

Plate XXV.



THE NEWGATE.



The Newgate and Wolf's Tower (now Thimbleby's Tower)

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(Read 10th December, 1929).



THE Newgate is the oldest existing gate in the walls of Chester. We find it mentioned in all authorities dealing with the history of the city. The gate was in early times known as Wolfeld, or Wolf's Gate, and has also been designated the Pepper-Gate, as in the Chester proverb, "When the daughter is stolen shut the Pepper-Gate."¹ Probably the earliest authentic reference to the gate is that which occurs in the Cheshire Chamberlain's Accounts for 1303-4, where among Chamber Rents for 32 Edward [I.], Mabel Harald is credited with the payment of 6d. in respect of a garden in "Wolfuldegate" which belonged to one Ranulph Dobbelday.² It is also referred to in a description of the streets and

¹ Mr. Simpson then related the popular story of the elopement of a daughter of Sir Walter Lynnet, Mayor, 1257-9, with the armourer at the gate, as indicative of the existence of a postern on the site at this time, and drew attention to the alternative version of the proverb: "When the steed is stolen lock the stable door." In reference to the view held by the late Canon Morris that the proverb originated from the elopement in 1573 of Ald. Aldersey's daughter, Mr. Simpson said that when he wrote *The Walls of Chester*, in 1910, he also doubted the story of the proverb, but that from what he had recently seen in the City records he had come to the conclusion that in the main the story was true. See Bridge, *Cheshire Proverbs*, pp. 151-5, where the subject is fully discussed; Morris, *Chester*, pp. 237-241; Simpson, *The Walls of Chester*, 68, and Smyth, *Struggles and Adventures of Christopher Tadpole*. Edit.

² L. & C. Record Soc., vol. LIX., p. 73. Mr. W. Fergusson Irvine supplies the information that the gate is referred to in the Aston Charters in 1318 as "porta de Wolfeld," and in 1320 as Wolfeld Gate. The derivation of the name is obscure. St. John's, outside the gate, was at times the Cathedral church of the diocese of Lichfield, Coventry and Chester, and it may be that the "field" to which the gate-way led was in some way associated with Wolfius (Wulfsy) who was bishop from 1039 to 1053. Edit.

lanes within the city and suburbs, *temp.* Edward III (1327-1377) in the following passage :³ "Peper Stret goith oute of Brugge [Bridge] Stret apou the South syde of the church of Saynt Michell and putteth over ffleshmongers Lane [now Newgate Street] to Wolfefelde Yate [gate] in the Walls of the Saide Citie the which yate some tyme had a Hollo grate with a Brugge [Bridge] for [words erased]⁴ puttyth upon Souters Looode [Lane]."⁵

In a list of rentals of 1534-5 is included "Richard Newhouse, glover, for the gate called Wolfe gate and a tenement on ye same gate on the Walls by yere . . . iiijd."

In the City Murenger's accounts of 1552 we find a statement of considerable sums of money expended on "setting up a new gate," as follows :⁶

"Newgat iiij bordes for making the Newgatt	xiijs	viiij ^d
A Pece tymbers to make the barr to the same	—	v ^d
Pd. the Wrights for makying the same yatte	x ^s	—
Ric. Gaye for makying the hyniges hooks and great nayles for the same yatte	iijs vi ^d
Wright and Mason for setting up the Yatte	—	xviiij ^d
xi sparres to the same	iijs viij ^d
xxiiij ^{li} ledde	— xx ^d
c gadds to the yatt	— ix ^d
For picke and cloutt nailes	— ij ^d
cxxvi ^{li} yron for the makying of the hyniges hooks the bolte and loke	xijs viij ^d
John Harrison, Smyth, for makying the loke the bolte and other thyngs	ijs viij ^d
ij laborers for castyng yerthe to the walls...	—	xij ^d

³ Copied into the first City Assembly Book in 1573-4.

⁴ Webb says "for horse and man."

⁵ Mr. Simpson then referred to the frequent association of the name "Pepper Street" with Roman settlements in this country, to the line of the south wall of the fortress, and the discoveries made in rear of the Telephone Exchange, adding the interesting information that foundations of the wall consisting of cobbles in exceptionally hard cement came to light in 1908 at the junction of Bridge Street and Grosvenor Street when the site for the public conveniences was being prepared. See Simpson, *op. cit.*, 71; Watkin, *Roman Cheshire*, 89-105, and *Arch. Soc. Journal*, N.S. I., 213; XVI., 9-27; XXIX. Edit.

⁶ Morris, *Chester*, 237.

More in Iron to mend hooks of the Newegatt	—	iiij ^d
More for viii ^{li} of lede	—	v ^d
Cartage for the iiij ^{or} greatt bordes for the gatt	—	iiij ^d
For stones that went to the mending of the Newgatt	—	xx ^d

Several historians have referred to this account as meaning that the gate was first built at that time. If the details mentioned are carefully studied it will at once be seen that all the items mentioned, except one, are for timber, nails and hooks, or gudgeons, and that only 1s 8d. was spent for stone for mending the Newgate. It may therefore be inferred that the new gate referred to meant a new wooden gate in the old stone arch.

In the Treasurers' Accounts for 1555, we find that Nicholas Newhouse was paid iiij^d for repairing a house buylded on Wolffs Gate." In the following year's accounts is "Rob Pova for Wolffs Gate under and over with a garden on the north side between the walls and the towne dicke."

The alternative designation of "Newgate," however, probably dates from this time, for it is so called in a lease of 28th March, 1565, for forty years to one Edward Thompson, recorded in a survey of the city lands made in 1574 and entered at fo. 154a in the first Assembly Book. The rent was 10s. It is also described as "Wolfe's gate otherwise Newgate" in a lease of the Tailor's carriage-house adjoining on the north-west side, under date 10th August, 1574, and as "Porta Nova" in Braun's late 16th cent. map of the city.

In the City Assembly Book, vol. 1, are two successive entries under date 14th January, 1573, in which reference is made to a certain gate or passage through the walls called Wolfe-gate which, "for divers good causes, and for the avoiding of divers enconveniences heretofore happened thereby as old records apeareth, was shutt up and now of late sett open to the encreasing of the said enconveniences." An order was made that "the gate shall forthwith be stopped, made up and fenced substantially and as surely as the said maior shall cause it to be made upp and no passage

to be suffered in the night; and the same to be opened in the day."

The closing of the gate was one of the matters of complaint made by Mr. Glaseor (vice Chamberlain of the county Palatine of Chester) against the city in 1574, when, on the 9th April the lords of the Privy Council ordered that it be shut by night only.⁷

At an Assembly meeting, held in the Common Hall of Pleas on the 20th July, 1603, John Robinson's petition for a lease of the Newgate was refused.

The statement by Ormerod and others (probably copied one from the other) that the gate was enlarged by the inhabitants of St. John's Lane in 1603 is not borne out by various entries in the city records. There we find that at a meeting held in the Common Hall of Pleas on Friday, 20th August, 1603, the inhabitants of St. John's Lane and places adjoining applied for and were granted permission to enlarge the opening for carts at their own expense. The gate, however, was not pulled down and rebuilt, for at a meeting held on the 19th October, 1604, Mr. Moyle petitioned the Assembly stating that the Newgate had hitherto been leased to Mr. Hollinshed for many years, and that the residue of the term had been conveyed to him. He desired a grant of the gate and offered to surrender his lease, to pay rent as should be thought fit, and to erect or repair the decayed building. It was ordered that the Newgate should be viewed, and a fee farm granted to Mr. Moyle if upon such view it should be thought fit to be so granted.

An an Assembly meeting held on the 6th November, 1607, Richard Brereton, of Penley, co. Flint, gentleman, and Dorothy, his wife, petitioned for a new grant, the residue of a term of years vested in them having expired. The request was refused, and it was ordered "That the said gate called Newgate, and the buildings thereof shall remain continue and be to the citties use and not to be leased or granted to anie person."

⁷ Morris, *Chester*, 241.

Although permission had been granted by the Assembly in August, 1603, for the inhabitants of St. John's Lane and neighbourhood to take down the old gate and replace it at their own expense with a more commodious gate, nothing had been done. It is evident the necessary funds had not been forthcoming, for at an Assembly meeting held on the 24th January, 1608, the matter was again referred to, and it was then "ordered that the parishioners and inhabitants of the said parish and parts eastwards shall determine what they will give and contribute towards the said intended work, and shall then make a levy and collection thereof and that the rest of the charge required to finish the said gate and passage that way, if the same do amount but to some small sum, shall be defrayed by the citie in general, and paid out of the treasury of the same cittie."

The work was completed before 22nd October, 1613, when the 'Tailors' Company unsuccessfully petitioned for the rebuilding of their carriage house adjoining.⁸

On 1st June, 1618, Mr. William Gamull, alderman, was granted the Newgate, together with the building over and the garden on the east side, at a rental of 33s. 4d., and on the 27th November he was granted the "old tower adjoining" in addition. A grant of the gate and garden made by order of the Assembly, 22nd December, 1612, to William Aldersey, alderman for forty years at 40s. a year had presumably been surrendered. The garden was evidently the one described in the Treasurer's Accounts for 1555⁹ as follows:—"Christofere Warmyncham for the ground between the Walls and the towne diche alongeste his orchard from the tower called Wolfes Tower - - xii^d."

The Gamull family were still tenants of the tower in 1651, for, at an Assembly meeting held on 17th July of that year it was decided to communicate with the heirs of Alderman

⁸ Assembly Book, and see *post*, page 86.

⁹ And probably that mentioned as early as 1303-4 in *Cheshire Chamberlains Accounts*, L. & C. Record Soc., LIX., 73. It is described in the Survey of 1574 as extending from the Wolf gate to the "trewants hole,"—a sewer formerly in the Walls by the present "Wishing steps," which should not be confused with the "truants hole" in the West Wall.

William Gamull, deceased, concerning repairs and arrears of rent.

On the 20th August, 1668, the tower alone, then commonly called Wolf's Tower otherwise Thimbleby's Tower, was leased to Alderman Richard Minshull for three lives and twenty-one years at a rental of 12d. per annum,¹⁰ and on the expiration of this lease, on payment of a fine of £5 it was granted on similar terms, 10th March, 1731-2, to John Townsend, Esq., who had come into possession in right of Frances, his wife,¹¹ the widow of Alderman Minshull's grandson, Samuel Minshull. The interest in the last named lease ultimately passed to Mary, daughter of Andrew Kenrick, Esq., who resided in the old house adjoining in Newgate Street, now occupied by Messrs. Storrar.¹² On the 9th December, 1790, she petitioned the City Assembly for a new lease for three lives, and this was finally executed 2nd July, 1795. By careless transcription the alternative name of the tower is entered as "Plumley's" in the Assembly Book and "Chimbleby's" in Jeaffreson's Calendar of Grants and Leases.

There is no mention of the tower in Broster's *Siege of Chester*, published in 1793, but it is referred to in the Broster MS. as having been used for many years as a laundry by the Kenricks, there being a door of communication through the city walls. The upper part of the tower was demolished during the siege of Chester by the Parliamentary forces, but the groined roof and "port-holes" were still in good preservation. The groined roof referred to would be that of the lower room, the corbels and springers of which have survived to bear witness to the tower's former beauty.

¹⁰ Copies of Grants and Leases, 1574-1703, fol. 193.

¹¹ Assembly Book, 1725-1785, fol. 39.

¹² This house was purchased by the Chester Corporation in March, 1932, and was demolished, and a new building with passage-way to an electricity sub-station at the rear is in course of erection on the site. The spout head bearing the initials of the owners and the date of its erection, formerly to be seen on the facade facing the city wall is to be replaced on the new building.

In 1878 the tower, no longer in private occupation, was found to be in a precarious condition, and the dangerous roof and brickwork were removed.¹³ The top of the tower was repaired and finished with a coping of stone flags to prevent further decay, and the tablet inscribed "Thimbleby's Tower, repaired 1879" was inserted in the east wall facing the city walls. The unclimbable hurdles were fixed in 1894.

How the name Thimbleby came to be associated with this tower is a question that has often been asked but never satisfactorily answered. No authority has ever been given for the statement of the Rev. F. Sanders (*Sheaf*, 3rd Ser. I. 6) that the tower was named after a Lincolnshire knight, Sir Richard Thimbleby, who occupied Hilbre Isle in 1575 as a tenant of Sir Rowland Stanley of Hooton; or for the view that it was so named from the Lady Thimbleby resident in Chester at the end of the 16th century, who was buried at St. Michael's in 1615. In discussing this question in the *Sheaf* (3rd ser. XXI., 76), Mr. Stewart-Brown concludes that she was probably the second wife, and widow of Sir Richard, who died in 1590.

No name is attributed to the tower in the 1618 grant—in the lease it is merely described as an ancient tower—but in all the later leases it is described as "Wolf's otherwise Thimbleby's Tower."

It is however unfortunate that the original name of Wolf's Tower has ceased to be used, and I would again suggest to our City Fathers that when new names are adopted, the old name might be bracketed below. Old associations would be better retained by preserving the old names, and in addition this practice would be of great assistance to students and visitors in locating historical places in the city of which they have read accounts, and otherwise might be unable to find. For instance:—Puppet Show Entry, now Crypt Court; Skinners' Lane, now Castle Drive, etc.

Reference has already been made to the Tailor's carriage house in Fleshmongers Lane, on the north west side of the

¹³ Improvement Committee Minutes, 14th, 18th Sept., 8th Oct.

gate.¹⁴ This was used for the accommodation of the stage or carriage on which the Company performed the Ascension of Christ during the Whitsun Plays. Described as being five yards in length and three and a half yards in breadth it was in the occupation of the alderman and stewards of the Company on the 10th August, 1574, when a new lease was granted to Robert Hill at 2s. 6d. per annum. The building was taken down at the time of the rebuilding of the gate, *circa* 1608, and was not rebuilt according to promise. As we have seen the Corporation refused to rebuild in 1613. The Company's request, 1st February, 1631, for permission to build at their own expense was acceded to but the grant appears to have been countermanded, for on the 20th October, 1636, William Hand to whom they had assigned their interest surrendered the grant in favour of a lease of a plot of land at the Watergate.

The Newgate played a prominent part during the Siege of Chester, being one of the chief guard houses on the inner line of defence. As early as 1640, when trouble was brewing, orders were given for the repair of the Eastgate and Bridgegate, and for a new door for the Newgate, and in 1642, danger being imminent, we read of four persons being posted to guard the gate, two musketeers and two halberdiers, and the walls being repaired and lined with earth, the Newgate and new Tower gate being mured [built] up.

Hostilities, however, did not commence until July, 1643, and for two years the Parliamentarians did not advance beyond the outworks. They succeeded in breaking through at the Bars on 20th September, 1645, and two days later their artillery made a breach in the walls near the Newgate with thirty-two cannon shot, sufficient to admit ten men abreast. The besiegers, however, were beaten off and the breach was made good with beds and wool packs. On the 23rd the King arrived in Chester, but only to see his army routed on Hoole Heath on the following day after their defeat at Rowton Moor. Thereafter the siege was relent-

¹⁴ See *Ante*, page 83.

lessly pursued, and both the north and east walls suffered much from bombardment by the besiegers. A breach was made near the Newgate by the battery of one hundred and fifty cannon shot on 29th September. Great havoc was wrought by two pieces of cannon placed on an eminence in St. John's Lane on 8th October, two breaches being made in the Walls on the 9th as a result of the discharge of three hundred and fifty-two large shot, but these were effectually repaired by the gallant defenders. In November Lieut. Morgell was killed upon his guard at the Newgate. On one occasion however in December two shots passed clean through the gate house, which was well manned at the time, without inflicting any casualties—such are the fortunes of war. By the end of this month negotiations had been entered upon and fighting ceased, but it was not until 3rd February, 1645-6, that the garrison surrendered. The gatehouse and upper part of the gateway were probably dismantled in compliance with a resolution of Parliament in 1655.¹⁵

For several years conditions in the immediate vicinity of the gateway remained unaltered. On the 8th September, 1674, William Robinson, plasterer, petitioned the Assembly for "a lease for three lives and one and twenty years of a voyd piece of ground lying between the Newgate and one Barlow's house [presumably erected in the meantime] containing in length thirty-six foot, and in breadth thirteen foot, and also another piece of ground between Mr. Warmingham's and the said gate about seven yards, upon which he would erect a dwelling house. . . . in the form of a tower so as it may be a defence and servitude to the said gate if occasion should require. Whereupon it was decided that Mr. Robinson should have a lease paying yearly three shillings and four pence and leaving the passage by the wall four or five foot in breadth and to build [with]in two years next coming."

The house was erected of red sandstone, in the shape of a square tower, abutting on the walls immediately adjoining the gate on the north side. The lower part with the

¹⁵ Morris, *Siege of Chester, Journal*, N.S. XXV.

brick arches supporting the parapet of the walls still remains and up to recently has been in the occupation of the City Corporation.¹⁶ The upper part, with window facing the walls, was taken down to the parapet level in 1890¹⁷ and cemented over.

Access to the river from the Newgate was by Souters Lane, a narrow rugged path, or lane, known in the 17th century as "Dee Lane."¹⁸ There were, at that time, two other lanes known by the same name, as they led to the river side—the one without the Bars, and the other now known as Canal Street.

In 1700 Richard Adams petitioned the City Assembly "that he and his partners have been at a considerable expence to open and level the lane leading from the Newgate to the River Dee and in fencing in a pitt for receiving the dirt and filth of the Common Shore which would otherwise corrupt rack up and annoy the River, and they being desirous to make and fence another pitt whereby to stop and receive the dirt comeing down the further Dee Lane without the Barrs of this Citty, and they also intending another publick improvement by levelling the Rock and grounds on the north side of the River Dee over and against the Causey whereby to make a convenient cart-way as well as horse-way from the Caple gate by the side of the Citty Wall¹⁹ to the said Newgate, and therefore desiring liberty to effect the improvements aforesaid at their own charge and to enjoy the said two pitts dureing the continuance of their lease from this Citty of the waste ground by the side of the River Dee. It is unanimously ordered that they may have liberty to effect the Improvement aforesaid and enjoy the same as desired by the said petition."

Up to 1703 the gate, walls, and tower were exposed to view on the east side. At an Assembly meeting held on Thursday, 5th August, 1703, it was ordered—in response

¹⁶ The lower part was taken down in 1932.

¹⁷ Improvement Committee Minutes.

¹⁸ Assembly Book. The older name alone survives.

¹⁹ Adjoining the east side of the Bridge-gate.

to an application from Charles Jackson at the previous Assembly meeting—"that the said Charles Jackson upon the surrender of the lease now in being may have a new lease of the premises desired for his wives life and two other lives paying twenty shillings fine and the antient yearly rent of five shillings. Except and always reserved to the City two yards in breadth of the said ground by the side of the City Wall, to be fenced by a brick wall for a convenient way to the Tower in the holding of Captain Minshull, the said brick wall to be made at the charge of the said Capt. Minshull if he shall think fitt to make use of the said way."²⁰

The passage eventually got into private hands and for a number of years was known as "Drury's Court," until the Corporation purchased the site and the adjoining cottages in 1928-9.

At an Assembly meeting held on the 26th February, 1768, it was ordered "that the murengers of this city do cause the Newgate, being ruinous and dangerous to the citizens passing there, to be taken down and rebuilt and that the passage of the City Walls over the same be made wider and more commodious and the expence thereof paid out of the Murage Dutys."

There is no mention in the city records of an architect for this gate, but at an Assembly meeting held on Friday, 2nd October, 1767, Mr. Turner, of Hawarden, was engaged to survey the Eastgate and adjoining property, and to design a new arch with passage over. Mr. Turner's design does not appear to have met with approval for, on the 26th February, 1768, when the order was made for the rebuilding of the Newgate, Mr. Hayden's design for the Eastgate was accepted. It is therefore probable that he also superintended the erection of the Newgate.

Napoleon having abdicated the throne of France and having been banished to Elba, Louis XVIII. was proclaimed Emperor, and the first Treaty of Paris was signed on the 30th

²⁰ Richard Minshull, a captain in the Army, the son of Alderman Richard Minshull, to whom the tower was leased in 1668.

May, 1814. In consequence of these events there were great rejoicings throughout Britain. Peace celebrations took place in Chester on the 15th June. The Newgate was beautifully lighted, and from the centre of the arch was suspended a large ship illuminated with variegated lamps; and on each side—just below the spring of the arch—"Peace and Plenty" was inscribed in red capital letters by Mr. Fitzgerald, pipe manufacturer, whose house adjoined the south side of the gate. The inscription on the south side is now entirely obliterated, and little remains on the north side. In 1911 I mentioned the inscription to the then Mayor (Mr. W. H. Denson, J.P.) and at his suggestion the City Surveyor (Mr. Matthews Jones) had the parts washed and the word "Peace" was distinctly seen on the north side.

The land alongside the walls, extending from the Newgate to Duke Street, lay open until about 1675, when on 3rd September, William Robinson applied to the Assembly for liberty to enclose a void piece of ground between the Newgate and the stairs leading up to the walls on the south side, in length five yards, and in breadth two yards, for a coal house. This was granted. During the following thirty years many applications were received by the Assembly for grants of the waste land alongside this portion of the walls; and eventually the whole length became occupied by sheds or houses.

Up to 1675 very little coal was used as fuel. The bakers used gorse. The City Company of Bakers had special licence from the City Assembly to store the gorse in stacks, and the aldermen and stewards of the Company supplied the retail bakers according to their requirements. The authorities were naturally very strict as to where these stacks of gorse should be placed, on account of the danger of fire. The principal place was where the cattle market now stands, and its present name "Gorse Stacks," is derived from this usage. Coal, of which there was only a very limited supply at that time, was becoming more commonly used, so the Assembly, on the 20th April, 1677, decided that a coal market should be established, and the site

decided upon was Lower Bridge Street, between the two churches (St. Michael's and St. Bridget's) and Castle Lane—now Castle Street. As this was the only road leading to North Wales, it was soon found inconvenient. The Assembly, therefore, in November, 1678, removed the coal market from Lower Bridge Street to the Newgate and the lower end of Fleshmongers' Lane, now known as Newgate Street. The coal market continued there until 1841, when, on January 8th, the City Assembly empowered the Corporate Estate Committee to remove the buildings near the Newgate occupied as a coal warehouse, paint shop, and a dwelling house, to remove the steps leading to the city walls in Park Street [near Duke Street], and to erect others near to the Newgate. They were also empowered "to erect walls in Park Street, and on the city walls to exclude from view the offensive openings seen from the city walls." In due course—on the 12th March, 1841,—the Assembly decided to accept Mr. Lawrence Davies's estimate of £52 for erecting steps at the Newgate of the description mentioned in the Corporation Estate Minutes of the same date. Either Mr. Davies's estimate proved insufficient, or extra work was done, for, on the 13th August, it was agreed to pay him £80 upon completion. The steps referred to are those we see to-day and which are shortly to be taken down to make way for the new roadway. The order also explains why the parapet wall above is so much higher than in any other part in the circuit of the walls.

The parapet wall over the gate was raised two feet by the addition of an embattled or crenellated top in 1890. This was found necessary owing to the wall being low and to the dangerous habit of children leaning over to talk to others in the street below. The work was executed by Messrs. Clegg & Sons, under the supervision of the City Surveyor, the late Mr. I. Matthews Jones.²¹

In the same year the Corporation purchased the cottages abutting upon the walls, between the Newgate and Duke

²¹ Improvement Committee Minutes.

Street, for the sum of £1,776, pulled them down and allowed the site to remain open,²² much to the improvement of this part of the city.

In 1925 the City Council applied for a Provisional Order to acquire land for the construction of an internal by-pass road from Pepper Street to Little St. John Street, and Vicars Lane. The scheme included a new gate with passage through the city walls forty feet wide.

Antiquarians generally were much concerned as to the safe-guarding of the old gate and passage through to St. John Street, especially when it was rumoured that proposals for their abolition were under consideration by the local authority. Objection was accordingly taken to the scheme at the public enquiry which was held at the Town Hall on the 12th February, 1926. Our Society was represented by Canon Thomas, Mr. W. Cullimore, and the writer, who strongly supported the retention and preservation of the old gate and road. In reply, the Government Inspector, Mr. Phipps, said "Apparently the proposal here is not to interfere with the Newgate at all; there is, at the present time, no proposal to close the Newgate or to interfere with the structure of the gate or walls, and if ever that arose, then would be the time to make a protest, as the Council would have to take the usual legal procedure." He also remarked, "You need have no fear as to the destruction of the Newgate. The walls, towers, gates and posterns of the city were scheduled under the Ancient Monument Act by the Office of Works, who communicated the fact to the Town Clerk by post on Wednesday, and which he received yesterday (Thursday)."

Mr. Walter Tapper, A.R.A., F.R.I.B.A., was eventually engaged by the city authorities to design the new gate-way at a fee of three hundred guineas. The first design submitted, for a large Bar-gateway with posterns, proved too costly and was rejected by the Council in December, 1929. Mr. Tappers alternative design for a gate with a forty foot single span was submitted to the Council on the 25th February, 1931,

²² *ibid.*

and adopted. When the work was about to be put in hand, unforeseen circumstances arose over which the City Council had little or no control, and the whole scheme was held in abeyance.

The City Council have from time to time cleared away a considerable number of buildings in front of or abutting against the walls, including the property already referred to along the whole length of Park Street, and a similar row of buildings which stood alongside the walls from the Northgate westwards. They now have a rare opportunity of beautifying that part of the city adjoining the Newgate—by leaving the south-east side of the present Newgate open and clear of buildings, and by grassing the vacant site. Strangers entering the city by the new road would see before them a splendid view of the walls, the old and the new gates, the south-east angle of the Roman Wall and part of Thimbleby's Tower.

Such an opportunity for improvement may never occur again. The additional cost would only be the amount for which the land might be sold, and this would be infinitesimal in comparison with the improvement, which would make so fine an entrance and additional attraction to visitors.

