

The French Fort at Eyemouth – An Overview of the Written Sources

Building Materials

In April 1558 iron (weighing more than 161 stones) was sent from Edinburgh Castle to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 422.

In June 1558 10,000 plancheour nails (i.e. nails suitable for nailing planks) and 4,000 door nails were sent to the fort at Eyemouth. Two months later (in August 1558) 1,800 single garron nails, 6,000 plancheour nails, and 4,000 door nails were sent to the fort. In October 1558 a further 1,260 plancheour nails and 1,000 door nails were delivered to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, pp. 424, 427, 430.

In August 1558 44 great oak joists, 187 normal oak joists, 40 small joists, 103 oak roof timbers, 9 great cuts of oak, 48 oak garrons (short wooden beams), and 600 timbers and 60 planks of unspecified wood were shipped to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 426.

In August 1558 steel worth £3 12s Scots was sent to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 427.

In August 1558 sixteen chalders of lime was shipped from the haven of Preston to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 429.

In October 1558 1,100 great slates and 2,000 small slates were shipped from Leith to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 430.

Tools

Large numbers of shovels and other tools were specially commissioned for the building of Eyemouth. For example, in the spring of 1558 smiths in Edinburgh were paid to make 108 picks and mattocks and 100 shovels with iron edges for the fort at Eyemouth. More picks, mattocks and shovels were bought in August and September 1558.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, pp. 422-423, 426, 430.

In April 1558 140 wooden hoits (baskets for carrying earth) were sent to Eyemouth. The accounts recording their transport suggest that the hoits were made in Newbattle (in Midlothian) and then transported to Leith before being shipped down the coast.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, pp. 422-423.

There is a reference to 6 great “crelis” (presumably creels or containers) being sent to the fort for a draw well (described as “ane draw wale” in the original accounts).

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 423.

Artillery

In February 1558 sixteen score (i.e. 320) oxen were taken to the Castle of Hume in order to transport cannons, battards (small cannons), and moyens (medium sized culverins) from Hume to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 334.

Food

In March 1558 letters were sent out ordering (under pain of death) all bakers, brewers and tapsters within the towns of Edinburgh, Leith, Musselburgh, Newbattle, Dalkeith, Preston, Prestonpans, Haddington, Aberlady, Dirleton, North Berwick, Dunbar, and Tranent, to bake bread and brew ale for the towns of Duns, Langtoun, and Eyemouth for “furnesing of men of weir”.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 344.

There are records of butter, cheese, beef, biscuit and flour being sent in barrels from Edinburgh to Eyemouth. The goods appear to have been purchased and packed in Edinburgh before being transported by cart and sleds to Leith, and then sent by sea to Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, pp. 421-426.

Substantial quantities of meal (probably made from oats) were sent to Eyemouth. In April 1558 the Master of Artillery at Eyemouth took delivery of 3 chalders of meal worth in total £48 Scots.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 423.

Dry ling (a cod like fish) was sent from Anstruther to the fort at Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, pp. 422-423.

In July 1558 2 stone and 2 ounces of sugar was sent to Eyemouth. The sugar cost in total £11 5s. Scots. A barrel of plumdames (probably either damson plums, or dried plums) was sent in the same boat.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 425.

Lighting

In April 1558 12 lanterns (known as bowats) were sent from Edinburgh to a man named Claude at Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 422.

In April 1558 tallow candles weighing thirty stone and four pounds were sent to the fort at Eyemouth. The candles were packed in bran to protect them.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 423.

Fuel

In August 1558 coal from Wemyss (in Fife) was delivered to the Comptroller at Eyemouth.

Source: James Balfour Paul (ed.), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1913), vol. 10, p. 429.