

IX.—THE WALLS OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,
ILLUSTRATED FROM DRAWINGS BY
GEORGE BOUCHIER RICHARDSON.

EDITED BY C. H. HUNTER BLAIR, PRESIDENT OF THE
SOCIETY.

[Read 28th October 1936.]

The strength and magnificence of the waulling of this towne far passith all the waulles of the cities of England and of most of the townes of Europa. (Leland's *Iter.*, c. 1540.)

Now where the wall and Tine almost meet together, Newcastle sheweth itselſe gloriously, the very eye of all the townes in these parts, ennobled by a notable haven, which Tine maketh, being of that depth, that it beareth very tall ships and so defendeth them, that they can neither easily bee tossed with tempests nor driven upon shallows nor shelves. (Camden's *Britain*, 1637.)

It seems fitting that the publication for the first time of Thompson's beautiful map and of Mr. Wake's comments upon it should be followed by further illustrations of the fortifications of the town from hitherto unpublished drawings.

These, on plates XII-XIX, are reproduced from original water-colour and wash drawings, or pen and ink and pencil sketches chiefly made by George Bouchier Richardson in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. They are contained in a manuscript book, also written by him, entitled *The Walls, Gates and Towers of Newcastle upon Tyne*. This valuable and unique volume now belongs to Messrs. Mawson, Swan & Morgan Ltd. of this city, and the drawings, of which a selection only appear here, are

reproduced by that firm's special permission, who have also generously lent the book to the present writer so that these drawings may be properly photographed. This has been done by our member Mr. H. O. Thompson, whom the writer wishes to thank for the care and skilled attention he has given to the work.

George Bouchier Richardson was the son of Moses Aaron Richardson, bookseller and publisher of Newcastle upon Tyne, and the nephew of Thomas Miles Richardson the artist. He was born in Newcastle 26 October 1822, and was educated at Bruce's school. He became a member of this society in 1848 and contributed some papers on local history and archæology to the first series of *Archæologia Aeliana*.¹ He followed his father to Australia in 1852, and died at Adelaide on 28th November 1877.²

The illustrations are careful and apparently accurate drawings of the walls and towers of the town as seen by the artist about the years 1840-52. Two (plates xviii, fig. 1, and plate xix, fig. 2) are, however, made by him from earlier sketches by his uncle, T. M. Richardson, whilst three (plate xvii, figs. 1 and 2, and plate xix, fig. 1) are from water-colour drawings by Ralph Waters senior done towards the end of the eighteenth century:

They are mostly views of the fortifications from the outer or field side particularly of the west and north-west walls and towers from above Close gate to New gate; there are also some of those on the north and east from Carloliol tower to Sandgate—these latter with the exception of one of Austin tower are not here reproduced. They all supplement in a very pleasing and interesting way the drawings by T. M. Richardson published in his *Memorials of Old Newcastle*.

It is not the present writer's intention to tell again the oft-told tale of the town walls. This has been done by the

¹ AA¹ III, 148, and IV, 82 and 119.

² *Men of Mark*. s.v.; AA³ x, pp. 222 ff.

historians³ of the town, as well as, in later days, by members of our society in *Archæologia Aeliana* and *Proceedings*.⁴ Nor is it his intention either to describe or locate the different views: they speak for themselves and are to be found accurately placed on Thompson's map, plate XI. The title as given by the artist is under each drawing. The short notes now given are chiefly from the original manuscript, with occasionally a comment by the writer.

PLATE XII, fig. 1.—Water-colour drawing by G. B. Richardson. "The wall between Close gate and White Friar tower mounted an exceedingly steep hill in antient times called the How or Hoga and was provided with a flight of 140 steps on the summit of the wall which from their exceeding steepness and length were commonly designated 'the breakneck stairs.'" Drawing made in 1840.

PLATE XII, fig. 2.—Pen and ink sketch. White Friar tower: "This has an octagonal base above which the upper part, built above a bold moulding, is circular in plan. The only exception to the circular form of all the other towers."

PLATE XIII, fig. 1.—Water-colour drawing entitled—"Nevil tower and White Friars postern as developed August 1847, G.B.R." "This gate though not ranked as one of the great gates of the town was yet greater than only a postern, it was situated at an angle of the wall and close to Nevil tower."

The tower was about 10 yards west of the postern; above the postern, on the town side, the shields of arms of the town, Clavering and Shafto were carved.

³ Grey, Bourne, Brand, Mackenzie and Charlton.

⁴ The chief of these papers are—on the Castle by Longstaffe, AA² iv, pp. 45 ff., and by W. H. Knowles, AA⁴ ii, pp. 1 ff. On the walls by Sheriton Holmes, AA² xviii, pp. 1 ff., and by Parker Brewis, AA⁴ xi, pp. 1 ff.

PLATE XIII, figs. 2 and 3.—Pencil and wash drawings, the full titles and dates appear on the plate.

PLATE XIV, fig. 1.—Water-colour drawing. The wall from West Spital tower, “removed in 1848 for the railway,” in the right distance, past the site of Stank tower, “removed in 1847 when Neville street was made,” to Gunner tower shown with a banner flying upon it. Forty yards north of the last tower, where the wall is broken down, the Forth postern was situated (plate XIX, fig. 1). Thence to Pink tower in left foreground the wall stands complete to its battlements. “Drawn in October 1852.”

PLATE XIV, fig. 2.—Water-colour drawing. A closer view of the wall from Gunner tower, at right hand side, to Pink tower. “The portion extending from Gunner tower to a distance of about 40 yards was razed to within a few feet of its plinth in 1826.” In the drawing this plinth, near Gunner tower, has the appearance of a bench table.

PLATE XV, fig. 1.—A large sepia drawing, measuring 17 inches by 11 inches, of which part only is here shown, signed in full *G. Bouchier Richardson*. N.D. The Pink tower—“called in 1539 the Spynke tower remained unaltered until it was removed in 1852.” The view shows the wall coming up to the tower from the south and the sector on the north towards Westgate being pulled down.

PLATE XV, fig. 2.—A wash drawing of Durham tower on the West wall beyond Westgate; “used as a coal house for the adjoining school, formerly used as a black-hole for the military.” It still stands to-day in good repair as does the wall south of it, but the outer face hidden by buildings against it.

PLATE XVI, fig. 1.—Wash drawing of the outer face of the west wall as it goes up to Herber tower at the north-west corner of the fortifications. It clearly shows the two offsets of the plinth as well as the stepping upwards to-

wards the tower. The wall here was broken through when Stowell street was made.

PLATE XVI, fig. 2.—Pen and ink drawing by Richardson after Ralph Waters, showing the north-west walls in 1789. Ever tower is in the left foreground, two turrets between it and Morden tower and another turret and Herber tower in the right distance. The corbels for the hoardings around Ever tower and the machicolations or corbelling out of the turrets are very clearly drawn.

PLATE XVII, fig. 1.—Water-colour drawing after Ralph Waters. Inside of north-west walls between Ever and Morden towers. Fig. 2.—Water-colour drawing by Ralph Waters of the same scene. The road inside the wall is the ancient *pomerium*, a road that in mediaeval times ran continuously around and close inside the fortifications to allow quick and easy access to them in case of need. The trees on the left of each drawing are in the grounds of the Black Friars.

PLATE XVIII, fig. 1.—The wall north-west of St. Andrew's churchyard as seen in 1818. After a sketch by T. M. Richardson, drawn in pencil by G. B. Richardson. Andrew tower is in the middle, New gate in the left distance with a turret between them. "Andrew tower stood at the north-west corner of the churchyard of which the wall formed the western boundary; the tower and part of the wall were removed in 1818 to enlarge the churchyard." "The vault was used as a bone house for many years before its removal."

The wet moat is now occupied by the buildings on the south side of Gallowgate.

PLATE XVIII, fig. 2.—The inner face of Andrew tower at the north-west corner of the old churchyard of St. Andrew's. The windmill on the left stood on the north side of Darn Crook.

PLATE XIX, fig. 1.—This water-colour drawing of the Forth postern was “made in 1780 by the late Ralph Waters.” It represents the inner face of the wall. The gate, placed beneath one of the turrets of the wall, was made in 1705 to give access to the Forth field by a narrow passage from Westgate. Built up in 1745 and reopened after the scare of '45 had passed away, it was removed in 1811. A drawing of the outer face of the gate is in *Memorials of Old Newcastle*.

From New gate, seen in the left distance on plate XVIII, fig. 1, the wall continued along the south side of Blackett street to Pilgrim gate. Between these two gates were two towers called Bartram Monboucher and Fickett with turrets between them. The latter tower stood at the east end of the present Y.M.C.A. building. From Pilgrim gate the wall ran to Carliol tower, on the site of the present Public Library, where it turned south to Plummer and thence to Austin tower. These gates and towers are illustrated in *Memorials of Old Newcastle*, and similar drawings are in the present manuscript. The course of these fortifications is clearly seen on plate xi.

PLATE XIX, fig. 2.—Austin tower, a pen and ink sketch drawn by G. B. Richardson in 1864 after a pencil sketch by T. M. Richardson made in 1826. Plummer tower is seen in the left distance. “Austin tower was the finest double-chambered bastion extant . . . both chambers were finely arched and the newel stairs from lower to upper and from the upper to the platform of the tower were both in perfect preservation.” The tower stood close by the house of Austin canons and remained standing until 1838. It was removed when the old Manors station was built, which occupied “the precise site of the old tower.”

From Austin tower the wall ran south to Corner tower and thence eastwards to Pandon gate, then south again by Wall Knoll tower to Tyne at Sandgate. (Plate xi and for views of this part *Memorials of Old Newcastle*.)

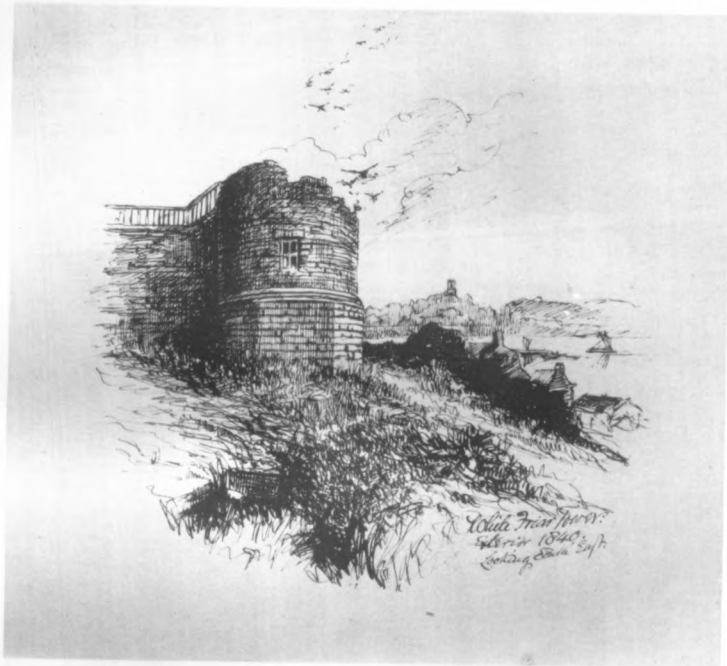


Fig. 2. WHITE FRIAR TOWER FROM NORTH-WEST IN 1840. G.B.R.



Fig. 1. THE WALL FROM CLOSE GATE TO WHITE FRIAR TOWER. G.B.R.



The Postern looking towards Nevil Tower: 7 Dec. 1866

S.B.R.



Outside of Nevil Tower.

1865

S.B.R.

Denton or Nevil Tower.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.



The White Friars' Postern

Fig. 1. NEVILLE TOWER AND WHITE FRIARS' POSTERN.

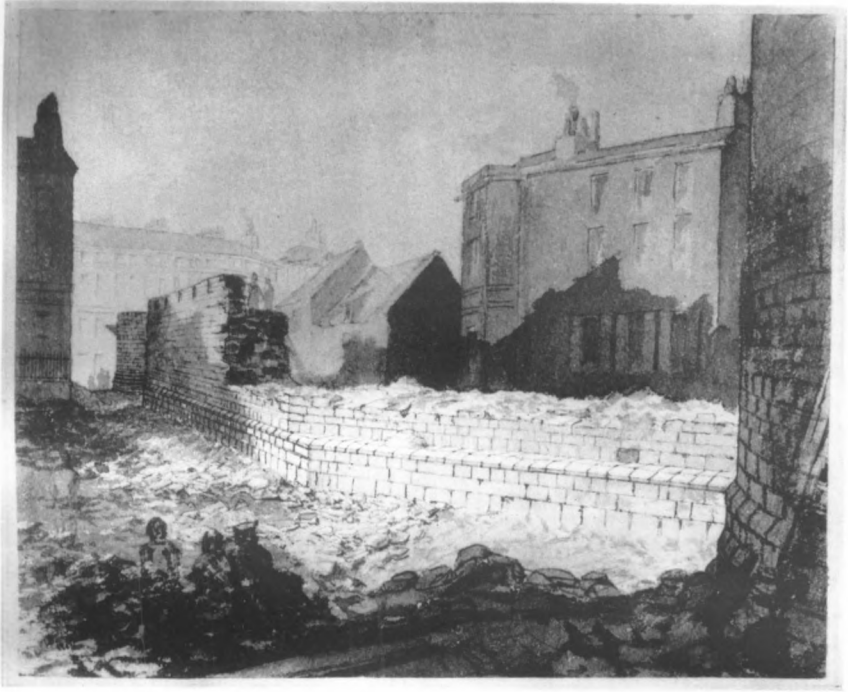


FIG. 2. FROM GUNNER TO PINK TOWER.

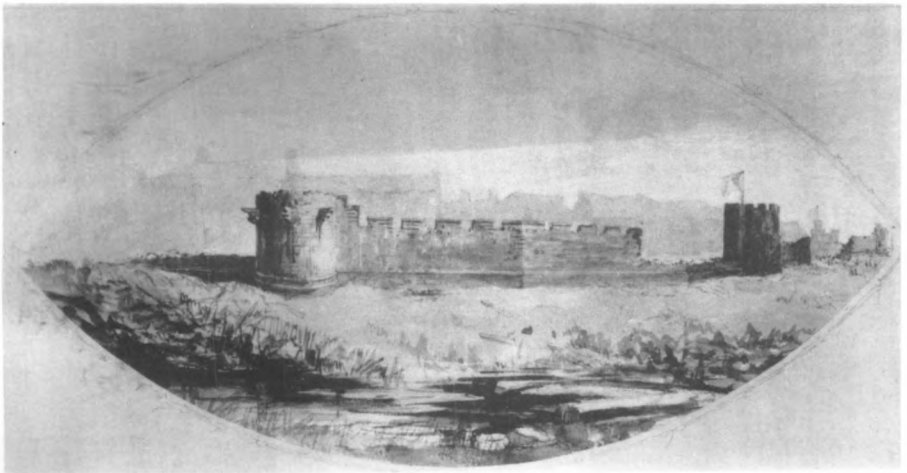


FIG. 1. THE WALL FROM PINK TOWER TO WEST SPITAL TOWER.

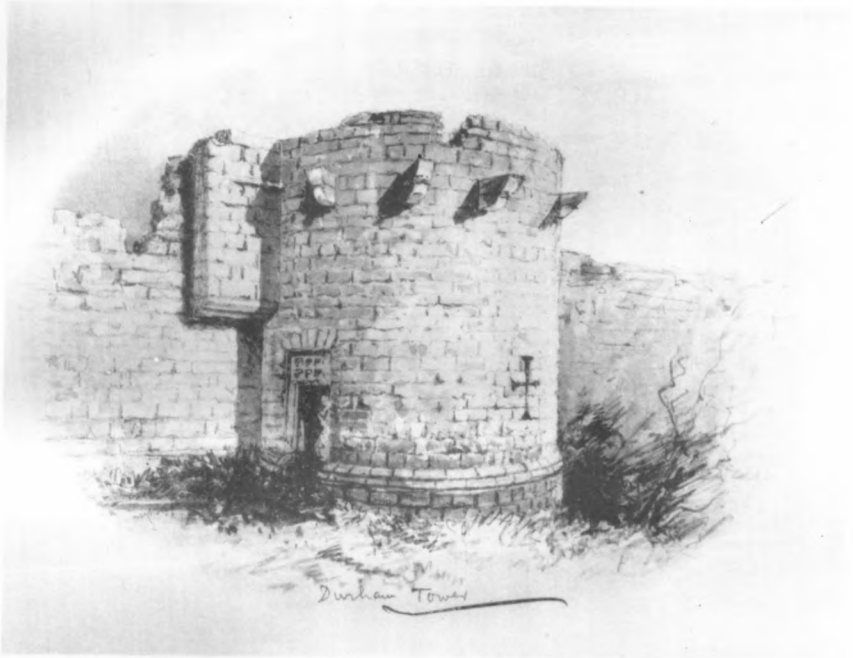


FIG. 2. DURHAM TOWER.

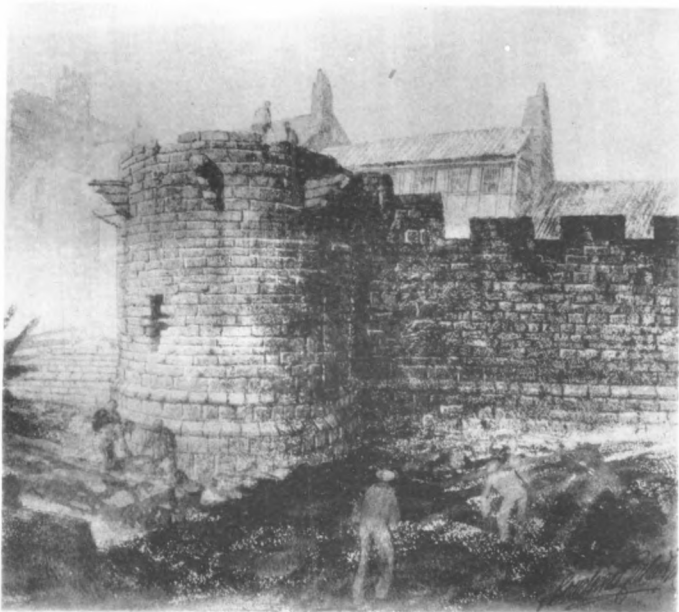


FIG. 1. PINK TOWER.

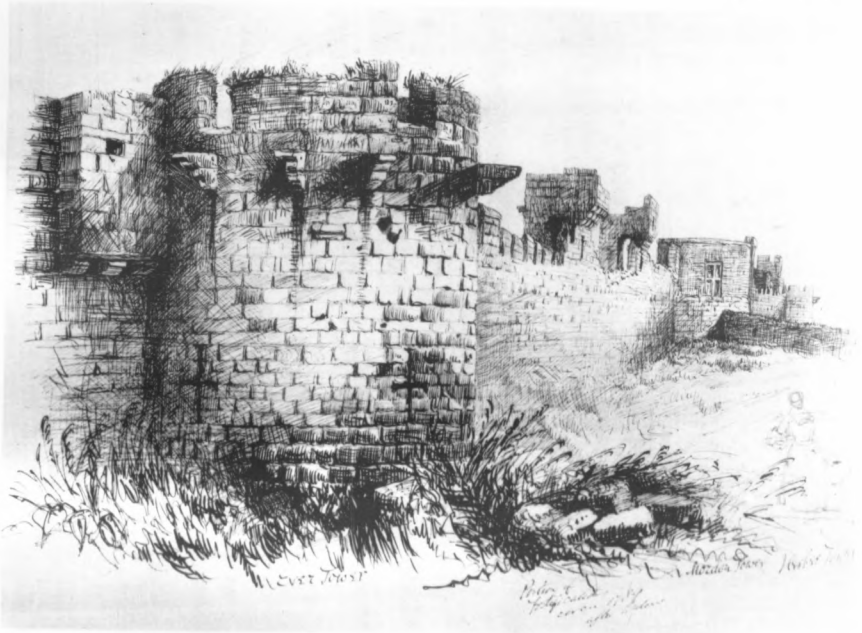


Fig. 2.

NORTH-WEST WALL FROM EVER TO HERBER TOWER IN 1789, AFTER WATERS



Fig. 1.

NORTH-WEST ANGLE OF THE FORTIFICATIONS AT HERBER TOWER. APRIL, 1853.

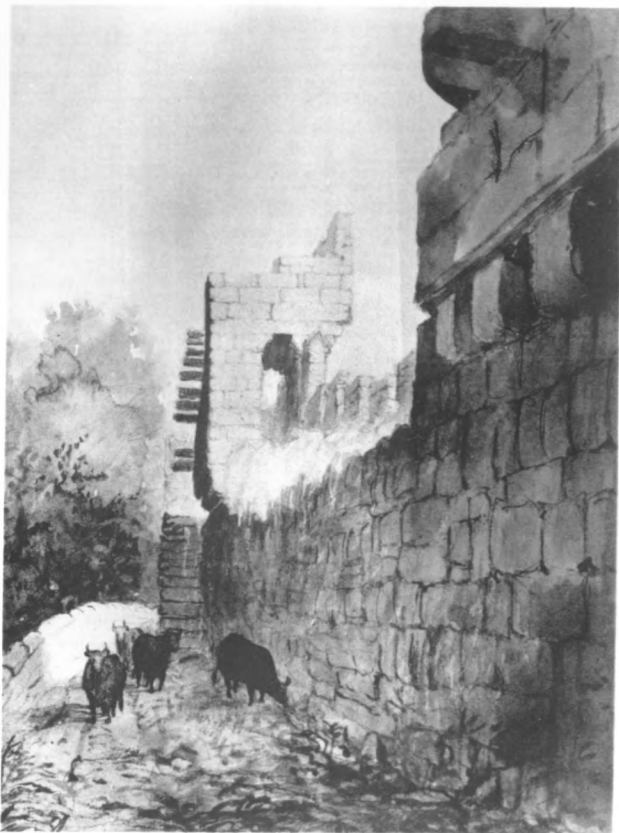


FIG. 1. WALL BETWEEN EVER AND MORDEN TOWER c. 1780.
AFTER WATERS.

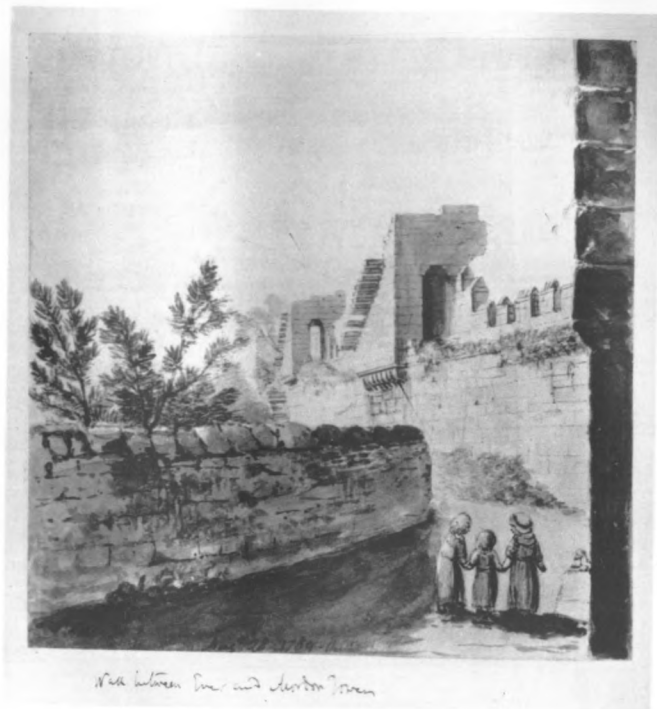


FIG. 2. WALL BETWEEN EVER AND MORDEN TOWERS
BY RALPH WATERS.

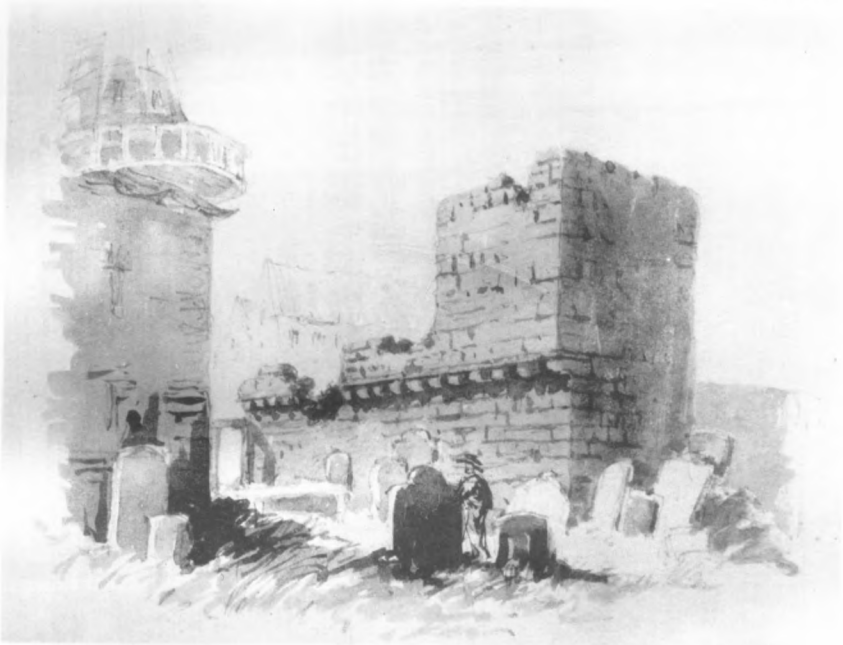


Fig. 2. ANDREW TOWER FROM CHURCH YARD.



Fig. 1.
ANDREW TOWER AND NEWGATE WITH TOWER OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH.

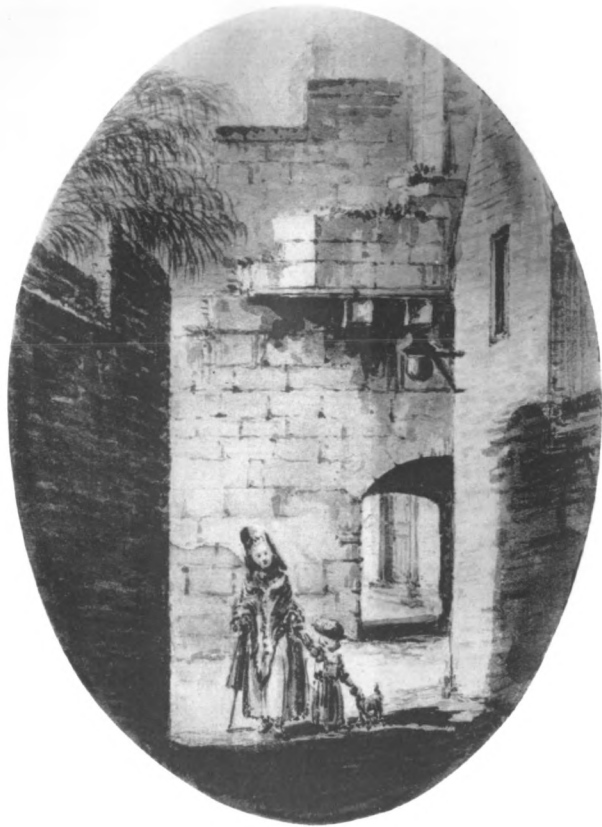


Fig. 1. FORTH POSTERN BY RALPH WATERS.



Fig. 2. AUSTIN TOWER.

