

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

Reference Code	DCAA.01.29
Title	3-15 Hammond Lane/161-168 Church Street (05E0765) Collection
Creation Dates	2000-2007
Level of Description	Collection
Extent and Medium	3 boxes, 20 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 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
Excavation Licence Number: 05E0765
Urban medieval; pre-Norman
SMR 18:202(377)

This second phase of excavation commenced at Hammond Lane/Church Street in October 2005. This site is sometimes referred to as Hammond Lane 2 or Hammond Lane II.

The first phase, excavated by Abi Cryerhall, was carried out in 2003 (DCAA.01.28). Extensive remains of the 18th- and 19th-century 161-168 Church Street basements, as depicted on John Rocque's 1756 map of Dublin, were exposed and recorded. A medieval wall was exposed at this level. The stratigraphic context within which the wall foundations were revealed is beneath rubble collapse associated with a sequence of 17th-20th-century activity on the site. The remains of structures of this date were found abutting and constructed up against the medieval wall.

The medieval wall foundations cut through a mixed grey clay layer (containing Dublin-type pottery) of 12th-14th-century date. These clays were recorded across the northern half of the site. The 20th-century cellars truncated this layer in the southern half of the site, Area 2. As a result of these findings, the wall can be stratigraphically dated to the 15th-16th century.

The remains of the wall lie at a depth of 1.35m below the present level of Church Street (3m OD). The wall is orientated east-west. It is not continuous, as it was badly damaged in the 18th and 19th centuries. The surviving fragments and foundations can be traced for a total length of 20m. The remains, which originally incorporated relieving arches, consist of two standing sections, one at the western and one at the eastern end, with two central piers. The eastern section extends for 3m in length by 1.2m in height and includes a portion of a relieving arch. The remains of the piers suggest that these also originally supported relieving arches and that the wall was continuous.

At the eastern end the wall is sitting on a clay surface, which appears to represent a floor, over which a hearth was exposed. Also a burnt sod layer survives in between the piers of the wall and extends 12.5m north-south; this may represent the remains of a collapsed

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

roof. This possible structure measures 5.5m east–west and the wall crosses directly through the centre of it. To the south of this wall the remains of another, similar, burnt structure of the same date were recorded. Associated with this was a burnt wattle screen sealed by burnt sod, together with associated (in situ) burnt posts. No diagnostic artefacts were recovered and the structure does not appear to be a domestic house.

A low clay bank extends into the site from its eastern side and runs in a northerly direction, swinging slightly westwards as it extends to the north of the wall alignment at the north-east corner of the site. A fence was constructed across the top of this bank and the edge of a ditch was recorded to the east, on the Church Street side. The extent of this ditch was not recorded, as it runs beyond the extent of these excavations. This bank may have served as a flood bank, protecting the occupants of the sunken structure to the west. Alternatively it may simply represent the early phases along early medieval Church Street.

The remains of a well-preserved wattle-lined sunken floor structure, which also extends beneath the material retained underneath and to the north of the wall, was recorded 4m west of the bank. A series of east–west rows of stakes and stake-holes both respect and appear to be delimited by the clay bank. All these are roughly contemporary and can be broadly dated to the beginning of the 11th century. Early 11th-century pantiles were recovered in the thin brown organic layer that ran under the bank. It was through this layer that the sunken floor structure and stakes and stake-holes were cut.

The second phase of excavation at 3–15 Hammond Lane/161–169 Church Street revealed evidence of late 11th- to 14th-century occupation in this part of Oxmantown on the northern bank of the Liffey. The excavations revealed that, up to the late 11th century and the construction of St Michan's Church, located 50m to the north of the site, the area was marshy marginal land and open fields. However, with the construction of a north–south-orientated clay bank in the early 12th century, the area came under increasing occupation. Two structures from this early activity were excavated, one of which appeared to be a sunken structure and the other a base for a tower or platform erected on the clay ditch.

By the late 12th century there was clear evidence for the subdivision of the land into five distinct property divisions, divisions that continued in use with some modifications up to the 14th century and through the change from post/wattle to stone construction. The division of the area into the five property plots was preceded by the introduction of soils to even out the ground levels. Hearths, storage pits, wells and evidence of metalworking, but only one, possibly two, structures, survived within the properties.

The change from post/wattle to stone construction occurred during the 13th century with the construction of the first stone building, boundary and garden walls. The property plots were consolidated and altered during this period. A large pottery assemblage was gathered across the site, ranging from Leinster cooking ware to the remains of a matching pair of Ham Green jugs.

Finally, the later 17th–20th-century basement structures were recorded. These walls are depicted on various maps, including John Speed's map of 1610, right through to the first- and second-edition OS maps. The construction of these buildings caused considerable damage to the underlying archaeological deposits and in places they were completely or partially removed.

In summary, the results of this excavation illustrate the growing settlement of this area from the early part of the 12th century. Located beside Oxmantown Street, now as Church Street today and one of the main thoroughfares leading north out of the medieval city, the site revealed new evidence for the first stages of expansion of the city north of the Liffey.

DUBLIN CITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE

Archival History	Transferred to DCAA from the Dept. of Environment 2010
Scope and Content	The collection contains archaeological excavation records from a site at Hammond Lane/Church Street, directed by archaeologist Sinead Phelan of Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd. Includes feature sheets, finds sheets, pottery sheets, sample sheets, registers, a copy of the stratigraphic report, copies of plans, illustrations and photographs. Also includes 20 CDs containing photographs, stratigraphic reports and information on samples.
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 inspection immediately
Reproduction	Photocopies provided for research purpose only. Publishing by written permission from Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd.
Language	English
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements	
Finding Aid	Box list in reading room and below
Existence of copies/originals	
Related Material	DCAA.01.28
Publication Note	Database of Irish Excavations Reports, www.excavations.ie . Sinead Phelan
Notes	
Archivist's Note	Noelle Mitchell
Rules or Conventions	ISAD(G): General International Standards Archival Description. 2nd ed.
Dates of Description	1 - 4 Nov 2013