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Whitecoats and Rascals

In Search of the Fortifications and Siege Works
from the Siege of Haddington 1548 - 1549

By

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Abstract:

It took the English pioneers and soldiers sixty eight days in the summer of 1548 to turn the Royal Burgh of Haddington into the first great ‘trace italienne’ fortress in Scotland. This revolutionary design had developed on the continent in response to the rapid development of artillery. When the English garrison, starving and plague ridden, was forced to leave some 19 months later, the fortress was razed having withstood all that the Scots and their French allies could throw at it.

Looking around Haddington today there appears scant evidence as to the fact that the siege ever took place at all. Odd pitting in the church walls, curious mounds in the adjacent fields and local stories of bodies found in the backyards of the baker’s shop provide tentative and sketchy reminders of this sanguine confrontation. Scotland’s longest siege seems to have been lost to history.

This dissertation attempts to piece together the enduring written and physical evidence and place the remains of the fortifications into the modern landscape. It is hoped this document will be used by archaeologists, historians and town planners alike to encourage greater debate and further investigation.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Lord Grey of Wilton wrote with his commander in chief, the Duke of Somerset on April 28th 1548. He said of Haddington ‘It will be the fairest town ever fortified in these parts, and the ‘daunter’ of Scotland’ (COSP Scot 228: 111). Some 20 months later the survivors of the English garrison; ravaged by plague, wearing nothing but their ‘whitecoats’¹ and reduced to eating dogs and rats, opened the gates of the town to the relief column. Notably no shots were fired by the Scots and French in the siege lines who were themselves in no fit state to oppose the sortie. The English took four days to raze the fortress and the remaining buildings before heading south to the border. Two days later the Scots moved into the ruined and battered burgh. This action concluded what was debatably the longest siege in Scottish history² (Urwin 2006: 80. Phillips 1999: 251).

Haddington today is a thriving and busy town bypassed by the A1 trunk road and within the prosperous commuter belt for Edinburgh. The streets during the day are given over to the hustle and bustle of suburban life. The High Street oozes history with nearly every house and shop subject to conservation orders and a plethora of street names referring back to the founding of the Royal Burgh.

Against the river Tyne and notably on the eastern outskirts of the Burgh, stands St Mary’s Parish Church, reputedly one of the largest parish churches in the land. Compared to the rest of the town it looks a little shabby, its walls pitted and the tower stark and square. It could be forgiven for being so; up until 1973 the choir had no roof and even now the crooked columns within can only support the weight of a fibreglass construction (Marshall 2001: 47). Tucked

¹ English troops and their mercenaries were often given a white woollen base coat as standard means of identification and uniform. Hence D’Esse cynically comments that Haddington was manned purely by ‘Rascals and Whitecoats’.

² Chris Brown in his latest work on the battlefields of Scotland (Brown 2008: 142) suggests the siege lasted no more than a month before it was surrendered under treaty. The garrison was relieved in August 1548 and the siege lines were notoriously porous through the later period however most chroniclers agree that the siege officially ended by late September 1549 on the withdrawal of the garrison.

along the north wall of the east transept are a number of display boards that explain the reason for this fragile restoration. It transpires that St Mary's was left standing outwith the fortifications by the English. As such it became a focal point for the combatants who regularly battled in and around its ruins. Looking again at that pitting on the exterior, it is clear that these were caused by harquebus and cannon fire. It turns out that the church is the most tangible and unique monument to those 19 months of suffering and death.

But what remains of the fortification itself? There appears to be no trace left of the 'daunter of Scotland'. In its time it was on the cutting edge of fortification design, the likes of which had never been seen in Scotland before. Built in the 'trace italienne' style and built to withstand the worst the new age of gunpowder could throw at it. Its low squat walls, no higher than the buildings they enclosed, were built from earth and surrounded by ditches and revetments. Its bulwarks bristled with artillery the barricades and casemates housed nearly 2,500 English 'whitecoats' and their allied European mercenaries, armed with pike and shot. Not only were the fortifications at Haddington unique in their radical design they were also the most fought over in Scotland for the period. They now appear to be lost under the sprawl of the modern town.

It was clear from the outset that, unlike similar forts at Broughty Ferry, Eyemouth and Berwick, the walls of Haddington had gone. There are no ramparts, bastions or bulwarks to see and unusually no map to show exactly where to look. It would appear that Miller writing in his history of the Burgh, 'The Lamp of Lothian', was right when he said that the fortifications were entirely demolished (Miller 1844: 32). However, is this really the case for the archaeologists? Is there material evidence of the siege remaining in the ground which would reveal the location and extent of the fortifications? What would any evidence look like if it was discovered?

The constraints imposed by the timescale for the dissertation precluded any archaeological intervention taking place. This work was purely a research project with the aim to identify the most likely location of the fortifications and

surmise as to what may be found there. In order to meet this aim a number of objectives were set:

- A review of all the written evidence and accounts of the siege to discern the nature, extent and possible location of the fortifications.
- An assessment of the accuracy and reliability of each piece of evidence and where possible locate it in the modern landscape.
- An analytical review of the evidence as a whole in order discern trends and patterns that would indicate the probable location of the fortifications.
- A document that presents the evidence in a methodical and effective manner from which the reader can draw conclusions as to the most likely location of the fortifications and the nature of the archaeological evidence that may be found.
- A document that will provide source material for further discussion as to the location of the fortifications and the history of the siege.

The following methodology was employed in order to meet these objectives and fulfil the aim of the project:

- Identification and review of relevant contemporary and modern literature (See 'Bibliography' for the material reviewed).
- The construction of databases into which abridged versions of the accounts were detailed along with associated source, dates and references. This was initially sorted chronologically.
- This data was then sorted by relevance to the fortifications and by location.
- A number of associated databases were also created such as artillery nomenclature and ranges.
- Finally the evidence for each feature of the fortifications was sorted, cross checked and conclusions drawn.

The analysis was then divided into four parts; Haddington prior to the siege, the fortifications themselves, the siege works and the post siege evidence. This subsequently determined the structure of the written work.

In addition a number of site visits were made to view the possible locations within town and interviews arranged with subject experts including Dr David Caldwell of National Museums of Scotland, Bidy Simpson, Heritage Officer for East Lothian Council and Alan Birbeck of Glasgow University. As the most descriptive text on the fortifications is in old French and subsequent translations have been deemed untrustworthy (Green 1907: 12), a new translation was written by Mrs Wendy Accrioli of the Language Room in Linlithgow (See Appendix A).

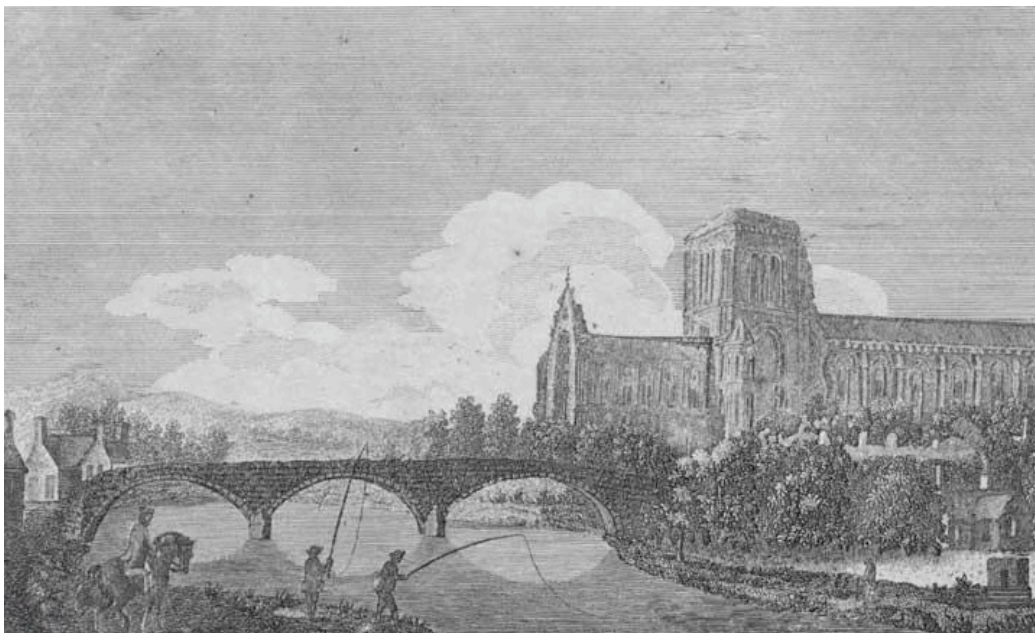


Fig 1.1- St Mary's and the Nungate Bridge at Haddington as depicted in the 18th Century. Both features lay outwith the English fortification and still bear the scars of the fighting.

Chapter 2 – Historical Background

Before due consideration can be made to its location, it is important to understand the circumstances that necessitated the building of the fortification and influenced its design, construction and its final demolition.

As the smoke cleared across the battlefield of Pinkie on 10th September 1547, the victor, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and, since Henry VIII's death in the January, Lord Protector of England, contemplated his next move against his Scottish adversaries. The Pinkie campaign, like his raids on Edinburgh in 1544 and the borders in 1545, had been brutally efficient but strategically ineffective. The 'Rough Wooing' of the Scots for the betrothal of their young Queen Mary to Henry's son, Edward was proving a costly and drawn out affair. He must have wondered how many more times would the English crown be called upon to mount expensive invasions on its Scottish neighbours in order to impose its will on a resilient and stubborn government.



Fig 2.1 – A modern OS map of East Lothian showing usual route to Edinburgh from the border, the location of Somerset's planned fortresses and

the area over which a large garrison at Haddington could be expected to control.

But Somerset and his advisors now had a different strategy in the pipeline. He looked to expand on the programme of garrisons by placing an English force (or at least one of English sponsored mercenaries) on the very doorstep of the Scottish parliament. He had already established garrisons on the island of Inchcolm in the Forth of Firth and at Broughty Ferry in the Tay estuary. His engineers were also surveying the peninsular at Eyemouth and the fortifications of Lauder in readiness of a massive building plan. Somerset was establishing a chain of fortified positions which could ensure a supply line all the way from the border to the outskirts of Edinburgh. All he needed now was the site for the hub of his 'Scottish Pale'³. (Bush 1975, 13-16. Pollard 1898: 67-69)

In April 1548, Somerset began a campaign of coercion in East Lothian, fortifying and garrisoning Yester Castle, Dalkeith and Lauder and burning out less cooperative Scottish lairds. In addition Sir Thomas Palmer and Lord Grey of Wilton reviewed the site at Haddington and despite their initial concerns on the location and lack of supplies, set about laying out the line of the fortifications (COSP Scot 228: 111).

It is clear from the correspondence that the English commanders in Haddington had an anxious time rapidly building strong enough fortifications to dissuade the Scots from attacking them. The early letters sent back speak of imminent threat from marauding Scottish and French forces (COSP Scot 229, 230: 111-112) and requests for more money to encourage the soldiers to work longer hours (COSP Scot 228: 111). English horsemen began laying waste to the surrounding countryside in order to deprive any besiegers of vital supplies and discourage the local populace from siding with them (Bush 1975: 17. Mackay 1899 -1911: 371).

However despite their worries the English commanders were reporting by the beginning of June that the fortifications were well established. By mid June

³ Much has been made of the similarity between this policy and that of Henry's strategy towards Ireland which resulted in the establishment of the Irish Pale centred on Dublin (Bush 1975. p2-3).

intelligence confirmed the arrival of the main French force under André de Montalembert, Count D'Esse who brought with him some 12,000 men including a contingent of German mercenaries under the Philip Francois, Count De Salm, Captain Rhinegrave. As the French closed in on the town, John Brende, chief engineer announced that the work at Haddington was moving on at a frantic pace with the garrison working all hours to strengthen the fortifications and clear the buildings outwith the walls (COSP Scot 253: 123).

The French and Scots finally arrived in force at the end of June and quickly set about sealing off the town. The garrison of some 2,000 Englishmen and European mercenaries now hunkered down to face the onslaught. The French spent most of July digging trenches and bombarding the fortifications and managed to undermine and prepare a breach in one of the bastions. By the end of the month the besiegers were readying for the assault by bringing up ladders and faggots to lie across the ditches and up against the walls. However the expected onslaught never materialised. Dissent amongst the Scots and their allies and the departure of many of the Scottish troops at the conclusion of their levy dissuaded D'Esse from launching the attack. In addition the English garrison seemed as strongly entrenched as they were at the beginning of the siege, often repairing the damage to the walls and bastions faster than the French could inflict it (COSP Scot 295, 296: 149).

On 18th July the political intrigues that began the campaign came to a head when the French ambassadors in Scotland met with the Scottish parliament in the Abbey at Haddington. With the sound of the French guns in the distance, the two sides agreed to the removal of the young Queen Mary to the French court and the future betrothal to the Dauphin. The Treaty of Haddington as it became to be known effectively removed Somerset's 'raison d'etre' for his whole campaign. To make matters worse for the English, a supply column destined for Haddington was beaten back at Linton with the loss of 800; the battle was later named the 'Tuesday Chase'. (Phillips 1999: 229 -232)

The siege now became an act of stubborn English defiance and a measure of Somerset's bloody mindedness. Mary's mother, the indefatigable Mary of

Guise, after signing away her daughter's care to the French, visited the siege lines only to have fourteen of her entourage blown apart by English gunnery. The English finally managed to resupply the garrison with valuable stocks of gunpowder and match and fresh plans to storm the battered Wyndham's bastion were thwarted by the construction of new fortifications built in the lee of the battered outer wall.

By the end of August 1548 the Scots and French had retired most of their heavy guns and resigned themselves to starving the garrison out. Their withdrawal prompted the arrival of an English relief force under the command of the new Lord Lieutenant of the North, the Earl of Shrewsbury, whose force of some 13,000 men entered the beleaguered town on 29th August. The garrison was resupplied and the casualties replaced before the column, unable to entice the French out of their lines along the Esk, returned to the border.

Attention then turned to other areas of the campaign. The French launched fresh attacks against Lauder, Jedburgh and tightened the siege around the English garrison at Broughty Ferry. As the winter set in and the campaign season drew to a close, friction between the French troops stationed in Edinburgh and the much put out populace sparked into riot. The Provost, amongst others, was killed and the French troops forced to leave the city leaving their wounded comrades unable to travel to be murdered in revenge (COSP Dom Edward: 295-296). D'Esse, sensing his campaign collapsing and in order to distract from the turmoil in the capital led his troops in a 'camisade' on October 10th which breached the outer defences of Haddington but was thwarted at the last by the firing of English artillery into their ranks at point blank range. Beaten and bloodied the French fell back to winter quarters and awaited the New Year (Phillips 1997: 240. COSP Dom Edward: 300-301. Mackay 1899 -1911: 375).

Life inside Haddington deteriorated rapidly with the onset of winter. By November the garrison was said to be around a thousand men of which many were unfit for service. Plague set in and food became scarce (COSP Scot 329: 166). The surrounding lands were stripped of provisions and the French forced into winter quarters in Leith. In January 1549 the garrison suffered another

heavy blow; their illustrious leader Sir James Wylford was captured at Dunbar and command of the garrison passed over to Sir Richard Acroft .

As the siege rolled on into 1549, it became clear to the English that the money and resources involved in manning the town was for little gain. The garrison was effectively impotent in winning over the hearts and minds of the ‘Assured Scots⁴’, bottled up as they were within the town and incapable of taking the fighting to the enemy. To add to their misery the new French commander, Sieur De Thermes, fortified Aberlady, the nearest port to Haddington, forcing the English to bring in supplies over the precarious overland route (Phillips 1999: 249)

The maintenance, protection and provision of the Scottish garrisons proved too expensive for the cash strapped English government and with Somerset’s own authority now being questioned in London there was little appetite to support the failing venture (Manning 1979: 97). Somerset was to be deposed as Protector in October 1549, partly as a result of the failure of his Scottish policy (Bush 1975: 36-39). On 14th September an English relief column of some 16,000 men led by the Earl of Rutland entered Haddington without opposition. Within a few days the remaining garrison was recalled, the town burnt and the fortifications razed. As Mary of Guise remarked ‘they left nothing behind them but the plague’ (Urwin 2006: 80).



**Fig 2.2 Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset
– His plan was sound however, poor**

⁴ Scots under English pay

execution and lack of money doomed the Haddington garrison to a torrid defeat.

Chapter 3 – Haddington 1548

Overview

In order to understand the impact the building of the fortifications and the ensuing siege had on the landscape we must have a clear understanding as to what that landscape looked like before the arrival of the English. This chapter describes the burgh immediately prior to the siege and establishes a series of landmarks around which the fortifications were built. Appendix C provides a plan to accompany this chapter.

16th Century Haddington was a prosperous and thriving example of the Scottish burgh. A burgh can be best described as a place with certain privileges primarily as a result of grants made by the king. These chiefly centred on the trading rights of the town which in turn was reflected in its architectural features and street layout. Burghs were allowed a High Street, Mercat Cross and Tollbooth as well as town walls and gates that controlled the passage of goods and tradesmen (Mair 1988: 5-8).

The concept of the Burgh dates back to the 11th Century and it is dangerous to assume that they grew up around existing features such as abbeys, castles and bridges. The location of a burgh can usually be attributed to presence of some kind of trading hub but whether this is due to prevailing geography or as a result of a gathering population around a man made structure varies from burgh to burgh (Mair 1988: 8). Haddington first became a burgh in the middle of the 12th century via grants given to the monks of Dunfermline by David I (Gourlay & Turner 1977: 1). The main reason for its existence seems to be the presence of the ford over the Tyne and the growing ecclesiastical real estate.

The Geography of Haddington

Haddington lies in the flat plain on the east side of the river Tyne some 17 miles east of Edinburgh and 11 miles south west of Dunbar. Although the river valley is relatively low lying, the town lies in the bottom in a shallow 'saucer' surrounded by higher ground. It is overlooked to the north by the Garleton Hills (186m) a mile and a half away and the high ground at Lennoxlove (nee Lethington) (81m) and Monkrigg (83m) two kilometres away to the south. The approach from the east is via the site of the Abbey of Haddington and the country estate of Amisfield. The western approach from Edinburgh passes through the Letham estate and is over looked by Alderton Hill (159m) and the high ground around Spittalrigg farm (105m). The River Tyne runs in a north easterly direction but at Haddington it kinks onto a more northerly course thus protecting the town from the south and east. The river passes by the estate of Clerkington before reaching Haddington. The main road from Berwick to Edinburgh passed through the town, however in more recent times it has been bypassed to the north by the A1 trunk road.



Fig. 3.1 - John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland of 1832 showing the prevailing geography of the environs of Haddington, in particular the course of the river Tyne and the surrounding higher ground. (NLS 2008)

The more notable features further a field are; the port of Aberlady, the nearest suitable harbour lying some 4.5 miles away to the north west, the town of Linton (now East Linton), 3 miles to the east, that provided the next suitable bridge across the Tyne en route to Berwick and the Lammermuir Hills to the south east that effectively ruled out any shipment of supplies from that direction.

Street Layout

As in most burghs, the 'High Street' is the primary thoroughfare in Haddington. It runs from west to east and forms one side of an isosceles triangle of main roads. The street once widened the further east it went however as time prevailed and trading in the burgh increased, an 'island' of buildings called the Kilpairs (NT 5146 7839 to NT5170 7389) was established in the early 15th Century which divided the High Street in two and formed Market Street (nee Back Street) to the north. This in turn was truncated by the Tollbooth which heralded the change of name of the street on its east side to Tollbooth Wynd. The base of the 'triangle' lies along the Hardgate that runs on a north south orientation. The houses lining these streets were interspersed with a number of narrow 'wynds' (alleyways) and 'yetts' (gated alleyways) that led to substantial 'riggs', 'tofts' 'burgages' or 'tenements' (narrow strips of land) that stretched to the burgh boundary. Latterly the demand for accommodation has seen the steady development of this land and the yetts and wynds have become the access to housing off the main streets.

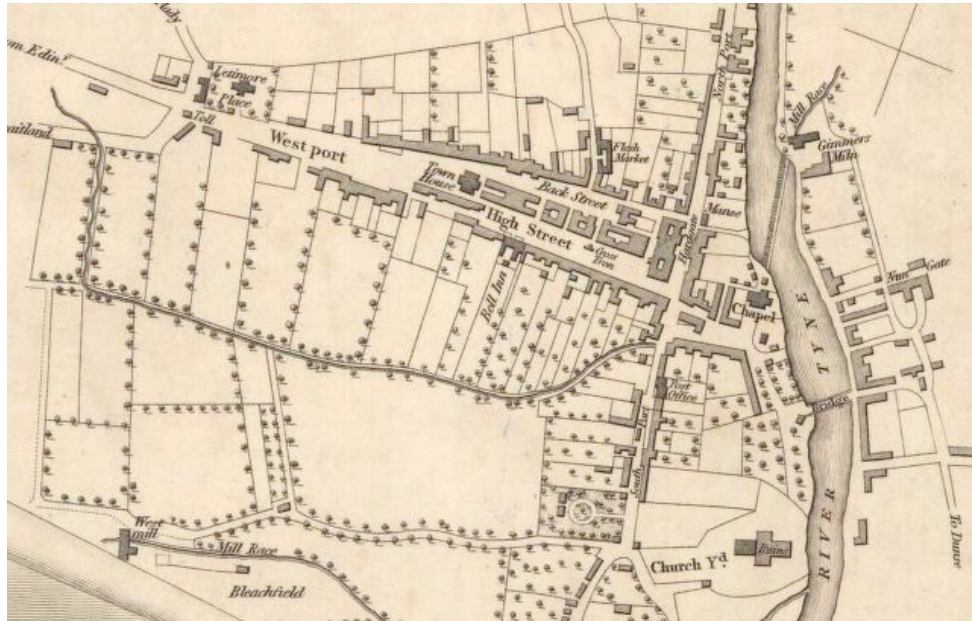


Fig. 3.2 – A close up of John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland, 1832 showing the inset plan of Haddington. Even some 300 years after the siege the street plan is little changed and the extent of housing is limited to those facing the main streets. The land behind the houses offers a clear space for building fortifications (NLS 2008).

Roads

The state of the roads in the mid 16th Century left a lot to be desired despite being on the main route to and from the border. Many were no more than cart tracks, often turning to quagmires after heavy rain and baking rock hard in the summer suns. The road through Haddington was earmarked for upgrade in 1542 with stocks of sand and rocks to be purchased at the town's expense but it seems this work was not completed before the siege (Robb, C 1880: 25).

Bridges and Fords

The river Tyne was fordable at a number of points in the vicinity of the Haddington especially in the dry summer. In particular the river was crossable to the north of Gowl Close, on the site of the later Victoria Bridge. However as vehicular traffic got heavier a permanent bridge was built in the south east corner of the burgh. The Nungate Bridge

as it became known was probably erected in stone in the 15th century and was left standing throughout the time of the siege. The shallows along the stretch of river to the north of the bridge have been long been known as ‘The Sands’ which by tradition was the scene of heavy fighting during the siege.



Fig 3.3 The original stone Nungate Bridge dates back to the 15th century and was left standing for the duration of the siege.

Walls and Fosses

In order to control a trade the burghs invested funds in surrounding the town by a wall or ditch which was perforated by gates or ‘ports’. They varied in construction from burgh to burgh. Stirling’s town wall for example was a contemporary structure to the defences at Haddington and stands around 10 feet high, adorned with gun loops and towers. In contrast some burgh councils asked their residents to incorporate the garden walls of their tenements into the defences or simply opted to dig ditches. The town wall at Haddington, of which traces still remain today, was built in 1597. However there are references to an earlier ‘King’s Wall’ and ports that predated the siege (Martine 1883: 51). There are also accounts of the burgh council sponsoring the build

of 'fosses' or ditches to the north and the south of the town which were probably designed to provide drainage and act as a midden as well as for security. (Robb C 1880: 26)

Ports

By the mid 16th century Haddington had four ports; the North East Port (NT 5169 7415) protecting the road to Dunbar and Linton, the East Port (NT 5190 7387) (or Abbey Port) leading out of the south east corner of the burgh towards the Nungate Bridge, the South Port⁵ (NT 5179 7358) positioned at the bottom of Sidegate⁶, a southerly extension of Hardgate, terminating at the river and the West Port (NT 5118 7387) (or Edinburgh Port or Great Port) at the end of Market Street in the present day Court Street which was debatably the grandest of them all. The Newtown Port (NT 5149 7411) to the north of the burgh was erected at the same time as the later town wall and does not appear to be a recognised entrance at the time of the siege. There is evidence to suggest the ports were quite substantial constructions with accommodation for gatekeepers and guards (Gourlay & Turner 1977: 7). The ports, with the exception of the South Port, were incorporated into the line of defences (Miller 1844 :36, 37,46-48). However they were found to be unsuitable for protecting the fort and were 'mured up' (blocked by earth) during the construction (COSP Scot 253. p123, Fulwell 1575: 51).

⁵ According to the S.B.S (Gourlay & Turner 1977: 7) and Jamieson (1926: 1) the South Port was 'located at the east end of the Sidegate where it was joined by Mill Wynd, the watch house being just at the corner of where the wall of Maitlanfield joins that Wynd'. However, this site is too remote from the town centre and therefore probably lay outwith the fortifications.

⁶ The street names ending in 'gate' such as Haddington's 'Sidegate' and 'Hardgate' may infer the existence of exits however the term 'gate' or 'gait' is another word for 'way' or 'road'.



Fig 3.4 The port could be a major defensive structure as the West Port at St Andrew's demonstrates. However, Fulwell comments that the gates of Haddington were 'not of any strength for defence, our men [The English] who were constraunde to ramme up the gates with earthe, and to mayntaine the defence of the town upon the wailes' (Fulwell 1575: 51).

The walls were also perforated with a number of sallet ports or postern gates allowing the garrison to sortie out upon a besieging enemy. Gowl Close leading off from the Hardgate was one such port out of Haddington.



Fig 3.5 – Gowl close, so called because it was often used by the monks as access to the ford and the road to the Abbey, was used as a sally port during the siege giving the English access to the west side of the riverbank.

Buildings

The location and age of the buildings in Haddington may give the best clue as to the site of the fortifications. By identifying which buildings were inside or outwith the fort and fixing them in the modern landscape it may be possible to reveal the location of the ramparts.

Beaugué, Grey and Fulwell recount that many of the 'fair' houses and the 'substance of the town' were left standing within the fortifications in order to provide lodgings for the garrison (Beaugué 1556: 21, Fulwell 1575: 51, COSP Scot 228: 111). However they quickly became targets for the French gunners who turned many into ruins.

'And in the ende, our enemies did so beat the towne with shott, that they lefte not one whole house for our men to put their heads in: Whereby they were constrained to lye vnder the walles, (for other lodging was there none.)' (Fulwell 1575: 5).

There are also records stating that houses outwith the fortifications were pulled down to provide a clear line of fire (COSP Scot 253: 123, COSP Scot 228: 111) and to provide building material. Some were incorporated into the fabric of the curtain wall. This nearly led to disaster as a French raid on the 5th July 1548 made entry into Wyndham's bulwark via a 'little wall of a house' which they proceeded to batter down. The attack was bloodily repulsed and the breach made good. (COSP Scot 282: 139)

The French in turn made good use of any ruins left upstanding in the environs of the fort. They used them as shelter and hiding places from which to ambush foraying English (Miller 1844: 33 -34).

Like today, 16th Century housing development produced suburbs of varying affordability and status. The wealthier areas tended towards the high ground, centring around the castle and prestigious public buildings. In Haddington's case it was the east end of town towards the ecclesiastical sites that became the favoured residence. The burgh houses at this end of town were primarily stone built, three to four storeys high with slate or pan tile roofs. The more salubrious buildings would be built with fine dressed stones, have a fair complement of windows and even balconies. Higher storeys tended to jut out over the walkway below enclosing the narrower yetts and alleyways

between properties. The yetts led onto courtyards or closes in which existed a stinking, claustrophobic world cut off from the bustle of the High Street.



Fig 3.6 – Mitchell Close – sanitised restoration of the back streets of Haddington

Cheaper burgh houses were made of building rubble and timber and prone to rot, decay and fire. The crowded vennels with thatched or turf roofs would not withstand the trauma of a siege and were earmarked for clearance by the English (Mair 1983: 169 – 189).

The streets were also cluttered with unofficial and temporary constructions to house animals, act as storehouses or shelter the homeless. The problem got so bad in Haddington that the council passed decree in 1553 for all such sheds and houses built in the streets outwith the ‘eisdrop’ (space liable to receive dripping of water from the eaves of the houses) of the main houses to be taken down apart from those which stand where the main houses came to an end. (Robb 1880: 53) By the turn of the century many of the houses were deemed to be in a ruinous state, in particular those at the west end of the town which were described as being ‘not fit to be seen by a gentlemen passing through’. Little changed in the 17th century and it wasn’t until the following century that a concerted effort was made to clean up the vista of the town.

Tradesmen and their Lodgings

There are a number of accounts and local stories that refer to the tradesmen of Haddington during the siege. Many of the Scots in Haddington for one reason or another sided with the English garrison and actively participated in the defence of the town. The garrison could potentially bring a lot of trade to the town and many of the tradesmen felt reluctant to give up their homes and premises to their new neighbours preferring to stick it out for the short term at least (Gray & Jamieson 1944: p11)

One such story elates to Will Cochrane, a ‘baxter’ or baker who had premises in the Hardgate. He was apparently interrupted from his work one day during the siege by the arrival of a couple of Frenchmen whom he duly despatched with rolling pins. The story concludes that the two attackers were buried in the back garden, their bones subsequently being dug up as the house was redeveloped in the early 19th century. (Martine 1883: 61). The author goes on to relate that this house belonged to Mrs Knox and can be identified on the census for 1881 as number 46 Hardgate (www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk). This story, if true, is interesting on two accounts, firstly it corroborates the fact that local Scots stayed on site to support the English and that a bakery was situated at the north end of Hardgate presumably safe within the town’s defences.

A similar deduction can be made about the apparent site of John ‘The Hinges’ Cochrane’s smithy at the bottom of Sidegate at Bedlam Close. The story has it that the smithy was used both by the English and the French to sharpen their ‘swords and bayonets’⁷, all be it not at the same time (Martine 1883: 53). This may infer that this site was outwith the fortifications as it was accessible by both sides during the siege or more likely that it was still standing within the fortifications after the siege and visited by the victorious French troops.

⁷ Unfortunately the author is using poetic licence here as bayonets were not invented until the end of the 17th Century.

Markets and Mercat Cross

The majority of trading took place at the markets scattered along the High Street and Market Street. For the most part traders applied to the council for a pitch on which they could display their wares on trestle tables under the protection of awnings. By the end of the 16th Century more permanent structures in the form of arcades fronting the buildings were built. However, it is clear from the Haddington Burgh accounts that the location of the market areas was moveable. In 1543 the council ordained that the fish market be moved from its position along the 'Friar's wall' to the east side of the Tollbooth with the salt market and meal market moving into the freed up location and the wheat market to the western end of the Tollbooth (Robb,C. 1880: 26). The market was still up and running in June as the English built the fortifications providing the garrison and citizens with enough food to allow stocks to be built up in anticipation of the siege (COSP Dom Add: 383). It appears that the 'market' was still a recognisable feature within the town during the siege as Palmer makes reference to the site in his correspondence on 11th July 1548 but its exact location is difficult to discern from this account (Hamilton 1890 -92 445: 603). He most probably was referring to the area around Haddington's Mercat Cross (NT 5162 7387). The cross itself was first noted in 1425 and a pre reformation cross was replaced in 1693 by one with a square base, four steps and surmounted by a unicorn (SBS 1999:15). This was in turn replaced in 1881 by the current cross. The cross not only marks the vicinity of the market but became the gathering point for public meetings and announcements. It was on this spot in the month before the siege that the English troops watched a fatal trial by combat between two Scottish prisoners in 'listes' specially erected for the event (Fulwell 1575: p50).



Fig 3.7 a and b. The current market cross was erected in 1881 and stands in the High Street in the vicinity of the site of the original cross. The location of the ‘tron’ or public weighing scales is marked by the round cobbling in the road.

Particular Buildings

Many of the old plots and contemporary buildings that existed in 1548 are still discernable in the archaeology and architecture of Haddington today. However there are a number of buildings that can be directly linked to the accounts of the fighting. The following section details these sites and discusses their connection with the siege.

St Mary’s Parish Church

St Mary’s parish church in Haddington (NT 5190 7362) remains the most tangible relic dating back to the siege. Even today its walls are pitted from shot and ball and up until 1973 the eastern transept and tower remained unroofed as consequence of the battering it took in 1548 (Marshall 2001: 47).

The church stands on the western bank of the Tyne some 150yds from the Nungate Bridge. Built in the late 14th Century on the site of an earlier church destroyed by Edward III in 1356, it was in its time one of the largest churches of its kind. It was built on the traditional cruciform shape out of red sandstone and was centred on the 90ft high tower. The English had every intention of levelling the building prior to the siege

(COSP 233 p114) and reported its demise to Somerset (COSP Scot 253: 123, 257: 126). However they had not done a thorough job as the French were able to use the ruins as cover and mounted guns on a 'platform of timber' which could fire down into the town and smaller 'cuthroats' on the steeple. The English retaliated by bombarding the ruins to the extent where at one point shot passed through the church killing men 'roasting their meat' on the far side (COSP 273: 136. Hamilton 445: 603). Undeterred the French continued to use the ruins as cover, driving trenches towards the fortifications from the churchyard. The church was used as the staging post for the camisade in October 1548 that so nearly won the town (Miller 1844: 47).



***Fig 3.8 a – St Mary's as viewed from the probable line of the English forward works.
Fig 3.8 b and c - Shot and bullet damage to the walls of St Mary's is tangible evidence of the siege.***

The Tollbooth

Lord Somerset advised Lord Grey that on taking up his command at Haddington he should set up his headquarters either in the church or the tollbooth on account that these were the two buildings that would best stand up to an assault ‘unless cannon are brought against it’ (COSP Scot 135: 64).

Certainly the Tollbooth was one of the major buildings for the Burgh. It acted as the primary meeting house for the town council, the store for the burgh records, banners and charters as well as the safe for the burgh income. As the name suggests it was also the building at which the burgh tolls, taxes and dues were collected. The tollbooth additionally acted as a guard room, housing the burgh armoury, the town court and prison. As such they tended to be of sturdy construction designed to keep prisoners in and thieves out. The building was divided into a number of areas usually on separate floors, the most important being the council chamber. Off this was the more functional courtroom. Prisons were initially sited on the ground floor which unfortunately facilitated tunnelling and undermining but aided defence, as the windows were small and often barred and the doors sturdy and robust (Mair 1988: 46-49. MacGregor 2003: 250-263).

Nothing remains today of the tollbooth at Haddington, at least above ground. However there are tantalising references to the building throughout the burgh records from which an impression of the building can be drawn. The earliest reference to the building was made in 1425 and it reputedly stood on the High Street at the bottom of Newton Port (NT 5156 7391) (Gourlay & Turner 1977: 9) and appears to have had enough space to the east and west of it to hold markets in (See *Markets* above). It had three floors and by the time of the siege its thatched roof had been replaced by a tiled steeple in the ‘Dutch’ style which by 1543 was in need of repair. The tollbooth survived the siege, despite being a conspicuous target⁸. In 1556 repairs were carried out its clock tower followed in 1572 burgh accounts show work to repair a drawbridge (Robb, C. 1880: 143). The tollbooth was the headquarters for the English during the siege and was heavily fortified. (See Chapter 4)

⁸ Methven wrote on 5th July that the Scottish artillery had laboured all the previous night and had ‘dong⁸ the tolbuht ane rest an pece hat lay betuix it and the kirk of the fryars’(Cameron 1927. p249)



Fig 3.9a A blurred close up of John Slezer's view of Haddington dated 1693 shows what is perhaps the only image of the tollbooth prior to its demise in 1748 (NMS).

Fig 3.9b The tollbooth at Dunbar which also dates back to the 16th century appears to be of a similar design.

Tenements and Towers

Two other substantial buildings of note in the vicinity of the Tollbooth that are mentioned in records just prior to and after the siege are the Greenlaw's Tower and the Well Tower. The exact location of the former is uncertain but the building is thought to have stood on the south side of Market Street. Records dated to 1543 state that the building was redeemed from the Franciscan friars by Philip Gibson for 16 pounds. The Well Tower (NT 5160 7380) was similarly associated with the Friary in documents dating to 1530 and is known to have stood in Brown Street (nee Strumpet Street) (Moir Bryce 1909: 184,195. SBS 1999: 15).

The Abbey of Haddington

The Abbey of Haddington (NT5350 7480) was perhaps the most notable building in the environs of Haddington at the time of the siege. It lay about a mile east of the town along the banks of the Tyne beyond the 16th century Abbey Bridge and little remains of the buildings today. First established in the 12th Century from lands given to Countess Ada, mother of Malcolm IV, the Abbey grew into one of the finest in the land with a reputation as a seat of education. By 1461 it was the home to some 24 nuns and by 1560 this had fallen to 18 (Cowan and Easson 1976: 147). The Prioress and the nuns were often called upon to support the Scottish war effort, providing stores and succour to passing armies. In return it was burnt by the English in 1335 and in May 1544. The Abbey became the centre of the Scottish effort at the siege, with the Earl of Arran setting up his headquarters on the site (Miller 1844: 102). The Prioress hosted a meeting of the Scottish parliament in July 1548 at which the treaty was signed agreeing the transportation of the young Queen Mary to France in preparation for her marriage to the Dauphin in return for military aid. It was also home to Mary of Guise during her state visit to the siege later that month. (Merriman 2000: 309 -310) The abbey failed to survive the Reformation with most of its lands and titles being handed on to William Maitland of Lethington in 1567.

Much of the land around Haddington was owned by the prioress. In particular, it appears they held tenancy on the corn mill a Gimmermyles and certain acres of the Nungate which were rented to William Waterston somewhere between 1550 and 1560. The mill opposite the NE Gate could also be the building mentioned by Palmer when he describes the German's trenching long the waterside to the mill that was fortified but abandoned by the English as untenable⁹ (COSP Scot 272: 135. Gourlay & Turner 1977: 10).

The Franciscan Precinct

The Franciscan Order of Friars came to Haddington in 1258 and was bequeathed the ground between Church Street to the Gowl Close and the River Tyne to the partly built upon land (the roods) between the Friary Wall and Hardgate (NT5181 7384). The

⁹ The identity of this mill is uncertain – it could be Gimmersmill or East Mill both of which lie outside the fortifications.

priory was burnt by the English in 1355 and again in 1544. The church was called the Lamp of Lothian as a result of the continual burning of candles before the altar and the magnificence of the structure. However some scholars dispute this on the grounds that the Franciscans were not renowned for such displays of open decadence and in fact it was St Mary's with its fine 90ft tower that was the object of the description (Bryce 1909: 169).

The order and the building never fully recovered from the ravages of the siege finally being alienated to the magistrates in 1555 in order to gain the burgh's protection during the Reformation and six years later it was demolished. In 1572 the burgh requested a stone dyke to be built some '10 quarters' high at the east end of the precinct presumably making good use of the masonry on site and in the following year the east gable end which was apparently still standing was bequeathed to Thomas Cockburn to dispose of as he felt fit. In 1878, work on a drainage ditch uncovered remains of the building and the Franciscan's grave yard. The Friary's walled garden became the garden for Elm House, the 18th Century manse now standing adjacent to the precinct wall.

According to Bryce (1909: 170) the layout of the buildings within the compound is not wholly conjectural. He relates that the church was orientated on the traditional east / west line with the great east window looking over an eastern courtyard towards the river. The nave was flanked by altars to St Francis, St Duthac, St John the Baptist and St Clement as well as possibly a fifth to the Blessed Virgin. The friar's cemetery was on the west side and the remaining ground up to the boundary or 'Friars Wall' was taken up by a croft or western yard. The cloister yard sat on the north side and separated the ancillary buildings from the chapel. These buildings lay 3 rods off the 'freir kirk passand north containing the chalmer hall and the kitchen' and appeared to have abutted onto the precinct's northern boundary along the Gowl Close. The friary 'Stank' (open drain) ran across the site initially forming the western boundary along the East Yard and then 'boundis the eist freir yard to thair said commone at the north part thair of'. Bryce concludes that there was no wall on this part of the north wall until 1575. The remaining ground within the plot was taken up by the Convent or 'Mekill' yard, the Warden Yard and the small 'Eister Yard'. It has to be remembered that Bryce has based his description of Burgh records that post date the siege.

The friars also owned a number of other plots of land around the town including the 'Kingis Palace' which lay 3 roods south of Church Street up to the St Mary's cemetery wall and the vicar's garden. In 1559 this land was known to be bounded to the north by St Catherine's chapel and lands belonging to Richard Wause, and the 'Kingis Wall' along Sydgait to the west and the 'buttes' or 'sands' to the east. In 1542 the land was used to grow corn and was walled in for security. (Bryce 1909: 172)

In summary Bryce describes a fairly large precinct containing the usual collection of Friary buildings surrounding a patchwork of courtyards and enclosures. There seems scant evidence of any substantial wall that totally enclosed the site however the boundaries would have been clearly defined. The precinct today is clearly bounded on three sides by fairly substantial walls but it has been truncated to the north by Tyne Close.



Fig 3.10 Possibly the front entrance to the Franciscan precinct described in the accounts of 1540 as being in the west wall (Friars Wall) some 10ft from Church Street (Bryce 1909: 170)

The precinct became an integral part of the English fortifications. Brende's letter to Palmer dated 20th June 1548 (COSP Scot 253: 123) states that 'they [the garrison] have made 'vamures' round about, cleared their dykes and closed in the Friars'.

The construction is described as one of the four bastions by Methven and as such probably housed English guns. As a result of its fortification the enclosure took some of the heaviest bombardment (Cameron 1927 CLXXVI: 249)

Other Chapels, Friaries and Palaces

St John's Chapel (NT 5162 7387) was probably that associated with the lodgings of the Knights of St John which stood on the corner of the High Street and the Hardgate. This large square building of three storeys with a vaulted undercroft was termed the temple tenement and was probably used as a hospital or travellers rest. No reference is made to it during the siege but the site was referred to in the Burgh records of 1545 as to the location of a 'gate' through beyond which the sufferers of the plague were to be placed (Robb 1880: 32).

St Anne's (NT 5176 7384) and St Katherine's Chapels (NT 5182 7386)

Adjacent to the Franciscan precinct stood two more chapels. St Anne's stood adjacent to the Sidegate and the site is still remembered in the buildings known as St Anne's Place. St Katherine's is a little more difficult to pin down however John Knox's history of the siege describes the building as being 'foirant' the Franciscan Church (Knox 1898: 92). Local historians locate the chapel on the site of the old burgh grammar school.

Dominican Friary (NT 5115 7338)

The first reference of this friary is in 1471 when it is located at the West Port of the town. However it appears to have disappeared by 1557 as it does not appear in the lists of Dominican houses that came out that year (Cowan & Easson 1976: 119. S.B.S.1999: 9). It could be speculated that the building was one which was levelled during the construction of the fortifications.

Palace of Haddington (NT5136 7384)

Remarkably for its status and position Haddington does not have a castle. However there appears to be the remains of a 'palace' at the west end of the High Street that was discovered in 1833 when the County Buildings were erected. This is thought to be the birthplace of Alexander II and the site of the murder of the 6th Earl of Atholl by William De Bisset in 1242 when it was subsequently burnt to the ground to hide the crime. (Gray & Jamieson 1944: 139. Gourlay & Turner 1977: 7).



Fig 3.11 – Sleazar’s engraving of Haddington dated 1693 depicts the vista from Monkkrigg. The burgh wall, Poldrate Bridge, Nungate Bridge and the battered St Mary’s are all recognisable features.

Chapter 4 – The Design of Haddington's Fortifications

The evolution of 'Trace Italienne' fortifications is inextricably linked to the development of guns and gunpowder. The low squat earthen ramparts are a direct response to the growing threat from artillery. This chapter briefly chronicles the development of the artillery and discusses the likely design of the fortifications at Haddington.

The first formulas for gunpowder appeared in Europe around 1300 and the first recorded use in a military context is attributed to 1331. (Kelly 2005: 21). The battle of Crecy fought in 1346 opened to the sound of noisy yet impotent English artillery fire.

The use of artillery on the battlefield was limited. Understandably as the small number of guns with a low rate of fire, poor accuracy and the tendency for the target to keep moving meant the field artillery was a burdensome and expensive hindrance to most mid-medieval commanders. Their use at sieges was however another matter. The artillerists, once dug in within range, had the luxury of time and a large stationary target to aim at. Throughout the ancient period, castle walls were susceptible to siege engines, such as mangonels and trebuchets that flung stone balls, rubble, disease infested carcasses and human remains into and over the city walls.

Despite the lack of hitting power of the early guns, commanders quickly saw the benefits of cannon over catapults. They were relatively lighter, easier to manoeuvre and with the introduction of the iron cannon ball, milled powder and brass cannons; guns soon packed a heavier pound for pound punch with a greater rate of fire and at a greater range. By the middle of the 15th century cannons took over the role as the primary siege machine across Western Europe (Pepper & Adams 1986: 9. Arnold 2001: 25).

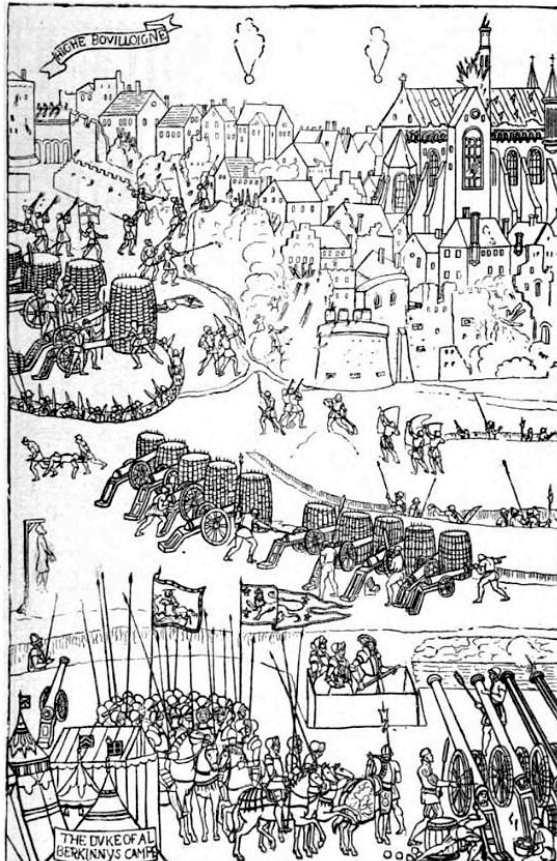


Fig 4.1 – The Siege of Boulogne in 1544 shows English guns in action. The scene outside Haddington some 4 years later must have been very similar.

In response the architects and planners began to rethink their design of fortifications. Initially defences became thicker, higher and subsequently more expensive. Existing towers were strengthened by filling rooms with rubble or adding additional facing stones.¹⁰ However, higher towers offered a greater target and so the new structures were squatter and sunk into the earth within great ditches offering lower profiles to

besieging gunners but still presenting assault teams with formidable heights to scale. Towers were also used to house layers of raised gun positions, casemates and vaulted bunkers specifically designed to house cannons and their crews.

Defenders employed a combination of artillery pieces. Larger guns were mounted on bastions capable of counter battery fire. Smaller pieces were dedicated to defending the interior, spraying the ground at the base of the walls with anti personnel shrapnel. Handguns, harquebus and muskets could be deployed against the assault en masse by infantry firing from the safety of barricades and trenches.

Round and square towers on their own presented the assault teams with blind spots and dead ground from which they could sap and undermine foundations in relative safety. Initially such weak points were defended from directly above with the walls being perforated with *merlatura* and ‘murder holes’ allowing defenders to pour boiling liquids, incendiaries and missiles onto the enemy below. But any master gunner worth his wage would quickly reduce such adornments to rubble. In response designers

¹⁰ A good example of the development of fortifications in response to firepower can be found at Tantallon in East Lothian. Here the walls have been thickened, interior walls filled in and gunports and gun platforms added. Finally forward earth works have been added to push back the encroaching enemy gun positions forcing them to fire at longer ranges.

looked to inter link defences with towers and bastions positioned to provide mutual fire support. This in turn meant the distance between such bastions was limited to the range of small arms or point blank artillery range in order to provide effective cover. Angled bastions were subsequently developed to ensure arcs of fire criss-crossed the approach to any point along the walls and to protect the 'flanking' guns from pre-assault bombardment. (Pepper & Adams 1986: 3-6, 19-27)

Fortifications not only changed shape but their construction also adapted. Expensive worked stone and rubble construction gave way to soil and turf. It was cheap, easy and made good use of the fill removed when digging the surrounding ditch or fosse. Where time and money permitted these embankments were strengthened with stone cladding, however, wooden planking, faggots and wicker fascines filled with earth were also employed. Where town walls and buildings already existed it was simply a case of piling up earth behind them and 'muring' up the gaps. The ability to build such forts quickly meant that they became a highly effective and versatile offensive strategy. Commanders could establish fortified sanctuaries in enemy territory with relative ease.

The design of fortifications became a science for the foremost mathematicians of the day. Books and guides were produced theorising over the ideal shape and design of fortifications. Such exotic symmetrical designs were fine on flat, open, 'greenfield sites' but fortifications had often to be built on existing strong points and comply with the contours of the land. Haddington being on a flat plain with few obstructions or restrictions however offered the engineers a relatively free hand when it came to its planning.

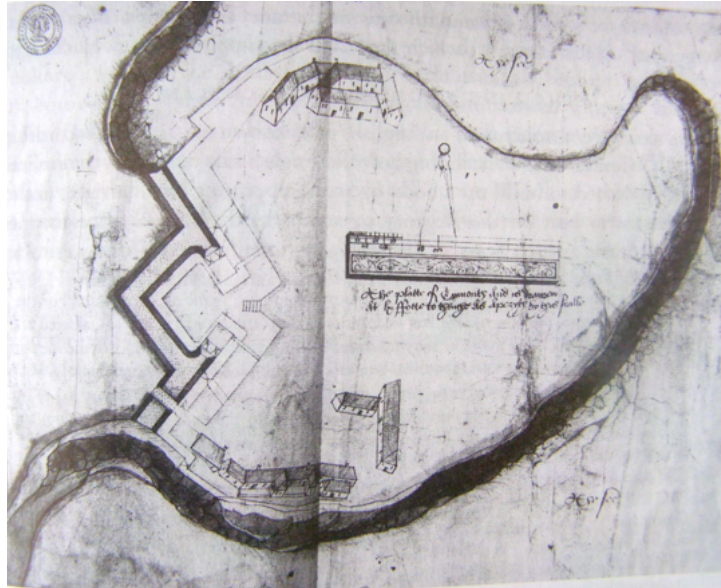


Fig 4.2 – A plan of the English attempt to fortify the peninsular at Eyemouth in 1547. Built by the same engineers that went on to layout Haddington. The single bastion proved to be a flawed design that the French went on to improve after its capture in 1550



Fig 4.3 – The English Bastion at Eyemouth today. Despite being slighted by the French on their departure and suffering from sever weathering and general wear and tear, the fortification still stands an impressive and daunting 15ft high.

Chapter 5 – Building Haddington’s Fortifications

Lord William Grey of Wilton and Sir Thomas Palmer arrived in Haddington on 24th April 1548 and set about viewing the ground the following day. Between them they laid out the line of the fortifications ‘wherein the substance of all the town and fair houses is contained, sufficient for any garrison’. Grey was a little despondent about the threat that could be imposed from the overlooking hills, the amount of work that was required, the lack of supplies and the ‘infidelity of some expected friends’ (COSP Scot 228: 111). He goes onto add that ‘rydding the ground was some hindrance’. In this context ‘rydding’¹¹ refers to clearing the land prior to the build which infers that some areas of the site was not in open fields and was in some way built upon. Yet despite these difficulties the English commanders were confident that they could build ‘the fairest town ever fortified in these parts and the ‘daunter’ of Scotland’ (COSP Scot 228: 111).

Not that they knew it at the time but the English garrison would be given until the 1st July, (68 days) to complete their task¹². They had at their disposal around 2,000 soldiers and labourers. Not all the military personnel were happy to help with manual labour. Spanish mercenaries refused to assist in the building of Lauder for example saying that they were men of war and not artificers (COSP Scot 220: 108). However, it appears the majority of the English troops were prepared to help dig. Holcroft’s band were particularly praised by Grey for not only being good soldiers but also ‘painful’ workmen (COSP Scot 220: 119). Many of the garrison’s horsemen were billeted in outlying estates in order to act as scouts and pickets and preserve the town’s dwindling supply of fodder (COSP Scot 241: 119). The cavalry were also expected to launch raids on local Scottish estates as well as protect their own foraging parties. These sorties not only brought in fresh supplies of food and cattle, but also returned with building material. Grey comments that such trips would bring in 4-5,000 faggots daily to be used

¹¹ Dictionary of the Scots Language - The action of clearing (a way). Cf **RID** v. 4 c and **RID** *ppl. adj.* 3. **b.** That which is cleared away; refuse.

¹² It would appear they did so with a day to spare as Palmer gave them a day off to view the approaching French army (COSP Scot 269: 133).

in lining the ditches and ‘raising the mounts in the bulwarks’ (COSP Scot 240: 118). Stocks of ‘Hather and roddes for maundes’ were built up¹³ and convoys from Berwick brought in valuable supplies of spades, felling axes and scythes for land clearance and building as well as the arms and ammunition for the imminent siege (COSP Scot 247: 121).

Good use was made of the material recovered from the demolition of buildings around the town. Brende writing to Palmer notes the ‘rydding’ of houses to clear the curtain [wall] by the waterside’ as well as the houses walls and trees in the vicinity of St Mary’s. (COSP Scot 251: 123). However later accounts of the initial skirmishes tell of the French using the ruined buildings outwith the fortifications suggesting the buildings, much like the church, were not completely levelled.

Descriptions of the Fortifications from Contemporary Texts

We are fortunate to have two fairly detailed and robust descriptions of the fortifications at Haddington. The first and debatably the most reliable is that of Jean De Beaugué, a friend of Count D’Esse and a soldier attached to the French staff for the period of the campaign. (See Appendix 1 for a full translation of the relevant passage.) Despite his obvious tendency to revere his commanding officer his description of the fortifications lacks any prejudice and is seen through the eyes of a military man. His account therefore details the important things that a fellow soldier would appreciate as being important. Likewise he uses language and terminology appropriate to his peers if somewhat bemusing to a civilian. Care must be taken when using subsequent translations. Sir Patrick Abercromby’s work for example of 1707 is inaccurate (Green 1907: 12) but has been referenced and misquoted in subsequent accounts of the siege, in particular Miller’s ‘Lamp of Lothian’ (1844).

Odet De Selve’s descriptions, contained within his letters to the French court, demand a degree of respect. Here we see the French ambassador to the English court being

¹³ Dictionary of the Scots Language - Hather – Heather, Roddes – Sticks, Maundes-wicker baskets. All presumably to build fascines for the fortifications and rebuilding breastworks.

invited to view plans¹⁴ of the fort by Protector Somerset who knew full well they would be related to the French king. His descriptions therefore are not an eyewitness account but a recollection of a plan shown to him in passing conversation and recounts of third hand information. De Selve no doubt accurately recalls his meetings as it was his job to do so, but there is no way to verify that what he was told was an accurate picture in the first place and not just what Somerset wished him to report.

It is therefore reassuring to find that much of what is related in the two accounts tally. Each provides tantalising diverse scraps of information on the detail but the basic layouts they describe are remarkably similar. These works, combined with the numerous snippets information gleaned from other correspondence and eyewitness accounts help to build a fairly detailed and accurate picture of the structure. The following section attempts to bring together these descriptions. In order not to complicate the text with numerous references, details taken from Beaugué's account have not been referenced. A translation of his description is available at Appendix A for cross referral.

The Fortress of Haddington

Basic Layout

Both commentators agree that the fortifications at Haddington were basically square. In fact Beaugué uses the expression 'tout carré' to emphasise the shape. De Selve is a little less sure of the form using the phrase 'presque carrée' and suggesting that it is a little longer than wider and the side running along the river is narrower than its opposite side. Surrounding the site is an outer ditch or 'fosse' of which De Selve estimates to be 30ft wide and 12 feet deep and fills with water (De Selve 1888: 376). Immediately behind the ditch is a bulwark or rampart, most likely made of the spoil taken from the ditch. It was capped with sods of turf then reinforced and faced with planking, fascines and rubble taken from the demolished houses (De Selve 1888: 376), fitted with 'spacious' ramparts and protected by a parapet again probably of reinforced fascines. De Selve concludes that the height to be scaled by any attacker at the bottom of the

¹⁴ Despite there being at least four plans referred to in accounts none have appeared to survive. Plans of all the other new fortifications for the campaign appear in the Belvoir House collection but the Haddington drawing is conspicuous by its absence.

ditch is 30ft inferring that it is about 18 ft high above ground level. Urwin (2006: 24) suggests the wall is some 50ft thick but provides no reference for this figure. Beaugué however, was impressed by their thickness noting that even after firing 340 balls from 6 cannons upon the front of a section of the wall made little impression as the balls were ‘deadened and drowned’ in the soil (Miller 1884: 37)

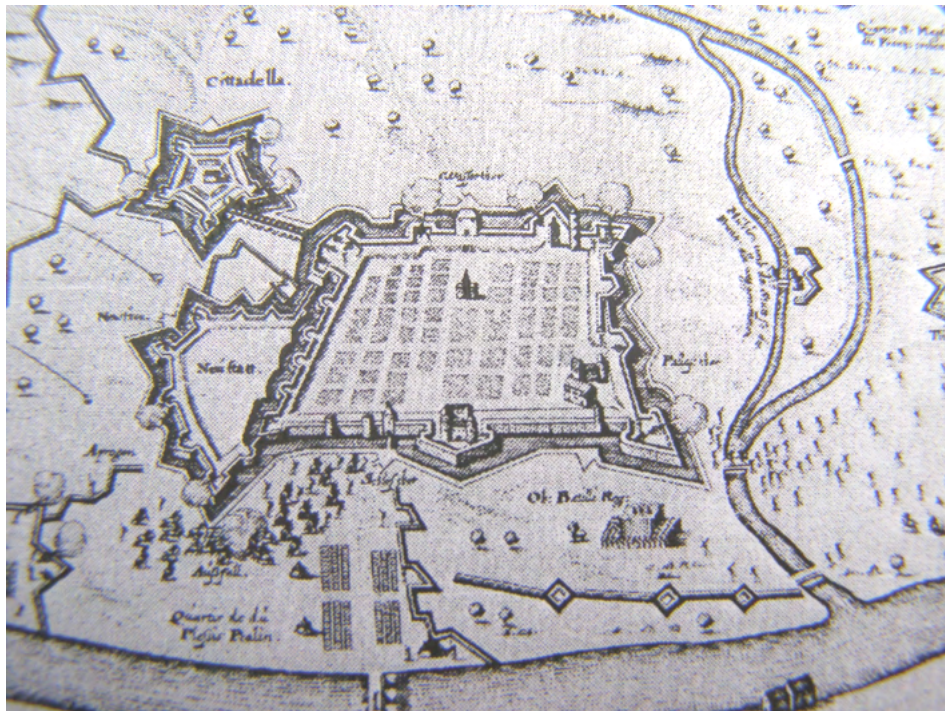


Fig 5.1 – Sieur De Bertville favourably compared the fortress of Haddington to that of Turin (De Selve 1888 p.360). This print of Turin, engraved in 1692 by Merian, depicts the siege of 1640. The fortifications around the town had not changed much in the meantime and with the exception of the ‘citadella’, it has an uncanny resemblance to the plan of Haddington described by Beaugué.

The Bastions

There were four bastions at each corner from which the ‘endangered’ places could be viewed. In other words they offered clear views of the entire outer walls and entrenchments. The bastions or ‘bulwarks’ were named after the captain assigned to protect them. Wyndham’s Bastion was the largest and faced towards Clerkington in the South West corner of the fort (COSP Scot 278: 138. COSP Scot 281: 139. Hamilton

445: 602). Wylford's Bastion sat on the North West corner (Hamilton 442: 598). It was renamed during the siege to Tiberio's or Tybere's bastion (Miller 1884: 37). The bastion in the north east corner was named after captain Bowes. It dominated the approach from Aberlady and Berwick (COSP Scot 281: 139. Hamilton 442: 598). According to Captain Holcroft there appeared to be a space between this bastion and the river (COSP Scot 284: 140). The bastion at the South West corner was incorporated into the Friar's precinct and was known as Tailor's (COSP Scot 278: 138. COSP Scot 281: 139)¹⁵. Holcroft's Curtain is also mentioned (COSP Scot 278: 138) and is most likely the southern wall between Tailor's and Wyndham's.

Beaugué suggests that the bastions mirrored each other in layout and each were surmounted with a gun platform that could house between 5 and 7 pieces¹⁶ (COSP Scot 253: 123. COSP Scot 269: 133). They were most likely angular in design as accounts describe Wyndham's as having two sides, a 'point' or apex and had 'flankers' (Hamilton 445: 603). Palmer writing to Somerset on 9th July suggests that in order to defend Wyndham's from imminent attack that the garrison should:

'on the insyde agenst the mydes of the same bulwark, they make a mount , and yet not so high to be discovered from without, and to cut that corner with a great trench from the rest of the towne,'

This implies that there was ample room for such a construction between the bastion and the town buildings. However he goes onto suggest that the two bastions on either side of Wyndham's (Tailor's and Wylford's) could not be protected in a similar manner suggesting they were of a different construction or the land to their rear was otherwise unavailable. Palmer writing to Somerset on 1st July also comments that the Wyndham's neighbouring bastion was in comparison a 'half bulwark', whether this is Tailor's or Wylford's is unclear. (COSP Scot 270: 134. Merriman 1982: 720).

¹⁵ The Scots called the bastions by other names. Wyndhams is known as the Southwest Bastion, Taylor's is referred to as the Friars Bastion, Bowes is renamed the Abbey Bastion and the Meid Bastion refers to Wylford's. The term 'meid' means meadow or pasture suggesting this bastion was built on open ground (DSL).

¹⁶ An ordnance survey of October 1548 states that the garrison had one demi-cannon, two iron and three brass culverins, one iron and four brass demi-culverins, three iron and two brass sakers, six brass falcons and six double chambered fowlers, three double bases, fifteen single bases and 150 hackbuts. (Merriman 1982: 721)

Beaugué's description becomes somewhat vague when he attempts to describe the top of each bastion and the ground directly behind them. He suggests that on the back of each bastion, where the ground falls away (presumably describing ramps up which the artillery can be pulled), the English raised several ravelins and platforms from which their medium guns could fire into the Scottish lines. These platforms are also protected by an enclosure with a wall of fascines from where harquebusiers can fire from.



Fig 5.2a and b – Beaugué could be recounting a design similar to the one found at Berwick upon Tweed. Here the bastions are surmounted by a raised gun platform before sloping down to the outer court.

The Inner Wall

Behind the outer wall and its bastions was a second ditch and wall surrounding what Beaugué describes as the ‘dungeon & cors de logis’¹⁷. Abercrombie’s translation critically omits reference to the lodgings or houses leading modern historians to assume these defences were placed solely around the ‘dungeon’ which in turn was associated with the Tollbooth (See Chapter 3) (Urwin 2006: 24). However Beaugué may have been referring to the main precinct of buildings left standing in the centre of town (Fulwell 1575: 51, COSP Scot 228: 111).

¹⁷ ‘Cors de logis’ or ‘Corps de logis’ is usually associated with the architectural term referring to the main central accommodation block found in stately homes.

The second ditch is described as ‘deep’ and bordered by another strong ‘curtain’ wall, with four ‘couillons’¹⁸ in the manner of small towers placed at each corner. A number of casemates were built along the wall and ditch which were protected from artillery fire by the height of the outer wall. Both these casemates and the towers were able to shelter harquebusiers who could defend the wall and ditch from assault.

The Dongeon

Beaugué goes onto to describe the location of the ‘dongeon’. He states that the structure cannot be attacked from any direction other than from the East. He adds that the English have subsequently raised a rampart and cavalier along the river bank which protects the ‘lodgings and soldiers’ This suggests that the ‘dongeon’ is situated towards the East end of the town and within artillery range of guns positioned outwith the fortress presumably across the other side of the Tyne. The intermixing of the terms ‘logis’ and ‘dongeon’ adds weight to the argument that this second wall and ditch circumvallates the remaining buildings at the eastern end of the town (See Chapter 3) and has the Tollbooth at its centre. In addition Beaugué states that the area inside the fort (presumably this inner court) is capable of retaining the whole garrison and allowing them to regroup and refortify should the outer bastions be taken. De Thou / Wilson translates this as being a spacious plain on which the troops can be drilled (De Thou 1620: 251). This would be impossible if the comment referred to the Tollbooth / ‘dongeon’ alone. Lord Grey relates the occasion on 7th June 1548 in which his men found a small horde of strange coins whilst digging what he specifically names as the ‘town ditch’ (COSP Scot 238: 117). If this is the inner ditch then it would infer that it surrounded the main buildings in the town and not just the ‘dongeon’. De Selve also describes the English blocking up the yetts and alleyways between the houses to create the cavalier and raised platform (De Selve 1888: 376).

Other references to the Tollbooth do however offer tantalising evidence of some form of fortification. The Burgh Records mention the repair of a drawbridge in 1572 but over what and on which side is not mentioned (Robb 1880: 43). This seems a fairly unique feature for a Tollbooth and is not mentioned prior to 1548 which would suggest it was

¹⁸ ‘Couillons’ can be literally translated as ‘a cod, stone, testicles’ or ‘assholes’, none of which seem appropriate in this case. (Cotgrave 1611.)

constructed specifically for the siege. It could also be assumed that the front of the building faced onto the Market Cross as it does on other contemporary buildings in neighbouring towns. There was also space on either side of the structure to hold markets (Robb 1880: 27) again suggesting there was room to construct some kind of wall and ditch around it. The entry for the siege in the Diurnal of Occurrences (1833: 46) refers to the town being ‘biggand’ [strengthened] with ‘fowfies [ditches] and the blockhous’ which could describe the fortification of the dongeon. However the term blockhouse can also be used to describe a small fort.¹⁹

The Ports

As already discussed in Chapter 3 the ports of the town seem to have been subsumed into the fortifications but were found wanting and were subsequently ‘mured up’ to add protection against artillery fire (COSP Scot 253: 123, Fulwell 1575: 51). It also appears that the approaches to the gates were protected by a number of ditches flanked by barricades (Miller 1884: 36, 44). Beaugué recalls the fact that the East Port was protected by a ‘half moon’ battery but may have been confusing this with the base court (Miller 1884: 48). The ports were often the scene of viscous skirmishes and the French commanders were often seen striking the ports with their ‘hangars²⁰’ as gestures of bravery and defiance.

The Basse Court

The camisade on the 10th October 1548 has been well documented in letters and by the contemporary historians. Both Knox and Beaugué describe the attack in detail and pass comment on the layout of the fort in the South Eastern sector. In particular much is made of the fact that the English had established a ‘Basse Court’ in the area into which the raiders forced an entrance. Basse courts, as the name implies, are usually lightly defended outer enclosures used for corralling livestock²¹ and horses and locating less essential facilities. The basse court at Haddington appears to have enclosed a number of

¹⁹ Blokhous - A small fort or defensive building. (DSL)

²⁰ Short swords carried as side arms

²¹ Prior to and during the siege the English garrison rounded up an enormous quantity of cattle to feed them and deny to the Scots (COSP Span 1912: 273)

storehouses for grain, beer and farm equipment²² as well as outbuildings attached to the rear of St Katherine's chapel (Knox 1898: 92) and lay south of Church street, beyond the East Port and stopped before reaching the precinct of St Mary's church (Miller 1884: 48). Fulwell describes the French as escaping over the enclosure walls as 'sheepe before a dogge, that happie was he that could tumble over first' (Fulwell 1575: 53).



Fig 5.3 – A speculative reconstruction of the layout of the fortifications as described by Beaugué and De Selve. The walls (in black) and ditches have been overlaid onto an aerial view of Haddington showing the extent of its development at the time of the siege.

²² The French had to unload a consignment of ploughs off the carts found in the basse court to evacuate their wounded on (COSP Dom Edward: 300).

Chapter 6 - Siegeworks

Due consideration has been given to the construction and layout of the fortification but further clues as to their location maybe gleamed by identifying the siege lines that were created to counter them. The accounts give us interesting details as to the location and construction of the French siege lines built during the first few months of the siege over the summer of 1548. If these locations can be identified in the modern landscape not only would they prove to be a valuable archaeological resource in their own right but they would also provide vital information as to the location of the main ramparts.

The Camps

The Scottish and French troops arrived in the July of 1548 to begin what many believed would be a quick and decisive offensive. However by mid July the idea of a speedy victory had been overtaken by plans for a protracted siege.

The allies set up a number of camps around Haddington in an attempt to restrict the resupply of arms and men into the garrison (See Appendix F for locations in relation to artillery ranges). Initially the French and Italians encamped around Clerkington²³, with ‘the rest on the other side of the hill towards Lethington, where the governor lies’ (COSP Scot 272: 135. COSP Scot 276: 137). The Scots ‘in no great strength’ were encamped at Haddington Abbey and the Highlanders to the north along the lower slopes of the Garleton Hills (COSP Scot 273: 135). The circumvallation was at the best of times porous and the English were able to sneak supplies through. A sortie on the 7th July for example managed to skirt the Scottish camp to the north then ‘turned over the hie hyll over agenst the curtayne between Bowes and Wylforttes bulwarkes’ (Hamilton 442: 599). So incensed was Beaugué by the English passing within 200 paces of the Scottish camp without detection that he questioned the loyalty

²³ Clerkington camp appears to have been in range of the garrison’s guns ‘All the wounded were carried to Clarkington where the town, the spy says, shoots in at every shot.’ (COSP Scotland 270. p134)

of the Scottish allies and suggested that they had accepted bribes. (Miller 1844: 38). Holcroft writing to Somerset on the same day noted that this sortie was ordered to enter between ‘Bowes Bulwark and the water side where the town lies unbesieged.’ (COSP Scot 284: 140).

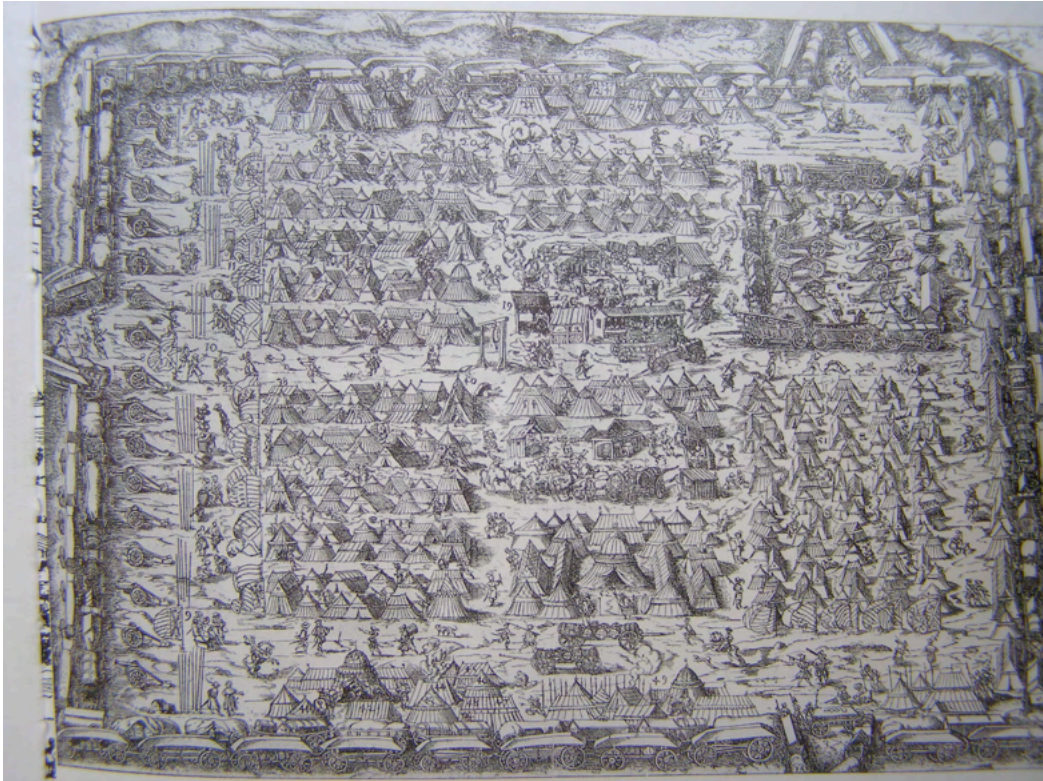


Fig 6.1 - This engraving by Fronsberger dated 1565 shows the ideal array of an army camp. Based on a Roman legion's camp the layout provides order and control within a defended camp. Evidence of trenches and temporary structures may still be found in the archaeology of the sites.

The Artillery Positions

Once the camps were established the allies began drawing up their artillery positions. These constructions, sometimes described as ‘maundes’ were like mini bastions, often raised up to enhance the range and arc of fire and surrounded by fascines and revetments. There are a number of such locations mentioned in the accounts and some were more successful than others. The positions had to be within the range of the

siege guns being emplaced upon them and therefore in the range of the garrison's own artillery. The construction work was often hampered by the English gunnery despite being undertaken at night.

The Scottish guns were first mounted on the 'cragg towards Aberlady', probably on the lower slopes of the Garleton Hills²⁴ and were capable of firing into the town but were soon forced to retire under counter battery fire from the English guns mounted on Bowes bulwark (COSP Scot 267: 133). The French mounted two guns on their 'maundes' in a small cornfield between Clerkington and Wyndham's Bulwark but were poorly manned with much of their shot passing over the fortifications (COSP Scot 273: 135. COSP Scot 276: 137). The French based at Lethington were said by Palmer on the 2nd July to have 'passed the water on that side with 7 battery pieces and 9 others and have intrenched in the 'hayth of the hyll' where the bulwark out of town was meant' (COSP Scot 273: 135). Where exactly this battery was destined to stand is difficult to discern from this single statement but Palmer's observation is interesting for the fact that this ground was considered as a good location for another bastion which if constructed would have been cut off from the town²⁵. This may therefore have been on the high ground south of the river but this does not explain the French having to cross the Tyne to get there from Lethington. Wylford writing to Somerset on the same day is a bit more specific about this deployment saying that the French 'lodge between the river and the town and this laste night have caste a trenche between Tayler's and Windam's bullewerk, along the hythe²⁶ of the hill'. He rightly surmises that the French will plant their artillery there which in turn would threaten the flanks of both bastions. He then describes a sortie in which his troops attack the French troops stationed behind the church (Hamilton 441: 597). Palmer adds that many of the pioneers working in the trenches were also killed, so many indeed that there are few willing to work there (COSP Scotland 273: 130).

The site described as the 'Justice' is another artillery position which is difficult to pin down. Palmer relates to Somerset on 5th July that the Germans have entrenched 'at the

²⁴ This may be at the Yellow Craigs (NT76005125) along the southern slopes of Barney Hill.

²⁵ This bears great resemblance to the fort at Balgillo outside Broughty Ferry which was built as a forward defence, but eventually cut off and over run by the Scots.

²⁶ 'Haythe' and 'Hythe' could refer to the brow of the hill but 'hythe' is also an old Scottish term for inlet or landing place (DSL) suggesting at the foot of the hill against the river

Justyce with 2 pieces which batter the town, but our men are lodged under the ramparts' (COSP Scot 281: 139). But by the 11th he reports that 'the Almaynes that laye at the 'Justyce' with three peces to bett the markt, ar removed and comme to the churche' (Hamilton 445: 603). A previous English report on the 2nd July states that the Germans are 'beyond the bridge, and trenching along the waterside to the mill that was fortified, but abandoned by our men as untenable' (COSP Scot 272: 135) which suggests the 'Justice' could be Poldrate Mill or Gimmers Mill.²⁷

One artillery position that can be clearly defined is that built within St Mary's. Much is made of the damage that was inflicted on the guns in this location and the construction of the site is mentioned in detail. Here the French built within the ruins a platform on which were mounted a number of 'cutthrotes'²⁸ which could fire into the town (COSP Scot 273: 136). But by 13th July the 'platform within the church is useless, the town has so beaten the stones about their 'years.' (COSP Scot 290: 146).

There is little trace left of the artillery positions today apart from St Mary's Church. East Lothian Council have listed a monument report on the location of what is surmised as being an artillery position in Amisfield Park (NT526 745) but then again as the author has suggested, this could be a structure from the military occupation of the site in the 18th and 19th century or simply a ramp for loading potatoes (ELCM MEL9227 dated 19/04/2007).

The mounds between Clerkington and the fortress may well have existed into the 20th century. On a braehead to the south west of the town were vestiges of an old circular fortification called New Wark situated on the ground now designated Mill Flat but has this has subsequently been lost to development²⁹. (Miller 1844: 75).

²⁷ Why the accounts should call the mill the 'Justyce' is unclear but there is location in Aberdeen called Justice Mills which may have similar origins.

²⁸ Light guns usually mounted on swivels or trestles

²⁹ A fort called Newark stood in the second field W of Tynebank (near Haddington: NT 5173) near the S end of the park and near the hedge. The remains of the building were removed about 30 or 40 years ago, when the field was converted to arable land, and no trace of it remains.(CANMORE NT57SW62)

The Trenches, Saps and Mines.

Once gun positions had been established the French set about digging trenches and saps in order to prepare the way for an assault. The process was simple. Pioneers would work in shifts, digging a trench towards the most exposed part of the fortifications. The path of the trench would zig-zag in order to stop a blast of shot travelling along the cut. A 'parallel' was then built at various points along the trench that would be used to shelter gunners or artillery who could then provide covering fire and keep the defenders heads down as the sappers dug on towards the walls. The head of the sap would be protected by fascines and gabions filled with earth. Sometimes the trench would sink down under ground level for protection and effectively become a mine. Once the trench reached the outer ditch the sappers would collect together more faggots and fascines to throw down to fill in the ditch, form a ramp to move troops across and protective barriers to act as cover from enfilade fire. Once at the wall the attackers would prepare scaling ladders or set about undermining the walls. Earth walls were susceptible to mining and tended to collapse without the need for explosives³⁰.

The defenders would do their utmost to stop the progress of the saps. Counter saps and mines could be used to allow the garrison to break into trenches and disrupt the digging. Artillery placed in the flanks of the bastions would rake the ground immediately in front of the walls with canister shot. Camisades and sallets (raiding parties) were launched in order to destroy the trenches, equipment and kill the pioneers. Warfare in the 'no man's land between the siege lines and town defences was viscous and deadly.

The main French assault on the fortifications took place over the first weeks of July 1548 and we have a number of letters detailing the progress of their work. There is conflicting evidence to say how effective the operations were depending on whose side the author was fighting for, however it is clear that the French sapped their way to the very walls of the town and at one stage managed to collapse a bastion. Only the incredible resourcefulness and ingenuity of the English garrison held them at bay.

³⁰ The fortification at Balgillo which protected Broughty Ferry was forever collapsing under its own weight causing the Sir John Luttrell the garrison commander to request shiploads of lime in order to 'cement' the walls in place. (Cameron 1927: 276)

Wyndham's bastion appears to have taken the brunt of the assault. Wylford's letter to Somerset on 2nd July gives the first indication of the French intentions as he tells of a trench being started towards the defences from the south. (Hamilton 441: 597). The work proceeds rapidly despite a number of forays by the garrison (Miller 1844: 36) By the 5th July Methven writes to the Queen Dowager informing her that the southwest bastion (Wyndham's) is so 'condamnit' that the English are unable to man it. In addition the bastion at the 'Friar Kirk' (Taylor's) is all broken in. (Cameron 1927: 249). But his confidence is misplaced as when the French commanders go to view the damage later that day they are fired upon and forced to retreat (COSP Scot 278: 138. COSP Dom Add: p292). It appears the English are repairing the damage faster than it can be inflicted (COSP Scotland 280: 138). The work however continues and the English report that the French begin to dig towards 'Holcroft's curtain'³¹, which they believe to be the strongest point of the defences (COSP Scot 278: 138) and Bowes bastion in the north (COSP Scot 281: 139) .

On the 7th July, Holcroft reports that the French have cut off and undermined Wyndham's bastion and have subdued the flank guns to an extent where they can start filling the ditches and prepare for the assault (COSP Scotland 284: 140). There now appears to be a lull in proceedings as the French gather troops for the attack. The English in the meantime take full advantage of the respite and resign themselves to the loss of the bastion. They start work on a new set of defences to the rear of Wyndham's in preparation for the assault. (See Chapter 5, Hamilton 442: 599).

Palmer writes on the 11th July of the mine under Wyndham's bastion which is on the side towards Lethington (south side). The pioneers, he reports, have managed to get up to the wall and have dug 20 feet into the base of the wall and have cast a great high trenche alongside the 'brynk of the dyche out of which they have made passages, covert with tymbre and earth upon yt, in to our dyche, and in the same trenche wardeth a great nombre of Frenshemen all armed to defend their worke.' A similar trench was being dug against the other face of the bastion and the flanks of Taylor's

³¹ Probably the curtain wall facing to the West between Wyndham's and the West Port

bastion had been shot away allowing the pioneers to work unmolested. (Hamilton 445: 602)

This must have been about the time when Fulwell describes the anecdote of the English and the French being separated by just the thickness of the wall and one defender fashioned a clumsy flail by which to beat the attackers at the foot of the ramparts. (Fulwell 1575: 51) He also describes one of the bastions (presumably Wyndham's) as being 'beaten down to flatte so that a man might ryde in and out at the breach'

However the attack was never launched. The Scots and the French commanders cannot agree as to the timing of the assault and eventually the Scottish troops leave for their homes. Palmer suggests this is down to the imminent arrival of the English fleet and reinforcements (Hamilton 445. p603). Beaugué states that D'Esse was not willing to commit all his troops to one assault without the Scottish army's help which despite the gallant efforts of the pioneers would have still been a costly affair that may have crippled his forces in Scotland (Miller 1844: 37)

Placing the Siege Works in the Modern Landscape.

Appendix D shows the most likely position of the siegeworks south of the fort mentioned in these accounts. It should be noted that much of the potential search area lies within municipal and school playing fields which despite being heavily landscaped will at least allow access for geophysical survey. The chance of finding the line of the trenches and saps can be assessed in light of the work done by GUARD at Leith in 2007. Here the English breast works of the 1560 siege lay under Pilrig Park and Leith Links; a mixture of sports fields and parkland set amidst an urban development similar to that found at Haddington (Pollard 2005: 7-8). Not only were the trenches visible on the geophysics but excavation revealed the manner of their construction in detail. If such information could be gleaned from the Haddington siege works then it may be possible not only to determine the position of the siege lines but to also make a better judgement as to the location of their target; the fortifications of Wyndham's and Tailor's bastions as well as the bulwark that ran between them.



Fig 6.2 – The Giants Brae or Somerset’s Battery on Leith Links may be a gun platform from the siege of 1560 and if proven genuine, a guide to similar constructions to those erected at Haddington.



Fig 6.3 – A similar feature to the Giant’s Brae lies on the north side of the Tyne opposite Amisfield Park. Its location suggests that it was more likely to be used to protect the French camp at the Abbey rather than to bombard Haddington.

Chapter 7 - Fixing the Fortress in the Modern Landscape

If Miller is to be believed, all traces of the fortress have been entirely demolished (Miller 1844: 32). Certainly the slighting of such fortifications would have been relatively straight forward when considering how they were constructed. All that would be required is for the ramparts to be pushed back into the ditches and after a few years there would be little trace on the surface and the ground would become prime target for urban development. But did the building of the walls and ditches and their eventual demolition leave marks in the landscape that can be traced today?

Comparison can be made with the contemporary works constructed at Leith (COSP Dom Edward: p292). The defences at this strategic port were started by the French as the siege of Haddington dragged on. It was considered as the ideal antidote to the presence of the English garrisons in Lothian, acting as a forward operating base for the French forces. The engineers designed the fortress and town walls in the 'Trace Italienne' manner and the French garrison went on to survive a gruelling siege in 1560. The walls were finally demolished in 1561 but their position can still be seen in the landscape within the street plan of the modern town.

However Haddington's fortifications, unlike Leith's, were not established long enough for the town to be shoe horned into its confines. Quite the contrary, the town's defences were purposefully built to fit around the main buildings. Those buildings deemed unworthy of preservation were duly flattened.

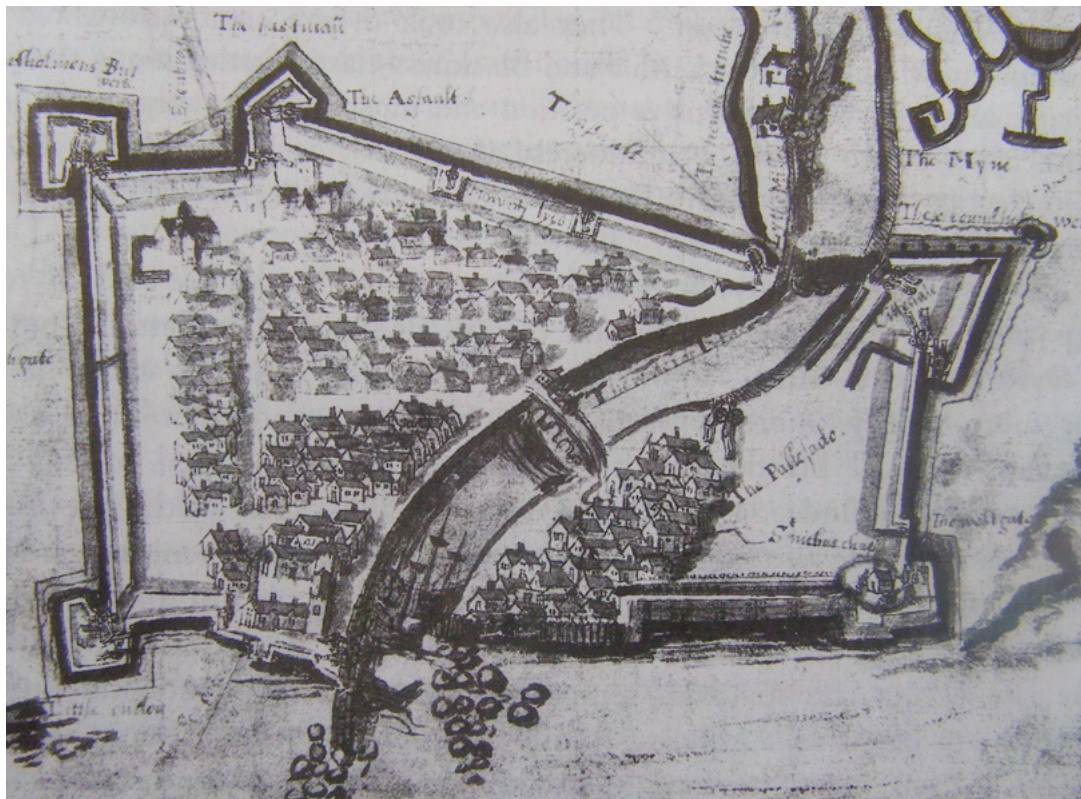


Fig 7.1 - A plan of the 1560's fortress at Leith clearly shows how the town street plan is confined by the fortress walls.

It could be suggested therefore that buildings which have vestiges of upstanding pre-siege architecture were inside the fortifications and those without or with the only remains of early 16th century construction below ground were outwith the walls. A good example of this is Elm House (NT 5182 7385). This building is noted as a fine example of a 18th Century town house (Gourlay & Turner 1977 :10). However the sunken dining room has a vaulted ceiling and its outhouses have evidence of late medieval architecture. It therefore suggests the earlier buildings on the site were in fact left standing during the siege and lay within the fortifications.



Fig 7.2 - Elm House stands at the end of Church Street adjacent to the Friary Wall. Despite its 18th Century appearance there is evidence of structures predating the siege incorporated into the fabric of the later building suggesting the location stood within the fortifications.

The review of post siege construction may also shed light on the location of the fortifications. The building of the ‘Butts’ is an example of this. According to the Burgh Records (Robb 1880: 54) the Butts were built in 1563 to provide training and practice in the dying art of archery for the Burgh ‘fencibles³²’. It was decided that a dyke would be needed at the North end to catch wayward shafts. The location of the Butts is now apparently evident in the street of the same name running parallel and to the south of the High Street as shown on later Ordnance Survey maps. This construction not only suggests there was open ground in the vicinity but may also have taken advantage of existing banking left over from the fortifications. However such tentative evidence can be often easily compromised; according to Dick (1997: 48) the term ‘Butts’ could derive from the existence of buttresses built into the town wall at this point and have nothing to do with the construction mentioned in the Burgh records. There is also evidence of a set of butts that was located adjacent to

³² Men capable of defending the Burgh

‘The Sands’ in what is now Lady Kitty’s Garden to which the same logic could be applied (Green 1907: 20).

Likewise the presence of ‘double dykes’ noted by John Martin in his ‘Reminiscences’ (1883: p6) also suggest a redevelopment of the old fortifications. He describes the feature as ‘formerly a ragged dirty water run supposed to have been connected with the old fortifications of Haddington, is now the good road betwixt King’s Meadow and McCall’s Park.’

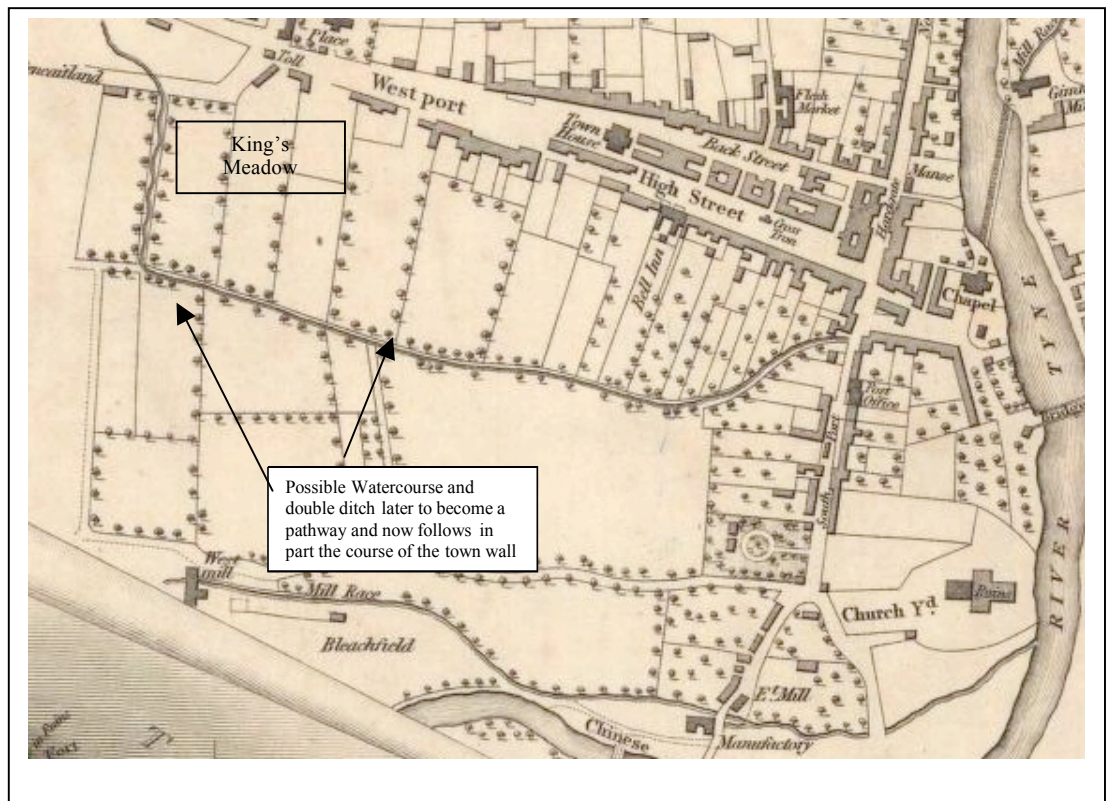


Fig 7.3 - John Thomson’s insert of Haddington dated 1832 clearly shows a stream running where what was later to become a pathway. The 1853 OS map names it the Mylds Burn (NLS). This could be the burn referred to by Martin and this was in someway connected to the fortifications.

Excavations and Archaeology of the Site

Material evidence thought to relate to the siege has appeared sporadically across the town since the fighting finished. Recent excavations in north of the Burgh (NT 5150 7400) in 1991 by SUAT revealed levels of occupation containing medieval pottery behind the premises on Market Street and tenuous remains of stonework associated with what the report describes as ‘medieval defences’ along Fortune Street. In addition a 17th century cannon was dug up by contractors and this is now on display outside Tesco’s (Cachart 1993: 49). Excavations in 1994 at the site of the King’s Meadow Primary School (NT 5135 7362) set out to look at an upstanding feature that was thought to be a part of the siege works but it was dismissed as nothing more than 20th century workings and no further evidence of the siege was found here. (Mackenzie 1994: 45).

In June 2008, workmen at Tyne Lodge (NT 5179 7394) discovered human and butchered animal bones from a clinker rich deposit which may be associated with the siege (Becket et al. 2008: 7)

However antiquarian records do reveal smattering of older relevant finds. In 1878 workmen cutting a new drain a few yards west of the townhouse discovered what they took to be remnants of the town’s defences. A ditch or fosse with a breastwork faced with stones to a height of seven feet was revealed. The bottom of the ditch was approximately three feet wide and lined with stones. Several cannon balls weighing between 36 to 40 lbs were found in it (Robb 1883: 25).

Robb writing in 1883 also relates the discovery of what appeared to be a grave pit in the area of Gallows Green containing human remains and horse bones along with their harnesses and trappings (Robb 1883: 22).

The precinct of St Mary’s has, not surprisingly, yielded a number of finds including cannon balls and shot up to 40lbs. A sexton digging a grave in the 19th century discovered a harlberd head at a depth of 7ft and very near the spot where a skeleton was found with a decayed purse beside it containing 17 gold pieces dating to the reign

of Henry VIII. (Robb 1883: 43). A large ‘bullet’ some 14 pounds weight was found in Sidegate Street while the drains and sewers were being cut and several bullets were discovered in what are now the gardens of Haddington House adjoining the churchyard (Martin J 1883: 84).

Analysis of the Evidence

The diagram in Appendix C places the sites mentioned in the historical accounts into the modern landscape. This simple analysis suggests that the eastern side of the fortification is clearly defined along the bank of the river Tyne running along the line of the more modern town walls from the Friary up to the NE Port however the western end of the structure is less discernable.



Fig 7.4 a and b – The town wall running along the banks of the Tyne are probably built upon the line of the fortifications.

The South East Quarter

There is little doubt that the Franciscan Friary Precinct was the location of what became known as Taylor’s Bastion. However it is difficult to believe that the structure, unlike the others around the town, took the form of a true ‘trace italienne’ bastion. More likely the English ‘mured up’ the existing walls and buildings, filled in the gaps with earthen embankments and created raised gun platforms that overlooked the Nungate bridge, St Mary’s church and the ‘basse court’. Church Street, the road leading through the East Port, was overlooked by the buildings within the Friary and St Katherine’s and additionally lined with casemates and barricades. It was these that impeded the French assault on 10th October and gave cover for the artillery piece that

decimated the attack. The basse court was most likely the precinct around St Katherine's, enclosing not only the chapel but also the associated stores and accommodation as well as provided protected grazing for the garrison's cattle and horses. A full version of Miller's account of the October 'camisade' is given at Appendix B

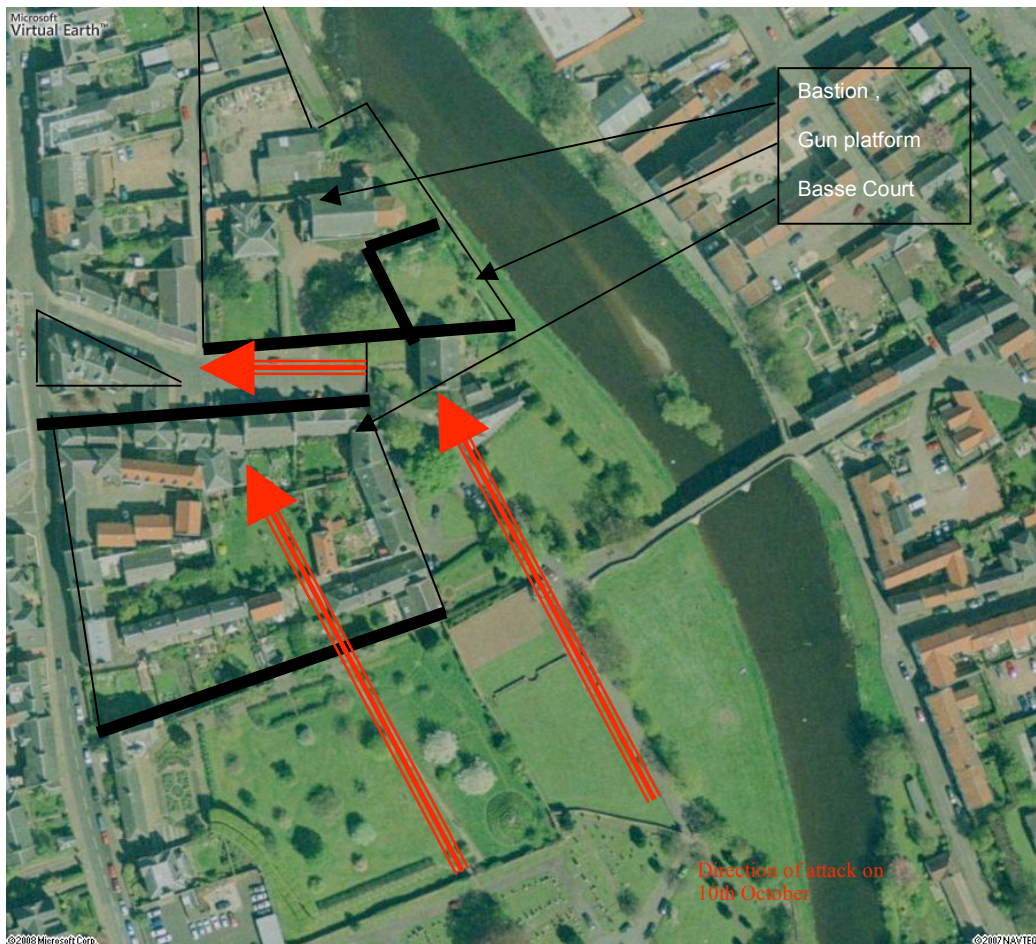


Fig 7.5 – The possible location of the ‘basse court’, Taylor’s Bastion and gun platform seen in the modern landscape.

The Western Bastions

The western bastions are a little more difficult to pin down. It is most likely that the line of the fortification incorporated the West Port and the approximate location of Wyndham's bastion lies within the King's Park area, but the location of Wilford's bastion to the north of the West Port is still open to debate. The strongest piece of evidence for its location comes in the form of John Adair's map of 1682, which

shows what appears to be two bastions or towers incorporated into the new town wall protecting the West Port. It is feasible that Adair was illustrating new fortifications built on the footprint of the old bastions or perhaps the ruins of the old bastions themselves. This would place Wilford's bastion to the north of the Westport at the westerly end of the town wall running along Fortune Avenue in the vicinity of Craiglodge.



Fig 7.6 – John Adair's map of East Lothian dated 1682 provides a tantalising clue as to the extent of the fortifications to the west of the town. This detail of his map clearly depicts two towers or bastions guarding the West Port. This could be the cartographers attempt to depict the remains of the fortifications built into the new town wall.

The illustration in Appendix E attempts to sum up in one diagram the conclusions to this research as it shows the most likely location of the fortifications when all the evidence has been duly considered. However, only a full archaeological survey and perhaps excavation would be able to pinpoint the exact position.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

The aim of this work was to identify the most likely location of the fortifications and surmise as to what may be found there. Consideration has been given to what Haddington looked like before the siege, the nature of 16th Century siege warfare, the design and construction of the new ‘Trace Italienne’ fortifications and material evidence that could be found in Haddington today. The final section of the dissertation has attempted to pull all the evidence together and suggest the most likely site of the construction.

Nothing in the research has unquestionably identified the *exact* location of the fortifications and where sites have been discussed then it has been qualified with an assessment of probability and a measure of doubt. It has been left to the reader to draw their own conclusions and it is hoped this will stimulate ongoing debate.

So where does that leave the issue? Only irrefutable evidence can identify for certain the exact location of the fortification of Haddington and this can best be obtained through the archaeological process. Even if one De Selve’s missing plans did turn up in an archive somewhere, only a proper archaeological survey could ever confirm its authenticity and accuracy. Despite being a bustling county town, Haddington does retain areas of open land that could provide vital evidence today. The playing fields to the south of the town, the surrounding fields towards Clerkington and Lennoxlove and the ground between St Mary’s and the Friary are prime areas for further investigation. Much could be learnt from an architectural survey of the older houses in the High Street and the immediate environs. Fundamentally whenever a planner looks to develop a town centre site then every effort should be made to look for signs of the siege.

If you stand at the Mercat Cross in the High Street, or in the precinct of St Mary’s or along the ‘Sands’ at the Tyne, it is sobering to know that some 460 years past English, Scots, Germans, French, Italians, Spanish and even Albanians fought and died over that piece of ground. Their world was one of death, plague, starvation, mutilation and murder. Their story lies beneath your very feet.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Translation of Beaugué’s description of the fortifications (1556 Imprint)

Beaugué’s text on the fortifications of Haddington is perhaps the clearest and most authentic description available. However, much reliance has been placed by British historians on the translation of the work by Patrick Abercromby in 1707, a translation that has subsequently been condemned as inaccurate (Green 1907: p12).

Therefore a new translation of the description was commissioned as part of the research to this dissertation and the results are shown below. The work has been left very literal and appears crude in parts. This was a conscious decision by the translator in order to ensure that she had not second guessed the author where the text seemed somewhat vague and thereby lose important phrases or detail. Brackets signify the translator’s notes.

The most pertinent new piece of evidence gleaned from this process was the inclusion by Beaugué of the term ‘corps de logis’ within the description of the inner sanctuary. Abercromby’s translation had suggested this inner wall was built only around the ‘dungeon’. But this additional remark backs up other evidence that suggests that all the main buildings in the town were enclosed within this inner ward.

‘The plan of the fort at Haddington is very square, and sits in the middle of broad and shallow plain, not having a mountain or hill from which to overlook it.

It is enclosed by a broad flat bottomed ditch and a good and strong curtain wall made of large earth turfs, equipped with roomy ramparts and fitted with good safe parapets: To the four corners sits four protruding boulevards [bastions], each one mirroring the other, whose tops can be used for a platform to hinder the reconnaissance of the most unprotected places; to the back of which, there is a piece of ground sloping gently downwards, where there are several raised terraces in the fashion of ravelins and platforms, without revetments where the English have been able to place several batteries of middlesized pieces, in order to harry us when we are in our camp.

And above the defences there is a place that has been built with a curtain of fascines where their harquebusiers are able to safely fire from under cover. Behind and against the rampart of the first wall is a deep ditch bordered of a strong curtain, four columns at the four corners, made in

the manner of towers, serving the defences and enclosing the Dongeon, and main lodgings. And between the edge of the ditch and the wall of this keep, are more casemates level with the first rampart, that the artillery are not able to touch; inside which one can arm harquebusiers, for the defence of the second strong ditch again that the columns serve the defences at the Dongeon wall which is perhaps to undermine a cannon shot, these casemates are able to serve this office with the use of false brays made between them.

And as for the Dongeon it cannot be hit except for one side the one on which is by the river Tyne: and the only rampart in the most dangerous place which has been taken up by a cavalier which protects the houses and the soldiers. Moreover the inside of the fort is very roomy and comfortable as one can easily withdraw oneself to re-group for battle and rearm if one needs.

The English have built this fort in the way said and taken Haddington (in my opinion) as it is in fertile and good plot / situation of country, and a place for working and to bring great sorrow/damage to the Scots – being as it is in the heart of Scotland. But I do not know if they understand that these beautiful commodities are accompanied by the necessity that they are not able to be secured or aided except with an army. Because, as already said, it is in the middle of Scotland: and that they do not hold between their hands the space, which would be necessary upon their withdrawal, and that the sea is not approachable for close to 2miles’.

Appendix B – A Description of the October Camisade taken from Miller’s ‘The Lamp of Lothian’.

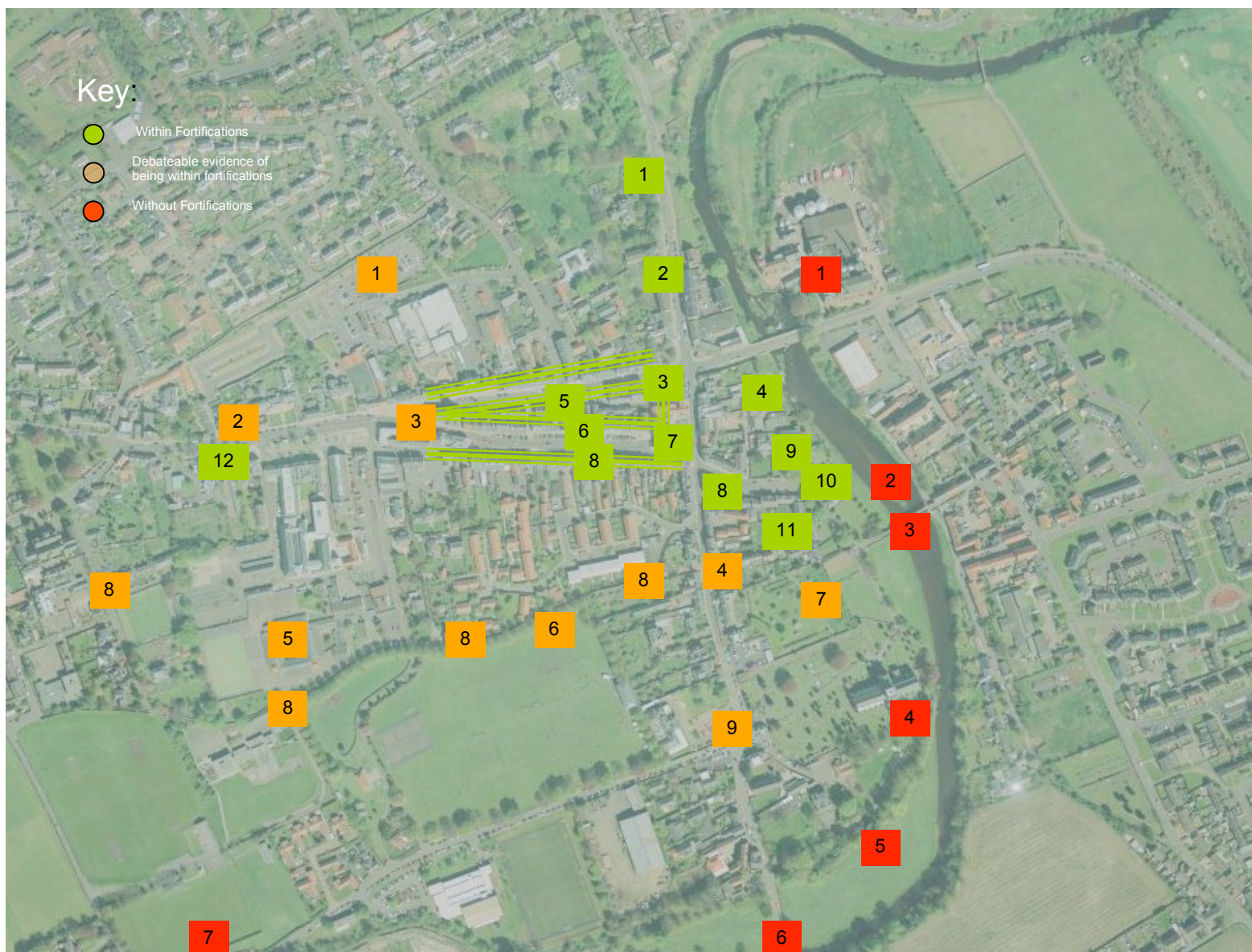
Miller cuts between his own commentary and that of Beaugué throughout this narrative.

‘The bas-court³³ before the east-gate of the town was gained ere the garrison was alarmed ; meanwhile some granaries which the English had placed at the back of an adjacent church, were attacked, while the French were breaking open the port .This was so suddenly effected, that the garrison had little time to put themselves in a posture of defence. The Italian guard were put to the sword ; and the few English who were upon duty, at no short distance from the former, fared no better. “Several were killed in their sleep,” says the journalist. " and those who awakened had but the comfort to die more feelingly. Thus we had leisure enough, not only to do great execution, but also to have carried the town with little or no loss; but M. de Desse was wisely apprehensive, lest some ingenious fallacy should lurk under a fault so evidently palpable. He very well knew, that the most unusual favours of fortune are for the most part hurtful and fraudulent ; for these reasons he would not suffer his men to run headlong upon success, but kept together in one body. The enemy had but one pass to defend, and therefore were not so much put to it, as if they had been environed on all sides ; and this pass was very narrow, and was fenced with trenches and other earth-works, from whence a few men by firing upon the assailants, were able to defeat their attempt."

Notwithstanding this advantage, which the garrison might have turned to some account, General Desse at the head of his battalion, continued to gain ground, and to give new testimonies of valour. He was backed by men that had been taught to fear no danger. The soldiers had already cried. " Victory, victory !" a hundred times, and doubted not but she waited upon their arms. " Of five hundred men," says Beaugue, who opposed our entrance ; some in their shirts with sword and daggers, others with halberts, and most part without any arms tit all, 250 lost their lives upon the spot, whilst hitherto not one man had fallen on our side. Indeed fortune till this minute had been in partial in our favour, that we could not doubt of victory ; and nothing but treachery could have frustrated our hopes." General Desse and his men were exposed to the mouth of a "double cannon," planted between two gabions, upon the narrowest place of the entrance or avenue, which led to the town. This place had not been mastered as yet, when by chance a French soldier, a native of Paris, (who not long before had been corrupted by the enemy, and served him as a spy,) was stationed at that very spot of ground. This renegade, dreading the punishment he deserved, had grown desperate and, naked and unarmed as he was, ran to this double-mouthed cannon, and fired it. The ball made its way through the close ranks of the French, and could not fail to make a great slaughter amongst them. In continuance of this smart reception, and the darkness of the night, which hindered them from ascertaining their real loss, which as yet was not sufficient to dishearten them, the French were seized with a sudden panic. A terrible cry ran through the battalion, which alarmed those in the rear, who began to retire ; and those behind them following their example, the French ranks were broken, and thrown into the utmost confusion. The garrison being now under arms, a party sallying from a privy postern, made such a furious onset with spears and swords, that very few of the French who had entered the lower, or bas-court, escaped alive.’

³³ an inner yard or inferior court where poultry etc were kept (Miller 1844. p108)

Appendix C – An aerial view of modern day Haddington showing the location of sites mentioned in historical accounts and relevant texts in relation to the fortifications.



Key			
Item Number	Description	Reference in Text	Notes
1	North East Port	p.14	Location of Port known and was used in the siege
2	Baxter's House – 46 Hardgate	p.18	If story is correct this is inside the fortifications
3	The Greenlaw Tower	p.22	Tenement present at time of siege
4	Gowl Close	p.15	Reputedly used by English on 14 th October to sortie out against attackers
5	Tollbooth	p.21	English headquarters
6	Mercat Cross	p.19	Bombarded during the siege
7	St John's Chapel	p.25	Tenement present at time of siege
8	The Well Tower	p.22	Tenement present at time of siege
9	The Franciscan Precinct	p.23	Incorporated into defences
10	Elm House	p.43	Has surviving pre 16 th century architecture
11	St Katherine's Chapel	p.25	Mentioned in accounts as being present at the time of the siege
12	West Port	p.14	Incorporated into defences
1	Fortune Avenue Excavations	p.45	Possible traces of 'medieval fortifications'
2	Dominican Friary	p.25	Present before the siege but no sign of it in post siege records
3	Town ditch excavation	p.45	Possible site of the 'inner town' ditch
4	Bedlam Close Smithy	p.18	Reputedly used by English and French during the siege
5	King's Meadow School Excavations	p.45	No sign of fortifications found
6	The Butts	p.44	Location of Butts according to street name
7	The 'alternative' location for the Butts	p.44	Location of Butts according to earlier OS maps
8	The line of the 'Double Ditch'	p.45	Reputedly connected to the fortifications
9	The South Port	p.15	Was up at time of the siege but too near the church to be considered within the fortifications

Item Number	Description	Reference in Text	Notes
1	Gimmers Mill	p.23	Used by the Germans as a gun emplacement
2	The Sands		The site of a number of skirmishes during the siege
3	Nungate Bridge	p.13	Definitely outwith the fortifications
4	St Mary's Parish Church	p.19	Notoriously left standing outwith the fortifications
5	The Haugh	p.20	Used by German troops to muster on
6	Poldrate Mill	p.38	Reputedly used by French as a powder store
7	The New Wark	p.38	Site of French gun position

Appendix D – An aerial view of the south side of Haddington showing the likely location of the siege works built by the French in their assault of Wyndham’s Bastion in July 1548.



Appendix E – Diagram depicting the most likely location the fortifications at Haddington.



Appendix F – A plan view of Haddington showing the ranges of 16th Century Artillery in relation to the position of the French and Scottish camps



