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Gresty

Handy Guide-book to Chester

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GRESTY'S
EXCURSIONISTS
2^D
GUIDE TO
CHESTER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS & PLAN.







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G R E S T Y ' S

H A N D Y . G U I D E - B O O K

T O

C H E S T E R A N D I T S V I C I N I T Y ;

W I T H B R I E F N O T I C E S O F I T S

C I V I L A N D E C C L E S I A S T I C A L H I S T O R Y ;

R o m a n a n d S a x o n A n t i q u i t i e s ,

W A L L S , C A S T L E , A N D C A T H E D R A L ;

A N D A D E S C R I P T I O N O F

E A T O N H A L L ,

W I T H P L A N A N D I L L U S T R A T I O N S .

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

J. GRETTY & SONS, PRINTERS & PUBLISHERS,

EASTGATE ROW & EASTGATE STREET, CHESTER.



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Gresty's Handy Guide-Book.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

It will add much to the interest of the visitor to be reminded in the first place, that the attractions of Chester do not alone consist in its mere outward aspect, beautifully situated as it is—"a city seated on a hill, girt with walls, and crowned with towers," and nearly surrounded by the "wizard Dee;" nor yet so much for its Roman remains, its complete walls and ancient towers, its unique rows, and singular excavated streets, remarkable and note-worthy as they are; but rather for the many and great historic events with which its name is connected. The occupation of Chester by Suetonius marked the final subjugation of Britain by the Romans; the slaughter by Ethelfred of the Britons and the monks of Bangor, at the instigation of St. Augustine, consummated the domination of the church of Rome over the primitive christianity of the natives; the utter rout of the Danes, who had seized and held the city, until reduced by famine, was here effected by the valour of Alfred, whose daughter, Ethelfleda, restored the city and rebuilt its walls. Here Edgar, the Saxon king, consolidated his sovereignty by the significant ceremony of causing eight tributary princes to row him to church in his barge, he seizing the helm. Chester remained unsubdued by the Normans till 1070, and when it fell England was finally conquered: It was the last independent English city, and its walls sheltered the widow of Harold, who is said to have been slain in battle, but whom there is grave reasons to believe, was borne wounded from the field, and lived as a recluse in the Anchorite's Cell, in the churchyard of St. John, where he was visited by succeeding sovereigns. During the Welsh wars this fortress was the head quarters of the English forces, and here Llewellyn, the last of the Welsh princes, was brought prisoner, and Wales finally subjugated. Here the royal martyr, Charles the First, made his final stand, and saw his last force defeated from its towers, ere he fled to Scotland, and was ignobly sold for certain pieces of silver. From this port sailed the armies which made Ireland a portion of the United Kingdom, and obtained for it the name of "The Key of Ireland." Chester has not of late years had any great event to commemorate, if we except the farce of the Fenian invasion, who, reversing Cæsar's brief despatch, only "Came, saw,"—and skedaddled; and the grand reception of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester in 1869.

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ALTHOUGH there is no historic record of the fact, yet there is every reason to believe that long before the Roman invasion the site of Chester was occupied as a stronghold by the original inhabitants. The site of Chester in early times was one well suited for the growth of a great and strong city. Its strength as well as its fitness for commerce, mainly lay in the river itself, which washed the walls of the city to a far greater extent than it does now. The real history of Chester commences with the occupation of it by the Twentieth Legion, which came into Britain in the year 61, under Suetonius, who made it his head-quarters, and after the defeat of Boadecia, led his intrepid legion into North Wales and Anglesea.

This important station was of a rectangular form, corresponding very nearly with the plan of a Polybian camp, occupying originally a space of about 650 yards by about 550, inclosed by a wall, a rampart mound on the inside of the wall, and a fosse without, with four angle towers, and a series of minor towers or turrets, and having four gates or principal entrances, from which proceeded military roads, leading to the neighbouring stations mentioned in the "Itinerary of Antonine." Such was Roman Chester: the chief features of which still remain, and in the immediate neighbourhood interesting remains of altars, funeral monuments, coffins, cinerary urns, tombs, baths, temples, tessellated pavements, and villas, have been brought to light from time to time. The name of Chester alone proves its Roman antiquity; it also proves its importance, as having come to be known as "the city," or "the camp," emphatically. During the lieutenancy of Julius Agricola, A.D. 85, it became a Roman colony, and was then called *Colonia Devana*, or "the Colony on the Dee," as is proved by a coin of Geta, which bears the inscription "Col. Devana Leg. xx. Victrix." By ancient British writers it is called *Cær Leon Vawr ar Ddyfrdwy*, or "the Camp of the Great Legion on the Dee." The accompanying woodcuts represent two of the Roman altars which were found in Chester. The first was discovered while digging a cellar in Eastgate-street, buried amongst a quantity of ashes, bones, and horns of various animals. On the back of the altar is represented a curtain festooned, over which is a globe, surrounded with palm branches. On one side is a vase, from which issue leaves of the acanthus; supporting a basket of fruit; on the other side is a Genius with a cornucopia in his left hand, and an altar on his right. The other is an altar found in Watergate-street, and is now preserved in the grounds of Oulton Park, the seat of Sir Philip Egerton, Bart. At the sides are the rod of Esculapius, the cornucopia and rudder; an urn, patera, sacrificial knife, and other instruments. A more minute account of these and other altars, with their inscriptions and translations, will be found in the Shilling Edition of "Gresty's Chester Guide," together with descriptions of other remarkable remains of the Roman period, many of which are now deposited in the Museum at the Water Tower, on the Walls, and the grounds adjoining.

For two or three centuries after the arrival of Agricola, Chester appears to have continued in the undisturbed possession of the Romans. Holinshed is of opinion that P. Ostorius Scapula, who, as we find, was sent over by the Emperor Claudius Cæsar, about the year 50, was the founder of Chester. He says that, after the defeat of Caractacus, King of the Ordovices, who inhabited Lancashire, Cheshire, and Shropshire, Ostorius



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 ORVM M IN VI
 OTISSIMO RVM
 AVGG EENO L EI
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 TRIB MIL LEC XY
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built in those parts places of defence for his soldiers, and for keeping down the rebellious Britons. Passing over the space of a few years, we find Julius Agricola completing the conquest of this island. Such was his power and skilful policy, that we are told the people soon became reconciled to the supremacy of the Roman arms and language. About the year 448 the Romans withdrew from the island, after having been masters of the most part of it for nearly four centuries, and left the Britons to arm for their own defence against their new enemies the Scots and Picts. The intestine commotions which were then shaking the Roman world prevented their former masters from affording them aid, and they were ultimately totally subjugated by the Saxons, whom they had invoked for their defence. In 607, Ethelfred, King of Northumbria, waged a sanguinary battle with the Britons under the walls of Chester, whom he overthrew, and made his infamous massacre of the monks of Bangor. This victory was the last great victory of English heathendom over British Christianity. Chester was most likely the last city which was made to share the fate of Jericho and Ai. From this period to the time of the Heptarchy, we have but very scanty materials respecting the history of Chester.



CECERE
 FORTVNER LXXC
 ESOLAPET SALVTILIX
 LIBERT ET FAMILIA
 IDIPONTIF CALMMIL
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The Britons appear to have retained possession of

it until the year 828, when it was taken by Egbert, during the reign of the British prince Mervyn.

In 894 Harold, King of the Danes, Mancolin, King of the Scots, and another prince, after a long siege, reduced the city. Soon after they were attacked by Alfred and utterly routed.

After the evacuation of the city by the Danes, it remained in ruins till 908, when Ethelfleda, the renowned daughter of Alfred, renewed the city, and the restored fortress at once took its place among the great cities of England.

The security of Chester against Danish invaders was effected by the victories of King Edmund about 942, after which it was occasionally the residence of the Saxon Monarchs. King Edgar received the homage of his vassal kings here in 973. One day he made his eight tributary princes row him in his barge from his palace in Handbridge, up the river Dee, to the monastery of St. John. In the following century Chester was possessed by the Earls of Mercia, until the Norman Conquest in 1066. The importance of Chester was shown by its being assigned to one of the chief leaders of the Norman army, and on his death it was given to Hugh Lupus, the nephew of the Conqueror, to be "holden as freely by the sword as the king himself held England by the crown." Six earls succeeded him, all of whom held sovereign jurisdiction, held their own parliaments, and created barons who also had power of life and death. After the death of the seventh earl, in 1237, Henry the Third gave the palatinate to his eldest son, Prince Edward, who conferred the title on his son, Edward of Carnarvon, the first Prince of Wales. From that period to the present the two titles have been vested in the eldest son of the reigning sovereign, and is now held by his Royal Highness Prince Albert Edward.

THE PORT OF CHESTER.

CHESTER was, probably in the time of the Romans, or earlier, a thriving port. The Saxon navy was stationed here, and at the time of the Conquest the imports and exports appear to have been considerable. As an illustration of the times, we may mention that one article of the latter was slaves, captured from the Welsh, and at other times exchanged for merchandise with the Northumbrians, "who never scrupled to dispose of their nearest relatives." Its other exports were hides, fish, (the salmon of the Dee being highly esteemed so long as a thousand years ago,) with lead and copper ore from the Cambrian mines, and its famous county staple, cheese. Its imports then were the luxuries of Venice and the East, spices, fruits, wines, furs, &c., with holy relics, costly armour, Damascus sword-blades, and other like articles. The manufacture of calf and other skins constituted a large proportion of the trade in the reign of Elizabeth and her successors, and was followed by the Irish linen business, of which article it was the chief emporium up to the commencement of the present century. As early as the reign of Henry the Seventh we find that King remitting £80 (a large sum in those days) of his annual fee farm rent, in consideration of "the decay of the haven and river," and from that date the commerce dwindled, and Liverpool reaped the advantage. But notwithstanding this great detriment, the Dee receives and returns considerable supplies of mineral ores, manufactured iron, coal, timber, wine, mineral oils and

grease, bone manure, slates, corn, cheese, &c. The city trade includes large flour mills, lead-works, and tobacco, pipes, cork, glove, and boot and shoe manufactories. Ship-building, both iron and wood, was until lately a branch of industry here, but these works are now located at Saltney, a short distance down the river. The railway traffic also amounts to a very large tonnage, and is rapidly increasing. The population of the city and borough is about 40,000, and its suburbs are yearly extending.

THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

MUNICIPAL institutions were first introduced into Britain by the Romans, and there is no doubt that Chester, as a Roman colony, had the same privileges as Roman citizens. The first charter was granted to the city by the Earl Ranulph, who prohibited any but citizens to buy and sell within the city, except at the fairs. Previous to this charter, King says "they used by prescription divers liberties, and enjoyed a guild mercatory, that is, a brotherhood of merchants, and that whosoever was not admitted of that society, he could not use any trade or traffick within the city." Officers, called leave-lookers, were appointed to see that these privileges were not infringed, and exacted small sums from strangers, for liberty to retail their wares. Ranulph's charter was confirmed by the succeeding earls, and further established and extended with valuable privileges and exemptions by several kings. In the 26th year of Henry the Third's reign, Chester was governed by a mayor, the first on record, except of London, which existed only fifty-eight years previously. By the Municipal Corporation Act of 1836, the local government is now vested in thirty-two town councillors, elected by the burgesses, who serve for the term of three years; the councillors elect ten aldermen, who hold office for six years, and any member of the council is eligible to fill the office of mayor. As early as the thirty-second year of the reign of Henry the Eighth, the city obtained the privilege of returning two burgesses to represent them in the English parliament, and by the Reform Act of 1832 retains the same. Chester is one of the few boroughs where the franchise was secured to the freemen by that Act.

THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER.

THEODORE, the first Anglo-Saxon Primate, ordained at Rome in 669, appointed St. Chad the first Bishop of Chester, who fixed his seat at Lichfield. The diocese of Chester seems to have continued one with Lichfield until the Conquest, when Peter, the first Norman Bishop of Lichfield, removed his seat from little Lichfield to greater Chester. He fixed his throne in the minster of St. John, the church then famous as the legendary scene of the penitence of Harold and of the Emperor Henry the Fifth. The stately Norman work which now remains is most likely due to this bishop, for his successor, Robert of Lindsey, chaplain to William Rufus, moved his throne again to Earl Leofric's minster at Coventry. Still the bishops were often spoken of as Bishops of Chester, and St. John's kept up

a claim to be looked upon as a third cathedral church alongside of Coventry and Lichfield. Its pretensions, however, did not save it at the suppression of colleges under Edward the Sixth, nor did it lead Henry the Eighth to make it the see of the later bishopric of Chester, which he made a distinct though altogether not a new diocese, taken partly out of Lichfield, partly out of York, and stretching from Cheshire into Cumberland. For that purpose he chose the suppressed Abbey of St. Werburgh, and thus Chester may be said to contain two cathedrals. Oddly enough, the episcopal dwelling, formerly made out of the abbot's quarters at St. Werburgh's, has been lately moved to the near neighbourhood of St. John. The see remained intact from the time of the Reformation until 1849, when John Sumner, D.D., was translated to Canterbury, the diocese again divided, and Manchester made a bishopric. It was of this bishop Sir Robert Peel said, "he was the hardest worked man in England; his diocese being the largest, containing two million souls, and his income the smallest." Among the more celebrated names of men who have been Bishops of Chester, are those of Hall, Wilkins, and Pearson—the author of "The Exposition of the Creed," "whose very dross was gold,"—Archbishop Markham, of York, Beilby Porteus, Majendi, Law, Bloomfield, Sumner, and the unostentatious "good bishop" Graham. The present diocesan is William Jacobson, D.D., sometime Vice-Principal of Magdalen Hall, Public Orator, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, and D.D. by decree of Convocation. The income of the see is £4,500.

ROUTE FROM THE STATION.

ASSUMING that the visitor arrives "by rail," a few brief particulars respecting the Station will not be out of place. It is the terminus of six lines, the roof covers an area of 123,000 feet, there are more than thirteen miles of railway lines and fifty-one turn-tables within its precincts. One hundred and thirty passenger trains arrive and depart daily, containing about 21,500 persons, or nearly three millions annually. Outside the Station is the Queen Hotel, containing one hundred bedrooms, and united by a tunnel under the City-road with the Queen Commercial Hotel at the opposite corner. From the bridge over the Ellesmere Canal, on the left, are seen the lofty tower of Messrs. Walker's Shot and Leadworks, the large Steam Flour Mills of Messrs. Frost, and in the distance, the massive reservoir and tower of the Waterworks. In the City-road is a temporary wooden structure, used as a circus and theatre, and facing the City-road, in Foregate-street, is the Bars Hotel. Close at hand is the chief entrance to Grosvenor Park, with its handsome Lodge, adorned with figures of the Norman Earls of Chester and their shields. There is a noble marble statue of the late Marquess of Westminster, who presented the park to the citizens of Chester, erected on a site which commands an extensive view, comprising the ruined fortress of Beeston Castle, the Ridley and Peckforton hills, and the winding course of the Dee. Near the statue are the guns captured at Sebastopol, and on the opposite side of the river is Queen's Park, which is approached by a suspension bridge. At the bottom of the hill is the river terrace, near which is a celebrated spring, called "Billy

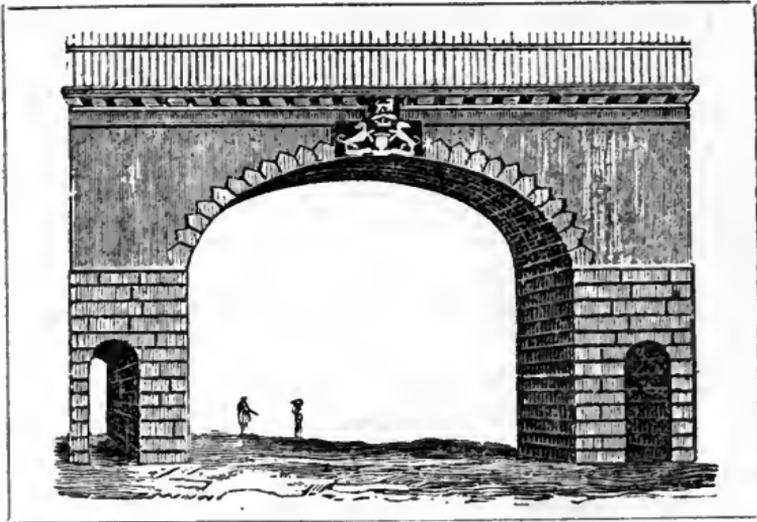
Hobby's Well." The quarry at the west end forms the most picturesque portion of the park, and here is placed an ancient archway, removed from the Nun's Gardens, on the Walls, near the Castle.

Adjoining the Park is the venerable church and romantic ruins of the Priory of St. John, founded by King Ethelred in 689. It was formerly the cathedral of the diocese, and is the most interesting of our ecclesiastical structures, and connected with great historic events, referred to in the sketch of ecclesiastical history. A flight of steps at each end of the churchyard leads to the Groves, a pleasant promenade, the river, where boats and barges can be hired, or a trip to Eccleston or Eaton Hall in the steamer.

Returning to Foregate-street, we pass Sellar-street on the right, and Love-street on the left. At the corner is a large mansion, once the residence of the Barnstons, a great Cheshire family. Further on the right is Queen-street, where the Independent and Roman Catholic Chapels are situated. About this part of Foregate-street are, at intervals, specimens of the Rows, which were once continuous on each side of the street. Passing by the Union Hall, where the Lancashire and Yorkshire merchants formerly exhibited their goods at fairs, we arrive at Frodsham-street, leading to the Cattle Market and Railway Station. In this street is the Quakers' Meeting-house. A little to the left is John-street. At the top is the handsome Doric building of the Old Bank; lower down on the left is the National Provincial Bank of England, and the Chapel of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. On the opposite side is the Post and Telegraph Office, the Free Library and Reading Room, and Wesleyan Chapel, School, and Minister's residence. The little street on the left leads to St. John's Church, the new Bishop's Palace, and Grosvenor Park. The old family mansion at the end of the street is occupied as a convent, and the archway through the City Walls is called the Newgate.

Having explored the eastern suburbs, it will be best to return and commence our inspection of the Walls, prefacing it with a few historical particulars. They are the only perfect specimens of this kind of fortification in England, and are built of red freestone. They are now about two miles in extent, and are kept in repair by the Corporation. The view from the Northgate is universally admired. In King's "Vale Royal" it is stated they were first built by Marius, a British King, in A.D. 73, and other historians state that they were only rebuilt by the Romans, and the remains of their masonry attest their origin. It is certain that, in 907, Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, restored, and perhaps enlarged the Walls to their present extent. In 1224 an assessment was ordered for repairing them, though subsequently, either parsimony or sheer ignorance of true policy, has permitted several prominent structures which varied the monotonous aspect of our ramparts, so lately as the beginning of the present century, to be removed ere they even had become ruinous. Let the visitor now refer to the "Excursionist's Illustrated Plan," facing the title-page of this "Guide," where he will find the chief objects of interest, along the Walls and in the Streets, denoted, and ascending the steps on the north side of the Eastgate, commence

A PROMENADE OF THE WALLS.

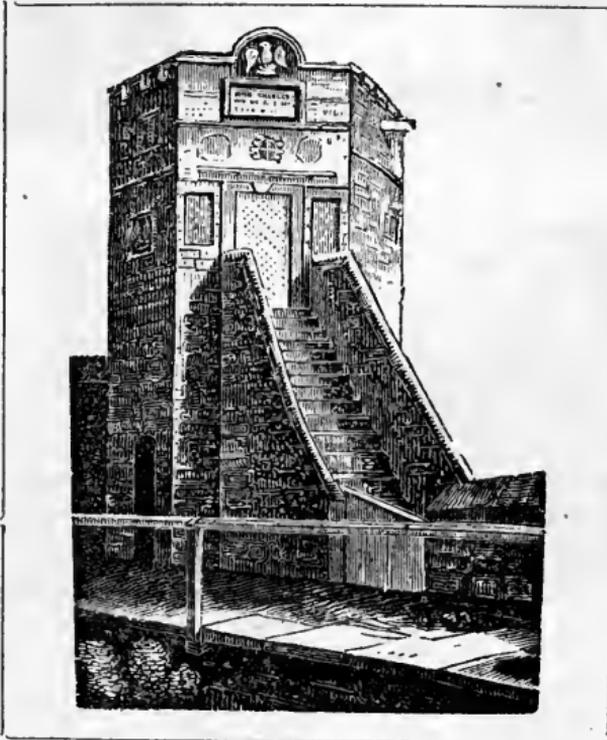


THE EASTGATE.

THIS gate, erected at the expense of Earl Grosvenor in 1769, stands on the site of the old Roman gate, one arch of which is still to be seen on the left side of these steps. At a little distance towards the north, we come in view of the Cathedral. It is said to occupy the site of a temple dedicated to Apollo, and a Roman gravestone and altar have been discovered close by. In the second century the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul stood here, which was the mother church for Chester and seven miles round for three hundred years and more. To this monastery the relics of St. Werburgh were removed in 875. The great reputation of this saint appears to have induced Ethelfleda, Countess of Mercia, to remove the old monastery of St. Peter to the centre of the city, and to erect on its site a convent dedicated to St. Werburgh and St. Oswald. Hugh Lupus laid the foundation stone of a magnificent abbey, where he was buried, and Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, regulated the foundation, and appointed Richard, his chaplain, the first abbot. It was not until about two hundred years after, in 1492, that the abbey was completed by Abbot Ripley, and assumed its present dimensions. On the dissolution of the monasteries Chester was erected into an independent bishopric, and St. Werburgh's became the cathedral. This edifice is remarkable as preserving so much of the monastic building: cloister, refectory, chapter-house, abbot's lodgings, all are there, and it is one of the best places for studying monastic arrangements. The most striking feature is the enormous south transept, used as the parish church of St. Oswald. In the choir is the shrine of St. Werburgh, a rich specimen of Gothic architecture, decorated with thirty small statues, representing king and saints of the royal Mercian line, ancestors and relations of St. Werburgh. The cloisters are on the north side of the church, and form a quadrangle of 110 feet square. A lavatory projects on the west side, and on the east side is the

Chapter-house, where lies the body of Hugh Lupus, the founder, first Earl of Chester, and nephew of William the Conqueror. As the entire restoration of the fabric is now in progress, it would be superfluous to enter into a detailed description; but the historian and Archæologist will do well to consult the larger edition of "Gresty's Chester Guide," for particulars of its early history, architectural features, and gradual development.

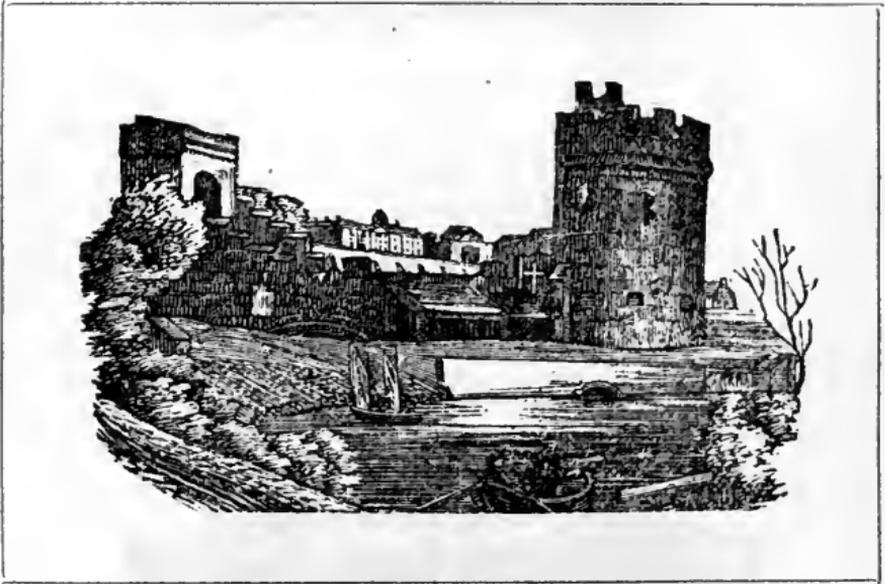
Leaving the Cathedral by the entrance in Abbey-street, the Walls are regained by some steps near a small postern which leads to the Kale-yards, or cabbage garden of the old abbey. A few paces further formerly stood the Saddler's Tower. To the east are seen the tall towers of the Lead Works and Water Works, with the massive Reservoir, and the extensive General Railway Station and Queen Hotel. The spire of Hoole Church is seen close by. We now arrive at the famous Phœnix Tower,



PHŒNIX TOWER.

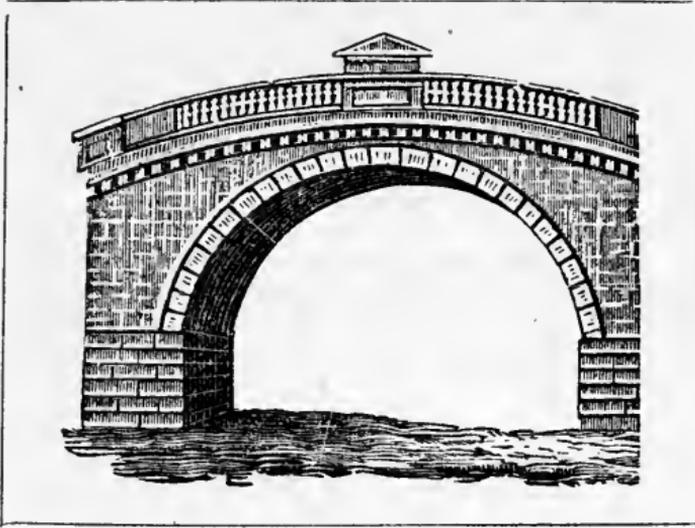
from whence King Charles the First saw his army defeated on Rowton Moor, the rising ground in the distance, on September 27th, 1645. Beneath the Walls here, is the Ellesmere and Chester Canal, deeply cut in the solid rock, and remains of Roman masonry, with a cornice, are conspicuous here. There is an extensive view from here of the Peckforton Hills and Castle, Beeston Castle, and Delamere Forest. Waverton and Christleton Churches are in the foreground. Next we arrive at the Northgate, a Doric elliptic arch, with a small arch on each side. The

view from this gate arrests the attention of every visitor. Near the gate is the Bluecoat Hospital, founded by subscription in 1700, and the ancient Hospital of St. John. The chapel of little St. John occupies the south wing. We now arrive at Morgan's Mount: a platform with a chamber beneath for a relieving sentinel. The view from the summit is grand and enchanting, exhibiting the windings of the Dee to its estuary; Flint Castle; the Jubilee Pyramid on Moel Fammau; the Lighthouse at the Point of Ayr; the Clwyddian Hills; and the Church and Castle of Hawarden. The red brick building to the right, with its many gables and clustered chimneys, is the Diocesan Training College. The alcove on the right is Pemberton's Parlour, where some fine old carving in stone remains. The field on your left was the Roman military training ground, now called Barrow Field, and was the burial place when the plague raged so severely in the city. At this angle of the Walls is Bonwaldesthorne's Tower, from which is an embattled passage to the Water Tower, built in



WATER TOWER.

1322, for repelling maritime foes; the river at that time flowing at its base. Here is the Museum, a Camera Obscura, and a good telescope. In the adjoining grounds are many ancient relics, and the Public Baths. Passing over the Railway, we next come to the Infirmary, opened in 1761, with a detached Fever Hospital in the rear. The large building adjoining is the City Gaol, now in disuse, and a little further on is Stanley Place, leading to the Linen Hall, where Cheese and Wool Fairs are held. We are now approaching the Watergate, the custody of which formerly belonged to the Earls of Derby, whose palace was at a little distance up



THE WATERGATE.

Watergate-street, part of which still remains. The view from this gate is extensive and pleasing. On the opposite bank of the river is Curzon Park, below is the Viaduct on 47 arches, and the beautiful expanse of the Roodey, the best racecourse in England. The course is visible to every spectator, and reviews and Autumn Sports are held here. It contains about 84 acres. Proceeding along the Walls we come in sight of a grand and varied architectural display: the Militia Barracks, an extensive red stone building, in the Norman castellated style; the Etruscan Church of St. Bridget; the elegant Gothic Savings' Bank; Marochetti's equestrian statue of Viscount Combermere; and a side view of the gigantic arch of Grosvenor Bridge, two hundred feet in span: the largest arch of stone in the world. The Castle, so called, with its classic Doric portico, each



THE BRIDGE GATE.

pillar a single stone, forms the background. The Barracks and Armoury (which contain 40,000 stand of arms) form the left and right wings of the square; the Shire Hall faces the Esplanade, with its grand portico of twelve columns, each a single stone twenty-two feet high. Of the old Castle there only remains the square tower used as a magazine. A little southward stand the Dee Mills and the Old Bridge, of great antiquity. We have now arrived at the fourth gate, called the Bridge Gate, similar to the others, built in 1782. Going eastward, there is a fine view of the Causeway, St. John's Tower, Boughton Bank, and Queen's Park. The structure moored on the river above the Causeway is the Floating Bath. We now ascend the Wishingsteps and crossing the Newgate, complete our tour at the Eastgate.

THE STREETS AND ROWS.

The Streets and Rows of Chester are unique, and require some preliminary explanations. The Rows form a continuous arcade or gallery, occupying the first floor of every house on both sides of the four principal streets, and pillars or arches support the superstructure fronting the street. They are ascended from the street by steps at each end, and by other steps placed at convenient distances. When in the Rows, it may be observed that the entries, or lateral passages, have, in many instances, corresponding openings in the opposite Row, and that both are on the natural surface of the land; thus conclusively proving that the intervening street has been excavated. The object of such a singular construction has not yet been satisfactorily accounted for. With the "Guide Map" in hand, we now enter

EASTGATE STREET.

The first building that attracts attention is the Grosvenor Hotel, a noble building in the local style; opposite is the entrance to the Corn Exchange, and close by Werburgh-street, leading to the Cathedral. Opposite is Newgate-street, and here the Rows commence, where the shops of the chief tradesmen are situated. The street fronts of these establishments present a great variety of designs, but are mostly adaptations of the old half-timbered gable style. In the rear of premises on the south side of the street, two very interesting old crypts have been discovered. We now come to the Cross, where St. Peter's Church stands on the site of the old Roman Prætorium, where the governor dwelt and dispensed the laws. Straight before us is

WATERGATE STREET,

Where we find the most ancient and remarkable specimens of our peculiar local architecture. First, on the left, is a house with the inscription, "God's Providence is Mine Inheritance—1652." This was almost the only house in the city where the inhabitants escaped the devastations of the plague, and the pious tenant had this grateful memorial carved on the front. On the south side of the street is a house bearing the date of 1539. Lower down is a singularly decorated old house, having square panels filled with carved work of heraldic designs and scripture subjects. Nearer the Watergate is the old mansion of the Derby family, with curious ornamental carved work on the front. Trinity Church is in this

street, where lie the remains of Parnell, the poet, and Matthew Henry, the commentator. In Crook-street, on the same side, stands his old chapel, now occupied by Unitarians. The Custom-house adjoins the Church, and lower down is Nicholas-street, leading to St. Martin's Church (service in Welsh), St. Bride's Church, and the Castle. Returning to the Cross, on the left, we enter

NORTHGATE STREET.

Here we find the rows on each side more contracted and in the old style; those on the west side only having shops. They extend but a short distance, and on the left terminate at the Town Hall Square, where there is a commodious Market Hall, with a front of singular but striking architecture. The noble gothic facade of the new Town Hall now arrests attention. It is the chief modern architectural gem of the city, and worthy of its commanding site and dignified purpose. The Hall was opened by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, on October 15th, 1869, on the occasion of his visit to his ancient earldom. The Music Hall is on the opposite side of the street, and at the next opening we obtain a good view of the elegant traceried west window of the Cathedral. The new stone building adjoining the Cathedral is the King's School, erected on the site of the old Bishop's Palace. Higher up, and parallel with the front of the King's School, is the Abbey Gate, a huge pointed Gothic arch, included within a larger obtuse one. This leads to Abbey Square, where the Deanery and Registry Office are situated. The remainder of the street possesses no noticeable features, and is terminated by the Northgate, beyond which lies Upper Northgate-street, leading to the recently opened Cheshire Lines Northgate Station, St. Thomas's Church, the Diocesan Training College, and Lunatic Asylum. We now return to the Cross, and enter

BRIDGE STREET:

An open and spacious street, extending 554 yards from the Cross to the Old Bridge, and is characterised by many features of deep interest to the antiquarian, especially an old crypt in the rear of Messrs. Powell and Edwards's premises. Here the rows are lofty, and contain splendid shops; prominently among which are those erected by the late Marquess of Westminster, on the site of the old Feathers' Hotel. In the rear of the shop of Mr. Rathbone, newsagent, is the Roman Sweating bath. On the opposite side of the street is Commonhall-lane. The rows on the east side terminate at St. Michael's Church. At the corner is Pepper-street, leading to the Volunteer Drill Hall, Baptist, and New Connection Chapels. Opposite the church is Grosvenor-street, leading to the Savings' Bank, Castle, Matthew Henry's Monument, Combermere Statue, the New Bridge, and the Cemetery: a picturesque spot, which deserves a visit. Lower Bridge-street contains some fine specimens of our old domestic architecture. The most remarkable are the Falcon Inn, the Bear and Billet, a house on the left hand side, bearing the date of 1603, and the old mansion of the Gamul Family, on the site of which is erected shops and dwelling-houses. Here Charles the First resided during his brief sojourn in Chester. Nearly opposite is St. Olave's Church, and lower down, Shipgate leads by a steep ascent to the fine old Church of St. Mary and the Castle.

EATON HALL.

THIS princely residence of the Duke of Westminster is situated in a beautiful park about three miles south of Chester. From each point of approach it presents a picture of unusual architectural grandeur; the scenery by which the Hall is surrounded heightens the effects. Westward the view embraces the Mountains of Wales, and to the east appears the Peckforton Hills, with the bold rock on which stands the ruins of Beeston Castle. The River Dee, winding in various directions, imparts great beauty to the varied and extensive landscape. The principal approach to the Hall, from Chester, is through the Grosvenor Gateway: a fine specimen of Gothic masonry, situated at a short distance from the city, over the Grosvenor Bridge. The design is a spirited copy of St. Augustine's Abbey Gate, Canterbury. The present edifice, designed by Porden, is considered the most splendid modern specimen of the pointed Gothic in the kingdom. The walls, battlements, and pinnacles of the building are constructed of a light-coloured stone brought from Delamere Forest; and on the turrets and parapets are shields of the Grosvenor family and their alliances. The building consists of a centre and two wings, and the eastern and western fronts agree in general form and proportion. In the front a cloister extends along the entire length, and conducts to a terrace, 350 feet long. The principal entrance is under a lofty portico, the pillars of which support a groined ceiling. Such are the main features of this palatial residence; but as there are such vast alterations and additions making at the Hall at the present time, further description is unnecessary. The terrace at the east front slopes to a lake, and the gardens and pleasure grounds cover fifty acres. Near the Conservatory is a temple, in which is placed a Roman altar found near Chester. The Mosaic pavement was brought from Caprie. An iron bridge of 150 feet span, crossing the River Dee, which runs through the grounds, was erected at a cost of £13,000. The house of Grosvenor traces its descent from the uncle of Rollo, the famous Dane, who invaded England in 876. William the Conqueror, when he invaded England in 1066, had for his attendants, his nephew, Hugh Lupus, afterwards Earl of Chester, and Gilbert le Grosvenor, nephew to Hugh, from whom the present Duke lineally descends.

Tickets to view Eaton Hall can be had at the Grosvenor Hotel, at 2s. for one person, 5s. for three, and 7s. 6d. for five. To the Gardens only, 1s. 6d. for one person, 3s. for three, and 5s. for five.

ECCLESTON

Is a beautiful little village about two miles from Chester, much resorted to by the inhabitants of that city, and by strangers, from its vicinity to Eaton Hall. The chief object of attraction is the church, built in 1810, by the first Marquess of Westminster. The interior of the church is chaste and handsome. In the north transept is the mausoleum of the Eaton family, and opposite to it their pew. Over the altar is a fine painting, by Westall, of the "Dead Christ."

CAB FARES.

Cab Fares are 2s. 6d. per hour, and 6d. for a quarter of an hour; or 1s per mile beyond the borough.



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