

THE KING'S WALK BASTION

The Bastion is one of at least three towers that were added to the eastern defensive wall of Gloucester in the 13th century. These semi-circular towers gave the defenders a clear line of sight along the outer face of the wall as well as providing a platform for defensive artillery.

On February 20th 1241 "King Henry III granted to Henry, son of Richard Burgess, a little tower on the east of the town at a rent of 6 pence for him to dwell in". His new home may well have been in the one here. However there was another bastion built to the south of the East Gate approximately between the Museum of Gloucester and Boots.

A third tower was built at the corner of Parliament Street and Brunswick Road. This is probably the "turret of the King's Wall" where the Greyfriars established a school of theology in 1246.

The defences of Gloucester were significantly improved during the 13th century. The East Gate was rebuilt with near-circular towers either side of the entrance way, and the Almersham Postern Gate was created at the north eastern corner of the wall about 1252. The Outer North Gate was also built around this time and the River Twyver between it and the Postern Gate was used as a defensive line. This probably had an earthen rampart on the bank towards the town. From the Outer North Gate the Twyver ran westwards towards the existing Alvin Gate, at the junction of Hare Lane and St Catherine Street. This would have provided a further outer defensive line which extended westwards to the now vanished third arm of the River Severn.

Gloucester's strategic importance was at its greatest in the years leading up to and during the Barons War of 1263-5. Although the city and castle changed hands more than once during this period it seems that the town was assaulted by force on only one occasion when the precinct wall of St Peter's Abbey was breached on its northern side.

A new ditch was dug between the South Gate and the Severn in 1265 involving the demolition of some houses in that area.

The Bastion was revealed during excavations in 1969.

The Roman stone wall was added to the earth and timber rampart of the fortress about AD 87-8 and built to a height of 17 feet or so. The wall was modified and heightened several times during the Roman period and rectangular interval towers were added to the inner face. The wall was further modified and repaired during the medieval period.