

York City Wall -- 13 July 2022 -- York, United Kingdom

By Tom Allin

We are in York; luggage is in our apartment and therefore it is time to go exploring.



Outside the wall (on the right) to our apartment complex – a complex of four small apartments.

I hadn't taken 20 steps when I could see Monks Bar in the very near distance poking out above the buildings in front of me. Monks Bar is one of the primary gates through the old city wall. Monks Bar was built in stages in the 1400s with the last stage – top story – completed by Richard III in 1484. Monks Bar originally was constructed with a gated barbican and a series of murder holes from which defenders dropped rocks, etc. on to attackers.

The City Wall were primarily built in the 13th century and extensively renovated in the 1800s.



This side of Monks Bar was outside the city whereas the other side was within the city walls.

The city wall fortifications consisted of two sections of wall, one swamp, and one lake (for the king to fish). The stone wall is very narrow and not particularly high. However, most the stone wall is built on top of a previous dirt mound fortification so that from outside an opposing army was looking at 20' of a very steep dirt incline and then 10 to 15 feet of stone wall. This made it very difficult to bring siege machines close to the wall and almost impossible to lean a ladder against the wall. I wouldn't want to be part of an attacking force.



The City of York was built upon a previous Roman Fort. Only a small area of the Roman Fort has been excavated and is shown in the above photograph. I am standing on the city wall.

The Romans built their fort in AD 71. More history I didn't know: Constantine the Great was proclaimed emperor of Rome at this fort in AD 306.

Following the withdrawal of the Roman legions the Angle Saxons took over and named the city, Eoforwie, and made it the capital of the independent kingdom, Northumbria. Next came the Normans as in William the Conqueror or Bastard on how you see his place in history. Yes, he was a bastard because his mother wasn't married to his father, Duke Robert I – the Duke of Normandy and descendent of Rollo, a Viking.

William defeated the Anglo Saxons at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Following his crowning as King of England, putting in place his government for England he returned to Normandy, France in 1067 where he spent most of the remainder of his life. In summary in 1066 the English king was a French Duke descendent from a Viking.

And if you think the above is complicated, I haven't even talked about how Rollo – a Viking – became the first Duke of Normandy, France by appointment of Charles the Simple, King of West Francia.

Further, I haven't even touch on the religious aspects which were more complicated and political but include Rome accepting Christianity, Rollo accepting Christianity as part of his being named Duke of Normandy, the War of the Roses or the Civil Wars, or the buying your way into heaven or better yet the Pope's seat, and more.



Looking at the exterior of the city wall.



Treasurer's House is located behind the Cathedral.



Throughout the city are plaques celebrating the accomplishments of the citizens of York.



The Archbishop's Palace behind the Cathedral.



The above occurred 539 years ago and I assume is considered new history in the United Kingdom.



Roman ruins convert to a war memorial to the 2nd Division and unveiled by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother on 24 June 1987.





Bootham Bar was also the location of a gate to the Roman Fort 2,000 years ago.



I'm back walking the City Wall.



A private gate at the bottom of the handrail and stairs leading to the City Wall.



Grays Restaurant and Hotel backs up to the City Wall. Cathedral in background of photograph.



Below: cutting the grass beneath the city wall by remote control.



Not everything in York is old. Mowing by remote control.



Grass lands, a Henry Moore sculpture, trees and a lake.

We stopped to take in various but not all of the sculptures at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The Sculpture Park covers 200+ hectares/500 acres. My legs are getting stronger but today they are not ready to walk 500 acres of open fields.



A sculpture by Henry Moore.

After more than an hour and half of cross country hiking to see various sculptures my pint of beer at lunch was a necessary pain killer.