

**Transcript of 2646.26**

*[Note: This letter was written on two pieces of paper each folded lengthwise and strung together, creating 4 pages with both sides of the page being used, i.e. 8 sides altogether, of which 7 sides were actually used. The document carries on its first side a black ink stamp of Secretary for Scotland dated 13 May 1893]*

7 Union Terrace  
Aberdeen  
14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1892

To

Finlay Munro Esq  
of Rockfield

Sir,

I inspected Portmahomack Harbour at time of high and low water of ordinary Spring Tides on 11<sup>th</sup> August last and under very favourable circumstances and have heard the views of local people as to the necessary requirements of the Harbour, and especially as to the disadvantages which the fishing interests now labour under from the want of deep water. I have also taken soundings and levels in the neighbourhood of the Harbour.

The Harbour consists at present of a basin of about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> acres sheltered by a pier 350 feet long with a return head or jetty at its outer end 45 feet long.

There is also a jetty slipway on south side of basin 140 feet long. The basin or sheltered area is dry at time of low water spring tides. Portmahomack has long been known as an important fishing place being well sheltered and in the neighbourhood of excellent fishing ground and its sheltered position makes it a favourite resort for vessels during stormy weather.

There is ample ground in the immediate neighbourhood of the Harbour for curing ground and other purposes necessary for the conduct of the Fishing industry.

For various reasons the necessity for extension and improvement are obvious.

(1<sup>st</sup>) The fishing boats have greatly increased in size, requiring greater depth of water and quay accommodation.

(2<sup>nd</sup>) Other and neighbouring ports have been improved and deepened

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Quicker despatch of goods etc by a larger class of sailing vessels and steamers is now necessary

Deep water is of the greatest importance in order that boats arriving from the herring fishing grounds may get into the Harbour on their arrival and also that they may not lose time in again proceeding to sea. In the present condition of the Harbour, fishing boats have frequently to lie outside with their valuable perishable cargoes for it may be four or five hours, and in consequence the fish frequently suffers to such extent that they cannot be branded and this entails a great loss to Fishermen and Curers.

In the Scheme of improvement which I beg to submit to you I have kept in view the requirements above enumerated and the Works which I have laid down on the Plan, which accompanies this Report, are of a simple and moderate description and designed to meet the wants of the Port and comprise,

(1<sup>st</sup>) the extension of existing Pier in a South Westerly direction for a length of 250 feet with return end extending 80 feet in a South Easterly direction

(2<sup>nd</sup>) The deepening of an area along inner side of this extension.  
The extended Pier will be constructed with an outer and inner Wall, the space between being filled in with the materials from excavation of area to be deepened, and will have a parapet rising 10 feet above the level of roadway.  
The return end shewn on Plan will be a suitable berth for a small trading steamer, which in fine weather may be moored alongside west side of same.  
The extended Pier will terminate in about 5 feet of water at low water of ordinary spring tides.  
The Works should be constructed of Portland Cement Concrete, and the cost of same I estimate at, Four thousand Pounds

I am  
Sir  
Your Obedient Servant

James Barron. M. Inst. C.E. [*personal signature*]