BRIDGES OF MEDIEVAL ENGLAND TO *c.* 1250

GENERAL GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

This dataset, in ArcGIS shapefile and comma-separated values (CSV) formats, brings together information on medieval bridges attested in written records and archaeological surveys in England to the middle of the thirteenth century. By combining documentary references, archaeological material and place-name evidence, this database provides a comprehensive digital resource for the study of this key aspect of medieval English transport and communications infrastructure. It was produced as part of the *Travel and Communication in Anglo-Saxon England* project conducted at the UCL Institute of Archaeology and the Institute for Name-Studies, University of Nottingham.

Modern scholarship, including the outcomes of the *Travel and Communication* project, has shown that the overall shape of the pre-Modern English overland transport network was fundamentally in place by the central Middle Ages. Any road system in a terrain and climate as wet as that of England must solve the challenges presented by the hydrological features of the landscape, and bridges and causeways, along with fords and ferries, played a key part in medieval travel networks.

Most medieval bridge-sites in England had been established by the middle of the thirteenth century. The preceding generations had witnessed enormous economic and population growth. Accompanying efforts to improve overland travel infrastructure appear to have concentrated on improvements to river crossings, including the construction of new bridges. In aggregate, these constitute the most substantial investment made in the overland transport network between the Roman period and the turnpikes of the seventeenth century. The medieval bridge network appears to have been able to meet the transport requirements of the country up to the eve of the Industrial Revolution: the number of bridges in the mid-eighteenth century was approximately the same as in the Middle Ages. Moreover, the building of bridges, in particular monumental stone bridges, was an economic and political statement. Once established bridges—and the routes they carried--proved remarkably durable. Bridges may have been built in response to contemporary needs but once in place they exerted a lasting influence on the shape and character of the local and regional transport network.

The dataset draws upon three major sources of information: surveys of historic bridges, archaeological evidence, and place-name data. The principal surveys of historic bridges are Edwyn Jervoise's four-volume *Ancient Bridges* series (1930–6), the first comprehensive survey of extant historical bridges in England and Wales, and David Harrison's *The Bridges of Medieval England: Transport and Society 400–1800* (2004), which provides an updated study of medieval bridge building and its socio-economic importance. Archaeological evidence for bridges is recorded in regional Historic Environment Records and the Heritage England National Monuments Record. The origin of most medieval place-names as descriptions of landscape features and settlements means that place-names provide further information about bridges hitherto unexcavated or not otherwise recorded in the medieval documentary record.

Compilation of the data comprised the digitisation of bridges listed in existing surveys by Jervoise (1930–6) and Harrison (2004); searches of the Historic England National Record of the Historic Environment Event dataset for excavations of 'Medieval Bridge[s]' (completed, 15/10/2015) and Historic Environment Records for the four case-study areas listed below; and the digitization of select place-name evidence from English place-name reference works (see further below).

For the period up to AD 1100 all three sources (place-names, archaeological evidence and historical documents) have been searched to provide a fully comprehensive list of bridges. Archaeological evidence and historical documents have also been surveyed nationally up to c. 1250. For the period c. 1100 – c. 1300 place-names have been surveyed to different degrees of accuracy in different regions as follows.

All place-names referring to bridges have been included if they are recorded by the eleventh century. Place-names that are the names of civil or ecclesiastical parishes (or their local equivalents) have been included regardless of whether they are recorded before c. 1100 or not (to ensure coverage of parts of England where documentary records from the eleventh century and earlier are scarce or non-existent). In addition, place-names recorded before 1300 have been included for four case-study areas: 1) Hampshire (excluding the Isle of Wight); 2) Worcestershire; 3) the hundreds bordering Offa's Dyke in Gloucestershire (St Briavels and the detached portion of Westbury) and Herefordshire (Greytree, Grimsworth, Huntington, Stretford, Webtree, Wigmore and Wormelow); 4) wapentakes bordering the Humber Estuary in Lincolnshire (East and North Manley, Yarborough and Haverstoe) and the East Riding of Yorkshire (the Hunsley Beacon division of Harthill and the South and Middle Divisions of Holderness).[1]

It should be further noted that the sources from which the case-study place-name data was drawn provide uneven levels of coverage. The English Place-Name Society survey volumes for The East Riding of Yorkshire and for Worcestershire, Coplestone-Crow's *Herefordshire Place-Names* and Gover's unpublished typescript *Hampshire Place-*Names provide fewer forms of medieval minor and field-names than equivalent volumes for Gloucestershire and Lincolnshire, so the evidence from the East Riding

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[1] References to counties refer to their areas before reorganisation in 1974.

of Yorkshire, Hampshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire is sparser than that from Gloucestershire and Lincolnshire.

The sense in which words for 'bridge' were used in place-names is sometimes unclear. Old English *brycg* in particular seems sometimes to have been used to refer to causeways; instances where this sense is suspected are indicated in the dataset's notes field. A further complication is that the Old Norse cognate *bryggja* could mean 'landing-stage, gang-plank, quay' but in England appears to be used of bridges; semantic influence from Old English *brycg* probably explains this. Consequently, place-names that ostensibly contain ON *bryggja* are also included here. Other 'bridges', especially those referred to using OE *þel* 'plank', might have been much less significant structures than those referred to by other terms.

FILES

Bridges1250.txt
Bridges1250.shp

Summary description: point data files locating all medieval bridge sites still existing, or known from written references (e.g. charters, chronicle mentions), archaeological evidence and medieval place-names with a bridge place-name component. A small minority of 'bridge' place-names may in fact refer to causeways as Old English *brycg* may mean either; if so this is discussed in the 'Notes' field.

Key to Attribute Table

FID	ESRI object unique ID number. Shapefile only
Shape	Geometry type of feature [point]. Shapefile only
Location	Locational information, e.g. settlement name
County	Locational information, pre-1974 county
River	Name of the watercourse
Attested	Date for oldest recorded attestation, either documentary reference, place-name record, or archaeological dating. May be a range of years or an approximate date
Build_by	Date by which the bridge must have been in existence, derived from the Attested field.
Place_name	A historic place-name indicating existence of a bridge
PN_element	The place-name element referring to a bridge
Harrison	Page number reference to E. Harrison 2004. *The Bridges of Medieval England: Transport and Society 400–1800*, Oxford

Jervoise	Page number reference by volume from *The Ancient Bridges* series by E. Jervoise 1930-6. See bibliography in *General Guide*. S: *The Ancient Bridges of the South of England* N: *The Ancient Bridges of the North of England* E: *The Ancient Bridges of Mid and Eastern England* W: *The Ancient Bridges of Wales and Western England*
Other_ref	Bibliographical references, predominantly for place-name reference works
Notes	Supplementary comments
Easting	Easting or X coordinate
Northing	Northing or Y coordinate

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

AS Mint-Names = Carroll, J., and D. N. Parsons (2007), *Anglo-Saxon Mint-Names. I. Axbridge–Hythe,* EPNS Extra Series 2 (Nottingham).

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CalInq = *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, Chancery* (1916–1968), 7 vols, (London).

CDEPN = Watts, V. (2004), *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Cambridge).

ClRH3 = *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (1902–1938), 14 vols (London).

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DB = Domesday Book.

DCoPNs = Padel, O. J. (1988), *A Popular Dictionary of Cornish Place-Names* (Penzance).

DEPN = Ekwall, E. (1960), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn (Oxford).

DuPNs = Watts, V. (2002), *A Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names*, EPNS Popular Series 3 (Nottingham).

ECEE = Hart, C. R. (1966), *The Early Charters of Eastern England*, Studies in Early English History 5 (Leicester).

EHNs i = Anderson, O.S. (1934), *The English Hundred-Names* (*Lunds Universitets Arsskrift* 30.1) (Lund).

EHNs ii = Anderson, O.S. (1939), *The English Hundred-Names: the South-Western Counties* (*Lunds Universitets Arsskrift* 35.5) (Lund).

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EPNS = English Place-Name Society.

HaCoates = Coates, R. (1989), *The Place-Names of Hampshire* (London).

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Jervoise W = Jervoise E. (1936), *The Ancient Bridges of Wales and Western England* (London).

KePNS = Wallenberg, J. K. (1934), *The Place-Names of Kent* (Uppsala).

KPN = Wallenberg, J. K. (1931), *Kentish Place-Names: a Topographical and Etymological Study of the Place-Name Material in Kentish Charters dated before the Conquest* (Uppsala).

LdnPNs = Mills, A. D. (2010), *A Dictionary of London Place-Names*, 2nd edn (Oxford).

LiPNs = Cameron, K. (1999), *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*, EPNS Popular Series 1 (Nottingham).

LPN = Gelling, M., and A. Cole (2000), *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Stamford).

ME = Middle English.

Mills = Mills, D. (2011), *A Dictionary of British Place Names* (Oxford).

MillsSf = Mills, A. D. (2014), *Suffolk Place-Names. Their Origins and Meanings* (Lavenham).

NbDuPNs = Mawer, A. (1920) *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge).

Noble, F. (1983), *Offa's Dyke Reviewed*, BAR British Series 114 (Oxford).

OE = Old English.

OS = Ordnance Survey.

PNBdHu = Mawer, A., and F. M. Stenton (1926), *The Place-Names of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire*, EPNS 3 (Cambridge).

PNCh = Dodgson, J. M. (1970–1997), *The Place-Names of Cheshire,* 5 vols, EPNS 44–48, 54 and 74 (Cambridge/Nottingham).

PNCu = Armstrong, A. M., et al. (1950–1952), *The Place-Names of Cumberland*, 3 vols, EPNS 20–22 (Cambridge).

PNDb = Cameron, K. (1959), *The Place-Names of Derbyshire,* 3 vols, EPNS 27–29 (Cambridge).

PNDe = Gover, J. E. B., et al. (1931–1932) *The Place-Names of Devon*, 2 vols, EPNS 8–9 (Cambridge).

PNDo = Mills, A. D. (1977–), *The Place-Names of Dorset*, 4 vols to date, EPNS 53–54, 59/60 and 87/87 (Nottingham).

PNEx = Reaney, P. H. (1935), *The Place-Names of Essex*, EPNS 12 (Cambridge).

PNGl = Smith, A. H. (1964–1965), *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*, 4 vols, EPNS 38–41 (Cambridge)

PNHt = Gover, J. E. B., et al. (1938), *The Place-Names of Hertfordshire*, EPNS 15 (Cambridge).

PNLi = Cameron, K., et al. (1985–), *The Place-Names of Lincolnshire,* 7 vols to date, EPNS 58, 64–66, 71, 73, 77 and 85 (Nottingham).

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PNWa = Gover, J. E. B., et al. (1970), *The Place-Names of Warwickshire*, EPNS 13 (Cambridge).

PNWe = Smith, A. H. (1967), *The Place-Names of Westmorland*, 2 vols, EPNS 42–43 (Cambridge).

PNWi = Gover, J. E. B., et al. (1939), *The Place-Names of Wiltshire*, EPNS 16 (Cambridge).

PNWo = Mawer, A., and F. M. Stenton (1927), *The Place-Names of Worcestershire*, EPNS 4 (Nottingham).

PNYoE = Smith, A. H. (1937), *The Place-Names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York*, EPNS 14 (Cambridge).

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