goods into categories for analysis.

Initially, all 1144 individuals from the six case-study sites were included in one large database. This was analysed to identify patterns in the disposition of the funerary rite

across the region of the north of England. This analysis was intended to look for pan-regional trends that might be used to characterise the provision of burial rites of middle Anglo-Saxon England. Furthermore, in combining six cemeteries together a corpus of burials of suitable size for valid statistical analysis was created.

Second, similar analysis was performed on each site separately. This analysis did not always provide populations of a large enough size for valid statistical analysis, and therefore patterns identified could not necessarily be tested for significance. However, it was considered important to consider each cemetery in isolation, as they each represent distinct burial communities, social units that may have articulated their burial practices differently from neighbouring communities. If this were to have been the case, combined analysis of all six cemeteries in isolation would risk glossing over local patterns. These methods were informed by previous research into earlier Anglo-Saxon funerary rites emphasising that "each community actively created its own burial rite whilst drawing on common practice" (Lucy 1998: 49).

5.3 Statistical methods

In this and the following chapter, the funerary data were analysed with the aim of identifying patterns in the provision of burials practices and correlations were made between aspects of the biological identity and burial forms of the individuals buried in the case-study sites. SPSS was used to collate this data, produce cross-tabulations and run simple statistical analysis to identify viable patterns.

The vast majority of the data was non-parametric and nominal or ordinal in scale, which limited the range of statistical tests that could be applied.[2] Non-parametric tests were ideal for this project as they suit these data types and demand fewer specific criteria of the dataset, permitting their use across more data types. In addition, they are more suited to smaller datasets. However, non-parametric tests can lack sensitivity, which may manifest itself in failure to detect differences in the data that do actually exist (Pallant 2001: 286). This flaw was borne in mind throughout data analysis and interpretation, and resulted in the discussion of some patterns that did not quite achieve statistical significance alongside more confidently identified correlations.

Non-parametric statistics were only used in this research to identify patterns within the data. Therefore simple correlations between data were made using chi-squared tests for independence (χ^2), which identify significant differences between two or more groups of categorical data such as sex (male, female) and grave goods (knife, brooch, buckle etc.). Data for age at death and stature were ranked, so more powerful statistical results could be obtained by using the Mann-Whitney U test (MW) or Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test. These are non-parametric tests that require that one variable is ranked or continuous (Sokal and Rohlf 1995: 423, 426). Mann-Whitney only applies to data with two groups and Kruskal-Wallis to data with two or

[2] Many data sets tend towards a normal distribution, whereby data is distributed symmetrically about the mean. These are called parametric data. Adult stature is a rare example of parametric data collected in the present study. It tends towards a normal distribution because the number of individuals at the extremes of height, i.e. the shortest and tallest, are small, but the numbers of individuals with statures in between these values increase towards the mean, forming a bell-shaped curve when plotted in a graph. Non-parametric data does not follow this generalised distribution. Nominal (or categorical) and ordinal (or rank) data are often non-parametric. Nominal data are classified by named categories, for example makes of car or colours of hair; or in the dataset used in this thesis, types of grave goods or grave shape. Ordinal data are also named categories, but these can be ranked, or placed in some meaningful order, for example quality of vegetables ranked as poor, moderate or good; or in the present study, age at death categories i.e. neonate, infant, child etc. or severity of a pathological condition (Rowntree 1981: 29-30; 124).

more. All statistical tests applied in this study were considered significant at a level of 0.05 (95%).

The nature of the dataset prevented the application of more complex statistical analyses. Although the cemeteries investigated were large by early medieval standards, they rarely provided the quantity of data required for many statistical tests to produce reliable results. This problem was particularly acute when data was selected for particular characteristics, further reducing the dataset. Sample size can have a significant effect on the power of statistical tests, therefore several precautions were taken in this analysis to ensure tests of smaller samples were valid. For chi-squared tests where expected frequencies in at least 80% of cells were below 5, the result of the test was not considered valid (Pallant 2001: 290). In addition, Yate's Correction for Continuity was applied for 2 by 2 tables to allow for a tendency for the test to overestimate significance (Pallant 2001: 288-290). The Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests are less sensitive to sample size, especially at a significance level of 0.05 and over, where samples as small as 5 can be tested (Sokal and Rohlf 1995: 426), so no modifications were needed in these cases.

5.4 Funerary practices at the case-study sites

The following section provides a detailed discussion of the various burial practices identified at the case-study sites. Site topography, grave form, disposition of the corpse, grave elaborations, grave goods and the location of certain graves within the cemetery area are all considered in order to provide a comprehensive characterisation of the funerary practices utilised at the six sites. Where relevant, details of prevalence rates of various burial practices and statistical correlations are included in the text.

The prevalences of all burial practices and complete statistical results for correlations made between different forms of funerary practices are included in Appendix 6. Where statistical results are mentioned in the text, these are cross-referenced to the tables in this appendix.

5.4.1 Site topography

Consideration of site plans instantly provides evidence for a variety of topographical features such as buildings, posts and boundaries at the case-study sites. (Figures 5.2, 5.4, 5.6, 5.9, 5.11, 5.15). Moreover, the irregular distribution of graves across the cemeteries, suggests that space was being used selectively for the placement of graves. There is evidence that the extent of cemetery space was marked by boundaries at Pontefract. A linear ditch containing several post-holes at the southern edge of site A aligned with the burials, and there were no interments encountered to the south of the ditch (Crockett and Roberts 1988) (Figure 5.16). The excavators hypothesised that this feature served as a boundary to the cemetery that, as site A contained only graves from phase 1, seems to have been established from the outset of burial. At Thwing, a palisade trench was cut through the cemetery during the 9th century (Manby in prep.). All graves except two, both of which have been highlighted as possible execution victims (see chapter 7.2.3), were located to the south of this trench, suggesting it also served as a boundary to the cemetery. Whilst the extent of cemetery space appears to have been marked by a physical barrier at Pontefract and Thwing, at other sites in the case-study sample the edges of the burial ground may have been conceptually, rather than physically defined.

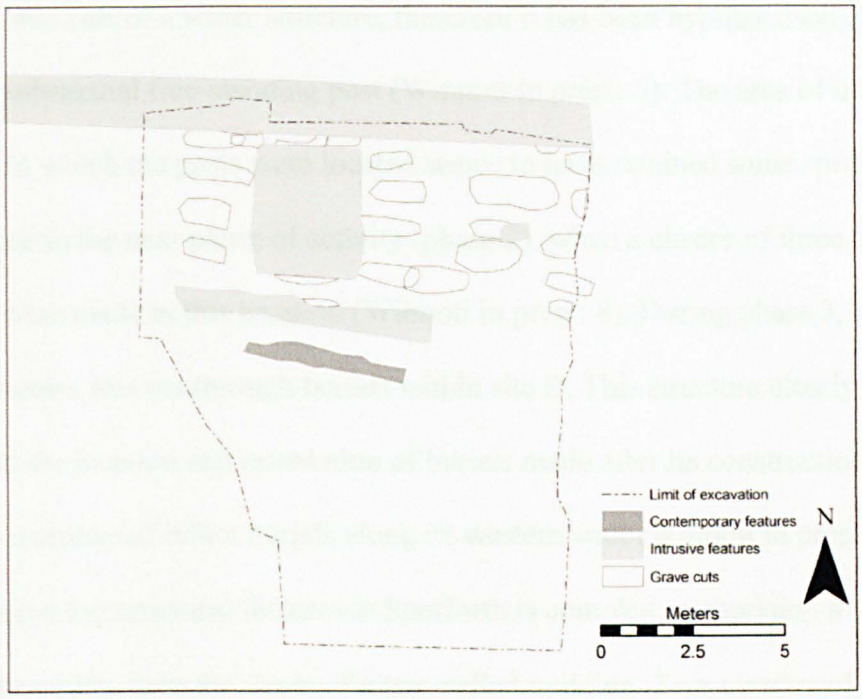

Figure 5.16. Possible boundary to the south of the cemetery at Pontefract (dark grey).

It is unusual for excavations of middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries to encounter the full extent of burial (see chapters 3.5 and 3.6), however, at Adwick the excavators believe that the edges of the cemetery were reached on all four sides. No boundary features were identified, yet the regular layout of the graves within a defined spatial area implies that the cemetery was no less spatially delineated than at Pontefract.

In some cases, topographical features of the cemetery site appear to have dictated variations in grave layout. At Thwing, burials were densest along the western side of the cemetery. This clustering of graves increased in proximity to the north-south line of post-holes and around the small building in the north west, suggesting that these structures were cemetery foci. Various structural features were encountered in the cemetery at Pontefract during its four phases of development. Two post-holes of different sizes were excavated from phase 1 levels in site B. The absence of other structural post holes across the site make it unlikely that the larger

post-hole was part of a wider structure, therefore it has been hypothesised to have housed a substantial free-standing post (Wilmott in prep.: 5). The area of the cemetery in which the posts were located seems to have retained some special significance in the next phase of activity (phase 2), when a cluster of three interments in chests were made in this location (Wilmott in prep.: 8). During phase 3, a single-celled structure was cut through burials within site B. This structure clearly influenced the location and orientation of burials made after its construction, attracting a cluster of infant burials along its western wall (Wilmott in prep.: 32-3). The evidence for structural features at Spofforth is complex, comprising a series of walls that roughly form the shape of a two-celled building. Two clusters of burial immediately south of one of these walls, which runs west-east across the site, might suggest that this structure also acted as a focus for burial. There is also evidence of the clustering of graves at Norton and Adwick, but in neither case is there archaeological evidence for any focal structure. At the former there is a gradual increase in the density of graves towards the south of the site, but if this pattern was the result of a cemetery focus, any archaeological evidence for its nature is located beyond the extent of the excavated area. At Adwick, interments were arranged in two irregular rows that ran from the westnorthwest to eastsoutheast of the site, but this regular grave layout broke down in places, especially in the far east of the site where an amorphous cluster of graves was encountered. It was hypothesised by the excavator that this might indicate the presence of a building or focal structure towards the north of the site which had greater influence over the orientation of graves in close proximity to it, but again, there is no archaeological evidence to confirm this (Harvey 2008). Standing structures were not the only topographical feature that could dictate cemetery layout. At Ailcy Hill, a group of burials to the

north side of the hill tended to be orientated more northwest-southeast than those elsewhere, following the contours of the hill (Hall and Whyman 1996: 73), thus, the natural relief of the land influenced the orientation of graves.

Whilst clusters of graves were commonly encountered close to focal features in the case-study cemeteries, another distinctive form of spatial organisation involves the complete segregation of small numbers of graves away from the main focus of burial. At Thwing, only two graves lie to the north of the northern palisade trench, removed not only spatially but also conceptually, being separated by a structural feature from all other burials. A similar picture is presented by two adult male burials (graves 248 and 281) at Spofforth, which lie to the north of the remains of an apparently contemporary foundation, which may have been the southern-most wall of a building. If this were the case, the burials would have been inside the building. In addition, there are two groups of burials located to the north east of the structure at Spofforth, seemingly isolated from the much more densely utilised area of the cemetery to the south. Open-area excavation of the site found no evidence for burials in the areas between these apparently isolated burials and the main area of the cemetery, suggesting their segregation was real, and not an artefact of excavation.

Caution must be employed when considering the distribution of graves throughout cemeteries and the relationship between burials and structures. Partial excavation or post-depositional destruction has the potential to create a false impression of grave distribution and it can be difficult to prove contemporaneity of graves and buildings. Nevertheless, at the six case-study sites the stratigraphic relationships between standing buildings and clustering of graves are relatively well established and in several cases open-area excavations have permitted clustering of graves in certain areas, and the paucity of burials in others, to be demonstrated.

In several cases, the topography of the case-study cemeteries varied through time. This was most clearly demonstrated at Ailcy Hill where all phases of burial were laid out differently (Figure 5.4). In the earliest phase of burial on Ailcy Hill, represented by charnel and two possible grave cuts, the burials were apparently orientated north-south, and the sporadic occurrence of charnel from this phase in later graves may indicate that burials were not uniformly positioned across the hill (Hall and Whyman 1996: 118). The subsequent phase 1 burials were dug in rows on a prevailing west-east orientation, but there were several graves that varied from this alignment. Phase 2 was more uniform, with consistency in alignment and closeness of spacing between graves, a practice that resulted in significant disturbance of the underlying burials (Hall and Whyman 1996: 76). Despite the limited numbers of graves, the excavators have tentatively suggested that phase 2 graves may have been aligned in strings rather than rows (Hall and Whyman 1996: 122). Phase 3a burials appear to have been inserted into the gaps between phase 2 graves. Alignments in this phase are much more varied, ranging from northwest-southeast to southwest-northeast (Hall and Whyman 1996: 76). Frequency of both intercutting and the superpositioning of burials varied between the three phases at Norton, but the most notable variation was in the positioning of graves with respect to each other (Figure 5.6). The earliest – phase 1 – graves were arranged in rows running from north to south and orientated northeast-southwest, phase 2 graves were positioned in strings on a truer west-east orientation, and phase 3 graves reverted to the earlier orientation seen in phase 1, and were more randomly located across the site (Johnson 2005: 9). A similar pattern of deviation in alignment was identified at Pontefract (Figure 5.9). Phase 1 graves were almost entirely uniform in their orientation exactly west to east. These burials were aligned in five rows in site A and at least 2 rows in site B

(Wilmott in prep.: 4-5). Three graves on site A appear, however, to deviate from this pattern and may represent in-filling made towards the end of phase 1. Phase 2 graves deviated from phase 1 in alignment, their heads being orientated slightly north of west (Wilmott in prep.: 8). Phase 3 graves reassert the phase 1 west-east alignment, which is shared by the single-celled building constructed during this period (Wilmott in prep.: 11).

Upstanding monuments, buildings and structures would naturally have physically defined and conceptually delineated areas within the cemetery as a whole and facilitated the creation of zoning or a spatial hierarchy. Moreover, whilst physical boundaries are rarely visible archaeologically, the clustering of graves into spatially defined areas to form cemeteries rather than, for example, dotted randomly across the landscape, indicates that there was still a conceptually restricted area in which burial was considered appropriate. Graves from many middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries appear to respect structures, align on focal points and favour certain areas, resulting in the intercutting of successive phases of burial (see chapter 3.7). Standing structures and boundaries may have delineated cemetery areas, yet less tangible spaces might be created by proximity to certain features or relationships to earlier marked graves. All of these factors may have been employed in the construction of meanings in the burial rite.

5.4.2 Grave form and disposition of the body

Data concerning grave form and disposition of the body were available for 1183 graves from the six case-study sites. There was considerable variation in the form and construction of the graves. Rectangular, linear grave cuts were the norm,

however, other forms were identified (Table 5.4). One grave at Thwing was described in the reports as being "key-hole" shaped, suggesting a roughly linear cut but with the addition of a circular head socket. Given the apparently highly unusual nature of this grave cut it is especially regrettable that there are no illustrations or photographs of the burial available to the author at present. Oval graves occurred rarely, at four of the six sites (35, or 12.3% of the total): Norton, Pontefract, Spofforth and Thwing (Figure 5.17). Variations in the morphology of the grave cut were limited to one site. At Thwing many forms of sockets, pits and post-holes were identified during excavation. Amorphous pits, roughly the same width as the grave cuts but a fraction of their length, were identified in the floor at the ends of almost a quarter of graves (32, 23.7%), of which the majority had pits at both ends (16, 50%), while the remainder had pits at only the head-end (7, 21.9%) or foot-end (9, 28.1%) (Table 5.5). In addition, steps and sockets were cut into several graves (7, 5.2%). The presence of steps/sockets and pits in the grave are mutually exclusive in all but one case at Thwing and, therefore, it appears that they had distinct functions (see chapter 7.5). Pits at the head, feet or at both ends of the grave appear slightly more common amongst graves around the edges of the site. Graves with steps and sockets, however, were clustered in a group to the north west and spread throughout the south-east corner (Figure 5.18). Their different distributions emphasise that the two forms of modification to the grave cut were rites afforded to different people or created at different times. A wide range of sockets, niches and ledges have been noted amongst early Anglo-Saxon graves, including 6th- and7th-century interments at Castledyke South, where they are interpreted as having held structural additions to the grave such as posts, canopies and markers (Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 213; Hogarth 1973). Whilst the sockets/steps and pits in graves at Thwing may have served a

similar purpose, there is insufficient information available on these features to permit any further consideration of their functions at present.

Grave shape	Frequency
Linear rectangle	249 87.4%
Ovoid	35 12.3%
Keyhole shaped	1 0.4%
Total	285

Table 5.4. Frequencies of grave shapes at the six case-study sites.

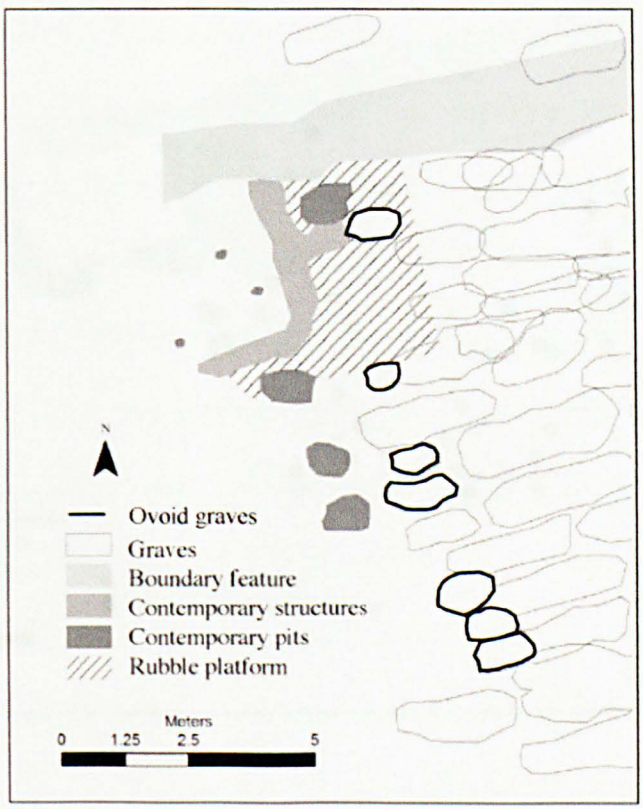

Figure 5.17. Examples of ovoid grave cuts from Thwing.

Grave form	Frequency
Pits at the head	6 4.4%
Pits at the foot	9 6.7%
Pits at the head and foot	16 11.9%
Steps/sockets	6 4.4%
Pits at the head and steps/sockets	1 0.7%
No elaborate grave form	97 71.9%

Table 5.5. Frequencies of modifications to the grave cut at Thwing.

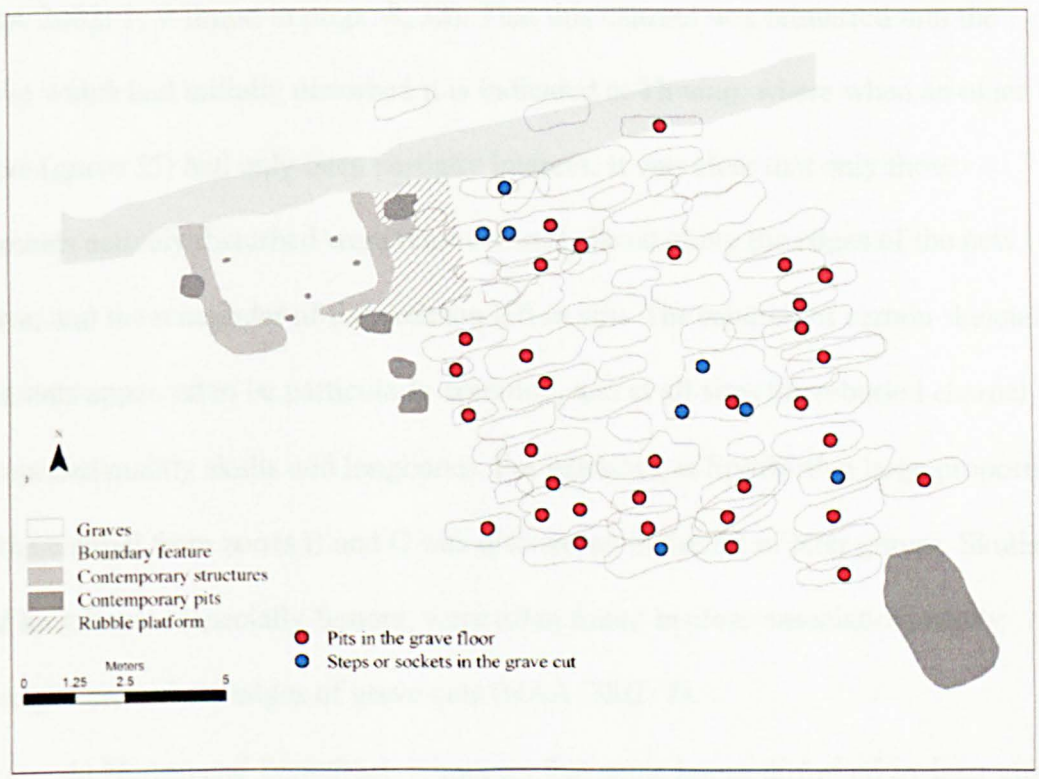

Figure 5.18. Graves with pits in the floor or steps and/or sockets in the cut at Thwing.

In many cases, graves at the case-study sites had been disturbed so that their morphology was not identifiable. Almost one quarter of the total population (120, 24.3%) were described in the site literature as disturbed or charnel deposits, however incomplete skeletons from numerous other graves may have also been disturbed to some degree. Whilst modern disturbance is documented – for example, the cutting of foundation trenches and bioturbation by tree roots at Spofforth – there was also strong evidence for disturbance of human remains by the cutting of later graves and structures during the period of use of the cemetery. In several cases at five of the six case-study sites – Ailcy Hill, Norton, Pontefract, Spofforth and Thwing – charnel was noted to have been encountered arranged on the base, along the sides and in the fill of later burials (Hall and Whyman 1996: 70; Johnson 2005: 10; Manby in prep.; NAA 2002: 7; Wilmott in prep.: 8, 32). That this charnel was reinterred into the grave which had initially disturbed it is indicated at Thwing, where when an older grave (grave 55) had only been partially intercut. It was clear that only those elements actively disturbed were removed and placed along the edges of the new grave, and the remainder of the skeleton left *in situ.* The reburial of certain skeletal elements appeared to be particularly common, and at all sites the reburied charnel comprised mainly skulls and longbones. For example, at Spofforth a large proportion of the charnel from zones B and C was discovered in the fill of later graves. Skulls and long bones, especially femora, were often found in close association, neatly arranged around the edges of grave cuts (NAA 2002: 7).

At Norton and Pontefract, it appears that some bones disturbed by later grave cutting were afforded special reburial. Fragments of two individuals were encountered in pit 295 at Norton, and the remains of one had been positioned so that the long bones crossed under the skull, described in the report as reminiscent of a

skull and crossbones arrangement (Johnson 2005: 10). In grave 608 from phase 2 of burial at Pontefract, charnel from at least two individuals had been placed in the gap between the grave cut and a coffin/chest before backfilling took place (Wilmott in prep.: 8). The occurrence of remains from four individuals in a container from phase 1 has been suggested by Tony Wilmott (in press: 32) to be a variant of the practice of the reinterment of charnel. In addition to the placement of charnel around the container in grave 608, another stack of charnel was included on the south side of the grave, which appeared to have been cut larger to accommodate the additional human remains. The articulated skeleton in this grave was interred in a container, but the grave also contained iron objects around the charnel, suggesting that the charnel had been placed in a chest alongside the coffined burial. The charnel is recorded in the unpublished report as having included a fully articulated lower leg, revealing that some of the charnel must have been articulated at the time of removal from its original place of burial (Wilmott in prep.: 9). This suggests the disturbance of a recently buried individual, although the possibility that it represents the burial of an amputated leg cannot be discounted, even though there is no recorded evidence of cut marks on the bones.

The vast majority of grave cuts in the sample were linear and orientated with their long axis west to east (188, 82.4%), however there was evidence for deviation from exact west-east, both between and within sites. The orientation of the individual within the grave cut was also subject to some variation. The majority of graves housed individuals buried with the head to the western-most end of the grave (480, 97.0%), however a notable minority had their heads towards the east (13, 2.6%) or north (2, 0.4%) (Table 5.6). Slight variation about west-east is most notable at Norton where the orientation of graves changes subtly through time. There appears to

be a specific spatial component to this shift with later graves more common in the south of the site, and therefore west-east orientated phase 2 graves are also more common in the south (Figure 5.7). The rarity of burials on reverse alignments makes drawing any inferences about their spatial distribution difficult. Reverse alignment graves are generally interspersed with others at Adwick, Norton, and Pontefract, and in all but one case are clearly not buried in spatially-distinctive locations, despite containing some unusual burial forms (Figure 5.19, 5.20, 5.21). For example, skeleton 2 at Adwick was reversed, had stones placed over the chest and skull, and was also one of only two burials from this site accompanied by a surviving artefact, in this case an iron knife. In addition, he had dental pathologies that seemed to suggest severe difficulties in jaw movement. One exception to the general pattern of inclusion of reversed graves among the burials of the wider community is the burial of an adolescent ?male from Ailcy Hill who suffered a significant spinal deformity and signs of disrupted growth including enamel hypoplasia and Harris lines. He was buried east-west in the unusual phase 3b, therefore is one of the few interments that may have been made after the burial focus had shifted to another cemetery nearby. Thus, whilst located in an area of previous burial, this individual was seemingly spatially segregated from the main communal burial focus at that time.

Orientation of body (head-feet)	Frequency
W-E	401 81.0%
NW-SE	2 0.4%
N-S	2 0.4%
NE-SW	2 0.4%
E-W	8 1.6%
SE-NW	3 0.6%
SW-NE	48 9.7%
NWW-SEE	29 5.9%
Total	495 100%

Table 5.6. Orientation of burials at the six case-study sites.

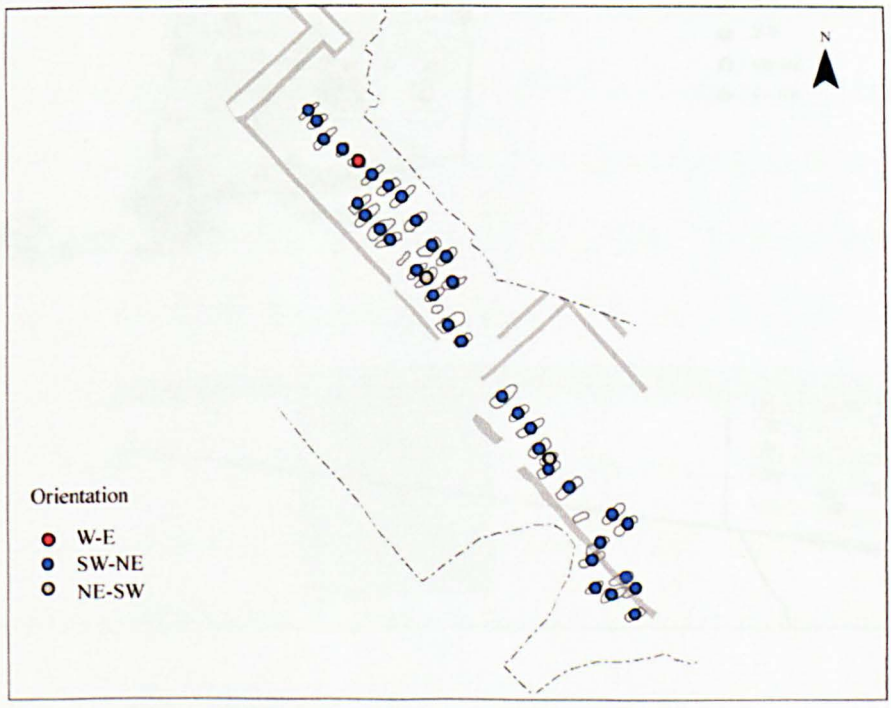

Figure 5.19. Orientation of burials at Adwick.

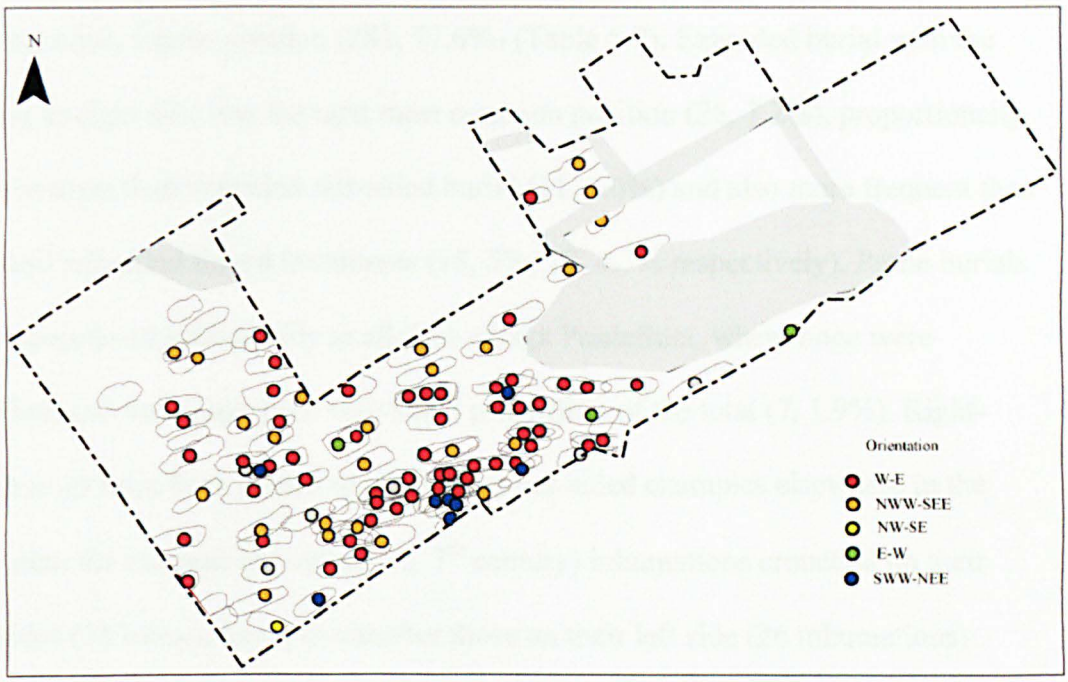

Figure 5.20. Orientation of burials at Norton.

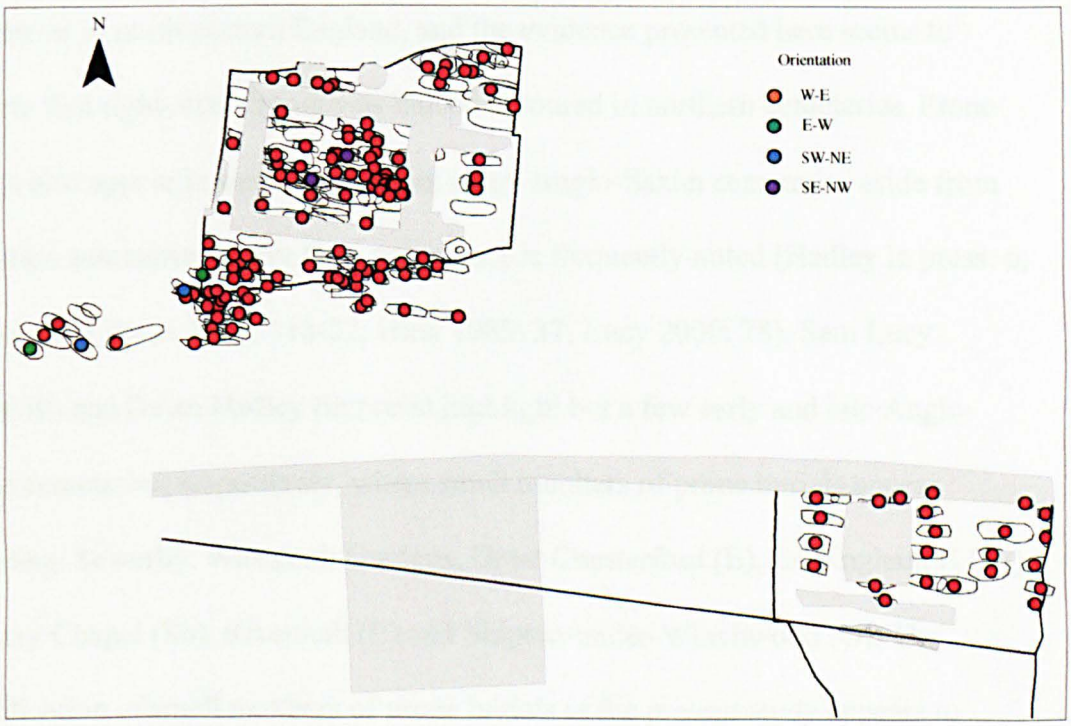

Figure 5.21. Orientation of burials at Pontefract.

The normative rite amongst the case-study cemeteries was to place the body in an extended, supine position (281, 77.6%) (Table 5.7). Extended burial with the body on its right side was the next most common position (26, 7.2%), proportionally more common than extended left-sided burial (11, 3.0%) and also more frequent than right- and left-sided flexed interments (18, 5%; 17, 4.7% respectively). Prone burials were encountered infrequently at all sites except Pontefract, where none were identified, and thus make up a very small proportion of the total (7, 1.9%). Right-sided burials have been shown to outnumber left-sided examples elsewhere in the study area: for example at Uncleby (c. 7th century) inhumations crouched on their right sides (34 inhumations) outnumber those on their left side (26 inhumations) (Lucy 1998: 58). The dominance of right-sided burials over left has also been noted at Jarrow, Wearmouth, and Black Gate (Lowther 2005: 186). Pamela Lowther (2005: 186) suggests that a high number of right-sided burials might be a feature of cemeteries in north-eastern England, and the evidence presented here seems to confirm that right-sided burial was indeed favoured in northern cemeteries. Prone burials also appear in small numbers in many Anglo-Saxon cemeteries aside from execution cemeteries where their occurrence is frequently noted (Hadley in press: 6; Hawkes and Wells 1975: 118-22; Hirst 1985: 37; Lucy 2000: 78). Sam Lucy (2000:80) and Dawn Hadley (in press) highlight but a few early and late Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, respectively, where small numbers of prone burials appear including: Sewerby, Westgarth Gardens, Great Chesterford (E), Empingham II (Su), Beckery Chapel (So), Rivenhall (E) and Shipton-under-Winchwood (O). The identification of small numbers of prone burials in the present study appears to reflect a practice utilised across the region of study, and Britain as a whole, for a significant time. The head of the interred individual most commonly lay on its side,

even in supine interments (right: 82, 46.9%; left: 52, 29.7%) (Table 5.8). The head was almost twice as likely to be lain on its right side rather than its left, reflecting the disproportionate number of individuals interred on their right sides. As expected, the side on which the head was placed was significantly linked to the placement of the body on that same side (χ^2=125.256, p<0.001). Table A6.3.34.[3]

		Side				
Position		Supine	Left	Right	Prone	Total
	Extended	281 77.6%	11 3.0%	26 7.2%	7 1.9%	325 89.8%
	Flexed	2 0.6%	17 4.7%	18 5.0%	0 0%	37 10.2
	Total	283 78.2%	28 7.7%	44 12.2%	7 1.9%	362 100

Table 5.7. Bodily disposition at the six case-study sites.

Head facing	Frequency
Ahead	38 21.7%
Left	52 29.7%
Right	82 46.9%
Down	3 1.7%

Table 5.8. Direction in which the heads of interments faced at the case-study sites.

The location of burials where the individual was placed on their side can be considered in order to investigate whether the direction that they faced was meaningful. Several right- and left-sided interments were made at Norton in all

[3] Tables with the prefix A6 can be found in Appendix 6.

phases. In phase 1 three right-sided burials were made in the south-east corner of the cemetery, and three left-sided interments were made some distance away in the north-west sector of the cemetery. In subsequent phases, right- and left-sided burials seem to respect this early division: six left-sided burials being made in a cluster during phase 2 in the east of the cemetery while one left-sided burial was made in the western part of the cemetery during phase 3 (Figure 5.22). It might be hypothesised that burials were made to face two different focal points, however there is no evidence of what these foci may have been, nor any corroborating evidence in overall grave alignment for a polyfocal cemetery. The suggestion that a pair of burials were aligned to face each other can be ruled out with evidence from Ailcy Hill. Here, a right-sided interment (sk 2005) was positioned next to a left-sided interment (sk 2010), however they had their backs, not faces, towards each other. In fact, there is no conclusive evidence from any of the case-study cemeteries that the direction in which the corpse was facing in the grave was intentional. At Spofforth, several of the graves nearer to the putative church certainly face towards it, but equal numbers seem to face in the opposite direction, away from the building, and at Thwing, the majority of burials are right-sided, and thus had their backs to the structure in the northwest corner (Figure 5.23, 5.24). In sum, left- and right-sided burials do not appear to have been preferentially selected based on orientation towards known features within the cemetery, nor do all burials at any one site face the same way. Alternative reasons for the placement of individuals on their right or left sides are considered in chapter 7.5.

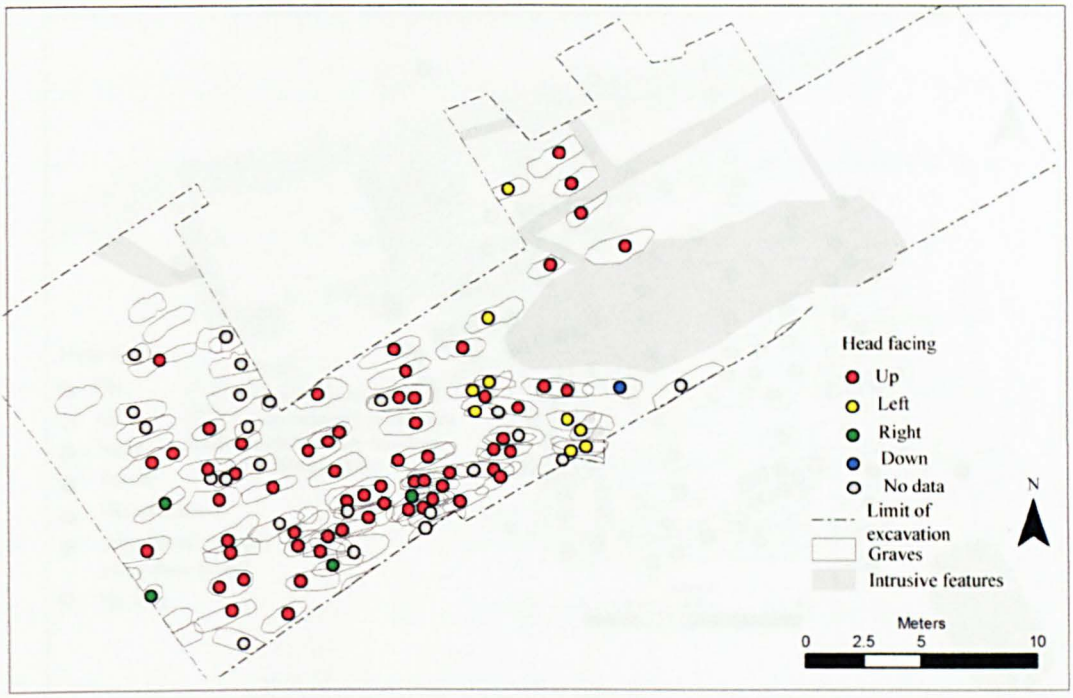

Figure 5.22. Direction in which the head faced in burials at Norton.

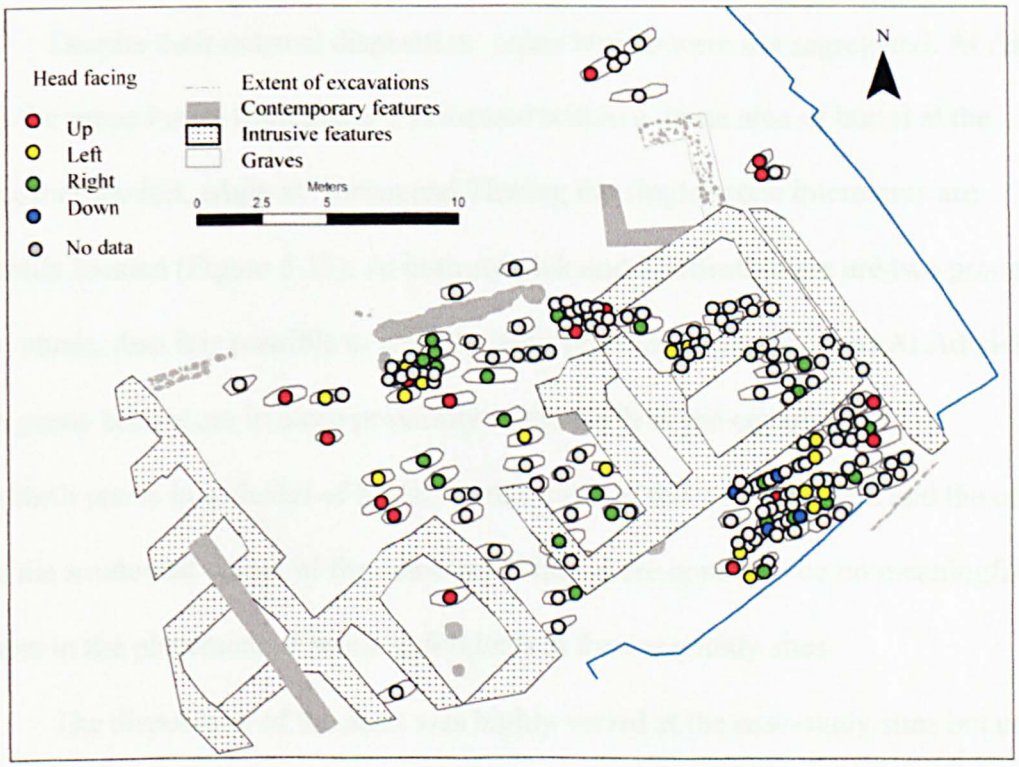

Figure 5.23. Direction in which the head faced in burials at Spofforth.

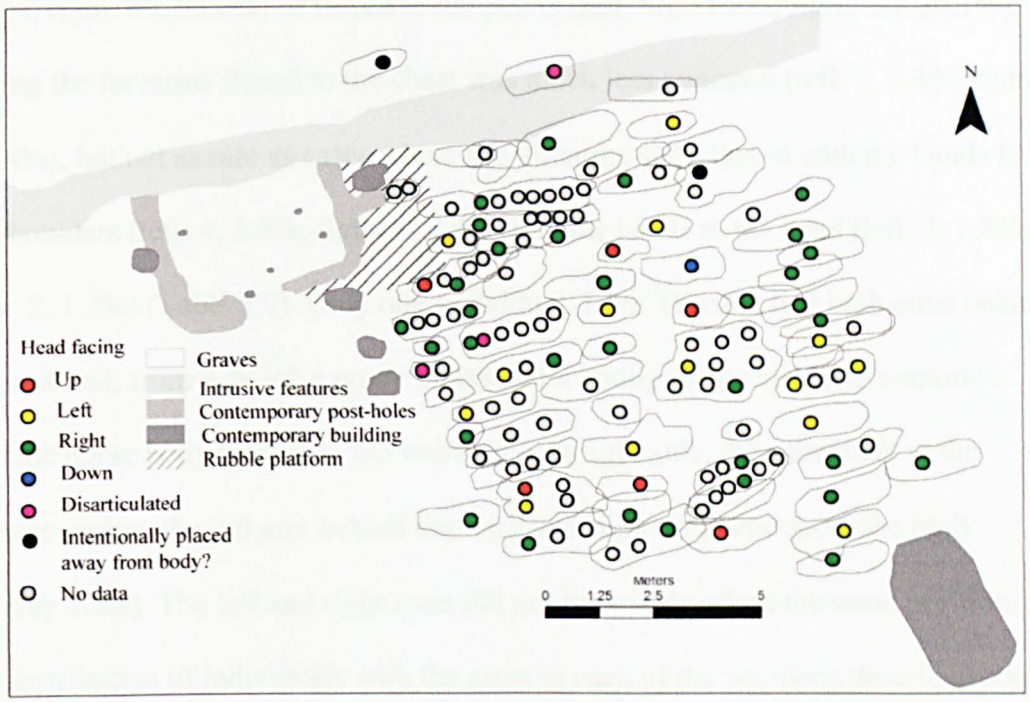

Figure 5.24. Direction in which the head faced in burials at Thwing.

Despite their unusual disposition, prone burials were not segregated. At Ailcy Hill, the prone burial from phase 2 is located within a dense area of burial at the summit of the hill, while at Norton and Thwing the single prone interments are centrally located (Figure 5.25). At both Adwick and Spofforth there are two prone individuals, thus it is possible to consider their proximity to each other. At Adwick both prone burials are in close proximity in the north of the cemetery, but at Spofforth one is in a cluster of burials to the south of the west-east wall and the other is in the south-east corner of the cemetery. Thus, there appear to be no meaningful pattern in the placement of prone individuals at the case-study sites.

The disposition of the arms was highly varied at the case-study sites but could be summarised for each individual by one of seven categories: 1) extended by the sides; 2) flexed to the pelvis, 3) chest, 4) shoulder or 5) head; 6) under the body; or 7) behind the back (Figure 5.26). Most individuals' arms were extended (left: 63,

38.0%; right: 89, 53.6%) or flexed to the pelvis (left: 86, 51.8%; right: 60, 36.1%). Having the forearms flexed to the chest was much less common (left: 9, 5.4%; right: 9, 5.4%), but not as rare as cases where the forearms were flexed with the hands to the shoulders (left: 4, 2.4%; right: 4, 2.4%) and the hands to the head (left: 3, 1,8%; right: 2, 1.2%) (Table 5.9). Only one individual, from Thwing, had both arms behind the back and, from Adwick a prone individual's bodily disposition was contorted with the upper body twisted at the waist onto its right side, the spine bent at the thoracic region, the left arm behind the back and right arm bent under the body (Harvey 2008). The left and right arms did not invariably adopt the same position. The distribution of individuals with the arms in each of the positions described above was significantly different for the left and right arm. The left arm was more commonly flexed to the pelvis than the right, which was more commonly extended. When this relationship was investigated statistically, the combination of left arm to pelvis and right arm extended was found to be significantly more common that the opposite disposition (χ^2=15.236, p<0.001). Table A6.3.50. The hypothesis that this may relate to movement of the body during the burial process is considered below (chapter 7.5). The arms crossed in just over one quarter of burials (32, 28.6%), most commonly at the pelvis (Table 5.10).

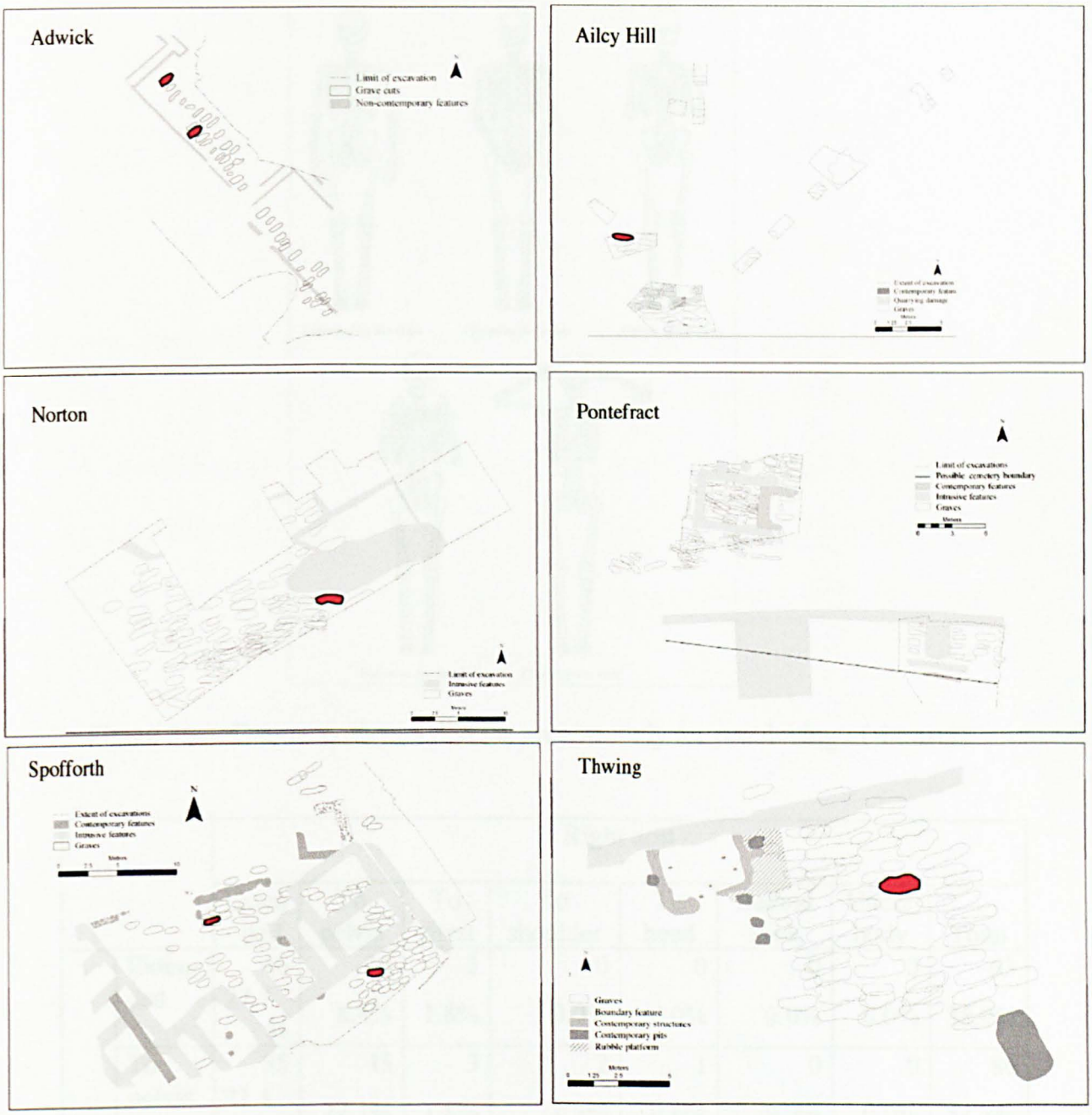

Figure 5.25. All sites, with prone interments marked in red.

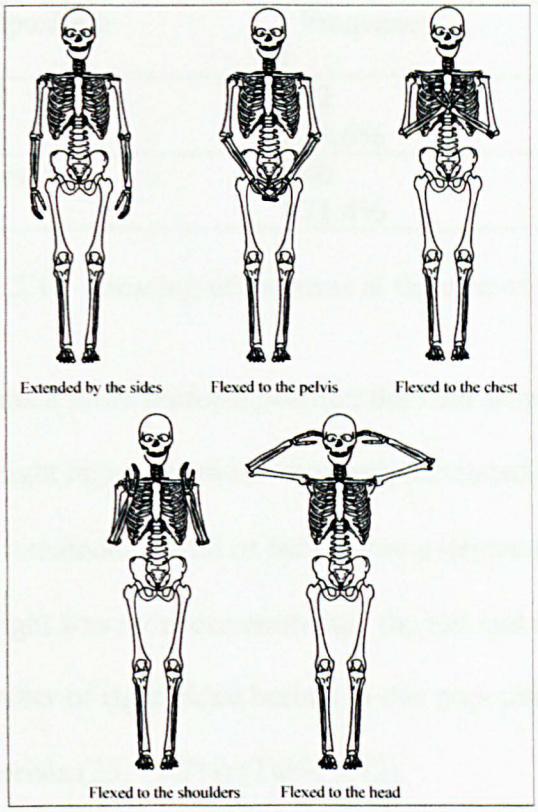

Figure 5.26. The categories used in the present study for positioning of the arms.

		Right arm							
		Exten-ded	To pelvis	To chest	To shoulder	To head	Behind back	Under body	Total
%L arm	Exten-ded	46 27.7 %	14 8.4%	3 1.8%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	63 38.0%
	To pelvis	35 21.1 %	45 27.1%	3 1.8%	2 1.2%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	86 51.8%
	To chest	6 3.6%	0 0.0%	2 1.2%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	9 5.4%
	To shoulder	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	4 2.4%
	To head	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 1.8%
	Behind back	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.6%
	Total	89 53.6 %	60 36.1%	9 5.4%	4 2.4%	2 1.2%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	166 100%

Table 5.9. Disposition of the arms at the six case-study sites.

Arm disposition	Frequency
Crossed	32 28.6%
Not crossed	80 71.4%

Table 5.10. Crossing of the arms at the case-study sites.

The legs adopted a much more uniform position than the arms in most cases (Figure 5.27). Both left and right legs were most frequently extended (left: 98, 80.2%; right: 96, 78.6%) with the remainder flexed or bent to some degree (Table 5.11). Having the legs bent to the right was more common than the left and is related to the disproportionate number of right-sided burials in this population. The legs crossed in nearly one fifth of burials (25, 19.7%) (Table 5.12).

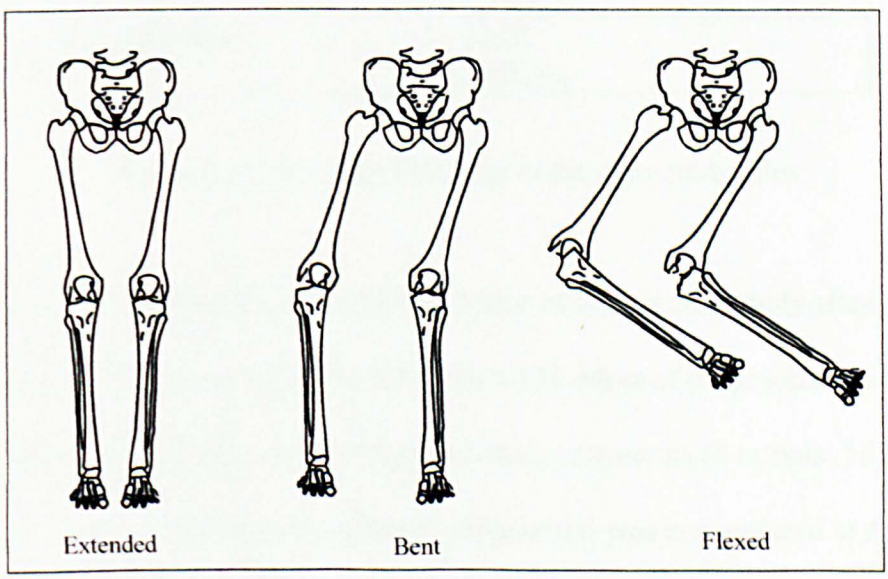

Figure 5.27. The categories used in the present study for positioning of the legs.

		Right leg					
		Extended	Bent to left	Bent to right	Bent	Flexed	Total
Left leg	Extended	94 77.0%	2 1.6%	0 0%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	98 80.2%
	Bent to left	0 0%	3 2.5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 2.5%
	Bent to right	0 0%	0 0%	5 4.1%	0 0%	0 0%	5 4.1%
	Bent	1 0.8%	0 0%	0 0%	4 3.3%	0 0%	5 4.1%
	Flexed	1 0.8%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 8.2%	11 9%
	Total	96 78.6%	5 4.1%	5 4.1%	5 4.1%	11 10%	122 100%

Table 5.11. Disposition of the legs at the six case-study sites.

Leg disposition	Frequency
Crossed	25 19.7%
Not crossed	102 80.3%

Table 5.12. Crossing of the legs at the case-study sites.

Multiple burials were encountered at four of the six case-study sites: Ailcy Hill, Norton, Pontefract and Spofforth (Table 5.13). Most of these were double burials, where two individuals were contemporary interments (8 burials, 16 individuals, 1.4%), but one contemporary triple burial was encountered at Ailcy Hill. Another triple burial was identified at Pontefract by the excavator, but the osteologist recorded the remains as representing only two individuals, not three as appears on the original recording sheets from the site archive. It is unclear why the excavator identified three individuals in this grave, and therefore difficult to assess the reliability of their statement. This situation emphasises the importance of detailed

records of skeletal position and assessment by a trained osteologist, and also highlights the need to be wary of examples of multiple burials where such evidence is not available for evaluation. Contemporary multiple burial was a very unusual rite, however it does appear to have been a form of burial employed widely across the region of study. In addition to contemporary multiple burials, the intentional superimposition of graves was apparent at Thwing, Norton and Spofforth. At the former there were no contemporary multiple burials recorded, but instead, earlier graves appear to have been reopened for the interment of additional burials in at least 16 cases and at the latter the grave of a woman was overlain by those of several children (NAA 2002: 9).

Multiple burial	Frequency (individuals)	Frequency (graves)
Single interment	1164 98.3%	1164 99.2%
Contemporary double burial	16 1.4%	8 0.7%
Contemporary triple burial	3 0.3%	1 0.1%

Table 5.13. Multiple burial at the case-study sites.

Although multiple burial is not frequent within the case-study cemeteries, there are strong indications that the location of such interments in each cemetery was significant. At all sites where more than one multiple burial was made, the graves tend to be in close proximity to one another. For example, at Spofforth both contemporary superimposed double burials are located in the south-eastern corner of the cemetery, less than 3 metres apart, and at Pontefract the possible double burial in grave 526 and the double/triple child burial are separated by only c. 5 metres (Figures 5.28, 5.29, 5.30). Where adjacent multiple interments were made in

different phases of burial, it might indicate that the placement of the later example(s) was by intention, and not just a result of the use of the multiple burial rite for a restricted period of time. This is certainly suggested at Norton, where two of the double inhumations were made during phase 1 (c. A.D. 660-790), another was made later during a second phase of burial and then a final possible double burial was made close by in phase 3 (c. A.D. 680-990).

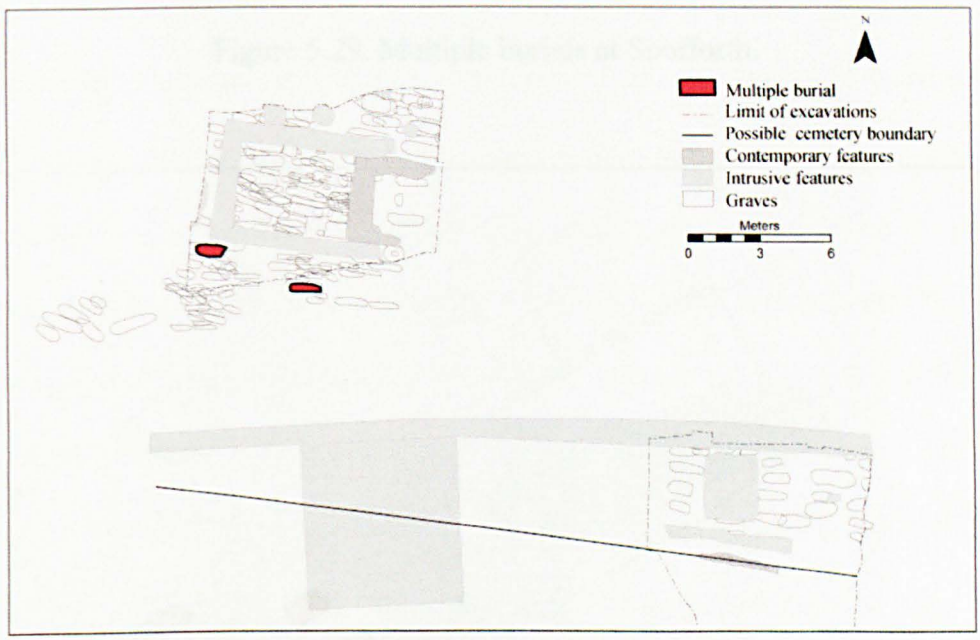

Figure 5.28. Multiple burials at Pontefract.

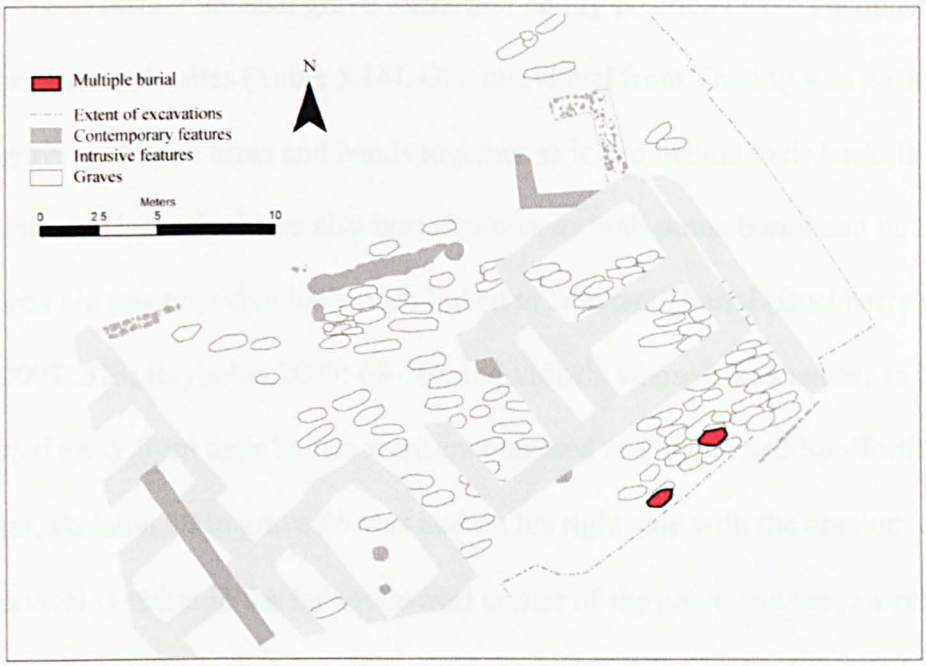

Figure 5.29. Multiple burials at Spofforth.

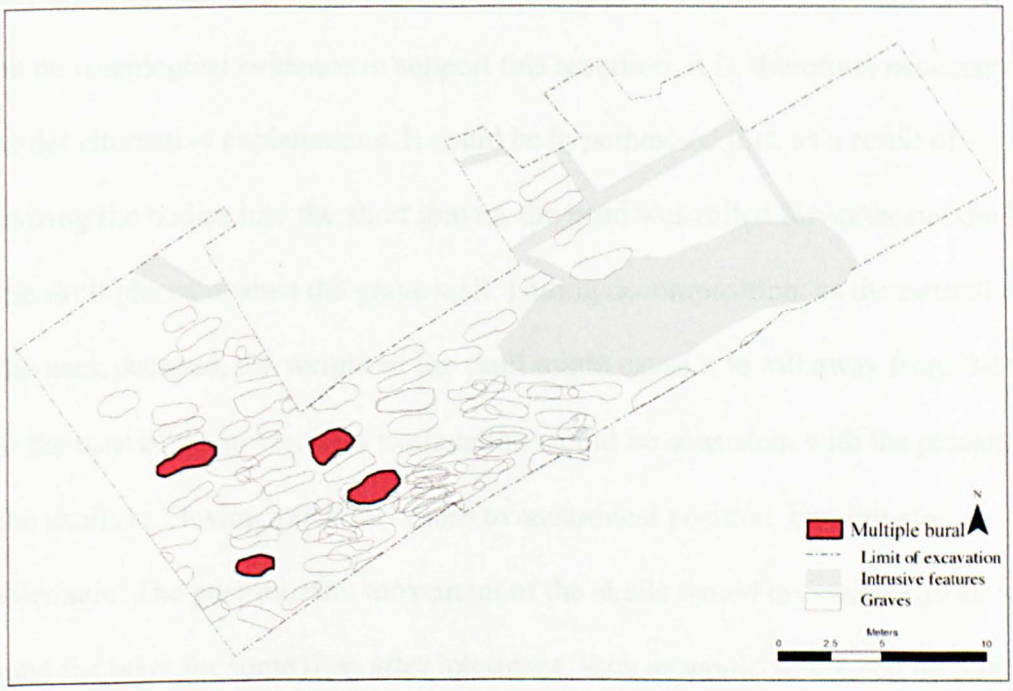

Figure 5.30. Multiple burials at Norton.

Several further unusual grave forms and bodily positions were encountered across the case-study sites (Table 5.14). One individual from Thwing was positioned in their grave with their arms and hands together as if tied behind their back. It is striking that this individual was also buried prone, as both prone burial and binding of the limbs are practices that have been linked to "deviant" burial (Buckberry and Hadley 2007: 323; Reynolds 2009: 68-76). Individuals whose heads appear to have been buried away from their bodies were encountered at Thwing and Spofforth. At the former, skeleton 89 in grave 65 was laid on his right side with the cranium and a single cervical vertebra in the far south-west corner of the grave and the jaw resting on the chest. In addition, skeleton 86 in grave 66 lay supine with his head laid on the right shoulder. These two individuals were cramped into too-short graves and it has been suggested that they had their heads removed prior to burial (Manby in prep.). With no osteological evidence to support this assertion, it is, therefore, necessary to consider alternative explanations. It could be hypothesised that, as a result of squeezing the bodies into the short graves, the head was rolled forwards and the back of the skull placed against the grave wall. During decomposition, as the musculature of the neck decayed, the weight of the skull might cause it to roll away from the wall onto the base of the grave. This explanation would be consistent with the placement of the skulls at Thwing, relatively close to anatomical position, but remains problematic. The post-mortem movement of the skulls would necessitate an air space around the body for some time after interment, such as would be created by burial in a container. Whilst evidence for containers is frequent at Thwing, there is no evidence that either individual with a displaced skull was buried in one. Therefore, the process by which the skulls became detached remains unclear. A further example of an individual with a displaced cranium was identified at Spofforth (Figure 5.31).

In this case skeleton 78A, a 25-30 year old male was buried face down in a relatively shallow grave. Stratigraphic relationships between the headless skeleton and charnel deposits allowed it to be hypothesised that a cranium from a nearby context belonged to this male, and similarities in age, sex and skeletal robusticity between the post-cranial skeleton of the male and the disarticulated skull provided further evidence that they were part of the same individual. As at Thwing, no evidence of decapitation can be provided, but in this case poor preservation of the superior vertebra means that, equally, it cannot be discounted. The complex stratigraphy of this burial provides, thus, only equivocal evidence of removal of the cranium prior to burial. Therefore, despite the presence of several individuals whose skulls were detached from their bodies amongst this sample, the evidence is insufficient to determine whether it resulted from human agency or taphonomic process.

Skeleton	Skeletal data	Description of burial rite (unusual feature recorded first)
Adwick 2	18-20, ?male, unilateral calculus- indicates abnormal movement of jaw	Reversed burial (NE-SW). Flexed on right side. Large limestone block directly over chest and smaller fragments overlying the skull. Buried with iron knife at the right femur and a metal object.
Adwick 17	18-22, male, 173cm, spinal joint disease	Prone burial in "contorted" position with left arm to shoulder and right under the body. (SW-NE)
Adwick 26	Adult, female	Prone burial. Buried with pebbles, amber glass and deciduous teeth at the abdomen
Adwick 29	20-22, ?female, 165cm	Reversed burial (NE-SW). Semi-flexed on left side with hands to head and legs crossed
Adwick 37	20-24, unsexed, spinal joint disease	Legs intentionally covered with limestone blocks. Semi-flexed on left side, left arm flexed to shoulder, right extended (SW-NE)
Ailcy Hill 1044, phase 3b A.D. 780-990	14-15, ??male, severe spinal deformity, possibly TB, Harris lines, enamel hypoplasia	Reversed burial (E-W). Extended, right arm over abdomen
Ailcy Hill 2006, phase 2 A.D.680-880	45+, male, 171cm, tibial periostitis, osteoarthritic wrist	Prone burial. Extended (W-E) with arms crossed under pelvis (at front) and hands together as if tied. Legs cross at knees and ankles. Charnel derived from 4+ individuals
Ailcy Hill 1045 and 1065, phase 2 A.D. 660-810	35-40, male, 185cm, spinal and appendicular joint disease, asymmetrical humeri and 19-20, male, 178cm, spinal joint disease, possible osteochondroma	Double burial (contemporary, side-by-side) 1045 is W-E, extended, supine in a chest with a lock plate and 1065 is W-E in a chest
Ailcy Hill 1019, 1022, 1023, phase 3b	35-40, ?male, 170cm; under 15, ?? male, 149cm and 20-25, ?male 168cm, spinal joint disease, enamel hypoplasia	Triple burial (contemporary, 1019 over 1022 and 1023). Extended (W-E)
Norton 73, phase 1	Adult, unsexed	Reversed burial and contemporary double inhumation below Norton 72 (40-44, unsexed). Extended, supine
Norton 84, phase 2	25-32, unsexed	Reversed burial and double inhumation (contemporary, vertical) above Norton 83 (25-27, ?male). Extended, supine. Chest burial

Norton 468, phase 3	Adult, unsexed	Reversed burial. Extended, supine
Norton 352 and 360, phase 1	Adult, unsexed and 50+, male, 176cm, spinal joint disease	Double burial (contemporary, vertical). Extended (W-E), supine. Lower individual (360) with hands towards head
Norton 468 and 469 , phase 3	Both unsexed adults	Possible double burial (contemporary). Not recorded as double burial in site literature, but two burials are in the same grave.
Norton 217, phase 2	20-27, male, 174cm, Schmorl's nodes, bilateral tibial and fibular periostitis	Prone burial. Extended (W-E)
Pontefract WB19	Adult, unsexed	Reversed burial (E-W)
Pontefract WB63	Adult, ?male, severe cystic osteoarthritis of right hip	Reversed burial (E-W)
Pontefract 556, phase 2	Adult, female, 165cm, spinal joint disease, osteomyelitis of left femur and healed fracture of left radius	Reversed burial (SE-NW)
Pontefract 578, phase 2	2 years, unsexed, abnormal enamel development	Reversed burial (SE-NW). Extended, supine
Pontefract WB47, WB48, WB49, phase 1	Either one or two neonates and an infant with enamel hypoplasia	Possible triple burial however osteological report indicates that the two neonates may be one individual, therefore also possibly a double burial. Chest burial.
Pontefract 526/1a, 526/1b	20-30, female, 156cm, spinal and appendicular joint disease and 12-18 months, unsexed	Possible double burial.
Spofforth 78A	25-30, male, 167cm	Prone burial. Extended (W-E), legs bent, head positioned away from post-cranial skeleton
Spofforth 187A	30-35, male, spinal joint disease, abnormal calculus development	Prone burial. Extended (W-E), left arm extended, right to pelvis. Chest or coffin burial
Spofforth 363 and 368	8-11, unsexed and 25-35, ?male, 169cm, spinal joint disease	Double burial (contemporary, vertical) (W-E)
Spofforth 479 and 480	15-16, intermediate sex, 149cm, cribra orbitalia, maxillary sinusitis and 20-30, female, 151cm, spinal joint disease	Double burial (contemporary, vertical). Extended (W-E), supine, one has head to left, the other to right
Thwing 13	40+, female, 163cm, spinal joint disease, fusion across	Prone burial, arms parallel behind back with hands together as if tied.

	finger joints, asymmetric humeri	Possible timber board with metal fittings over body (W-E)
Thwing 86	25-30, male, 163cm, Schmorl's nodes	Grave cut too small and skull positioned in south west corner of grave at shoulder. Extended supine
Thwing 89 A.D.238-880	45+, male, 173cm	Grave cut too small and skull positioned in south west corner of grave away from post-cranial skeleton. Flexed on right, cuts palisade trench (W-E)

Table 5.14. Examples of graves with non-normative grave forms or bodily dispositions.

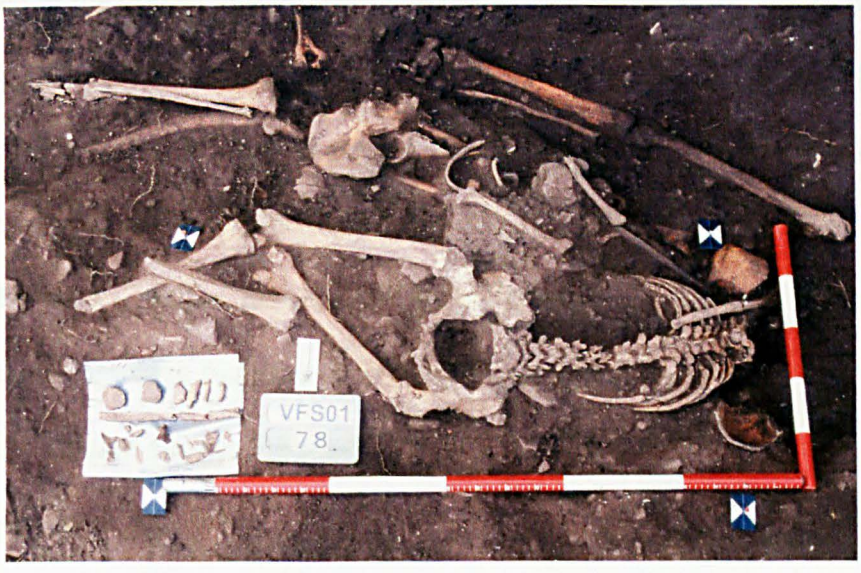

Figure 5.31. Prone skeleton (78A) from Spofforth (photo courtesy of NAA).

5.4.3 Grave elaborations

The majority of graves were not elaborated in any way, nor did they incorporate any grave goods. *In situ* evidence for burial elaborations, such as containers for the body, grave linings of wood or stone and grave markers, was encountered in just over ten percent of graves (138, 11.7%) (Table 5.15). This pattern is also evident amongst later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries from the region, where only a minority of graves are

elaborated (Buckberry 2007). The most common grave elaboration, which occurred at five of the six case-study sites, was the wooden container (87, 7.4%) (Table 5.16). Across England, the use of wooden coffins appears to increase in the 7th century, although they are certainly identified in earlier graves (Lucy 2000: 102). Of the wooden containers encountered in this sample, a significant number were wooden chests characterised by the presence of a variety of metal fittings, and most diagnostically, by hinges, a moveable lid, and in rare cases, a lock or fastening (79, 70.0%). Normally the body appears to have been placed in the chest and then both were placed in the grave cut with the lid uppermost, however in one unique case from Ailcy Hill the chest lay on its side, with the backboard on the base of the grave and the lid along one side. The occurrence of two types of object was particularly associated with chest burials: locks and keys (Table 5.17). Six locks (0.5%) and five keys (0.4%) were identified amongst the graves in the case-study sample. All locks and all but one key were found in context with chest burials. As the dominant form of burial elaboration amongst this sample, the chest burial rite is discussed in much greater detail in chapter 7.3.

Grave elaboration	Frequency
Absent	1028 86.9%
Out of context elaboration	17 1.4%
In situ elaboration	138 11.7%

Table 5.15. Grave elaborations at the case-study sites.

Chest fittings	Frequency
Absent	1070 90.4%
Coffin fittings	34 2.9%
Out of context chest fittings	26 2.2%
In situ chest fitting	53 4.5%

Table 5.16. Chest and coffin fittings at the case-study sites.

Locks and keys	Frequency
Absent	1172 99.1%
Key	5 0.4%
Lock	6 0.5%

Table 5.17. Locks and keys encountered in graves at the case-study sites.

Evidence for grave markers takes several forms. In several cases amongst the case-study sites, excavators have noted that the regular layout of graves suggests that they were marked in some way – for example at Adwick and particularly in phase A at Norton Bishopsmill School (Harvey 2008; Johnson 2005:24) – however, archaeological evidence for markers themselves is scarce. At Thwing, excellent preservation and careful excavation identified marker-post pipes in 11 graves (0.9%) (Table 5.18). The form of these post-pipes suggests that markers were organic posts with circular or D-shaped cross sections that would have decayed over time, and therefore their paucity across the sample is unsurprising. In fact, the only possible material evidence for markers from the other case-study sites is a single broken

fragment of dressed limestone, 210mm in height, from Pontefract and a fragment of a carved stone cross-arm from Spofforth (NAA 2001; Wilmott in press: 15). Neither was in its original context and there is no evidence that either was ever used specifically as a grave marker.

Stone was incorporated into the grave in varied ways in four cases (0.4%). In no two graves was it utilised in the same manner, and the examples can be divided into cases where stone was incorporated into the grave structure and others where stones were placed on or around the body. The grave of a male aged over 45 years from Spofforth had a partial stone lining and a 25-35 year old male from Adwick was buried in a grave with large limestone blocks lining the foot-end. At Ailcy Hill another male who died between the ages of 35 and 40 was buried in a grave partially lined in stone slabs. An example where stone is placed over the body is only found at Adwick: a young adult male (sk 2, 18-25 years) was buried on a non-normative orientation, cramped in a grave cut that was too small and limestone blocks were located over the chest and head; and the legs of another young adult (sk 37, 18-25 years) were covered with limestone blocks. The block placed over the chest of skeleton 2 from Adwick was large enough to suggest to the excavators that the body was weighed down for some purpose (Harvey 2008) although , alternatively, it is possible that the slabs were components of a partial cist. The use of stone is certainly encountered in early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, for example flint edgings and linings such as those at Dover Buckland and Portway Andover (Cook and Dacre 1985: 54; Evison 1987: 17-8), but it appears to become much more varied and frequent in later Anglo-Saxon and medieval contexts with characteristic rites such as head support stones, encountered at Barrow-upon-Humber, Fillingham (L), Kellington (NY), St Martin's Wharram Percy and York Fishergate (NY) (Buckberry 2007: 118;

Heighway 2007: 238-9; Stroud and Kemp 1993: 153). Therefore, the occurrence of a few graves where stone elaborations were present, and the variability of the manner in which stone was used, amongst this middle Anglo-Saxon sample fits with the patterns identified in burials practices throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.

In two cases a wooden board may have been included in the grave. These examples have been distinguished from containers by the absence of evidence for an enclosed structure, however in both cases this evidence is equivocal. The individual from Ailcy Hill with a stone-lined grave-cut, mentioned above, also had a clay layer under the body, which the excavators postulated might be the remains of a wooden board that had been replaced by clay sediments. Alternatively, it might have been a deliberately-constructed clay lining, as is known in later Anglo-Saxon burials at sites including Raunds Furnells and Barton-upon-Humber (Boddington 1996: 37; Rodwell 2007: 25-6). The second example is a mature female from Thwing. She was buried face down with her hands apparently tied behind her back with nails and staples positioned slightly above the body in lines along its northern and southern sides 0.35m apart, such that it appears that a rectangular timber structure was placed over the body (Manby in prep.). The use of partial coffins or wooden biers is attested in graves of the 5th and 6th century at Portway, Andover and in the pre-Norman cemetery at York Minster (Cook and Dacre 1985: 55; Phillips 1995: 86-7), and this example from Thwing may be comparable with these.

Grave linings and modifications to the grave cut	Frequency
Absent	1134 95.9%
Stone lining	2 0.2%
Wooden board	2 0.2%
Marker post pipe	11 0.9%
Post holes in grave fill	2 0.2%
Stones placed over body	2 0.2%

Table 5.18. Grave linings and modifications to the grave cut encountered at the case-study sites.

Shrouding is not an easily identified burial rite. It has been recognised archaeologically from compact bodily position (Boddington 1996: 28) and the presence of shroud pins (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 110), however it is possible that shrouds were sewn with thread, which would not be visible in the burial record (Daniell 1997: 156-7; Thompson 2004: 108). Not unexpectedly, evidence for shrouding in the case-study sample was extremely limited. It is plausible that the lack of evidence for clothed burial amongst this sample (this would be provided by dress accessories in the grave), is an indicator of shrouded burials, however in isolation this evidence is not sufficient to draw any firm conclusions about the prevalence of shrouding. Only one burial provides sufficient evidence for the use of a shroud: at Thwing skeleton 23, an adult male aged between 35 and 45, had the arms extended but rolled in tightly towards the torso with the scapulae drawn forward indicative of binding of the upper body. It is also possible that individuals with their hands and legs crossed were bound in some manner for burial and, in fact, there is a significant

relationship between individuals having both hands and legs crossed (χ^2=15.327, p=0.001), suggesting a group of more compact interments among the sample. Table A6.3.63. Similar burial positions have frequently been associated with shrouding in the archaeological literature (see chapter 3.12), however the evidence presented here for compact interments is not, on its own, considered sufficient to characterise shrouding, and thus further discussion of this practice is not attempted.

The distribution of graves with any form of elaboration is widespread at all sites, however, when investigated in more detail some spatial patterns are apparent in the provision of specific forms of more elaborate grave. For example, although chest burials are not excluded from any specific area of any of the cemeteries, they do appear to cluster more frequently in certain areas. At Spofforth, the chest burials are mainly along the west-east wall and down the eastern side of the cemetery; at Norton, there is a west-east line of chest burials in the south of the cemetery (including one phase 2 grave with three phase 3 burials on either side of it); at Thwing, the chest burials are along the west of the cemetery, especially in the south-western corner; and at Pontefract, they are to the north of trench B (Figure 5.32). Where coffins occur alongside chests, they tend to be widely distributed across the whole site, further emphasising the restricted distribution of the chests in comparison. Keys occur infrequently in chest graves, and in one case a key was found in a context without evidence for a chest (small find 365), yet although keys are uncommon, there is some suggestion that graves that include them were afforded specific positions. At Norton, the one grave with both a chest and key is central to the graves from its burial phase (3) and at Thwing, the two chests with keys are located in the far west of the cemetery, close to both the building and the free-standing post alignment.

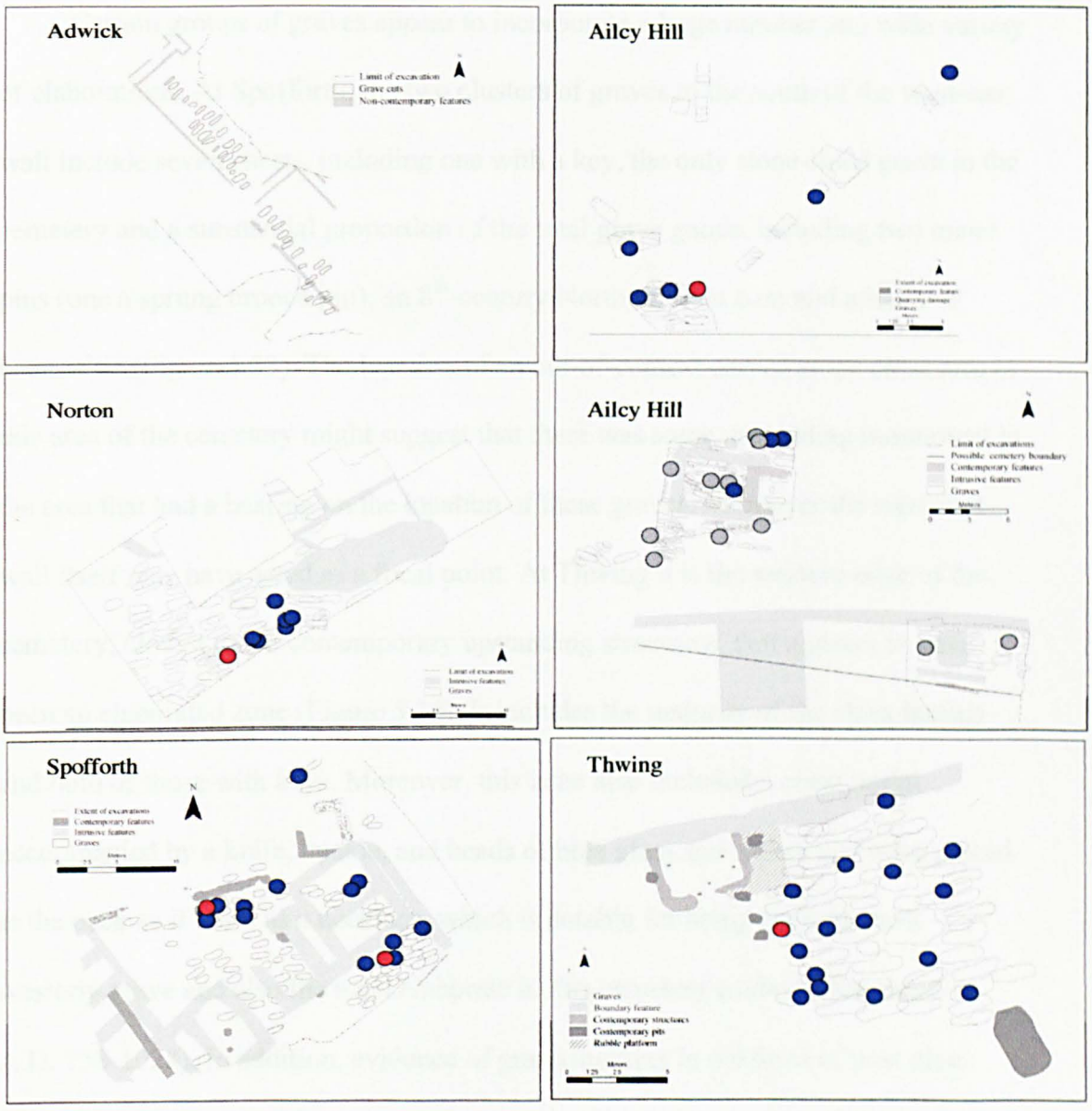

Figure 5.32. Locations of chest burials (blue) and chest burials with keys (red) at all six case-study sites. (The grey dots at Pontefract represent possible chest burials).

Certain groups of graves appear to incorporate a large number and wide variety of elaborations. At Spofforth, the two clusters of graves to the south of the west-east wall include seven chests, including one with a key, the only stone-lined grave in the cemetery and a substantial proportion of the total grave goods, including two metal pins (one a sprung brooch pin), an 8th-century Northumbrian coin and a lump of haematitie (Figure 5.33). The location of an out-of-context carved stone cross arm in this area of the cemetery might suggest that there was some upstanding monument in the area that had a bearing on the location of these graves. Moreover the west-east wall itself may have acted as a focal point. At Thwing it is the western edge of the cemetery, closest to the contemporary upstanding structures, that appears to have been an elaborated zone (Figure 5.34). It includes the majority of the chest burials and both of those with keys. Moreover, this zone also included a chest burial accompanied by a knife, buckle, and beads of blue glass and amber that were placed at the neck as if worn as a necklace, which is notable for being both the most westerly grave and also the most elaborate in this cemetery (radiocarbon dated to A.D. 758-1028). In addition, evidence of grave markers in the form of post-pipes suggests that five of the six identifiable examples of marked graves were also in this area (Figure 5.35). The grave of a 35-45 year old male at Ailcy Hill stands out for having the greatest variety of elaborations and grave goods in this cemetery: an iron knife, double-tongued buckle and a grave cut with the vertical faces lined with stone and the floor lined with either wood or clay (see above). This grave occupies a plot at the summit of Ailcy Hill. As an early grave from phase 1 – radiocarbon dated to A. D. 560-660 to 2 sigma – this interment may have become the focus for later burials, but the spatial distribution of subsequent graves does not indicate this as clearly as,

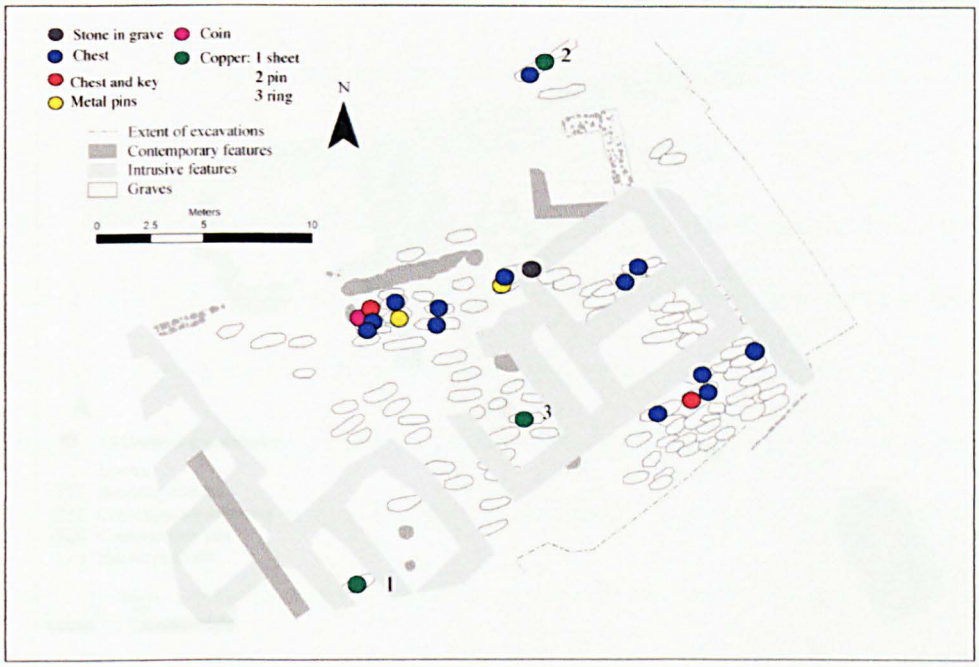

Figure 5.33. Elaborate graves and graves with grave goods at Spofforth.

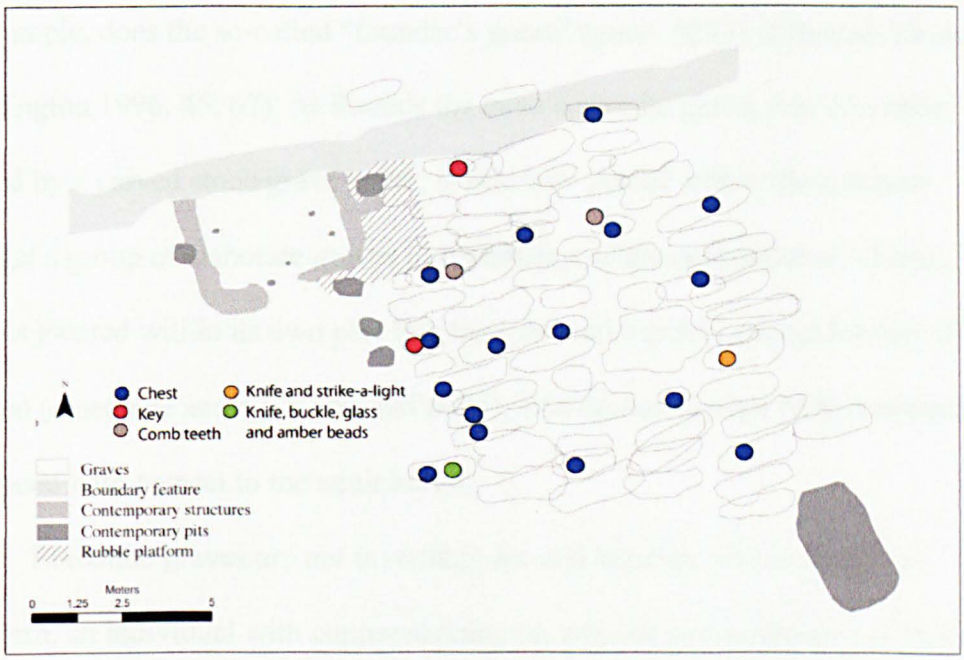

Figure 5.34. Elaborate graves and grave with grave goods at Thwing.

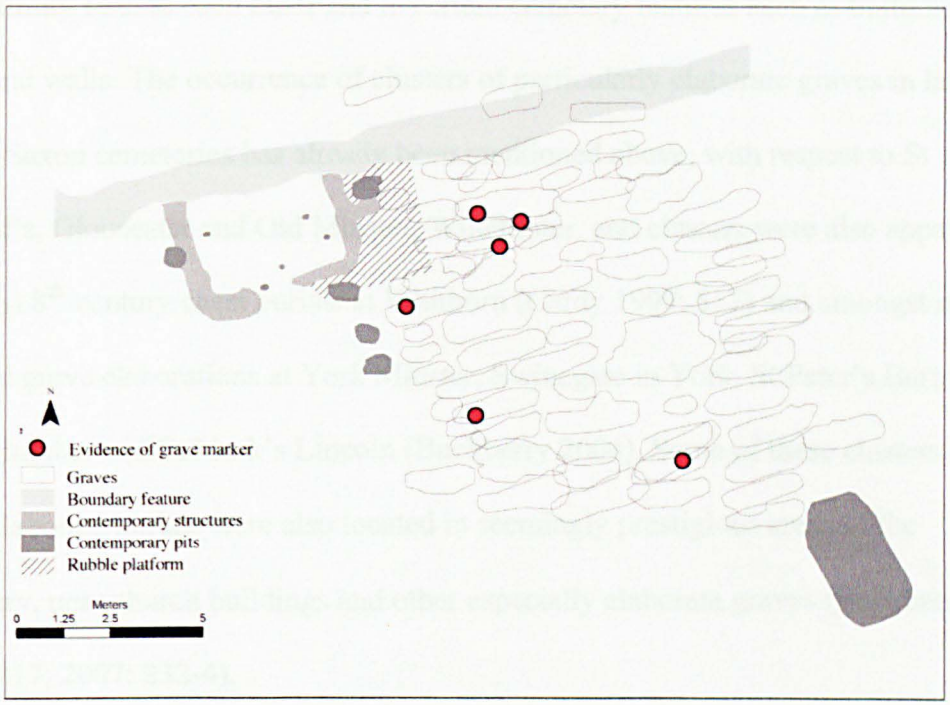

Figure 5.35. Marked graves at Thwing.

for example, does the so-called "founder's grave" (grave 5283) at Raunds Furnells (Boddington 1996: 45, 67). At Raunds the most elaborate grave, that of a male marked by a carved stone grave cover, is centrally placed within the cemetery amongst a group of elaborate graves just southeast of the contemporary church. The grave is located within its own plot free from intrusive graves except for that of two children (a neonate and a 5-6 year old child), who appear to have been intentionally positioned with respect to the adult burial.

Elaborate graves are not invariably located together. For example, at Spofforth, an individual with copper staining on a finger and accompanied by a shale disc (see below 5.4.4, Table 5.20) was located centrally in the site, away from any clusters mentioned thus far, and at Thwing, a burial with a knife and strike-a-light was located on the opposite side of the cemetery from the most elaborated graves. Nonetheless, there appears frequently to have been a desire to locate elaborate graves

in proximity both to each other and to certain cemetery features such as buildings, posts and walls. The occurrence of clusters of particularly elaborate graves in later Anglo-Saxon cemeteries has already been mentioned above, with respect to St Oswald's, Gloucester and Old Minster, Winchester, and clusters were also apparent amongst 8th-century chest burials at Whithorn (Cardy 1997: 557) and amongst more unusual grave elaborations at York Minster, Swinegate in York, St Peter's Barton-upon-Humber and St Mark's Lincoln (Buckberry 2004). Some of these clusters of more elaborate burials were also located in seemingly prestigious areas of the cemetery, near church buildings and other especially elaborate graves (Buckberry 2004: 217; 2007: 232-4).

5.4.4 Variations in grave goods

Grave goods were encountered in four percent of graves from the case-study sample (47, 4.0% *in situ*) (Table 5.19). The forms of grave goods were relatively restricted and comprised metal objects (both iron and copper alloy), coins, small stones and pebbles, beads, pottery, human teeth and worked bone/ivory. A selection of graves containing *in situ* grave goods is presented below in Table 5.20.

Grave goods	Frequency
Absent	1133 95.8%
Out of context grave goods	3 0.3%
In situ grave goods	47 4.0%

Table 5.19. Occurrence of grave goods at the case-study sites.

Grave	Age, sex of individual	Types of grave goods	Placement of grave goods, where recorded	Other grave features
Adwick 1	18-25 female	Ferrous buckle, quartz pebble	Buckle under right arm	-
Adwick 2	18-25 male	Iron whittle-tanged knife and other metal object	Both under right femur	Limestone blocks on chest and head
Adwick 31	18-25 unsexed	Iron blade, copper alloy ring, whetstone	At right hip	-
Adwick 26	Adult female	Amber glass and deciduous teeth	Teeth in group at abdomen	Prone burial, pebbles in grave
Ailcy Hill 1064 A.D. 560-660	35-45 male	Iron knife and double tongued buckle	-	Grave lined with stone and floored with wood or clay
Norton 417	8-9 unsexed	Fossil	-	Chest
Norton 265	16-20 female	Copper alloy finger ring	-	-
Pontefract	-	Teeth and metal objects		-
Pontefract 548/1	No skeletal data	Copper alloy spatulate tweezers	By head of skeleton	-
Spofforth 229A	35-45 female	8th-century Northumbrian sceatta	-	Carved stone cross arm
Spofforth 310	35-45 female	Copper staining on finger, slate/shale disc	-	-
Spofforth 398	Neonate unsexed	Sprung brooch pin	-	-
Thwing 48 A.D. 758-1028	40-45 female	Iron knife, blue glass and amber beads	Knife is under left tibia and beads are at neck	Chest
Thwing 72	No association with a skeleton	Iron knife and strike-a-light	-	Large grave

Table 5.20. Graves containing *in situ* grave goods.

Metal grave goods such as knives, buckles, pins and rings were rarely identified in graves at the case-study sites. The only furnished grave of Ailcy Hill contained an iron knife and double-tongued buckle with the skeleton of a 35-45 year old male radiocarbon dated to A.D. 560-660 (Hall and Whyman 1996: 114-5). Three individuals from Adwick were interred with knives and buckles: grave 1, an 18-25 year old female buried with a ferrous buckle under the right arm; grave 2, an 18-25 year old male with both an iron whittle-tanged knife and another metal object under the right femur; and grave 31, in which an unsexed individual between 18 and 25 was buried with an iron blade and copper-alloy ring at the left hip. Two graves from Thwing also contained knives: a knife was encountered under the left tibia of a 40-45 year old female; and a knife and strike-a-light were recovered from a burial but, due to repeated use of this grave, it is unclear to which of three individuals they belonged. A copper-alloy finger ring was recovered from the grave of a female aged 16-20 years at Norton and copper staining on the finger of a 35-45 year old female from Spofforth suggests that this individual was also buried in a finger ring. Knives, buckles, brooches and rings are found at 7th-9th century cemeteries across England, Scotland and Wales and are commonly related to burial in clothing (Geake 1997; Hadley 2009; Holbrook and Thomas 2005: 33-4; Hill *et al.* 1997a: 74) (see above, 5.4.3). A unique find was a pair of copper-alloy tweezers, recovered from near the head of grave 584 at Pontefract (Wilmott in prep.: 10). Tweezers are common in both cremation and inhumation grave assemblages of the 5th-7th centuries, for example at Castledyke South, Apple Down (Sx) and Monkton Thanet (K) (Down and Welch 1990: 103; Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 288-9; Hawkes *et al.* 1974: 70-1), where they are widely considered to be toilet implements for grooming. They are less frequent in burial contexts from the middle Anglo-Saxon period, however they do

appear in settlement contexts across 7th- to 9th-century northern England at Church Close Hartlepool, Whitby and further south at North Elmham (Nf) (Jackson 1988: 181-3; Goodall 1980: 502; Peers and Radford 1943: 61-2).

Coins were found in graves at two of the case-study sites; an 8th-century Northumbrian sceatta was found in a grave at Spofforth (229); and a worn Roman coin was recovered from close to the head of burial 228 at Pontefract. Roman coins are common grave goods throughout the early medieval period, and have been found at, for example, Castledyke South, Staple Gardens Winchester (Ha), St Peter'sBarton-upon-Humber, York Minster and Llandough (Gm) (Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 290; Gaimster *et al.* 1990: 188; Holbrook and Thomas 2005: 34; Phillips 1995: 91; Waldron 2007: 28). In contrast, the coin from Spofforth would likely have been contemporary with, or only slightly older than, the burial, and therefore, it does not share the obvious antiquity of Roman coins.

Several, perhaps more idiosyncratic, finds were also characteristic of the case- study sites. Stones and pebbles were one of the most frequent forms of grave goods at Adwick. Coloured stones were favoured and include white and pink quartz, flint and red pebbles. White quartz pebbles like those encountered at Adwick have also been recorded at Whitby, Whithorn and Kellington, and outside the study area they are frequent amongst cemeteries from western Britain such as Llandough, Capel Maelog, (Po) and Barnstable, (D) amongst many others from Christian contexts (Freke 1988: 90; Gilchrist 2008; Hadley 2009; Holbrook and Thomas 2005: 35-7; Jones 1988: 27; Meaney 1981; Mytum 1993: 16). It can be suggested that the stones at Adwick were intentionally positioned in several ways in relation to the body. Skeleton 15 had quartz pebbles placed between his clavicles and skeleton 21 had a line of quartz pebbles along the lateral side of the left leg. In addition, one grave

encountered during the watching brief at Pontefract and attributed to phase 1 (WBS 10) is described as having stones placed at either shoulder, however it is not made clear whether these are pebbles as in the examples from Adwick, or larger blocks (Wilmott in prep.: 14). A fossil crinoid ossicle (sea lily stem) with a natural central perforation was interred with an 8-9 year old child at Norton. Various forms of fossils have been noted amongst Anglo-Saxon grave assemblages (Meaney 1981: 113-122), however crinoids are particularly associated with northern England, where they are known colloquially as "St Cuthbert's beads". Examples like those at Norton were also found amongst 7th- to 9th-century settlement remains at Fishergate, York (context 4546), where it was also suggested that they may have been strung into necklaces, however as the majority were only recovered singly, this suggestion is largely conjectural (Rogers 1993: 1387). Groups of human teeth were found in two graves at Adwick and one at Pontefract. In two cases, deciduous teeth were included with an adult and in another case adult canines were interred with an adult. There is some evidence to suggest that these are not simply teeth from disturbed burials. For example, at Adwick deciduous teeth and amber glass were found at the abdomen of one individual, and teeth and quartz pebbles around the lower body of another, suggesting that they may have been kept in bags worn at the waist. In all cases it is conceivable, although not proven, that the teeth belonged to the individuals they were interred with. Indeed, the folk-practice of saving teeth lost in life for burial has been widely recorded. For example, there is the folk-belief that if lost teeth should fall into the hands of an enemy, they could be used, through sympathetic magic, to injure the person from whom they came. In consequence, there are records from across England of the burning of extracted teeth as a means of safe disposal (Johnson 1912: 321-22). Indeed, human teeth were also recovered from 7th- to 8th-century

burials from Marina Drive (Bd) and a c. 7th-century burial at Castledyke South, and in both cases the teeth were apparently contained within bags hung from the body. In the former they were interred with a young adult male and in the latter, a bag of various amuletic items including 11 human teeth and a polished pebble, were hung from the neck of a 10-11 year old girl (Drinkall and Foreman 1998: 45; Matthews 1962: 30, 35, 47). A group of more enigmatic items include a fragment of a shale disc recovered from a grave at Spofforth and bone or ivory objects, including comb teeth in two graves from Thwing, and a fragment of stone incised with concentric rings from Spofforth. The latter examples from Thwing and Spofforth did not come from secure grave contexts, and therefore may not have been intended to be grave goods.

All of the grave goods encountered in the case-study sample have parallels from middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries across the rest of England and early medieval cemeteries from western Britain. The objects from graves amongst the sample considered in this study are more restricted in both number and form than those recorded across more southern areas of England dating to c. A.D. 650-850. The grave goods noted amongst the case-study sites are also less frequent and variable than those encountered at some middle Anglo-Saxon cemeteries discussed in chapter 3, particularly those dating to the 7th century (Geake 1997). They can be generally categorised into two groups: items that were worn on the body as clothing; and idiosyncratic items. The latter, when encountered as grave goods in early medieval graves, are widely considered to have served an amuletic purpose (Geake 1997: 98-100; Gilchrist 2008; Meaney 1981). The function of both of these forms of grave good is considered in more detail in chapter 7.5.1.

The distribution of burials with particular types of grave goods varies. At Adwick burials containing eccentric items such as pebbles, coloured stones, ancient coins and human teeth are widely spread across the cemetery and include a very elaborate prone female grave with amber glass beads, deciduous teeth grouped at the abdomen as if suspended from the waist in a bag and a wide variety of coloured stones and pebbles than other burials. At Pontefract, a burial with deciduous teeth and a metal object, another burial containing a metal object and a third individual with a Roman coin at the head, that the excavator considered amuletic, are located in a row in site A in phase 1 of burial. This distribution, focussing on the southern-most site A, is very different from that of elaborations or other grave goods, which predominantly occur in site B in later phases of burial. At Pontefract, this pattern might be explained by a shift away from the use of amuletic items in graves from the 8th century onwards. However at Norton, the child burial with a fossil came from the latest phase of burial and was radiocarbon dated to A. D. 710-910, and therefore a chronological pattern in the use of idiosyncratic grave goods such a pebbles, teeth and fossils is not universally apparent.

Burial in a grave with grave goods was clearly a rite available to only a limited number of individuals at each site in this study. Whereas elaboration was relatively uniform, with chest burials being by far the most common form and occurring at five of the six case-study sites, in contrast, the kinds of grave goods encountered were much more varied. No two graves have the same combination of grave goods, and where evidence is available, it indicates that these items were placed in a variety of positions in the grave with respect to the body.

5.5 The characterisation of a middle Anglo-Saxon burial rite for northern England

Having outlined the variations in grave form and bodily position encountered within the case-study populations, this discussion will now consider the combinations in which these features occur. It can be hypothesised that if certain burial forms conveyed specific meanings or were only afforded to certain individuals or in specific situations, their occurrence would generate identifiable patterns in the funerary record. As we have seen, the normative burial rite for all sites in this sample was a rectangular earth-cut grave aligned along a roughly west-east axis. The body was laid extended and supine with the head positioned on its side at the western end of the cut. Arms were either extended or laid across the pelvis and legs were extended. Over half of the individuals for which complete sets of burial form data were available received exactly this form of burial (63, 52.9%). Between 50% and 75% of a substantial sample of early Anglo-Saxon burials were also extended, supine interments (Brush 1993: 221), and the position appears to remain dominant beyond the middle Anglo-Saxon period (Buckberry 2007: 118; Heighway 2007: table 123).

In contrast, it can be seen that non-normative grave forms and bodily dispositions sometimes occurred in combination. These unusual interments occurred rarely, but were noted at all six sites (Table 5.14). There are some general patterns apparent in these more unusual burial forms, for example reversed orientation burials (those whose heads were at the eastern-most end of the grave cut) had a greater proportion of the less frequent arm and leg positions ($p<0.001$ for all), suggesting that they were less uniform in bodily disposition that those normatively orientated. Tables A6.3.6-A6.3.10. Therefore, whilst most individuals received the same general

form of burial, there appears to have been a specific group of people to whom a range of non-normative rites were afforded. These individuals are discussed in more detail in the following chapter. The form of the grave and position of the body were also considered in relation to the provision of elaborations in order to investigate whether certain features were frequently used in combination as a complete burial rite. As noted above, a commonly utilised complete burial rite was the west-east orientated, extended supine burial with no grave goods or elaborations. This particular form of grave occurred in 223 cases (18.9%) and was the most common complete rite across all sites. That said, there were some notable correlations between certain burial forms and elaborations that suggest that they were frequently combined in a single grave. For example, burials placed in containers (both coffins and chests) were more likely to house flexed interments (17.8%, in comparison with 6.2% flexed burials without containers), and more specifically, those in chests were also more frequently buried on their right sides than their left-sides, supine or prone (χ^2=12.964, p=0.005). Table A6.3.26. Multiple burials were also commonly afforded elaborations (χ^2=9.919, p=0.007): for example, two out of a total of eight double graves included chests (25%), which is notably more frequent that the prevalence of graves including double burials amongst the populations overall (0.7%). Table A6.4.72. At Pontefract two juveniles were buried together in one chest but at Norton it was not clear whether the two individuals buried in grave 67 with chest fittings were both interred in the same container, or only one of the interments was originally inside the chest. At Thwing, there were further specific patterns in elaborated graves. First, elaborated graves were significantly more likely also to have pits in the grave floor (χ^2=16.620, p=0.005), but not sockets or steps in the walls. Table A6.4.13. This pattern was especially noticeable for chest burials (χ^2=31.002, p<0.001), although

not all chest burials also had pits (see chapter 7.5) Table A6.4.15. Second, post-holes in the grave fills always occurred in combination with pits or sockets/steps in the grave cut, thus these graves were elaborated both below and above the ground. Evidence for burial elaborations was identified in just over ten percent of graves from the case-study sites (138, 11.7%), more frequently than grave goods, which were incorporated into the burial in less than five percent of graves (47, 4.0%). There were no specific patterns in common at all sites in the relationship between deposition of grave goods and the form of the grave. At Thwing all graves with grave goods, including knives, buckles and beads also had elaborations to the grave cut such as pits in the grave floor or steps/sockets, but as no other sites had pits or steps/sockets, the pattern cannot be considered in general. Where they appear, grave elaborations and grave goods frequently occur in the same grave (χ^2=42.306, $p<0.001$) Table A6.5.1. For example, *in situ* grave goods occur more frequently in graves containing chests than they do in graves without a container (χ^2=28.427, $p<0.001$) Table A6.5.7. Burial elaborations and grave goods were not mutually exclusive forms of funerary expression, but, rather, were frequently combined in the same graves. Whilst it can be hypothesised that the elaboration of the grave or inclusion of grave goods was only afforded to a restricted section of society, the variety of forms that have been identified in this sample suggest that a range of different rites were afforded to members of this select group.

5.6 Summary

The majority of burials at all six sites were earth cut features, aligned on a normative orientation roughly west to east. The most common bodily disposition was extended

and supine with the arms lain along the sides or on the lower torso. These graves contained no evidence of having been elaborated in any way and nor were grave goods interred with the body. In contrast, some interments were distinguished from the majority by the provision a wide range of funerary rites, which included alternative grave forms, bodily positions, multiple burial, grave elaborations and grave goods. Often, those individuals who were provided with one non-normative burial practice were also afforded other unusual forms of burial. The choice of location of the grave also appears to have held some significance. At no two sites is the cemetery space used in exactly the same way, however there are patterns common to two or more sites that suggest certain aspects of cemetery topography held common meanings between communities.

In the following chapter the provision of the burial rites described at these six sites are investigated through a bio-cultural analysis, in which their occurrence and spatial distribution within the cemetery is compared with evidence of the identity of the individuals afforded them in order to investigate further the reasons why certain burial practices were afforded to some individuals but not to others.