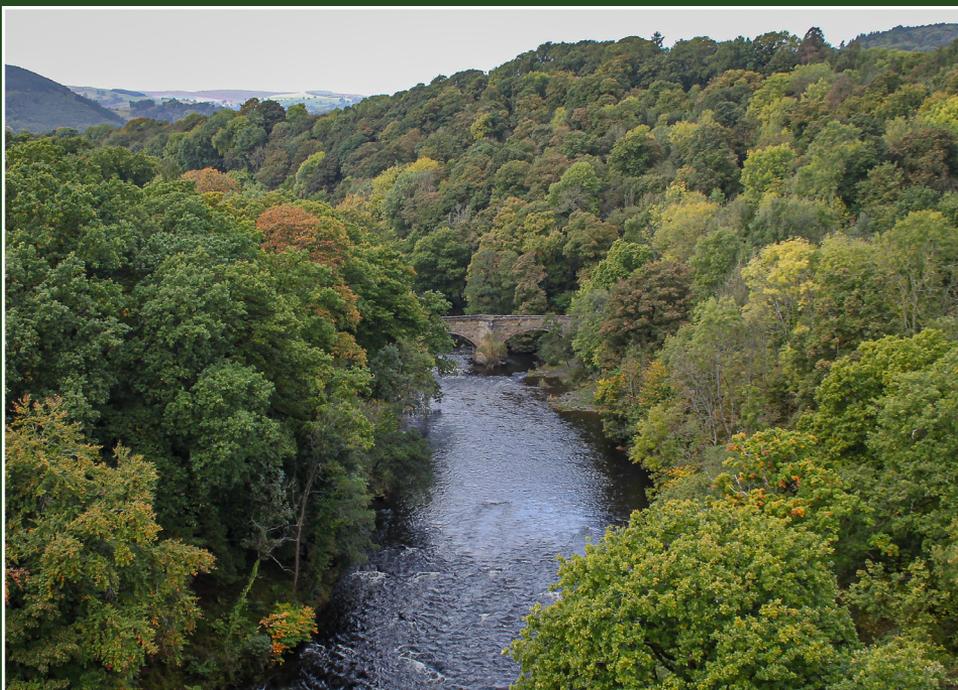


# Offa's Dyke Journal



Volume 4

Borders in Early Medieval Britain

Edited by Ben Guy, Howard Williams and Liam Delaney

## Aims and Scope

*Offa's Dyke Journal* is a peer-reviewed venue for the publication of high-quality research on the archaeology, history and heritage of frontiers and borderlands focusing on the Anglo-Welsh border. The editors invite submissions that explore dimensions of Offa's Dyke, Wat's Dyke and the 'short dykes' of western Britain, including their life-histories and landscape contexts. *ODJ* will also consider comparative studies on the material culture and monumentality of frontiers and borderlands from elsewhere in Britain, Europe and beyond. We accept:

1. Notes and Reviews of up to 3,000 words
2. Interim reports on fieldwork of up to 5,000 words
3. Original discussions, syntheses and analyses of up to 10,000 words

*ODJ* is published by JAS Arqueología, and is supported by the University of Chester and the Offa's Dyke Association. The journal is open access, free to authors and readers: <http://revistas.jasarqueologia.es/index.php/odjournal/>. Print copies of the journal are available for purchase from Archaeopress with a discount available for members of the Offa's Dyke Association: <https://www.archaeopress.com/>

## Editors

Dr Ben Guy BA MA PhD (Research Associate, Cardiff University)

Email: [guybl@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:guybl@cardiff.ac.uk)

Professor Howard Williams BSc MA PhD FSA (Professor of Archaeology, University of Chester)

Email: [howard.williams@chester.ac.uk](mailto:howard.williams@chester.ac.uk)

Liam Delaney BA MA MCIfA (Doctoral Researcher, University of Chester)

Email: [1816919@chester.ac.uk](mailto:1816919@chester.ac.uk)

## Editorial Board

- Dr Paul Belford BSc MA PhD FSA MCIfA (Director, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT))
- Andrew Blake (AONB Officer, Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership)
- Christopher Catling MA FSA MCIfA (Secretary, The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales)
- Professor Florin Curta MA PhD MA (Professor of Medieval History, University of Florida)
- Dr Clare Downham MA MPhil PhD (Reader in Irish Studies, Institute of Irish Studies, University of Liverpool)
- Dr Seren Griffiths MA MSc PhD FSA MCIfA (Senior Lecturer in Public Archaeology and Archaeological Science, Manchester Metropolitan University; Honorary Research Associate, Cardiff University)
- Professor Laura McAtackney BA MPhil PhD (Professor of Archaeology, University College Cork; Professor of Archaeology, University of Aarhus)
- David McGlade BA DMS (Vice-Chairman, Offa's Dyke Association)
- Professor Keith Ray MBE MA PhD FSA (Honorary Professor, School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University)
- Dr Andy Seaman BA MA PhD FHEA ACIfA FSA (Lecturer in Archaeology, Cardiff University)
- Dr Rachel Swallow BA MA PhD FSA (Visiting Research Fellow, University of Chester; Honorary Fellow, University of Liverpool)
- Astrid Tummuscheit MA (State Archaeological Department of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany)
- Dr Kate Waddington MA, PhD, FSA (Senior Lecturer in Archaeology, School of History, Law and Social Sciences, Bangor University)
- Frauke Witte Dipl. Prähist. (Curator, Museum of Southern Jutland (MSJ))

Submissions: [odj@chester.ac.uk](mailto:odj@chester.ac.uk)

Copyright © 2022 Authors

**Front cover:** The River Dee looking east from the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Here, the Offa's Dyke Path traverses the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site (Photograph: Howard Williams, 2022, with thanks to Rose Guy for assistance). Cover and logo design by Howard Williams, Liam Delaney.

# Offa's Dyke Journal

*A Journal for Linear Monuments, Frontiers and  
Borderlands Research*

Volume 4 for 2022

Special issue: Borders in Early Medieval Britain

Edited by Ben Guy, Howard Williams and Liam Delaney



University of  
Chester

## Borders in Early Medieval Britain: Introducing the Special Issue

Ben Guy

The contents of this special issue comprise the proceedings of a conference held over Zoom on the weekend of 11–12 July 2020. The event was originally planned to take place in Cambridge, but, as the unforeseeable events of 2020 began to unfold, it was soon realised that it would be necessary either to cancel the event or move it into digital space. The latter path was taken, making this conference part of the first wave of academic Zoom events that we have subsequently become so accustomed to. It was a steep learning curve, but hopefully a valuable learning experience for all concerned!

The name of the conference was 'The Borders of Early Medieval England', reflecting the original intention to hold a multi-disciplinary event that would consider the nature of 'borders' around and within England during the early medieval centuries. The event was planned as the culmination of my research fellowship in Robinson College, part of the purpose of which was to conduct research into Anglo-Welsh interaction in the region of the River Dee in the Middle Ages. The intention was to study processes of political, cultural and linguistic interaction in a regional border zone as a cohesive unit, moving beyond consideration of these areas as merely places where the boundaries or 'frontiers' of larger polities or cultural groups collided. There is a well-established historiography on this subject that Dr Lindy Brady helpfully recounts in her contribution to this issue, but studies of the Anglo-Welsh border (and of the other political/cultural borders of early medieval Britain for that matter) have not always kept pace with it. As it transpired, this research led me to reconsider the history of the entire Anglo-Welsh border zone in the early Middle Ages, along with the nature of the Anglo-Welsh interaction that took place not so much across it, but within it. My hope for the original conference was that it would help to put some of this work in perspective, allowing the experience of the early medieval Anglo-Welsh border to be compared with the experiences of other borders and borderlands around and within Anglo-Saxon England, from a range of historical, archaeological and linguistic perspectives. The speakers achieved this goal admirably and it proved a stimulating event.

For the purposes of this special issue, the conference title has been altered to 'Borders in Early Medieval Britain', which was felt to convey more accurately the resulting contents after some of the original speakers decided not to publish their papers in this context. All the papers published in this issue began as presentations at the conference, with the exception of the excellent 'response' by Dr Lindy Brady which was commissioned to accompany the collection and provides reflection on it. I am grateful to Dr Brady for rising to the challenge and writing a thoughtful piece.

In addition to the contributors, I would like to thank the speakers at the conference whose work is not represented in this issue, but who made such insightful contributions to the event: Dr Ben Allport, Dr Robert Gallagher, Dr Charles Insley, Dr Tom Lambert, Jacob O'Neill, Dr Richard Purkiss, Dr Rebecca Thomas, Dr Alex Woolf, and especially Dr Chris Lewis, who delivered a fascinating plenary lecture on 'England's boundaries 1066–1086 and the Limits of Domesday Book'. I would also like to express thanks to my fellow co-editors and especially Professor Howard Williams, who initially agreed to take on the project and who has been a fantastic collaborator throughout its production. It is a privilege to be able to publish work like this in the *Offa's Dyke Journal*, which maintains the rigorous standards of academic publishing while remaining freely accessible to the public. I am deeply indebted to Robinson College, and particularly the Senior Tutor, Dr David Woodman, for supporting the research that underlies my contribution to this issue as well as providing financial backing for the conference itself. Lastly, I am very grateful to my wife, Dr Rose Guy, for teaching me how to use Zoom in Spring 2020 and for acting as a moderator during the event.

Cambridge, 17 August 2022

---

Dr Ben Guy, School of Welsh, Cardiff University  
Email: [guybl@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:guybl@cardiff.ac.uk)