

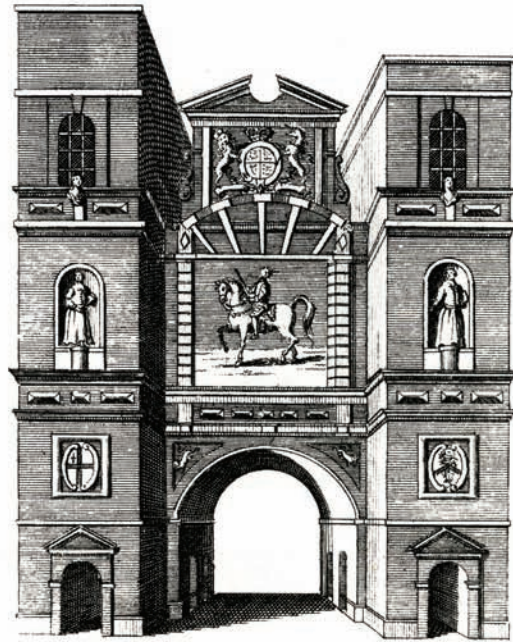
ALDERSGATE, *CITY GATE*

On railings on east side of Aldersgate

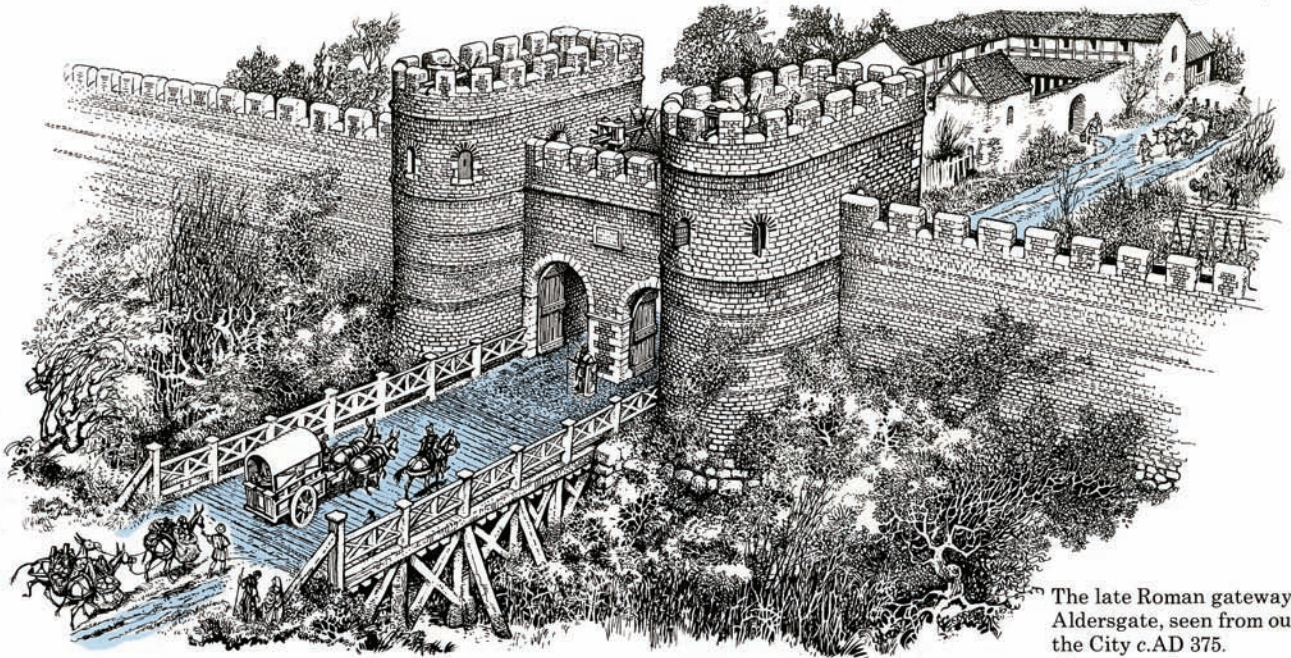
The increasing threat of raids by Saxons from across the North Sea in the 4th century led to the strengthening of the City defences. It was probable that the west gate of the Roman fort was blocked and a new gate was built here at this time. This gate was of late Roman military design with twin roadways flanked by semi-circular projecting towers. These were built of solid masonry and provided an elevated platform for catapults.

Aldersgate continued as an important gate in the medieval period as it gave access beyond the Wall and ditch to St Bartholomew's Priory, the London Charterhouse and the livestock market and fair on Smithfield. It was also sometimes used as a prison. On 20 October 1660 Samuel Pepys wrote '*I saw the limbs of some of our new trytors, set upon Aldersgate . . . A bloody week this and the last have been, there being ten hanged, drawn and quartered.*'

After being damaged in the Great Fire of 1666 the gate was rebuilt. This imposing structure was finally demolished in 1761 to improve traffic access.



The gateway at Aldersgate in its final form: built 1672; demolished 1760. 18th-century engraving.



The late Roman gateway at Aldersgate, seen from outside the City c.AD 375. Reconstruction.

GREYFRIARS, *MEDIEVAL TOWER* *AND CITY WALL*

Giltspur Street access is with permission from Merrill Lynch.

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Viewing is possible Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm and Saturday 9am - 1pm.

Foundations of several semi-circular medieval towers and stretches of City Wall have been recorded between Aldersgate and Newgate. At the angle where the City Wall turned southwards, another tower and a curved portion of wall adjoining the corner of the tower were uncovered when the Post Office acquired a large portion of ground behind Newgate Street, upon which Christ's Hospital once stood.

The Wall stretches for 4.6m (12 feet) and its full width survives at the base, with a sandstone plinth and the regular triple tile facing course on the exterior face. Above the plinth, five courses of squared ragstone, a double tile-bonding course, five further courses of squared ragstone and a second double bonding course survive. The Wall leans outwards and was evidently leaning and cracked before the tower was added in the medieval period.

The tower is hollow with ragstone masonry set in white mortar and while the external face is carefully pointed and smooth, the inner face is irregular and unpointed. The wall is just over 2m (7 feet) thick at the base and survives to a height of 8m (26 feet).



The area around medieval Greyfriars,
with the corner tower and Newgate in the foreground

Reconstruction drawing by Judith Dobie

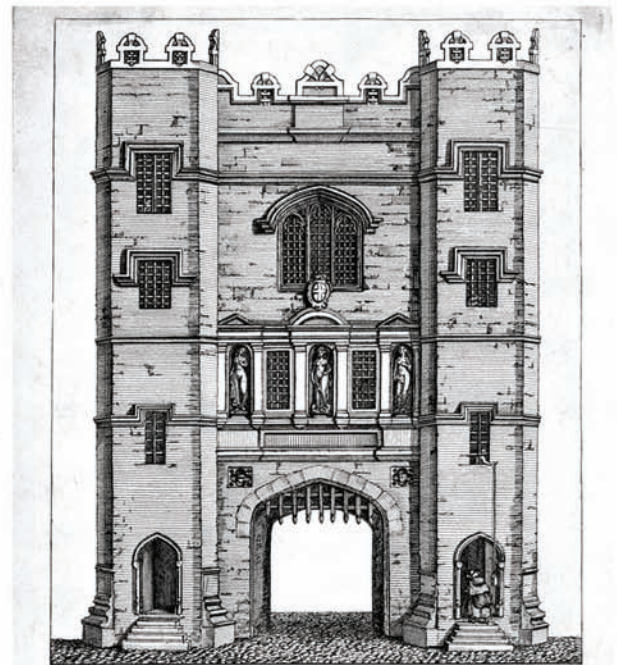
NEWGATE, CITY WALL AND CITY GATE

City wall in the Central Criminal Court (no public access), Warwick Square and Newgate Street

Discovered in 1966-9, the internal face of the City wall survives for a length of 6.4m (19 feet) in the basement of the Central Criminal Court. The rubble foundations are visible together with a triple tile-course which denotes Roman ground level. The external face has been entirely removed and the surviving width of the wall is about 1.55m (5 feet). Coins provide the dating evidence for the construction of the Roman Wall indicating that it may have been built about AD200. A medieval tower would have existed on the outside of the wall and evidence of the medieval ditch was found during excavations.

Roman Newgate led directly from the main east-west road of the Roman city and gave access to two major Roman highways, Watling Street North, the road to St Albans and the north-west, and the road to Silchester and the west. The foundations of the Roman gate, the only one yet to be recorded, were discovered in 1904. Its ground-plan was similar to an enlarged version of the fort gate with a double gateway entrance (10.5m wide) flanked by rectangular guard-rooms which projected both in front and behind the wall. Roman Newgate appears to be earlier than the Wall and may have been an earlier freestanding arch that spanned the main road.

The fortified gate at Newgate provided a stronghold which was used as a prison as early as 1190. The gate was rebuilt and improved in 1422 with money left by Sir Richard ('Dick') Whittington, Lord Mayor of London. Damaged by fire in 1555 and restored in 1628, it was again destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. When it was rebuilt in 1672, it was adorned with statues of Liberty, Peace, Plenty and Concord - statues that were transferred to Newgate Prison when the gate was demolished in 1777.



NEWGATE:
Considered as a gate, it most remarkably exemplifies, even reduced by fire, Whittington, in the single here represented, and from its remains only it, Newgate, from which, Newgate Street was named, upon the west front were four and on the east front were three figures, Liberty, Peace, Plenty, and in the top front were three figures, Justice, Prudence, and Moderation, the building was destroyed by the English revolution and was rebuilt with great magnificence through the liberality of the nation, as appears by the figures given in Wood's and Kneller's, as the entire destruction of the gate, four of the figures were put up on the south wing of the present new wall, otherwise...
See also the gate of Whittington, Street at Warwick Lane, London, from Wood's and Kneller's, London, p. 100, and the same in Wood's and Kneller's, London, p. 100, and the same in Wood's and Kneller's, London, p. 100.

Newgate in its final form, as the gateway to Newgate Prison.