

Specification for a house to be built in Dominick Street

CONOR LUCEY

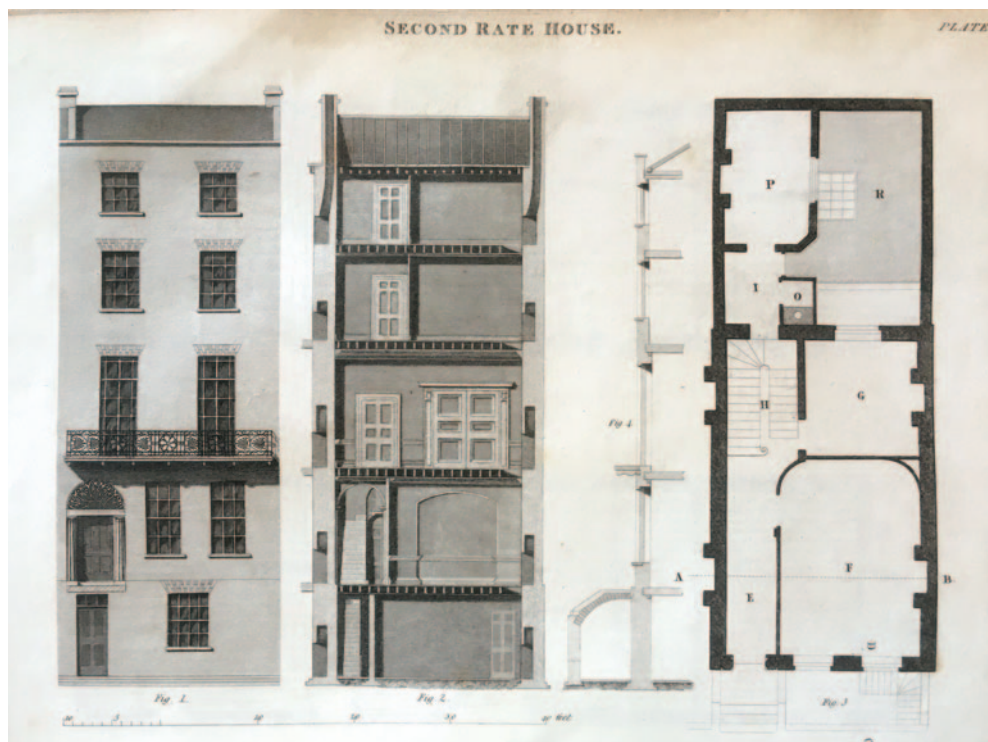
AN UNDATED ‘SPECIFICATION OF AN [SIC] HOUSE TO BE BUILT FOR GEORGE WATERS Esqr. in Dominick Street’, part of the extensive papers of measurer (or quantity surveyor) Bryan Bolger (c.1758-1834) held at the National Archives of Ireland, provides a comprehensive account of the obligations incumbent on a house builder in late Georgian Dublin (Plate 4).¹ With its itemised delineation of the works intended for each stage of the building’s construction and decoration, it is of considerable historical interest and merits an unexpurgated transcription (see Appendix I).² Significantly, against a burgeoning standardisation of architectural form within the building industry generally, it contradicts the still persistent notion that the ‘typical’ terraced house did not require, or generate, a paper trail of drawings, contract schedules or materials specifications.³

George Waters (fl.1793-1814) was a member of Dublin’s thriving coach-making industry.⁴ Originally of Longford Street Little, by 1797 he had moved his operation to Dominick Street Lower and thereafter routinely advertised a variety of gigs, post-chaises, landaus and curricles for sale.⁵ The house in question, described as being ‘built for’ Waters, evidently replaced an earlier structure; the specification begins by stating that all materials were to be furnished by the contractor John Allen, allowing him ‘all the Materials on the ground which he has pulld Down at his own Expençe’.⁶ The new build, however, resists precise identification. At a public auction held in December 1797, Waters acquired the premises of renowned coach-maker William Whitton on Dominick Street, which included ‘stables work shops and sheds’.⁷ An unrelated conveyance of another house on the same street in October 1803, built before 1729 for Sir Christopher Dominick (for whom the street is named), describes that it was then ‘enjoyed and occupied’ by Waters.⁸ On 29th October 1807, Waters’ dwelling house and premises at ‘No. 25 Dominick Street’, wherein he ‘carried on the coach makg. business’, was used as collateral in his marriage settlement with Mary Ann Leech, daughter of George Leech, Esq., of the city of Kilkenny.⁹ Boundary details garnered from these various conveyances and indentures confirm that the property held in trust for his marriage bond (with a street frontage of

1 – *George Waters’ concerns in Dominick Street*

(*Ordnance Survey, City of Dublin, Sheet 8 [detail], 1847. ‘City of Dublin’, held by Ordnance Survey Ireland.*

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110ft) describes those acquired in 1797 and 1803 combined, and numbered as ‘25’, ‘26’, ‘27’ and ‘Magdalene Asylum’ in Dominick Street Lower on the Ordnance Survey map of Dublin first published in 1847 (Plate 1).¹⁰ George Waters was deceased in 1814;¹¹ in June 1815 Richard Waters advertised the leasehold of ‘No. 26, Old Dominick Street’, described as ‘that most excellent dwelling house’ being ‘finished in the first style, with every convenience for a respectable residence’, suggesting that this is the likeliest candidate for the new build outlined in the specification.¹² That said, in August 1820, Waters granted the ‘large dwelling house’ (with a street frontage of 67’ 6”) and the ‘building and ground in front adjoining thereto together with the coach factory and extensive yards at the rere’ to Patrick Hanbury, another coach-maker, and reserved the ‘new dwelling house’ at this property’s northern boundary (presumed to be No. 28) as his own concern.¹³ Regardless, all were swept away when the entire premises and appurtenances were acquired in 1852 by the Dominican Fathers as a site for their new church of St Saviour, built to designs of distinguished architect J.J. McCarthy and consecrated in 1861.¹⁴

In an era when the speculative nature of house-building aroused concern in architectural and social discourse, the building specification took on a particular significance.¹⁵ For Waters’ house on Dominick Street, the contractor entered into an obligation to execute all works in ‘a permanent & workmanlike Manner & of the Best Materials’; a covenant common to property leases of the period.¹⁶ The completed building was to follow the established form of four storeys over a basement, using place bricks for the vaults and internal structure, grey stocks for the rear and flank walls (and chimney shafts), and

3 – Elevation of two Dublin houses. The larger building has dimensions similar to those proposed for George Waters' house in Dominick Street Lower. (detail)

(courtesy National Library of Ireland, Stapleton Collection, AD 2223)

opposite

2 – Peter Nicholson, *THE NEW PRACTICAL BUILDER AND WORKMAN'S COMPANION* (London, 1823), plate 3 (courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)



reserving ‘Good Red Stock Bricks’ for the street elevation, red brick possessing an aesthetic quality that remained popular with house-builders and house-buyers alike well into the nineteenth century.¹⁷ While granite (‘mountain stone’) was required for the coping of the parapet, window stools, steps and area plinth, the doorcase was to take the form of a ‘Neat Ionic fronticepiece’ in ‘Scotch Stone’ (likely an imported fine-grained sandstone), surmounted by a ‘fancy fan Sash’.¹⁸ Bristol glass was stipulated for glazing the ground, first and second storeys, confirming a preference for imported glass over its locally produced counterpart (at least for those windows with a ‘public’ presentation to the street).¹⁹ The dimensions of the individual storeys are also predetermined in the schedule: the ‘Parlour Story’ was required to be 12ft tall from floor to ceiling, the ‘Drawing Room Story’ was slightly taller at 13ft, the ‘Attic Story’ was to measure 10’ 6”, and the ‘Garret Story to top of wall plate’ was set at 8ft. Comparing these proportions with those of contemporary Dublin and London houses, it seems clear that Waters required a building of some scale and pretension, similar perhaps to the second ‘rate’ of dwelling as codified by the Building Act introduced in London in 1774 (Plates 2 and 3).²⁰

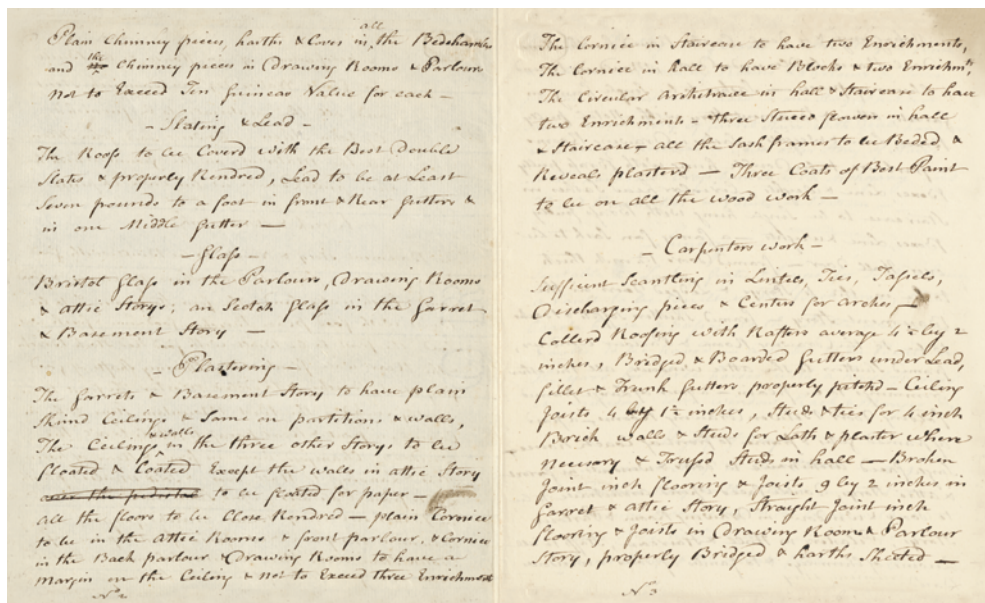
Internally, the stipulations for decorative finishes were equally systematic. The carpenter’s work was to include a pair of large-framed folding doors between the front and rear drawing rooms, pilaster architraves in the hall and staircase, and ‘Three Coats of Best Paint ... on all the wood work’.²¹ Here, measures of economy were effected: ‘double faced’ (or full) architraves are reserved for the doors and windows of the drawing and parlour storeys only; ‘square’ (as opposed to ‘turnd’) bannisters were sufficient for the

kitchen and garret stairs. The decorative plasterwork was equally parsimonious by Dublin standards – three ‘Stucco flowers’ in the hall and staircase, while the cornices in the rear parlour and drawing rooms were to consist of ‘a Margin on the Ceiling & not to Exceed three Enrichments’.²² Of particular interest is the reference to chimney pieces for the drawing rooms and parlours as restricted to ‘Ten Guineas Value for each’. An unrelated account for ‘Hewn Stone works’ at the present No. 25 Mountjoy Square, executed by the firm of Frederick Darley and measured by Bolger c.1800, itemises the appropriate materials designated for chimney pieces throughout the individual rooms and storeys of that house, including the entrance hall (Portland stone), parlours (statuary marble), ‘Attic’ rooms (veined marble), the ‘Upper story’ or garret (Kilkenny marble) and the house-keeper’s room and servant’s hall (‘Black Stone’).²³

In the absence of a related ‘estimate by admeasurement’, the projected cost of the new build in Dominick Street is unknown. Recent scholarship on building economics has considered the extent to which contemporary books of mensuration, aimed principally at the speculative builder, contributed towards the standardisation of the eighteenth-century typology, reinforcing the prevailing classical hegemony and simultaneously introducing ‘norms of cost behaviour’.²⁴ Philip Levi-Hodgson’s *A Set of Tables of Solid and Superficial Measure* (Dublin, 1774) suggested that ‘it may be expected to have a building finished in a workman-like manner (according to the design) from 1500l. to 3000l. or more’, although the form of the ‘building’ referred to remains somewhat ambiguous.²⁵ A later estimate for a ‘substantial House in the city of Dublin’, published in Thomas Humphreys’ *The Irish Builder’s Guide* (Dublin, 1813), suggested a total cost of £2,766 14s 8½d including materials (Appendix II),²⁶ although early nineteenth-century titles, including William Stitt’s *The Practical Architect’s Ready Assistant* (Dublin, 1819), generally ignored the ‘typical’ terraced house.²⁷

From supporting evidence in the form of property indentures, building records and newspaper advertisements, it is clear, if not surprising, that the cost of constructing and decorating a town house was subject to many variables. Hayes St Leger, Viscount Doneraile, engaged the services of architect John Ensor for his house, the present 45 Kildare Street, and paid him £13 13s for ‘Directing and Drawing Different Designs for finishing of new house’;²⁸ the total cost of the build was £2,499 11s ¾d in 1753.²⁹ The Rt Hon William Brownlow spent £3,205 18s on his house, 12 Merrion Square, in 1764-65, including £446 (approximately 15% of the total outlay) on decorative plasterwork.³⁰ Larger houses necessarily commanded larger prices. An advertisement for the sale of Sir Barry Colles Meredyth’s ‘most fashionable, convenient and well finished house’ on Buckingham Street in 1795 noted that he had spent ‘upwards of 4000l.’ on ‘building the house and concerns’,³¹ and property transactions concerning No. 45 Merrion Square (now home to the Irish Architectural Archive), with its imposing façade of 60ft, record that the developer Gustavus Hume spent ‘large Sums of Money in Erecting and Building Same’, selling it to banker and politician John La Touche in March 1796 for £6,800.³² That said, in 1800 the brickwork, stonework and slating alone of solicitor John Pollock’s ‘Capital Message tenement and Dwelling House’ (the present 27 Mountjoy Square, with a street frontage of 32ft) – amounted to £5,500.³³

While the discrepancy in building costs between houses erected during the 1790s



4 – ‘Specification of an House to be Built for George Waters Esqr. in Dominick Street’,
 Bryan Bolger papers, National Archives of Ireland

(reproduced with the kind permission of the National Archives of Ireland
 and the Director of the National Archives of Ireland; courtesy National Archives of Ireland)

is not readily comprehensible, it may have been linked to a significant increase in the value of real estate in Dublin.³⁴ In response to a committee report presented to the House of Lords in 1794, investigating the sale of ground on Sackville Street by the Wide Streets Commissioners to the speculator Henry Ottiwell some years earlier, Luke Gardiner, Baron Mountjoy was reported as remarking that ‘building grounds in the city of Dublin, had risen in a most unprecedented degree’ in the interim. Beginning in 1789, Mountjoy had originally

offered the whole of Mountjoy-square at 6s. per foot; very shortly afterwards he was offered 12, then a guinea, and at last 25 shillings. He had made a verbal agreement with an honourable friend of his for a lot of ground in that square at 6s. per foot. Circumstances intervened to prevent his closing the bargain, as his friend was out of town for two years; but on the very day he had signed the leases for this lot to his friend in consequence of his promise at 6s. per foot — he set the very next lot to it at 25s.³⁵

Memorials of leases for building ground on the north, west and south sides of Mountjoy Square, issued in 1789-91, confirm that they were calculated at 6s per foot;³⁶ those assigned for the east side of the square in 1792 were reckoned at the substantially increased rate of 25s per foot.³⁷ Location was another factor. As Humphrey’s estimate for a ‘substantial house’ in Dublin amounted to £2,766 14s 8½d, so similar properties in Newtown Pery, Limerick, and Main Street, Cork, were calculated at £1,125 2s 4d and £1,144 4s 8½d respectively.³⁸

Bryan Bolger's role with respect to Waters' new build on Dominick Street was evidently concerned principally with project management; the work of each tradesman was subject to his 'approbation & directions', and his schedule anticipated 'any necessary work not here Specified, that Should belong to Such a house'.³⁹ This was clearly of the first importance, especially when tendering for construction contracts. A similar, undated specification for a house on Grafton Street describes how any estimate received was 'to be made showing the Quantities of Each part of the works & the prices thereto'; a further clause states – 'if found necessary ... when the whole is finished' – that the client reserved the right to have the work 'meas[ure]d & priced according to the Estimate prices, be the Quantities more or less'.⁴⁰ Indeed, it was the 'disputed matters relative to buildings' that had apparently prompted the publication of *The Irish Builder's Guide*, the author suggesting that 'the contents of which should be able to overcome all the obscurities complained of, and give such light to both the gentleman and the mechanic, as would at once intercept the cunning devises of the one, and administer impartial justice to the other'.⁴¹ Prior to the commencement of Viscount Doneraile's house in Kildare Street in 1746 (noted above), carpenter Richard Reilly entered into a contract that bound him to 'build erect and finish the Joyner's and Carpenter's Work' according to 'the true Intent design and meaning of such Directions as shall be from time to time given by the said Hayes St. Leger ... or by such Person or Persons as he or they shall appoint to Oversee the Building'.⁴² Covenants such as this underscored the responsibility of the contractors (and subcontractors) to deliver a quality product; the client, as at Dominick Street, pledged to issue payments 'according to the Progress of the Works'. By the early nineteenth century, this form of legal instrument was already standardised: Richard Elsam's *The Gentleman and Builder's Assistant* (Londonderry, 1808) concluded with a sample 'general building contract', designed to 'protect both the employer and the employed'.⁴³

APPENDIX I

Specification of an House to be Built for George Waters Esqr. in Dominick Street and all the Materials to be furnishd by John Allen, allowing Said John Allen all the Materials on the ground which he has pulld Down at his own Expence.

Brick & Stone work – The Basement Story & Vaults to be Built with Good Quarry Stones & place Bricks where Necessary & Good Lime & fresh water Sand — the four Story over do. to be Built with good place Bricks, good Lime & fresh water Sand, the front to be Built with Good Red Stock Bricks & the Rear wall flank wall & Chimney Shafts of Good Grey Stock Bricks & Riddled Morter. The front to be Neatly Tuckd — the Best Mountain Stone to be in Coping on front & Rear parapets, Stools to all the Windows, Chamfred base in front & Rear of house, Steps & Landing to Hall door & Solid Moulded plinth under front Palisades. — Spud Stones under doorcases in Basement Story, Black punchd flagging in Basement Story — a Neat Ionic fronticepiece of Scotch Stone with three Quarter Columns & Circular Rim over fan Sash of the same Stone — Plain Chimney pieces, harths & Coves in all the Bedchambers and the Chimney pieces in Drawing Rooms & Parlours Not to Exceed Ten Guineas Value for each —

Slating & Lead – The Roofs to be Coverd with the Best Double Slates & properly Renderd, Lead to be at Least Seven pounds to a foot in front & Rear gutters & in one Middle gutter —

Glass – Bristol Glass in the Parlours, Drawing Rooms & Attic Storys, an Scotch Glass in the Garret & Basement Story —

Plastering – The Garrets & Basement Story to have plain Skimd Ceilings & Same on partitions & walls, The Ceilings & walls in the three other Storys to be floated & Coated Except the walls in Attic Story ~~over the pedestal~~ to be floated for paper — all the floors to be Close Rendred — plain Cornice to be in the Attic Rooms & front parlour, & Cornice in the Back parlour & Drawing Rooms to have a Margin on the Ceiling & not to Exceed three Enrichments. The Cornice in Staircase to have two Enrichments, The Cornice in hall to have Blocks & two Enrichmts, The Circular Architrave in hall & Staircase to have two Enrichments — Three Stucco flowers in hall & Staircase – all the Sash frames to be Beded & Reveals plasterd – Three Coats of Best Paint to be on all the wood work —

Carpenters work – Sufficient Scantling in Lintels, Ties, Tassels, Discharging pieces & Centers for arches — Collerd Roofing with Rafters average 4½ by 2 inches, Bridged & Boarded Gutters under Lead, fillet & Trunk gutters properly pitchd — Ceiling Joists 4 by 1½ inches, Studs & ties for 4 inch Brick Walls & Studs for Lath & plaster where necessary & Trussed Studs in hall — Broken Joint inch flooring & Joists 9 by 2 inches in Garret & Attic Story, Straight Joint inch flooring & Joists in Drawing Room & Parlour Story, properly Bridged & harths Sheeted — 4 Mohogany & 4 Deal Curbs Round harth Stones & Deal Raisd Saddles under Doors, Mouldings Round 4 Chimney pieces — Sashes to be Single hung in Garrets, Attic & Basement Story with Metal pully Boxes, Line & Weights — Sashes in Drawing Rooms & Parlours to be Double hung with Brass pully Boxes, Line & Weights, Circular head Sashes in Staircase to be Single hung with Brass pully Boxes, Line & Weights — a fancy fan Sash to be over Hall Door — framed Doors 1¾ inch thick to be in the 4 Storys & Ledged doors in the Basement Story — framed Shutters Soffets & Backs to be to the Drawing Room & Parlour Windows, framed Shutters to the attic windows, all the other Trimmings to be plain — a pair of Large framed folding Doors Between Drawing Rooms, — a pair of framed Gates & frame to front of Coach house — Single faced architrave to Doors & windows in Garret & Attic Storys, Double faced Opend architrave to be to Doors & Windows in Drawing Room & Parlour Storys, Pilasters in Hall & Staircase, Staffs to all Quoins of Chimneys & to Jambs of Doors & Windows in Basement Story — Beaded Skirting in Garrets & Attic Story — Base & Subbase in Drawing Rooms & Parlours & Toris plinth in Staircase & hall — one Story of kitchen Stairs & one Story of Garret Stairs with Deal handrail & Square Bannisters — Two other Story of Stairs with handrail Cross banded with Mohogany and Turnd Bannisters & Volute at Bottom —

Sundrys – Suitable Locks, Grates & hinges for Such a house, a Vault to be Built in the Back area, the Coach house & passage to the Stable over wine Vaults to be paved — a Stable to be Built in the yard for three horses with a hayloft over it including doors, window, Rack & Manger &c.

<i>Height of Storys</i>	Basement Story in the Clear	9 – 9
	Parlour Story in the Clear	12 – 0
	Drawing Room Story in the Clear	13 – 0
	Attic Story in the Clear	10 – 6
	Garret Story to top of wall plate	8 – 0

The Whole of the forgoing works to be Executed in a permanent & workmanlike Manner & of the Best Materials, as well any necessary work not here Specified, that Should belong to Such a house, and to be at all times Subject to the approbation & Directions of Mr. Bryan Bolger as to the Execution of the works, & Likewise the Sums to be paid by Mr. Waters ~~at Certain~~ according to the Progress of the Works —

APPENDIX II

'Total Amount of the Bills of the Sundry Artificers, employed in building a substantial house, in the city of Dublin', from Thomas Humphreys, *The Irish Builder's Guide* (Dublin, 1813).

	£	s	d
Mason's and bricklayer's bill, furnishing all materials for said concerns,	578	13	3
Labourer's bill for excavation of foundation,	31	10	3
Master carpenter's bill, furnishing all materials for the dwelling house	£1024	14s	7d)
For stables and offices, ditto,	£165	15s	2½d)
Slater's and plumber's bill for all materials,	118	11	1
Paver's bill for the same,	17	10	0
Plasterer and Stucco man's, ditto,	304	10	0
Ironmonger's bill furnished, by carpenter,	35	7	2½
Painter's bill,	51	5	10½
Stone cutter's bill,	127	6	8
Three good marble chimney-pieces, and neat grates for two parlours and drawing-room	150	0	0
Kitchens, with ovens and boilers in each	22	15	0
Seven polished stone chambers chimney-pieces, and neat plain grates, at five guineas each	39	16	3
The iron railing before the door	13	13	0
Three rooms papered in first style, and finished	45	10	0
Seven rooms with plain paper, ditto	39	16	3
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<i>Total amount,</i>	£2766	14	8½
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

The following abbreviations are used:

NAI National Archives of Ireland
NLI National Library of Ireland
RD Registry of Deeds, Dublin

¹ For an overview of this archive and their significance for the study of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century architecture in Ireland, see Edward McParland, 'The papers of Bryan Bolger, measurer', *Dublin Historical Record*, vol. 25, no. 4, 1972, 120-31.

² The Bolger papers contains a number of house-building specifications, including 'Specification of an house to be Built for Miss Bond in Kevins Port' and 'Estimate by admeasurement of 3

houses to be Built for George Warner Esqr. on his Ground — one in Preston Street, one on the North Strand & one on the Corner between do.' For similar accounts relating to London houses, see John Bold, 'The design of a house for a merchant, 1724', *Architectural History*, 33, 1990, 75-82, and Dan Cruickshank and Neil Burton, *Life in the Georgian City* (London, 1990) 209-54.

³ Arthur Gibney erroneously maintained that the 'repetitive design patterns' of Dublin's town houses dispensed with 'the need of drawings and descriptive specifications'; Arthur Gibney, *The Building Site in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 2017) 55. The standard text on building economics in the late Georgian era is Linda Clarke, *Building Capitalism: historical change and the labour process in the production of the built environment* (London, 1992). For an overview of the system of contracted labour employed on the typical building site in late eighteenth-century Dublin, see Conor Lucey, 'The developer, the builder, his contractors and their

- tradesmen', in James Campbell et al (eds), *Proceedings of the First National Conference of the Construction History Society* (Cambridge, 2014), 239-48.
- ⁴ Various spelt Waters or Watters.
- ⁵ Waters, coach-maker, is listed at 2 Longford Street Little in 1794-97. He announced his move to Dominick Street Lower in December 1797, noting that the property was 'lately occupied by Mrs Whitton and the late Mr Charles Strong' (*Dublin Evening Post*, 19th December 1797), and is listed at this address thereafter, although the number of the house changes from 26 (1798-1803) to 27 (1804-5) and, finally, 25 (1807-15). Whitton (d.1792) and Strong were key figures in Dublin's coach-making industry. See W.G. Strickland, 'The State Coach of the Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin and the State Coach of the Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor of Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, XI, 1921, 49-67. Waters, on the other hand, remains little known although he regularly advertised new and second-hand vehicles between 1793 and 1812 (ex. info. Fiona Ahern). The 'remaining part' of Waters' stock in trade was scheduled for sale on 5th February 1816 at the 'Coach Factory' at '25½, Dominick Street'; *Dublin Evening Post*, 9th December 1815. A second auction of vehicles and raw materials was advertised some years later; *Freeman's Journal*, 5th September 1820.
- ⁶ John Allen remains to be identified; no building tradesman of that name is listed in the street directories for the period under review. The salvage and reuse of materials was common building practice. See Cruickshank and Burton, *Life in the Georgian City*, 237.
- ⁷ RD, 515/37/333674. Strong had leased the property to Whitton on 1st May 1788 for 53 years; Waters acquired the premises and appurtenances for £1,455.
- ⁸ RD, 559/117/372826. A further three properties in Great Britain (now Parnell) Street are included in the transaction; collectively the four properties were conveyed to Waters for the collective sum of £2,495 10s. Frustratingly, there are no boundary details provided in this memorial. It recites that the Dominick Street house was where Sir Christopher Dominick (d.1743) 'formerly dwelt', and had been leased to Roger Palmer of Palmerstown, county Mayo, in 1743 for 99 years from 1st May 1743. This house had been built on ground originally acquired by Dominick in 1709, and completed sometime before 1729. It later acted as anchor for the development of the new street, undertaken by Dominick's widow in the 1750s. Christine Casey, *Dublin, Buildings of Ireland 3* (New Haven and London, 2005) 187. Waters apparently had property interests across the city. An advertisement in *Saunders's News-Letter*, 22nd January 1799, announces a 'large commodious house' to let at the corner of Merrion Square and Holles Street, with enquiries directed to Waters.
- ⁹ RD, 596/67/404653.
- ¹⁰ An indenture dated 10th March 1852 describes the house and premises on 'Old Dominick Street' as being 'known as numbers twenty five, twenty six, twenty seven and twenty eight in said street'; RD, 1852/7/214/179. Street directories list the Magdalene Asylum, originally of Bow Street, at 26 Dominick Street Lower in 1837, and at 28 Dominick Street Lower from 1845.
- ¹¹ NAI, MS XX5, 'Index to Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1811 to 1858'. This records the probate will of 'George Watters' of Dominick Street in 1814.
- ¹² *Freeman's Journal*, 24th June 1815. The adjoining 'large house' at 'No. 25 Old Dominick Street' was also available to let. The same advertisement appeared regularly during the following months suggesting a lack of immediate commercial interest. Richard Waters conveyed 'that new brick dwelling house' to Joseph Wall, pawnbroker, in September 1823 for £300 and the yearly rent of £100; RD, 784/550/530885. Wall is listed at 26 Dominick Street between 1826 and 1831.
- ¹³ RD, 755/39/512974. The boundaries of the property indicate that Patrick Hanbury acquired the leasehold of numbers 25-27 Dominick Street Lower, the property being bounded on the north by the 'new' dwelling house and concerns of Waters, and on the south by 'Mr Brassington's concerns'. Hanbury (or Handbury), a 'coach and harness manufacturer', is listed at 25 Dominick Street Lower from 1819 to 1844; Richard Brassington, a land surveyor and conveyancer, is listed at 24 Dominick Street Lower between 1815 and 1839. By the 1830s, 25-28 Dominick Street Lower accommodated a diverse range of tenants; the 1834 edition of *The Dublin Almanac* records Charles O'Reilly, MD; Patrick Hanbury, coach-maker; Frederick Codd, attorney; Thomas Chandler, builder; Denis Carroll, iron bedstead

- manufactory; the Misses Maxwell, French and Italian seminary for ladies; James Logan, house painter; Joseph Taylor, builder, Lawrence and Fegan, stone and marble yard; and Farrell's livery stables.
- ¹⁴ Anon., *St. Saviour's Church, Dublin: Centenary 1861-1961* (Dublin, 1961) 5. This confirms that the Dominican Fathers had 'found four houses and a large yard, once a coach factory, in Lower Dominick Street. One of the houses had been the residence of Sir Christopher Dominick, from whom, and not from St. Dominic, the street got its name.' In the 1846 edition of *The Dublin Almanac and General Register of Ireland*, numbers 25-27 'Old Dominick Street' are described as 'vacant', while 28 remains designated as 'Magdalene Asylum'; this continued until 1854, when 25 Old Dominick Street is designated 'St Saviour's Chapel House, R.C. Church of St Saviour' (and followed by 29 Old Dominick Street in the sequence of house numbers on the street).
- ¹⁵ On this issue, see Conor Lucey, 'From reportage to ridicule: satirizing the building industry in the eighteenth-century Irish press', in Michela Rosso (ed.), *Laughing at Architecture: architectural histories of humour, satire and wit* (London, 2018) 37-55.
- ¹⁶ In July 1792, for example, the lease of a lot of ground in Gardiner Place required the lessee to 'build, complete, and finish upon the said Ground in front to said Place one or more good and substantial Messuages, or Buildings' with 'good and sufficient materials of the best sorts and kinds, and in a workman-like manner'; NLI, Gardiner MSS, 36,531/1.
- ¹⁷ On the hierarchy of brick types in the construction of the typical house, see Susan Roundtree, 'Brick in the eighteenth-century Dublin town house', in Christine Casey (ed.), *The Eighteenth-Century Dublin Town House* (Dublin, 2010) 73-81.
- ¹⁸ 'Scotch stone' likely refers to an imported Scottish fine-grained sandstone (ex. info. Patrick Wyse Jackson). Stone from quarries in the Ayr/Dumfries area of Scotland supplied materials to building sites in Belfast (ex. info. Tony Hand), citing C.E.B. Brett, *The Buildings of Belfast, 1700-1914* (London, 1967) ix. References to 'Scotch Stone' in a variety of contemporary manuscript and published sources suggest its appeal was based on economics rather than aesthetics; by the early nineteenth century, for example, Scotch stone flagging provided a slightly cheaper alternative to Portland stone flagging. William Stitt, *The Practical Architect's Ready Assistant* (Dublin, 1819) 230.
- ¹⁹ Gibney, *Building Site*, 216-18. A bill for various works done at Mr William Crosby's 'new buildings' on Temple Street in 1790 records 'Irish Glass' in 18 windows to the attic and garret storeys, with 'Bristol Glass' reserved for 16 windows in the 'Drawing and Parlour Storeys' (NAI, Bolger measurement papers, bundle 'C'). Prices for 'best' and 'fine' glass from London, Newcastle and Bristol was considerably more expensive than 'Common Bristol or Scotch glass' and 'Irish glass', according to Philip Levi-Hodgson, *The Modern Measurer* (Dublin, 1793) 104-05.
- ²⁰ NLI, Stapleton Collection, AD 2223, 2352. The portfolio of builder and decorator Michael Stapleton (c.1747-1801) contains two drawings of houses annotated with similar dimensions. For similar proportions at a house in Soho Square, London, see Cruickshank and Burton, *Life in the Georgian City*, 57. On the system of house rates, see C.C. Knowles and P.H. Pitt, *The History of Building Regulation in London 1189-1972* (London, 1972) 50, and Peter Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London* (New Haven and London, 2004) 282-84.
- ²¹ For information on the colour schemes employed in eighteenth-century Dublin houses see Conor Lucey, "'Rooms neatly coloured": painting and decorating the Dublin town house, 1789-1810', *Georgian Group Journal*, XVIII, 2010, 137-51.
- ²² A similar economy of ornament, albeit for a speculative house, is found in Humphreys' estimate for a 'substantial house': 384 feet of 'plain moulded cornice' in the upper floors; 100 feet of 'neat moulded cornice' in the staircase; and 348 feet of 'fancy cornice, with a frieze enriched with composition flowers' for the reception rooms; Thomas Humphreys, *The Irish Builder's Guide* (Dublin, 1813), 209.
- ²³ NAI, Bolger papers, bundle 'P'. This house was built on ground leased to a Mrs Ann Preston in 1794; RD, 497/540/328692, 502/431/325824. For the different prices of materials available from Dublin stone yards, see Hodgson, *Modern Measurer*, 100.
- ²⁴ Ingrid Jeacle, 'Accounting and the construction of the standard house', *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, vol. 16, no. 4, 2003,

- 582-605.
- ²⁵ Philip Levi Hodgson, *A Set of Tables of Solid and Superficial Measure* (Dublin, 1774) ii. English joiner-turned-author William Pain's 'Estimate for Building a New House' projected the total outlay at £1,774 19s. See William Pain, *The Builder's Companion, and Workman's General Assistant* (London, 1769) 8-10.
- ²⁶ Humphreys, *Irish Builder's Guide*, 212-13. Humphreys provides an extensive itemised breakdown for building including materials and for workmanship alone.
- ²⁷ Stitt provides estimates for 'building and completing a Mansion House' and for 'building a House 66 by 56 feet square'; Stitt, *Practical Architect's Ready Assistant*, 156-98, 200-28. By the nineteenth century, designs for town houses were often presented in innovative semi-detached or terraced compositions. See David Laing, *Hints for Dwellings* (London, 1801) pls xxxi-xxxiv, and Richard Elsam, *The Practical Builder's Perpetual Price-Book* (London, 1825) pls iii-v.
- ²⁸ David Griffin, 'The building and furnishing of a Dublin townhouse in the 18th century', *Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, 38, 1996-97, 29.
- ²⁹ NLI, Doneraile papers, MS 34,165 (1), untitled account book, fol. 12r. This folder contains extensive measured accounts and receipts for all aspects of the construction and decoration of the house.
- ³⁰ Loreto Calderón and Christine Casey, 'Number 12 Merrion Square: townhouse of the Right Honourable William Brownlow', *Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies*, V, 2002, 12-14.
- ³¹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 13th June 1795. The house had a street frontage of 48 feet, and possessed a standalone 'ball-room 40 feet in length by 23 feet in breadth'. A mortgage of 1794 recites that Meredith had acquired two adjacent plots of 24' frontage on which he had erected his dwelling house. RD 484/488/309389.
- ³² RD, 486/572/310829 and 498/504/320115.
- ³³ Desmond FitzGerald, Knight of Glin, 'Mountainstown House', Christie's sale catalogue, 28th and 29th September 1988, citing Pollock MSS at Mountainstown House, county Meath. Pollock acquired the leasehold of this property in December 1800; RD, 532/404/349514.
- ³⁴ A newspaper editorial of June 1790 noted the prodigious development of 'superb streets' on the Gardiner Estate during 'the last twenty years', describing how 'elegant mansions seem to vegetate and propagate there'. *Dublin Evening Post*, 22nd June 1790, cited in Edward McParland, 'Strategy in the planning of Dublin, 1750-1800', in Paul Butel and L.M. Cullen (eds), *French and Irish Perspectives on Urban Development, 1500-1900* (Dublin, 1986) 105. In their comparative analysis between property transactions and macro-economic fluctuations in modern Ireland, Kevin O'Rourke and Ben Polak note that following a credit crisis in 1772-73, the property index 'picks up again in the mid-1770s and rises pretty well continuously until 1813'. Rising 'especially rapidly during the 1780s', it dipped only in 1797-99, 'a period of course characterized by political turmoil and the Rebellion of 1798'. Kevin O'Rourke and Ben Polak, 'Property transactions in Ireland, 1708-1988: an introduction', *Irish Economic and Social History*, XXI, 1994, 62. For a general overview of the property market in late Georgian Dublin, see David Dickson, *Dublin: The Making of a Capital City* (London, 2014) 274-79.
- ³⁵ *Freeman's Journal*, 11th March 1794.
- ³⁶ RD, 412/517/271146, 412/518/271147, 412/520/271148, 412/522/271151, 412/524/271155, 412/526/271158, 412/531/271165, 413/150/271149, 415/151/273127 and 430/532/280144.
- ³⁷ RD, 452/214/291853 and 454/82/289921.
- ³⁸ Humphreys, *Irish Builder's Guide*, 252, 286.
- ³⁹ Hodgson notes that 'in making an estimate [for a building] it may not be improper to add 1-16th part for unforeseen expenses'. Hodgson, *A Set of Tables of Solid and Superficial Measure*, ii.
- ⁴⁰ NAI, Bolger papers, bundle 'W'. 'Specification of an house to be built for Mr Wa[ilsh] in Grafton Street'. This directs the 'new house to be Built according to the plans, Elavation [*sic*] & Section as now Laid down'. A related account itemizes 'Sundry Extra Works done for Michl. Walsh Esqr. at his New Built House in Grafton St not included in the Contract', and describes the building of an 'Assembly Room' at the property.
- ⁴¹ Humphreys, *Irish Builder's Guide*, vi.
- ⁴² NLI, Doneraile papers, MS 34,165 (1). 'Articles between the Honble Hayes St. Leger and Mr. Reilly Carpenter, in relation to the Building of a House'.
- ⁴³ Richard Elsam, *The Gentleman and Builder's Assistant* (Londonderry, 1808) 163-66.