

'An Early Map of Brailes: "fit symbolographie" ?'

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The map can be viewed via the link below

<https://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/article/map-showing-sheldons-brailes-estates>

This map, drawn on four sheets of paper, joined, measuring in total 685 x 838 cms, was purchased by Warwick Record Office in 1995. It had been in possession of the family until at least 1902 and stayed with other material through most of the century.¹ Much faded, the map is not in good condition and shows evidence of damp and considerable flaking of colour especially at the bottom and in the upper right hand corner where it is much distressed. Close examination on a light table by the staff of Warwick Record Office revealed that there is no watermark, and no signature or any other writing on the reverse. The map has been mended relatively recently, using strips of Japanese paper forming a cross vertically up the centre and horizontally across the middle. The edges of the original have been overlapped; when they are separated about a half inch it is possible to see the completion of the lines showing the original field boundaries, of the flourish which ends the word SUTTON, the foot of the letter R in the lower right appearance of the word Brailes and that there was originally space for the missing letter I of OR ENS on the lower border so that it was once correctly spelt. This repair also explains why there is an overlap of four corners at what appears to be the centre fold. Close study makes it obvious that some of the large capitals, Over and Nether Brailes, Chemscode (*recte* Chelmscode), were originally written in the same ink as the other place names and have been overpainted in red or blue. The same colours have also been touched up in the borders of the cartouche, the blank rosette, the scale and the shield. There appear to be at least three separate hands, one producing letters in two sizes.

The map provides few obvious clues as to why, when or for whom it was made. There are three possibilities; that it dates to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, to the

¹ I am grateful to Mr Chamberlaine-Brothers and the staff of Warwickshire Record Office for their careful examination of the document, reference CR 3231, on which this description is based. It supplements the very bare description in Sotheby's Sale Catalogue, *Valuable Printed Books*, 30 November 1995, 30-31. It is known to have been with family papers in 1902, Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive, Stratford, Bloom Collection, DR41/27, f.14, a reference I owe to Dr Robert Bearman, Senior Archivist there. It subsequently remained with family possessions, (private information, gratefully acknowledged).

The field names, most in Lower Brailes, fall into three groups; the date is that of their first documented appearance as listed by Philip Tennant, 'The Place names of Brailes', *Warwickshire History*, 7, no.2, Winter 1987/8, 25-56. In letters the same as the words 'scription of' in the cartouche are the names Round Hills (1547), Monkes (1590), Brome Hill(c.1765) in Compton Park (1567), Pyke Corner, Mr Throgmorton, Huche Waren (=Winderton Heath Warren, 1597), Under Haines(1705) and Suters Hill(1659); in letters used in the remainder of the cartouche are Nine Hill Waren (Tennant's Mine Hill of 1413/14 and of TNA documents), Achil Waren (1567), Fernehill (1567), (?)Dark Heath and Aston Mia(d), the Lawne Wood, The Lawne (? = Laundelondez c.1480), Trayters Forde (1597). The others are in a later hand and include Brayles Meadow (1607), Cag.Acer, Forde Meadow, Gravell (?piece) Sodden (? Sidenhill 1714), Heye Hills (1480), Dodfold Closes (possibly the Dodfold of c.1443 and, as Dolefield, in William Willington's will of 1557), Darke Heath, (?S)alte, Winderton.

eighteenth or that it is a copy of an early map. To reach a decision we are as dependent on the history of Brailes as on the internal evidence of the map itself.

At the end of the sixteenth and in the early seventeenth century the estate map was still, to judge by the survivals, at an early stage of development. In addition to the mapped area, the most commonly found elements were an explanatory cartouche, a scale, expressed in paces, perches or miles, a directional symbol, together with the fields or strips, their tenures, acreages and owners.² Of these, the most useful is the explanatory cartouche which usually names the estate, its owner who had commissioned the map, its purpose, and may also give the name of the surveyor and a date. Any special effects, such as the use of colour, would be explained. If it had been drawn for any purpose other than recording the divisions and tenures of land, that too was stated. Houses in the village, the church and, in some detail though with varying levels of artistic skill, the owner's residence were also often depicted.

In many of these features the Brailes map is deficient. Its cartouche, on the top left corner, states that it is "a description of the maners of Over Brayles, Nether Brayles, and Chemscode. With parte of their confines: wherein they, the demeane, or Farme gronde, the Waren, and their intermixtures are severallie distinguished". No names are given, though the arms of the Sheldon family, accepted by the Heralds from 1569 onwards and always used by Ralph (d.1613),³ in the lower right corner leave it to be inferred that there was indeed some connection. Unusually, but perfectly correctly and certainly according to the advice of one textbook, the mantling too was drawn.⁴ Orientations are shown not by a compass but in the Latin words in the border; another peculiarity, though much less uncommon in the sixteenth century than it would be today, is that north lies to the right, not to the top of the page. There is a variety of lettering and of writing styles; the only personal name is that of Mr Francis Throckmorton, shown underneath a three bay house; the field names are in three hands, two of them found also in the cartouche. Individual land parcels were not shown, nor even attempted, though the use of yellow, shades of green and hatching were probably intended to distinguish differing land uses, arable, pasture and meadow respectively. Trees, resembling willow or alder, marked the course of the brook while deciduous trees stand in Lawne Wood. Stylized houses, each facade towards the viewer and all with red roofs and white walls, line either side of the road, shown in yellow; the church, depicted inaccurately with a central steeple instead of a west tower, and rather too close at least to the present road, was dignified with a blue roof.

Other decorative features include a talbot crest surmounting the scale of perches and a blank rosette. Quite what information could have been encompassed by the latter is not clear, for the circle's diameter is small, only 350mm. The obvious explanation would be that it was intended as a compass rose, subsequently made redundant because the compass points were inserted in the border. The significance of the talbot hound is even more puzzling. It was one of the supporters in the contemporary arms of Talbot, but was not in the arms; neither had the Talbot family any links to the parish though Sir John Talbot of Grafton, Worcestershire and

² P.D.A.Harvey, *Maps in Tudor England*, London 1993 In particular 78-93.

³ *Visitation of Worcestershire 1569* in Harleian Society, 27, ed. W.P.M.Phillimore, 1888. It was the style used by Ralph Sheldon to decorate the chantry chapel he built onto Beoley parish church in at some point in the later sixteenth century, *Victoria County History (VCH), Worcestershire*, iv, 7.

⁴ Use of mantling is rare at this time but was not incorrect, A.C. Fox-Davies, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, revised 1969, London, 299.; William Folkingham, *Feudigraphy: The Synopsis or Epitome of Surveying Methodized*, 1610, 58, from which my title's tag.

Ralph Sheldon were friends.⁵ One possibility is that it is a punning, and not very accurate, reference to the Taillebois family who had had interests in Brailes before the Sheldons. The alternative is that both compass rose and hound are later ‘improvements’.

The large cartouche has been shown to be identical with one designed by Jan Vredeman de Vries and printed first in 1555; it is found on a map of Westphalia included in the maps of Ortelius published in 1579 and again in England in 1606.⁶ Either book could thus have been its source, though since Vredeman’s work was quarried extensively for motifs on the first series of tapestry maps it must have been well known to the Sheldons. It suggests also that the map’s artist, or the man who commissioned him, was familiar with the engravers’ world.

This then is the obvious information provided on the map. Taken together, the pictorial content points to a date in the later sixteenth century though details of the style might point to a date into the seventeenth. The problem might be resolved by elucidating other questions. What was the purpose of this map? When might it have been made? Was it surveyed or only drawn? Had it a legal use? Was it voluntarily produced, made by court order or intended as an aide memoire, either for a member of the Sheldon family or for someone else?

Throughout the second half of the sixteenth century the number of estate maps increased steadily, amongst the reasons being that the royal courts more and more frequently requested a map to illustrate the claims and counter-claims in land disputes. One of the most compelling reasons for the creation of this map then could be the intense legal activity focussed on the area between 1597 and 1610 when three important cases concerning Brailes were outstanding against Ralph Sheldon. To understand them some historical background is necessary. Within the parish of Brailes there had been around 1550 three separate blocks of land. One was Chelmscote, where at least 330a. were held in 1547 by William Willington, Ralph Sheldon’s maternal grandfather; this appears to have come into possession of the Sheldons by inheritance.⁷ A second parcel of land, consisting of 8 messuages and 8 virgates, formerly part of the dissolved chantry of Brailes, was acquired by Ralph’s father by purchase

⁵ ‘Elizabethan Estate Book of Grafton Manor’, ed. J. Humphreys in *Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc.* xliv, 1918 (1920), 1-124 shows that the Sheldon works supplied tapestries; the arms are described in Harleian Society, 27, (note 3) 131.

⁶ A. Wells Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: the influence of continental prints 1558-1625*, 1997, 70. The map’s previous owner vitiates his arguments through incorrect knowledge of the tapestry maps; of the six surviving pieces, five display Sheldon arms; the corner of the sixth is lost. Only three tapestries bear the Hyckes’ names, Richard on both Worcestershire versions, Francis on the later Oxfordshire, while the date of 1588 is on only one. Two are orientated with north to the left, not, as stated, to the right. It is debatable whether the Hyckes supplied tapestries to Bess of Hardwick and after 1580 relations with the earl of Leicester had cooled. The date 1588 could commemorate events in the Sheldon family, in particular the wedding of the heir to Elizabeth Markham, the arms quartered with those of the Sheldons on the Warwickshire tapestry, the only one to bear a date. There is no reason to regard this as a date of production, only as a *terminus ante quem*. Recognition of the initials RH in the collar of the dog is dubious. A detailed study of the tapestry maps by the author will appear in *Bodleian Library Record* and, specifically on Warwickshire, in *Warwickshire History*, Summer 2002.

⁷ *VCH, Warwickshire*, ed. L.F. Salzman, 1949, v, 18. It should be said that the account, v, 17-26, has omitted much and is incorrect in saying that Ralph Sheldon was lord by 1630 (p. 18 n. 32), though see p. 18 fn. 27 for Tailboys and also TNA LR 2/185 f. 228.

of a lease from William Palmer in 1556.⁸ The third and largest was the manor proper, consisting of the site of the manor house, land totalling 1420 a., a water mill, a horse mill, the warren and right to tolls from a fair and market, granted to Ralph's father by Thomas Wymbish and his wife Lady Elizabeth Taylbois in 1547.⁹ A fourth parcel seems to have been acquired c.1561/62 leased from the Crown, when its value was said to be £84 per annum; the same sum is recorded in the account book covering the years 1586-88.¹⁰

It is clear that there was considerable unrest in Brailes in the later sixteenth century, much of it apparently provoked by Ralph Sheldon. He may have held part of their holdings even before his father's death, for he already suffered from the hostility of some of the tenants to his rights of warren in the 1560s. In 1567 his steward had been attacked by five of the villagers for which remedy was sought in the Court of Star Chamber on the plea that the Queen herself, as the overlord, had suffered losses. No resolution was reached until 1596 when Ralph received compensation and the re-statement of his rights.¹¹

The holders of Crown lands, and their fellows, were unhappy about other matters also. Before 1597 some had started proceedings in the Exchequer Court, claiming that Ralph Sheldon had made inclosures of the Queen's grounds, had increased the entry fines of properties and altered the customs of the manor as to the number of lives for which copyhold property could be held.¹² He was required to justify his title, and to explain his actions with regard to inclosures. From the depositions of two witnesses, William Child, later sheriff of Worcestershire, and Thomas Savage of Norbury, it emerges that in 1580-81 Sheldon had held a Court of Survey at which copies of tenure were examined and entered into the Court Rolls by the steward, Anker Brent, gentleman.¹³ On a separate occasion, in 1598, John Ward, then aged 68, who described himself as yeoman and resident of Beoley, the main Sheldon manor, deposed that he had been requested to make a measured survey of lands that were to be inclosed and for which land was to be exchanged. It is not clear exactly when this took place; the lands and meadow grounds lay in Nether Brailes and were called Aston Meadow, Fernehill and Minehill, all names found on the map in the same hand as that of the cartouche. Ward stated that the exchange had 'the consent and goodwill of the greater part of the tenants and inhabitants'. He claimed that they took the lands allotted to them 'in such good part that they gave this deponent very good entertainment ...and paid for the most part of his charges and .. rang the bells in witness of their joy... and requested him to tarry a month longer amongst them at their charge...'.¹⁴

⁸ Exemplification of 1586 in Birmingham Central Library, in future BAH, deeds 168208.

⁹ *Calendar of Patent Rolls (CPR) 1547-49*, 221-2 and recited in TNA LR 2/185.

¹⁰ *CPR 1558-1560*, 436; Warwickshire County Record Office (WaCRO) CR 2632, ff.23, 127v, studied in detail by the author.

¹¹ TNA STAC 5/S72/32; BAH 168044; TNA STAC 5/S20/11 and BAH 167447.

¹² TNA E134/39Eliz/Easter26; E134/39 Eliz/Easter2; E134/39&40Eliz/Mich31; E134/40Eliz/Hilary17; E133/8/1317;E133/8/1318;E133/9/1368;E133/10/1663; E133/10/1696; E134/43&44Eliz/Michaelmas24 and E123/23 of 25 April 1597 when witnesses were first heard. Resolution in May 1600 in BAH 167441.

¹³ TNA E133/8/1317, in which both witnesses agree.

¹⁴ TNA E134/40Eliz/Hilary17, Ward's deposition, substantiated *ibid* by Anthony French, husbandman of Brailes, who adds that Ward was the "dealer" between Sheldon and the tenants. Ward was mentioned in William Sheldon's will of 1570, TNA PROB 11/53/79, when he was appointed bailiff and woodward of the manors of

All the deponents concur that Sheldon and his tenants agreed to certain inclosures, several of which involved exchange of land. Where they differed was on the question of whether or not Sheldon had a right to change tenure of properties. Insofar as fields are named on the map, they are those named in the depositions and at issue in court. It was not in fact germane to the court proceedings that individual holdings should be distinguished, since it was not the amount of land received or its location that was at issue, but the question of Sheldon's right to inclose. The tenants' claim that he had enclosed royal property led to the assignation of the case to the Exchequer Court. Needless to say, Sheldon won the case.

There was another manor within the parish of Brailes, that of Winderton. It is shown on the map as an area of yellow wash, without any indication of land use. Here too there was trouble for the Crown, caused by the lessee of royal land there, Mr Throckmorton, whose is the only named property, a three bay house, to appear on the map. Distant cousins of the Sheldons, a Mr Francis Throckmorton, who had inherited the manor from his father Michael in 1558,¹⁵ appeared in the Exchequer Court in 1597 for failure to pay his rent to the Queen for the lease of the manor.¹⁶ The arrears were longstanding, dating from 1582/3; to make matters worse Throckmorton was accused of extending on his tenants' goods to pay his own arrears. One tenant was a Mr Swarbryck, who later deposed against Sheldon in the matter of raised fines and altered tenures, described as husbandman aged 85; another was Mr Chetwynd, described as a husbandman of Brailes, aged 60.¹⁷ The tenants were freed of their obligation to Throckmorton, who was rebuked and instructed to pay. Francis died in 1617.¹⁸ But that Throckmorton's name appears on the map at all provides a possible indication of why the map was made, and when. The Exchequer Barons or the Exchequer Clerks needed to know about Brailes.

Only a little later Throckmorton was in trouble connected with the extensive depopulation rioting which took place in southern Warwickshire in 1607; its causes were subsequently investigated. Amongst the landowners called to account, he vigorously denied that he had been guilty of "the pulling down or suffering to decay all the barns and houses of office of the said house mentioned in the bill of complaint in the parish of Winderton or the suffering of the said dwelling houses to go to ruin or the converting or causing to be converted the said arable grounds belonging to the several houses into pasture or the not letting or not using the same belonging to the said houses as they were wont to be...and as to the stopping of the highway usually called the Greene way leading from Winderton to Epwell or the stopping of any other highway and all other depopulations...he hath been very desirous to eschew the said offences".¹⁹ He laid the blame on malicious neighbours for drawing him into

Arlchurch (?Alvechurch) and Dry Salford for 24 years, with a yearly fee of 13s. 4d. He could probably be relied on to say what was required. Witness statements vary considerably about the dates of surveys.

¹⁵ *CPR 1553-4*, 400-1; TNA C 142/131/195.

¹⁶ TNA E123/23, p.2, 30 April 1596.

¹⁷ John Swarbrick was a husbandman of Wynderton, aged 85 in 1597, TNA E133/8/1318; William Chetwynd was a husbandman in Brailes aged 60 in E134/43&44Eliz/Mich24.

¹⁸ *Visitation of Warwickshire 1619* in Harleian Society, 12, 111, ed. John Fetherston, 1877.

¹⁹ TNA STAC 8/15/12, 28 January 1608. M.W.Beresford, 'Deserted Villages of Warwickshire', *Trans Birmingham Archaeological Society*, 66, 1950 and Edward F. Gay, 'The Midland Revolt of 1607', *Trans. Royal Historical Society*, xviii 1904, 195-244.

the question. Exactly where the house stood is hard now to identify; an eighteenth century brick house, called The Warren, may preserve the site.

For Ralph Sheldon there were still other sources of trouble. The first came before the Star Chamber in 1601, when he was accused of preventing Brailes villagers from ploughing and sowing certain fields, amongst them Southcombe and Aston Meade. Only the latter is shown on the map, though all were presumably areas in which those who accused him had once had rights. The second case went to the Court of Requests, presided over by Sir Julius Caesar, to whom Sheldon wrote, forcefully putting his case.²⁰ The outcome of the first is unknown; the second was resolved in favour of the tenant.²¹

Still more charges awaited him. In 1606 Ralph was again before the Exchequer Court on the subject of his money dealings with Thomas Horde.²² In brief Sheldon had agreed to accept large sums of money from Horde, also a catholic and wanted for non-payment of his fines for non-attendance at church. The parties regarded the money as a 'loan', against the repayment of which Sheldon made grants out of his lands. He also allowed interest to build up on interest until the total allegedly reached £24,000. The Crown held that the purpose of the arrangement was for Horde, and possibly Sheldon also, to conceal this money and prevent its forfeiture along with Horde's other goods, thereby defrauding the Crown. When Horde claimed repayment Sheldon was unable to meet the debt. Intermediaries arranged a repayment plan in January 1605, whereby Sheldon would pay £1000 every year for twelve years and assign lands worth £600 yearly to Horde. The agreement was read in court.²³ Amongst these lands was a third part of the manor of Chelmscote, within the bounds of Brailes, shown on the map in dark green and with undifferentiated land use.²⁴

These then are the reasons for which either someone connected to the Exchequer Court or possibly even Robert Cecil, who drew up a schedule of Sheldon's debts, might wish to have a map.²⁵ It is, however, an over-elaborate document for this purpose; a simpler sketch map would have done as well. Nor is it large enough, or detailed enough, for use in a court room. If this possibility is rejected, on what other occasion could the map have been made?

As part of the drive to increase revenues from royal lands, where lack of a register of assets opened the way to the widespread losses listed by John Norden,²⁶ a survey of all Crown property was ordered on December 21 1607, the results, for Brailes at least, to be completed and returned by 21 January 1608. Does the map relate to this survey, studied in detail in this

²⁰ TNA STAC 5/R27/36, 1601; STAC 5/R12/25, 1601/02; STAC 5/R36/36, 1602; REQ 2/33/1-137, no. 39 and British Library (BLib). Lansdowne 161, f.90.

²¹ REQ 2/33/39, endorsed 3 July 1601

²² TNA E 126/1 ff.41,47-49,54, 88-89; E124/5, f.25. He is probably to be identified as the purchaser of Cote, Oxon, *VCH, Oxfordshire*, ed. A Crossley, vol. 13, 67, 1992. Detailed account forthcoming.

²³ BAH 167897 and TNA E 126/1 p.8^v.

²⁴ BAH 168155.

²⁵ TNA SP 14/20 no.21 and SP 14/40, no.13.

²⁶ B Lib Ms Lansdowne 165, no.55; printed *Camden Society*, 9, 1840.

journal, in any way?²⁷ For our purposes we need look only at the very specific questions to be answered; to inquire and present the names of the tenants, freeholders and copyholders and the quality of the lands; what houses, and of how many bays, stand on the lands; to number the trees on copyhold and lease lands, on the commons and the waste and estimate the loads of timber and of firewood; to inquire what interruptions and intrusions had been made or committed on His Majesty's lands; to present the metes and bounds of the manor and all other things that may belong to the survey thereof that have not been presented.

When the answers and descriptions of the survey are compared with the map there is surprisingly little correspondence. One set of questions remained unanswered, those concerning woodland; yet trees, never of significant quantity in Feldon Warwickshire, are clearly shown in the map. While the distinction between arable and pasture roughly corresponds to the distribution to be deduced from the survey, the houses, ranging from 2 to 9 bays, are almost uniformly shown as being of three bays; not even the number depicted - there were at least 75 - is accurate. Moreover, the area of the map is larger than the lands with which the survey was concerned and it is the Sheldon arms, not the royal arms, that are depicted. The probability therefore is that the map was their commission, for, as we have it, the survey is of the tried and trusted kind, written. A map might have been made, though it seems unlikely when the man nominally in charge, John Hercy I, would be slated by one of the most competent surveyors in England, John Norden, for the production of surveys by relation only, 'for he perambulated none. Soe one day was sufficient for the survey of a great manor'.²⁸ Nevertheless, behind the elegant map we look at today might lie a much cruder, or indeed a much more complicated, version.

While at first sight either the royal survey or the court cases mentioning some of the field names might have suggested a date for the map, even though no order for a map has survived in the court records, not in any case complete, closer examination suggests that both lines of investigation are false trails and we need to look elsewhere. Are there clues in the map itself, perhaps by identifying the person who drew the map? There are eight surviving maps of Warwickshire estates dated before 1650 and one, known in a copy, for Worcestershire.²⁹ Each is an individual production with little common resemblance; most are securely dated, none is in a style which resembles that of the Brailes map. Two are linked to a written survey. Minworth, the property of an attainted Sheldon relative, was the work of an anonymous royal employee; for Ansty there is a survey and map and a second map executed by Richard Banckes, a Crown surveyor and 'practitioner in the Matthamaticks'. Another such

²⁷ TNA LR 2/185 ff.170-228. Alan Tennant's help illuminated my own conclusions. It is worth noting that nine years later, in 1616, a survey of the glebe lands was carried out, 'Ecclesiastical Terriers of Warwickshire Parishes', ed. D.M. Barratt, *Dugdale Society*, xxii, 1955, 59-62.

²⁸ BLib Maps 198.c.50 (original in Cambridge University Library, Mm 3.15), from A.S.Mason, 'A Measure of Essex Cartography', in *Essex, "full of profitable things"*, ed. Kenneth Neale, Oxford 1996. This refers to John Hercy the elder. His son, another John, c.1579-1648, had a legal training and seems to have been retained by the earl of Shrewsbury as his man of business in London, Sheffield Record Office, *Catalogue of Arundel Castle Manuscripts*, 206, 207, 209, 210 212, 217. John II was certainly in London on 10.1.1608 (*ibid*, 210) and may subsequently have been appointed surveyor of the Midland group of counties, 12.2.1608, TNA SP14/ 31, no.29, f.102. He appears to have been superseded by 29.11.1608 when John Woodward got the appointment, TNA SP14/37, no.104, f.206. See also R.W.Hoyle, 'Vain Projects' in John Chartres & David Hey (eds.) *English Rural Society 1500-1800*, 1990, 77.

²⁹ D. Fowkes, A List of pre-1650 estate maps in County Record Offices, July 1991, Microform Academic, East Ardesley Yorks; S. Bendall, *Dictionary of Land surveyors and local Mapmakers*, 2 vols, B Lib 1997. The maps referred to are WaCRO Shilton & Ansty, Upton, R. Flecknoe, 1614; Radbourne, Anon. 1634; Brackenborough, Lane, 1620; TNA LRRO 1/406, Kenilworth 1628, Hardy; Feckenham, 1591, Brit. Lib M.T. 6.B1(12).

‘practitioner’, John Goodwin, mapped Stoneleigh in November 1597.³⁰ None of the other six Warwickshire mapmakers or their employers have links to the Sheldons who were well enough connected in the cartographic world to make their own choice.

The paucity of surviving local examples, though probably a false picture, makes it almost impossible to answer the question of who, *c.* 1610, might be available to produce a map of this quality, increasing the temptation to associate the map with the designer of the tapestry maps. Tudor maps may look primitive to us, but map making was already a recognisable profession. Although it is hard to assign an artist to a product on the grounds of style, it is less hard to eliminate candidates and it is unlikely that, as has been suggested, it is the work either of Christopher Saxton or of Richard Hyckes, head of the Sheldon tapestry manufactory and arrasmaker to the Queen. It was not Saxton’s style to produce beautiful estate maps; his are strictly utilitarian, produced for a purpose and excluding the irrelevant. His use of colour is sparing and limited to red, green, yellow and the white of the paper. Never does he orient North to any position but the top of the page, until 1598 naming the cardinal points in Latin and thereafter in English, though he always placed them centrally in the border, as he had done on his county maps. He employed simple double lines to box any written information, not decorative cartouches. Even though much of his work after the completion of his county maps (1574-79) and the publication of the wall map, 1583, was concentrated on estate surveys, all but two of those known were for the Cavendish family and their relatives.³¹ There is nothing in the style of the Brailes map, its level of execution or its quality of drawing to suggest that it is the work of Saxton, with whom the Sheldons had no known connection, and who in any case was far from being the only capable surveyor in England.

Neither is its maker likely to have been Richard Hyckes, a suggestion based on the claim that his initials are to be seen on the hound’s collar. By the first decade of the seventeenth century he was in his eighties. Furthermore, many of the tapestry designs, including some elements of the map series, were derived from prints, a transfer which demanded other skills from those of a mapmaker. Although Hyckes carried out miscellaneous tasks for the Sheldons, from shopping, rent collection to witness statements, nothing suggests that he had any specialities applicable to estate management.³² Neither is there any established link with Brailes, for which the names of the stewards are known from the 1550s and where there is the particular connection with John Ward of Beoley.

The map was too decorative and insufficiently detailed to be of practical value whether for legal purposes or to assist the improvement of the estate. Simply because it more closely resembles a picture, there remains a third possibility which would also date it to the early seventeenth century, namely that it was drawn for the trustees of Elizabeth Petre who married William II Sheldon in 1611. She was the grand-daughter of Sir John Petre of Ingatestone, Essex, the son of Queen Elizabeth’s Secretary of State, and great-niece of Sheldon’s friend, Talbot, whose wife was Sir John’s sister. Brailes was assigned to secure her dowry of £4000.³³ In view of the many legal wrangles in which the land and the Sheldons

³⁰ TNA MPB 1/10(1 & 2) for Minworth, property of a Sheldon relative; Ansty, WaCRO CR 285/56 & 57; Stoneleigh, copies in WaCRO, Z 139/1/1,2 U and Z 141(U).

³¹ Ifor Evans and Heather Lawrence, *Christopher Saxton Elizabethan Mapmaker*, Wakefield, 1979, esp. pp 74, 85-6, 102. Given that every argument in this book militates against Saxton’s connection with the Brailes map, it seems odd that the author is credited with supporting this view.

³² eg WaCRO CR 2632, ff 12, 25, 66.

³³ B Lib Add Ms 38091, ff 124-130 recites the original; the relationships from *Visitation of Essex 1612*, ed. Walter C. Metcalfe, Harleian Society, 13 1878, 264-5.

had so recently been involved, it would scarcely be a surprising precaution for her family to request a map, given also that they were no strangers to map makers. As the landlords of the Walkers of Hanningfield the Petres had commissioned them to map the Ingatestone estate, including a drawing of the hall.³⁴ However, the Walkers themselves must be excluded from this inquiry; they worked extensively, but virtually exclusively, in Essex and in a distinctive, easily recognisable style far from that of this map.

The Petres, however, were connected to the only early example from Gloucestershire, the map of Todenham, some 4 miles west of Brailes.³⁵ Petre property since 1549 and managed together with Sutton, Todenham was in the 1580s abandoning its scattered ridge and furrows and consolidating the holdings of the largest landowners. It was managed for the Petres along with Sutton, adjacent to Brailes, by Robert Caldwell, sometime steward to Sir John Talbot,³⁶ his agitated letters on the advisability of letting the Sutton tenants enclose were written to Sir John Petre in 1602. Part of Todenham was leased to William Moulton, “gent, farmer” in his own words. The map he commissioned was drawn on January 20 1592, a simple affair, unsigned and without scale or compass, showing in 13 plain colours accompanied by a number corresponding to a written key, what had been agreed, in writing, between the holders. It depicted the roads, the bridge, the mill, the well, houses, the church and an isolated barn.³⁷

Moulton is almost certainly to be identified with the William for whom Ralph Sheldon delivered his rent due to the dean and chapter of Westminster in October 1586 and 1587; this suggests a relationship of trust which may perhaps have turned to friendship, for Moulton’s daughter married Richard Savage, grand-daughter of Ralph’s sister Anne.³⁸ It is moreover unlikely that Sheldon was unaware of events so close to home, and so similar to his own troubles, or that Moulton kept his map to himself. Sheldon may well have been familiar with it, and, even though his own map differed in style, it too practised the concept of colour use. Indeed, Sheldon’s is almost a text book example on the principles laid down by William Folkingham who published his *Feudigraphia* in February 1610.³⁹ Amongst his advice specifying the materials to be used to produce the colours, was that ‘arable for corne may be dashed with a pale straw colour...meadows be washed with a light green, pasture with deeper green..waies and mud wals with white leade with ruste of iron..’. Finally, the ‘Lorde’s Coate with Crest and Mantells’ was to be shown.

³⁴ A.C.Edwards and K.C.Newton, *The Walkers of Hanningfield*, London 1984. I am grateful to Mr Peter Barber, Deputy Curator of Maps at the British Library for introducing me to this book, thus causing me to look twice at the Petre connection, and for his subsequent comments.

³⁵ Glos.RO. D 1099/P 1; a later, possibly C17, copy D 1099/P 2 enhanced the buildings.

³⁶ Glos RO D 1099 E3/1; Household and Farm account books of John Talbot of Grafton, BAH 603797. A Robert Caldwell married Anne Holmestede of Ingatestone, *Visitation of Worcestershire, 1569*, Harleian Soc. 27, 35, and is possibly the man listed in the 1603 Subsidy, *Worcestershire Historical Society*, 1899, 2-4, and the purchaser of land in Bromsgrove c.1595, *VCH, Worcestershire*, ii, 27.

³⁷ The articles of agreement are Glos RO. D 1099/E3/2; *VCH, Gloucester*, vi, 1965, 250-258.

³⁸ WaCRO CR 2632, ff.3, 25, 60, 113; *Visitation of Worcestershire 1634*, Harleian Society, vol 90, 1938, ed. A.T.Butler, 87.

³⁹ William Folkingham, *Feudigraphia*, (note 4), 58.

But though colour was in moderately frequent use by 1600 either to distinguish between areas of land or to denote land use, there are much less frequent examples of cross hatching, of the small tussocks (at Chelmscote) and of rushes (at the lower edge of the map). The latter bear a distinct resemblance to those on the seventeenth century copy of the Oxfordshire tapestry (formerly displayed at Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk) in the sections where the tapestry area was enlarged but no new detail inserted. It opens up the possibility that the map is a picture map, rather than a survey, executed in the eighteenth century, since there is no other obvious date when such a document would have been necessary. There were no further disputes over tenures, no forfeitures, despite the Sheldons' suspected Jacobite connections, and no land sales of any substantial size to which the areas shown might relate.⁴⁰ Another possibility is that it is a copy of an earlier map into which the copyist, like the enhancer of the Todenham example but relatively faithful to his earlier original, could not resist the introduction of some extraneous material, for example the Talbot hound and the blank rosette. If the map is thought to be later than *c.*1611 it is very hard to assign it on stylistic grounds to any of the mapmakers known to have been working in the county around 1690, for example James Fish, John Wilson, the Hewitts or John Garfield, or to John Doherty the younger, working in the 1730s and 1740s, the copyist of Blagrove's survey of Feckenham of 1591.⁴¹ The last possible date has to be earlier than the enclosure award of 1787 when the roads within the parish assumed their present layout.⁴² All these possibilities are contradicted by the field names scrawled in different hands, suggesting that the map had been in use for some time.

The details of the map are not those produced by the eighteenth century cartographer who was well used to placing North at the top of his page and would have looked with scorn on Vredeman's cartouche, rejecting it as far too plain. The lettering within the cartouche is carefully executed, a point at which a copyist frequently lapses into the hand to which he was more accustomed, the shield boldly drawn and well emphasised, a statement of status. By 1611, the Sheldon family were powerful only locally; in arranging a marriage into the catholic Petre family with whom they had long been acquainted and whose fortunes were in better shape than their own the Sheldons needed to make some sort of display. No longer wealthy enough to produce another of the tapestry maps which had commemorated the marriage of William's father, they chose the next best option - a specially commissioned map of a substantial part of their lands. Not only was it a map of the part which most interested the family into which they married; it was a demonstration of a shared interest, celebrating a new alliance.

⁴⁰ 39. None of the deeds in the Bloom Collection (see n.1) at DR 41/20, 22, 25, nor B Lib. Add Ms 36583 refer to large areas.

⁴¹ P.D.A.Harvey, 'English Estate Maps; their early history and use as historical evidence', in ed. David Buisseret, *Rural Images*, Chicago, 1996, 27-61; J. Pannet, 'The manuscript maps of Warwickshire, 1597-1880', *Warwickshire History* 6, no.3, 1985, 69-85; Brian S. Smith, 'The Dougharty family of Worcester, estate surveyors and mapmakers, 1700-60', *Worcester Historical Society new series 5, Miscellany II*, 1967, 138-169.

⁴² Brailes enclosure map, 1787, WaCRO.

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