

## DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

Reference Code	DCAA.01.28
Title	3-15 Hammond Lane/161-168 Church Street (03E0721) Collection
Creation Dates	2000-2004
Level of Description	Collection
Extent and Medium	5 boxes, plus 1 outsize box
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 Hammond Lane/Church St. Collection is one of many site archives that has been generated through these development-led excavations.

### Key words:

3-15 Hammond Lane/161-168 Church Street, Dublin 7  
Excavation Licence Number: 03E0721  
Urban medieval; post-medieval  
SMR 18:20(237, 190, 189)

The site at Hammond Lane/Church Street is roughly triangular in shape, measuring 115m east-west by 58m on the east side and 7m on the west side. The excavation was divided into two phases. The first phase began in September 2003 and was completed in January 2004. The following briefly details initial findings.

This site, on the north side of the Liffey, is located approximately 50m south of St Michan's, reputedly founded in 1095. The existence of a parish church in the 11th century is some evidence of a settlement here prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. The site is located in the south-western area of the medieval suburb of Oxmantown and fronts directly onto the main street of Oxmantown, now Church Street. To the south, it is bordered by Hammond Lane, originally Hangman's Lane.

There are a number of monuments of medieval date near the site: a fortified tollgate (SMR 18:20(237)) was located at the western end of Hammond Lane; a mill was located at the southern end of Smithfield (18:20(190)); and a second tollgate was at the junction of May Lane and Bow Street (18:20(189)).

### Phase 1: prehistoric activity

A small natural ridge running east-west was located between 6 and 12m from the present-day Hammond Lane frontage and 110m from the modern quay wall. This line delineated bright yellow natural boulder clay, found across most of the site, from naturally deposited riverine gravels and sand along the southern site boundary. The natural ridge has been interpreted as an original high-tide mark of the river.

Located at the edge of the riverbank was an irregular-shaped spread of fire-shattered stones and charcoal-rich clay. It measured 4m by 3.7m and had a maximum depth (central) of 0.15m. The charcoal sampled was identified as alder, commonly found in fulachta fiadh material, and elm and blackthorn, which is not as common (Lorna O'Donnell, pers. Comm.). The calibrated radiocarbon date gave an early to mid-Bronze Age date for this feature, 1938-1744 BC (two sigma cal.). There were no cut features or

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finds associated with this burnt mound.

### Phase 2: 11th- to late 12th-century activity

The features in this phase were mostly aceramic. A number of radiocarbon dates were sought from the river defence ditches and fence-stake remains. Radiocarbon dates from sampled features dated this phase from the early 11th century to the mid/late 12th century.

The earliest activity was located in this area of the site. Two man-made banks enhanced the natural ridge. Material consisting of grey and yellow mottled clay with gravel, sand, marine shell and charcoal inclusions was deposited on and along the ridge, thus increasing its height and width. The break between the banks, in the middle of the site, was approximately 10m.

The western bank was 10–12m from the street frontage. Parallel to it on the riverside was a 1m-wide and 0.7m-deep ditch. The eastern terminus of the ditch respected the break in the bank. Both bank and ditch were a minimum of 20m in length and continued beyond the western limit of excavation. The ditch was backfilled by river-deposited organic material and sandy gravels. Between the bank and the ditch was evidence of a fence. To the south of the ditch were further fence lines. Wood remains from these fence lines provided a radiocarbon date for these features of AD 1021–1171 (two sigma cal.).

The eastern bank was closer to the southern site boundary (only 6–8m). However, there were seven ditches excavated. These were all similar in dimensions, being around 11m in length, 1m in width and 0.5–0.7m in depth. Between the bank and ditches was again evidence of fences. Several of the ditches were intercutting, and on two occasions the fences were placed in a backfilled ditch. The backfill was also layers of river-deposited organic material and sandy gravels. The primary fill of one of these ditches was sampled for radiocarbon dating; the calibrated date range was AD 1010–1160 (two sigma cal.)

This eastern part of the riverfront obviously displayed a greater level of activity than to the west. River or water management and protection, however, appears to be the function of all this activity. The bank, ditches and fences may have formed barriers against the dynamic nature of the Liffey, the high tide and storm waters. The material in the ditches gives a picture of constant river inundation. In the area between the banks, a large drainage ditch runs from north to south. This ditch was 2m in width at the top, 0.8m in depth and had a V-shaped profile. The primary fill of light-grey clay with flecks of charcoal and other organic material such as twigs is consistent with the idea that this was a drainage ditch running into the river area beyond the banks.

There were no datable finds from the bank or any of the ditches in the eastern area. The ditches and fence lines were sealed by river-deposited gravels up to 0.4m in depth containing pottery dating from the 12th century. Two pottery types were identified in the field: Leinster cooking ware and Ham Green. The primary fill of the north–south drainage ditch also contained no datable finds. However, the upper backfill and general layer sealing it contained pottery dating from the 12th/13th century.

Pottery from both the upper layers of the bank and the ditch in the western area was recovered, dating from the 12th/13th century. A combination of reclamation and natural river depositions sealed the ditch and stake-holes in this area. Mostly sherds of Leinster cooking ware and Dublin coarsewares were recovered from these deposits, but also a few sherds of Saintonge.

The land north of the riverbank could be divided in three by two boundary lines; 11th/12th-century activity was at its most intense towards the Church Street frontage.

To the west of the large north–south drainage ditch there were several smaller east–west and north–south ditches. These are more than likely associated with land drainage. A shallow gully ran parallel to the eastern side of the large drainage ditch. As the activity to the east of the gully differed from that to the west, it has been interpreted as a boundary.

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These features are dated to the 11th/12th century – a radiocarbon date of AD 1039–1227 (two sigma cal.) was obtained from the main drainage ditch. They are later sealed by a ground-levelling deposit associated with river-edge reclamation (see below).

To the east of the gully in the middle of the site there was very little in the way of 11th/12th-century activity. One east–west narrow and shallow drainage ditch was excavated. A sod layer was present across much of this area also.

Another north–south boundary line was located to the east of the site. Activity to the east of this line was relatively intensive. Twelfth-century features in this area include a sod layer, two north–south shallow linear cuts, post-holes and several refuse pits. These relate to activity taking place to the rear of properties on Oxmantown Street (Church Street).

Sealing the ditch and the bank in the western section of the site was a combination of reclamation deposits and naturally river-deposited material. Large dumps of gravelly stones containing butchered animal bone, oyster shells and pottery (12th/13th century in date) were mixed with sandy gravels also containing some animal bone. These reclamation deposits were up to 1m in depth, bringing the ground level up to that of the boulder clay in the northern half of the area.

In the area between the two banks, there were several lines of stake-holes. These formed rectangular box structures approximately 9m north–south by 7m. These boxes would have facilitated the process of reclamation by providing protection against the river while the deposits were being built up and consolidated. The stakes did not survive, but in plan their lines delineated differing reclamation deposits.

A layer of gravelly clay was then deposited over the reclamation and the rest of the western half of the site, sealing the drainage ditches. Pottery recovered from this layer, only a maximum of 0.1m in depth, dated from the 12th and 13th centuries. A similar deposit was not present anywhere else on the site.

### Phase 3: 13th to 15th century

Activity across the site increases from the 13th century. The site was still divided in three, based on activity type and intensity. Later 17th-century cellared structures along Hammond Lane and Bow Street removed some medieval archaeology. However, the rear of the plots survived remarkably well. The rear of the Oxmantown properties was subject to the most intense activity.

After the deposition of the gravelly clay over the reclamation bank and drainage ditch in the western area of the site, a greenish-brown silty clay was imported. This garden soil survived to a maximum depth of 0.3m. Associated with this was a property or field boundary ditch 1m in width and depth. It was at least 10m in length, its southern end truncated by a 17th-century structure and its northern terminus presumably beyond the limit of excavation. Finds from the clay layer and ditch date between the 13th and 15th century.

To the west of the ditch, several refuse pits were identified, and a further layer of imported garden soils. This area was subject to a series of intercutting pits of similar date and type. Mostly the pits cut the first layer of garden soil and were roughly circular, between 1–1.5m in diameter, with depths of up to 1.6m. Later in the 15th, 16th and early 17th century, this area was used for the dumping of cess.

To the east of the property boundary, similar deposits of imported clays were present and also a few isolated refuse pits. These again date from the 13th to the 15th century.

The remains of a large circular structure cut the river-deposited gravels and the 12th/13th-century sod layer. These were the remains of a horse mill. This consisted of a ring-like cut with an outer diameter of 14m. It was 2m in width and up to 0.5m in depth and was filled with a dark-green silty clay. The base of the cut was very irregular and the natural boulder clay underneath was pockmarked. In the centre of the ring-like cut was a 4m-diameter circular pit filled with yellowy-green clay, 0.4m deep, with a flat base.

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A number of post-holes, stake-holes and small pits were located around this feature. These indicate other structural features and activity around the mill. It went out of use some time in this period, as another layer of imported clay with similarly dated pottery sealed the feature.

Arcing from north-east to south-west in this plot was a watercourse. This post-dated the horse mill, and could be dated to the 14th or 15th century. The watercourse was at least 45m in length and appeared to terminate 5m from Hammond Lane. It continued in a west-to-east direction parallel to Tram Street and beyond the eastern limit of excavation towards Church Street.

The cut was, in general, U-shaped, between 1.5 and 2m in width and ranging in depth from 0.6m in the north-east to 1.5m towards the southern end. There were post-holes along the outside of the watercourse, at a section where it widened and deepened. This could have been part of sluice-gate structures. There also seemed to be evidence of wooden lining at this section, although the rest of the cut was into boulder clay and therefore naturally semi-impermeable to water. It marked an area that was waterlogged for the rest of the medieval period.

Thirteenth- to 15th-century activity in the eastern section of the site was by far the most intense. There was a clear distinction between the area with the horse mill and watercourse and this area, though no actual boundary features were found.

Two large areas here were taken up with a series of intercutting and recut refuse pits and cesspits. These pits ranged in shape, size and depths. Most contained domestic waste and some cess. These pit complexes cut the 12th- and 13th-century pits of similar function. They were contained within general imported clay and garden soil layers.

This area provided evidence of continuity of occupation, presumably associated with the houses on Oxmantown Street, from the 12th century, and perhaps even pre-Anglo-Norman.

### Phase 4: 15th to 17th century

At this point, the excavated site could be divided into four. A clear boundary was established in the middle section of the site that contained the earlier mill and watercourse. With the 13th- to 15th-century boundary established to the rear of the corner of Bow Street and Hammond Lane, this area became a cess dumping area. At least twenty large pits, up to 2m in depth, were intercutting. They dated from the 15th century to the early 17th century.

To the east of the cesspits, a plot was under cultivation. Features in this area consisted of north-south furrows, small gullies and drainage ditches. The cultivated clay was up to 0.6m in depth, and the features were within this. Pottery finds included Dublin-type and 16th-century German stonewares.

A boundary ditch marked the extent of the agricultural activity to the east. The clays in the next plot along were very mottled with natural iron pan. This clay had built up over, or was deposited on top of, the obsolete watercourse. The top backfill of the watercourse below consisted of dumps of building material, including slate, some perforated, cobbles, handmade bricks and medieval floor tiles. These date from the 14th/15th century. Dumps of this material were frequent in the area, presumably to help consolidate the waterlogging ground.

Several pits dating to the 15th and 16th century were also excavated in this plot. Some were for domestic refuse and building waste. One very large 15th-century cesspit was excavated. This was associated with similarly dated structural remains. These consisted of an east-west wall (2m) with a north-south return (2.2m), a corner essentially. The wall was 0.8-1m in width and survived to a height of 1.3m.

This wall was truncated by later archaeological and modern activity, thus removing any evidence that may have survived to indicate its function. A small length of construction cut survived; this was through a 13th-century layer. A 13th- to 15th-century stony layer was

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built up around the exterior. This was followed by a 15th- or 16th-century garden soil. Later in the 17th century a cellared building was constructed against the medieval wall.

Throughout the medieval period in this area, a combination of cultivation and importation of clay layers built up the ground level quite substantially, comparative to the rest of the site towards Bow Street. Combined, these layers were 1.5m in depth and, within them, the 15th- to early 17th-century features included refuse pits, cesspits, ditches, spreads and dumps of domestic and building waste.

Phase 5: post-medieval structures in the later 17th and early 18th century  
Activity continued through the transition between the medieval and post-medieval periods. Cellared structures were built along Hammond Lane and Bow Street. These cut the earlier medieval deposits.

Along the Hammond Lane frontage there were ten cellared structures. These were divided into two groups of five, the break occurring at the medieval structure. Here, the late 17th-century building had no cellar.

All the cellars followed the same basic floor plan: two corner fireplaces, front room, back room with stairwell and annex. The houses of the eastern row were constructed against each other, from east to west. Each house had its own fireplaces and, therefore, chimneystack. Within each room, at least two floor levels were present, indicating phases of improvements and alterations through the 18th century.

The western group of houses on Hammond Lane were slightly different. They were built in twos, a chimneystack serving four fireplaces in two properties. There was also evidence of 18th-century alterations.

To the rear of the properties, no contemporary property boundaries were evident. Each house had a number of stone-built latrines and refuse pits. There was no evidence of 17th- or 18th-century water pipes and each property had one, if not two, wells to the rear.

The Bow Street properties were consistent in date and type with those of Hammond Lane. These also had a latrine, refuse pits, drains and wells to the rear. A laneway, with at least two phases of cobbled surfaces, separated the Hammond Lane and Bow Street houses.

Phase 6: later 18th- to 19th-century industrial activity  
Through the 18th century and into the 19th century, the houses were altered and changed. Many of the cellars went out of use, as the finds recovered from the backfill within them date to the 19th century. Industrial activity behind the street and houses was established. At least two of the houses on Hammond Lane became incorporated into a foundry that was present on the site from the mid-18th century.

The remains of a large limestone-built structure formed the foundry building. Within this, several brick-built casting pits and other structures were recorded. There was also evidence of an earlier, small phase of foundry activity here. This building can be traced from Rocque's 1756 map and the first-edition OS of 1847. Outside the building, the remains of two casting pits, a kiln and several waste pits were excavated.

### Conclusions

With features dating from the 11th century through to the 19th, this site has provided a very clear picture of the development of an area through the medieval period, post-medieval urban expansion and industrialisation.

The 11th- and early 12th-century material on this site is interesting, adding more to our knowledge of Dublin's north side around the time of the foundation of St Michan's parish church and St Mary's Abbey. The greater survival and density of the archaeology towards Church Street offers a tantalising glimpse into what may be uncovered during the second phase of excavation.

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The discovery and identification of an early to mid-Bronze Age burnt mound is important, not for the feature type but for the fact that it survived in a city-centre site that was witness to such intense development from the medieval period.

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<b>Archival History</b>	Transferred to DCAA from the Dept. of Environment 2010. Further accession Apr 2014
<b>Scope and Content</b>	The collection contains archaeological excavation records from a site at Hammond Lane/Church Street, directed by archaeologist Abi Cryerhall of Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd. Includes feature sheets, registers, notebooks, finds sheets, plans, conservation records, reports, administrative material and photographs. Includes testing licence for this site (02E0096).
<b>Appraisal destruction and scheduling information</b>	
<b>Accruals</b>	
<b>Arrangement</b>	Collection processed and box lists created by Noelle Mitchell. Arranged according to document type.
<b>Access Conditions</b>	Available for public inspection immediately
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<b>Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements</b>	
<b>Finding Aid</b>	Box list in reading room and below
<b>Existence of copies/originals</b>	
<b>Related Material</b>	DCAA.01.29.
<b>Publication Note</b>	Database of Irish Excavations Reports, <a href="http://www.excavations.ie">www.excavations.ie</a> . Abi Cryerhall "Excavations at Hammond Lane: hurdle ford to iron foundary" in Sean Duffy (ed.) 'Medieval Dublin VII (2006)
<b>Notes</b>	
<b>Archivist's Note</b>	Noelle Mitchell
<b>Rules or Conventions</b>	ISAD(G): General International Standards Archival Description. 2nd ed.
<b>Dates of Description</b>	14 Oct 2013 & 24 Apr 2014