

Forty seven**CHESTER – A CIRCUIT OF THE WALLS.**

Chester is a lovely walled city, and there is no better introduction than this walk around the Roman and Mediaeval walls. You can leave the walls to explore anything else that takes your fancy and then rejoin for the rest of the circuit.

Catch the stopping train to Newton-Le-Willows and change there to catch the Llandudno/North Wales train soon after on the same platform. Alight at Chester Station. *This was called Chester General and served the Great Western and London and North Western Railway.*

Leave the Station and go ahead between the Queens Hotel and the Town Crier. *Notice the elegant hotel and once across the road look back to see the impressive Italianate façade of Chester General. It was opened on the 1st August 1848, having been designed by Thomson and Wild and built by the famous railway contractor Thomas Brassey.*

Continue down the road, which has many hotels, and cross the Canal Bridge. *To your left you see The Steam Mill and the shot tower.* Descend the steps on the left to The Old Harkers Arms. U-turn to your left to follow the canal towpath into Chester.

On your left you pass The Frog and Nightingale (*real ale and food*) and go under a bridge. A little further and take the path going left from the canal bank to a set of wooden steps up to the wall.

At the top of the steps go left along the wall. *At key points around the wall you will find plaques with historic details about Chester and the walls.*

First on your right are Chester Cathedral and its separate modern bell tower. Then cross the bridge over Eastgate *On this bridge is the Victoria Jubilee Clock (1897). There is also a fine view along the main shopping street.*

Continue along to Newgate Bridge. *Down below on the left a corner of the old Roman Fort and ditch is exposed. On the other side of the road you can see part of the amphitheatre and then just along the Roman Garden. At the far end of the Roman Garden is part of a hypocaust (Roman under floor heating system).*

Continue along past the WatchTower. *There is now a fine view of the River Dee. On the left you can see the very pleasant quayside where one can hire rowing boats or take the tourist boats along the river; and also the suspension bridge.*

Continue to cross the bridge over Lower Bridgegate. *To the right you can see up Bridgegate into the city (notice The Bear and Billet and various tea rooms. On the left is the weir (with a small hydroelectric power station (defunct), and bridge 79*

over the Dee.

You descend from the walls at this point. *Take a look at the bridge and the Roman symbols of justice and power on the Bridgegate. I recommend the Bear and Billet for Okell's (Isle of Man) real ales and good food.*

Walk above the river in front of the County Hall. At the right of the hall rejoin the walls. *Above you is Chester Castle.*

At the main road there is an option.

[OPTION: If you wish to visit the castle go right about 150 yds and enter through the classical portico. After your visit return to the same spot. *The castle was rebuilt in Greek revival style in the 18th Century to house the Cheshire regiment barracks and the courts. Pevsner considers this to be the best example of the style. There is a Cheshire Regiment museum (small charge) – see the fountain pens used to sign the Japanese surrender to General MacArthur in 1945!*]

Cross the road and continue ahead. *On your right is the historic Roodee Racecourse (first documented in 1539. Notice the villas above the river and the arches carrying the railway).*

As you come to Watergate there are many 18th century buildings on your right. *Notice the Infirmary of 1761.*

Cross the bridge over railways to Shrewsbury and Holyhead and you come to the Watertower. *Below is the canal. Its warehouses and lock buildings are typical designs by Thomas Telford.*

Continue along the walls to Pemberton's Parlour. *(Note the reference to muragers – officers to look after the walls.)*

Next is King Charles's Tower. This is at the green where you first joined the walls.

Descend the steps and retrace the route along the canal to Chester General Station. Catch a train to Newton le Willows and change there for a train to Eccles.

CATEGORY: MEDIUM EASY.
ARCHITECTURE, VIEWS, PUBS, CAFES, SHOPS,
RIVER TRIPS, CANAL, MUSEUMS, CATHEDRAL.
RAIL FARE: category four.

MAP OS 1:50 000 sheet 117