

‘ROBBED IN ANTIQUITY’: GRAVE OPENING IN SEVENTH-CENTURY EAST KENT – STIMULATED BY CROSS-CHANNEL INFLUENCES

ALISON KLEVNÄS

Signs of what appears to be ancient grave robbery have frequently been reported in excavations of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in Kent. The county is the one area of early medieval England with substantial evidence of such plunder. Affected graves appear ransacked, with incomplete skeletons found in disorder on grave floors and in the fill. Artefacts, or at least their fragmentary remains, are often found in the disturbed burials, but grave-good collections appear diminished, with metal stains on bones sometimes indicating the original presence of removed objects.

Until recently no attempt had been made to collate reports of robbery, nor to compare the evidence from different sites, with the poor publication record for cemeteries a major hindrance. Moreover, discussions in Kent have been almost entirely isolated from the parallel evidence for widespread re-opening in contemporary cemeteries on the Merovingian Continent.

This paper presents the key Kentish findings of recent research which brought together all the accessible evidence for disturbance of contemporary burials in Anglo-Saxon England as a whole. Reopening of recent graves occurred intensively, especially in the east of the county, being particularly common on the Isle of Thanet. There are also isolated examples of similarly treated graves in west Kent and elsewhere in southern and eastern England, but only east Kent shows reopening levels comparable to those seen in cemeteries over the Channel.

Looking in depth at the evidence from the most heavily disturbed sites in east Kent, it quickly becomes apparent that this is not a question of straightforward robbery. On the Continent this period featured pervasive practices of revisiting, opening, manipulating and removing selected objects from recent burials, and it is now clear that these customs crossed the Channel into Kent.

Disturbed early medieval graves are still being discovered in Kent and are likely to come to light in many future excavations. Meanwhile archival records of a number of excavated examples are currently being revisited as publications are attempted for some key sites. A central aim of this paper is therefore to highlight outstanding questions which may be answered by future excavators, as well as to draw attention to the forms of evidence which are crucial to interpretation and which it may be possible to retrieve from archive material, especially where photographs

and drawings survive. Some recent benchmark publications of comparable sites on the Continent show how much evidence may be reconstructed, if grave opening is approached as a significant episode in the biography of a cemetery (e.g. Codreanu-Windauer 1997; Burgweinting-Schule in Zintl 2012; Theuws & van Haperen 2012).

Although ancient grave opening is a well-known phenomenon in Merovingian cemeteries (e.g. Stoll 1939; Werner 1953; Müller 1976; Roth 1978; Périn 1980; Grünewald 1988; Perkins 1991; Aspöck 2005; Bofinger & Przemyslaw 2008; Jimenez & Carré 2008), little inter-site research had until recently been carried out, so that the research behind this paper (Klevnäs 2013) was the first time data had been intensively compared between early medieval cemeteries at a regional level. The aim was to recover as full a picture as possible of where and when in Anglo-Saxon England grave disturbance was and was not carried out.

While a number of isolated cases were found in other areas, by far the majority of reports of reopening come from Kent. Several prominent reports originate with one archaeologist in particular, the late David Perkins, who worked in Thanet for many years. However, ancient disturbance has been recognised by a wide variety of excavators in the county. The apparent association of Perkins with robbed sites is largely the result of his publishing record; the majority of disturbed graves have been found by other excavators, but not so promptly published. Perkins also contributed significantly more information and analysis of robbing than is typical in excavation reports (Perkins & Hawkes 1984, Perkins 1985a, Perkins 1987, Perkins 1991, Perkins 1992).

Accounts of disturbed graves have been published from 1866 onwards, with the most recent in the excavations in advance of the East Kent Access Road (Andrews 2015). The evidence of deliberate early disturbance in Kent cemeteries discussed here was recorded by at least nine site directors: J. Brent, W.P.D. Stebbing, A. Rowe, A. Warhurst, A.C. Hogarth, L. Webster, S.C. Hawkes, D.R.J. Perkins, and D. Hart. At four sites (Finglesham, Bradstow School in Broadstairs, Monkton, and Sarre) disturbed graves have been identified by different excavators in successive campaigns of excavation. At Finglesham this was despite initial scepticism by the second director about the earlier interpretation of robbing.

When this research was carried out, early medieval graves had been excavated and recorded at about 120 sites in Kent (Richardson 2005). All 120 were reviewed in order to identify sites where the scale and standard of excavation produced data useful for this study. A total of 32 cemeteries was selected in which the quality of excavation and recording indicated that any early disturbance was likely to have been both observed and documented. Records of the selected burial sites were searched for evidence of reopening, as well as other forms of disturbance, including plough damage, unrecorded antiquarian excavation, recent robbing, and animal damage. Particular attention was paid to how excavators identified, described, and distinguished between different forms of disturbance.

The 32 cemeteries were divided into three groups: 8 sites with considerable evidence of early disturbance, 10 sites with limited evidence, and 14 sites with no evidence of early grave opening. Seven of the 8 more heavily disturbed sites have detailed information available in publications or site archives for at least some of the excavated graves; this is summarized in **Table 1** (the *full tabulated data for all the studied sites can be found on the KAS website*). The full publication of this

TABLE 1. SELECTED DATA ON THE EIGHT SITES WITH THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF EARLY GRAVE OPENING

	Bradstow school	St Peter	Margate	Monkton	Ozengell	Sarre Brent +TAT	Lyminge	Fingl'ham	All 8 sites
No. graves for analysis	89	388	34	34	89	292	68	237	1,197
No. graves disturbed	18	54		3	39	39	11	17	181
<i>% disturbed</i>	20	14		9	44	13	16	7	15
No. burials for analysis	91			35	91	316	68	251	852
<i>Confirmed male burials % total</i>	40			37	36	26*	44	35	37
<i>Ditto Female %</i>	16			17	42	35*	41	38	34
<i>% Adult burials</i>	62			60	69	87	76	70	75
<i>% Pre-adult burials</i>	23			6	26	13	13	22	18
No. disturbed graves with artefacts	15	47		3	33	28	5	12	143
<i>% with artefacts</i>	83	87		100	85	72	45	71	79
No. weapon graves	24					70		28	122
No. disturbed weapon graves	4	21		3	5	8	0	4	45
<i>%</i>	17					11		14	13
No. disturbed graves with beads	3	13		0	12	4	1	3	36
No. graves with kerb-slots		7		0	5		2	0	0
No. disturbed graves with kerb-slots		4		0	4		2	0	0

* Graves excavated by the Thanet Archaeological Trust only.

research (Klevnäs 2013) sets out the evidence for each cemetery and discusses its reliability, as far as possible at the level of individual graves. All available details of each disturbed and probably disturbed grave are presented, along with plans of the disturbed cemeteries and graves, many previously unpublished. This article is based on that data, but concentrates on presenting the results of the inter-site analysis of the cemeteries with considerable evidence of early disturbance. These include at least 183 affected graves, or about 15% of the 1,197 fully recorded graves at the sites. This is a much higher level of ancient grave reopening than previously recognised in the county, largely due to the access kindly granted by the British Museum to the evidence from the two Broadstairs sites. In 2010-2011 several further examples were uncovered (Andrews 2015); on the limited published information these resemble the previous finds in date and appearance.

A further ten Kent cemeteries have limited evidence of early disturbance, confined to one or two graves at each site. At least 18 disturbed graves are known from these sites, taking the minimum number recognised in Kent to 201 graves (containing 212 buried individuals). At Polhill, Darenth Park, Mill Hill and Eastry substantial areas have been excavated, showing that these sites are almost entirely intact, with just one or two cases of disturbance. On the other hand, the two Minster sites, Hoo Farm and Thorne Farm, may represent limited excavations into extensively disturbed burial grounds. Initial information from the 2003-2006 excavations of about 100 graves at Bourne Park suggested that significant evidence of early reopening had been found (Wilkinson unpubl.), but reported data remain unsatisfactory. The remaining fourteen sites either showed no signs of early robbing, or, as at Bekesbourne II, it was concluded that reports of reopening are unsubstantiated.

Geographic distribution

All the 8 heavily disturbed sites are in east Kent, with 6 on the Isle of Thanet (**Fig. 1**). The two exceptions are Finglesham and Lyminge, some distance to the south. The heavily disturbed sites are interspersed with unaffected cemeteries and with ones in which only one or two burials have been reopened. This pattern resembles that seen in the Merovingian kingdoms, where neighbouring cemeteries of similar date often show quite different reopening rates (e.g. Fingerlin 1971, 16-54, Roth 1978, 60). Finglesham, for example, is close to the extensively excavated sites of Mill Hill, Deal, and Updown, Eastry, which have only minimal evidence of early disturbance. Likewise at Dover Buckland over 400 burials have been excavated without any signs of early medieval reopening being recorded, despite this site's proximity to extensively disturbed Lyminge, and its substantially overlapping use-period. It is also notable that Dover Buckland and the similarly undisturbed cemeteries at Townsend Road, St Margaret's at Cliffe, and Cliff's End Farm are so close to the coast: it is not the case that accessible coastal burial grounds were disturbed while inland sites remained intact.

The Affected Graves

Between the heavily disturbed cemeteries the percentage of affected graves ranges from 8% at Finglesham to 44% at Ozengell. This variation in the proportion of graves disturbed is probably partly a result of incomplete cemetery excavations, since at

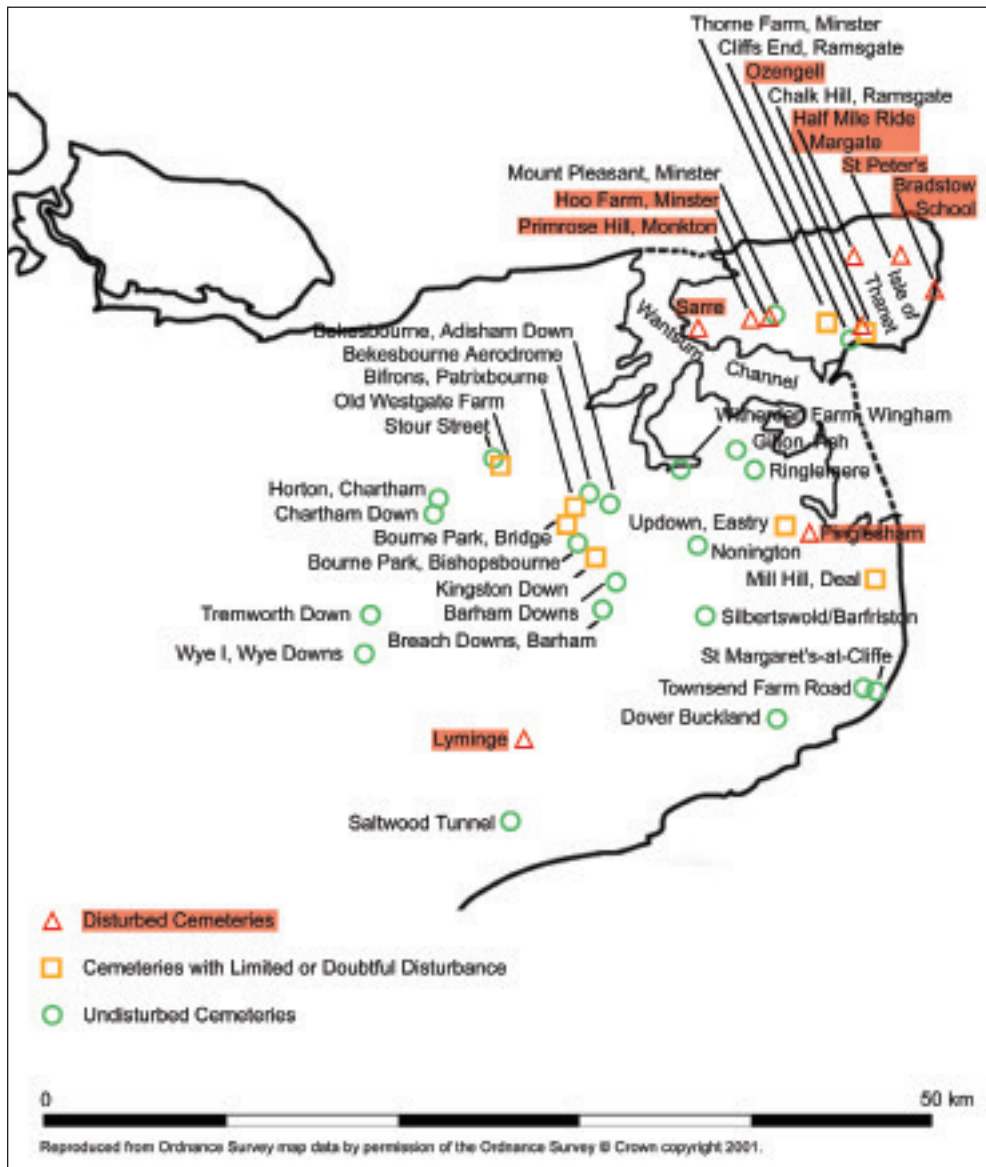


Fig. 1 Map of the early medieval burial sites in eastern Kent reviewed in the study. (There is a scattering of seven cemeteries in the rest of Kent which are either undisturbed or without significant disturbance.)

some sites opened graves are concentrated in particular areas. It is also likely that the diagnosis of early disturbance was more readily made at some sites than others. However, since the basis of the diagnosis of deliberate opening has been reviewed for every single grave in this sample, with numbers revised downwards at most sites, it seems there is real variation in levels, as is seen across the Channel.

Dimensions

Graves reported as deliberately reopened are on average substantially deeper, longer and wider than undisturbed ones. There is variation between sites: disturbed graves at Ozengell are only an average of 7cm deeper than undisturbed ones, compared to 30cm at Sarre. However, in every dimension at every site for which figures are available, the disturbed graves are larger.

The observation that disturbed graves are consistently deeper than average substantially rules out the possibility that ‘disturbance in antiquity’ is misreported plough damage. Most cemeteries in this intensively farmed region have suffered some plough damage, but it is the shallowest graves which are most vulnerable.

It is likely that larger and more conspicuous graves were deliberately selected for reopening. Digging into burials may itself lead to enlarged grave cuts; there are some cases where grave cuts have evidently been damaged and extended. In St Peter’s Grave 261, for example, the head end is some 20cm deeper than the rest, suggesting that the reopeners ‘over-dug’ and increased the dimensions in this area of the grave. However, such cases are relatively few and seem usually to result in recognisably irregular re-cuts confined to the grave lip. In such cases excavators seem to have tried to record the dimensions of the original cut, rather than letting the robbers’ work render their measurements inaccurate (e.g. Finglesham Grave 139).

Age of the deceased

Only a small number of infant and child burials are reported as disturbed. This is in part due to the relatively poor preservation of sub-adult bones; displaced skeletal remains are usually key to recognising reopening. However, there are indications that children’s graves may have been avoided, since almost all the recorded examples are of sub-adults buried in large, adult-sized graves. This is an indication that reopeners may have been guided by aboveground appearance rather than previous familiarity with the interment. Beyond the possible avoidance of children’s graves, no other age patterns are evident. Reopening affected adult graves in all age categories.

Gender

Across the 8 heavily disturbed sites 54 female burials (19% of total), 74 male (22%) and 63 unsexed individuals (15%) had been affected (sexing here on the basis of a combination of skeletal data and grave-good arrays, see Klevnäs 2013 for details). These average figures mask considerable differences between cemeteries. In particular, at Monkton and Lyminge male burials make up the overwhelming majority of disturbed graves.

With the caveat that many disturbed burials lack gendered grave-goods, it is thus possible that male burials were more frequently targeted than female ones, at least at some sites. However, it is by no means the case that male graves were exclusively targeted. Male graves may have been preferred, either for their grave-goods or for some other reason, but female graves were also frequent targets.

This does not necessarily mean that reopeners brought with them foreknowledge

of the sex of the buried individuals. Male and female graves may have been differentially marked on the surface; it seems plausible that the marked gendering of grave-good assemblages extended to other aspects of burial ritual and monument. Finally, there is also the possibility that male graves were more lastingly marked, so that more of them were visible to reopeners.

Markers and structural features

How and for how long graves remained marked on the surface is a key issue for grave reopening. Widespread and varied evidence exists for the use of grave markers in Anglo-Saxon field cemeteries (Lucy 2000, 97-102, Hirst & Clark 2009, 645). Above all, intercutting is so rare that all or almost all graves must have been indicated in some way.

In most cases in Kent it appears that not only were graves still marked at the time of reopening, but the outlines of the graves were still clearly discernible on the surface, since the disturbance is confined to within the grave cut and frequently to a specific part of it. This argument was explicitly made in the case for an early robbing date by the excavators at a number of sites, including Lyminge. At Bradstow School it is notable that the prehistoric graves which are intermingled with the early medieval ones as secondary interments on a Bronze Age barrow were not reopened: they were either invisible or readily distinguishable from the more recent interments that were the robbers' targets.

There is a small number of graves in which 'finding cuts' to locate the exact edge of the grave cut are reported. One of these is Ozengell Grave 60, probably also the oldest disturbed grave at the site, which could explain it being less clearly defined on the surface. As shown at Mill Hill, Deal (Parfitt 1997, 17), graves did occasionally disappear from view within the use-periods of long-lived sites. On the other hand, Ozengell Grave 60 was also highly unusual in preserving what was thought to be the Anglo-Saxon ground surface under the robbers' spoil. Substantial truncation of the upper levels of graves is the norm, especially since modern ploughing. Witness, for example, how much shallower the graves excavated in the late 20th century at Sarre were than those dug in the previous century by Brent (Perkins 1991). Where these upper layers are lost, so is evidence of finding cuts, so that disturbance apparently centred on a particular part of the grave may be giving an exaggerated appearance of accuracy on the part of the reopeners.

There are several more cases where slight extensions of grave cuts may be the result of uncertainty about where to dig, but are more likely due to the need to get a tool under a coffin lid to lever it open. The latter explanation is likely in Monkton Grave 22, which was reopened while the body was still substantially articulated, so that any cover was also likely to be intact. There can also be difficulties in distinguishing between finding cuts and other features (e.g. Bradstow School Grave 11 and St Peter's Tip Grave 233).

Did some forms of burial monument attract reopeners? In many cases the marker showing the whereabouts and orientation of a burial may simply have been earth piled over the grave, which would be enough to indicate where to dig. However, a range of more elaborate forms of aboveground monument are known archaeologically, with the most conspicuous and durable form being the

earth barrows commonly used in Kent. Some 752 out of Richardson's 2,934 Kent burials were recorded as lying under mounds, the majority single graves under individual newly built barrows, but some inserted into prehistoric monuments. Even this figure is likely to represent significant under-recording, since antiquarian observations before intensive ploughing in the 20th century refer to much higher numbers of barrows than are seen today.

Such mounds do not appear to have attracted high rates of robbing, despite their lasting visibility. At Finglesham, for example, only 8 out of the at least 18 likely barrows were found disturbed. On the other hand, reopeners evidently did sometimes consider it worth their while to dig down through these substantial monuments. This has significant implications for the selection of burials for reopening: it was not the graves which are easiest to access which were chosen. Digging through a mound takes much longer and more effort than opening a flat-grave, yet barrows were still sometimes targeted. Barrows cannot be seen as a deterrent to reopeners, at least not an effective one.

Less monumental but even more common are postholes for wooden markers (e.g. Finglesham Grave 60). In some cases several postholes are found grouped together, suggesting a structure. Christina Lee (2007, 93-95) has recently surveyed the evidence for such constructions – outside Kent – and speculated on the possible superstructures and functions. In east Kent, a number of cemeteries have evidence for complex forms of internal and external structural features, which were first classified by Hogarth (1973) at St Peter's, Broadstairs, with updates by Perkins (1991) at Sarre and Ozengell, and a recent survey by Richardson (2005a, 116-124). Although conventionally discussed together under the label 'structural features', these are varied, ranging from flint-packing around coffins to kerbs around graves, to apparently substantial structures or canopies over them. The original appearance of these forms of grave elaboration is currently poorly understood and in need of further study.

As Table 1 shows, the disturbance rates of graves with recorded postholes or other structural features are higher than average. However, the specifics of which structures were targeted vary significantly from site to site. There is no clear relationship between reopening and any one type of grave structure. It is not the case that a particular form of internal or external feature was consistently avoided or preferred by reopeners across the disturbed sites.

The only strong association is between kerbslots and disturbance. Graves surrounded by these rectangular gullies thought originally to have contained stone uprights are seen at Lyminge, Ozengell, and St Peter's Tip. A high proportion are disturbed at all three sites. At Lyminge both examples had been reopened, and at Ozengell 4 out of 5 were disturbed. At St Peter's Tip 4 out of 7 examples were definitely reopened, and it is possible that all had been. Were these graves selected on the basis of specific symbolic connotations, or simply because they were conspicuous? There is little to indicate whether this form of grave structure was associated with impressive grave-good assemblages, largely because almost all examples have been looted.

Conversely, there are plenty of examples of highly elaborated graves which are not disturbed. Ozengell Grave 64 is a particularly striking example. Within the grave was a 'pillow' of earth packing plus chalk packing along the sides. Probably

visible aboveground were 3 pairs of posts along the sides, a square sandstone slab and a chalk pyramid (Richardson 2005a, 121). Yet this grave was found undisturbed at a site with an overall reopening rate of up to 44%.

Dating

Dating reopening requires establishing first the date of the initial burial, and then the length of the interval between interment and disturbance. This section briefly discusses the information which is useful in assessing that interval and summarises the conclusions which can be drawn about the chronology of the reopening in Anglo-Saxon Kent. The basis, precision, and reliability of relevant individual dates are discussed in Klevnäs 2013.

The majority of the disturbed burials are dated to the 7th century, either by artefact finds or by inference since they are in cemeteries dominated by 7th-century burials. However, at all the sites there are many untouched graves contemporary with the opened ones. A smaller number of earlier burials were also reopened, but despite the much higher numbers of often impressive grave-goods found in 6th-century graves, they were not a significant target.

There are no disturbed burials which must have been interred during or after the last quarter of the 7th century. Burial at most of the disturbed cemeteries appears to continue after the reopening ceased, with the possible exception of Lyminge, which may have been disturbed after abandonment. A strong indication that reopening ceased before the final interments were made in field cemeteries comes from the internal layout of the Finglesham burial ground, explored by Duncan Sayer (2009). He shows that the eastern area, which he labels Plot C, is generally the later burial location, with the majority of datable burials being late 7th- or early 8th-century, especially close to the eastern edge. Plot C has almost no evidence of reopening, with the exception of a couple of graves at its western edge. It is likely that this area postdates the disturbance phase; the reopening episodes may even be associated, directly or indirectly, with the shift in burial location.

For assessing the length of time which elapsed between burial and secondary disturbance, the states of decomposition of all elements in the grave can provide indications: body tissues of different types, grave-goods of various materials and sizes, and any coffin or other container in which these lay. Timeframes adapted from German-language early medieval and Bronze Age research (Aspöck 2002, 49; 2005, 251-252, Neugebauer 1991, Sági 1964, Klevnäs 2013, 44-45) were used to classify the state of decay of the Kent graves at the time of disturbance. In addition, in a couple of cases where intercutting graves provided opportunities for robbing, the dates could quite tightly established.

The state of any coffin, other container, or lid over the grave is a neglected but useful source of information for the chronology of reopening, since it is frequently possible to distinguish between disturbance that took place within the void of an intact container and that which happened in an earth-filled grave (Aspöck 2005). Where the disordered bones are strewn in a layer over the grave floor, disturbance must have taken place within an open space. The grave was therefore originally lidded, whether or not residual traces of a container or lid remained at the time of excavation. The grave openers cleared the earth from above the lid, then either

removed it entirely or made an access hole through it. They thereby gained access to the whole burial and were able to move its elements around within the open space.

Viewed in this light, the reopening evidence shows that burial containers were significantly more common in east Kent cemeteries than reports would suggest, since a considerable proportion of the affected burials can be seen to have been disturbed within intact open spaces, even though no traces of coffin or lid were reported. Evidence from St Peter's supports this conclusion, as wood preservation seems to have been unusually good, allowing coffin traces to be observed in a larger number of burials. The drawings from that site suggest that the coffins were substantial, thick-sided containers, which would have lasted for a number of decades. In one case (Grave 78), the St Peter's excavators made a comment that shows they were aware of this source of dating evidence, but it was not systematically or explicitly recorded. However, records allow reconstruction of the situation in a fair proportion of graves at several sites, and show that lids were still whole in a high proportion of cases (e.g. Monkton Grave 22, Finglesham Grave 197), giving the first indicative timeframe for reopening of within perhaps 10 to 50 years.

The indications that many containers were still intact at the time of disturbance fits with the evidence from the corpses themselves. The great majority of graves had been re-entered after the muscle and ligaments of the cadaver had decayed, but while bones were still solid and resistant to breakage. There are very few clear examples in which bones fragmented during disturbance, which is in marked contrast to the severely decayed state of the bones by the time of the excavations at most of the sites. The length of time taken for a corpse to skeletonize is highly variable; discussions of fleshy decomposition in previous discussions have tended to overstate the conformity of these processes. But for the purposes of this research, a broad estimate was employed that that skeletonization in the types of burial under discussion is usually complete after a decade, and almost always after 25 years. The majority of disturbance therefore appears to have occurred long enough after burial for fleshy decay to take place, but soon enough for many coffins to still hold as lidded voids: some years after burial, but within living memory.

In addition, there are a small number of burials disturbed before fleshy decomposition was complete, which enable reopening to be pinned to a more limited number of years after burial. In fact there are at least 16 claims of partial articulation, with cases seen at Bradstow School, St Peter's, Monkton, Finglesham, and Ozengell. Only Lyminge and Sarre have no examples. However, fully seven come from Ozengell, where the lack of available grave plans prevented proper evaluation of the evidence. If those cadavers were indeed still semi-articulated, it should be noted that several were clustered in one part of the cemetery, making it likely that skeletonization was protracted in this area of the burial ground, possibly due to an extra factor such as water-logging.

Where partial articulation is claimed, it must be in accordance with the order in which articulated joints decay; the most persistent articulations being those which in life require thick and powerful ligaments (Ubelaker 1997, Duday 2006). On this basis, all but a handful of reported cases were judged unconvincing. However, sufficient remain to be of assistance in dating the Kent disturbance phase. These

include St Peter’s Grave 165, in which a large part of the skeleton (R femur, pelvis, lower spine) seems to have held together and been moved intact, along with a bead necklace which remained strung when lifted; Grave 270 in which a couple of sections of spinal column seem to have remained articulated; and Monkton Grave 22 where it appeared that the right leg and part of the pelvis had been moved intact to the foot of the grave.

Bringing all this evidence together, it appears that the majority of disturbance took place within the 7th century, probably concentrated in the mid-part of that century. However, even on the shortest possible range, cases are spread over more than half a century. There are a few examples which suggest reopening had started before the end of the 6th century, while others indicate that the practice continued into the third quarter of the seventh century. There is therefore not a single wave of reopening, but rather a phase of several decades during which reopening episodes occurred sporadically in many – but by no means all – Kentish burial grounds. With the possible exception of Lyminge, the affected cemeteries must thus have seen burial continuing alongside intermittent reopening of graves from the previous generation.

Reopening methods

A wide variety of grave-opening techniques were employed, including within each cemetery. These were in part adaptations to the state of decay of the coffin and contents: for example, intact coffins were sometimes explored by means of a stick or hook passed through a hole in the lid, while decayed, earth-filled coffins could be dug through. However, the approaches taken to grave opening are sufficiently diverse that they must represent the work of different individuals or teams, rather than wholesale robbery by a group going from grave to grave on a single occasion.

In general, the approach to each grave appears individual, with the various techniques dispersed across the cemeteries. In most cases reopening leaves graves in considerable disarray, in marked contrast to the carefully laid out burial displays, while in some examples the degree of fragmentation of bones and grave-goods suggests the use of destructive violence. Conversely, a substantial minority of graves show evidence for more deliberate treatment of the human bone. In at least 14 disturbed graves at St Peter’s, displaced bones had been heaped or piled at one end of the grave, usually but not always the foot end. A clear example is Grave 140 (**Fig. 2**), in which the displaced bones, mainly long-bones, have been laid lengthways across the width of the grave floor, at a time before the coffin had collapsed. Here the piling of bones is sufficiently careful that it looks like respectful treatment, in contrast to the apparently brutal emptying of many other graves, for example nearby Grave 147, which left the few remaining bones fragmented and scattered.

There are just a few cases where neighbouring graves may have been opened together. St Peter’s Grave 261 and 268, for example, were both disturbed by an unusual method of pushing the whole body towards the side and foot-end of the grave, while in Grave 235 and 236 the robbing footprint is also sufficiently similar that it seems likely that these two graves were opened as a pair. Meanwhile there are very few examples in Kent where bones from extra individuals may have been

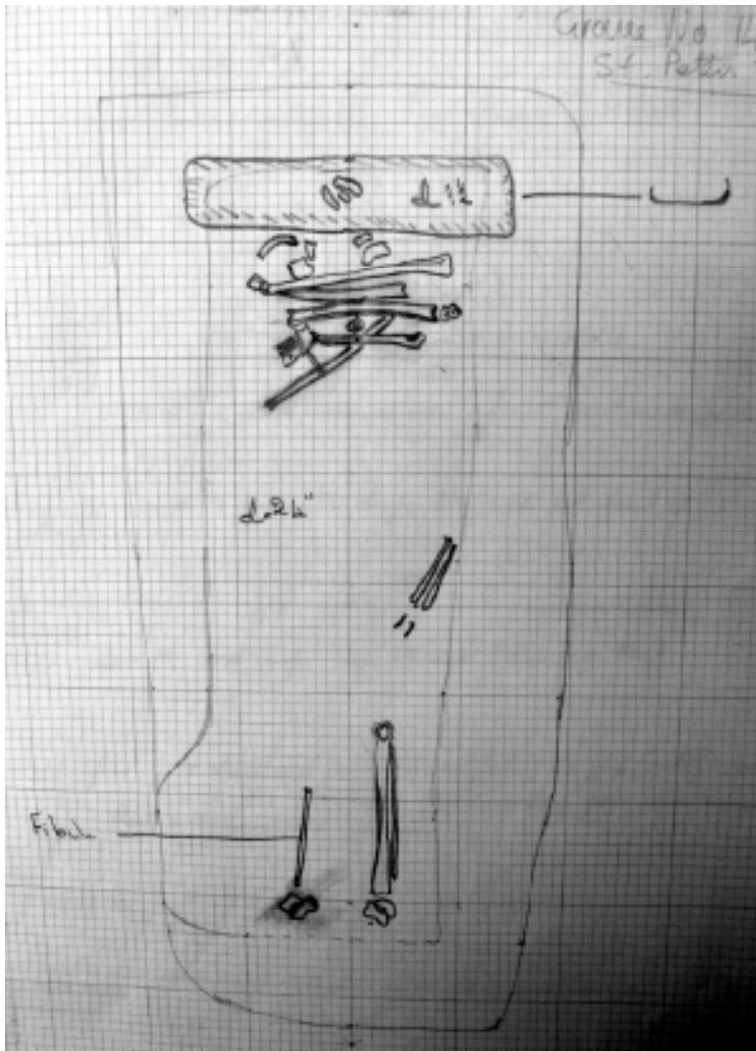


Fig. 2 Plan of Grave 140 at St Peter's, Broadstairs from the field documentation, reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

added during reopening; it was not the case here that multiple graves were opened simultaneously and the contents mixed.

Spatial distribution

In none of the cemeteries are all the graves in any area affected. The reopened graves are dispersed across the sites and are interspersed with intact burials. There is no evidence for any systematic, simultaneous reopening of large sections of any of the burial grounds.

At some sites, particularly Lyminge and Bradstow School, small clusters of weapon graves have been identified. There is no direct link between these and robbery. It is possible that weapon graves are robbed slightly more frequently, but spatially reopening is not exclusively or even particularly focused on weapon graves.

Plans of two sites, Finglesham (**Fig. 3**) and St Peter’s (**Fig. 4**) illustrate these points. At St Peter’s, the reopened graves are dispersed across the excavated area, perhaps with a slight concentration towards the centre. The apparent group of co-aligned graves at the extreme west is nearly free from robbing, and the cluster of ring-ditched graves at the south edge may also be, but disturbance appears to affect all excavated areas to some degree. There are one or two possible small clusters of reopened graves, such as co-aligned Grave 233, 235, and 236, in which the latter two in particular seem to form a pair. However, even in the areas where reopening is particularly intense, the disturbed burials are intermingled with intact ones.

At Finglesham the disturbed burials are best described as scattered across the excavated area. There is an undisturbed area on the eastern side, despite the presence there of some highly visible ditched graves; this is the plot identified by Sayer (2009) as the latest part of the burial ground. There is only one case of neighbouring graves being disturbed (Grave 2 and Grave 44). The disturbance patterns in these two graves are quite different, with Grave 22 suffering only slight displacement of some bones of the upper body, and Grave 44 heavily disturbed, but with only the legs in approximately in the right part of the grave. However, these differences may reflect the conditions of the burials or presence/absence of coffins, rather than different operating methods. It is quite possible that these two graves were opened together for reasons of proximity and convenience. Apart from this one example, however, the impression is rather the opposite: disturbed graves are spaced across the cemetery to such an extent that the dispersal may even be deliberate.

Backfilling

The stratigraphy of the fill of disturbed graves is crucial for understanding the process and nature of the reopening, yet is often neglected in the excavation records. No section drawings through disturbed fill have been located for any of the reopened graves in Kent. Most have only a two-dimensional plan of the grave floor, although even this is lacking at Lyminge, for example. In some cases, including several at Finglesham, bones and artefacts considered to have been displaced from their original positions were omitted from the grave plans, even when found within the original grave cut. Depicting objects displaced upwards into the fill is in any case near-impossible in a bird’s eye view; at St Peter’s Tip attempts have been made to include such objects by labelling the depth of each find, but the drawings quickly become confusing.

More generally it is evident from several comments on grave forms at St Peter’s Tip in particular that the excavators could at least sometimes detect considerably more information about changes in fill, robber cuts, and the internal stratigraphy of graves than they recorded. This can also be deduced from Perkins’ (1991) discussion of the disturbed fill in graves at Sarre, where he was able to reconstruct

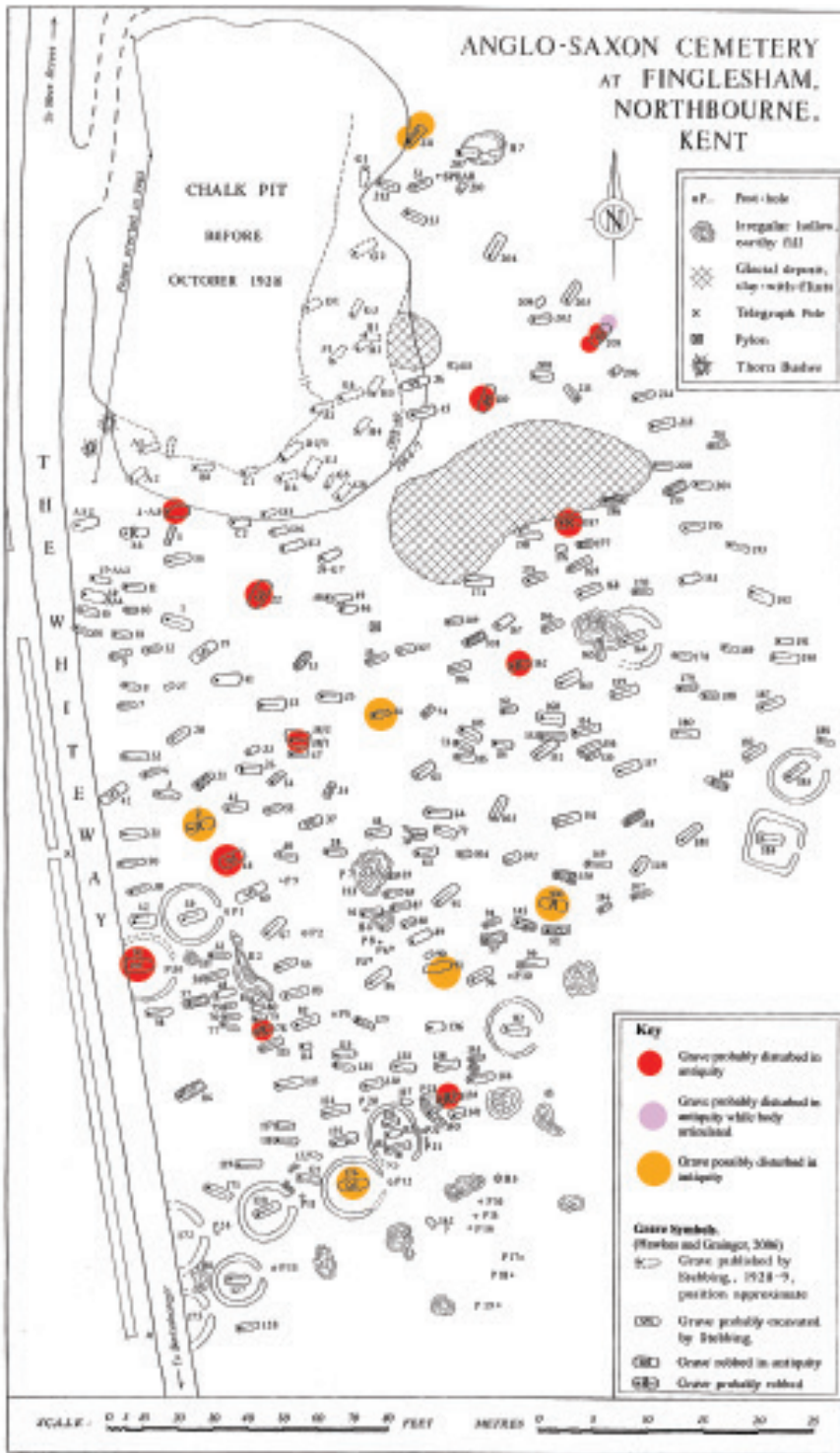


Fig. 3 Plan of Finglesham cemetery showing the disturbed burials (after Hawkes & Grainger 2006).

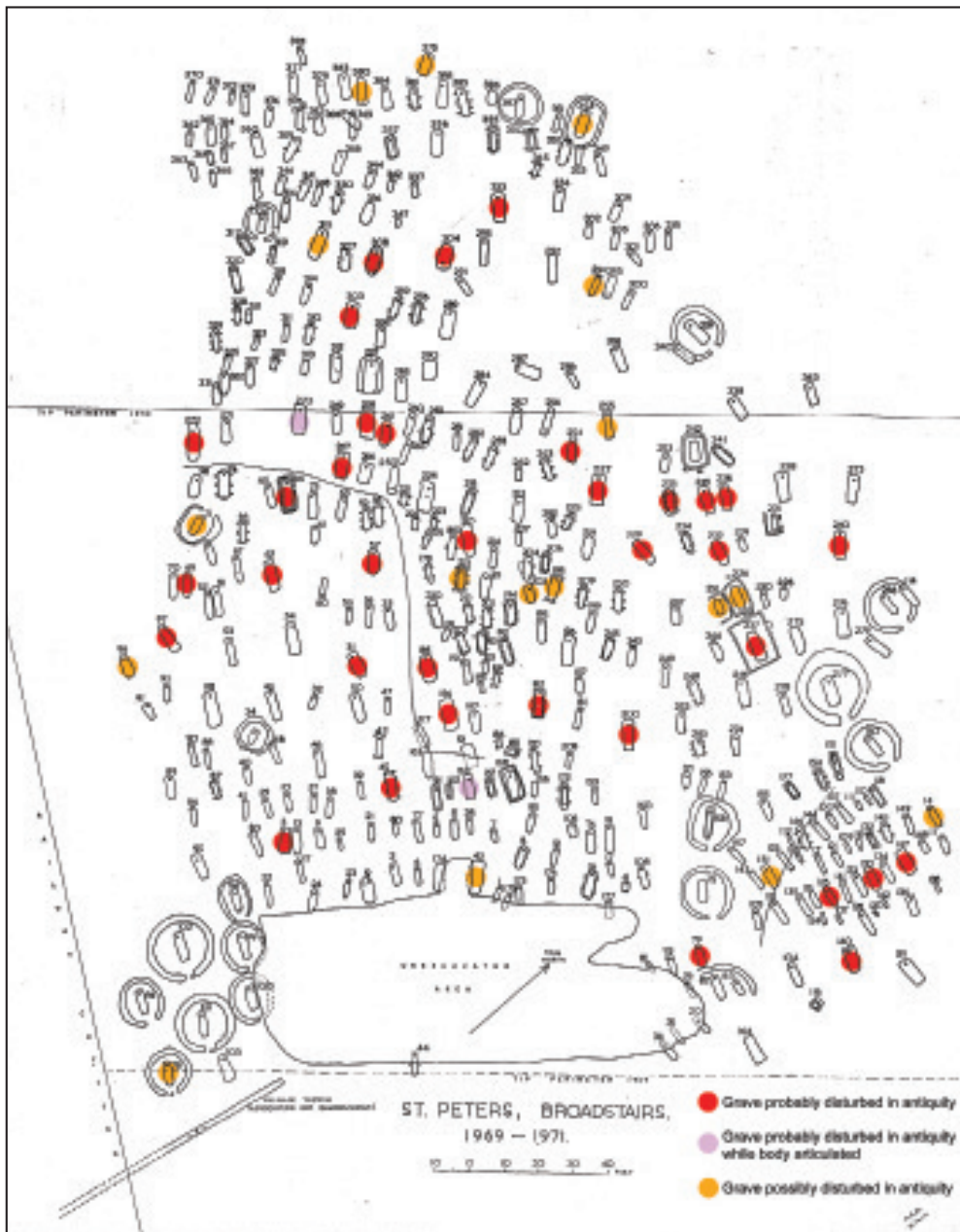


Fig. 4 Plan of St Peter's cemetery showing the disturbed burials (after Hogarth 1973).

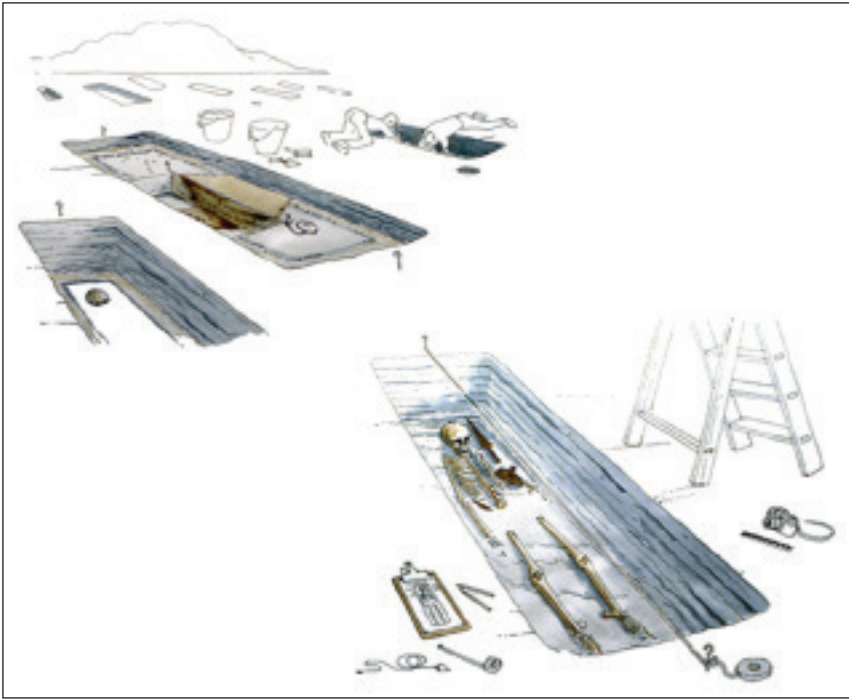


Fig. 5 Artist's drawing of a disturbed grave under excavation at Lord of the Manor, Ozengell, Ramsgate, by Len Jay. Reproduced by permission of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology.

considerable details of how graves were opened and refilled. Meanwhile the site artist's drawings of disturbed graves under excavation at Perkin's excavations at Ozengell (**Fig. 5**) show that the intrusive cuts into the burials were clearly visible, along with stratified deposits in the backfill.

Overall, sufficient information is noted across the sites to show that there was marked variety in the ways in which graves were (or were not) backfilled. Reopened graves could be backfilled with the original fill, often with bones and artefacts thrown or shovelled back in, or could be backfilled with a different material. Backfilling with the same fill probably accounts at least in part for the lack of discernible secondary cuts into some clearly disturbed graves.

Where graves were backfilled with the original fill it is also hard to tell whether bones and artefacts were intentionally thrown back into the grave or simply shovelled in with the rest of the material, perhaps overlooked by the reopeners. This latter possibility also limits our ability to say for certain that artefacts were intentionally rejected. Grave descriptions frequently state that bones or artefacts had been 'thrown back in', but without giving grounds for this conclusion.

Grave 22 at Finglesham is an example in which the disturbed area is backfilled with an unmistakably different material: 'brown loamy soil containing a few salvaged bones, and this contrasted markedly with the original fill of chalk rubble'.

In this case bones must have been picked out and intentionally added to the backfill, not just heaved back in with the rest of the spoil. Only part of the skeleton was replaced, but there was evidently at least a symbolic effort to restore the grave’s integrity. The impression here is therefore that rifling the burial contents was the motive, not emptying or desecrating the grave for its own sake.

On the other hand, the excavators’ observation that the backfilling of Grave 22 was not necessarily carried out by the reopeners is significant. A delay in backfilling or different diggers might account for the change in backfill, especially if the reopeners had scattered their spoil. Perhaps the open grave and its exposed contents were discovered and replaced by someone with a connection to, or respect for, the burial. We can still make only limited conjectures about how frequently Early Anglo-Saxon field cemeteries were visited by the burying community and how near to settlement sites they lay, despite recent settlement excavations (for which see Hamerow 2012).

At Ozengell Perkins identified two graves in which deliberate backfilling probably never occurred, or only after a delay of at least some hours. In Grave 18 the robbers had dug out much of the fill, but original fill was still present at the sides. Within the disturbed area, ‘The stratification of fill indicated that the grave was not backfilled immediately after disturbance, heavy rain bringing a dark silt from land surface’. In Grave 60 the original chalk rubble fill could still be seen ‘heaped on both sides of the grave, trapping the land surface to the south’ (Perkins 1977). In this case the excavators thought that backfilling had happened naturally.

A small number of disturbed graves had intrusive later material in the upper fill, as seen at Continental sites (e.g. Aspöck 2002, 53-4). Several of these are at St Peter’s Tip (e.g. Grave 54, 126, 270). Grave 52 at Ozengell had a medieval potsherd at 7cm depth. Bradstow School Grave 12 had a piece of medieval tile in the upper fill. However, these objects appear to have collected in hollows above the disturbed burials and are probably indicative not of partial backfilling, but of much slighter dips formed by the sinking of backfill. It is presumably also this sinking that leads to occasional finds of later material in the upper fill of even undisturbed burials: St Peter’s Tip Grave 95 had a piece of clay pipe around 5cm into the fill, but the underlying burial was to all appearances untouched. This later material is significant in confirming an early medieval date for the robbing: it is never found in the disturbed burial contexts, only near the surface.

The non-backfilled graves speak against any need for concealment; they indicate rather that the reopeners were either indifferent or wished to advertise their work, perhaps to increase offence by leaving graves open. Recorded examples of non-backfilled graves are few, but on the other hand the fill evidence has been so widely disregarded that many more may have been missed. The quantities of bone missing from many graves suggests that piles of material may have been left strewn around reopened graves. In any case it would be extremely difficult entirely to conceal the digging out of a grave: Perkins (1991, 163) points out that in these usually chalky cemeteries a tell-tale spread of white dust forms around any digging.

Grave-goods

In Kent, as in Merovingia, the presumption has always been that a central motivation for reopening was the removal of grave-goods, whether as theft, reclamation, or a

superstitious practice. The appearance of the disturbed graves supports the view that discovery and removal of artefacts was a primary aim. The archaeology bears witness to rummaging of grave contents, but not to attempts to eradicate graves. Generally the remains are left in considerable disorder, sometimes with damage to artefacts and skeletal parts, but occasionally the searching appears positively orderly. Further, a number of graves show clear signs that objects have been removed. Copper staining on bone, broken fragments of missing objects, and in a couple of cases the remains of scabbards but no swords testify to the former presence of removed artefacts.

It is therefore a counter-intuitive finding that graves reported as disturbed are as likely or slightly more likely to contain artefact remains than the undisturbed examples in the same cemeteries. However, this bare statistic is misleading: in grave catalogues and databases, a tiny scrap of a scabbard is counted in the same way as a whole scabbard, in order to give a picture of the original condition of a grave. Taking a closer look at the residual assemblages in the disturbed graves, it is evident that objects have been removed. Although a superficially similar proportion of disturbed and undisturbed graves at each site have grave-goods, the disturbed graves are at the bottom of the range in terms of the numbers of artefacts, and a high proportion of grave-goods in the disturbed graves are represented by partial, displaced fragments.

The evidence from the Kent sites suggests that a deliberate and largely consistent selection was made of types of artefacts to remove from graves. It was not the case that whoever reopened the graves wanted indiscriminately to remove as many artefacts as possible. Swords and brooches were the main targets, as they are almost entirely absent from disturbed burials. This selection is similar to the pattern seen in Merovingia, but the pattern is not identical, since knives were consistently left in the disturbed Kentish graves, while vessels were probably sometimes removed.

Only one complete sword has been recorded in the 178 disturbed/probably disturbed burials. This was in Grave 304 at St Peter's and may well have been missed by the reopeners, who made a limited intrusion into the other site of the grave. Additionally, there may have been sword blade fragments scattered in St Peter's Graves 57, 182, and 200. These weapons must have been in very poor condition by the time of reopening, since they fragmented when disturbed. In Sarre Grave 104 the top of a sword hilt was found. The rest of the artefact had been taken, but again was probably in bad condition.

None of the other sites have any substantial remains of swords in reopened graves. This is despite Kent having by far the highest proportion of graves with swords of any region (Richardson 2005a, 138), with swords in 108 or about 20% of weapon graves, or just over 5% of Richardson's 2020 furnished grave-good assemblages (Richardson 2005a, 140-141). It would be reasonable to expect sword finds in a considerably higher proportion of disturbed graves. At Sarre in particular Brent's excavations unearthed swords in almost one in every ten graves (Perkins 1992, 107; Brent 1868, 318 seems a slight undercount). Yet the only trace of a sword any of the 44 disturbed graves at the site is the hilt top.

It has been claimed that burials containing weapons were preferentially targeted for grave robbing (Härke 1992, 65; Härke 2000, 391-2 and table 5, Welch 2007, 222-3). This would require either detailed knowledge of the cemeteries by the

robbers, or for weapon graves to have been differentially marked on the surface. The evidence collated here gives no basis for this conclusion. If reopeners had a preference for weapon graves as a general category, it was not systematic or thorough, since large numbers of 7th-century weapon burials remain in the disturbed sites. Further, the only category of weapon which is consistently removed from the reopened graves is swords. The disturbed burials contain a high percentage of spearheads, which were evidently not taken. Shield bosses are similarly present in a significant number of reopened graves. These represent some of the largest iron objects in Anglo-Saxon graves. That no effective effort was made to remove them also makes it very unlikely that the recovery of iron was a primary motivation for grave opening.

Brooch removal is frequently cited as an explanation for disturbance in the chest area of female skeletons, and indeed brooches are missing from disturbed female burials. Richardson records a total of 356 brooch finds in his 2020 grave-good assemblages (2005a, 137). Despite this frequency, the only artefacts of this kind found in disturbed graves are a ring brooch in Sarre Grave 85 and the two bow brooches at Finglesham. Of these latter, one is a fragmentary Roman copper alloy bow brooch, was almost certainly a stray object which found its way into the dip at the top of the disturbed fill of Grave 22. The second is a silver bow-brooch which was found on the spoil heap and thought probably associated with Grave 205, where it may have been responsible for copper-staining on the clavicle. Since the modern excavators missed it as they dug, it seems quite possible that the early grave openers did so too. At Sarre, 25 (8%) of the 294 excavated burials contained brooches or pendants, but only the Grave 85 early ring fibula was in a disturbed grave. Brooches, along with swords, are thus one of the most consistently removed grave-good types.

In addition, disturbed female graves tend not to contain the kind of apparently amuletic objects characteristic of the burials described by Audrey Meaney as ‘cunning women’ (Meaney 1981, 249-62; Dickinson 1993; Gilchrist 2008; Reynolds 2009, 73-4). As Helen Geake (1997, 98-100) has shown, the boundaries of this category may be too vague to be meaningful, and the probably highly symbolic female belt items certainly do remain in disturbed graves. However, it may be significant that none of the crystal balls, perforated spoons, or animal or mineral keepsakes otherwise found in Kent are seen in the robbed graves. Numbers are too low, however, to conclude for certain either that such objects were taken, or that this kind of burial was avoided by reopeners.

A range of artefacts which to modern eyes appear highly desirable were left behind. This applies most clearly to the necklace elements: the beads of all materials, which remain in high numbers, and the various forms of pendant, even those made of precious metals. Sometimes beads may have been missed, especially where the hook method was used. However, there are strong indications that beads and other necklace elements were deliberately rejected: the still-strung necklace in St Peter’s Grave 165, which included 78 beads and 6 pendants variously of silver, silver-gilt, glass and garnet, had probably been viewed, perhaps even handled, as had the pendant depicted in the drawing as still hanging around the woman’s neck. Similarly, two silver pendants remained in Grave 237, and another in Grave 354. Sarre Grave 286 had a pendant fashioned from a tremissis and a silver-mounted

key-stone-shaped type of pink glass. There is no reason to think that most of these were in bad condition at the time of robbing; their materials ought to place them among the better-preserved grave-goods.

Other elements of female dress frequently rejected are the various forms of chatelaine and other iron and copper alloy objects worn hanging from belts. These were consistently left behind even when in good condition. Looking only at the larger sites, there were at least 8 in the disturbed graves at St Peter's and 4 at Sarre in addition to the 2 at Finglesham. These represent between 14% and 19% of furnished burials at these sites: above the expected average. In Grave 281 at Sarre the latch-lifter/chatelaine complex was lifted and replaced at the side of the grave floor, which is an unusually definite case of an object being handled and rejected.

DISCUSSION

This paper has summarised the key conclusions of recent research investigating the evidence for early medieval disturbance of contemporaneous graves in Kent. This was an attempt to reconstruct as nuanced a picture as possible from data of varied quality. None of the sites presents a full picture of the evidence. Many were hurried rescue excavations in the days before funding was available for processing and publication. Some have grave drawings but not a cemetery plan, or vice versa. Several lack post-excavation bone and artefact reports. It was therefore necessary to go back to the field documentation wherever possible, since the drawings, photographs, diaries, and context sheets held in site archives preserve the nuances of archaeological interpretation in the field in a way that is almost always edited out through the publication process. Future excavations are likely to unearth further examples, with the potential to bring considerable additional detail to the current picture, or even to alter it.

Currently the evidence points to a sporadic practice, carried out by a variety of actors over a period of some decades. Each time a grave was chosen for reopening, the selection seems to have been individual, based on factors which cannot be identified archaeologically, but which include a preference for larger, probably better-furnished burials. Yet most of the reopening was carried out in the early-mid 7th century, and affects interments only a generation or so old, rather than the more richly furnished 6th-century graves which were still clearly marked in these cemeteries.

The reopeners' activities appear to be focused on entering, rifling, and removing grave-goods from the graves, with varying degrees of damage resulting to skeletal parts and artefacts. This is not a straightforward form of theft, since many apparently valuable objects are left behind, including gold and silver finds. Only two forms of artefact were consistently removed: women's brooches and men's swords. The condition of these objects at the time of disturbance has significant implications for the reopeners' motives: swords were in several cases friable and fragmenting, yet were selected for removal whether or not they were still cutting weapons.

Given the labour, unpleasantness, and perhaps risk involved in reopening a grave, it seems counter-intuitive not to take all the artefacts on offer. If grave disturbance was a transgressive or insulting act, why not take everything that might be exchanged or given away? Even if beads and pendants were not useful for the

main targets, why were they not acceptable trinkets for a partner or playthings for a child? There is a puzzle here: the manner of robbing looks transgressive, or at least is in marked contrast to the originally carefully arranged displays, with bones scattered and graves sometimes left open. Yet it was carried out by people who appear to have obeyed rules about what objects could and could not be taken.

In subsequent work the author has developed these ideas, suggesting that reopening may be explained as a tit-for-tat, vengeful practice, involving the removal of particular kin-related possessions from the graves of recent ancestors (Klevnäs 2015). In this interpretation the aim is not to obtain objects for use or exchange, but to remove them from the ownership of the dead, damaging the prestige of kin who invested them as grave wealth.

Meanwhile the data presented here are currently being integrated into a European-scale perspective on early medieval grave opening as part of a three-year project funded by the Swedish Research Council (reopenedgraves.eu). Comparison with evidence of the same phenomenon elsewhere in the Merovingian zone of influence will open up new possible lines of interpretation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research behind this paper was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, with additional support from Girton College, Cambridge, and the John Templeton Foundation. In 2011 the Kent Archaeological Society awarded it the Hasted Prize, providing funds for publication. The data are now being included in the project, ‘Interacting with the dead. Belief and conflict in Early Medieval Europe (AD 450-750)’, funded by the Swedish Research Council and hosted at Stockholm University.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, P., 2015, *Digging at the gateway: archaeological landscapes of south Thanet : the archaeology of East Kent access phase II. Volume 1, The sites*, Oxford, Oxford Wessex Archaeology.
- Aspöck, E., 2005, ‘Graböffnungen im Frühmittelalter und das Beispiel der langobardenzeitlichen Gräber von Brunn am Gebirge, Flur Wolfholz, Niederösterreich’, *Archaeologia Austriaca*, 87, 225-265.
- Aspöck, E. and R.Y. Banerjee, 2016, ‘Formation processes of a reopened early Bronze Age inhumation grave in Austria: the soil thin section analyses’, *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 10, 791-809.
- Beckett, J. and J. Robb, 2006, ‘Neolithic burial taphonomy, ritual, and interpretation in Britain and Ireland: a review’, in R. Gowland and C. Knüsel, *The social archaeology of funerary remains*, Oxford, Oxbow, 57-80.
- Bello, S. and P. Andrews, 2006, ‘The intrinsic pattern of preservation of human skeletons and its influence on the interpretation of funerary behaviours’, in R. Gowland and C. Knüsel (eds), *The social archaeology of funerary remains*, Oxford, Oxbow.
- Bofinger, J. and S. Przemyslaw, 2008, *Reihenweise ausgeraubt: Beobachtungen zum Grabraub im frühen Mittelalter. Raubgräber – Schatzgräber*, F. Brunecker, Biberach: 48-59.
- Brent, J., 1868, ‘Account of the Society’s Researches in the Saxon Cemetery at Sarr. Part III’, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 7, 307-321.

- Codreanu-Windauer, S., 1997, *Pliening im Frühmittelalter. Materialhefte zur Bayerischen Vorgeschichte A*, 74, Lassleben.
- Dickinson, T., 1993, 'An Anglo-Saxon 'cunning woman' from Bidford-on-Avon', in M.O.H. Carver (ed.), *In search of cult: archaeological investigations in honour of Philip Rahtz*, Woodbridge, Boydell.
- Duday, H., 2009, *The archaeology of the dead: lectures in archaeoethanatology*, translated by A.M. Cipriani and J. Pearce, *Studies in funerary archaeology*, Oxford, Oxbow.
- Fingerlin, G., 1971, *Die alamannische Gräberfelder von Güttningen und Merdingen in Südbaden*, de Gruyter.
- Geake, H., 1997, *The use of grave-goods in conversion-period England, c.600-c.850*, BAR, British Series, 261.
- Gilchrist, R., 2008, 'Magic for the dead? The archaeology of magic in later medieval burials', *Medieval Archaeology*, 52, 119-159.
- Grünewald, C., 1988, *Das alamannische Gräberfeld von Unterthürheim, Bayerisch-Schwaben*.
- Hamerow, H., 2012, *Rural settlements and society in Anglo-Saxon England*, OUP.
- van Haperen, M., 2017, 'In touch with the dead: early medieval grave reopenings in the Low Countries', Doctoral thesis. Leiden University.
- Härke, H., 1992, *Angelsächsische Waffengräber der 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne and Bonn, Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters, Beiheft 6.
- Härke, H., 2000, 'The circulation of weapons in Anglo-Saxon society', in *Rituals of power: from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages*, F. Theuvs and J.L. Nelson (eds), Leiden, Boston, Brill.
- Hawkes, S.C. and G. Grainger, 2006, *The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Finglesham, Kent*, Oxford, OUSA.
- Hawkes, S.C., Hogarth, A. and C. Denston, 1974, 'The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Monkton, Thanet', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 89, 49-89.
- Hirst, S. and D. Clark, 2009, *Excavations at Mucking: Volume 3, The Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries*, Museum of London Archaeology, London.
- Hogarth, A.C., 1973, 'Structural features in Anglo-Saxon graves', *Archaeological Journal*, CXXX, 104-119.
- Jimenez F. and F. Carré, 2008, *Louviers, Eure, au haut Moyen Âge. Découvertes anciennes et fouilles récentes du cimetière de la rue du Mûrier. Saint-Germain-en-Laye*, Association Française d'Archéologie Mérovingienne.
- Kinkopf, K.M. and J. Beck, 2016, 'Bioarchaeological approaches to looting: a case study from Sudan', *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 10, 263-271.
- Klevnäs, A., 2013, *Whodunnit? Grave Robbery in Anglo-Saxon England and the Merovingian Kingdoms*, Oxford, Archaeopress.
- Klevnäs, A., 2015a, 'Abandon Ship! Digging out the Dead from the Vendel Boat-Graves', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 48, 1, 1-20.
- Klevnäs, A., 2015b, 'Give and take: grave-goods and grave robbery in the early middle ages', in A.M. Klevnäs and C. Hedenstierna-Jonson, *Own and be owned: archaeological approaches to the concept of possession*, Stockholm Studies in Archaeology, 62, 157-188.
- Klevnäs, A.M., 2016a, 'Imbued with the Essence of the Owner': Personhood and Possessions in the Reopening and Reworking of Viking-Age Burials', *European Journal of Archaeology*, 19, 3, 456-476.
- Lee, C., 2007, *Feasting the dead: food and drink in Anglo-Saxon burial rituals*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press.
- Lucy, S., 2000, *The Anglo-Saxon way of death: burial rites in early England*, Stroud, Sutton.

- Meaney, A., 1981, *Anglo-Saxon amulets and curing stones*, Oxford: BAR.
- Müller, H.F., 1976, *Das alamannische Gräberfeld von Hemmingen, Kreis Ludwigsburg, Stuttgart, Müller & Gräff*.
- Neugebauer, J-W., 1991, *Die Nekropole F von Gemeinlebarn, Niederösterreich, caplRömisch-Germanische Forschungen 49*, Mainz, Phillipp von Zabern.
- Nilsson Stutz, L. and L. Larsson, 2016, 'Disturbing the dead. Archaeothanatological analysis of the stone age burials at Zvejnieki, Latvia, excavated 2006-2009', *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 10, 715-724.
- Noterman, A., 2016a, 'Early medieval grave robbery. The French case', in L. Gardeła and K. Kajkowski (eds), *Limbs, bones and reopened graves in past societies*, Bytów, Muzeum Zachodniokaszubskie w Bytowie, 149-174.
- Noterman, A., 2016b, 'Violation, pillage, profanation: la perturbation des sépultures mérovingiennes au haut Moyen Âge, VIe-VIIIe siècle, dans la moitié nord de la France', PH.D. thesis, University of Poitiers.
- O'Brien, E., 1999, *Post-Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England: burial practices reviewed*, Oxford, BAR.
- Parfitt, K. and B. Bruggmann, 1997, *The Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Mill Hill, Deal, Kent*, London, Society for Medieval Archaeology.
- Périn, P., 1980, *La datation des tombes mérovingiennes: historique, méthodes, applications*, Genève, Droz.
- Perkins, D. R. J., 1977, 'Excavations in the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Ozengell nr. Ramsgate, Kent, Phase I', unpubl. draft report.
- Perkins, D.R.J., 1985a, 'The Monkton gas pipeline: phases III and IV, 1983-84', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 102, 43-69.
- Perkins, D.R.J., 1985b, 'Wealth, robbery and status in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries', B.Sc. dissertation, North-East London Polytechnic.
- Perkins, D.R.J., 1987, 'The Jutish cemetery at Half Mile Ride, Margate: a Re-appraisal', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 104, 219-236.
- Perkins, D.R.J., 1991, 'The Jutish cemetery at Sarre revisited: a rescue evaluation', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 109, 139-166.
- Perkins, D.R.J., 1992, 'The Jutish cemetery at Sarre revisited: Part II', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 110, 83-120.
- Perkins, D. and Chadwick Hawkes, S., 1984, 'The Thanet Gas Pipeline Phases I and II (Monkton Parish), 1982', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 101, 83-114.
- Reynolds, A., 2009, 'Anglo-Saxon deviant burial customs', in J. Blair and H. Hamerow (eds), *Medieval History and Archaeology*, Oxford, OUP.
- Richardson, A., 2005, *The Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of Kent. Vol I & II*, BAR British series 391.
- Roth, H., 1978, 'Archäologische Beobachtungen zum Grabfrevel im Meroweingerreich', *Zum Grabfrevel in vor- und frühgeschichtlicher Zeit: Untersuchungen zu Grabraub und 'haugbrot' in Mittel- und Nordeuropa: Bericht über ein Kolloquium der Kommission für die Altertumskunde Mittel- und Nordeuropas vom 14. bis 16. Februar 1977*, H. Jankuhn, H. Nehlsen and H. Roth, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 53-84.
- Sági, K., 1964, Das langobardische Gräberfeld von Vörs, *Acta Archaeologica Hungarica*, 16, 359-408.
- Sayer, D., 2009, 'The 7th century Kentish family: considering the evidence from the legal codes and cemetery organisation', in D. Sayer and H. Williams (eds), *Mortuary Practice and Social Identities in the Middle Ages*, Exeter University Press.
- Schröder, A., 2007, 'The Anglo-Saxon cemetery of Lyminge, Kent', M.A. dissertation, Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Bonn.
- Stoll, H., 1939, *Die Alamannengräber von Hailfingen in Württemberg*, Berlin.

- Theuws, F. and M. van Haperen, 2012, *The Merovingian cemetery of Bergeijk-Fazantlaan*, Bonn, Habelt-Verlag.
- Welch, M., 2007, 'Anglo-Saxon Kent', in J.H. Williams (ed.), *The Archaeology of Kent to AD 800*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 187-248.
- Werner, J., 1953, *Der alamannische Gräberfeld von Bülach*, Basel, Birkhäuser.
- Wilkinson, P., 'The archaeological investigation of a hexagonal feature at Star Hill, Bridge, near Canterbury, Kent (2003-06)', unpubl. report.
- Zintl, S., 2012, 'Frühmittelalterliche Grabräuber? Wiedergeöffnete Gräber der Merowingerzeit', Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde der Philosophischen Fakultät der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg i. Br.