

## FIFTEENTH CENTURY SUTTON FROM THE BAILIFFS' ACCOUNTS

TRANSLATED BY ANNE-MARIE POWELL, COMMENTARY BY ROGER LEA

One of the early pieces of work done by the Research Group was Anne-Marie Powell's translation of the 1480 Bailiffs Account for Sutton Coldfield. This has been in the local history library, together with the Latin original, ever since Anne-Marie left the district, and many members have referred to it. Even in translation, however, it is a difficult source to use, so it is now published in this article with a commentary.

On its own it is a very informative document, but further light is thrown on it when compared with a similar account from 1433<sup>1</sup>. It appears that such accounts were produced every year, and the method used was to copy the previous year's account, noting any changes. Consequently, much of the later account repeats exactly the wording of the earlier one, including the amounts of money, there being no inflation then. This consistency over a 50-year period suggests the probability that there would be similar entries in accounts for 50 or 100 years earlier, if they existed, and some of the items were still being recorded in Warden and Society rentals of the 18th century<sup>2</sup>. Bearing all this in mind, the commentary which follows sometimes strays far away from the actual text.

### **Sutton - the account of John Bailly, Bailiff there at the time as above.**

This heading is short because the account is one of a series of manorial accounts for different places, copied out in a fair hand, now at the Public Record Office, as detailed by Hilton<sup>3</sup>. The 1433 account has *Sutton - the account of Robert Kelynge, Bailiff there from Michaelmas in the 11th year of the reign of the lord king Henry VI to Michaelmas in the 12th year, that is for one whole year (1432-3)*. John Bailly's account is for 1479-80, the same accounting year, as was usual in the Middle Ages.

**Arrears - None, because the account of this manor for the preceding year remains with the separate accounts administered in this way for the preceding year in the treasury of the Lord King at Westminster, concerning which accounts proceedings were undertaken against individual debtors of the King for their arrears of this kind as is recorded in the account for this lordship there.**

**Total - nil.**

These accounts were for the manors of the Duke of Clarence, forfeited to the Crown on his attainder for treason in 1478, and had come to him in 1471 on the death of the Earl of Warwick at the battle of Barnet. In 1433, Robert Kelynge brought forward £41.0s 8d from the previous year.

**Fixed rents -But he is answerable for £19 6s. 10d. of fixed rents there, payable equally at the terms of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangel each year, as is contained in the preceding accounts, to wit at the two times falling within the period aforesaid.**

This is the income from the bulk of the arable land and property in the Manor, the open field land which had been in cultivation for centuries. This same arable land probably comprised the 22 ploughlands referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086, and if the theories of continuity of settlement are right, it was already in cultivation before the Romans came. Although Sutton was much bigger than Erdington, the equivalent entry at Erdington is for over £20, so the Sutton figure may exclude Hill and Little Sutton, where the rent was due to Canwell Priory, according to Dugdale<sup>4</sup>. The figure for 1433 was £19 6s. 9d, the penny difference being probably due to a copying mistake - and so it can probably be projected back into the 14th or even 13th century, since there was always a high percentage of tenants paying a money rent in Sutton rather than holding land purely by feudal services.

**And for 4d, a new rent from Thomas Huchon for a piece of waste land in Ballefeld; in addition to the old rent of 2d, to be paid at the said 2 terms of the year, as is included likewise in the said preceding accounts, to wit at the said terms falling within the said time.**

**And for 4d increased rent from William Flecher for 1 acre of arable land in Overwynnemylsfelde to be paid etc.**

**And for 2d increased rent from Richard Hancock for a piece of open land in Catexhurst to be paid etc.**

Reference to the 1433 account puts paid to the idea that these entries represent new activity, as there are almost identical entries there. The personal names are all the same, which seems strange as it is unlikely that all three men would have survived the 47 years between the two accounts, but it is the description of the land which has changed slightly, almost certainly due to incorrect copying by officials unfamiliar with the locality. The 1433 account has *a piece of arable land called Ballefeld; an acre of arable in Overwindelefeld; and an acre of arable in*

*Cottexhurst*;- in each case the earlier version is probably more correct. Ball field has not been located but Catexhurst was just north of Penns Lane. The 1480 account sent me in search of windmills, but Over Wyndley Field was probably somewhere between Maney and the Park, and nothing to do with windmills after all.

**And for 4d rent from Thomas Hawe for 1 acre of land below Rowmore to be paid etc.**

**And for 1d new rent from John Hurst for 1 acre of waste land near his house with appurtenances in Warmeley to be held by him and his heirs for ever, payable etc.**

**And for 1d new rent from John Penkerich for one parcel of waste land near Reddeweycoppes containing half an acre of land, as appears in the roll of the court held there in the year as is included likewise in the said previous accounts**

**And for 3d increased rent from John Aleyn, cartwright, for 1 acre of arable land in Litill Sutton Field, demised to the same John Aleyn to the end of his life as is recorded in the court rolls for the year....., as in the accounts etc.**

**And for 12d new rent from Agnes Hardman for pasture called Mullemore, demised to the same Agnes and her son John to the end of their lives, by John Bayesham, then supervisor there, as in the said accounts etc.**

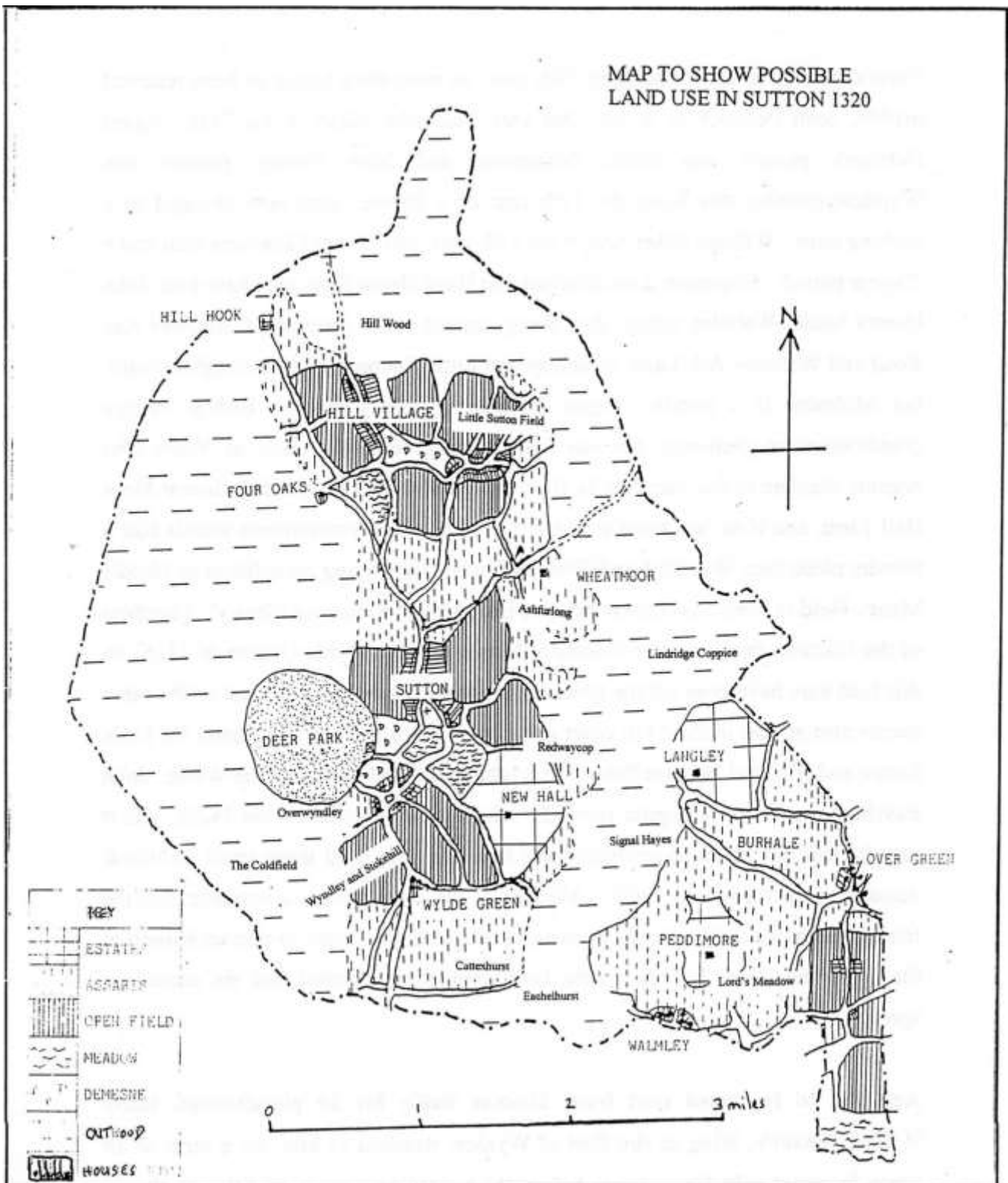
**And for 4d new rent from John Vernon, clerk, for a pasture called Wynleywith, demised to the same John to the end of his life by the aforesaid supervisor, as is in the said accounts etc.**

**And for 2d new rent from William Baker for 6 strips of ploughland, lately Thomas Tailleur's, demised to the same William to the end of his life, as appears in the court rolls for....year, and in the said accounts etc.**

**And for 2d rent for 1 parcel of waste land there, demised to Richard Huchens in the year.... as appears in the court rolls there, and in the said accounts etc.**

These items also appear in the 1433 account, with minor differences: there John

MAP TO SHOW POSSIBLE  
LAND USE IN SUTTON 1320



This map of the conjectural land use in Sutton appeared in *Scenes from Sutton's Past* 10 years ago. Since making it, more information has come to light, for example on the layout of the fields at Little Sutton and the size of New Hall Estate, but in general it has stood up to further research. The names of some of the places mentioned in the current document have been added.

Hurst's tenancy is said to be in its 30th year, so must have begun or been renewed in 1404, John Penkrich is in his 33rd year, and John Aleyn in his 21st. Agnes Herman's pasture was called Millemore, and John Verney's pasture was Wyndeleyqweche, this being the 17th year of a 20-year term now changed to a lifelong term. William Baker was in his 13th year, and Richard Huchens then had a 20-year period. Rowmore is unidentified, but Hurst Green Farm may have been John Hurst's house, Walmley village then being situated at the junction of Walmley Ash Road and Walmley Ash Lane; Reddicap and Little Sutton Field are straightforward, but Millmore is a puzzle. Agnes Herman (Harman) may be Bishop Vesey's grandmother or great-aunt, her son John possibly being the uncle of Vesey who became chaplain of the chapel of St. Blaize at the Manor House<sup>5</sup>; did she live at Moor Hall Farm, and if so was there a mill in the vicinity? Wyndleyquech sounds like a marshy place near Wyndley, and Thomas Taylor was buying ploughland in Middle Maney Field in 1363, his charters being at Birmingham Reference Library<sup>6</sup>. Members of the Huchens family were residents of Maney and the Wylde Quarter in 1416<sup>7</sup>, so this land may have been off the Birmingham Road somewhere. Several of the other names also appear in the 1416 court roll - John Aleyn was the tithingman for Little Sutton and Hill, and William Baker was a tithingman for Maney and the Wylde. John Baysham was a very energetic steward of the Earl of Warwick in the 1420s<sup>8</sup>, and it may be that this series of accounts dates from his time if all these small additional items have accrued since 1400. Mention of the court rolls is a reminder that the feudal system was still in being, requiring a new tenant or owner to present himself at the court leet where his title to the land would be confirmed and the conditions agreed.

**And for 2d increased rent from Thomas Bailly for 10 ploughstrips, lately William Baker's, lying in the field of Wynley, demised to him for a term of 40 years by court rolls for.....years before the preceding year in addition to the 6d old rent payable for it before etc.**

**And 1d increased rent from John Joliffe for a toft in Assheforlong, demised to John Joliffe and his heirs, according to the custom of the manor in the court rolls for previous years in addition to the old rent formerly payable.**

**And for 4d new rent from William Walker for 2 small crofts which lie next to**

**Hullewood to the north, the town of Hulle to the south and the highway leading towards Lichfield for the term of the lives of William and his wife Elizabeth, as in the court rolls for .... years before etc.**

**And for 1d new rent from William Camelde of Burmicham for a parcel of meadow called Alderichawe and Wyggenhullemede, demised to him according to court rolls for .... years before etc.**

**And for 1d new rent for a parcel of land out of the king's waste in Great Sutton 2 feet wide and 21 feet long attached to his tenement called Saintmaryhull in order to repair St. Mary's house, demised to Thomas Redde and his heirs for work on the said building, payable at the usual terms according to the court rolls for ...years before etc.**

**And for 2d increased rent from Richard Die for a toft with appurtenances on the Coldfeld called Spetelles, demised to him by the court rolls for years before etc.**

**And for 1d new rent from Richard Harecroft, smith, for a piece of ground on the king's waste there 35 feet long and the same wide, lying on the Stadelede Greve to hold to him and his heirs by the court rolls for .... years before etc.**

None of these records appear in the 1433 account, so presumably they represent new activity after 1433. Thomas Bailly may have been a relative of the Bailiff, having taken over William Bakers strips he was probably a Maney man, and the likely location for Wynley open field is between Jockey Road and Wyndley Pool. Ashfurlong covered a wide area, so the toft or platform where a building formerly stood could be anywhere in the Whitehouse Common / Reddicap district, but my guess would be on Reddicap Hill. The very detailed description of the crofts at Hill enable them to be identified with some certainty, while William Camelde's parcel of meadow probably lies somewhere beneath the Minworth sewage works. St. Mary's Hall stood on Trinity Hill, and was later connected with Bishop Vesey's grammar school, while Spetelles and Stadelede Greve are as yet unidentified. The designation of Richard Harecroft as a smith and John Aleyn as a cartwright show that combining farming with a trade (which is a feature of 17th century Sutton) was already common<sup>9</sup>. In this account, most of the references to coppices refer to income from their use as pastures, but Hillwood is described as "boscum de Hullewood", i.e. the

woodland of Hillwood, and was still being leased out as a coppice in Elizabethan times.

**Total £19. 11s. 1d.**

A running total is given after each group of items - the corresponding figure in 1433 was £19. 10s. 0d

**Small revenues and increased rents**

**And for 4s the value of 18 hens issuing from the rents there this year, such sales being included in the previous year's accounts.**

**And for 12d the value of 24 arrowheads, at 1/2d a head this year, such sales etc. And for 1d the value of a glass goblet from the rents there this year, such sales etc.**

These items appear in exactly the same form in the 1433 account, except that the hens are worth 3s. At some point particular rents must have been agreed with payment partly in kind, suggesting that 100 or so years previously one tenant kept a lot of fowl, another was a maker of arrowheads, and another a glassmaker - by the time of these accounts, an equivalent amount of money was no doubt being paid in lieu, the fictional items still being listed for accounting purposes. Dugdale records an agreement of 1297 when the Earl of Warwick allowed John, Lord of Little Barr, to have some woods for an annual payment of six barbed arrows, to be delivered at Sutton every Michaelmas.

**And for 20d rent for 5 acres of arable in the field called Wynley and Stokehull, late in the lord king's hands, now demised to Robert Huchens for the term of his life by the court rolls for ....year, as appears in divers etc.**

**And for 2d new rent from John Wifford for a croft called Repecroft, over and above the 6d old rent as appears in the aforesaid court rolls etc.**

**And for 2s.5d. increased rent from John Hawkyns for a cottage in Sutton called Ferroures, late occupied by Edith at Lee, now demised to the said John by the court rolls for the .... year of the reign of King Henry VI over and above the old rent**

**And for 4s 4d increased rent for a messuage with half a yardland of arable in Mandy lately held by John Short, now demised for the term of their**

**lives to Robert Osborne and his wife Agnes, over and above the 2s. 4d. old rent payable before by the court rolls this ..... year etc.**

These are all in the 1433 account, but it is damaged at this place, so there are not many differences to note - the cottage was called ferroce and it was Alice atte Lee, and Robert Osborne was in his 12th year. Robert Huchens appears in the 1416 court roll at Maney, and John Wyford was a juror. Wynley and Stokehull is presumably the same open field as Wynley; half a yardland was about 16 acres, so if rent was the same as the 4d per acre Huchens was paying, Osborne's 6s. 8d. rent would have been 5s.4d. for land and 1s. 4d. for the house. Repecroft is not identified. A croft was a small field with a fence or hedge enclosing it, and a messuage was a dwelling house with its immediate surrounds.

**And for 4d. increased rent for a cottage late of William Cowper now demised to John Congrewe and his heirs by manorial custom, over and above the 3s. old rent formerly payable by the court rolls for years before etc.**

**And for 4d new rent from Richard Die for a croft called Litill Stokehill demised to him by the court rolls for years before, to hold to him and his heirs by manorial custom, with the enclosures there to be made at his own expence etc. And for 1d new rent from William Northampton alias Baker for a parcel of waste land at Blakeven', lying between the king's road, and in length northwards towards Coleshull, and southwards to the land of William Mattok, to hold to him and his heirs by the court rolls for years before, payable at the usual terms there etc.**

**And for 2s. 2d. increased rent from Richard Dey taken into the lord's possession, over and above the old rent by the court rolls for ... years before**

Richard Die, Dey and Day are all the same person. None of these items appears in the 1433 account, and the phrase "to him and his heirs" seems to mark a move away from the feudal holding for life or for a term of years towards the modern concept of land ownership. Litill Stokehill was presumably near the Wynley and Stokehill open field in Maney. Blakeven is intriguing, as it reads like a traffic island in the middle of the road; assuming Coleshill to mean Coleshill Street, the king's road would then be Mill Street, so this may be between Mill Street and Reddicroft, or at the junction



with Coleshill Street, but in that case it should have been described as Great Sutton rather than Blakeven. Richard Dey's increased rent seems to suggest some land added to the estate he rented at New Shipton, which was in demesne.

**And 3s. 4d. customary tallage payable annually at Michaelmas, i.e. for that feast which falls within the time covered by this account, as etc.**

**And for 2d. increased rent from the said John Wifford for a croft called Quarreyfield, over and above the 6d. old rent by the court rolls, as etc.**

**Total 49s. 1d.**

Some time since 1433 these items must have been overlooked and then added on to the end of this section. There, the tallage is 33s.4d, and so it must have been the same in 1480 in order for the total to be correct. Tallage was a local tax the logic of which is obscure, but if Sutton had always paid tallage of 33s. 4d the lord was unlikely to abandon it; who paid it is not clear, but perhaps each of the 5 Quarters of Sutton paid a noble (6s. 8d.). The name Quarreyfield indicates that building stone had been quarried there or nearby, so it was probably located in the area bounded by Ashfurlong, New Hall, Maney Hill and Moor Hall, where there were stone outcrops.

**Farm of the Mill.**

**And for £4. 6s. 8d. received from Thomas Lesyng for the farm of the lord king's water mill there, demised to him this year, payable at the terms of Easter and Michaelmas in equal portions, that is, for the two terms which fall within the period [Marginal note - inquire as to its condition]**

**Total £4 6s. 8d.**

A farm in this sense meant that the mill was farmed out, or let (in theory) to the highest bidder. Robert Milward of Pirie (Perry Barr) and Richard his son had the mill in 1433 for the term of their lives at the same annual rent, and were in the 34th year of their lease. *And they are to keep the mill in working order at their own expense together with repairs and improvements to the said mill as may be required, performing the customary work and services applicable to the mill and its ponds and dams, that the lord will contribute any structural timber and will maintain the mill stream at his expense so that it flows under the great dam there.* There are similar conditions in the 1533 lease of the mill to Thomas Kene<sup>10</sup> (whose rent was £6. 13s. 4d.), so presumably Lesyng was also required to maintain it well - the marginal note must have been made by a royal steward with a view to ensuring that these conditions

were being met. The lord of the manor had the milling monopoly for the whole of Sutton, and there appear to have been no other mills there at this date. At the 1416 court Richard Milward was fined for taking too much tolcorn (the percentage of grain taken by the miller in payment for his work), but this seems to have been a standard practice, the equivalent of a licence to grind corn, with the added advantage of being enrolled in the official records so that his position as miller for the manor was unassailable. This implies that Milward was the working miller, but both Lesyng and Kene were probably minor gentry who sublet the mill to working millers

### **Manorial revenue.**

This heading signifies that the following entries relate to the lord's demesne, or directly-owned property. According to the exchange document of 1126, when the Earl of Warwick received Sutton from the King in exchange for the manor of Oakham in Rutland, the demesne consisted of one park and one hay fenced, two carucates of land and one watermill.

**He is not answerable for the farm of the manor site there this year, as it stood empty throughout the whole period of this account for lack of tenants and farmers this year, and so no profits were forthcoming for the time in question, as he says upon oath, as in etc. [Marginal note - rent in the following year one mark more].**

**But he is answerable for £8 for the farm of the herbage of the park of the lord king there, demised to Richard Lee this year, as in etc.**

In 1433 the manor was vacant, but it had until recently been demised to "Ralph Bracebruge knight. with the herbage of the park for £10 per annum". The Earl of Warwick's proctor, Matthew Smallwood, then had the farm of the park at £7 6s. 8d per annum for 21 years, that being the tenth year, by deed under the seal of the Earl of Warwick dated January 28th 1 Hen VI (1423), reserving sufficient grazing each year for the wild beasts there. The manor house, which stood on Manor Hill at the end of The Driffold, had once been a very imposing and extensive edifice, but having been empty for 50 years by 1480 was probably derelict. There is no mention in the accounts of the two carucates of land referred to in 1126, (about 60 acres) which were

firma nobis

Q[uo]d in die... [illegible text]

C. m. [illegible]

firmis manibus

[illegible text with a large hole in the center]

Part of the 1433 Baili's Account, slightly reduced, showing one of the large holes in the parchment

probably next to the manor site. The "herbage of the park" is effectively the grazing rights there, but may include woodland products as well. It is not clear why the value of this was increasing - the marginal note shows that it was to go up to £8 13s. 4d. the following year, being already a mark (13s. 4d.) more than Smallwood was paying. If in Bracebridge's time the park boundary was marked by the ditch and bank shown in Dr. Hodder's plan, and by Vesey's day by the bank shown on the same plan, perhaps the rent increased as the larger park took shape and was made more productive. The herbage of the Park is the subject of a clause in the Borough Charter of 1528, where it had been leased at £8. 13s.4d. but increased to £9, while the underwoods there were let for £5 per annum.

**He does not answer for the farm of five fish ponds in the said park, that is, during the said time, because they remained in the king's hands this year, and no profits were forthcoming from them in the period concerned, as he says upon his oath.**

**But he is answerable for 3s. the farm of a croft of demesne land near the mill, demised to the widow of William Aleyn this year, as in etc.**

**Concerning the income, whether from farm milk or dairy there this year, he does not answer for it, because there are no cows there from which such income could proceed in the aforesaid period, as the said bailiff says upon his oath**

The 1433 account is more-or-less identical, except that there are holes in the parchment at this point. The croft of demesne land was described as being near the manor, with a rent of 2s., and was occupied by William Kyderminster in lieu of wages. These entries reporting no income, which must have been repeated in every account for 50 years, presumably show that income must have been accounted for from them at some time in the past. The five pools in the park were supposed to have enabled Bracebridge to pay his rent in kind - Dugdale reports his rent as £10 or 120 bream, and Leland records a tradition that their dams were rebuilt with great heads of stone by Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick around 1415<sup>11</sup>, but by the time he was writing (c. 1550) the pools had been drained and converted to meadow, perhaps as a result of these years of yielding no profit, and perhaps fish were no longer such a staple part of the diet. The five pools were Keepers, Wyndley, Bracebridge, a pool by the Youth Centre called Cross Pool, and (probably) the town mill pool.

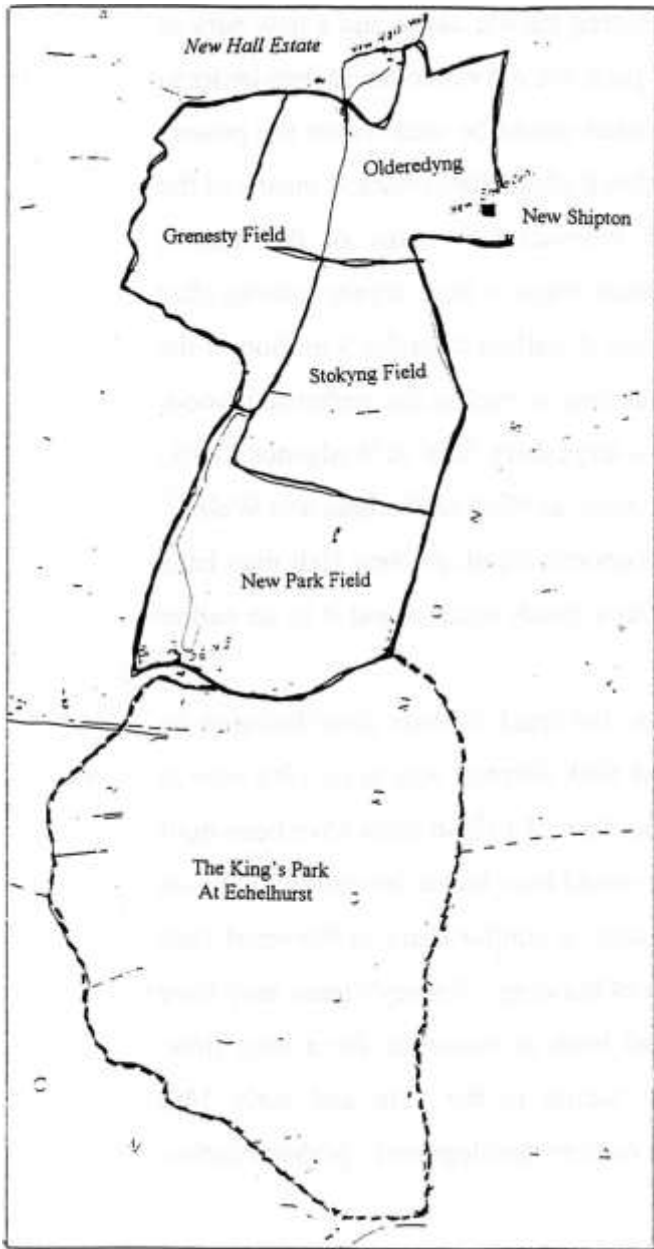
**But he is answerable for £4. 13s. 4d. from the widow of Richard Dey for the farm of a messuage there called Newpolepanne with four fields called Grenesta Field, Stokynghfield with new park, and the Olderynge, demised to Richard Dey and his son John Dey for a term of 40 years, this being the 26th year, by the court rolls from the 25 preceding years.**

In 1547 the corporation of Sutton leased New Shipton Farm to Humphrey Fisher for 80 years at an annual rent of £4 16s. 8d.<sup>12</sup> and the chief rent of New Shipton was still £4.16s. 8d. in the 18th century corporation rentals. This seemed fairly conclusive proof that Newpolepanne is New Shipton, and this is confirmed by the corresponding entry from 1433 : *and for £4 12s. 8d. rent (hole in the document here) called the Newshippen with 4 fields viz. Stoking, Grenestyfeld with New Park and the Olderedyng demised to John Verney clerk to the end of his life by the court rolls this being the 13th year payable at the terms of the Annunciation of Blessed Mary and Michaelmas per annum and John Verney is to maintain all the buildings of the said messuage and the fences of the said fields in all necessary things at his own expense that the lord will supply structural timber for building repairs and underwood for the maintenance of the said fences.* This confirms the early name of Newshippen, meaning new dairy farm, and this, taken in conjunction with the earlier entry recording that the old dairy farm was no longer productive (see the previous entry), and the inclusion of this item under demesne income, leads to the supposition that Newshippen was established to replace the old dairy farm. The proximity of New Shipton to New Hall, and the decay of the manor house, further suggest that New Hall may have become the Earl of Warwick's Sutton headquarters. Perhaps New Hall was developed in the "one hay fenced" of the 1126 exchange. The field names are also full of interest - Stoking is a name used for a field newly cleared and brought into cultivation, as is Redding (Oldereding in 1433 was contracted to Oldering by 1480), Grenesty is a field where gorse or broom is a nuisance (some 17th century inventories list a special tool for dealing with it - a broomhook), while New Park leads to highly speculative possibilities. Later in this account there is reference to "the king's park at Echelhurst", and the Corn Rent map shows fields adjacent to Penns Lane with the name Park. All this leads to the surmise that the whole of the Earl of Warwick's estate in Sutton underwent a thorough reorganisation, New Hall becoming his headquarters in place of the Manor House, New Shipton replacing the old dairy, and a new park at Echelhurst superseding Sutton Park as his deer park, the

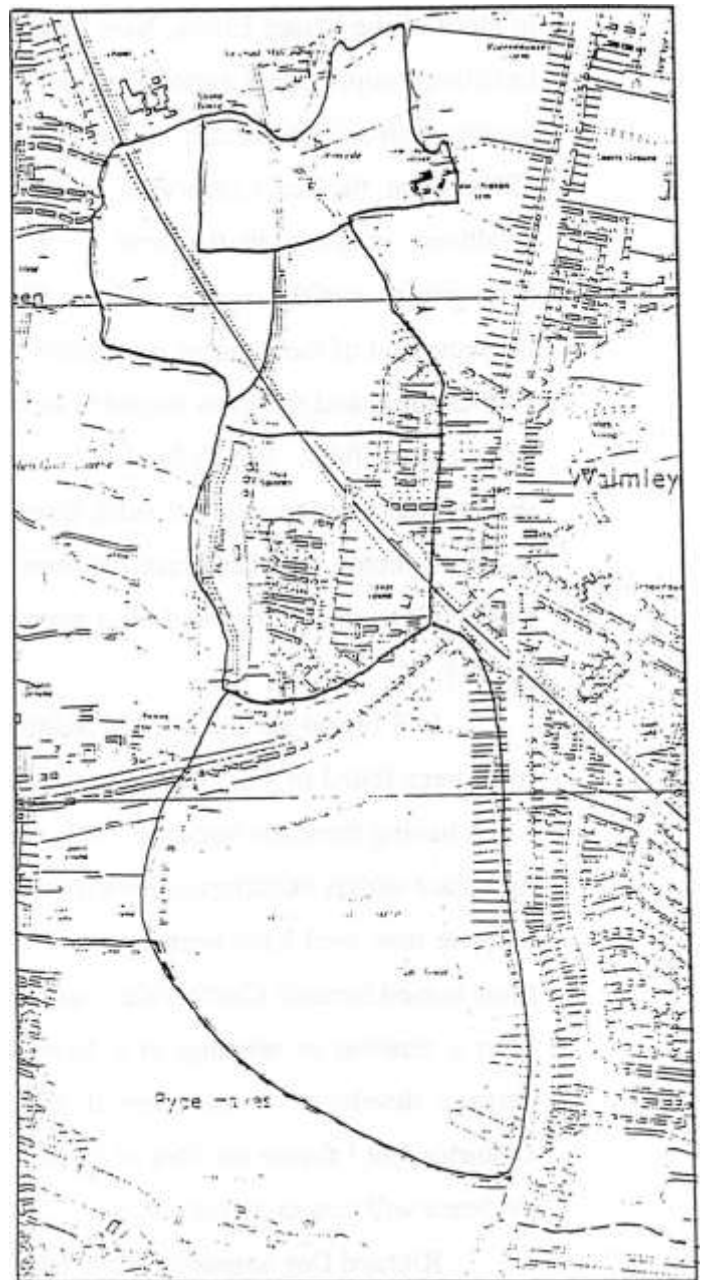
old estate could then be let to tenants such as Bracebridge. Such a reorganisation would be well within the powers of Baysham, the Earl's supervisor, and well within Richard Beauchamp's means as the wealthiest magnate in the land. In North Warwickshire many of the manors belonging to wealthy owners suffered from reduced income from arable farming after the reduction of the national population from over 6 million to under 3 million in the 14th century, and the lords turned to pastoral farming to exploit the underused wood-pasture more fully. The Earls of Warwick had a large dairy farm in Wedgenock Park, and records show transfers of stock from as far away as Northumberland and Wales<sup>13</sup>, so New Shipton may have resulted from this economic trend, as New Hall may have been built to satisfy the need for a mansion with a trendy moat round it in an earlier century

In a recent survey of New Shipton Barn, the cruck timbers were found to be from trees felled in 1425, but Verney's lease of New Shipton was in its 13th year in 1433, having therefore begun in 1421. The huge barn of 1425-6 must have been built to replace earlier buildings (otherwise the lease would have had to be redrawn), but its purpose may well have been to house dairy cattle; a similar dairy at Berwood Hall (now buried beneath Castle Vale) was six bays of building. Verney's lease may have been a renewal or reletting of a farm that had been in existence for a long time, perhaps developed in the general growth of Sutton in the 13th and early 14th centuries, but I favour the idea of an early 15th century development - perhaps further evidence will turn up to settle this.

Richard Dey appears to have taken over the lease in 1455 - he was a Coventry grazier, and the lease of New Shipton is probably a simple business transaction, whereas John Verney was in the service of the Earl of Warwick. There were two John Verneys, father and son, both of them clergymen and both in the Earl's service<sup>14</sup>. The Earl of Warwick, Richard Beauchamp (1382-1439), employed a Receiver-General and a Supervisor to act as his treasurer and manage his estates; in the 1420's John Baysham held both offices, and was very active (Ross, 1956); John Verney also filled both offices slightly later on. It was the custom of great lords to reward their officials with appointments which carried an income but few duties; in the 1416 court roll, John Verney is described as "chaplain", so may have been appointed to the



Plan to show the possible layout of the southern end of the New Hall Valley in the early 19 Century. The base map, which is just visible, is the 1824 Com Rent map, reduced.



The conjectural extent of New Shipton Farm and the park at Echelhurst superimposed on a modern map of Walmley. The scale is approximately 1:15000.

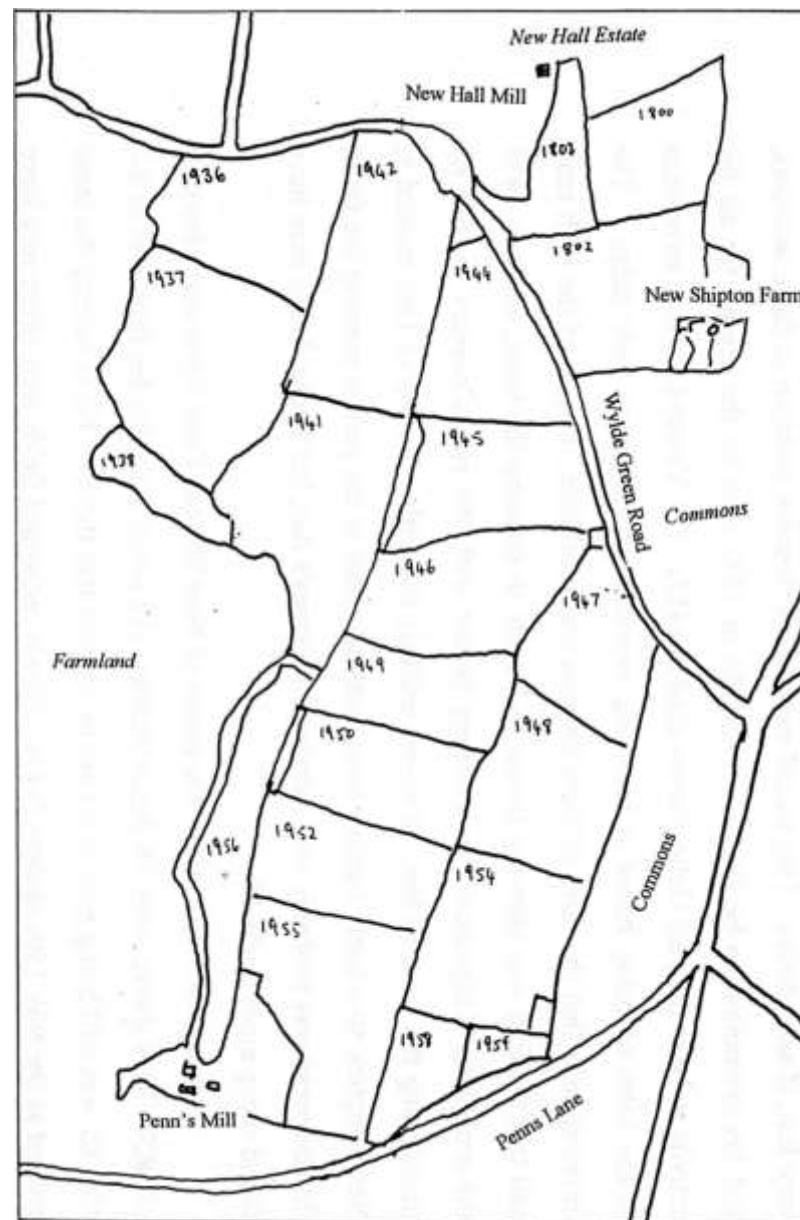
Part of the Corn Rent Map of 1824, to show the fields  
Occupying the presumed original extent of New Shipton.  
The names of the fields are given in the Corn Rent  
Schedule as follows:-

New Shipton Farm (owner - Floyer)

1800	Hill Close
1802	Barn Close
1803	Rickyard Meadow
1936	The Grimstye
1937	The Wood
1938	Little Meadow
1941	Bullford Meadow
1942	Yates's or Vales Meadow
1944	Saw Pit Close
1945	Alder Close
1946	Marlpit Close
1947	Broom Close
1948	Horton's Close
1949	Long Close
1950	Smith's Close

Penns Estate (owner - Webster)

1952	Marlpit Piece
1954	Stable Piece
1955	The Park
1956	Mill Pool
1958	Corner Piece
1959	Gardens





Chapel of St Blase at the Manor House, a post to which an income was attached, but very few, if any, duties. This would explain his frequent mention in these accounts, and his promotion to be Dean of Lichfield in 1432 may be the reason for all his activity to be in the past (John Verney died in 1457). The Verneys seem to have been in the habit of being better at receiving income than in paying their debts. The implication is that the farm of New Shipton was profitable, in spite of the high rent, and that the Earl was showing favour to Verney in granting the lease, while in 1455 the ambitious Kingmaker was currying favour with the rich Coventry grazier by transferring the lease to him. It seems unlikely that either Verney or Dey resided at New Shipton, so a fairly humble house was adequate to the person running the farm; this business was probably still dairying in Verney's day, but Richard Day may have found sheep more profitable.

The earliest map to show the extent of New Shipton Farm is the corn rent map of 1824. This shows some 16 fields totalling 112 acres; since the fee farm rent of £4. 16s. 8d. was still being paid, it is easy to suppose that these 16 fields occupy the same ground as the four 15th century fields. Newly reclaimed fields were often very large - for example, at Peddimore in the 13th century Thomas and Rose Arden were authorised to make assarts "to the Sutton measure of 40 acres" - so these four fields may have totalled as much as 160 acres. They are not listed in the 1547 lease, but had probably been subdivided by then, as it includes a clause relating to the sub-letting of Stokying Meadow, 7 acres. In 1547 the land there seems to have been all agricultural, but by 1617 there had been a significant change. In 1617, William Fisher of New Shipton Farm sold to Robert Shilton of Birmingham a messuage with corn, blade and fulling mills at Eachelhurst lately occupied by John Penn with a meadow, New Park Field, Pitt Leasow and Park Field Closes lying between the mill fleam and the heath, with long meadow and well meadow. This may correspond with the Penns Hall land of 1824, totalling 43 acres, and is probably the New Park Field of the 1480 account; adding this to the 112 acres of the farm gives 155 acres, which may therefore be the original extent of New Shipton Farm. How William Fisher in 1617 had managed to become the owner of New Shipton in place of the Corporation is a mystery, but New Shipton continued to be subject to the £4. 16s. 8d. Fee Farm Rent in spite of change of ownership and sale of New Park. It is inconceivable that the 1547 lease would have failed to mention Penns Mill had it been in existence then, the inference being that it was established in late 16th century at about same time as New Hall Mill.

**And for 10s. for the farm of the pasture of Knolles demised to John Cheshire by the court rolls, and lately held by John Wryght for the same amount, as in etc. He does not answer for the farm of a dovecote there this year, because it stayed in the king's hands, and was totally broken down and destroyed by crows, and reduced to nothing by rain and wind and other storms, so that no income is forthcoming for the period concerned, as the said bailiff says on his oath.**

**But he is answerable for 22s. for the herbage of Erlesmede alias Patymore, with 2s. 8d. for the aftermath of the said meadow, demised to the tenants there, and no more because 7 wagonloads of hay from that meadow are mowed for the lord king's use this year, of which 3 were delivered to the Rider of the Chase and 4 to the manor, as in etc.**

There is a John Wryght of Greves (near Minworth) in the 1416 court roll, so perhaps Knolles was in that direction, but Langley Knolls sounds a likely location. This item is not in the 1433 account, but the surviving fragment of this is torn off after a few more entries, so it may have been in the missing part. Both bailiffs, in 1433 and 1480, wax lyrical about the state of the dovecote - Robert Kelying in 1433 blamed *mustelis* (weasels, stoats and martens) as well as crows, but the message of a once-productive asset fallen into ruin is clear.

Earlsmead, called simply Petymore in 1433, was later known as the Lord's Meadow, not far from Peddimore Hall. The corn rent map shows it as a large egg-shaped field, predating the surrounding fields whose boundaries butt onto the older Lord's Meadow. The reason for this name is obvious from the accounts, as this meadow supplied the needs of the Manor for hay - in 1433 income was not due because the hay had all been cut for the lord's use and the aftermath (use of the field for pasture after the hay was harvested) was grazed by animals belonging to the lord's tenants. The Lord's Meadow Charity was established in the 16th century, by Bishop Vesey, according to Dugdale, who may have obtained the remaining demesne lands, whereby the hay was given to poor widows for their maintenance<sup>15</sup>

**He is not answerable for the farm of the coppice of Syndenhamhey for this period, because it belongs to the keeper of Berwood, as in etc.**

**Nor does he answer for the agistment of oxen and cattle grazing in the king's park of Echelhurst for the above period, because no such grazing took place there during this time.**

**Nor does he answer for any income from the pannage of pigs at Martinmas this year, because there was no mast for them during the above time.**

**Nor does he answer for 6s. 8d. for the farm of the coppice of Hawkenest lately demised to John Hall for the time covered by this account, because no-one would farm it, and no income at all was forthcoming at this time, on his oath.**

"Coppice" at this period meant managed woodland, probably harvested every few years for poles and small timber, and these were probably remnants of more extensive woodland. Walmley Ash, Wigginshill and Minworth were still collectively known as "Beyond the wood", and an early 13th century deed<sup>16</sup> refers to a newly cleared estate at Ramshurst in Bulls Lane as "in Sutton Woods", so if Sydenhamhey and Hawksnest are Signal Hayes and Falcon Lodge, they are perhaps relics of former more extensive woodland. However, according to the 1433 account, the income would have been for "The pasture in the coppice of Sydenhalehay", so even these woods must have been converted to pasture by the 15th century. Much of the early medieval woodland was wood-pasture, gradually becoming less wooded as grazing animals prevented regeneration of trees, where foraging cattle and rootling swine were a more profitable use of the land than wood products. If the Keeper of Berwood had Sydenhamhey, and Sydenhamhey is Signal Hayes, this would give an idea of how far northward the Berwood division of Sutton Chase extended. Oxen were still the draught animals in general use, and court rolls of the period regularly require inhabitants to ring their pigs, and fine them for not doing so; generally in forested areas there was a charge of 1d. per pig for pannage, or foraging for acorns, payable at Martinmas (November 10th).

**Nor does he answer for any income deriving from a parcel of old hay left over from last year for the above period, because it was not sold at this time.**

**Nor does he answer for income from the sale of rabbits there, during the time of this account, because none were sold during this time.**

**Nor does he answer for the Duchess of Buckingham's pigs at the above period, because there were none of the duchess's pigs in the aforesaid park at this time.**

**Nor does answer for income from pannage of pigs on acorns there this year, because no such pannage occurred at this time.**

**Total - £24. 8s. 4d.**

No old hay was sold in 1433 either. A parcel of old hay sounds odd, but this was the term used for any well-defined commodity, as in the parcel of waste land already mentioned, or the "parcel of muck" sometimes found in 17th century inventories. The other items are not in the 1433 account (although it is very badly damaged at this point). Rabbits were the product of coneygrees or warrens, and there were several of these at Sutton - possibly the one near Warren House Farm belonged to the manor. The Duchess of Buckingham concerned was probably Ann Nevill, heiress of Maxstoke Castle, who married Humphrey Earl of Stafford, who was created Duke of Buckingham in 1444; he died in 1460, but she survived him, dying in 1480<sup>17</sup>. As she was the Earl of Warwick's great-aunt as well as an important neighbouring magnate, the presence of her pigs in Sutton in the 1450's is explained. One item in the 1433 account here is 14s. for the sale of crops to John Jelif and Thomas Porter, showing that the bailiff had to look out for such additional items when making his accounts.

**Farm of a weir called The Were - he is not answerable for the farm of a certain weir called The Were in Mulledmore late demised to Thomas Reede for a term of years for 6s. 8d. per annum, that is in the said time of this account, because no-one would take on the farm of it, both because no income was produced in the said time and because it was granted by the late Duke there to Humfrey Gulson free of rent, as in etc.**

**Total - nil.**

**Revenue from land in the lord's hands - he answers for 20d revenue from a toft with land adjacent called Harisortumore, late held by Thomas Baker customarily, taken into the late lord's hands because the said Thomas alienated the said land to Thomas Huchies by charter and not by the court rolls, this being the 56th year, over and above the old 5s. old rent, demised to Richard Bailly the 23rd year before, as in etc.**

**Total 20d.**

Not much interest in fishing in Sutton, apparently, this being almost certainly a fish weir. The location is problematic, Mulledemore could be a name meaning near a mill, but the weir may even have been at the southern tip of Sutton on the River Tame; the "late Duke" was George Duke of Clarence who received the Manor on the attainder of the Earl of Warwick in 1471. The Harisortumore entry is the last in the 1433 account (no mention of the weir there), the sum being 20s. then, but most of the entry is torn away. Thomas Hutchens appears in the court roll for 1416 in a dispute over the legality of his claims to some land called Alchons, so he was active in real estate when the feudal system was in decline, but sometimes burned his fingers.

**New rents**

**And for 6d new rent from Robert Kelynge for a parcel of waste in Great Sutton next to Sutton Mill, demised for a term of 100 years by the court rolls for 38 years before, this being year 37, as in etc.**

**And for  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. new rent from Thomas Chattock for a parcel of waste in Wisehaw demised by the court rolls for 32 years before, as in etc.**

**And for 5s.2d. rent discovered on examining the rental for last year, concerning both various parcels of land occupied by John Verney, Dean of Lichfield, and for other parcels of land which had been concealed, as in etc.**

**And for 10s.  $8\frac{3}{4}$ d. rent on the account for 21 years before found on examination of the rental, of which 4s. 8d. is rent recovered from John Verney, as in etc. And for 4s.  $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. rent on examination of the rental for 21 years before, as in etc.**

**Total 20s.  $7\frac{1}{4}$ d.**

Robert Kelynge was the bailiff in 1433. It seems strange that there should have been waste land near the centre of Sutton, but perhaps this land, probably now South Parade, was too marshy and subject to flooding to have been exploited before; the term of 100 years shows some confidence that inflation would remain at zero. The bailiff seems to have been diligent in catching up with John Verney, who died in 1457, if his rent arrears were only now being discovered.

## **New Farms**

**He is not answerable for 13s. 4d. for the farm of the pasture of Lyndrich Copies in Sutton Collefeld late demised to John Hull in the time covered by this account because it reverted to common this year, as in etc.**

**But he answers for 40s. for the farm of a tenement in Sutton with its appurtenances called Bere newly acquired by lord from the feoffees of the late Robert Kelyng, demised to John Chesshire for a term of years, this being year 17, payable at the usual terms there, as in etc.**

**He is not answerable for the farm of a tenement with its appurtenances called Gasethyng, or for another tenement there late John Jelly's, which belonged to Robert Kelyng on the day of his death, that is, in this account. because Alice, widow of the said Robert, holds it as her dower for her life, then after her decease the whole remainder is due to the heirs of the said late Duke. [marginal note - enquire if she be surviving or not].**

### **Total 40s.**

Lindridge Coppice was mostly submerged when Langley Mill Pool was made in 1603, and was probably too marshy to be very useful as pasture; however, the relatively high rent may indicate that it covered a wider area in 1480. Neither The Bere (probably an inn called The Bear) nor Gasethyng have been identified, but they and the other tenement were possibly somewhere in High Street. It appears that Robert Kelyng had died at least 17 years previously, and the auditor's note hints that his widow must be quite old. John Jolif was a tithingman for More and Ashfurlong quarter in 1416, another surname which nobody could spell!

**Sales of woodland produce - He is not answerable for income from the sale of any woods or underwoods there, that is in the said time, no sale of woods or underwoods occurred within the period, as the bailiff says on his oath.**

### **Total - nil.**

**Sale of fishery produce - nor does he answer for 5s. the value of pickerel and eels as sold in various previous years, that is, for this accounting period, because no such sale of pickerel, eels or other kind of fish took place there at that time, on the said bailiffs oath.**

**Nor does he answer for any income from sale of eels caught in the mill pool there, sold for 12s. a year in former years, in the period concerned, for the same reason as noted in the last item, on his oath.**

**Total - nil.**

Richard Neville, son-in-law of Richard Beauchamp, became Earl of Warwick in 1445, and was soon campaigning on behalf of the Yorkist claim to the throne.

He is said to have sold off vast quantities of Sutton Coldfield timber in the 1450's to help finance his military and political ambitions<sup>18</sup>, leaving the town in an impoverished state- even by 1480 the woodlands had not recovered enough to produce income. Woodland products included timber for building, but also poles and sticks for a multitude of uses from minor repairs and fencing to furniture-making and tools, while dead wood and unusable pieces were the main fuel for cooking and heating. Acorns provided forage for pigs, while nuts, berries and fruits were welcome additions to the diet, not to mention any wildlife that could be snared and added to the pot. Such products must have been available for life to go on in Sutton, but not enough for the lord to profit from. One also presumes that fish and eels had not entirely died out, and it was lack of buyers rather than dearth of fish that made the fisheries unprofitable. Eels were once common in Sutton - an eel fork specially for catching them is among the old tools to be seen at New Hall Mill - and may become so again if river and sea pollution can be remedied.

**Court perquisites.**

**But he is answerable for 25s. 9d. the income of a View and Court Leet held there on the Thursday after the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist in the 19th year of the said king's reign, of which 9s. 6d. was heriot, as appears on the court rolls shown and examined before the making of this account, and 9s. 6½d income from a view and Court Leet held there the Thursday after the feast of St. George the Martyr, in the 20th year of the king's reign, as likewise appears on the rolls shown and examined before this account.**

**Total - 35s. 3½d**

**Sum total due - £45. 12s. 8¾d.**

The manorial courts were an important source of income for the feudal lord, but 35 shillings (£1.75) is low compared with the £4. 2s. in 1416 and £11.2s. 6d.in 1548, perhaps showing Sutton at a low ebb.. The View of Frankpledge was a feudal institution where every householder was supposed to attend and renew their oath of

fealty; in reality this was done through tithingmen representing a group of householders (theoretically ten); in Sutton these petty officials were called Headboroughs, and two of them spoke for each of the five quarters, Great Sutton, Hill and Little Sutton, More and Ashfurlong, Maney and the Wylde, and Walmley and Beyond the Wood. The court regulated the economy of the manor and penalised minor offences, and also dealt with changes in tenancies of property. Consequently, court income was higher when economic activity was high. So far in this account the bailiff has been dealing with income, but now all the income has been accounted for, and is given as the total sum due; however, an equal amount of space is devoted to the expenditure side of the account, which includes some curious items.

### **Released and defaulted rents**

**The same amount is allowed as in diverse previous accounts for the chaplain celebrating mass within the said manor there this year, as a release from rent 12d.**

**And in released rent for 16 acres of arable land next to the water mill at 21 ½d. per annum various other lands there of various other tenants there at 14d. per annum and for 216 acres of land of various tenants at 18s. 10d. per annum and various other lands there late of William Collette at 4d per annum, because all and singular the above mentioned land is included in the king's park there, as appears in the bailiffs account for last year in 4 items - 22s. ½d.**

Although the position of Chaplain of the Chapel of St. Blaize at the manor house was almost certainly a synecure, carrying an income but no duties, this entry shows that at one time the chaplain was required to serve the town as well as the manor; it also shows that the chaplain had property in Sutton, otherwise this rent rebate would be of no use to him.. Sutton had a parish church with a rector from at least 1280, so perhaps earlier in the 12th and 13th centuries the inhabitants had to survive with only two masses a year. Some 240 acres appear to have been added to the park in the recent past, another puzzle, but if the 14th century boundaries identified by Dr. Hodder show the extent of the park during Bracebridge's tenancy, these 240 acres could easily be accounted for south-west of Wyndley and east of Park House. The conversion of arable into pasture was common practice in the 15th century, but adding this land to the park indicates that



it was probably demesne land. It is tempting to suggest that this land may have been used for the mysterious king's park at Eachelhurst, with a water-mill already at Penns or New Hall, but there is no other evidence to support such a hypothesis.

**And as reduced rent for one tenement called Lynchiok, because it is demised for a smaller rent than was paid by 3s. per annum, thus the reduction in rent this year - 3s.**

**And as reduced rent for a customary tenement late of Robert Brekyshild, because it is demised for less than was payable by 6d, and so the loss of rent this year, as noted in last year's account -6d.**

**And for default of rent for a parcel of land in Hulle, late in the tenure of Richard Hewester for 3s. per annum, because it is in the king's hands, and yielded nothing on the said bailiffs oath, thus the default of rent this year - 3s.**

**And in reduction of rent on a parcel of waste late William Northampton's alias Baker lying at Blowen, formerly yielding 1d. because the said William and his heirs are inhabitants, and the said land lies in the king's hands, and nothing was raised this year, on his said oath - 1d.**

**And likewise for default of rent for an enclosure called Stokehull, and various parcels of land on the Collefild late in the tenure of John Dye at 20d. per annum, on which there was no income for the above period, as he says on his oath - 20d. And likewise for default of rent for a tenement late in the tenure of Alice More, now in the hands of the present lord king, and it yielded nothing, on his oath - 6d.**

**And in rent allowed on a garden in Wormley, late in the tenure of Andrew (blank) at 4d per annum, as is more fully set out in the foot of the last account – 4d**

**And in rent allowed there in Wormeley previously yielding 6s. 6d. per annum, because the said tenement was granted to the Keeper of Berewode as a rise in wages due to him of old - 6s. 8d.**

**Total 33s. 10½d**

Although these lost rents seem to indicate decline, their value is much less than the increased rents listed above, especially considering that the main items are change of

use by addition to the park and payment to the Bailiff or Keeper of Berwood. Lynchiok and Robert Brekyshild are not identified, but Richard Hewster of Hill officiated at the 1416 court.

**Chaplain's Salary, Officer's wages and Steward's expenses.**

**And for the salary of a chaplain celebrating divine service in the manor there, as allowed in the account of the bailiff last year 33s. 4d.**

The Chapel of St. Blaize was said to be worth £3 per annum, and if so the rest of the amount would either be paid by the lord rather than coming out of manorial income, or was the value of the property attached to the appointment.

**And for Humfrey Gelson's wages, the park keeper there, at 2d a day for his office, as allowed in the last account by the said bailiff - 60s. 8d.**

**And for shoe money for the said Humfrey for the same reason, as in etc. - 6s. 8d. And in this matter hay for his horse for the same reason, as in etc. - 5s. 0d.**

**[Marginal note - to find the letters paten of H. Golson, J Gulson, and J. Cailegh]**

**And for John Golson's wages, bailiff of Lynrich at 1½d. per day for his office this year, as in etc. - 45s.6d.**

**And for James Cayleh's wages, bailiff of Hulwode at 2d per day for his office, as in etc. - 60s. 8d.**

Some of these offices were sinecures, and the duties attached to others were probably quite light, and the appointees were often retainers of the lord of the manor, rewarded for good service by being granted these offices. Park keeper is self-explanatory, though he evidently walked as much as he rode his horse, but the other offices also relate to the sporting value of the manor of Sutton. Still attached to the Manor was the Chase of Sutton Coldfield, a huge expanse, administered in four sections Lindridge extending through Middleton to the Tame, Berwood in the south from Curdworth to Erdington, Coldfield to the West as far as Great Barr and Aldridge, and Hillwood to the north from Little Aston to Tamworth; the keepers or bailiffs of these areas were responsible for ensuring that game was plentiful and preventing poaching, and also accompanied local lords who had permission to hunt in their area. A dispute over permission to hunt in the chase in 1477 nearly led to bloodshed between 60 retainers of Willoughby of

Middletin and 100 men of Lord Lisle of Drayton Bassett, but finished up in court. Payment by the day was not unusual, but only for 364 days a year; the different rates presumably reflect the different level of responsibility, Lindridge perhaps having less sporting countryside (this is long before the Belfry golf course). The officers listed above had probably been installed by previous patrons Duke of Clarence or Earl of Warwick - and continued in office, but the following are new appointees by the new regime, and the documents appointing them - letters patent- are quoted in full. They do not contain a job description or anything of much interest, being included here for the sake of completeness, so feel free to skip over them.

**And for Roger Holden's wages, who, by his letters patent dated 11 August 19 Edward IV, for good service given and to be given, was given by the King of his special grace the office of Bailiff of the Collefeld in the Chase of Sutton, this office being, by forfeiture of George late Duke of Clarence and in the minority of Edward, son of Isabelle who was the wife of the late Duke, in the king's gift, to have and occupy to the said Roger the said office, in person or through a sufficient deputy, during the minority of the said Edward and so long as the lordship or manor of Sutton remains in the king's hands; and he also granted to the said Roger 2d. a day for the office, to be taken annually from the income, profits and revenues of the said lordship or manor which comes into the hands of the receiver, bailiff or other responsible person for the time being, at the terms of Easter and Michaelmas in equal portions, during the minority of the said heir and so long as the king holds the manor or lordship, together with all the other profits, products, and emoluments customarily attached to the office, as is more fully set out in the said letters patent; and so in paying him his wages at 2d. a day for a year ending at Michaelmas in the 20th year of the said king's reign, as the wages for this office were allowed to John Clerk late holder of the same office in the accounts of the bailiff of Sutton last year, on a receipt of the said Roger delivered and examined before the making of this account - 60s. 8d.**

**And for John Knyght's wages, who was made Keeper of Berwode by the said lord King Edward IV by letters patent dated 15th March 19 Edward IV for true and faithful service which this said dear friend John Knyght, late servant to George the late Duke of Clarence, had given and would give,**

and by the king's special grace, was granted the Keepership of Berwode also called Bailiff of Berwode in the Chase of Sutton (endorsed in Collefeld) in his county of Warwick then in the king's disposal owing to the minority of Edward son of the late duke to have and enjoy the said office himself or through sufficient deputy or deputies during the said minority, and so long as the king holds the lordship of Sutton, with the fees and wages customarily pertaining to the office to be taken from the income and revenues of the town and lordship of Sutton handled and managed by the Bailiff of the said town for the time being in equal portions at Easter and Michaelmas, and all other profits, products, and advantages pertaining or belonging to the said office, to the same degree as the said John or anyone else holding the office before that time had enjoyed, as the said letters more fully show, and so in payment of his said wages at 2d. a day for the year ending at Michaelmas 20 Edward IV, as is allowed for the same office in the last year's bailiffs accounts, and shown by an acquittance of the said John delivered and examined before this account was made - 60s. 8d.

And for the wages of William Berkeley Esq. to whom the said lord King Edward IV by his letters patent dated 1 May 18 Edward IV chronicled and enrolled immediately after the foot or end of the account of David Madock, the Bailiff of Yerdeley in the county of Worcester, among other things, granted the office of Forest Rider of the Chase of Sutton and Colvyle and Sutton Park, to have and to occupy the said office among others to the said William by himself or by his sufficient deputy or deputies during the said minority. And he further granted to the said William for the said office of Forest Rider 100s. from the income, profits and revenues of the lordship of Sutton and Colvyle coming into the hands of the receiver, farmer, bailiff, holder or other occupier of the said lordship for the time being payable at Easter and Michaelmas in equal portions, and so in payment of his said wages at the said terms to Michaelmas 20 Edward IV as was likewise allowed to the same William in last year's bailiffs account, by acquittance of the said William delivered and examined before this account was made up - 100s.

And for the steward's expenses in holding courts there this year, as appears in the rolls thereof and in a bill replaced there - 18s. 2d.

Total - £22. 11s. 4d.

In 1528 Sutton was granted its Borough Charter, and a large part of that document is taken up with an account of all these manorial appointments to offices in connection with the chase and the park, which then became extinct; however, the payments due to the various officers then became a charge on the borough to the crown, totalling £58, and this "fee farm rent" continued to be paid annually for another 300 years. The Chase ceased to exist in 1528, having lasted over 400 years since its creation in 1125.

**Livery of the Palesman with their wages and the Bailiffs there. And for 4 quarters 2½ bushels of tolcorn bought for the livery of William Rede, palesman there, at 4s. 6d. a quarter, the price fixed for the year, as likewise was allowed for various other late palesmen in various previous accounts - 20s. 9½d.**

**And for 11 quarters 3 bushells 1 peck of oats bought for the horses of the chase rider this year, the fixed price for the year being 20d per quarter, as likewise was allowed to him in various previous accounts - 19s. ½d.**

**And for wages for the said palesman for his office this year as in various previous accounts for the said lordship of Sutton - 8s.**

**And for wages of John Bailly the bailiff there at 4d a day; granted to him by the King in his letters patent, as paid to the bailiff of Sutton in last year's accounts £6. 16d. [letters patent deficient]**

**Total - £8. 9s. 2d.**

The 1433 account is a roll of parchment with part torn off and missing, but on the reverse there are details of transactions relating to goods rather than cash. These include the hens and arrowheads already mentioned, but also: *-4 quarters and 2 bushells of tolcorn received for the livery of the palesman at a quarter per 12 weeks total 4 quarters 2 bushells of the same for the livery of the said head palesman as above this year.*

*And for 11 quarters 3 bushels 1 peck of oats bought as below for the chase rider this year at the rate of a peck a day.*

*And for a pound of pepper due in rent at Christmas.*

*And for eight iron wedges carried forward from the previous year used by the park palesman for splitting wood. And for two saws and an iron file.*

*And for 3 eyries of swans brought forward from the previous year*

*And for 24 cartloads of hay brought forward from the previous year, and 23 cartloads produced by the meadows this year - total 47. Of which 20 cartloads*

*were used for the lord's horses in the hunting season and 3 were the customary annual livery of the Chase Rider; and 24 cartloads remain in the grange.*

The measures are volume measures, 2 gallons = 1 peck, 4 pecks = 1 bushell, 8 bushells = 1 quarter, 4 quarters = 1 chaldron or cartload. The palesmen would be responsible for maintaining the park fence, although their tools seem to have been lost by 1480, so perhaps by then their duties had lapsed and the post was a sinecure

**Warden's expenses. And for various items for the warden and expenses incurred by the said maker of this account on various essential things, as is detailed below, namely mowing and making hay by order of the said chase rider 20d., and for the enclosing of a meadow called Earl Medowe this year 12d., and for the making of pales in the park there this year 2s. 8d., and in making and repairing the pools there this year 16s. 2d. - altogether, as is detailed in two paper bills delivered and examined before the making of this account and left in the attached memoranda - 23s. 6d.**

**Total - 23s.6d.**

**Total of the above allowances - £34. 5s. 10d.**

**Still owing - £11. 6s. 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d**

Warden is another name for one of the chase officers, probably the chase rider, but if this was the title in common use in Sutton for a senior official, it could explain the choice of the title Warden rather than Mayor when the Borough was established in 1528. The bailiff now proceeds to show how he has disposed of the rest of the income.

**Of which there is allowed to the said maker of this account 2s. for his expenses in travelling to Warwick to render his account this year, as is allowed in various preceding accounts. Still owing - £11. 4s. 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d**

**Of which there is respited to him 59s 9d. for various fixed rents and farms there assessed too highly earlier, as appears in a new paper rental shown before the making of this account, these respites to stand until the said rental is renewed and examined.**

**And likewise - 9s. the value of a black bull which came as heriot of John Hewer, because it was in the court roll and not in the revenues of the said maker of this account, and so he had no power or warrant to distrain for**

**the consideration, and so this is respited until etc. [by gift to the steward as his fee]. Total respited 68s. 9d.. And there still remains - £7. 16s. 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d.**

Nearly £3 off the assessed rents of nearly £20, a 15% reduction, seems to be another indication of a manor in decline. Although this part of the 1433 account is missing, there is a fragment at the Stratford Record Office which, if not part of the same account, is from an adjacent year: *the expenses of Robert Kelyng bailiff riding from Sutton to Caversham to present this account there from the 1st to the 6th October after the end of the accounting year - 3s. 4d. And in supplying - Duffels clerk with hospitality at the expence of Robert Kelyng and for carriage of 12 fat bucks from Sutton to the lord there this year - 12s. The total sum he has is £48. 9s 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.* At that time the Earl's headquarters were at Caversham Park in Reading. The transport of 12 fat bucks would have entailed packing the carcasses in barrels of salt, whereas if deer were still being hunted in the Chase and Park in 1480 it was probably for local consumption by local worthies hunting by licence. The bailiff now goes to Warwick:

**Then he is charged with £9. 2s. 4d. received, as is set out in the foot of John Webb's account, beadle of Elmeley Castell. Total £16. 19s. 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.**

**Of which is allowed to him - £10 paid to John Clerk and John Hewyk, the auditors for the king's lands which belonged to the said late lord duke in all the English counties, more fully explained in the account of the said John Webbe for their fees as granted by letters patent of the king, as Henry Harper and John Tooke were accustomed to receive. And for the fees [£4] of the said auditors' clerks in engrossing all the accounts of the manors in the charge of John Luthington one of the receivers for the lord king of the lands which belonged to the late duke, and for parchment [20s.] bought for the engrossing of the said accounts according to the said letters patent, as was allowed in numerous previous accounts.**

**And likewise £6. 19s. 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>. paid to Thomas Edward as part payment for the expenses of the said auditors as well as the receivers, stewards, bailiffs, farmers, reeves, and other king's ministers being in Warwick Castle in November 1480 for the settling of their accounts, which came this year to £15. 11s. 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. and last year came to £24., in addition to £8. 12s. 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. the rest of the said Thomas's payment, contained in John Willyams' account, reeve of the lordship of Shenstone this year.**

**Total - £16. 19s. 5¾.**

**Which sum corresponds with the total debit above, and he is acquitted.**

This gives a glimpse of the medieval civil service at work. Engrossing was the making of a fair copy along with all the other accounts to be kept by central government; in 1433 the Sutton account seems to have been a separate document not engrossed onto a central register: Kelyng had £48. 9s 10½d., *but he owes £48 10s. 6d of which 100s is allowed to the present account of Robert Kelyng for the same reason as it was allowed last year for the fee of Thomas Erdington Esquire as his wages from the lord. And the said bailiff is allowed 13s 4d from part of the rent of the Newshippen.....And he is allowed £6. 12s. 6d.....Thomas Muggleford the receiver-general of the said lord by indenture of commutation made at Caversham in respect of £36. 3s. 8d.* This is only partly legible, but there was obviously some difficulty over a shortfall of 7½d. so that the account does not end with the usual acquittance.

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<sup>1</sup> Bailiffs Account, Stratford Record Office, BRT 1/3/180.

<sup>2</sup> Corporation Rentals, 1742-1870, Sutton Coldfield Reference Library.

<sup>3</sup> Hilton, R.H. Ministers' Accounts of the Warwickshire Estates of the Duke of Clarence, 1479-80, Dugdale Society Vol. xxi, 1952.

<sup>4</sup> Dugdale, W. Antiquities of Warwickshire, 1730 ed. P.919

<sup>5</sup> Bracken, A. A. History of the Forest and Chase of Sutton Coldfield, 1860. P.57.

<sup>6</sup> Charters in Birmingham Reference Library, Digby 'A' 258, 260.

<sup>7</sup> Court Rolls, Middleton Collection, Mi M134/1-22, Nottingham University.

<sup>8</sup> Ross, Charles. The Estates and Finances of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Dugdale Society Occasional Paper no. 12, 1956.

<sup>9</sup> May, J. Thomas Clifton of Sutton Coldfield, in Scenes from Sutton's Past, ed. R.Lea, 1989.

<sup>10</sup> Lease in Sutton Coldfield Reference Library.

<sup>11</sup> Leland's Itinerary, c. 1546.

<sup>12</sup> Lease of New Shipton, Sutton Borough Record 107, Birmingham Reference Library

<sup>13</sup> Watkins, A. Landowners and their Estates in the Forest of Arden in the 15 Century. Agricultural History Review vol.45 part 1.

<sup>14</sup> Carpenter, C. Locality and Polity: a study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-99. 1992.

<sup>15</sup> Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1835, p. 1091.

<sup>16</sup> Grant, Birmingham Reference Library deed 348039.

<sup>17</sup> Dictionary of National Biography.

<sup>18</sup> Bedford, W.K.Riland- History of Sutton Coldfield 1890.