



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF BIRMINGHAM

**Harvington Hall,  
Harvington ,  
Worcestershire:  
Archaeological  
observation and recording**

*Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit*



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**Harvington Hall, Harvington, Worcestershire:  
Archaeological observation and recording**

by  
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# **Harvington Hall, Harvington, Worcestershire: Archaeological observation and recording**

## **Contents**

1.0 Summary	1
2.0 Introduction	1
3.0 The Site	1
4.0 Objective	2
5.0 Method	2
6.0 Archaeological Results	2
7.0 Discussion	2
8.0 References	2
9.0 Acknowledgements	3

## **List of figures**

Figure 1 Site location map

## **List of plates**

Plate 1 Harvington Hall, south and east elevations with terrace garden

Plate 2 The water tank foundation trench (orientation to the east)

Plate 3 The water tank foundation and drainage gully (orientation to the southeast)

# **Harvington Hall, Harvington, Worcestershire: Archaeological observation and recording**

## **1.0 Summary**

A programme of archaeological observation and recording was carried out at the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Harvington Hall, Harvington, Worcestershire (SAM No. 299; NGR: SO87757443) during groundworks for the installation of a lead tank and associated drain. The fieldwork was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2001 as a condition of Scheduled Ancient Monument consent. The work was commissioned by Henry J. Harper, architectural consultants, on behalf of the owners of Harvington Hall.

A rectangular footing and drainage channel were excavated through two horizontal layers. No significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

## **2.0 Introduction**

This report describes the results of archaeological observation and recording carried out during excavations for the foundations of a lead tank, and drain to connect to an existing drainage system at the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Harvington Hall, Harvington, Worcestershire (SAM No. 299; NGR: SO87757443). The fieldwork was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit as a condition of Scheduled Ancient Monument consent. The work was commissioned by Henry J. Harper architectural consultants, on behalf of the owners of Harvington Hall.

## **3.0 The Site**

Harvington Hall is a Tudor moated manor house with some remnants of the original Medieval house still on the site (Plate 1). There has been extensive documentary research about the history of the hall and the priest holes and painted plaster are of especial note (Hodgetts 1998). The site of the proposed water tank is located in the terrace garden on the southeast corner of the house (fig. 1). There was a possibility that these groundworks could disturb archaeological deposits relevant to the history of Harvington Hall.

## **4.0 Objective**

The objective of the observation and recording was to provide a record of any archaeological deposits or features which might be present below the modern ground surface, and to provide an understanding of the history and significance of the archaeology as a whole.

## 5.0 Method

The objective was achieved through archaeological supervision of excavations carried out by the contractors groundworks. A foundation trench measuring 1.2m on a northwest-southeast alignment and 0.8m on a northeast-southwest alignment was hand dug to a depth of 0.2m. The trench abutted the south-west wall of Harvington Hall within the terraced garden (Plate 2). A drainage channel 0.3m wide by 0.1m deep was also dug, which extended 2.1m to the south of the foundation trench (Plate 3). A photographic and drawn record were made of the excavations which, together with recovered artefacts, form the site archive. This is presently housed at Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit.

## 6.0 Archaeological Results

The foundation trench was excavated through two horizontal layers. The upper layer (1000), was a dark humic silt with cinders and large quantities of brick rubble, this was 0.1m deep. A sample of the artefacts were recovered for dating purposes and consisted of a fragment of clay pipe, a sherd of bottle glass, a piece of stone tile, four sherds of pottery. Their date varied between the seventeenth century and late-nineteenth/early- twentieth century. The lower layer (1001), which was a light brown sandy silt with charcoal flecks contained a large quantity of building rubble and roof tiles, of which a representative sample was taken. Also present in this deposit was the base of a Cistercian ware pot which was dated to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. These excavations revealed further courses of stonework of the external southwest wall of Harvington Hall. There was no evidence of a cut for the wall through the excavated stratigraphy. Excavation stopped at the interface with a further deposit (1002), which was a cleaner, red-brown sandy silt and a fragment of brick was recovered. The natural subsoil was not encountered.

## 7.0 Discussion

No significant archaeological features or contexts were encountered during the excavation of the tank footings. Harvington Hall had been left to ruin since the mid-nineteenth century (Hodgetts 1998) which may explain the layer (1001), of building rubble within a sandy (redeposited natural) matrix, representing a period of disrepair. The presence of large quantities of building debris and the pottery of mixed date within layer 1000 may represent evidence of the documented episodes of repairs undertaken in 1930-1, and then again in 1984 (Hodgetts 1998). This interpretation would also be consistent with absence of any evidence of a cut for the wall.

## 8.0 References

- Hodgetts, M. 1998     *Harvington Hall*,     Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission.
- Steane, J. 1994         *Specification for Archaeological Work at Harvington Hall, Phase 3*,     Unpublished.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Henry J. Harper, architectural consultant, on behalf of the owners of Harvington Hall. The watching brief was carried out by M. Duncan. The report was written by M. Duncan and edited by S. Litherland. The finds were processed by E. Macey and dated by E. Macey and K. Nichol.

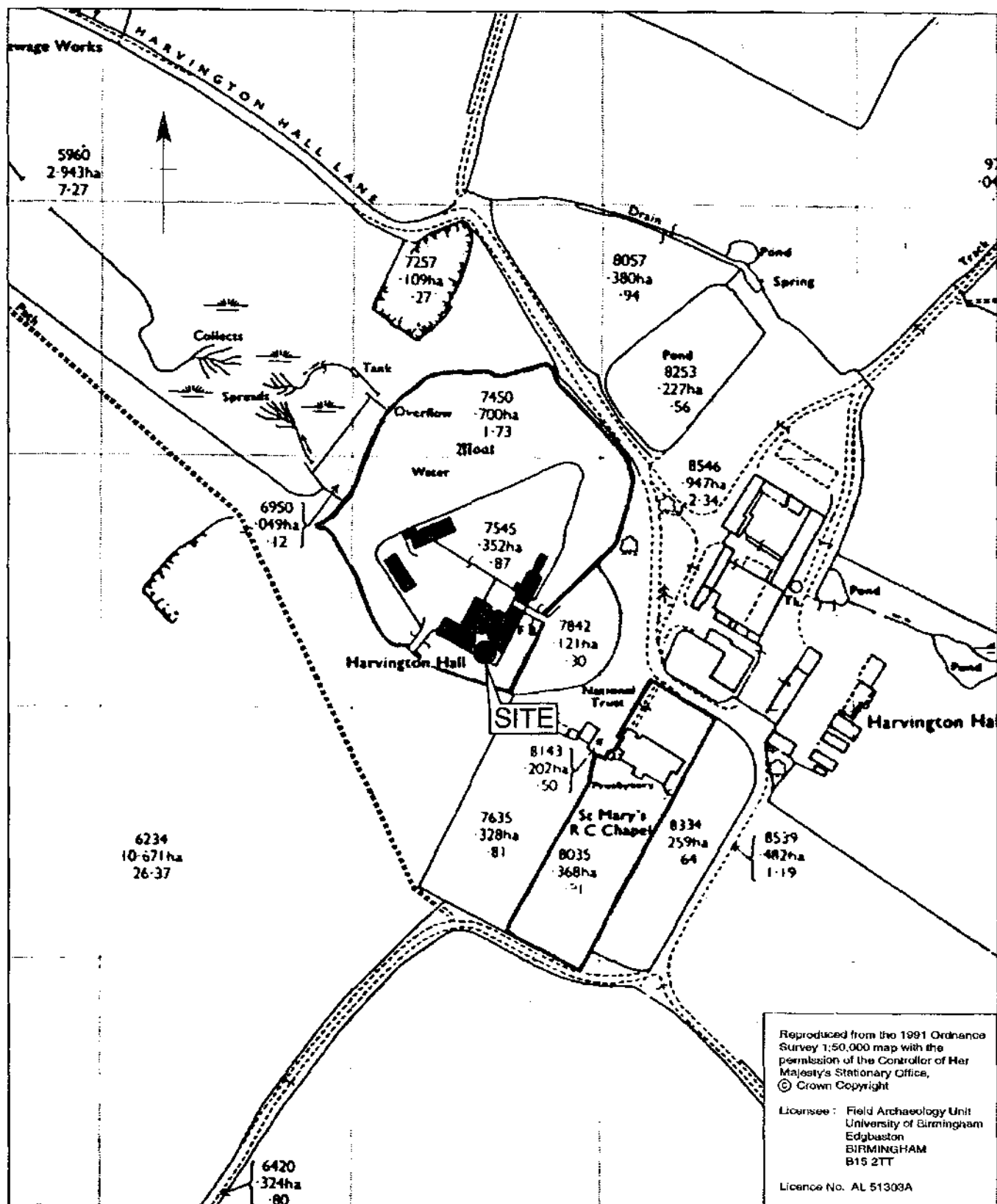


Fig.1



Plate 1



Plate 3



Plate 2



