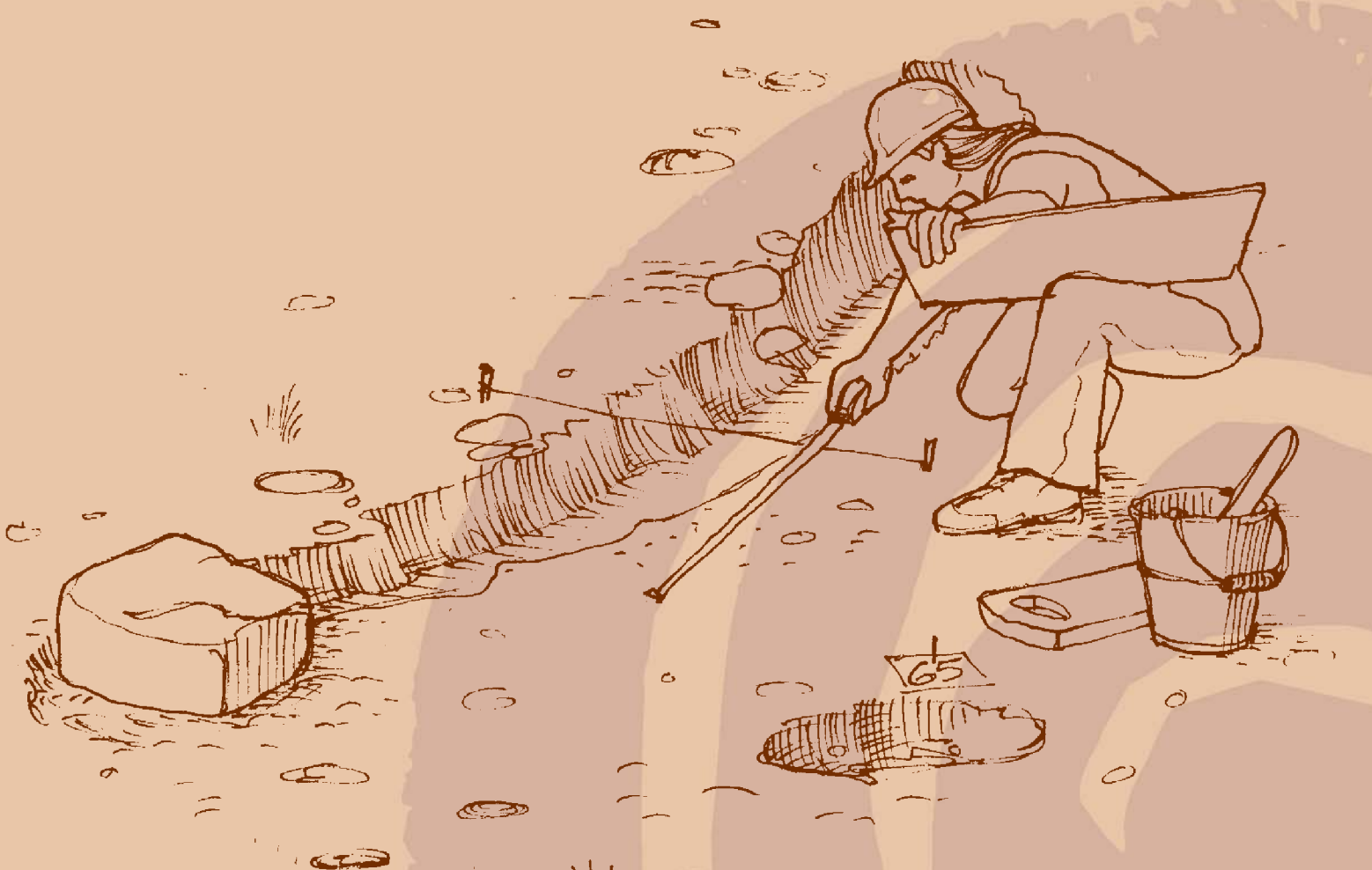


Towns

LESSON 2

Beneath the Streets



ARCHAEOLOGY
time in transition

IT'S ABOUT TIME 2

**Aim(s)**

To give the students an understanding of urban archaeology in an Irish setting.

**Objective(s)**

To show the students how an archaeological excavation in Cork has revealed a lot of information about the development of the city from Viking times.

**Time Period**

11th/12th century

**KEY INFORMATION****Lesson**

- Case study: The excavation on South Main Street, Cork, found part of the Hiberno-Viking trading town.
- This trading town had rectangular wattle houses on the street front with sophisticated jetties on the river side.
- The Normans take over Cork in the 13th century.
- The Normans extend the town and enclose it with a defensive wall.

Context

- Archaeological excavation reveals information about a city's past.
- Many Irish towns have their origin in the medieval period.

**METHODOLOGY & MEDIUM**

- Instruction
- Visual—PowerPoint
- Discussion
- **Student Handout** Archaeological Excavation in Cork - A Case Study

**SECTIONS**

- Section 1** The Beginnings of Cork City
- Section 2** The Vikings
- Section 3** Archaeological Excavation—What Survives?
- Section 4** Hiberno-Viking Houses
- Section 5** Archaeological Finds
- Section 6** Hiberno-Viking Quayside
- Section 7** The Norman Town

**Key Question(s)** What are the origins of Cork City?

The following slides detail an archaeological excavation carried out in Cork City in 2003-4 which revealed important new information about the Viking settlement in Cork.

Slide 1 Beneath the Streets

We will now look at how an archaeological excavation in Cork has revealed a lot of information about the development of the city from Viking times.

Slide 2 Obtaining an Excavation Licence

How did this excavation come about?

- Developer submits planning application to Cork City Council (for 40-48 South Main Street).
- Development site within sensitive archaeological area (possible location of Viking settlement).
- Application referred to *Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*.
- Application granted by Cork City Council subject to an archaeological excavation being carried out at the site.
- Licence for excavation granted by the *Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*.

Note: During this entire process an archaeologist was contracted by the developer to liaise with State and City Council Archaeologists regarding the proposed development. The developer also employs the archaeologists who carries out the archaeological excavation.

Slide 3 The Location of the Excavation is 40-48 South Main Street, Cork

- The aerial photograph shows the centre of Cork City from the east. Note that the centre of the city is a flat area between the two main branches of the River Lee.
- The location of the excavation is on the north bank of the southern branch of the river.
- This is the area where it is thought the Vikings first settled in Cork. It is the type of place the Vikings tended to settle: as far up the river as it was possible whilst still having easy access to the sea.



Key Question(s) Why did the Vikings choose Cork to settle in?

Slide 4 Viking Attacks

The image of the Vikings often portrayed in the history books is of fierce warriors who raided Irish monasteries for valuables and slaves. Vikings are attacking monasteries in Ireland—first recorded raid in 795 AD. Monasteries were largely undefended and contained great wealth.



The early raids were hit-and-run—grab the loot and flee back to Scandinavia as quickly as possible. From 795 onwards there was at least one Viking attack on some part of Ireland each year.

Slide 5 Longphorts

From about 830 onwards larger fleets of Viking ships were setting up summer bases along the Irish coast from which they could mount raids—returning to Scandinavia for the winter.



These fortified bases, called Longphorts or Dúns, developed into settlements.

Why build Longphorts? The Vikings needed

- Protection from hostile **inhabitants**.
- A safe harbour and haven for **boats**.
- To be able to move quickly out to sea in case of **attack**.
- River access inland to raid upriver monasteries.
- Most suitable location was the tidal head of a large river.
- **Within** 25 years of their first raid on St. Finbarr's monastery in Cork (846 AD) the Vikings had **established** a Dún nearby.
- **By** the 10th century this Dún had developed into a permanent trading settlement.

The aerial photograph shows the location of St. Finbarr's monastery at Cork (where the Church of Ireland cathedral now stands) on a ridge overlooking the river. The most likely location for the Viking Dún is on the marshy islands in the river below. This is where the excavation will take place. The reconstruction illustration shows what a Viking dún/longphort looked like in Ireland c. 900 AD.





Key Question(s) What survives of Viking Cork?

Slide 6 What Will Survive of Viking Cork?

- **Cork** has constantly been redeveloped over the centuries. Only in the street pattern and property boundaries are echoes of the ancient settlement evident. As the centuries **passed** layer-upon-layer of occupation 'debris' has built up. These '**deposits**' contain invaluable archaeological information about the past history of the **city**.
- Preservation of organic material is very good because these deposits are waterlogged (anaerobic conditions prevent bacterial breakdown).
- However, The damp, wet, tidal conditions also make archaeological excavation in these conditions a messy business. Excavations are often flooded at high tide.

Slide 7 South Main Street

Before the excavation commenced the site was occupied by a car park and petrol station. Its location is at the south end of the medieval town. South Main Street was part of the main street of the Norman town. The Normans usually set up their towns directly where the Viking settlement was located e.g. Dublin and Waterford—though the Norman town is usually much larger in area.

The excavation's situation on the bank of the river make it a likely location for the Viking settlement.

Slide 8 The Historical Background

The archaeologists begin by researching the historic background of the site. This includes

- Checking old maps—one of the earliest maps of Cork City is Speed's map of 1610. This shows the site with small houses along the street (South Main Street) with an open area **behind**.
- An 18th century sketch shows tall stone buildings on the site—probably 18th century in date. It also shows the Gaol forming the South Gate into the town.

Slide 9 Selecting Trenches

Having finished their preliminary research—and of course receiving a licence from the State—the archaeologists are now ready to excavate—but first they need to select where they are going to put their trenches. In this case two main areas are selected

- **Along** the street front (blue on map).
- **Along** the river front (green on map).

There is no upstanding building on the site—it was levelled in the 1960s and then used as a car park and petrol station. The deep pits of the tanks for the petrol station had disturbed much of the archaeological deposits in the centre of the site. This was the main reason for not excavating in this area.

Slide 10 The Street Front

- The buildings that last stood on the street front dated to the 18th century. **These** buildings had basements whose construction had removed all archaeological deposits down to the 13th century level.
- The archaeologist first removed the modern concrete surface, **and** then the disturbed layers of rubble (filled-in basements) beneath it, with a mechanical digger.
- **Once** these were removed intact archaeological layers were discovered. **From** here on down, all **material** was removed by hand.

Slide 11 Process of Archaeological Excavation (see *The Big Dig* T3,U2,L2)

The process of hand digging facilitates the careful removal of soil and allows the archaeologists to identify features like pits, post holes, artefacts etc.

The soil that is removed is taken off the site in buckets or wheelbarrows. This is a constant chore as buckets of wet earth are heavy. The soil from certain areas will either be sieved on site or bagged for examination later by a soil specialist. Sometimes picks and shovels can be used instead of hand trowels if the deposit has little archaeological value (e.g. dumped river mud).

Recorders—This is a very important job—all aspects of the excavation have to be recorded—everything has to be photographed, drawn and carefully examined before it is removed. Archaeologists get only one chance to excavate a site. (see *The Big Dig* T3,U2,L2).

Director—Every excavation has a Director—this is the person who has the licence to dig and is responsible for the site. A Supervisor helps the Director run the site.

Slide 12 The Preserved Layers

What did the archaeologists discover when they got down to the preserved layers?

**Teacher Instruction**

Ask the students to describe what they see in this photograph.

(The following slides will explain this scene in detail).

Note: The planks allow the archaeologists to walk across certain areas without disturbing the soil. The water in the pit beside the archaeologist on the top left is groundwater—at high tide most of this area will be flooded. Note also the yellow reflector vests and hard hats worn by the archaeologists—the same Health and Safety regulations that apply to a building site also apply to an archaeological excavation.



Key Question(s) What were the features of a Hiberno-Viking House?

(Note: The term 'Hiberno-Viking' is now widely used to describe Scandinavian settlements in Ireland in the 10th and 11th centuries.)

Slide 13 Features of the House

The slide shows the remains of a rectangular Hiberno-Viking house when fully excavated.

Main features of the house

- Post-and-wattle walls.
- Central hearth.
- Solid timber door jambs at front and rear.

The far end of the house was not excavated—this was for Health and Safety reasons.

Slide 14 Detail of a House Wall

Detail of a house wall

- Upright posts interwoven with flexible rods of willow and alder to make a wattle wall.
- Mud was applied to the wattle to weatherproof it—this is called daub.
- These types of walls are often referred to as wattle-and-daub.

Slide 15 Detail of Door Jambs

Here we see the stumps of the solid oak posts which were the base of the door jambs (sides).



Teacher Instruction

Ask the students why is there a need for such strong timbers to frame a door?

The walls were not very solid so the door frame had to support itself.

These door jambs were dated, using dendrochronology (tree-ring dating—see **Supplementary Information**), to the early 11th century. This shows that our house belongs to the Viking settlement. By the 11th century the Vikings had become much more integrated with Irish society and are therefore referred to as 'Hiberno-Vikings' by archaeologists studying this period.

Slide 16 24 Houses

The remains of 24 houses were uncovered during the excavation. There were the remains of four side-by-side houses at each of six levels.

This slide shows two of the houses being excavated. The one to the right had oyster shells strewn across the floor. Oysters were a favourite food in medieval times—it seems that the inhabitants of this house did not take much trouble in disposing of the shells once they had eaten the oysters!

- Both houses are outlined by post-and-wattle walls.

These houses didn't last very long—and were probably replaced every 20/30 years by just knocking them down and building on top of them. Hence the build up of layers over time.

This practice served the purpose of raising ground level in very damp conditions.

Slide 17 Wood Quay

This slide shows a very well preserved Viking house being excavated at Wood Quay in Dublin in the 1970s. This was the first time it was realised that a good state of preservation existed beneath the present ground level in our historic towns.

We can clearly see

- the strong post-and-wattle walls of the house.
- the woven wattle mats laid on the floor.
- the strong posts which supported the roof are also evident in the middle of the house.

Slide 18 What did the Houses Look Like?

Based on this evidence we can reconstruct what these houses looked like.

They are located side-by-side along a street line—the houses set back a short distance from the street. Each house sits on its own plot—the property boundaries defined by post-and-wattle fences.

Typical features of a Hiberno-Viking House

- The houses were rectangular in plan with rounded corners and thatched roofs. (Note: this illustration shows ten houses along a street line. The excavation in Cork found evidence of four houses—a shorter section of a street).
- The houses had a central door at front and back.
- There was a central hearth so the smoke must have been allowed to escape through a smokehole in the roof.



Slide 19 Features of the Interior**Teacher Instruction**

Ask the students to describe the house, artefacts and the crafts shown in the illustration.

Features of the interior

- A central hearth.
- Raised side aisles.
- Central door hung of oak posts.
- Daub on wattle walls.
- Fishing nets with stone weights.
- Wooden bowls.
- Weaving frame with stone weights.
- Stave barrel and bucket.
- Rotary quern.
- Iron pot.
- Iron axe.
- Bone comb.

SECTION 5 Archaeological Finds



Key Question(s) What artefacts were found during the excavation?

Slide 20 Caring for Artefacts

During an archaeological excavation the location of each artefact is carefully recorded, and it is assigned a unique excavation number. It is then carefully stored away for later analysis unless it needs conservation. If the object needs conservation this is carried out immediately on-site if necessary, or in a laboratory. Artefacts (portable objects) were found during the excavation in Cork. In general, the artefacts discovered were associated with regular household activities such as these pins and needles. These are the kind of things that got lost during the course of everyday life (see *Our Archaeological Footprint* T2,U4,L1 and *Artefacts of Living* T2,U4,L2).

Slide 21 Combs

The Vikings were skilled craftsmen—particularly in wood and bone. These combs are made out of animal bone. Some have simple carved decorations. These fine combs were very functional objects as parasites were very prevalent in medieval towns! (see *Artefacts of Living* T2,U4,L2).

**Slide 22 Leather Shoes**

Leather shoes haven't changed much over the centuries. These have survived because of the damp conditions. Once removed from the ground they will dry out and crumble very quickly unless conserved using special chemical processes. These finds show the range of craftsmen working in a Viking settlement; comb making and shoe making were important trades.

Slide 23 Ornamental Objects

Two ornamental objects were discovered—a finger ring, and a decorated hollowed-out bone pendant. The pendant may have been a container for small needles—its lid is missing.

Slide 24 Wood Turned Bowl

Wood turning was also an important medieval craft.

- This wooden bowl (for scale see the archaeologist's trowel!) was decorated on its base with a boat. The bowl showed evidence of having been well used.

Slide 25 Iron Knives

A number of iron knives were also discovered—these were very useful tools for the Vikings. In these cases the wooden or bone handle has long since rotted away. The replica shows what they looked like when in use—with a leather scabbard.

Slide 26 Weighing Scales

One of the most unusual artefacts found was a small weighing scales.

**Teacher Instruction**

Ask the students what they think it might have been used to weigh?

The scales show the importance of trade in Viking towns. Most merchants, like the one shown in this Italian Renaissance painting—carried a scales with them. This was used not only to weigh goods but also coins. A trader had to be sure that payment was 'worth its weight in gold (or silver)!'

Slide 27 Wooden Boat

Another unusual artefact is this small wooden boat—possibly a toy for a child or an ornament for an adult?

Why would a toy boat have been a popular toy for a Viking child in the 10th century? Vikings were great boat builders and sailors.

Slides 28, 29 & 30 Bone Beads, Iron Nails and a Quern

Here are drawings of other artefacts found in the excavation (bone beads, iron nails, quern).

**Teacher Instruction**

Ask the students to describe them using the formula: **form**; **fabric**; and **function** (see *Our Archaeological Footprint* and *Artefacts of Living T2,U4 L1 and L2*). Follow the animation on these three slides.

Slide 31 Specialists

- Some artefacts are sent away to specialists for detailed study. Animal bones are found on a lot of excavations in great numbers. This is because they are rubbish and rubbish often is left behind when more precious objects are not. Animal bones also survive well in the ground, even very small bird bones.
- There is a wide variety of archaeological specialties—this slide shows a zooarchaeological laboratory. In the photograph we see the specialist with her assistant examining the animal bones from the excavation. On the table she has sorted the bones into animal types.
- Once the zooarchaeologist has identified the bones and analysed them for disease, butchery marks etc., she will have a good idea of the diet of Vikings living in Cork in the 11th century. This information will be included in the report on the excavation.
- The excavation required specialists to analyse the animal bones, pottery, glass, textiles, soil, leather and wooden artefacts which were discovered.

**Slide 32 Foodstuffs**

The study of all the food remains from the excavation gives a picture of what was eaten in Viking Cork. This slide shows the main variety of **foodstuffs**

- Meat.
- Fish.
- Fowl.
- Game.
- Cereal.
- Wild fruit.

Slide 33 Fishing

That fish was important in the diet is shown by the finding of cork net floats and the stone net weights. Also found were iron fish hooks. Most of the fish was caught nearby in the river but the presence of Ling and Conger Eel bones show they were also doing some deep-sea fishing.



Key Question(s) What evidence did the archaeologists find for the Hiberno-Viking Quayside?

Slide 34 The River Front

The area that the Vikings chose for their permanent settlement in Cork was a wet boggy area. Here the River Lee divided up into a number of smaller streams with marshy islands between.

The benefits of the location (accessible for boats and easy to defend) must have outweighed the enormous difficulties of reclaiming land and keeping the tide out. The archaeological excavation discovered how the Vikings achieved this.

Slide 35 Tidal Marsh

The area they settled looked a bit like this—tidal and **marshy**. The first step they took in reclaiming the land was to build a loose stone wall around the south side of the island—a bit like this modern example.

Slide 36 Timber Fences

On the east side of the river front the archaeologists discovered a number of timber fences made of oak staves (long planks of timber) set close together and driven into the ground. These timbers were built to keep the tide back from the island.

These timbers have been dated by dendrochronology to c. 1097 - 1135 AD. This gives us an approximate date for the start of the settlement on the island.

Slide 37 More Timber Fencing

This section dates to 1134-5 AD (dendrochronology), slightly later than the last example. This shows that the process of reclaiming the island took place over a period of time.

Slide 38 Reconstruction Drawing of Timber Fence

The fence acts as boundary between the tidal river and the interior of the island. Once the fence was erected the Vikings brought in clay to raise the level of the interior and so reclaim the marsh. This enabled the settlement to begin.

Slide 39 Archaeologist at Work

This slide shows the archaeologist examining the clay layers brought in to reclaim the **island**. The sloping nature of the clay layers **indicate** that they were not naturally laid down by water but deposited by man.

Slide 40 Timber Revetment

Around 1145 a solid timber revetment was built along the river's edge. The revetment consists of solid planks of oak laid one on top of the other and held in place by upright timber posts. The posts are set in the ground and held in position at the top by projecting **timbers**. This image shows a reconstruction of the revetment and its location in the excavation. This shows a further stage in defining the area of settlement on the island.

Slide 41 A More Sophisticated Jetty

In 1160 a more sophisticated jetty was built along the river's edge in order to tie-up boats. Here we see the base of the jetty being **excavated**. By this date the settlement is well established and engaged in regular nautical trade, hence the need for a jetty.

Slide 42 Base Plates

The jetty structure is built up from solid oak planks, called base plates, laid horizontally.

How did they stop the base plates sinking into the mud? The base plate is supported in the tidal mud by numerous wooden piles.

The jetty is built of solid oak timbers held together by mortise and tenon joints. (These slides show the jetty under excavation. Again note the very wet conditions which have preserved the timbers so well.)

Slide 43 Recycling Timber

The Vikings were good at recycling timber. Oak was precious and they constantly reused it. Some of the oak timbers in the jetty were reused beams—on the left is a reused boat timber with the marks of the ribs still evident. The jetty was constantly being **repaired**. These are 13th century roof timbers used to repair a section of the jetty.

Slide 44 Reconstruction Drawing of the Jetty

This reconstruction drawing of the jetty shows how it projected out into the water allowing ships to be tied up to it. It also shows the arrangement of timbers supporting the jetty as revealed by the excavation.

Slide 45 A Busy Jetty

This reconstruction drawing shows what the jetty looked like when in use. Importing and exporting goods was an important contribution by the Hiberno-Viking towns to the 11th century Irish economy.

Slide 46 The Valuable Iron Axe

There were not many artefacts found in this area of the site. Why? It was not a habitation area so little refuse was thrown around. However, one of the tools used for making the timber beams was found—a Viking iron axe with typical splayed ends. The wooden handle has rotted away. Imagine how angry the Viking carpenter must have been when he discovered that he had lost his valuable iron axe!

Slide 47 A Thriving Trading Centre

The Viking settlement continued as a thriving trading centre during the 12th century. This drawing shows what it looked like. The Vikings were skilled craftsmen in wood, jewellery, leather and metal work. These craftsmen set up workshops in the settlement. They enhanced the market economy by providing a trading centre that acted as a conduit for trade from far and near. The Vikings in the 12th century were well integrated into Irish life—fighting, trading, and intermarrying. The Hiberno-Viking settlement continues until 1177 when the Normans arrived.


Key Question(s) What did Cork look like after the Normans arrived?

Slide 48 Norman Charter

Cork's first charter was granted in 1185.

A charter was very **important**

- It was a written document granting rights to its **citizens**.
- A citizen who owned a house or business was called a **burgher**.
- Burghers had special status by **law**.
- They elected a mayor and a town **council**.
- Towns were entitled to collect taxes and tolls.

The Normans soon expanded out onto the north island and by the early 14th century had established the walled medieval town of Cork on two islands—north island (North Main Street) and south island (South Main Street).

Town walls were important not just for defence but to define the town as a separate place which enjoyed special rights and privileges.

Slide 49 The Walls of Cork

Most medieval towns were enclosed by substantial stone walls, similar to the curtain walls around castles, with wall-walks, battlements, mural towers and defended gateways. Entry and exit of towns were strictly controlled through these gateways.

Traders entering the town had to pay a toll. The walls were substantial and needed constant maintenance—particularly the Cork walls which were built on soft ground. The walls formed the boundary which defined the urban area, and protected the inhabitants. The Cork walls were quite substantial with 16 defensive towers along the circuit. There was a gateway into the town at the north and south ends with bridges across the river at these points.

Slide 50 Remains of the Wall at South Main Street

Little remains above ground today of the Cork town walls—most of it was demolished in the 18th century to allow the town to grow. Remains of the wall were discovered during the excavation on South Main Street. This was a substantial stone wall rested on a timber raft or piles—these were to prevent the wall sinking into the river mud on which it is built. It has an external base batter like a castle wall. The wall is now some distance back from the modern river's edge. This shows that as the city continued to grow the river was forced into a narrower channel.

Slide 51 Norman Walled Towns

Medieval Cork had the typical layout of Norman walled **towns**

- Narrow main **street**.
- Lined with timber-framed houses on the street **front**.
- Long thin burgage plots behind—used for storage, gardens, workshops, dumping **rubbish**.
- Enclosed by substantial town walls with defensive entrance gateways.

Slide 52 13th Century Norman Houses

As we noted earlier there was no evidence from the excavation for Norman houses as these layers had been removed when the 18th century houses, with their basements, were built along South Main Street. However, an earlier excavation at a nearby site on South Main Street produced evidence for 13th century Norman houses. This reconstruction drawing, based on that evidence, shows what Cork looked like at this time. Timber-framed two/three storey houses fronted the street with long narrow 'plots' behind stretching back to the town wall. Also note the parish church (Christ Church) set back from the street front.

Slide 53 A Hive of Activity!

Medieval towns were a hive of activity (as this reconstruction painting shows). There are many different trades including carpenters, coopers, drapers, glovers, furriers, potters, tanners, shoemakers, smiths, tailors and weavers, with shops along the street.

Different kinds of foods were sold by bakers, grocers, vintners, butchers, fishmongers, poultries etc. There were also general merchants who imported luxury goods from England, Europe and even further afield. Evidence of exotic imports include the remains of grape and fig seeds which were found in the excavation. Also the scales of a sturgeon were discovered showing the extent of the luxury foods brought in from far away.

Nothing on this scale existed in Ireland before the Normans came. Town building is probably their greatest contribution to the country.

Slide 54 Pottery

Pottery is a wonderful artefact for archaeologists as it is ceramic—does not rot away, is generally dateable and comparable with examples from other excavations. For example, fragments of pots similar to these were found in the upper layers and belong to the Norman period.

Some of the pots from the Viking layers are from Normandy while later layers have pots from Bristol in England. Both indicate the strong trading ties between medieval Cork, France and England.

Slide 55 Glazed Ware

The glazed pottery in the picture is from the Bordeaux area of France and dates to the 13/14th century indicating trading links with the SW of France. These jugs were used to serve wine imported from SW France.

Slide 56 Textiles

During the excavation a number of textiles were found. They were sent to a textile specialist to analyse. Some interesting items were discovered

- A 17th century silk stocking.
- A 17th century cloth and knitted band.
- Some 13th century hair.

The hair was found in a cesspit and show signs of been cut. It is possible that hair would have been recycled for wigs. False plaits and extensions were made up for fashionable hairstyles in the medieval period.

Slide 57 The Expansion of Cork City

Cork stays mainly inside the town wall up until the 17th century, though with some suburban development taking place on the north and south banks of the **river**.

- The 18th and 19th century was a period of relative calm and major rebuilding took place. Cork was no exception. It witnessed a rapid expansion out beyond its walls—reclaiming further marshland and the covering over of some water channels (Patrick **Street**).
- By the middle of the 19th century the entire level part of the city had been reclaimed and built-over. Substantial suburban developments had also been established on the north and south sides of the river.

The present expansion of the city is part of a process that has gone on since the 11th century. Thankfully through the work of the archaeologists valuable information has been gained from today's redevelopment about past developments.

Slide 58 Summary

What did the archaeological excavation find out about early **Cork?**

- Viking settlement **established**.
- Marsh reclamation using wooden fence **revetments**.
- A sophisticated jetty on the river **side**.
- Rectangular houses on the street **front**.
- Lots of interesting artefacts were **discovered**.
- The Normans took over the settlement in the late 12th century, extending the town and enclosing it with a defensive wall.

WEB LINKS

WWW.



National Monuments Service

www.archaeology.ie/

The Vikings

www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/pre_norman_history/vikings.html

Viking Network Ireland

www.ncte.ie/viking/

Archaeology of Cork City

www.corkcityheritage.ie/archaeology/index.shtml



- 821 AD First Viking raid on Cork.
- 846 AD A Viking 'Dún' established at Cork.
- 900 AD Permanent trading settlement established.



Hiberno-Viking Settlement in Cork

Their greatest legacy—our coastal towns—have constantly been developed and redeveloped over the centuries. Only in the street patterns and property boundaries are echoes of the ancient settlement evident.

However, beneath the streets, a lot of Viking and Norman remains survive. As the centuries passed layer-upon-layer of occupation 'debris' has been building up. These 'deposits' now contain invaluable archaeological information about the past history of urban Ireland.



Viking Houses

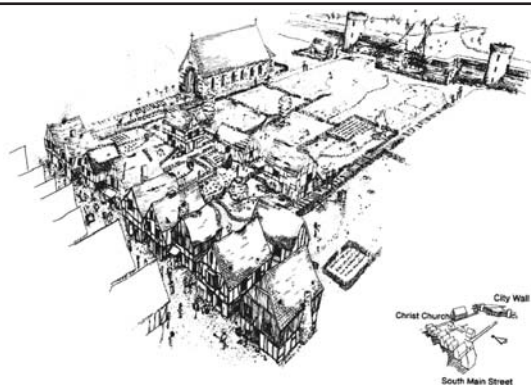
Main features of house

- Wattle and daub walls.
- Central hearth.
- Solid timber door jambs at front and rear.
- Post to support roof.
- Side aisles.
- Artefacts: iron axe, quern stones, fishing nets, bone comb, toy boat, etc.



A Busy Jetty

This reconstruction drawing shows what the jetty looked like when in use. Importing and exporting goods was an important contribution by the Hiberno-Viking towns to the 11th century Irish economy.



The Normans expanded on to the north island and by the early 14th century had established the walled medieval town of Cork on the two islands—north island (North Main Street) and south island (South Main Street).

Cork's first charter granted 1185. A charter was a written document granting rights to its citizens.

- A citizen who owned a house or business was called a burgher.
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