

encroaching Taff in 1610. At that date the river would have run south to the sea across ground now occupied by the eastern parts of the bus station and the Central Railway Station.

The west wall of the town followed a course running north-north-west from the south-west angle for a distance of about 554 metres to the lower end of Quay Street. This long section had been undermined by the river by 1610. The main plan (Figure 2) marks the approximate line followed by the western defences before the Taff began to encroach within them. It is claimed that a section of the wall was exposed in 1885 near the Golgate, but its precise location is not recorded; its foundations were also thought to have been discovered in 1849-53 during the building of a new Town Hall on the west side of St Mary Street, when the lower part of a newel stair was identified.<sup>57</sup> More recently, two substantial sections of walling close to the suggested line were encountered during the building of the multi-storey car park on the site of the former Westgate Street Fire Station, in the angle made with the south side of Quay Street. The sections of wall lay parallel to the north side of Westgate Street and 8 metres within its line. Overall they defined an 11 metre length of substantial wall, 1.20 metres thick and up to 3.57 metres high, its top only slightly below the present ground level. These fragments were interpreted as part of the nineteenth-century quay made obsolete when the Taff was diverted to its present course in 1849-53, and their position is marked in brick on the ground floor of the car park. However, it is possible that a section of the town wall had been exposed; only 3.50 metres south of Quay Street, the remains would have been close to the Blanch Gate. Further south two walls ran back at right angles to the substantial wall described above. Even if these walls were correctly interpreted as a dock enclosure or slipway of late date, this need not conflict with the view that the wall parallel with Westgate Street represented part of the medieval town wall.<sup>58</sup> The old OS large-scale maps mark the site of the Blanch Gate at the bottom of Quay Street and plot the faceted line of the west wall running north from that gate to the West Gate. This line is shown on the main plan, although no evidence has been found to justify its precision.

## Cowbridge

### *Development of the borough*

The walled town of Cowbridge was founded on 13 March 1254 by Earl Richard de Clare as a demesne borough, and it prospered and expanded so rapidly that by 1307 it had become one of the most populous boroughs of Wales.<sup>59</sup> It was located on the Portway, the old Roman road, which provided it with the good communications essential for its growth as a trading centre. In addition, it lay at the centre of the Vale proper, the most

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 22, 310.

<sup>58</sup> P. V. Webster, 'Excavations in Quay Street, Cardiff 1973-74', *Arch. Camb.*, 126 (1977), 88-90, 96-8.

<sup>59</sup> Beresford, *New Towns*, table IX.2, 255-6. The principal accounts of Cowbridge are: L. J. Hopkin-James, *Old Cowbridge: Borough, Church and School*

(Cardiff, 1922); J. Richards, *The Cowbridge Story* (Bridgend, 1956); B. L. James and D. J. Francis, *Cowbridge and Llanblethian Past and Present* (Barry, 1979); D. M. Robinson, *Cowbridge: The Archaeology and Topography of a Small Market Town in the Vale of Glamorgan* (Swansea, 1980).

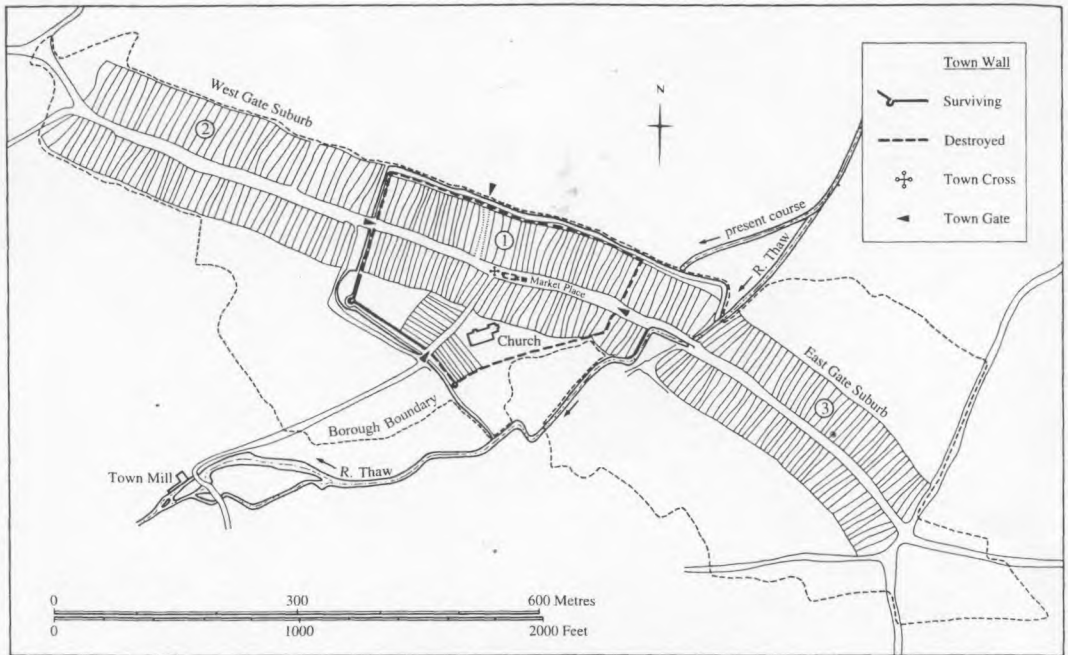


FIGURE 5. Cowbridge: the medieval walled town and its suburbs.

fertile area of the Vale of Glamorgan, and was well situated to serve as the main market for the largest and richest demesne manor, administered from Boverton by Llantwit Major, near the coast about 6.5 kilometres to the south, but extending north to Llysworney, where it abutted Llanblethian manor a short distance west of Cowbridge. It was similarly convenient as a market serving the lord's knightly tenants of the shire-fee. Cardiff lies about 19 kilometres to the east, across the Ely and Taff rivers, and Kenfig is 20.5 kilometres to the west.

The foundation of Cowbridge can be seen as part of more determined policies in the exercise of lordship begun by Earl Richard and developed by his successor, Earl Gilbert. Cowbridge was not given its own castle. Llanblethian Castle was only about 0.5 kilometres south-west of the town and it continued to be maintained; as late as the sixteenth century it served as the prison of the lordship, and its constable acted as the mayor of Cowbridge.

Robinson has made a detailed analysis of the growth of medieval Cowbridge based on a careful reconstruction of the medieval burgage plots of the town, using the cartographic evidence of the 1841 Tithes Survey and the first 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1878.<sup>60</sup> By this means he was able to plot 285 characteristically long, narrow burgage plots, all but eighteen of them set end-on to each side of the old road, the exceptions being those lining the outer end of the medieval Rood Street (now Church Street) in

<sup>60</sup> Robinson, *Cowbridge*, 39–43, and figs. 9, 10 (n. 2).

the south of the walled area (Figure 5). The plots were disposed in three distinct but contiguous zones: at the centre, about a hundred lay within the walls; outside the walls, about eighty-six were ranged along the road in the western suburb (Westgate); and about ninety-nine formed the eastern suburb (Eastgate). The burgages were generally uniform, at an average of about 67 metres long to the north of the road and about 55 metres to the south side, but there was some variation in their widths, suggesting that some of the nineteenth-century boundaries represented the amalgamation or subdivision of original plots. The total of 285 plotted, however, is close to the maximum recorded medieval total of 320.

The increase in burgages in the time of Gilbert de Clare II would have generated a spread of settlement well beyond the primary walled area, where Robinson estimated that a maximum of eighty to ninety burgages could have been accommodated, assuming that some of the 1841 plots represented subdivided burgages. His suggestion that this total had been reached by at least 1275 is mistaken, based on the 135 burgages purportedly recorded in 1281, but in fact relating to the year 1316.<sup>61</sup> It is probable that extra-mural settlement would have become necessary as early as 1269, when the average annual increase of 5.4 burgages under Gilbert II would have brought the total to ninety and exhausted available space in the walled area.

The suggested early development of extra-mural suburbs from about 1269 would strengthen the view that the town walls were built when the borough was founded by Earl Richard. The claim that the walls date to the early fourteenth century is not demonstrated by any documentary or architectural evidence, and no dating evidence was produced when two sections were cut across the line of the north wall. The excavations also failed to discern any evidence that the walls replaced a primary rampart. The internal stone-revetted bank behind the surviving section of the wall running north from the south-west angle-tower is an eighteenth-century feature in the large garden behind Old Hall. It is possible, but improbable, that Gilbert II inspired the Cowbridge defences; given the estimated rate of growth this could only have been before 1269, by when it is estimated that the enclosed area could accommodate no further burgages. With its church and market-place, it seems more probable that Gilbert had inherited a borough already enclosed within strong walls and with only enough vacant land for another twenty or thirty burgages. Earl Richard's preference for the low-lying site on the Portway, rather than the hill-top beside Llanblethian Castle, would explain the immediate need for defences to protect his new town.<sup>62</sup>

Cowbridge continued to expand under Gilbert II's widow, Joan.<sup>63</sup> After her death in 1307 a period of stagnation set in, probably exacerbated by warfare and the Black Death.<sup>64</sup> The second half of the fourteenth century witnessed a full recovery and further expansion at Cowbridge, attested by the greatly increased number of burgesses in 1425.<sup>65</sup> The second flourishing of the borough seems to represent the climax of its for-

<sup>61</sup> Clark, *Cartae*, III (dcccxvi), 828 (Gifford's survey of 1361, misdated 1281).

<sup>62</sup> Beresford, *New Towns*, 183, 527-8.

<sup>63</sup> *Cal. I P M*, iv (35 Edward I), no. 435, 322-4.

<sup>64</sup> Beresford, *New Towns*, 554 (citing PRO, Chancery 134/33); *Glam. Co. Hist.*, iii, 340; Clark,

*Cartae*, III (dcccxvi), 828 (misdated 1281, and usually misquoted as evidence for only 135 burgages); *Cal. C R*, Edward II (1318-23), 541-2; Beresford, *New Towns*, 554 (citing PRO, Chancery, 135/105).

<sup>65</sup> *Glam. Co. Hist.*, iii, 355.

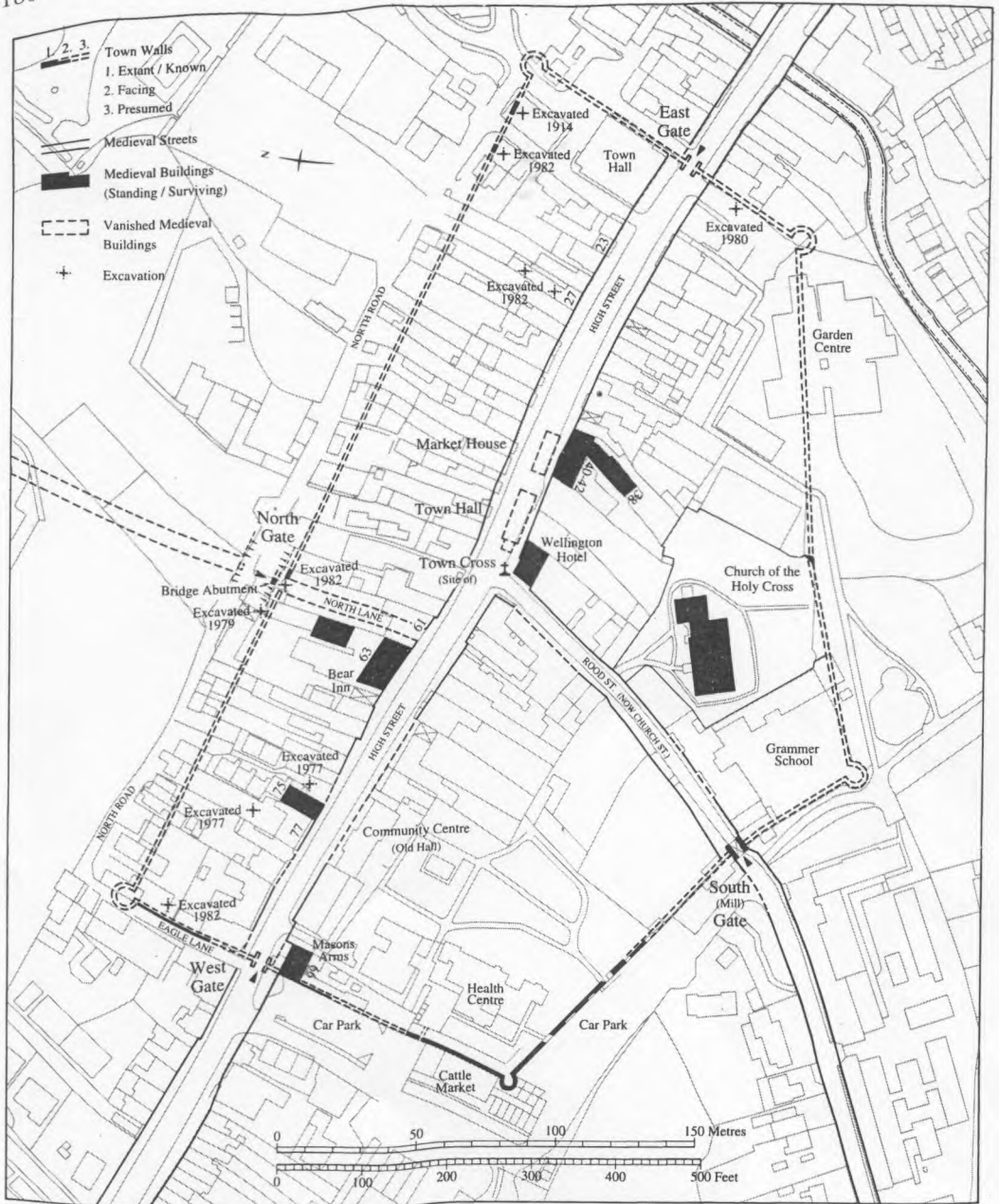


FIGURE 6. Cowbridge: plan of the town defences.

tunes. Robinson estimates a population of around 1,200 in the early fourteenth century and a minimum of about 1,400 inhabitants in 1425. Thereafter there began a long period of decline, shared with the other boroughs in Glamorgan. As the fifteenth century progressed many burgages were abandoned, and revenue from market tolls and brewing declined.<sup>66</sup> ?

The borough showed evidence of further decay in 1514; houses lay empty and derelict, and revenues had fallen sharply. Long before 1514 it is probable that the burgesses had ceased to yield any profits to the lord.<sup>67</sup> Cowbridge, however, still sounded quite prosperous in Leland's account:

As much of Cowbridge as is enclosed with the waul ston dith on the est ripe and the bridge of ston there. The great suberbe of Coubridge is cis pontem. The waulle of Cowbridge is a 3. quarters of a mile aboute. There be 3. gates in the waulle, the est, the west and Porte Meline by south.<sup>68</sup>

He noticed the church as a dependency of Llanblethian parish church, failing only to record the small North Gate of the town. The location of the town on the main route though the region probably saved it from the serious decline sustained at the more remote boroughs at Llantrisant and Caerphilly. The Acts of Union of 1536-43 enhanced the status of Cowbridge as one of the contributing boroughs electing a member of Parliament for the new county of Glamorgan, where Cowbridge ranked third after Cardiff.<sup>69</sup>

Cowbridge maintained its status as an important market town serving a rich agricultural hinterland. Merrick, *c.*1580, records its two markets each week and its two annual fairs; he also noticed its school and town hall.<sup>70</sup> A grammar school was founded in the early seventeenth century.<sup>71</sup>

In 1781 the population was 759, and the same number of inhabitants was returned in the first census of 1801; the number increased to 1,107 by 1821; by 1971 there were 1,224 within the old borough boundaries, excluding large new suburban housing estates extending south towards Llanblethian.<sup>72</sup> When a northern by-pass was opened in 1965 the town was relieved of the congestion of heavy traffic along its long narrow street. After this it retained its old market function, but it has also become a desirable residential commuter town. 905

#### *Description*

The Town Walls (Figures 5 and 6) outline a pentagonal enclosure embracing 5.50 hectares (13.50 acres), and measuring about 335 metres east-west by 217 metres north-south at its widest central point. The enclosed area is bisected by the medieval Portway, which formed High Street between the East and West Gates and served as the market area of the town. The road passed through the East Gate about 45 metres beyond its

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 355-7, with graph and detailed tabulated revenues for 1425-58.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 358.

<sup>68</sup> Leland, *Itin. Wales*, 32.

<sup>69</sup> Robinson, *Cowbridge*, 64.

<sup>70</sup> Merrick, *Morg. Arch.*, 37, 81, 136, 139.

<sup>71</sup> I. Davies, *A Certain School: A History of the Grammar School at Cowbridge* (Cowbridge, 1967); Hopkin-James, *Old Cowbridge*, 207-77.

<sup>72</sup> Robinson, *Cowbridge*, 65, 76.

crossing of the Thaw. Besides the main gates demarcating each end of High Street, there was a South, or Mill, Gate on the line of the south-west curtain, and a gate to the north. To the north of High Street the parallel North Wall and squared northern angles outlined a long rectangular area. A less regular outline was imposed on the walls enclosing the larger area south of High Street by the south-western course followed by the Thaw from a point just below the river crossing. The West Curtain and the shorter East Curtain constricted by the river maintained the square form to the north. To the south, however, long unequal south-west and south-east facets produced an irregular pentagonal enclosure. Only the South Gate survives; the West Gate was demolished in 1754, the East Gate c.1770.

The street pattern within the enclosed area was a simple T-plan, the short Rood Street (now Church Street) running south from the mid-point of High Street to the South Gate. A short alley ran north from a point further west along High Street to link with the North Gate, here named 'North Lane', since it was designated only as a 'footway' in a survey of 1630.<sup>73</sup> The two main streets of the town defined three zones which collectively accommodated about 100 burgages and the church. Burgages were mainly concentrated to the north, flanking High Street, with only about seventeen ranged beside the lower end of Rood Street near the South Gate (Figures 5 and 6). Divided only by the narrow 'North Lane', contiguous burgages entirely filled the enclosed area to the north of High Street, facing those ranged along the south side of the street and broken only by Rood Street.

'The Tower of Cowbridge' recorded in 1487 has long vanished, but its location within the walled town may be deduced from a deed endorsed 'carta le towre de Cowbryge'.<sup>74</sup> The deed, dated 26 September 1487, granted by the feoffees of William Prior, burgess of Cowbridge, gave to John Thomas, son of John ab Ieuan ap Thomas of Llanfihangel Place, certain properties within and without the walls. The lands granted by William Prior's feoffees included 'a tower with all curtilages and walls' within the walls of the town. The curtilage with the tower can be identified as that occupied by the town house of the family of Thomas of Llanfihangel Palace, now the Bear Inn, which incorporates fabric attesting a three-unit, lateral-chimney hall-house of late medieval date. The Dunraven estate, successor to the Thomas family, still held the later Bear Inn property in 1782.<sup>75</sup> It is possible that the 'tower' of 1487 was set on the line of the North Wall of the town. Alternatively, it may have designated a detached, late medieval, first-floor hall represented by the barrel-vaulted undercroft now supporting an eighteenth-century assembly room to the rear of the Bear Inn. William Prior, the grantor and suspected founder of the chantry at the town church,<sup>76</sup> was not 'William the Prior', as some have suggested, but William Prior, burgess of Cowbridge; there is no record of a priory at Cowbridge.

The walls survive virtually intact only on the south-west, with substantial sections of the West and South-West Curtain extending from the extant South-West Angle-Tower of the town. The South-West Curtain continues, rebuilt on the old foundations, as far

<sup>73</sup> Hopkin-James, *Old Cowbridge*, 48.

<sup>74</sup> Clark, *Cartae*, v (mccli), 1735-6.

<sup>75</sup> Clark, *Limbus*, 272; *Glamorgan Historian*, 9 (1973),

163, and plan between 160-1.

<sup>76</sup> James and Francis, *Cowbridge*, 43-4.

as the South Gate, which also survives. Recorded sightings of the North and East Curtains and the topography of the remaining south-east flank permit the delineation of the entire circuit of the defences. They enclosed 5.50 hectares (13.50 acres), far less than the 33 acres first cited in 1833 by Lewis and closely followed by most subsequent authorities.<sup>77</sup> Robinson suggested that the initial defences were of earth and timber and that the primary area enclosed extended as far as the Thaw to embrace 8.50 hectares (21 acres).<sup>78</sup> However, no evidence was found during excavations to suggest that sections of the North Curtain had been inserted in a primary rampart.

A survey of 1630 suggests that the North Gate, unnoticed by Leland a century earlier, was the first gate to fall out of use, the 'common footway' leading to it from High Street having been blocked by a stable erected by Richard Says.<sup>79</sup> The main gates continued to control traffic along High Street until the mid-eighteenth century. By then, however, the medieval walls were crumbling and the main gates were perceived as a hindrance to traffic through the town. For this reason, Thomas Edmonds of Old Hall was permitted to take down the West Gate in 1754, provided he carried away the stones at his own expense. The borough rolls mention the East Gate in 1763 and 1768, but by 1775 it had gone, and an adjacent property was described as 'near where the Eastern gate lately stood'.<sup>80</sup>

The 'Town Ditch' which fronted the walls is no longer visible. It was maintained in 1610, when it was decreed that 'noe maner of pson shall caste noe duste, dounge, nor noe other filthe in the streates nor in the Town ditches' or 'drive anie beastes into . . . the same'. The Town Ditch was noticed again in a survey of 1630, and later records suggest that its circuit remained open and continuous until the 1790s. The south ditch is mentioned in 1672, 1776, 1786, and 1787, and that on the west in 1748 and 1791. In 1794, however, Thomas Thomas was presented for 'making level' a section of the old ditch on the south-east side, and in 1808 it seems that the west ditch in Eagle Lane had been 'fenced and stopped'. The ditch on the east side seems to have remained open in 1813, and in 1832 it was 'cleansed' at the expense of the corporation. The ditch along the northern side of the town was open and apparently insalubrious in 1853, when it was blamed for a serious fever epidemic in the town; to correct this nuisance a covered drain was inserted and the ditch was filled in.<sup>81</sup>

The borough records suggest that the Town Ditch held water. A presentment of 1748 instructed Thomas Wyndham to raise the wall near the West Gate and 'stone' (revet?) and keep clean the watercourse opposite John Long's pool. The watercourse was either the ditch itself or a leat designed to feed it. The ditch on the south side is termed the 'main gutter' in 1776, and in 1853 the northern ditch clearly provided inadequate drainage eastwards to the river, being 'an offensive open gutter . . . containing a quantity of putrid matter'.<sup>82</sup>

The northern ditch was partly revealed in excavations in 1981-2, which also disclosed

<sup>77</sup> Lewis, *Top. Dict.*, i, s.n., Cowbridge; Beresford, *New Towns*, 554; H. L. Turner, *Town Defences in England and Wales* (London, 1971), 213; I. Soulsby, *The Towns of Medieval Wales* (Chichester, 1983), 115; James and Francis, *Cowbridge*, 17, 35.

<sup>78</sup> Robinson, *Cowbridge*, 44-5.

<sup>79</sup> Hopkin-James, *Old Cowbridge*, 71; Richards, *Cowbridge Story*, 144.

<sup>80</sup> Hopkin-James, *Old Cowbridge*, 71-2.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 32, 35, 48, 72-5.

<sup>82</sup> James and Francis, *Cowbridge*, 102.

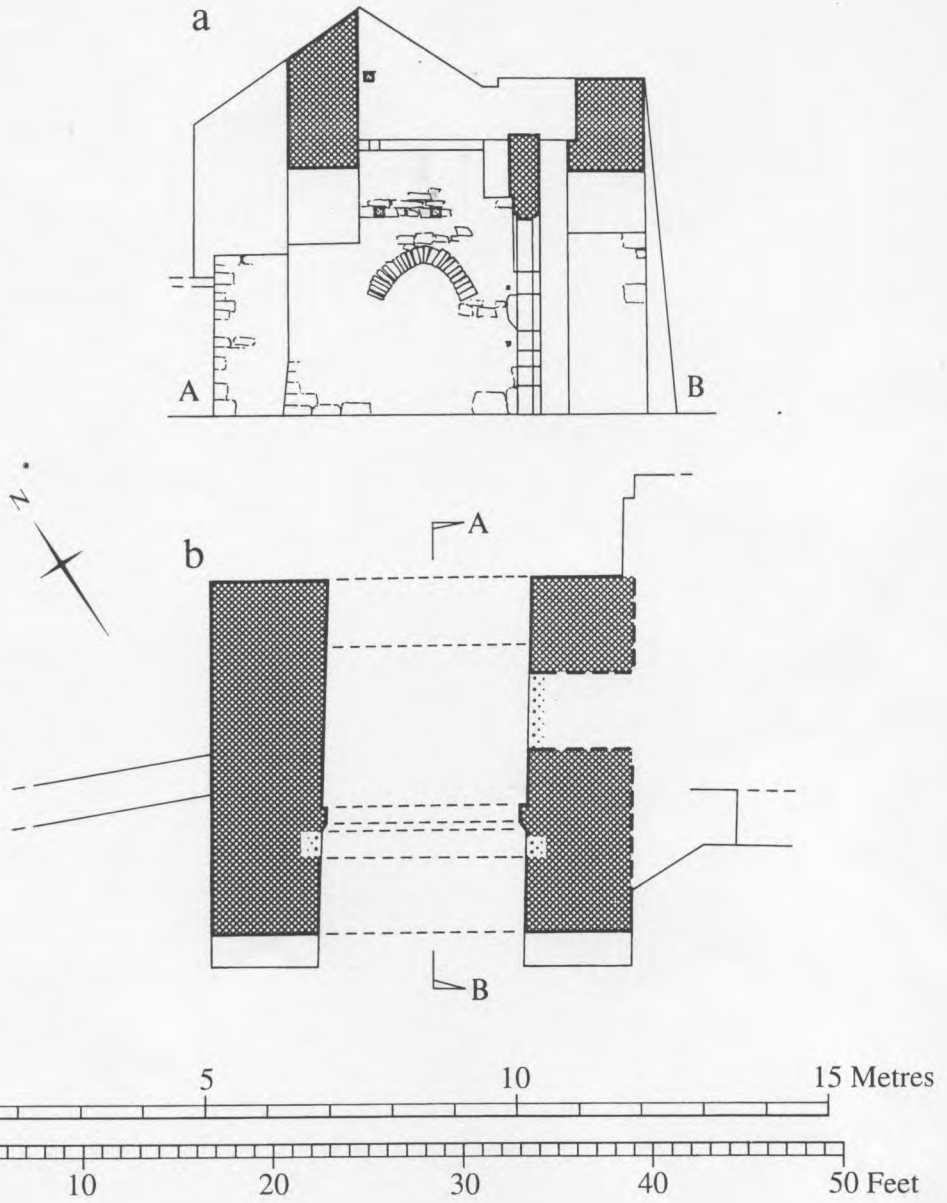


Figure 7. Cowbridge: the South Gate.



the North Gate of the town. Only the inner lip of the ditch and part of its scarp was traced, with a massive masonry bridge abutment fronting the gate. From the inclination of the scarp of the ditch, it was estimated that the outer lip probably lies on the far side of North Road, giving it an overall width of about 15 metres. A narrow berm, 1.50 metres wide, separated it from the town wall flanking the gate to the east.<sup>83</sup>

The South Gate (Figure 7) survives in good condition after recent restoration. Its masonry is of random rubble, much patched, with dressings of Sutton stone. This simple structure has been dated to the early fourteenth century, but no architectural feature attests such a date. The gateway consists of a square block, comprising a passage flanked by two thick walls and set astride the south-west section of the town wall at the lower end of Rood Street. The town wall survives on the west, joining the middle side of the gatehouse, but on the east side the adjacent wall is gone and its site is occupied by eighteenth-century outbuildings. The outer part of the gateway, facing south-west, possibly projected outwards into the ditch. The passage is spanned at each end by a rough arch of Lias limestone voussoirs, both springing from the flanking walls. The outer arch is elliptical and possibly rebuilt on original Sutton stone quoins at the outer angles of the passage. Outward subsidence towards the ditch may have necessitated the buttresses of late date that were added to the outer faces flanking the entry. The inner arch towards Rood Street is segmentally pointed, its roughly dressed Lias voussoirs springing from the side-walls. The gate-passage, excluding the modern external buttresses, is 5.70 metres long and unvaulted. The doors were set 1.80 metres within the passage towards its outer end, their position marked by the projecting jambs bearing another segmentally pointed arch, all framed with plain, broad-chamfered Sutton stone ashlar. A narrow, rectangular murder slot protects the front of the door, and there was provision for a portcullis, but very recent patching has masked the surviving portcullis groove on the west side recorded in an unpublished Royal Commission survey of c.1940. The passage within the recessed doorway is open above, but was formerly covered by a timber floor set on transverse beams supported by offsets to the flanks. Immediately behind the doors the east wall displays a blocked medieval doorway with a pointed relieving arch of rough voussoirs. The doorway probably gave access to the stairs leading to the upper floor.

The upper floor and original roof level are gone, and the present low parapet is probably of post-medieval date. A water-colour by Paul Sandby painted in 1777 shows the gate from outside the walls; since that date its appearance has hardly altered.<sup>84</sup> In 1777 a wall ran along the outer lip of the ditch, broken in front of the gate for a five-bar gate opening to the unmade track heading to the town mill and Llanblethian. The South Gate was repaired by the corporation in 1805 and 1862. The South-West Wall extends about 115 metres north-westwards from the South Gate, and about 48 metres to the south-east. At both ends it terminated at projecting angle-towers or bastions. To the west of the gate the first 30 metres of the line are marked by a modern boundary wall, with a cottage and garden occupying the site of the ditch. From its junction with the garden boundary the town wall survives as a rebuilding on old foundations for about 18 metres.

<sup>83</sup> J. Parkhouse, *Annual Report 1981-82*, Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, pp. 12-16.

<sup>84</sup> Moore, *Earliest Views*, 33.

Then there is a length of original walling for about 22 metres, standing 3.60 metres high with a thickness of 1.80 metres and pierced by a small modern doorway leading into the grounds of the Old Hall (occupied by the Health Centre in 1995); the wall here retains a strong external batter. After a break in the masonry, a further section extending about 12.20 metres is again rebuilt on old foundations. The final section extending 27.50 metres to the South-West Angle-Tower is original. White chalky mortar characterizes the extensive patching throughout and the area of rebuilding. The original masonry is of random Lias limestone rubble with yellow clay bonding instead of mortar.

The wall extending the south-west line eastwards from the modern building abutting the South Gate is comparatively modern, but it ends by outlining another boldly projecting, round angle-tower and may be accepted as a rebuilding on the old line. Within this section of the line the old grammar school grounds are set at a higher level.

The South-West Angle Tower is circular and about 5.60 metres in diameter. It stands 3.60 metres high; the lower part, rising on a strong batter, is original. The upper portion was rebuilt in the eighteenth century as a summer-house, with rendered faceted sides dashed with calcite gravel, and the interior filled in to first-floor level. At that level there is a small fireplace of the same period, but the roof has gone.

The West Wall contiguous with the South-West Angle-Tower is substantially intact for about 40 metres, its ditch occupied by the cattle market. Here, as it heads towards High Street and the West Gate, it is 1.80 metres thick and survives to a height of 3.40 metres with a pronounced external batter. The southern section of the West Wall is masked internally by an eighteenth-century earth terrace, contained by a stone revetment wall and outlined to the front with simple mock crenellations. These late features, along with the summer-house, represent the landscaping of the grounds of Old Hall. Beyond the original section the line is preserved by a modern boundary wall as far as the Old Masons Arms on High Street next to the former West Gate. The Old Masons Arms incorporates a 1.80 metres-thick section of the town wall in its west gable.

The West Gate, demolished in 1754, was probably a more impressive structure than the South Gate, but no evidence can be cited to confirm this. The projected line of the West Wall beyond High Street is accurately marked by the boundary wall running along the east side of Eagle Lane. Immediately behind this wall, in the grounds of Woodstock House, excavations in 1981 distinguished a band of yellow sandy mortar thought to have represented the foundation trench of the West Wall.<sup>85</sup>

The footings of the North Wall were exposed at its east end during the building of an extension at the north end of the Institute.<sup>86</sup> The footings were 2.13 metres wide, cemented with yellow mortar largely consisting of clay, and with a marked external batter. This siting of the foundations was not precisely located in relation to North Road, and for long it was assumed that the North Wall must have followed a line approximating to the south side of North Street. In 1979 excavations at the rear of the Bear Inn disclosed that the north ditch extended back well within the south side of North Street and that one small section of the town wall within its line was built into the walls of an outbuilding.<sup>87</sup> The wall was 3 metres high and 2.20 metres wide and had a marked

<sup>85</sup> Parkhouse, *Annual Report*, 16.

<sup>86</sup> W. F. Evans, *Arch. Camb.* (1914), 304.

<sup>87</sup> A. Davidson, *Arch. in Wales*, 19 (1979), 40; Robinson, *Cowbridge*, 44-5, and fig. 11.

external batter. Further sections of the North Wall were identified at two points in 1982. Behind the Midland Bank on the property immediately east of the Bear Inn was a fragment 2.30 metres high, 3.60 metres long and 1.80 metres wide, with the characteristic external batter and yellow mortar of the medieval fabric. A squared termination marked an opening at the west end of this wall section; excavation located a bridge abutment of solid masonry fronting this opening and the inner scarp of the town ditch on which the abutment rested; the remains were part of the site of the North Gate. Within the wall a small trench disclosed two medieval footings, but it was not possible to determine whether these represented part of a gatehouse.<sup>88</sup> Behind the Midland Bank the North Wall had been set about 5 metres within the south side of North Street. The second sighting in 1982 confirmed the withdrawn alignment to the rear of Taynton Cottage, towards the east end of the wall, where excavations exposed the stump of the North Wall beneath an outbuilding and set back 5.20 metres from the road.<sup>89</sup>

Following the filling of the North Ditch in 1853 its area was encroached upon at the rear of properties previously defined by the line of the wall. It is very probable that many more sections of the wall were demolished during this encroachment. The plan (Figure 6) tentatively marks angle-towers at the northern angles on analogy with those known at the south-west of the enceinte.

The East Wall is the shortest and the least well-established. It is generally maintained that it ran north-south just to the east of the Town Hall. An excavation in 1980 disclosed a 'section of wall possibly related to the medieval town wall near the East Gate, and the lip of the ditch' at SS 9956 7461. No further details were reported, but the location is close to the presumed line as it nears another suggested angle-tower which probably marked the south-east corner of the town.

The South-East Wall followed a slightly re-entrant course in two unequal facets from the presumed but vanished south-east tower to the probable tower marked by the rounded revetment projecting at the south angle. From there the shorter facet of the South-East Wall appears to be marked by the modern revetment supporting higher ground within the grammar school grounds and the contiguous churchyard. At the south-east angle of the churchyard the facet ends with a rounded section of masonry which appears to incorporate medieval fabric at the base of its battered face. The feature is too close to the site of the South Tower to represent another such structure and only effects a slight set-back at the start of the remaining and longer facet on this flank. The boundary walls of properties marked the latter facet as far as the south-east angle until open ground within the line was taken over as part of a large garden centre around 1970. The facet was followed by a re-entrant of the borough boundary (Figure 6), which seems to confirm it as the line of the vanished town wall; only the boundary wall to the south-west end joining the corner of the churchyard remains. The general course of the South-East Wall was dictated by the south-western trend of the River Thaw along this flank.

<sup>88</sup> Parkhouse, *Annual Report*, 12-16.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.