

THE OLD HARBOURS OF DUNBAR

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THE Royal Burgh of Dunbar, which faces the North Sea at the opening of the Firth of Forth (fig. 1), possesses a variety of claims to historical renown, and not least among them should surely be the fact that it exists as a seaport at all. Nature has done little to help and a great deal to hinder, as the coast is cliff-bound and beset with off-shore islets, the beaches are hemmed in by rocks, and in storms from any easterly quarter the earlier mariners must have found a dangerous lee-shore. Yet harbours of one sort or another have evidently served the place from very early times, and it is the purpose of this paper to explore their historical background, to describe the Old Harbour as it stands,¹ and to correlate structures with records in so far as this may be possible.² Some buildings associated with the 'Old Harbour' of today are also discussed in an Appendix.

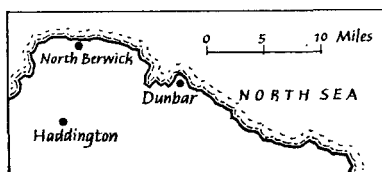


FIG. 1. Dunbar and the coast of East Lothian

Belhaven: the Middle Ages

The earliest navigators avoided the dangers of the exposed North Sea coast by using as their harbour a sheltered tidal nook among the sands at the mouths of the Biel and Lochend Burns. Roy's map of Scotland (fig. 2) shows the relationship of Belhaven village and Dunbar, and the outline of the tidal area as it was in the middle of the 18th century; this however, like that of the Tyne estuary as a whole, has been greatly altered by the reclamation of the flats. The origin of the harbour is obscure. No grounds exist for identifying Belhaven with the Dark-Age Aberlessic, from which St Kentigern's mother began her miraculous voyage, but as Professor Jackson places Aberlessic on this estuary, and not at Aberlady,³ the temptation to do so exists. The harbour was certainly established as early as 1153, when Gospatric, Earl of Dunbar, gave the monks of May a toft 'juxta meum portum de Bele'⁴; and another early notice dates from 1369-70, when David II granted to the Earl of March 'apud Dunbarre liberum burgum... ac liberum portum apud le Bellehaven... cum

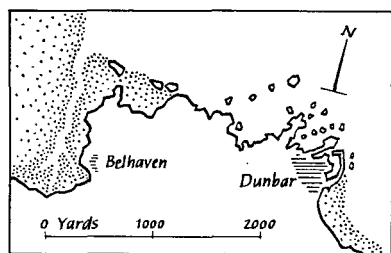


FIG. 2. Dunbar and Belhaven about 1755, after Roy. Scale and orientation are approximate

¹ The descriptions relate to 1965, when the field-work was done.

² In addition to published sources, use has been made of (i) MS plans and Board of Ordnance documents in the National Library of Scotland; (ii) MS Dunbar Burgh Council Books and draft Council Minutes, not individually catalogued but preserved in Boxes 21-24 in H.M. General Register House, referred to as 'Records'; (iii) MS Dunbar Harbour Accounts, similarly preserved (Box 20), referred to as 'Accounts'. A good deal of verbal information has also been obtained from Dunbar residents, which is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

³ *Studies in the Early British Church*, ed. Chadwick, N. K., 293.

⁴ *PSAS*, xc (1956-7), 74 f.

libero introitu et exitu navium'.¹ In later times Belhaven continued to figure as a 'portus', a 'receptaculum', a 'sea place' or a 'maritimus locus', along with Dunbar's other possessions, down to the seventeenth century²; and as late as 1814 the burgh was claiming dues, on a cargo landed in the Biel Burn mouth, in virtue of the charter of 1618.³

Belhaven Harbour has vanished, but it is known to have occupied the area, reclaimed by a sea-wall built in the nineteenth century,⁴ that is bordered on the S. by Highway 1087 and on the E. by the road to Belhaven Sands, and thus corresponds with the SE. corner of the tidal area shown by Roy (fig. 2). A haven set here would have enjoyed excellent shelter from all quarters except the N., and would have been perfectly suitable for fishing boats and other small craft which could rest on the sand at low water. The Lochend Burn, which is now piped under the children's playground, would have traversed it by the easternmost of the three channels marked by Roy and would have helped to prevent silting. Some structural remains were still visible in 1841, when a plan and a set of explanatory notes were prepared by a certain John Mason, who described himself as 'Surveyor, Belhaven'. The plan has disappeared, but a typed copy of the notes⁵ mentions a ridge of rock running '500 feet Westward from High-water mark, which formerly used to be the natural breakwater of the Harbour', but which, by 1841, had been 'almost entirely quarried out or away'; and likewise records that old residents still remembered 'a piece of built pier' extending southwards from the W. end of the ridge. Mason also found, S. of the ridge but within the tidal area, a straight line of wooden posts 'extending from High-water mark Westward 733 feet,' in a direction slightly south of west. Remains of some masonry structure were unearthed in recent years at the south-easternmost corner of the reclaimed area, in front of the old toll-house (Benston Cottage)⁶; this may well have been a jetty, as one of the blocks carried an iron ring.

Lamerhaven: the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

In its earliest phase, the harbour below the town, as distinct from the one at Belhaven, seems to have been known as 'Lamerhaven'. This name occurs in a charter of 1555,⁷ and the harbour is described as lying 'ex orientali latere castris de Dunbar'. It was probably no more than a natural tidal anchorage, sheltered, if precariously, from the N. by Lamer Island,⁸ the tidal island now occupied by the Battery (p. 188), and from the W. by the Castle promontory, but otherwise much exposed. It is clear that no artificial harbour-works existed in the middle of the sixteenth century, as de Beaugé remarked (1548-9) that a harbour could easily be made at little cost⁹; and in fact it was only in 1574 that the Burgh was authorised to

¹ *RMS*, 1306-1424, No. 340, p. 119.

² *ibid.*, 1546-50, No. 999, p. 224 (1555); 1593-1608, No. 1418, p. 507 (1603); 1609-20, No. 1921, p. 697 (1618); *APS*, v, 492 (1641).

³ Records, Box 22; 13 Sept. 1814.

⁴ Miller, J., *The History of Dunbar* (1859), 232.

⁵ With 'Accounts' (Box 20).

⁶ Information from Mr N. Swan, Belhaven.

⁷ *RMS*, 1546-50, No. 999, p. 224.

⁸ Dr W. H. F. Nicolaisen has kindly informed me that the place-name element 'lammer', as in Lammermuir, is to be connected with the Old English word for 'lamb'. The name 'Lamer Island' is still in local use.

⁹ Hume Brown, P., *Early Travellers in Scotland*, 67.

charge certain customs 'to the building of ane hevin under the toun, and be east the Castell thairof'.¹

That advantage was soon taken of the powers so granted is shown by the records of repairs to the harbour works that appear both before and after the turn of the seventeenth century. Thus in 1591 Dunbar was excused from attending certain meetings of the Convention of Royal Burghs on condition 'thatt the sowme of thre scoir li be employitt vpoun the reparrelling of thair deokayitt harberie'²; and on several occasions between 1600 and 1613 the Burgh was concerned to raise money for the same purpose,³ 'thair hevin and bulwark' being mentioned in 1605. Some more information about the state of the port at this time emerges from the charter of 1618,⁴ which refers to 'burgum regium de Downbar, cum liberis portubus, maritimis locis et receptaculis de Belhevin et Lamerhevin cum *lie* LamerCraig ex boreali occidentali latere ejusdem, et *lie* bulwarkis circa eadem, cum ceteris lapidosis saxis, *lie* ilandis, receptaculis *lie* Landing-places et creikis inter dict. portus de Belhevin [et Lamerhevin], cum aliis maritimis locis infra territorium dicti burgi'; and with this passage may be compared a corresponding one, in Scots, in the Act of 1641,⁵ which likewise refers to 'bulwarks' in the plural and confirms that these were in fact artificial structures and not natural formations of rock. The provisions regarding Lamer Island and the 'landing-places', creeks and rocks were probably concerned less with navigation than with inshore fishing, the prevention of smuggling, and the collection of seaweed for manure, as noted by Brereton in 1636.⁶ In 1618 Dunbar could be classed as a 'portable town', along with such places as Dundee and Aberdeen,⁷ and in 1655 as 'indifferent good'.⁸

The middle of the seventeenth century again brings records of repairs, and now on a much larger scale. The precise course of events in and after 1655 is not completely clear, but two Acts of Parliament,⁹ taken in conjunction, show that the harbour was ruined by a storm in December of that year; that the people of Dunbar petitioned the Council of State at Whitehall 'concerning the defectes of their harbour'; that this petition was referred to the 'Committee for the affaires of Scotland' for consideration and report; that the Council in Scotland relieved the Burgh of some of its assessment, but that by 1657 more money was needed; and that the Council in Scotland was then recommended to 'afford some additionall assistance' towards the repairs. No actual sum is mentioned in either of the Acts, but the *Statistical Account* gives £300 as the amount of the grant made by the Protector's government¹⁰ and this figure has been reproduced by all subsequent writers. Earlier in 1655 the Burgh had borrowed money for various public purposes, including the upkeep of the harbour,¹¹ and in 1666 contributions were again received from the Royal Burghs.¹²

It is only in the second decade of the eighteenth century that the records of construction in the harbour (*infra*) begin to appear in any detail, and consequently,

¹ *RPC*, ii (1569-78), p. 417.

³ *ibid.*, ii, 79, 207, 296 f., 320, 409.

⁵ *APS*, v, 492. The wording shows that 'et Lamerhevin' should be supplied in the Latin text of 1618.

⁶ Hume Brown, *op. cit.*, 135.

⁹ *APS*, vi, ii, 763 a, of 10 March 1656; *ibid.*, b, of 7 April 1657.

¹⁰ Vol. v (1793), 479.

¹² *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs*, iii, 588.

² *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs*, i, 363.

⁴ *RMS*, 1609-20, No. 1921, p. 679.

⁷ *ibid.*, 112.

⁸ *ibid.*, 165.

¹¹ *Records*, Box 24.

though the position of Lamerhaven is known to have been SE. of Lamer Island (*supra*), the nature and extent of the earliest harbour-works remain matters for conjecture. It seems safe to assume that the causeway leading to the Island was one of the original 'bulwarks', as it gives protection from north-westerly seas to the area of Lamerhaven as defined in 1618 and is not a particularly formidable piece of construction. The East Pier, of course, would have been a much more serious undertaking, but it is difficult to see how a harbour on the site in question could have had much value unless it was also protected from the NE. and E., and on that showing the East Pier, or a 'bulwark' in the same position, should reasonably be dated to the later sixteenth century. Unless it was merely a piece of official jargon, the phrase 'the peir and shoir' of Dunbar, which occurs in Privy Council orders of 1627, 1628 and 1631,¹ certainly suggests an unimproved foreshore associated with a pier or breakwater; and it is almost necessary to assume that an eastern breakwater, whenever it was built, must have had approximately the same dimensions and appearance as the existing structure, for the reason that, to give effective protection, it would have had to reach as near to the Island as possible without making the entrance to Broad Haven unduly narrow. There is thus little to support Groome's statement that the Old Harbour was 'commenced with a grant of £300 from Cromwell'.² Again, the boulders seen in an undisturbed part of the footings of the Island causeway, and their counterparts in the East Pier, particularly in its lowermost courses, may suggest that both structures belong to the earliest phase of construction, when natural boulders might well have been available for the lifting. Other remains illustrating early construction may no doubt have become obliterated in the course of later improvements; but it is possible that a rock-cut footway (fig. 3), which mounts the SE. side of Broad Haven almost opposite the drawbridge, may be a survivor of this phase. It is contained in a recess about 30 ft. long, cut back very roughly into the face of the rock; at its foot is a tumble of boulders lying at the base of the rock, itself cut vertical and partially topped with masonry, and rises steeply about 12 ft. to the level of the wharf SW. of the harbour entrance (p. 184). Its surface is slightly hollowed, and shows at least seven footholds, three of which are very distinct and recall a series noted at Cove Harbour, Berwickshire.³

The Old Harbour: the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

The Old Harbour seems to have assumed very much its present form (fig. 3) in the course of the second and third decades of the eighteenth century. Roy's map of Scotland (1747-55) is large enough in scale to show a general plan indistinguishable from that of today, and the records throw at least some light on the several phases of development. The principal feature of the whole is the East Pier, and within this there lies a smallish inner basin, square-ended on the S., and a larger outer division flanked on the W. by angled stretches of wharf (Pl. XVI, 2). This outer basin is divided from Broad Haven by a length of pier which returns south-westwards from the head of the East Pier; the harbour entrance, at the end of this returned work, opens into

¹ *RPC*, 2nd ser., ii (1627-8), pp. 18, 566; iv (1630-2), p. 294.

² *Gazetteer of Scotland*, i, 403.

³ *PSAS*, xcvi (1963-4), 218.

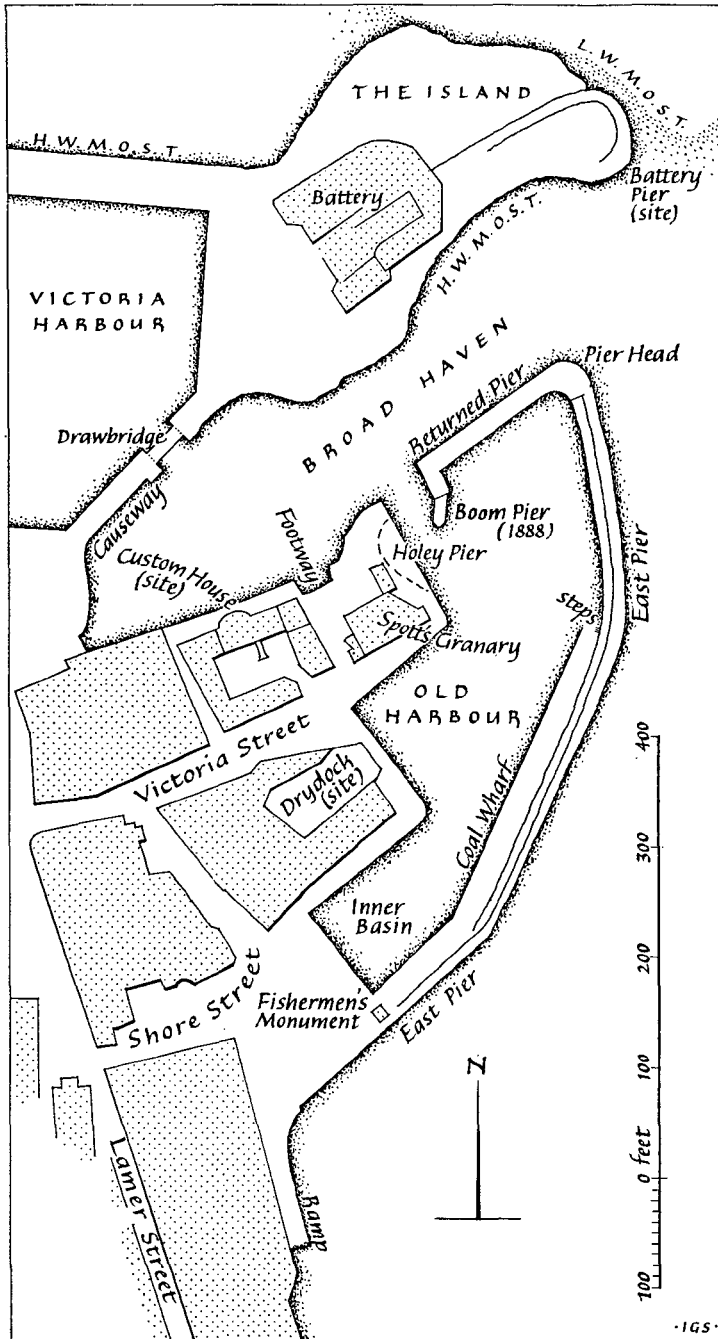


FIG. 3. The Old Harbour

Broad Haven, and it was through this that access was formerly obtained to the sea. The harbour is 565 ft. long,¹ and its breadth varies from 58 to 170 ft. The whole area dries out at low water, a plan of 1879² showing the harbour bottom as 9 ft. above low-water mark; depths of from IV to XVII (feet) are cut in the masonry of the W. face of the entrance, the latter figure being at the level of the quay top, and XI, XII and XIII on the opposite side. The greatest depth at high water has been given as 9 ft. at neaps and 14 ft. at springs.³

The piers and wharves, with their associated features, can best be described individually.

The East Pier

The East Pier has a total length of about 920 ft., its landward end, which acts as revetment to the open space that fronts on the inner basin, measuring 250 ft. along its curve, and the pier proper an additional 670 ft., its curving or slightly angled line running first north-north-east and then north. It is 11 ft. wide over the parapet at the landward end; at the pier-head, which is not in its original form (*infra*), the top of the parapet is 30 ft. above the rocks as left dry at low water. Although, as has been said, it must, in all probability, have been built as a single unit throughout its length, the appearance of the masonry varies markedly from place to place, particularly on the outer face. For example, at a point about 120 ft. out from the Fishermen's Monument, there is a footing of large beach-boulders, above them horizontal slabs of red sandstone, then more boulders, and at the top a wall-head and parapet of small coursed rubble (Pl. XIV, 2); but some 350 to 380 ft. further out, the basal stratum of boulders is a good deal thicker, and is encroached on at both a higher and a lower level by sandstone slabs set vertically, while further out again there are no boulders and the vertically-set slabs account for nearly the whole height of the wall (Pl. XIV, 3). However, such variations do not suggest successive phases of construction, but rather patching and rebuilding after damage, combined perhaps with alterations in the type of stone available. The possible significance of boulders in the lowermost courses has been mentioned above, and some of the recorded repair work was no doubt done on the 'bulwork deick', as e.g. in 1718 and 1719.⁴ In particular, the large expanse of vertically-set stonework in the seaward part of the pier (Pl. XIV, 3) can be confidently associated with another great disaster, comparable with that of 1655, which befell in 1806. On 1st February of that year, the Provost informed the Town Council that 'a great part of the Old Pier tumbled down last night'.⁵ A contract for repairs was authorised three months later with James Burns, builder in Haddington,⁶ which seems to have covered not only this collapse but also defects in the pier-head which had meanwhile claimed attention (p. 180); the work was to have been completed by 1st November, but delays ensued⁷ and it seems to have been carried on into the following year, when another minute noted that much stone would still be needed

¹ All the longer dimensions given in this paper have been scaled off the O.S. $\frac{1}{25000}$ plan NT 6879.

² Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. map No. 5847/58.

³ *NSA*, ii (Haddingtonshire), 88.

⁴ Records, Box 24, 19 and 24/7/1718, 27/5/1719.

⁵ Records, Box 21, 1/2/1806.

⁶ *ibid.*, 1/5/1806.

⁷ *ibid.*, 15/7/1806.

for repairs.¹ The total cost of repairs effected between 1806 and 1810 was £2888.² Careful provision was made for the manner of joining up the old and new work, e.g. 'by the best possible Rubble building, the stones to be neatly laid in mortar and every vacancy filled up. The outside to be lipped with Roman cement',³ but the position of the junction is unfortunately not made clear. The same minute also requires that 'the stones which have tumbled or been taken down shall be used . . . as far as is possible to ascertain the quantity', a provision which probably accounts for the occasional appearance of boulders elsewhere than in the footings, but nothing is said about the vertical or horizontal setting of slabs.⁴ The original masonry was pretty certainly dry-stone, the mortar that is now to be seen in both faces of the work, with pinnings of pebbles and chips, having most probably been inserted as pointing. This conclusion is supported not only by the typically dry-stone technique of the vertically-set masonry but also by the numerous eighteenth-century records of wedging – e.g. the purchase of 5000 wedges in 1718.⁵ It is interesting to know that wedges were still being used in this way in a dry-stone breakwater at North Berwick in 1966 (Pl. XVII, 4). The inner face is mainly of red-sandstone slabs and blocks (Pl. XIV, 1); some of the blocks are very large and rough, and some of the slabs are again set obliquely or vertically, though this kind of work is much scarcer than on the outer face. About 210 ft. short of the junction of the returned pier, a flight of steps (Pl. XV, 1) descends the face of the wall to the harbour bottom; the steps are formed by slabs protruding from the face, and the lowermost ones are much wasted.

The walk on the top of the pier is single for the first 130 ft. of its length, but at that point, where it is 11 ft. wide, it splits into two, and an upper and a lower walk then run on parallel, with an initial difference in their levels of about 2 ft. At their widest, the upper walk is 7 ft. and the lower one 8 ft. 6 in. wide; both are neatly edged with flags. Just before it reaches the steps the lower walk slopes downwards, making the difference in height as much as 5 ft., but its final section again rises to rejoin the upper walk at the pier-head. The parapet is from 4 ft. to 5 ft. 6 in. high. The existence of the two walks suggests that the height of the breakwater has been raised at some time, and the fact that the parapet, as seen from the outside, appears to be later than the wall-face below it would agree with this idea. It is, in fact, quite possible that the walks and parapet assumed their present form as a result of the repairs of 1806–7 (*supra*); this is perhaps more probable than that they did so in 1717, when mention is made of 'the men who wrought the way along the harbour head',⁶ as this expression, like the reference to 'William Craig with the Calsalayers' of 1718,⁷ suggests rather paving or road-work on the wharves or the approaches from the town. If such a reconstruction took place, at whatever date, the lower walk may represent the original top of the pier, preserved in the new arrangement because it stood at a convenient height for work on berthed ships. It carries three pawls, two

¹ *ibid.*, 30/3/1807.

² Records, Box 23, 23/5/1827.

³ Records, Box 21, 15/7/1806.

⁴ Mr G. M. Binnie, M.A., M.I.C.E., informs me that the lifting effect exerted by waves on vertical slabs is less than that on long horizontal joints, and that their use consequently increases the solidity of a masonry face.

⁵ Records, Box 24, 28/7 and 1/10/1718. Accounts, Box 20, 1758 and 1761. Pococke noted wedges in the pier in 1760. (*Tours in Scotland* (SHS), 323.)

⁶ Accounts, Box 20.

⁷ Records, Box 24, 24/7/1718.

of wood and one of iron, which are said locally to have been used for warping ships round in the northern part of the harbour; they are set in recesses in the wall-face that rises from the walk, one of which is big enough (7 ft. 4 in. wide, 3 ft. 6 in. high, 2 ft. 6 in. deep) to hold coiled-down warps beside the pawl itself. One of the pawls has been put out of action by the building-up of its recess, and there are traces of another built-up recess from which the pawl has been removed.

The Pier-head

The pier-head was rebuilt in 1879¹ after a collapse, and tells us nothing as to the nature of earlier arrangements; the records, however, show that there was formerly a roundel here, though it cannot have been large as it does not show on Roy's map (fig. 2). Miller states, though without quoting an authority, that in 1658 an 'outer head', along with an otherwise unexplained 'cross dyke', was damaged by a storm, help in the repairs being asked from Edinburgh Town Council, and also that in 1774 the 'round head' suffered a 'tremendous breach'.² In 1806, a short time after the disaster to the pier as a whole (p. 178), the Provost reported that 'the outer head of the Old Pier on inspection was in a very frail state³ - not unnaturally as 'the north end of the old pier was in a ruinous situation' six months earlier⁴; after inspection by a certain Mr Paterson, who was then superintending the construction of Leith Docks, a contract for repairs was made with the same James Burns who was to rebuild the pier itself.⁵ A round structure was specifically mentioned some ten weeks later, when the Town Council was 'much alarmed', in view of the advanced state of the season, to find 'that no part of the New Work [was] yet connected with the Roundel head'⁶; and this reference agrees with mention of 'a plan of the way in which that part of the Pier that extended from the inside convex of the outer head to the entrance into the Harbour' was to be altered.⁷ Notwithstanding the Council's efforts, 'the head of the old pier was [still] in a very ruinous state' in the following year⁸; but as no further disaster seems to have occurred until 1879 it may be inferred that reasonably effective repairs were made.

The Returned Pier

From the pier-head, another length of pier, evidently the one referred to by the Town Council minute of 11th September 1806 (*supra*), returns south-westwards for 170 ft. and ends at the harbour-entrance. Its NE. part was involved in the collapse of 1879 and has been rebuilt, but in the remainder the original masonry remains and is plainly of a different character from that of the East Pier, the squared and neatly coursed blocks contrasting strongly with the larger and rougher material of the latter (cf. Pl. XV, 1 and 2). It is 16 ft. 6 in. wide on the top over a parapet 2 ft. 3 in. thick and the same in height; the blocks at and near the SW. end of the parapet are secured with iron bolts which come up through them from below, and have their ends split and turned down like rivets (Pl. XVII, 2). At the end there stands a massive wooden

¹ Nat. Lib. Scot., MS map No. 5847/58.

² Miller, J., *The History of Dunbar* (1859), 266 f.

³ Records, Box 21, 15/4/1806.

⁶ *ibid.*, 15/7/1806.

⁴ *ibid.*, 3/10/1805.

⁷ *ibid.*, 11/9/1806.

⁵ *ibid.*, 3/10/1805; 1/5/1806.

⁸ *ibid.*, 29/6/1807.

pawl, made out of the butt of a tree (Pl. XVIII, 2); three other pawls have been removed from the length of the pier. From the SW. end, a short work, only 17 ft. long and with steps at its outer end, projects inwards at right angles, to form a kind of throat to the harbour entrance. Although its masonry seems fully homogeneous with that of the rest of the pier, there is reason to believe that it was in fact added between 1806 and 1827, as part of a larger work. This point will be discussed below in the context of the harbour entrance (p. 184).

As will appear below, a number of improvements were begun in 1717, and this was probably the 'New Peer' built in that year.¹ In 1718 a certain Patt Hog was paid £245 4s. Scots for building it, the relative entry in the Accounts describing it as 'the New Key'. Another entry possibly relating to this work mentions 'the lyme that built the new key'. This dating would agree with the fact that the returned pier is shown on Roy's map of 1747-55, but on the other hand the expressions 'new pier' and 'new quay', as used in the Accounts, clearly bear different meanings at different times and are not applied to this pier alone. For example, '10 roods and 26 yards', or 243 feet, of causeway were made on the 'New Key' in 1761, and in this case the returned pier could certainly not have been meant as its length is 73 ft. short of the figure stated.

Granting, however, that the returned pier was, in fact, built in 1717, a question remains as to whether it was then new in conception or replaced some earlier structure, e.g. Miller's 'cross-dyke' of 1658. No original authority has been found for this supposed work, but, in view of the obvious value of protection from the N. and NW. over and above that provided by the Island and its causeway, it would not be surprising if the latter alternative were correct.

The Quays

The harbour as formed by the East Pier, whether or not reinforced by a pier returning from its head, would have been a good deal smaller than the 'old' harbour of today, as rocks projecting from the shore would have encroached on its W. side and inner end. In that state it no doubt merited the description 'very imperfect, capable of containing only a few small vessels'.² However, the construction of regular quays seems to have begun in 1717, when a total sum of £1189 14s. 3d., presumably Scots, was expended on 'Repairing the Harbour, & other Shoar work, & Building of a new peer'.³ In addition to the items, mentioned above, that seem to refer to the returned pier, the Accounts contain others for men's time at harbour, shore and quarries, together with smith's work, carting, lime, timber and pawls. In 1719 the Burgh Council agreed that Mr Robert Laughlane, teacher of mathematics, should survey the harbour and neighbouring ground 'in order to form an exact map thereof to be made use of in any further works the toun may have occasion to undertake about the harbour'⁴; and a few weeks later a contract was made with a mason named Richard English and his partners 'for building of the New Key at Spots Garnell,' the rate being 3s. 6d. Scots per foot for 'hewing & laying'.⁵ Later again in 1719 the payment of £41 13s. 8½d. sterling was approved for 'winning stones

¹ Accounts, Box 20.

² *Stat. Acct.*, v (1793), 479.

³ Accounts, Box 20.

⁴ Records, Box 21, 14/3/1719.

⁵ *ibid.*, 22/4/1719.

to the New Key and other works of the harbour'.¹ Similar work was going on in 1720, the use of the word 'keys' in the plural, combined with more than one reference to Spott's Girnell, indicating that the whole of the S. and W. sides of the harbour, as far as the Girnell or Granary (p. 187), was being provided with wharfage. Also in 1720 the work of deepening the harbour began; 'the Touns workmen having begun to dig the Harbour' an overseer was appointed.² In 1721 it was decided to 'clean the hole that lyes on the South part of the Harbour and cut it square in the upper part as also to applanish & Smooth the ragged tops of the rocks that now discover themselves in the Mouth of the Harbour'³; this was no doubt the origin of the square S. end of the inner basin, which appears quite clearly on Roy's map. It is evidently to these operations that the *Statistical Account* refers⁴ when it notes that, early in the eighteenth century, the harbour 'was enlarged and deepened, by digging into the solid rock, 8 feet deep at an average; and at the same time very commodious quays were built'; while Miller was certainly wrong⁵ in dating the improvements to about 1775. Faces of cut-back rock, corresponding with the *Statistical Account's* record, can be seen at a number of places, for example at the end and along the NW. side of the inner basin, and in the re-entrant angle below the bottom of Victoria Street, where the cutting extends nearly as far as Spott's Granary. Similar work beyond the Granary is probably later (p. 184). Where the cutting is deepest, the vertical rock-face rises at least 8 ft. above the mud of the harbour bottom, and it is everywhere eked out and topped with masonry of large red-sandstone blocks, rather poorly coursed (Pl. XVI, 1). The paler and superior stonework just short of the end of Victoria Street marks the former opening of a dry-dock, described below (p. 188). In view of the considerable activities of 1717 and later, Miller's statement that the harbour was almost ruinous for some years before 1735⁶ cannot be accepted.

The square end of the inner basin is 90 ft. long and its NW. side is 143 ft. long. Behind it is an open space, no doubt on the site of the 'hole' mentioned in 1721 (*supra*), measuring some 150 ft. from north-west to south-east and 160 ft. along its SE. side, where it is revetted and sheltered by the landward end of the East Pier; a shallow drain leading out under the parapet carries off water from waves which break over the top, while a valve at the mouth of the drain prevents any return flow. About the middle of the open space, 40 ft. back from the edge of the quay, there is a massive and much-worn wooden pawl, similar to but larger than the one illustrated in Pl. XVIII, 2, together with an iron pawl made out of a gun and four very heavy mooring-rings. The W. side of the basin has two guns re-used as pawls, another iron pawl, and three rings. All these three guns are of the same size and pattern, but no distinguishing marks are visible as the breeches are under ground; the barrels, which have suffered from rust and bad usage and have been filled with cement, stand to heights of 2 ft. 9 in. or less. The bore seems to have been about $3\frac{5}{8}$ in. in every case. The two lengths of quay at the foot of Victoria Street are 120 ft. and 115 ft. long respectively, and the open space behind their angle is provided with one iron pawl and three rings, one of the latter being set well up the street.

¹ *ibid.*, 1/12/1719.

² *ibid.*, 27/6/1720.

³ *ibid.*, 19/6/1721.

⁴ *Stat. Act.*, v (1793), 479.

⁵ Miller, J., *The History of Dunbar* (1859), 267.

⁶ *ibid.*, 266.

At this point may be mentioned a ramp, which leads down past the landward end of the East Pier parapet to the tidal rocks E. of the harbour. A narrow opening is shown here by Roy, though whether the existing structure dates from as early as the eighteenth century cannot be determined. It is paved with large setts and is bordered with red-sandstone slabs, one of which bears the inscription VINCENT TANN/VINE[N]T TAN[N], a C being added under the I of the third word; the Vs are given a vertical central line, so that they resemble 'broad arrow' marks, and they probably represent the kind of W, commonly seen on seventeenth-century tombstones, that was formed by two Vs in ligature. TI appears on the sinister margin, aligned at right angles to the names, and other letters elsewhere. Another slab is inscribed I ONEIL / 17, and yet others bear the usual vague *graffiti*.

The construction work begun in 1717 evidently continued later in the eighteenth century. A grant of £20 sterling was made by the Convention of Royal Burghs in 1728,¹ but a more important source of finance was a local duty on sales of ale and beer, authorised by Parliament for nineteen years in 1719.² The Burgh's resources, however, were insufficient for its ambitious programme of improvements, which included water-supply and other things not connected with the harbour, with the result that a second Act was needed in 1737,³ to extend the validity of the first for a further twenty-five years. This second Act states in its preamble that the original provision was made for expenses 'in digging up Part of the Rock at the bottom of the Harbour, and in carrying out the great Pier to the Rock called *The Beacon Rock*, and in cutting the Slope of the Island down to the Perpendicular, in order to make . . . the Entry into the said Harbour more safe and secure', but that these works were 'not yet so much as begun' as the Town's revenue was 'much incumbred and burthened by the works already done'. The East Pier was never lengthened in the manner proposed, but the entrance channel was broadened (*infra*) and there are several references to works which cannot now be identified, e.g. the 'little pier head' in 1752-3⁴ and the 'long pier' and the 'little pier' in 1768.⁵

A major improvement of the middle of the eighteenth century was the building of the Coal Wharf in 1761. This work leads down from the S. corner of the inner basin to the bottom of the harbour, flanking the inner face of the East Pier (Pl. XVI, 2); it is 390 ft. long by 25 ft. wide at widest, is paved with large cobbles and setts and bordered with slabs, and its lower end is received by a bench cut in the underlying rock. It carries one iron pawl and eight wooden ones, some of the latter being made up of two posts. An account paid to one Robert Fraser in 1761⁶ includes £56 13s. 4¼d. for work 'att the Rock of the Hirst', and £39 2s. 3½d. for 'the new Pear on the Coal Hirst', while 'the rock in the harbour' is also mentioned; and this language suggests that the rock that can now be seen, cut back, underneath the Coal Wharf originally served as a natural ramp or 'hirst', and that this was now replaced by the existing masonry structure. It is also quite likely that the Coal Wharf was, in fact, the 'New Key' on which was laid the measured length of causeway mentioned on p. 181.

¹ *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs*, v, 480.

² 5 Geo. I, cap. xvi. ³ 10 Geo. II, cap. ii.

⁵ *ibid.* ⁶ *Accounts*, Box 20, 3/6/1761.

⁴ *Accounts*, Box 20.

Several entries in the Accounts go to show that coal was a regular item of importation in the middle of the eighteenth century, and this was no doubt the case at earlier dates as well. In 1835 the shipments are recorded as coming from Wemyss, Charlestown, Bo'ness and Sunderland.¹

Notwithstanding all the improvements just described, it could still be said, in 1774, that 'this haven is not either large or commodious, and is, at its entrance, also embarrassed with Rocks'.²

The most recent of the quays seems to have been built, or begun, in 1785, on the SW. side of the outer basin, when the Convention of Royal Burghs voted £600 towards its cost.³ The wharf now runs straight from the outer corner of the harbour entrance to the angle immediately SE. of Spott's Granary. The surface of the rock has been levelled back as far as the footings of the Granary in a manner which shows that the latter was standing before the wharf was built. Until some date later than 1888,⁴ the face of the wharf was recessed, possibly to conform with a natural recess in the rocks, for the filling-up of which rubbish was being bought at 1½d. per cart-load in 1793⁵; the recess gave the wharf its name of the 'Holey' (i.e. hollow) Pier, and provided a space in which vessels could be warped round by means of the pawls on the East Pier (p. 180).⁶ It seems to have been about 73 ft. long by 25 ft. deep near its NW. end, though the surviving plans are not in full agreement, and it contained a flight of steps. The wharf as it stands today carries a pawl at each end and two mooring-rings; the wooden pawl by the opening of the harbour entrance has been carefully shaped and is not simply the butt of a tree.

The Harbour Entrance

It has been said above (p. 181) that the short structure that turns inwards from the end of the returned pier was probably part of a larger work built between 1806 and 1827, in spite of the similarity of its masonry to that of the returned pier itself. This can be inferred from the facts that something called a 'boom pier' was built between those dates at a cost of £500⁷; that Mason's plan of 1837⁸ shows a longer work provided with a chase to hold booms, but shows it partly in dotted line, as if it were incomplete; and that the existing short work, with its steps, only appears in 1842.⁹ It is necessary therefore to look more closely at the question of the booms that were formerly placed in the entrance to reduce the force of waves coming in from outside.

The booming of the harbour entrance had certainly been considered as early as 1804,¹⁰ and in 1827 the local Shipowners and Sailors Society petitioned¹¹ for a pier to be built 'from the end of the old Pier in a direction opposite to the Spotts granary',

¹ *NSA*, ii (Haddingtonshire), 93.

² Campbell, J., *A Political Survey of Britain*, i, 419.

³ *Stat. Acct.*, v (1793), 479 f.

⁴ Cf. *Nat. Lib. Scot.*, MS. map no. 5847/63.

⁵ Records, Box 21, 13/2/1793.

⁶ *ibid.*, 10/2/1801 and 25/1/1805 for purchase of warping ropes.

⁷ Records, Box 23, notes dated 23/5/1827 relating to the Dunbar Harbour Bill of that year (7 and 8 Geo. IV, cap. civ).

⁸ *Nat. Lib. Scot.*, MS. map no. 5847/35.

⁹ *ibid.*, no. 5847/37.

¹⁰ Records, Box 21, 3/2/1804.

¹¹ Accounts, Box 20. The date is doubtful, as the draft of the petition preserved in H.M. Register House is docketed '1819' on the outside.

and for a boom to be put across the entrance from this new work with its end 'fixed in the rock at said granary'. No record of the resulting action has been found, but the structure shown by Mason, which had a projection at its inner end with a chase facing the N. corner of the Granary, corresponds very closely with the petition's wording, and a square chase, suitable for receiving the ends of the booms, can be seen cut in the quay face on the opposite side of the entrance channel. It is flanked by a vertical flight of notches, probably footholds. The sequence of events is suggested by a record of 1846,¹ when the harbour-master stated that 'the pier, to which one end of the booms was attached, was thrown down in a heavy gale', and that another position for the booms had been found unsatisfactory; it may be inferred from this that the accident happened before 1842, and that the short work, as marked on the plan of that year, was a fragment of the earlier 'boom pier'. This is the more likely as it is too small to have accounted by itself for the £500 spent on that structure, as mentioned above; an extension to it, shown on the plan in red ink, is clearly no more than the sketch of an unrealised project.

A substitute for a system of booms at Spott's Granary is perhaps to be seen in a pair of opposed chases a few feet in from the mouth of the entrance channel; these have remains of iron fittings at their heads and the NE. one has a small recess (Pl. XV, 2), features which suggest arrangements for manipulating the booms. Finally, a system which returned to the suggestions of the Shipowners and Sailors Society was installed in 1888,² though now reducing the breadth of the channel from 40 ft. to 30 ft. A kind of spur, which still exists, was built out obliquely from the end of the short piece of inturned structure (*supra*) to hold the NE. ends of the booms, while a wall to hold their SW. ends was built across part of the recess in the Holy Pier so as to flank the entrance channel. This alteration naturally destroyed the utility of the recessed wharf for the turning of ships, and the rest of the recess was filled up later and brought to its present condition. The wall contains a chase fitted with iron rungs, to serve as a ladder for access to the top of the wharf. The spur, which is built of large masonry and concrete and is 30 ft. long centrally, retains the footings of the crane with which the booms were raised and lowered,³ and the chases on both sides of the channel retain the iron clamps through which screws went down to hold the booms in place. The drawings show seventeen booms, of squared timber, in place when the entrance was fully blocked.

The outer approach to the entrance, which passed between the Island and the head of the East Pier, and then through Broad Haven, has called for improvement as well as the harbour itself. The rocks for which 'applanishment' was provided in 1721⁴ were probably in the outer passage, and the cutting-back after 1737 of those along the side of the Island⁵ would have widened the channel and eased the turn into the harbour. This latter work was being tackled in the 1750s, when records of 'blowing' and of the purchase of gunpowder 'for Blowing the Island', together with allusions to a 'blower' named John Stewart and his borrowman, point to a good deal

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, xxxii (1847), 88.

² Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. map. no. 5847/63, which gives measured drawings of the mechanism.

³ For an illustration, see Muir, T. S., *East Lothian* (Cambridge County Geographies), 69.

⁴ Records, Box 21, 19/6/1721. ⁵ 10 Geo. II, cap. ii.

of blasting,¹ and traces of the work are still plain. As late as 1814, however, some shipowners were still reporting a 'dangerous hirst' outside the harbour mouth, and asking for the 'Painted Rocks' to be smoothed and removed.²

A final phase in the history of the outer approaches came with the opening of the Victoria Harbour in 1842, when access from this to the Old Harbour had to be provided by breaching the causeway to the Island. A plan of 1851³ illustrates a proposal, evidently under discussion as early as 1843,⁴ for a wide channel connecting the two harbours, the cutting of which would have removed some 90 ft. of the N. end of the causeway; and although this was never carried out the plan shows that a passage about 26 ft. wide, with steps descending beside it, already existed in the part of the causeway that would have been removed. It is thus to be inferred that this narrow connection with Broad Haven was an original feature of the Victoria Harbour; and it must presumably have been spanned by some kind of bridge though none is indicated on the plan of 1851. A metal drawbridge was installed in 1860⁵ over a passage 30 ft. wide. This passage is now the only access to the Old Harbour, as the mouth of Broad Haven has been blocked. Like the Old Harbour entrance, the passage through the causeway was formerly provided with booms, some of which could still be seen lying nearby in 1965.

General Maintenance

In addition to new construction and major repairs, a great deal of routine maintenance was evidently needed. The accounts are full of allusions to work of this kind generally without specific reference to one part of the harbour or another; but little would be gained by multiplying notices of men's time at carting and quarrying, of payments to masons, wrights and smiths, or of expenditure on 'old work' or on wedging, timber and lime. The cleaning of the harbour, however, deserves to be mentioned, as the need for removing rubbish, mud and stones constantly recurred; in 1807 a regular contractor was employed,⁶ but a complaint made in 1814⁷ shows that the trouble persisted. The stones were presumably ballast dumped by skippers when taking on cargo,⁸ the name of the offending ship being recorded in a certain case. The rate of wages paid for this work in the middle of the eighteenth century was 6d. a day.

Acknowledgments

In conclusion, I wish to thank Mr M. R. Dobie, C.B.E., for invaluable help in the field; Mr D. A. Stevenson for permission to use the Stevenson plans preserved in the National Library; Mrs W. Bruce, Miss A. Young, Mr G. D. Hay, Mr G. Simpson and numerous local informants for help in various phases of the work; and Mr I. G. Scott, who prepared the drawings.

¹ Accounts, Box 20.

² Records, Box 22, 27/8/1814.

³ Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. plan no. 5847/40.

⁴ Records, New Harbour Book, letter dated 5/5/1843. See also *Accounts and Papers*, LX (1847-8), 200 ff.

⁵ Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. plan no. 5847/55. The existing drawbridge is of fairly recent construction.

⁶ Records, Box 21, 30/3/1807.

⁷ Records, Box 22, 27/8/1814.

⁸ In 1623, the Privy Council took action against skippers who dumped ballast in harbours in the Firth of Forth (*RPC*, xiii, 225).

APPENDIX

*Associated Buildings, etc.**Spott's Granary.*

The only old building of interest surviving on the quays of the harbour is the store-house known as Spott's Granary (Pl. XVI, 1), which stands just N. of the lower end of Victoria Street. It is of red-sandstone rubble, now harled, and is three storeys in height. The roof has been renewed, a former roof of pantiles being remembered locally. Aligned from NE. to SW., it measures 70 by 42 ft. over walls 2 ft. 8 in. thick, but its N. corner has been sloped away to avoid the former recess in the face of the wharf (p. 184). The original arrangement of the openings on the SE. front was probably a central door, now broken out to a larger size, with two windows on either side of it and symmetrical fenestration on the first and second floors. The first-floor openings are the largest. The NW. face is generally similar, but at the wall-head there are two pairs of red-sandstone corbels, the purpose of which is not clear; they may perhaps have held wooden gutters below the eaves, but they were probably not intended to carry runners, for the swinging of goods into the openings below, as they are too close to the wall-face, while the small size of the openings themselves suggests windows rather than loading-doors. At the SW. end of the building two doors, set close together, open on to a loading-platform measuring 27 ft. 6 in. by 6 ft. 6 in. and reached by a short flight of steps; these doors, one of which has a cat-hole, reflect the longitudinal subdivision of the interior by an axial wall. This wall, which is 2 ft. 8 in. thick, contains built-up window-like openings, and a wide doorway has been broken through it in line with the SE. entrance, perhaps as part of the rearrangement of the interior to serve its present purpose, the storage of fishermen's gear. The continuous intermediate support given to the floors by means of runner beams suggests that heavy loading was originally expected, as it would have been in a grain-store. The building must date from at least as early as the first quarter of the eighteenth century, as it is on record in 1719 and 1720.¹

The Custom House

The Custom House no longer exists, as it was demolished in 1954, but it deserves to be put on record. It formed part of the NW. side of a small square which occupied the ground, now derelict, between the foot of Victoria Street and Broad Haven.² The square was entered at its E. corner by a narrow access from Victoria Street, and the Custom House fronted on the square and overlooked Broad Haven at the back. Old pictures,³ together with some surviving remains of foundations, show that it was a two-storeyed building of red-sandstone measuring externally about 55 ft. from NE. to SW. by about 21 ft. transversely, the latter dimension being increased to 26 ft. in the SW. portion by a shallow bow, 18 ft. wide, which projected there from the NW. side (fig. 4). The house was built on an artificially flattened rock-surface, a strip of which, 2 ft. 8 in. wide, was left at a slightly higher level to form a foundation for the front.

The main entrance was in the centre of the front (Pl. XVIII, 3), at first-floor level, and was approached by a flight of fourteen steps expanding towards the bottom and provided with a graceful iron handrail. The doorway was flanked by pilasters with consoles, and had a moulded triangular pediment; on either side of it, symmetrically spaced, there were two large windows with back-set surrounds, and above each window a blocked oval opening. It is remembered locally that the first-floor rooms were very high, and this fact, combined with signs of disturbance round the oval openings, suggests that

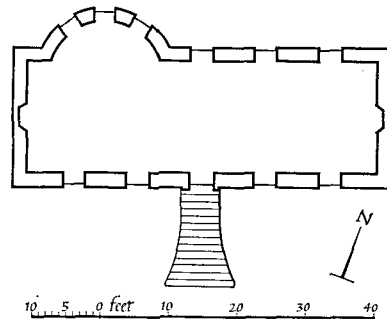


FIG. 4. The Custom House.
Reconstruction plan of upper floor

¹ Records, Box 21, 14/3 and 22/4/1719; 25/1/1720.

² Custom House Square has been inserted in fig. 3 from the O.S. 25-inch map as revised in 1893.

³ For these I am indebted to Mrs Trzebniak, Bielside; to the Royal Burgh of Dunbar, by courtesy of Mr G. Milne, Burgh Surveyor; and to the National Monuments Record.

these may have replaced dormers belonging to an original attic floor, subsequently removed. One, at least, of the rooms contained a fireplace of Adam type. On the ground floor, the section of the front on either side of the stair contained a central door with projecting lintel and cornice; the SW. door was closely flanked by windows with back-set surrounds, but in the NE. section the SW. window seems to have been built up and replaced by another, unsymmetrically close to the stair. The lintels and cornices interrupted a square string-course defining the division between the storeys. At the back, at first-floor level, the straight (NE.) section of the wall showed three large, tall windows with back-set surrounds, symmetrically spaced, while the bow contained a further three though it occupied only the same space as two in the other section. The south-westernmost window seems to have been converted from a door-like opening reaching down to the floor. The bow no doubt gave good observation of ships lying in Broad Haven or entering the Old Harbour. In the photographs the rear openings on the ground floor are partly hidden by a wall; but the NE. section evidently contained a door, generally similar to the ground-floor doors in the front, with a pair of flanking windows, though the arrangement was not symmetrical with the windows above. The ground-floor openings in the bow had probably been altered, but the window at the SW. end looks original. A good deal of alteration may be assumed, as in its final phase the house was divided up into a number of small, poor apartments. The roof, latterly at any rate, was slated, the extension that covered the bow rising to about half the height of the main ridge. The gables bore plain skews and brick chimney-stacks, no doubt replacements, while a thin brick chimney which rose from near the centre of the back wall was probably an addition.

Though the custom-house district of Dunbar was constituted in 1710,¹ this building was probably not older than the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Its Classical detail contrasts with such older vernacular features as crow-stepped gables and cavetto skewputs which appeared on other houses in the square, demolished before the Custom House and not appearing in Pl. XVIII, 3.

The Dry-dock

In 1785, Robert Fall of Underedge, merchant in Dunbar, proposed to the Town Council to make 'a dry Dock in his Timber Yard' for cleaning and repairing ships, and asked leave 'to make a cut or opening in the quay of thirty-two feet breadth', which he would provide with a cover of oak planking when the gates were shut.² It is mentioned as having suffered damage from a storm in 1805,³ and is shown on Mason's plan of 1837⁴ as being about 132 ft. in length and up to 50 ft. in breadth, with a two-leaved gate like that of a canal lock. It was apparently still in use when the second edition of Miller's *History* was published in 1859,⁵ but was filled up well before 1888.⁶ Traces of its filled-up entrance can be seen in the face and on the lip of the quay S. of the foot of Victoria Street.

The Battery

The *New Statistical Account*, in an article written in 1833, states that a battery of sixteen guns was built in 1781, after an American raider, Captain Fall, had tried to cut a ship out of the harbour entrance.⁷ It seems to have been a civic undertaking, rather than part of a national system of defence, as in 1793 the Provost advised the Town Council that, 'in the present state of this country, it was proper to put the Battery into proper order, and to procure a quantity of powder'; the structure was accordingly 'repaired', the Provost was authorised to 'commission' the powder, and the engagement of two night-watchmen was approved.⁸ The *Statistical Account of Scotland* gives the number of guns in that same year as twelve, mentioning '9, 12 and 18 pounders'.⁹ In 1795 the place was inspected by an R.E. lieutenant with initials 'W.G.', whose report to Lord Adam Gordon, Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, has been preserved¹⁰; details of the armament were evidently given in a separate statement, which has disappeared, but W.G. states that there were sixteen embrasures and mentions six-, nine- and twelve-pounder guns and also eighteen-pounder shot, together with four carronades for the defence of the landward face of the Battery. He adds that 'if two of the 12 pounders and the furnace',

¹ Chalmers, G., *Caledonia*, iii (1888), 318.

² Records, Box 21, 13/5/1785.

³ *ibid.*, 28/6/1805.

⁴ Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. map no. 5847/35.

⁵ p. 267.

⁶ Groome, F. H., *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland*, i, 403.

⁷ Vol. ii (Haddingtonshire), 75.

⁸ Records, Box 21, 13/2 and 18 and 30/3/1793.

⁹ Vol. v, 480.

¹⁰ Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. 1649 Z. 3/56 b.

which latter he had recommended for the heating of shot, 'were placed in the castle they might either assist the effect of the guns of the battery or would command the bay to the westward'; and he notes that the furnace would be safer there than inside the Battery and close to the magazine. In 1808 the magistrates were requested by the Office of Ordnance to 'cause the stone Platforms of the Guns . . . to be repaired and made fit for service'¹; and in 1814 by the O.C. Artillery in North Britain to repair two eighteen-pounder and two twelve-pounder gun-carriages.² After the 'general peace', i.e. presumably in or after 1815, the guns were removed to Edinburgh.³ In later years the buildings were used as a hospital,⁴ taking military patients during the first World War, but they were gutted in a Coronation bonfire in 1936 and the place is now derelict (Pl. XVIII, 1).

The Battery stands on the highest part of the Island, and is built of sandstone blocks, well coursed and mainly red, though the landward face is generally paler and pinkish. It is roughly D-shaped on plan, measuring 118 ft. 6 in. internally from NE. to SW. by 116 ft. externally along the chord. Its rounded seaward face, which is slightly flattened on the E., commands a field of fire of at least 180° from NW. to SE., while its entrance looks SW. towards the causeway. The landward face contains a straight central section 52 ft. 6 in. long, flanked by two wings which splay forwards a perpendicular distance of 8 ft.; but these wings are not loop-holed for the defence of the entrance, and the NW. one is in fact filled up internally to the level of the gun-platform, here 6 ft. below the wall-head. Elsewhere the parapet is a few inches lower. The landward wall, which carries an ovolo coping 6½ in. thick, is 13 ft. high at the entrance, but elsewhere the external height of the wall varies greatly according to the level of the rock on which it is founded. The regularity of the plan is broken at the S. corner by a small projection, designed to hold one gun firing seawards (NE.) and two across the outer end of Broad Haven. The entrance-gate (Pl. XVIII, 4) is 8 ft. wide and has a segmental head; the quoins and voussoirs are alternately long and short, and the central voussoir has a false keystone worked on it in relief. The gun-platform is reached by a ramp running straight up from the entrance; its SE. part overlies a barrel-vaulted basement-range, originally magazines and guard-room, which is reached from a small yard opening from the entrance on the level. The older 25-inch maps show that this yard was roofed over when the Battery was serving as a hospital. Also entered from the yard is the shell of a two-storeyed house, which occupies the S. corner of the Battery; this is not an original feature, as the gun-platform has been removed to make room for its upper storey and two of the three embrasures in the projection have been adapted as windows while the third has been built up. Of the thirteen remaining embrasures, five face NW. and four each NE. and SE.; the wall in which they are set is 3 ft. thick, and the one chosen for measurement was 3 ft. 2 in. wide internally, 4 ft. externally and 2 ft. 6 in. at 1 ft. in from the inner face. Behind some of them paved stances for guns still remain; a relatively undamaged one measured 17 ft. 6 in. from front to rear by 12 ft. in width. The report of 1795 remarks, not very lucidly, that 'there are earthen merlons added to the interior part of the embrasures in front which in a good measure remedy the disadvantage of the stone wall'; whatever the arrangement of the merlons actually was, its object was no doubt to stop flying chips when the wall was under bombardment. The report also states that the embrasures for the four carronades, which were to have covered the landward front, had not been 'completed', but there is in fact no structural evidence that they had ever even been begun.

The Battery was served by a pier,⁵ built on the rocks at the E. extremity of the Island, which was washed away in a storm at some date between 1914 and 1918. It was approached by the rock-cut roadway that runs below the SE. wall of the Battery, and its NW. side was protected from high seas by a wall, the landward end of which is still in place.

The Fishermen's Monument

This remarkable monument (Pl. XVII. 1) stands by the S. corner of the innermost basin of the harbour, and holds a mercury barometer for the local fishermen's use. It was set up by subscription

¹ Records, Box 21, 6/6/1808.

² Records, Box 22, 1/6 and 19/12/1814.

³ *NSA*, ii (Haddingtonshire), 75.

⁴ 25-inch O.S. map of Haddingtonshire vii, 5, as revised in 1893, 'Hospital (infectious diseases)'; do. 1906, 'Casual Sick House'.

⁵ Inserted in fig. 3 from 25-inch O.S. map as revised in 1906.

in 1856, at the instance of William Brodie of Seafield, who had been impressed by the value of a public barometer at Eyemouth.¹ It stands about 15 ft. high, is 9 ft. 7 in. wide over the pedestal, which is intaken 3 in. at a height of 1 ft. 10 in., and is 2 ft. thick, with a central portion 4 ft. 7 in. wide advanced 6 in. About 1 ft. 6 in. below the top there is a moulded cornice. The whole monument is rendered in plaster and is painted a pale bluish grey; the front is smooth, but the back and sides show V-joints between the ashlar blocks. A recess in the advanced front houses the barometer, within a wooden case; and above this, on a sunk and moulded panel, there is a painted plaster group in relief executed by Alexander Handyside Ritchie, of Edinburgh. The group comprises, in the centre, a fisherman in his boat, with his wife evidently begging him not to sail and pointing to the barometer below; in the stern of the boat an old woman, pointing out the cloudy state of the sky to a small boy, now headless; and at the bow two larger boys preparing to cast off. Above the panel, and framed by a heavy swag of seaweed, shell-fish and shells, a bulging sail hangs from a spar and bears the inscription PRESENTED TO / THE FISHERMEN OF DUNBAR / TO WHOSE PERILOUS INDUSTRY / THE BURGH OWES SO MUCH / OF ITS PROSPERITY. Above the cornice is the date MDCCCLVI.

¹ Miller, J., *The History of Dunbar* (1859), 274.



1. Inner face of East Pier, from N.



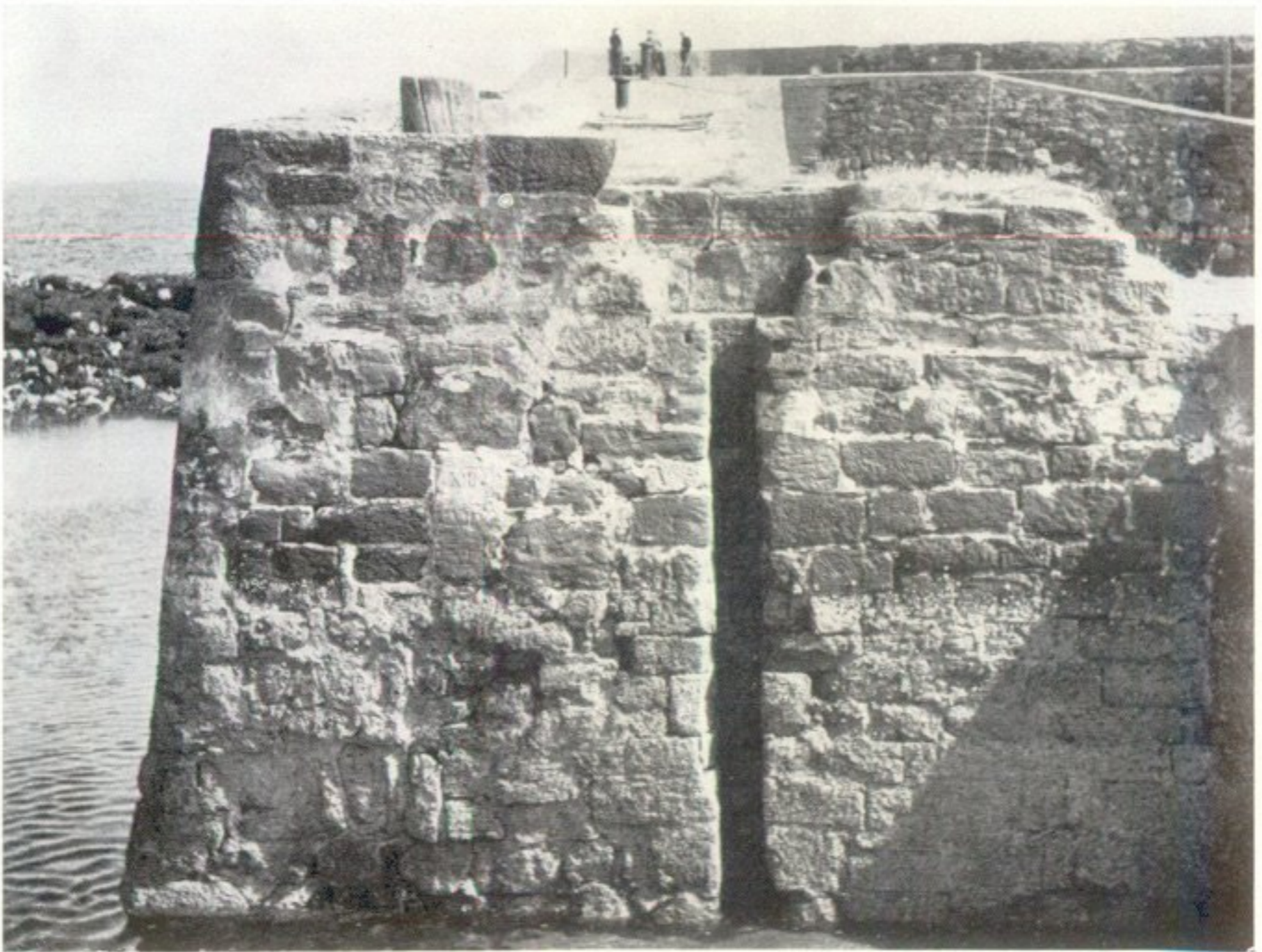
2. Outer face of East Pier, showing boulders and slabs



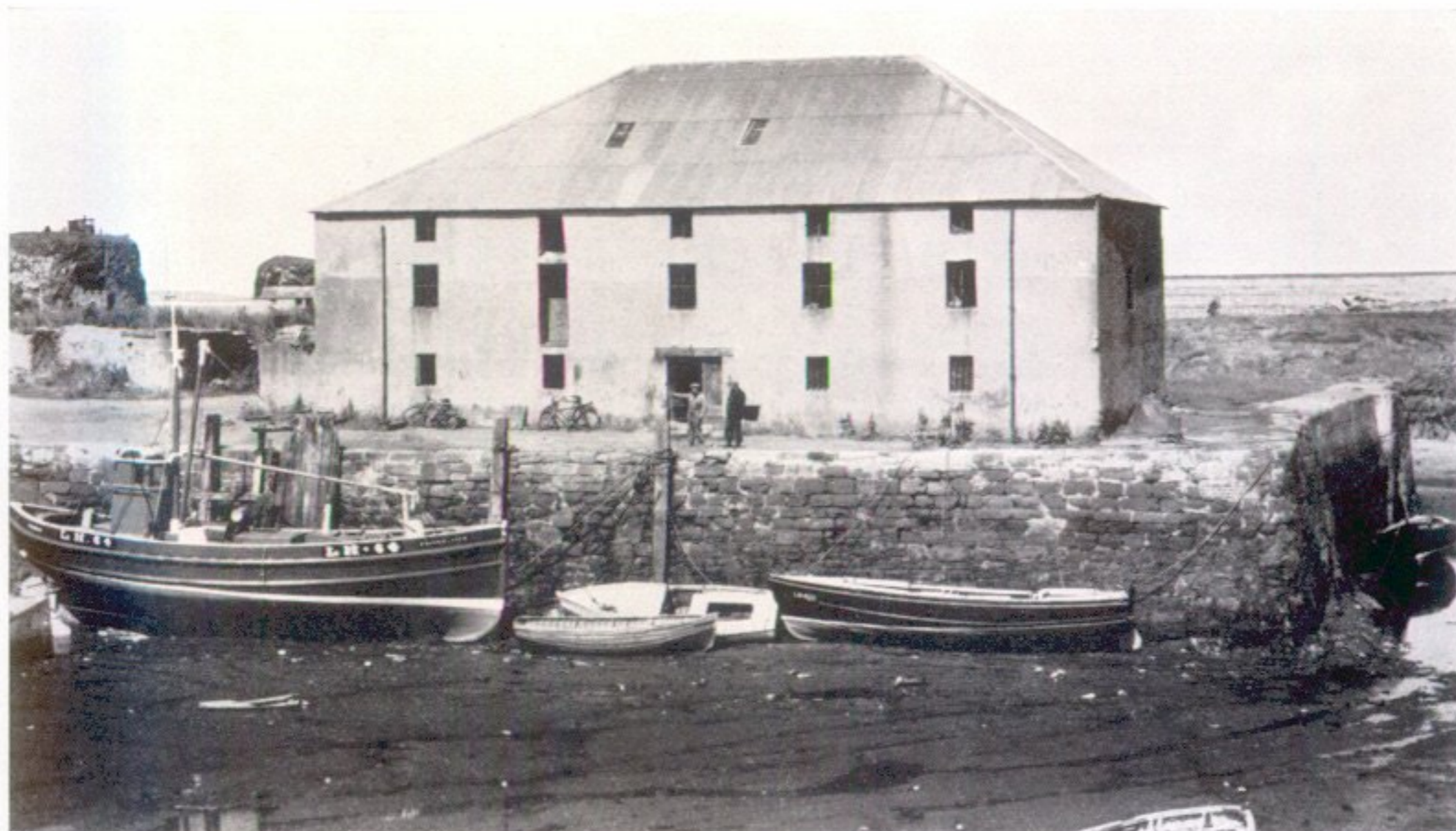
3. Outer face of East Pier, showing vertical masonry



1. Steps on inner face of East Pier



2. NE. side of harbour entrance, showing chase for booms.



1. Quay W. of harbour entrance, with Spott's Granary



2. General view of harbour from S., showing excavated rock (left) and Coal Wharf (right) with East Pier beyond



1. The Fishermen's Monument



2. Rivet-type clamp in parapet



3. Warping-pawl in recess on East Pier



4. Dry-stone breakwater at North Berwick, showing wooden wedges



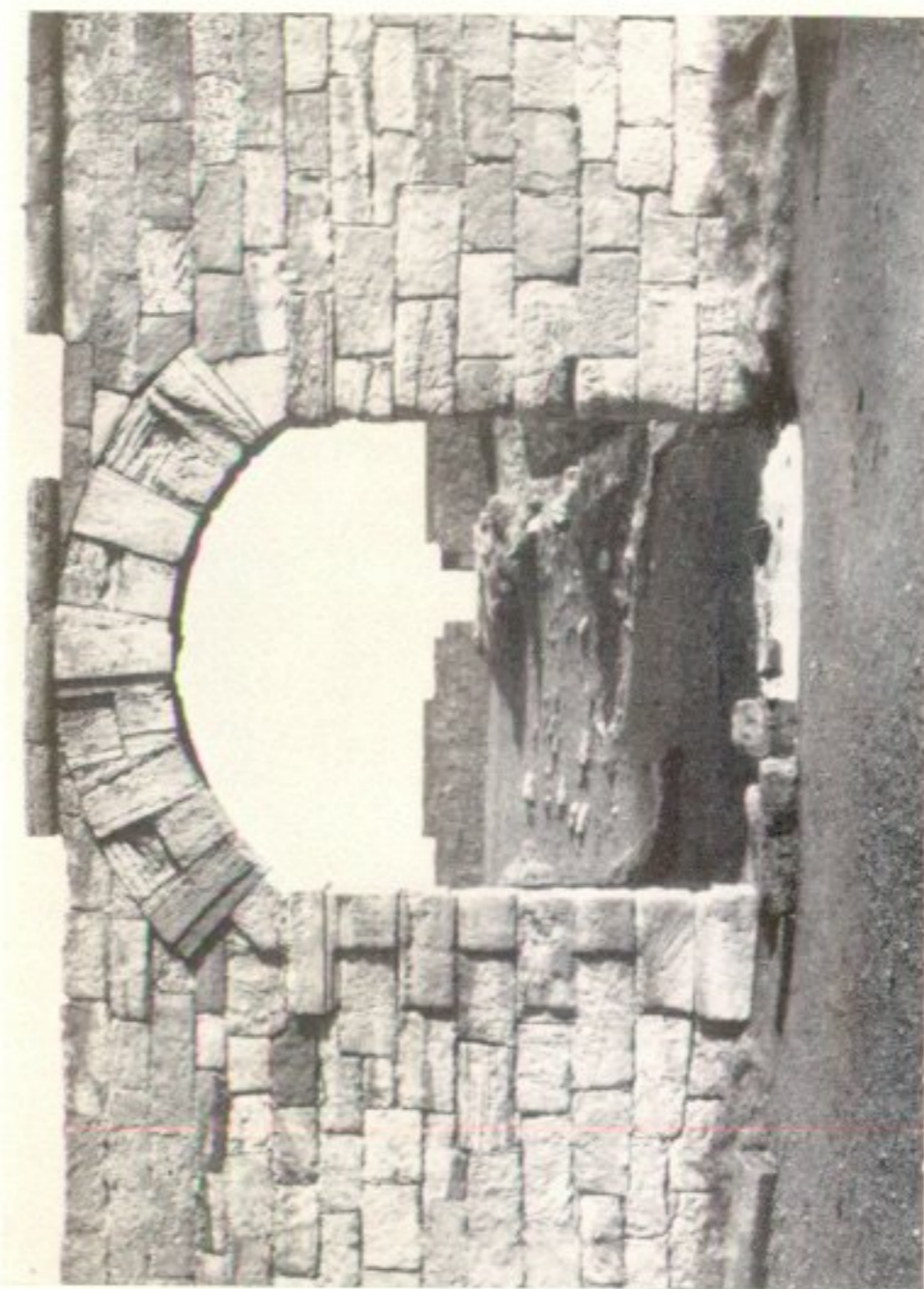
1. The Battery from S.E., showing in foreground rock cut back in widening of Broad Haven



2. Large timber pawl, showing parapet of Battery in background



3. The Custom House from S. immediately before demolition.
(By courtesy of the Royal Burgh of Dunbar)



4. Entrance to Battery, showing (within) ramp to gun-platform and an embrasure