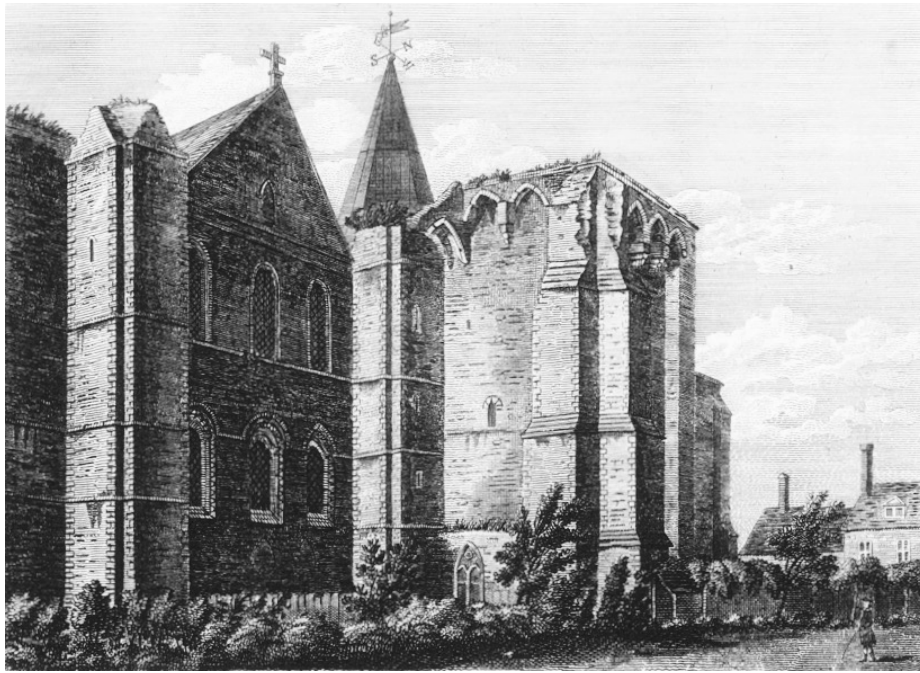


The north tower drawn by Francis Grose in 1781



Gundulph's Tower. / Williams Sc. / Published 1 May, 1783. By S. Hooper.

The north tower, seen from the north-east, drawn by Francis Grose in 1781. This seems to be one of only two good drawings (John Buckler's the other) made while the tower was still in a near-complete state, lacking only the wooden belfry which formerly stood on top of it.

A plate engraved from Grose's drawing was published in volume 3 of the 'new edition' of his *Antiquities of England and Wales*. I do not know who Williams was, but he made a very good job of it. Grose supplied the following short description:

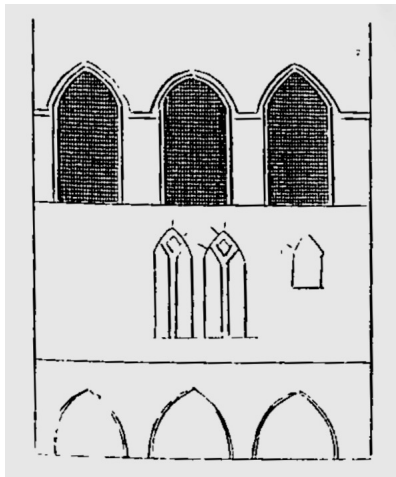
GUNDULPH'S TOWER, ROCHESTER.

THIS tower, which stands on the north side of the cathedral church of Rochester, is generally supposed to have been built by the bishop whose name it bears, as a place of security for the treasure and archives of that church and see. Some suppose it to have been intended for a bell tower, and others for an ecclesiastical prison, but whatever might be its destination, its machicolations, its loop-hole windows, and the thickness of its walls shew that strength and defence were considered as necessary.

This tower was originally in height about sixty feet, four or five of which have either fallen, or been taken down, its walls are

six feet thick and contain within them an area of about twenty feet square, it was divided into five floors or stories of unequal height, and had a communication with the upper part of the church by means of an arch or bridge, the steps of which are still visible. The common report is, that this was the only entrance into it; but on examination there were two other doors, one on the north side, at the base of the tower, and another on the third story. From diverse circumstances in the church, there are some grounds to suppose this tower was erected after that edifice was completed. This view was drawn anno 1781.

While Samuel Denne was writing his 'Memorials of Rochester Cathedral', Thomas Fisher pointed out to him that there was something wrong with this plate of Grose's. Denne misunderstood him; so Fisher drew a sketch to explain what he meant:



He was making the point that the small blocked windows in the north-east transept were not depicted correctly in Grose's plate.