

A MAP ILLUSTRATING THE SIEGE OF LEITH, 1560

by FRANCIS W. STEER, M.A., F.S.A., F.S.A.SCOT.

'THE English army came, and English and Scots together laid siege to the town of Leith, where the French had fortified themselves. This was surely a remarkable thing to have happened – the Scots fighting along with the English, who had so long been their enemies, against the French, who had so long been their friends.'¹ On 6th July 1560, a significant date in Scottish history, the Treaty of Leith, or of Edinburgh, was arranged by Scotland, England and France after the surrender of the French. On the following day an unknown cartographer drew a remarkable map which is the subject of this paper.

Measuring 28½ in. high and 34 in. wide,² 'The plat of Lythe w^t thaproche of the Trenches therevnto. And also the great Ordyn'nce there in placed as it was at The daye of the Surrender thereof being the 7 daye of Ivlie/1560' is an informative and colourful document now among the archives at Petworth House, Sussex.³ 'The Scale of this Plat is eightye paces to ane ynche. Every pace conteyning 5 foote geometricall' is the surveyor's method of saying that the map is on a scale of 400 ft. or just over six Gunter's chains to an inch or 13.3 inches to a mile in modern reckoning.

The orientation of the map is reversed, i.e. N. is at the bottom and E. on the left-hand side; this arrangement has enabled the cartographer to present Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh Castle and the hills to the W. of it in a very realistic fashion. All the high ground is emphasised by blue shading which merges with the subtle greens and buffs which are his predominant colours. Roofs are red, blue or brown according to whether the material is tile, lead or slate, or thatch; the lead roofs of Holyrood Palace and Abbey are specially noticeable. All buildings are finely drawn in perspective view but, except for St Giles' church (easily recognised by its open crown on the central tower) and the Netherbow Port or Gate,⁴ Edinburgh is shown as a conventional cluster of houses. The groups of tents – the 'palzeous' [pavilions] mentioned in John Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland*⁵ – are often shaded with a tawny colour; the walls of forts are a lightish grey, trenches dark grey; the roads are greyish and so is the Water of Leith while the Firth of Forth is depicted in bluish greys and buffs and further distinguished by four large vessels. The entire map is

¹ Hume Brown, P. (ed. Henry W. Meikle), *A Short History of Scotland* (Edinburgh and London, 1955), p. 182.

² These are average dimensions as the mutilated border makes precise measurement impossible.

³ Although the present writer (who has the archives at Petworth House under his care) cannot offer any certain explanation for the presence of this map in a Sussex mansion, he would wish to express his thanks to the owner, The Rt. Hon. Lord Egremont, M.B.E., for permission to offer this description of it. However, it is very probable that the map came through the Percies, Earls of Northumberland who had Petworth from 1150 to 1670. Henry, 2nd Earl of Northumberland (as Sir Henry Percy), c. 1532–85, was a commissioner to treat with the French. See de Fonblanque, E. B., *Annals of the House of Percy* (London, 1887), vol. 2, pp. 129, 133–40 and Bruce, J., ed., *Annals of the first four years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Camden Society, London, 1840), p. 57.

⁴ So well described in *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of the City of Edinburgh* (H.M.S.O., Edinburgh, 1951), pp. 123, 124. This work is abbreviated hereafter to *Inventory*.

⁵ Dickinson, W. C., ed., *John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland* (London, 1949), vol. 1, p. 320. The exhaustive notes to this edition of Knox are of great value to anyone studying the military aspect of the events of 1560.

executed in water-colour on squared paper; a heavy black 'frame' or border (not shown in the photograph) was painted round the map and the whole was mounted on a coarse, loosely-woven piece of material rather like hessian. Some urgent repairs to the map have been carried out in the West Sussex Record Office at Chichester: these have included the securing of damaged portions of the border, stripping the map from its original decayed backing and remounting on strong linen fabric.

The map is more precise than that of Edinburgh and Leith drawn in 1547¹ and now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and it helps to complete the cartographical record of the city and its environs for the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The map is of increased value because of the scarcity of early maps of Edinburgh and Leith as is shown in William Cowan (ed. C. B. B. Watson), *The Maps of Edinburgh, 1544-1929* (Edinburgh, 1932) and in *The Early Maps of Scotland* (Royal Scottish Geographical Society, Edinburgh, 1936). As well as being an important historical document, the map at Petworth is of the utmost interest as a record of much architecture that has been lost: the careful delineation of many such buildings of all types may, in fact, be the only representation of them that has survived. It may be fairly assumed that the author of this map was not a Scotsman because of the variations, and probable inaccuracies, of spelling.

It now remains to transcribe and identify the buildings, emplacements and other features drawn and/or noted on the map. To assist the reader, a numbered key is provided on the same scale as the reproduction (Pl. I) which, unhappily, loses most of the elegance of the original by being in black and white instead of colour. Editorial comments are enclosed in square brackets; the spelling is as on the original map but, because of the limitations of print, contractions indicated by a horizontal line above letters in the original are denoted in the transcript by an apostrophe.

1. Arthor Seate
2. St Anthonyes Chappell
3. Edenbroughe parke
4. Holy roode howse
5. Cragge Ingalt [Calton Hill]
6. St Gyles Kvrke in Edenbrowghe
7. Edenbrowghe Castell
8. [No wording against this building which is presumably St Cuthbert's church]
9. Roode Chappell [This representation of the Rude Chapel, Greenside, extends the known history of this building by 17 years; in the *Inventory*, p. 216, it is stated that 'In 1543 the chapel was the scene of a meeting between representatives of the pro-French and pro-English parties. . . . It is not heard of again after this date.' The building is shown as roofless.]
10. The lowghe howse
11. Browghton [see *Inventory*, p. lx]
12. Cana Mylles [presumably the Canon Mills operated by the Water of Leith]
13. Com'on Mylles [also on the Water of Leith, higher and more westward than 'Cana Mylles']

¹ Reproduced as Plate 15 in *Inventory*.

14. The De'nne [the Village of Dean]
15. Moreste
16. Inaerlythe [Inverleith; the house has a garden enclosed by a crenellated wall of red brick]
17. Granton
18. Restarycke Place [Restalrig; see *Inventory*, pp. lx, lxi. The old tower, said to have been destroyed about 1586 by the Provost of Edinburgh is clearly shown]
19. Sir Iohn Nevells w^t other Cap^{ens}
20. The lorde Graye and the Earle of Arren [William, Lord Grey of Wilton (d. 1562) and James (Hamilton), Earl of Arran (d. 1574/5). See *Annals*,¹ pp. 51, 55]
21. Sir francis Leeke w^t other Cap^{ens} more
22. Cap^{en} Randall Cap^{en} Conway
23. Cap^{en} Reade w^t other Cap^{ens} more
24. Sutton and Capell w^t other Cap^{ens} more
25. Wareston [Warriston. The house and tower adjoining are shown as enclosed in a red brick wall]
26. Restarycke [Restalrig. Note the church with lead roofs and massive central tower. On 21st December 1560 the General Assembly directed 'that the kirk of Restalrig, as a monument of idolatrie, be raysit and utterlie castin downe and destroyed' (*Inventory*, p. 253)]
27. The trenches of the first Approche
28. Mownt Pellam [or ?Pellain] [This is an emplacement with five cannon marked 'A' on the key; just to the right of this are two more cannon marked 'B' and 'C' on the key]
29. Bartholmeus Bulwerk [This encloses five cannon marked 'D' on the key]
30. The place of y^e second Battrye [Here are nine cannon marked 'G' on the key]
31. pelrygge [This is probably the site of the present Pilrig House]
32. Mownt Somersett w^{ch} is the trenches of the seconde Approche [Mount Somerset encloses the six cannon marked 'H' on the key]
33. The place of the first Battrye
34. The battrye at the Pale [Just to the north are four cannon marked 'J' on the key]
35. Bonneton' [The site of the present Bonnyhaugh House]
36. The trenches of the thirde Apreche
37. Byere Mownt [Fortified by a cannon marked 'K' on the key]
38. The new mownt
39. Waredye
40. [Very indistinct, but presumably Estenbrogh gate]
41. The fastilian'
42. The Assault [Five cannon enclosed within the area of 41 and 42]
43. Thassault
44. The frenche trenche

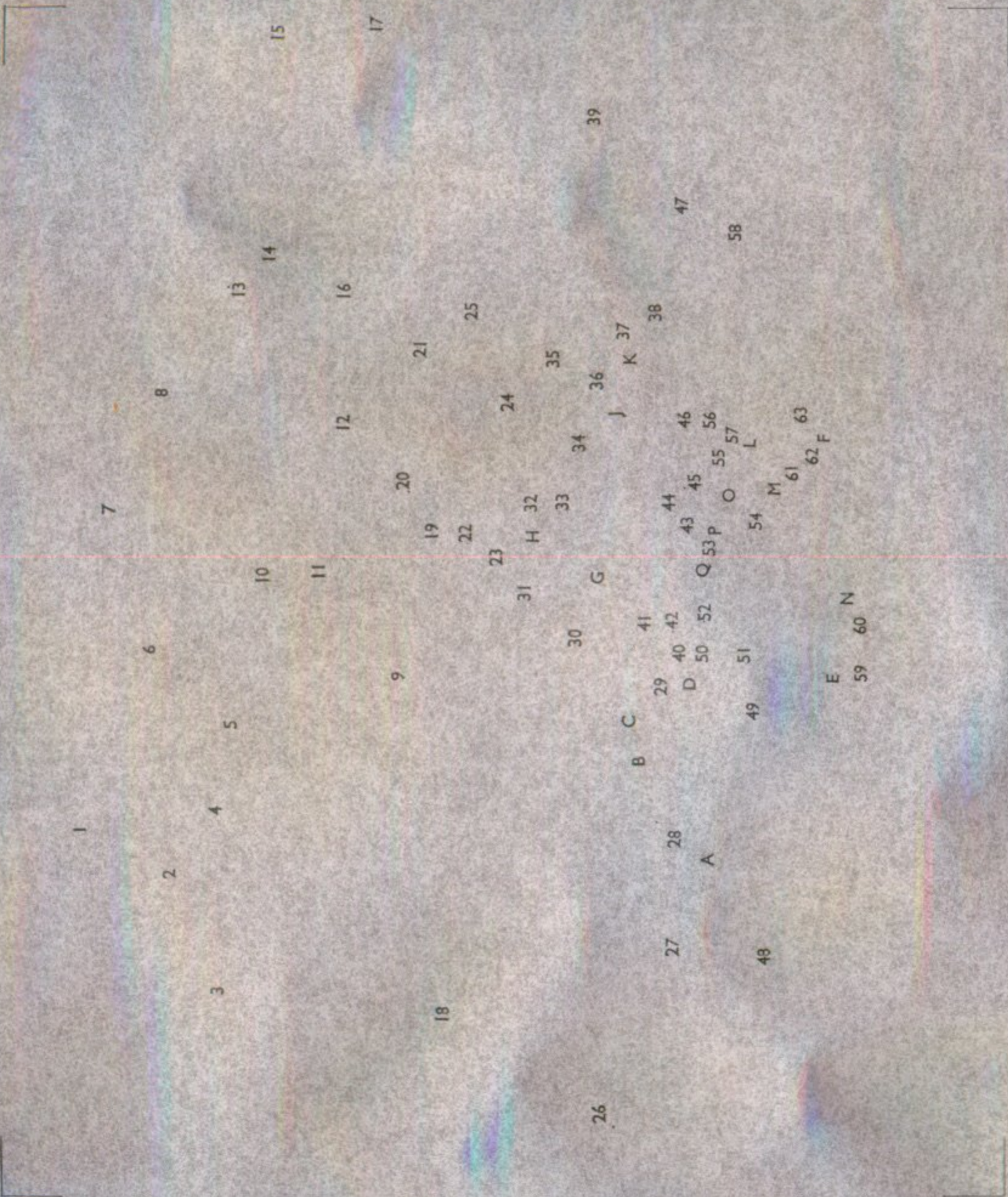
¹ Ed. by J. Bruce; see p. 280, n. 3.

45. Lythe [water] Milles
46. The Myne [see also 56]
47. Newhavin [Note the large church which was the chapel of SS. Mary and James, Westmost Close, Newhaven, dating from the early sixteenth century; see *Inventory*, p. 254]
48. [The title of the map]
49. Muskelbrogh gate
50. mary kirke [St Mary's church, Kirkgate, with a lead roof; see *Inventory*, pp. 250, 251]
51. [Very indistinct, but perhaps the site of the Friary of St Anthony; see *Inventory*, p. 254. Or perhaps St Ninian's church; see *Inventory*, p. 251]
52. [Very indistinct, but probably] S^t Anthonyes [Hospital]
53. Mowntes lygo [Either side of this is a cannon, marked 'P' and 'Q'; another is at 'O' on the key]
54. The water of Lythe
55. The Pale [Note the bridge of four arches with two houses on it; boats are placed across the Water below the bridge; also notice the masted vessels at the mouth of the Water of Leith]
56. These round holes were foundes for the Myne [see also 46. 'Found' in this sense probably means a mould for a cannon ball]
57. Cittenale [or Cittedale. With six cannon marked 'L' on the key]
58. The horse mens waule
59. Little london [Above this is an emplacement, marked 'E' on the key, of four cannon]
60. The Sea gate [defended by four cannon marked 'N' on the key]
61. The Pallesado [with two cannon marked 'M' on the key]
62. S^t Nichas chap [There are six cannon, marked 'F' on the key, on the emplacement at this corner. See *Inventory*, p. 266]
63. The west gate

The total number of cannon depicted, in seventeen positions, is sixty-two, facts from which a military expert may draw conclusions. The French troops concentrated at the heavily-fortified Leith were besieged by the English army and the Scottish Reformers; a consideration of the placing of cannon and trenches may furnish evidence as to the military tactics employed throughout the 1560 campaign.

In conclusion, it may be said that the object of this paper is to describe a map and not to comment on the siege of Leith or the military implications thereof or on the leading figures engaged on that occasion. Such aspects are for a specialist in Scottish history and are quite outside the province of an archivist living in the S. of England, but mention may be made of the excellent account of the preparations for the siege, the disposition of troops, the damage to buildings and the proclamation of peace so vividly recounted in John Bruce's edition of Sir John Hayward's *Annals of the first four years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*.¹

¹ The manuscript is British Museum, Harleian 6021; see also p. 280, n. 3.



STEER: MAP ILLUSTRATING THE SIEGE OF LEITH.



STEER: MAP ILLUSTRATING THE SIEGE OF LEITH.