

Bridgwater Old Bridge.

BY MR. W. BAKER.

THE building of the stone bridge over the river Parret at Bridgwater, which is represented in this engraving, was begun in the time of king John, by William de Briwere, and finished in Edward the first's reign, by Sir T. Trivett, a gentleman of Cornwall "whose arms being a trivet," says William of Worcester, "were affixed to the copings of the structure."

When Bridgwater was stormed and taken by Cromwell's forces in July, 1645, this Bridge obstructed the successful advance of the storming party for two or three days.—Oldmixon in his history of the royal house of Stuart, says "Captain Rynolds, of Cromwell's regiment of horse, at the head of the forlorn hope, drove the cavaliers from the draw-bridge at St. John's, which was let down and a passage made to the east gate, which was soon forced open, and Rynolds, entering Eastover with his horse, scoured the streets of that part of the town, up to the stone bridge. There was at that time a gate at the bridge, where the enemy (the royalists) made barricades, and drew up a draw bridge."

The massy piers of this fine old bridge obstructed the passage of barges up the river, and often occasioned much damage, at the first rush of the tides; in the year 1795 it was taken down, and the present handsome cast-iron arch erected in its place.



OLD BRIDGE, BRIDGWATER.
(REMOVED IN 1793.)