

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

Reference Code	DCAA.01.25
Title	Clancy Barracks, South Circular Road (07E0261) Collection
Creation Dates	2007-2009
Level of Description	Collection
Extent and Medium	3 boxes; 1 outsize folder; 4 CDs
Creators	Margaret Gowen and Co Ltd
Administrative/ Biographical History	Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd., Rath House, Ferndale Road, Rathmichael, Co. Dublin, is a professional archaeological company founded in the early 1980s. The company has carried out numbers of archaeological excavations and development-led investigations arising from the requirements of development control and planning process, in line with legal provisions of the Planning and Development Acts (2000) and the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) and Amendments Acts. The Clancy Barracks Collection is one of many site archives that has been generated through these development-led excavations.

Key Words:

Clancy Barracks, Islandbridge; Excavation Licence No. 07E0261; Urban post-medieval and riverside early medieval

The excavation at Clancy Barracks was carried out after testing undertaken by Franc Myles. This testing uncovered, 3.6m below the current ground surface, a layer of river-deposited silty clays containing fragments of worked wood. On foot of this it was decided that all archaeological groundworks on site were to be monitored.

Clancy Barracks is situated at Islandbridge and is bounded to the east by Heuston Station, to the north by the River Liffey, to the west by the South Circular Road and to the south by St John's Road West.

During monitoring, the rubble associated with the construction of the barracks was removed and the foundations of previously demolished barracks buildings were recorded. Beneath these several layers of post-medieval cultivation soils were also removed. Below this was a layer of sterile orange sandy clay. It was this layer which sealed the deposits that contained the wood recovered during the testing phase. These deposited clays, which sat directly over the glacial gravels in a 25m-wide strip along the extreme northern edge of the site, were then excavated by hand. This portion of the site is directly adjacent to the River Liffey. When the orange, sterile sandy clay which sealed these deposits was removed and the clays exposed, the remains of a riverside revetment were uncovered. It stretched for 130m along the old riverbank, although it was heavily disturbed in places. The basic construction was a post-and-wattle fence erected a small distance into the river, with a large quantity of wood dumped behind it to consolidate the ground on the land side of the fence. The fence which marked the river side of the revetment did not survive for the full length of the site. The wattle panels were made entirely from hazel and the majority of the fence posts marking the river side of the revetment were of willow. Apart from these elements of the structure, the wood that made up the majority of the revetment was a mix of species, eleven in total. Wood from three separate ecological groupings was present, dry land mature woodland, alder carr and scrub woodland/hedgerows. The majority of the timbers and brushwood came from species from the dry land woodland and of these 50% came from two species, oak and hazel. Other species represented were alder, elm, blackthorn and wild cherry. In the central portion of the site the revetment had been heavily disturbed. The wood was still there but the fence line was displaced with the stakes being scattered throughout the structure. Both the archaeological and environmental evidence shows that the structure petered out towards the eastern portion of the site.

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

No artefacts were recovered from the site and it proved impossible to dendrochronologically date the oak timbers from the site.

During the excavation of the revetment a large square pit was uncovered at the northern limit of the site. The skeletal remains of two horses, one male and one female, were uncovered at the base of the pit. These proved to be the remains of a cavalry horse that was attached to the 5th Dragoon Guards when they served in the Crimea and an unknown horse. The cavalry horse is commemorated by a plaque which reads:

Near this spot lies buried the remains of
Dickie Bird B7
Troop Horse 5th Dragoon Guards
Which was foaled in 1850
Joined the Regiment in 1853
And served throughout the entire Crimean Campaign
From May 1854 to June 1856
He was shot on the 21st Nov 1874
By special authority of the Horse Guards
To save him from being sold at auction.

Along with the skeletal remains of the two horses a bridle and reins set with the date 1846 stamped on it was recovered from the pit.

The final archaeological site found during the project was a homemade crypt containing four coffined burials. This crypt would have been situated in the back garden of one of the houses fronting on to the South Circular Road. The four burials were all female and were aged between fourteen and 24 years. Two of them possibly had syphilis. There is also evidence for scurvy; malnourishment and TB were also present. All four of them had been coffined, although the wood had long since rotted away; the corroded handles remained. The crypt had been adapted for this use from a smaller underground structure, most probably an icehouse. The structure had been extended and the narrow steps leading down into it blocked with flagstones. The burials were Victorian in date, probably around 1850, as shortly afterwards this area was acquired by the army to extend the barracks.

Archival History

Transferred to DCAA from the Dept. of Environment, 2010

Scope and Content

This collection contains archaeological excavation records from a site at Clancy Barracks, South Circular Road, Dublin, excavated by Kevin Lohan. Includes: feature sheets, sample sheets, timber sheets, wooden stake sheets, registers, notebooks, administrative material, reports, drawings and CDs.

Appraisal destruction and scheduling information

Accruals

Arrangement

Collection processed and box lists created by Noelle Mitchell. Arranged according to document type.

Access Conditions

Available for public research 2013. During closure period available for research to Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd.

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Language

English

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

Physical Characteristics and
Technical Requirements

Finding Aid

Box list in reading room and below

Existence of copies/

Related Material

Publication Note

Database of Irish Excavations Reports, www.excavations.ie

Notes

Archivist's Note

Noelle Mitchell

Rules or Conventions

ISAD(G): General International Standards Archival Description. 2nd ed.
Ottawa: International Council on Archives, 2000

Dates of Description

10 - 12 Sep 2013