

# Europe's field boundaries

hedged banks / hedgerows / field walls (stonewalls) /  
dead brushwood hedges / bent over hedges / woven  
hedges / wattle fences / traditional wooden fences

Volume I



Georg Müller

2013



23.10.2009 Felin Fach/Großbritannien

4

Landscapes of hedged banks and hedges glow in the sunrise in Felin Fach in Great Britain. Many of the hedges that were formerly laid are now annually cut down to a height of about 1-1.5 m.



03.05.2010 Alberobello/Italien

5

Stunning stone wall landscape with „Trullis“ near Alberobello in Italy, in spring. Field walls are still in a marvellous condition around there.

## Extracts from statements

Georg Müller:

The field boundaries of Europe

Under this title G. Müller presents the most exhaustive study ever presented about the hedges, hedged banks, field walls and the full range of field boundaries found in Europe. With the help of a large number of illustrations, it shows a previously unimaginable diversity of hedges and other types of field boundaries which have a significant impact on the landscape. Many only remain as relict features and are here uniquely documented as part of our cultural historic heritage, whereas others will remain due to special protection measures.

This monumental piece of work is the result of intense research that lasted over 30 years and was conducted in over 30 European countries. The results have been carefully examined and presented in a very attractive and instructive manner. Among other things, they show the connection between farming methods based on the different landscapes and their corresponding field boundaries. There are, for example, living hedges and hedged banks, dead scrub hedges, stone banks and field walls, all constructed and managed differently, as described in detail in the text supported by numerous photos and drawings. Some of the structures described are ancient and date back to the Palaeolithic era.

Extensive literature especially on hedges does exist, however this piece of work is the first to so comprehensively cover the distribution, construction and history of field boundaries. It will be the main source of information about these important cultural assets and their links to the landscape and agricultural history. Any future research in this area will be based on this book, which will serve as a reference in this field for the unforeseeable future.

Prof. em. Drs. Dr. h. c. Heinrich E. Weber  
Am Bühner Bach 12  
49565 Bramsche  
3. February 2013

Prof. Dr. Uwe Meiners  
Ackerstraße 34  
D-26121 Oldenburg

Cloppenburg, 30. 08. 2012

Expert opinion about the script by Georg Müller,  
Field boundaries of Europe

With the publication of his extensive documentation and examination of the field boundaries of Europe, Georg Müller from Ganderkesee (BR Germany) has produced an epic work of literature on the occurrence and history of this part of our cultural landscapes, both ancient and recent. For the first time, the book makes data and visual documentation collected over a period of more than 30 years available to a wide audience. Not only does the information hugely increase our understanding of cultural landscapes across Europe, it will

also serve to increase public awareness of the importance of field boundaries to our cultural history.

The nearly completed manuscript has over 5000 images, drawings and maps as well as nearly 1000 printed pages. I recommend it without hesitation. All the information, pictures and maps etc have thoroughly been researched, and so are of high documentary and investigative value for studies on European cultural landscapes. Reflecting its high quality, the book will be a long-lasting source of information on which to base further investigations into the farmed landscape of Europe.

signed.

Prof. Dr. Uwe Meiners

Leading Director of the Lower saxon one open-air museum-  
Museum Village Cloppenburg

The field enclosures and field boundaries of Europe  
Georg Müller

Georg Müller has written a fabulous book which will be a standard reference tome for years to come. Fieldwork for the book started in 1983 and includes insights from personal visits to over 20,000 km of field margins in 32 European countries. Field margin types include dry brush (dead) hedges, woven sticks, wooden and stone fences, living hedges and hedge banks and dry stone walls. The work seeks to show the distribution of different field boundaries throughout Europe with estimates of condition and status. The book starts with an introduction to the historical development of field boundaries and then moves into detailed survey results.

Apart from the detailed text, the book includes excellent photographs and diagrams illustrating the different types of field boundary and their variants, so there is, for example, not just a single photograph of a stone wall, but a whole collection supported by line diagrams of different construction methods. The illustrations of different hedging styles are breathtakingly beautiful and I'd happily hang some in my office!

The work is the outcome of an obsession with understanding the nature and scope of field boundaries; in doing so Georg Müller may be providing us with a last glimpse of what we once possessed. Alternatively, and this is my hope, his work may stimulate increased conservation and protection of the wonderful diversity of European field boundaries. Field boundaries are not simply stock control or ownership boundary features, they are human cultural artefacts – and their presence in the landscape is a physical history of human endeavour.

Professor John W. Dover BSc, PhD, FRES, FSB  
Staffordshire University  
Stoke-on-Trent, UK  
2012.11.07

## Synopsis and summary of contents

### Synopsis and summary of contents

Field boundaries such as banks, hedges, walls and fences are present across Europe in a remarkable diversity of forms. They are a very important part of Europe's cultural landscape and history, and provide habitat for rich wildlife communities. They have played a critical role in the development of agriculture over the ages.

This book gives a full and wide ranging account of the field boundaries of Europe. Observations on their worldwide history, formation and geographical distribution complete the picture.

The detailed documentation of hedged banks, hedges, field walls and traditional fences is the result of survey work taking place over 30 years. During this time numerous photos were taken, drawings made, descriptions written and measurements taken. The appearance, characteristics and purpose of the many different types of boundary features encountered are covered in detail, as well as the ways in which they are managed. The condition of field boundaries, and the causes of any damage or loss, are described, together with newly-created boundaries.

The book is split into two parts. The first covers the Europe as a whole, the second one is dedicated to each of the 27 different countries covered.

In the first part, an historical account of boundary development is given, ranging from the Palaeolithic Age to the present day. Hedged banks (folds), field walls (dry stone walls and stone ramparts), and various types of fence (eg dead brushwood, stick picket, woven vertical and wattle) are all described and classified, and their geographic occurrence illustrated. Likewise, the tree, shrub and other plant growth on banks and walls is summarised. Around 200 different styles of hedge management are described and illustrated. The

significance and economics of banks and walls to the farming industry are discussed. A brief overview of relevant international agreements and European Union policies on the protection of boundaries is provided. The ecological significance of banks and hedges is described with the help of examples. The historical and current use of hedges for wood fuel is also covered, together with the pros and cons of relevant modern methods of management and harvesting.

In the second part, the accounts for each country include the following:

General information about the country.

Photographs showing representative field boundary landscapes.

A brief description of human settlement and history.

A glossary of different terms connected with field boundaries, in both English and the local language.

A fully illustrated description of the different types of banks, wall and fence found, including any associated tree and shrub growth, crossing points, gates and ditches.

Information on past and current management practices, including hedge laying (folding) styles, and on any legal protection.

An overview of the condition of field boundaries including an assessment of the extent of loss, causes of damage and of new boundary creation.

Details of publications referred to.

Georg Müller

13.06.2013



