



HEBER TOWER



# I.—THE WEST WALLS OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE. BETWEEN DURHAM AND EVER TOWERS.<sup>1</sup>

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The town of Newcastle upon Tyne was early recognized as a suitable base and place of assembly for operations against the Scots, and it has been assumed that, as a protection against their incursions, it was early enclosed by walls. Yet of the date and position of early walls we know nothing. In some oft quoted verses, Hardyng, the rhyming chronicler of the sixteenth century, attributes the first town walls to William Rufus :

“ He buylded the Newcastle upon Tyne,  
The Scottes to gainstand and to defend,  
And dwell therein. The people to incline  
The town to build, and wall as did append,  
He gave them ground and gold full great to spend;  
To buylde it well, and wall it all about.”

It would appear that there has been some confusion between the walls of the castle and the walls of the town. It is highly improbable that either had stone walls at that early date, though Hodgson Hinde and others<sup>2</sup> have thought that in the infancy of the town, a portion of the

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 1 to 4 on plan, fig. 1, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Welford's *History of Newcastle and Gateshead*, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, p. ix, and *A History of Newcastle on Tyne*, by R. J. Charlton, p. 19.

Roman wall was used as its northern boundary, and that a western wall was erected, mainly with stones from the Roman wall which it joined somewhere in what is now Collingwood Street, and extended over the Tuthill to the river, thus protecting the weaker portion, whilst the Lort burn afforded a sufficient defence on the eastern side.

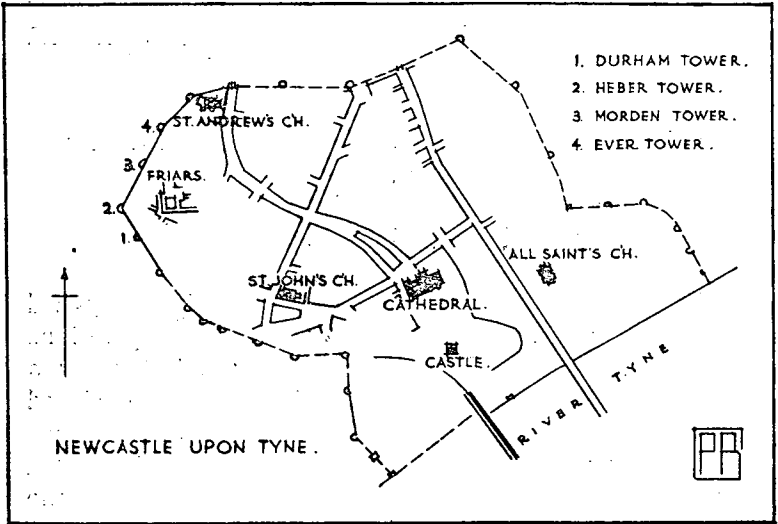


FIG. I

A charter of king John, dated January 28th, 1215-16,<sup>3</sup> mentions the walls of the borough, whilst Grey and Bourne state that king John gave great privileges to this town and that probably Newgate and the walls thereabout were built in his time, but, by the time of Edward I, had got no farther than the Ever tower. Bourne (p. 11) further states that "from Newgate to the Ever tower is a

<sup>3</sup> Dendy's *Newcastle Merchant Adventurers*, vol. I, p. 281, Surtees Society, 1894, gives a translation of this charter, and the original Latin form is printed in *Rotuli Chartarum*, published by the Record Commissioners in 1837. This charter states that the Merchant Adventurers need not plead outside the walls of the borough. But this was a common form in charters of the period, it was used regardless of the fact that the town referred to had, or had not, walls. Newcastle probably had. There is a grant of murage dated Henry III, which is proof that the town had pre-Edwardian walls.

work older and vastly different from what the wall is from Ever tower towards Westgate." It is certain that in the thirteenth century there was a great growth of the town; having acquired the privileges of self-government, which greatly increased its commercial importance and population, it was then girt with walls of great strength. After these walls were built the castle was allowed to fall into decay, for the walls then spread so far from it that it could no longer play a prominent part in the defence of the town (plate II). These walls enclosed an area of over 150 acres, including four churches, four monasteries, and open spaces, mainly the domains of monastic institutions, which afforded mustering grounds for armies. The walls were over two miles long,<sup>4</sup> and gained a reputation for great strength. John Leland<sup>5</sup> visited the town and recorded that the strength and magnificence of the walling of this town far passeth all the walls of the cities of England, and most of the towns of Europe.<sup>6</sup> These walls must have been very costly, and most of the cost was raised by means of grants of murage. Edward I gave grants of murage in 1277, 1280, 1290, and again in 1299. It was c. 1280 or 1282 that the section under consideration was begun, for when it was built it cut through the grounds of the Black Friars, thus separating their garden from the monastery. In consequence of this, Edward I, on 8th September, 1280, granted the Friars permission to make a postern gateway through the wall in order that they might enjoy ready access to their garden, reserving to his constable and the sheriff of Northumberland the right to close the postern at his royal pleasure. This grant terms the wall *The New Wall*.

The building of the west walls was therefore con-

<sup>4</sup> In 1299 the town of Pandon was added to Newcastle, and in 1307 was included in the walls, which then were, according to the measurements of Thomas Ambones, 2 miles 239 yds. 1 ft.

<sup>5</sup> Royal Antiquary to Henry VIII.

<sup>6</sup> Lithgow, the covenanter, in 1644, speaks of the walls of Newcastle in the highest terms and states that "the walls here of Newcastle are a great deal stronger than those of York."—*The Siege of Newcastle*, by Wm. Lithgow, p. 17.

templated in 1280, and possibly begun that year, but had not then reached the Warden's close, though in consequence of the above named grant, this section of the wall is usually assigned to the year 1280. The Aubone MS., however,<sup>7</sup> states that the land on which this section of the west walls was built was purchased by the town from the Friar preachers in the year 1281-2.

The Friar preachers, or Preaching Friars, were the Black Friars, or Dominicans. Part of the Blackfriars still stands behind Stowell Street, and is marked "Friars" on plan, fig. 1, p. 2.

During the troubled relations with Scotland, which lasted through the reigns of the first three Edwards, the English kings were oftèn in Newcastle, and usually lodged at the Blackfriars, where, in 1344, Baliol did homage to the English king for the crown of Scotland. The Black Friars seem to have been on good terms with Edward I, and when they negotiated the sale of the land, they must have been aware that it was being acquired for the purpose of building the wall thereon, and that it would cut off their gardens from the monastery. It would appear that they immediately petitioned the crown for the right to have the postern, granted in September 1280, but the land was not purchased until 1281-2. The wall here may have been built in that year. It certainly was by 1282-3 (see p. 13). The Blackfriars' postern (plate III, fig. 2), though now built up, is situated near to the Heber tower.

#### THE WALLS.

The general scheme of defence consisted of strong curtain walls, furnished with towers placed within bow-shot of each other, thus possessing a command of the intervening curtains, which, in addition, carried one or more turrets between each pair of towers. Where the

<sup>7</sup> The Aubone MS., so called because it belonged to Mr. Aubone, secretary to the Trinity House. The MS. is herein quoted at p. 13 and p. 18.

walls were pierced by gateways they were defended by gatehouses, and the whole town was a vast castle.

There was no means of access to the parapet walk of the curtains, save by the stairs in the gatehouses and towers. If the enemy obtained access by scaling ladders they were still exposed to assault from the tops of the towers.

The curtain walls, in different segments, varied in date, thickness and height. In the section between the Heber and Morden towers they were 7 ft. thick and 20 ft. high to the parapet walk, from which it was 3 ft. to the embrasure and another 2 ft. to the top of the coping of the merlons, making 25 ft. high in all (plate x).

The parapet walk overhung the inner face of the walls, being supported upon corbels; an arrangement which gave it additional width. The flagged path of this walk and the corbels are now mostly gone, yet some of the latter remain in a narrow passage to St. Andrew's churchyard (plate III, fig. 3).

The merlons and embrasures of the curtain walls rose in stages to the superior height of the towers and turrets, thus protecting the users of the stairs that led to their summits. In some cases the merlons adjoining the towers were pierced by loops, as at the Heber tower (plate IV, fig. 5). The embrasures were provided with wooden shutters pivoted at the coping level and capable of being tilted up for the discharge of missiles from the wall and immediately closed so as to act as shields from the arrows of the assailants.<sup>8</sup>

Externally the walls had a two-course chamfered base. This may be seen from Gallowgate Lead Works (plate IV, fig. 4), but at the adjoining Rutherford College grounds the present ground level is so much above the mediaeval ground level, that the base is here buried (plate x, section B.B. and C.C.). It reappears, however, at the Heber tower. At the south side of this tower the ground level falls and the base courses are stepped down (plate IV, fig. 5), and

<sup>8</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1853, p. 485.

again twice between the Heber and Durham towers (plate v, fig. 6). As the walls approached the river the gradients became steep, and the base courses were accordingly steeply stepped down.<sup>9</sup>

In 1644 the embrasures were built up with stone and lime,<sup>10</sup> but probably were reopened when the walls were repaired after that siege. These repairs cost £2,564. At a later date the embrasures were again built up, the capping of the coping of the merlons removed, and the parapet walls heightened (plate v, fig. 7). This must have been done after 1783, for it is not shown in Richardson's drawing (fig. 10) nor in the drawing of 1789 (fig. 17). It was probably part of the work done on the walls at the time of the Napoleonic wars, when, for the last time, the walls of Newcastle were repaired and put into a state of defence. When this was done the defence from the curtain walls must, in this section, have been abandoned<sup>11</sup> and the defence from the towers alone relied upon. One of our members, Mr. Fenwick, speaking at a meeting of this society in 1861, said "that he remembered the circuit of the whole walls, and how it was occupied by the military during the last French war."<sup>12</sup> As soon as the scare of this war was over, the walls were allowed to fall into decay, and in 1823 and following years, Newgate and much of the best parts of the walls were demolished.

#### TURRETS.

Between the Heber and Morden towers there is but one turret (plate x and plate vi, figs. 8 and 9). It is the best preserved of those remaining, though originally these were all much alike. This particular turret has been rebuilt, for beneath it there is a slight settlement of the wall. This is visible both inside (plate vi, figs. 8 and 9)

<sup>9</sup> *Arch. Ael.*, 2nd ser., vol. XI, plate xxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Wm. Lithgow's *The Siege of Newcastle*, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> In other sections this was otherwise. See R. O. Heslop's letter of 7th July, 1881, in Charlton's *History of Newcastle*, p. 95.

<sup>12</sup> *A History of Newcastle on Tyne*, by R. J. Charlton, p. 77.

BETWEEN DURHAM AND EVER TOWERS



and outside the wall, yet the upper courses of the curtain wall are now level, and therefore must, together with the turret which they carry, have been rebuilt. This was probably done in 1386, for on 29th November of that year there was a " writ of aid, for one year, for the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle upon Tyne, appointed to take and set to work in repair of its walls . . . and re-erecting turrets thereon, as many workmen and labourers as may be necessary. "13



TURRETS ON THE WALL OF NEWCASTLE  
Between Morden and Ever Towers (1783).

FIG. 10

The parapet walk passed through each turret, ascending by a few steps (fig. 10) to its superior level, then descending to the other side. Passing through the turret it formed a watch chamber, with a single loop towards

<sup>13</sup> Calendar of Patent Rolls 1386, Nov. 29, Westminster, M.8.



the field, but as the chamber is only 2 ft. 11 in. wide, it would not have left room for the archer to draw his bow; arrows were a cloth yard (3 ft.) long. A rectangular recess has therefore been formed in the wall behind the loop to give the archer "elbow-room" (plate x, section A.A.). These turret chambers gave protection to the watcher in bad weather, and he could ascend to the roof by an external staircase at the rear of the turret, thus obtaining a more elevated point of view.

The doorways leading from the turrets to the parapet walk (plate x, detail at A., and plate vi, figs. 8, 9 and fig. 10, p. 7) are of the type known as "shouldered arches," though actually they are not arches at all, but flat lintels with a corbel over each jamb. Shouldered arches were a common architectural feature in the reign of Edward I—as in Carnarvon castle. The term "shouldered arch" was unknown until about 1860, when the then duchess of Northumberland is said to have invented it.<sup>14</sup>

The inside wall of the turrets starts with a corbel table at the level of the parapet walk, the spaces between the corbels being bridged by a flagged course and surmounted by squarish ashlar. The flagged course above the corbels (plate x and plate vi, figs. 8 and 9) is characteristic of the period and very different from the bridging of the corbels at the Ever tower (plate vii, fig. 12), where the ordinary ashlar is laid on the corbels without any intervening flag course, and is said to be earlier than this section of the curtain wall. See p. 2.

The turrets were flush with the curtain walls, to the field, but had machicolations to defend the foot of the curtain. The tops of the turrets were ornamented with carved stone demi-figures,<sup>15</sup> such as remain at Alnwick castle.

<sup>14</sup> Rickman's *Gothic Architecture*, 6th edition, 1862, p. 183. The term has now passed into the English language, see *New English Dictionary*, *Webster's Dictionary*, and most architectural glossaries later than 1860.

<sup>15</sup> Some of these figures are in the possession of the society. See *Proceedings*, 4th ser., vol. V, p. 253.

The turret between the Durham and Heber towers is situated at the point where Stowell Street is cut through the west walls. It has been almost demolished, but little more than the corbelled course now remains (plate VII, fig. 11). Between the Morden and Ever towers there were two turrets (fig. 17); one of them has been demolished and the remains of the other (plate VIII, fig. 14) are a striking contrast to what they were in 1782 (fig. 10).

#### THE DITCH.

Shortly after these walls were built, a great military ditch was dug in front of them. It was commonly referred to as the *King's Dykes*, and is said to have been 1 chain, i.e. 22 yds., wide and 15 ft. deep.<sup>16</sup> In the section of the wall between the Heber and Morden towers the ground level outside the wall is higher than in mediaeval times, the ditch having been filled in, and no sign of it left (plate x). But the date can be fixed when the ditch was dug here, because it naturally presented another obstacle to the access of the Black Friars to their garden. A licence, however, was procured from Edward II in 1312, giving the friars liberty to construct a wooden drawbridge, 5 ft. in width, across the new fosse, by which they might pass "from their house within the wall of that town, by their postern in the said wall into their garden beyond the fosse aforesaid," on condition that in time of danger the bridge should be removed with all haste.

The ditch presents many difficulties. It has often been said that it was a wet ditch, but at best it could have been only partially so. For it must be remembered that the wall and ditch ran from the river up the hill round the town and back to the river, and that the major portion of it, especially as the walls approached the river the gradients are so steep, that it could not have held water. Doubtless where it did naturally hold water this was welcomed as an additional defence, but where it did not do so there would

<sup>16</sup> Brand, vol. I, p. 6.

be little or no attempt made to adapt it as a wet ditch. The one place known to be wet was at Newgate. A drawing by T. M. Richardson, senior,<sup>17</sup> shows Newgate and the moat with water up to the walls; moreover, Allan's reprint of the *Siege and Storming of Newcastle*<sup>18</sup> states that "close beside it was the breach of Newgate, where Richard, the son of Richard Bewick, was drowned while playing beside the moat."

Newgate was well situated, both as to ground levels to hold water, and a good supply from the Lort or Lork burn, which rose in the Leazes and flowed down St. Thomas's Street, Prudhoe Place and East Eldon Square, where it crossed the *King's Dykes*. The ditch in front of the stretch of west walls now under consideration is also suited for a wet ditch, for the ground was fairly level and it might be fed by the Lamb burn, which flowed down Gallowgate and Darn Crook, and became a tributary of the Lort burn.

The land outside the west walls, formerly the Black Friars' gardens, was later called the Warden's Close, because in a field at the north end of it, called "The Shoulder of Mutton Close," the warden of the priory of Tynemouth had his house, garden, and fish ponds.<sup>19</sup> In this area there appears to have been a supply of water which fed the fish ponds, and may also have been used to fill the *King's Dykes*.

Oliver's map of Newcastle, 1830, shows two ponds here close to the west walls. Though in the *King's Dykes* they are not part of them.<sup>20</sup> One of these ponds in the Gallowgate Lead Works was long used as a reservoir for waste water from the works, and part of it yet remains (plate IV, fig. 4). If the ditch at the west walls was wet, there must

<sup>17</sup> *Memorials of Old Newcastle upon Tyne from original drawings by T. M. Richardson, senior*, published by Thos. Gray & Co., Edinburgh, 1880, etching III, and also a small woodcut in Richardson's *Table Book*, Historical Division, vol. III, p. 274.

<sup>18</sup> p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Bourne, pp. 146-7.

<sup>20</sup> They do not appear on Chas. Hutton's excellent map of 1772, nor on R. Beilby's map of 1788, nor in the drawing of 1789 (fig. 17).

have been a stank-head or dam opposite to the Heber tower, for southwards of this point the ground level falls rapidly. That it did so in mediaeval times is shown by the fact that the plinth outside the walls is stepped down at the Heber tower (plate iv, fig. 5), and twice again before reaching the Durham tower (plate v, fig. 6). Dams are a source of great weakness in military ditches, for they form causeways where the enemy may cross, and they are easily destroyed, thus letting the water away. They therefore require special protection. It has been suggested that the small loop (plate ix) at the south side of the Heber tower at its junction with the curtain wall was intended to cover a crossing of the ditch by a dam at this point. The loop has little or no internal splay, and therefore could command but a small arc of the field (see p. 15).

Unfortunately early maps of Newcastle give very little information regarding the *King's Dykes*.

A berm was a flat space of ground sometimes left between a wall and the lip of the ditch defending it.

The object of a berm was to prevent the weight of the wall crushing the inner lip of the ditch and thus letting down the wall. The use of a berm was favoured by Roman military engineers, for example Hadrian's Wall.<sup>21</sup> A berm was not customary in mediaeval military architecture, for it afforded a platform on which the attackers might place their scaling ladders.

It has been claimed that the Edwardian walls of Newcastle had a berm, but as far as the writer has been able to investigate the matter, there is no evidence of this. On the contrary, it is certain that at some points there was no berm. For example, T. M. Richardson's drawing of the outside of Newgate<sup>22</sup> shows the ditch up to the walls. Again, Mr. Sheriton Holmes's section (fig. 13) shows that at Gallowgate there was no berm, for the wall stands on the inner lip of the ditch. This is not proof that there was not a berm at other point or points, yet it appears to

<sup>21</sup> *Arch. Ael.*, 4th ser., vol. IV, plate xxi.

<sup>22</sup> See footnote no. 17.

be unlikely, for William Lithgow in his account of the siege of Newcastle, 1644 (p. 15), states that the defenders lined the "exteriour root of the walls" with clay, so that the attackers' scaling ladders could not get a hold. Had

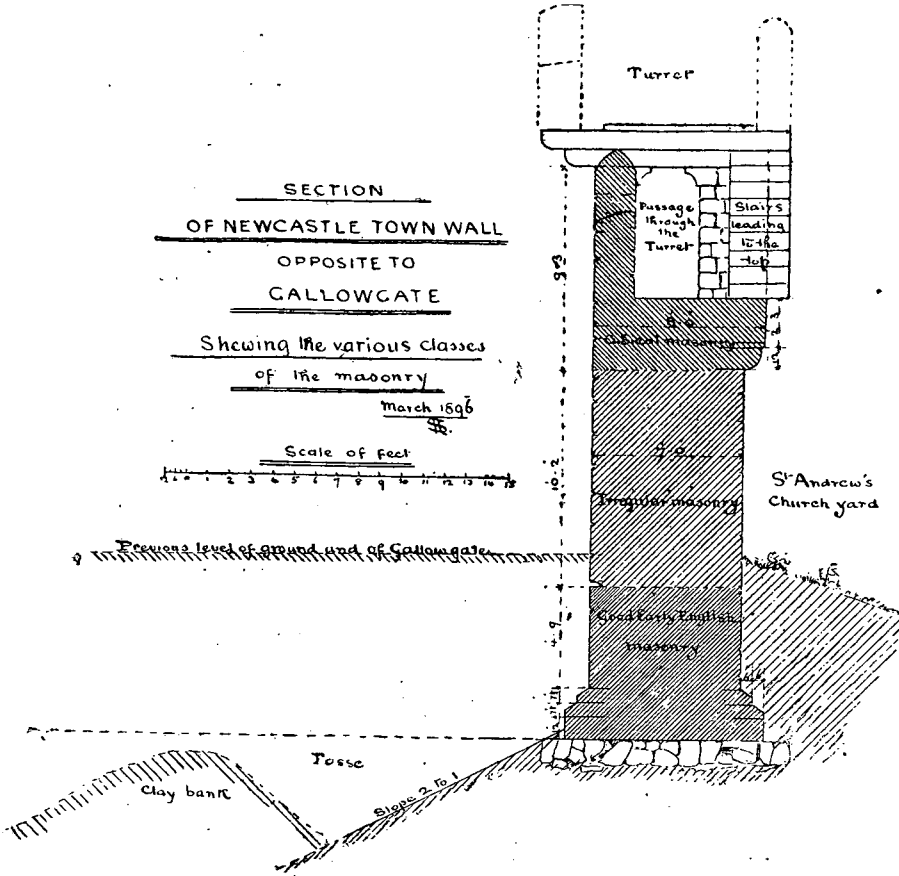


FIG. 13

there been a berm, this clay would have been useless, for the ladders would have been planted on the berm.

Grey's *Chorographia*, 1649, p. 6, states that the walls were "ramped within with earth," but this was a temporary measure at the time of the 1644 siege. Wm. Lithgow

in his account of the siege, p. 14, states that: "The walls, the defendants, within had marvelously fortified . . . ramp with mountains of earth." This earth must have blocked the *pomerium* and has been removed.

The *pomerium* was the space *pone muros*, i.e. at the back of the wall.<sup>23</sup> This road or space behind the walls was left vacant so that the defenders could quickly rush up troops or supplies to any threatened part.

As the Aubone MS. has it, "In the 11th year of King Ed. 1st (1282-3) upon a Writ of *ad quod dampnum*, enquiry was made before the Mayor and Bayliffs of the Town, whether there were, between the Town Wall and the House of the Fryar Preachers there, a place call'd the King's Place and it was found that there was such a Place, purchased the last Year of the Issues and Profits of the Murage, upon part of which the Wall was built, and part left for necessary Carriages unto it, which is call'd the void Place, and is necessary for the Defence thereof."<sup>24</sup> The *pomerium* behind the west walls is shown in plate VI, figs. 8 and 9, also in plate VII, fig. 11, and plate VIII, fig. 14,<sup>25</sup> and is now termed *west walls*. The word *pomerium* was first applied to the sacred boundaries of Rome. It is equivalent to the *intervallum* of a Roman camp or fort.<sup>26</sup>

#### THE HEBER TOWER.

The Durham, Heber and Morden towers<sup>27</sup> were originally all of one pattern, probably of one date, c. 1281. They were rectangular internally, but horseshoe shaped externally, with the semicircle to the field.

<sup>23</sup> See A. M. Oliver's *Early Newcastle Deeds*, Surtees Society, vol. 137, 1924, p. 146.

<sup>24</sup> The Aubone MS. is in the possession of the Newcastle Corporation. See p. 17.

<sup>25</sup> The postern, under the lamp, seen in plate VI, figs. 8 and 9, is not the Blackfriar's postern, but is a later opening in the wall for access to the bowling-green which was in the Warden's Close.

<sup>26</sup> See *Arch. Ael.*, 2nd ser., vol. XXIV, p. 5 and plate p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> Nos. 1, 2 and 3 on plan, fig. 1, p. 2.

Round towers were known to the Romans, but went out of fashion. Early mediaeval towers were usually rectangular, such as those of Henry's stone castle of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1177.<sup>28</sup> The angles of these towers were weak points and had a blind spot to the field. As a result of experience gained at the crusades, round or semi-circular towers were re-introduced.

The Heber tower is the most perfect remaining on the walls of Newcastle. It was only one storey high, covered by a stone-ribbed vault which carried the roof. On the ground floor the walls were pierced by three large cross loops (plate IX and plate VIII, fig. 15), the centre one of which faces the field, the others flanked the curtain wall on either side. Cross loops do not appear until the thirteenth century, and Merrick, in his *Ancient Armour*, assumes that cross loops were for the use of cross bowmen. Viollet le Duc, however, explains them as an ingenious way of allowing three long bowmen to fire a volley from one arrow slit. This section of the wall was built in the reign of Edward I, who made the long bow the weapon *par excellence* of the English army. With it he won the battle of Falkirk, and in his reign was the victory of the round tower over the square and the prevalence of the long cross loop, of which feature this tower offers excellent examples. But in the days before gunpowder, defence from the top of a tower was still of importance, and the tower has long stone corbels<sup>29</sup> intended to support hoardings. These were timbered galleries carried round the top of the wall outside the battlements, and were rigged out only in time of war.

There is a stone stair to the roof, which was embattled. Holmes states that the present battlements are original,<sup>30</sup> but he appears to have overlooked the fact that they cut

<sup>28</sup> *Arch. Ael.*, 4th ser., vol. II, plate II.

<sup>29</sup> At the Durham tower these corbels are only of two courses, but at the Durham tower they are of three courses, as they were also at the Pink tower, *Proc. Soc. Ant. N/c.*, 3rd ser., vol. I, plate opposite p. 160, and elsewhere.

<sup>30</sup> *Arch. Ael.*, 2nd ser., vol. XVIII, p. 14.

off the upper portion of the original battlement loops, which were intended for bows and arrows (plate I and plate IV, fig. 5), whereas the present embrasures of the battlements are intended for guns, and were probably built in 1644, since when the flagged roof has been given a slope towards the back, which is unsuited for guns, for the recoil would drive them against the back parapet wall.

The projecting latrine (plate IX at A.) and the small loop at its junction with the tower (plate IX at B.) are omitted from Holmes's plan and text. This loop is of interest because internally it is in a confined situation, has but a small arc of training, and has the recess behind as elbow room for the archer (plate IX at C.), very similar to the recess behind the loop in the turret on the curtain between the Heber and Morden towers (see p. 8). In 1620 the Heber tower was repaired by the Feltmakers' Company.<sup>31</sup> In 1896 the tower was threatened with destruction, but saved mainly by the efforts of our society.<sup>32</sup>

#### THE MORDEN TOWER

This tower<sup>33</sup> was originally very similar to the Heber tower, but it now has an upper storey, added in 1619-20, when Sir Peter Riddel, the mayor of Newcastle, granted the tower to the Company of plumbers, glaziers and pewterers, to form their meeting place. In 1700 there were further alterations to the tower by the Company, and the back of the upper storey was rebuilt in brick. This addition is supported on brackets and overhangs the *pomerium*.

The tower is now occupied by the operative plumbers as a museum of plumbing, and the custodian is glad to show this and the Heber tower to visitors. The parapet walk south of the Morden tower is 3 ft. 8 in. above the floor level of the tower, whereas in the bay north of the

<sup>31</sup> *Picture of Newcastle*, by Thomas Oliver, p. 81.

<sup>32</sup> *Proceedings*, 2nd ser., vol. VII, p. 289.

<sup>33</sup> No. 3 on plan, fig. 1.



tower it is first level, then twice stepped down before it reaches the Ever tower.

Moreover, the turret north of the Morden tower is about 5 ft. lower than the turret south of it. It is possible that the latter was raised in position when rebuilt. It certainly appears that the Ever tower was earlier than the Morden, Heber and Durham towers, and that the curtain walls adjacent to these towers were higher than those adjacent to the Ever tower.

An iron cannon ball found embedded in the walls of the Morden tower is now in the museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne; it is a relic of the siege by the Scottish army in 1644—the only time the walls were effectively breached.

From the Durham to the Heber tower is 77 yds. 1 ft. From the Heber to the Morden tower is 115 yds. From the Morden to the Ever tower is 99 yds. 1 ft.

For several centuries after these walls were built they served to protect the town, and were only once taken by storm, in 1644, when gunpowder played a part unforeseen when the walls were designed. The means taken by our ancestors to protect their lives, liberties and properties should interest all, yet owing to the development of the modern commercial town, now a city and county, all the gates except the sallyport and most of the towers and walls of old Newcastle have been destroyed. The west walls are the best remaining fragments and are now scheduled as ancient monuments. The west walls are the property of the city and county of Newcastle upon Tyne. When times improve financially it is to be hoped that the city will do something towards improving the condition of the little that is left, and make the walls more widely known. "This tribute, at least, we owe them, and they deserve it at our hands, to preserve their remains."

Plate II. This plan, now first published by kind permission of H.M. Office of Works, was copied in 1742 from a drawing made in 1683 by Sir Martin Beckman. He was

a Swedish captain of artillery, who, as an engineer, entered the service of Charles II of England. He accompanied Lord Sandwich's expedition to Algiers and Tangiers in 1661-2, became third engineer to Great Britain in 1670, second engineer in 1681, and chief engineer in 1685, in which year he was knighted. He was sent to Scotland c. 1683, and also reported upon the defences of Newcastle upon Tyne and other places. On June 1st, 1671, he received £100 "for services in hindering the stealing away the Crown jewels." He died 1702.

Beckman's plan does not show the points of the compass, and the top is not the north. St. Nicholas' church spire is nothing like the original, but he possibly wrote only the word *church* on his plan. He does not show the ditch, but it is probable that this was fully described in his report, now not to be found.

Plate xi. T. M. Richardson's drawing of the west walls in 1827 was taken from the Newcastle Mansion House extra illustrated copy of Mackenzie's *History of Newcastle*. It is clear that the engraver mistook shadows on the original drawing for breaks in the line of the wall. The turret did not and does not stand upon a semi-octagon tower, as here shown.

Mr. Bernard Stevenson, curator of the Laing Art Gallery and Museum, has spared no pains to find the original Richardson drawing; but without success.

The Aubone MS., pp. 4 and 13, is the property of the city. It has not been properly edited. I am indebted to our member, Mr. A. M. Oliver, town clerk, for comparing Brand's extract with the original, and making many corrections.

Mr. Oliver has also sent me the two following notes:

On the third page of Brand's *History of Newcastle* we find the statement that in 1335 Hugh of Merchinleigh, one of the bailiffs of Newcastle, was removed from his office by the commonalty of the town for having procured murage against them. Apart from the date, which was 1280, Brand's bald statement of fact is correct, and it sums

up in a few words an interesting episode connected with the building of the west walls. The connection of the family of Merchinleigh with the town of Newcastle was of short duration. Thomas of Merchinleigh was a bailiff of the town in the middle of the thirteenth century, and the family owned land bordering on the Lort burn. They also owned land in the Westgate, which was bought by the town for the building of part of the wall thereon.

In the year 1280, for the purpose of negotiating the renewal of the grant of murage, the burgesses sent a deputation of two of their members to Westminster, one of whom was their bailiff, Hugh of Merchinleigh. The business was satisfactorily carried through, and the grant continuing to collect murage was duly made on 20th May, 1280. Shortly after the receipt of the news that the grant had been made, the mayor received notice that the king had on 29th May granted to Merchinleigh and his companion, the right to collect the toll for their own use, paying to the mayor only £60 a year for the building of the wall, and a like sum to the sheriff for the repair of the castle.

The mayor and burgesses, on receipt of this news, immediately removed Merchinleigh from the position of bailiff of the town, and apparently also deprived him of his rights as a burgess. Merchinleigh appealed to the king against this decision, and accused the commonalty of Newcastle of contempt in depriving him of his office. The mayor and burgesses astutely and effectively replied that they had no thought of contempt for the king; that they removed Merchinleigh from his office of bailiff, not because he had procured murage against them, but because while at the king's court at Westminster, on the town's business, he had been doing business on his own behalf. That Merchinleigh's appeal against the action of the mayor and burgesses was unsuccessful is evident from the fact that on the official roll, after the entry of the grant made to him, are written the words, "vacated, because surrendered and cancelled." He apparently dared not



return to Newcastle, for no trace of his name, nor indeed of any of his family, is to be found after this incident in the annals of this town.

The events above narrated may account for the fact that although the grant of murage and that for the Black-friars postern are both dated 1280, yet the wall was not built for a year or so later.

A second note may have a bearing on the method of building the walls in general. It is as follows:

On Palm Sunday, in the year 1298, Adam Brocher, the burgess at that time entrusted with the charge of the guard at the town pele tower near the Austin Friars in Newcastle, set on guard four men for the day. . . . About curfew time that day, Brocher visited the guard to see that all was in order, and found that without his leave or knowledge, two of the above men had gone off duty.

The use of the word "pele" raises the question: were the towers built at the same time as the wall, or were they built first, and thereafter joined up by the building of the curtains in the intervening spaces? The expression "the pele tower near the Austin Friars" no doubt refers to the wall tower afterwards known as the Gunner tower. But the expression "pele," as is understood to-day, denotes a tower standing alone.

We know that the forts of Hadrian's wall and those on the Antonine wall were built before the walls themselves.<sup>34</sup> With regard to the west walls, at the junction of the curtains with the north sides of the Durham and Heber towers, the ashlar of the curtain walls is not coursed

<sup>34</sup> Sir George Macdonald has recently shown (*Pro. Soc. Antiq. Scotland*, LXVI, 1931-2, pp. 219-76) that on the Antonine wall some of the forts, in particular Balmuirdie and Old Kilpatrick, had been laid out before the detachments working on the wall had brought it up to them; and in each case the fort-builders misunderstood the line that the wall would take at its junction with the forts, so that the preparations for joining the wall with the forts required modification when the actual junction was made. On Hadrian's Wall a similar state of affairs has since been found at Housesteads (*Arch. Ael.*, 4th ser., vol. X, pp. 83-5), and it is now evident that the so-called buttresses to some turrets on the narrow wall, on the broad foundation were built in anticipation of the wide wall joining them up—thus they, too, were built before the wall.

with, or bonded into that of the towers. This may be intentional to allow of settlement of the towers without tearing them from the curtains, or it may be the result of building the towers first and then joining them by the curtain walls.

Finally I am indebted to Mr. C. H. Hunter Blair for fig. 17.

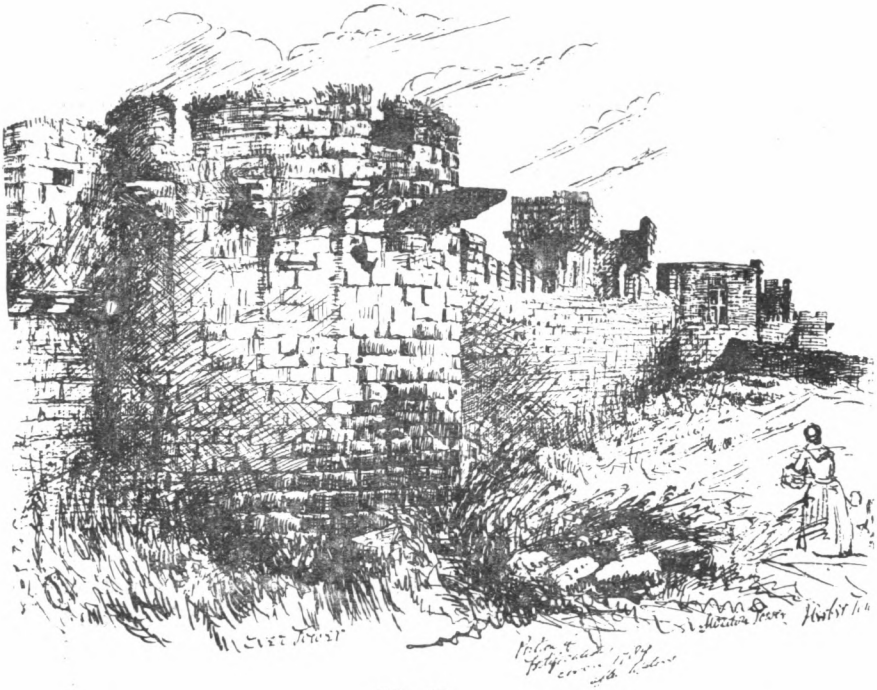


FIG. 17

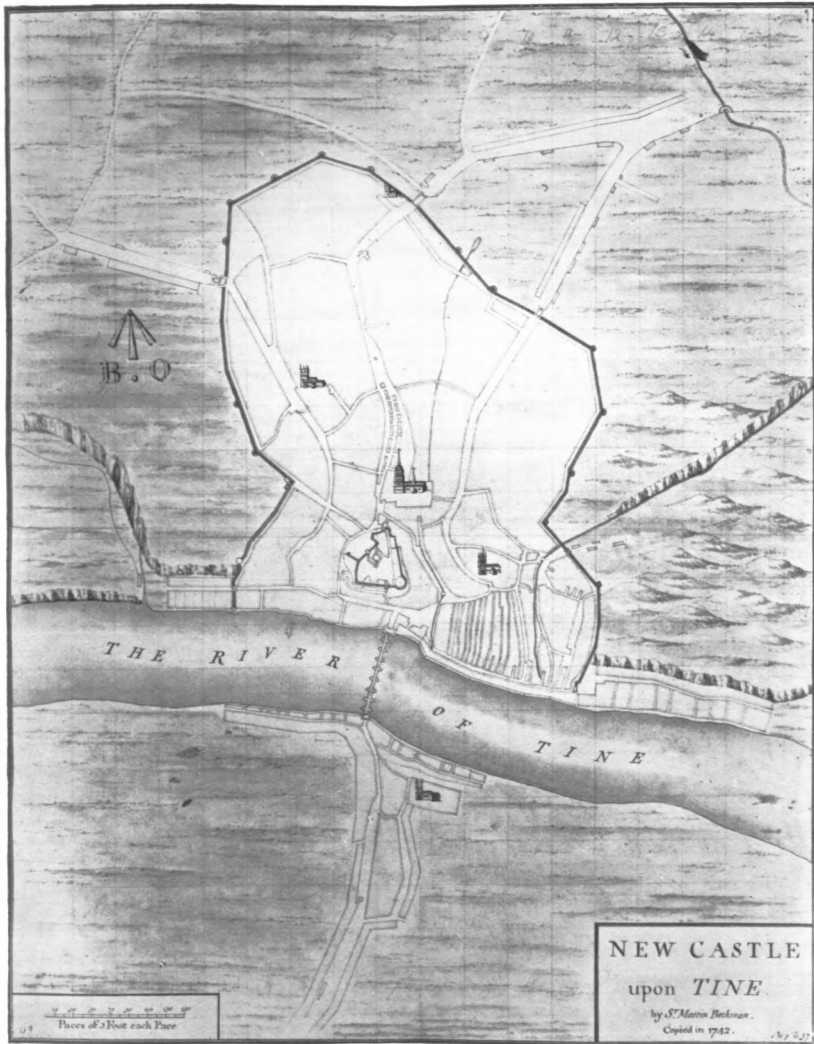






FIG. 2.

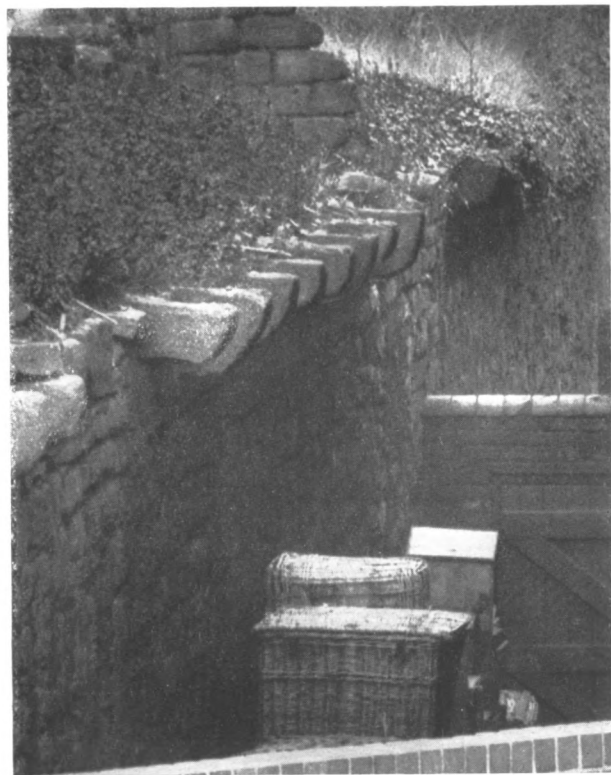


FIG. 3.





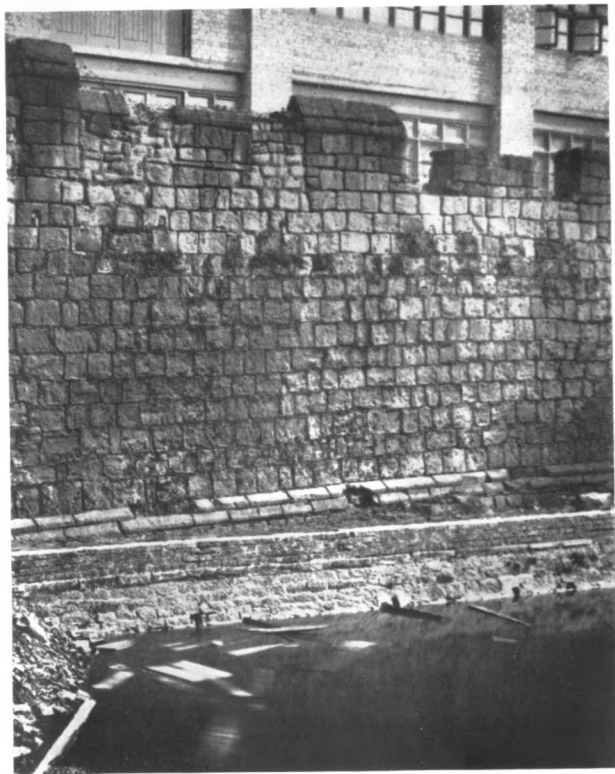


FIG. 4.



FIG. 5.





FIG. 6.

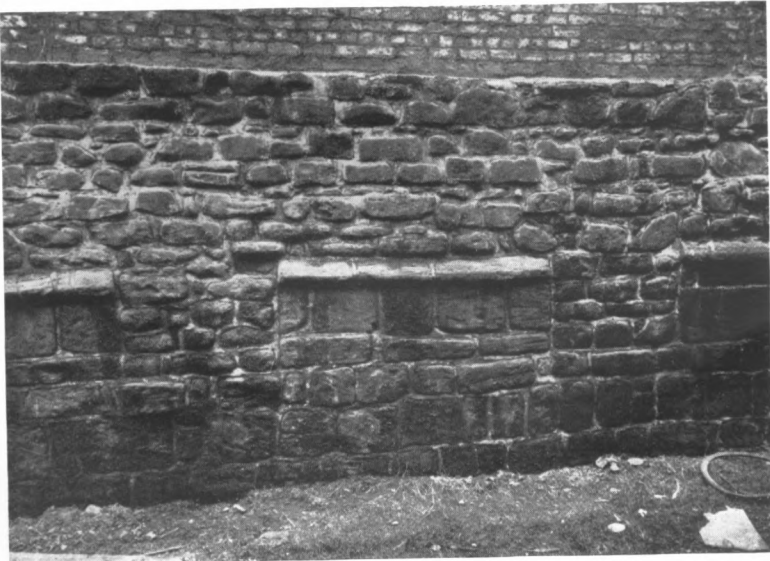


FIG. 7.





FIG. 8.



FIG. 9.





FIG. 11.



FIG. 12.





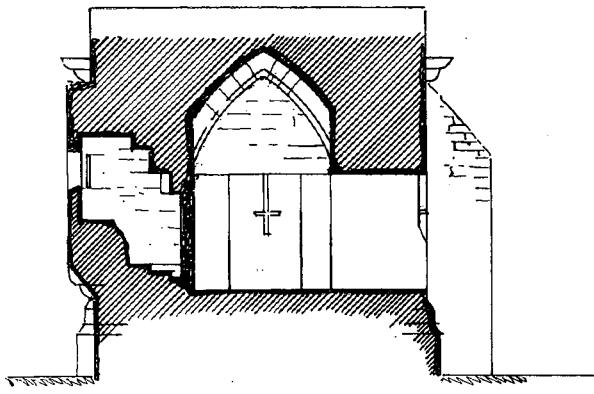


FIG. 14.

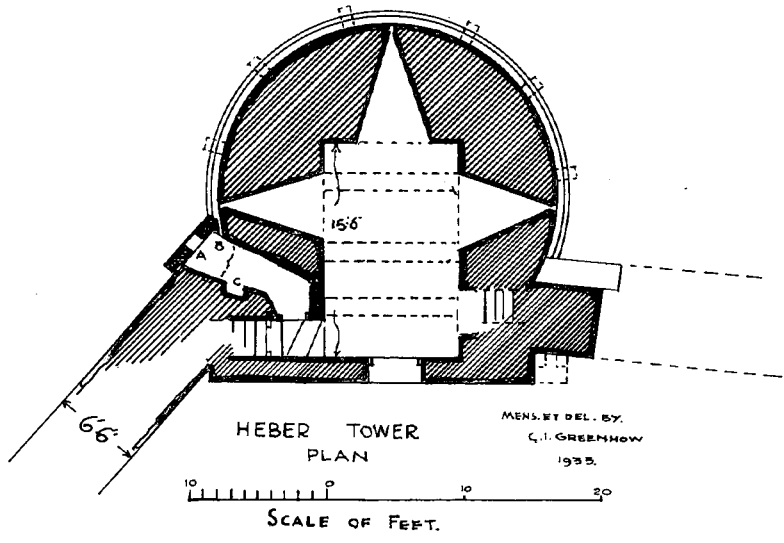


FIG. 15.



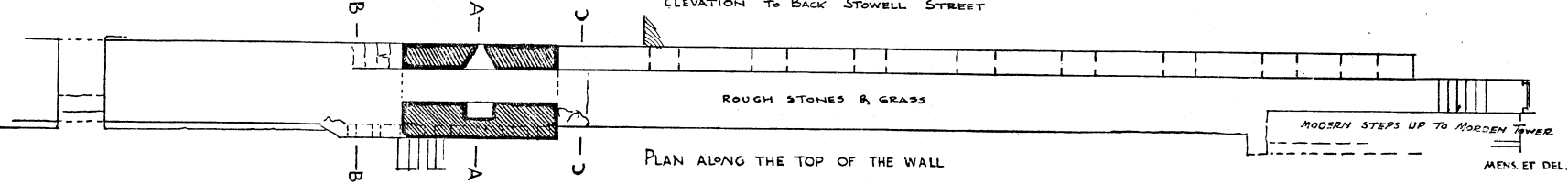
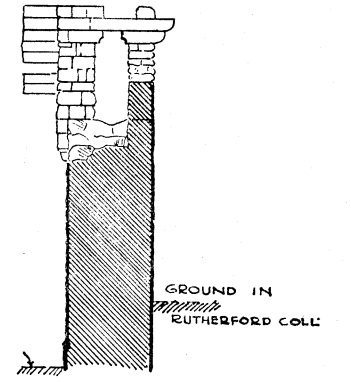
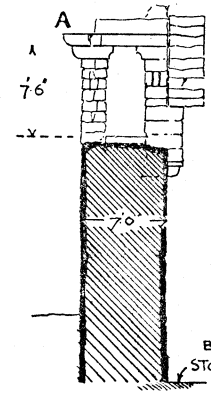
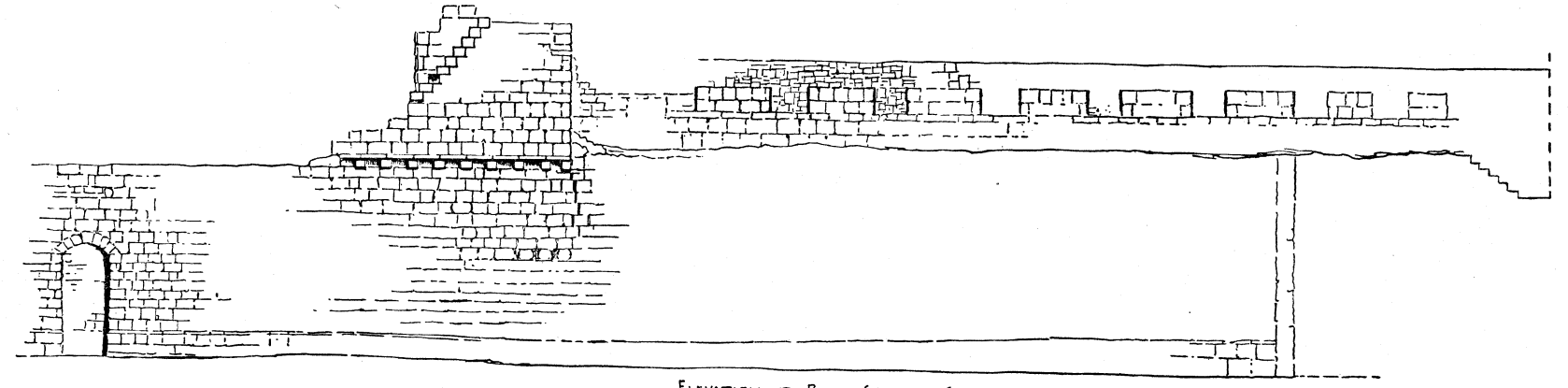
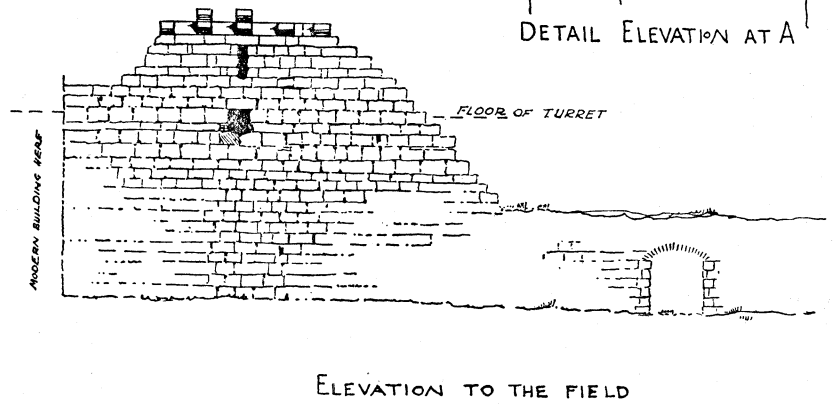
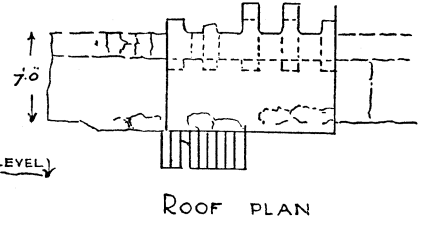
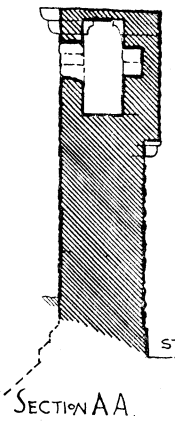
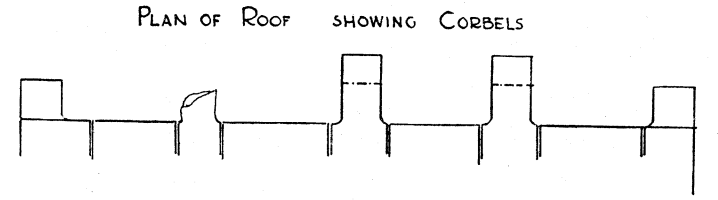
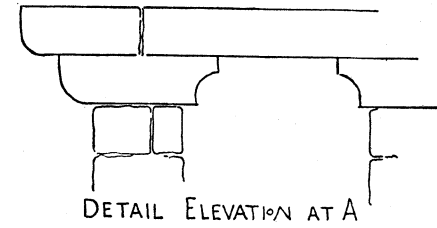
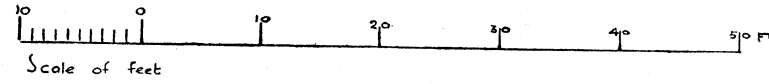


SECTION



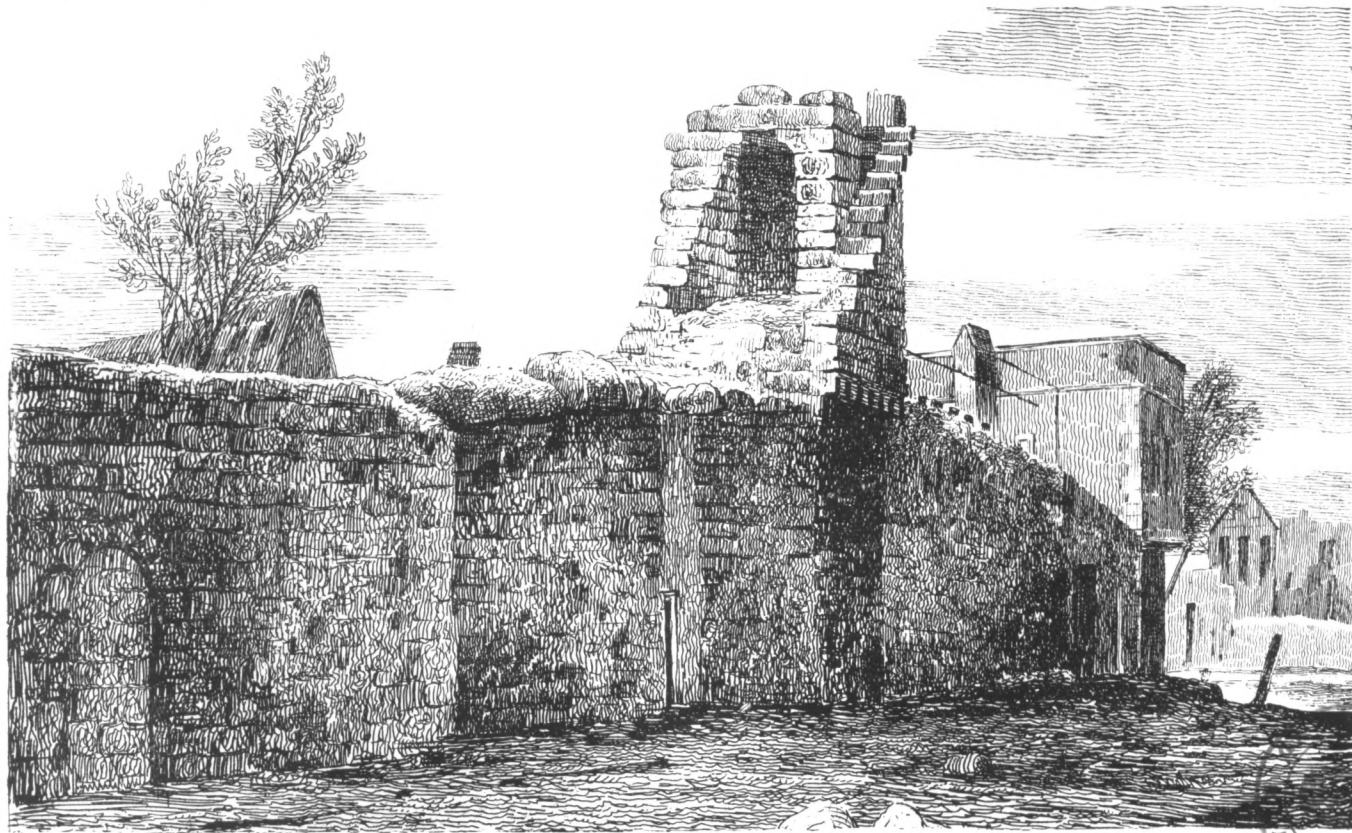


# WEST WALLS · NEWCASTLE. BETWEEN THE MORDEN & HEBER TOWERS.



MENS. ET DEL. BY C. INGLEBY GREENHOW. 1938.





THE WEST WALLS, AFTER T. M. RICHARDSON.





