



The first printed map of Staffordshire

SAXTON, Christopher.

Staffordiae Comitatu pfecte et absolute elaboratu haec tibi tabula exhibet Anno Dni 1577.

London, 1579. Original colour. 395 x 500mm, sheet with grapes watermark.

£3,500

The first published state of Saxton's map of Staffordshire, one of three maps engraved by Francis Scatter for Saxton's county atlas of 1579. Top right are the arms of Queen Elizabeth, with the arms of Thomas Seckford (1515 -87, who financed Saxton's survey) underneath, balanced with the strapwork title cartouche and a pair of compasses on the scale on the left. On the map towns, rivers and hills are marked, the names spelt phonetically (for example 'Lychfelde', 'Wulverhampton' & 'Leike'), but it was not until nearly a century later that roads were routinely shown on county maps. The larger towns are marked with multiple buildings, demonstrating the varied fortunes of different regions: Leek and Brewood are shown on a par with Stafford and Lichfield, but Stoke-on-Trent has only a single building, dwarfed by nearby Newcastle. It was Lord Burghley, Elizabeth I's Secretary of State, who determined that England and Wales should be mapped properly, and Seckford, as her Master of Requests, who financed it. With only a few exceptions, Saxton's surveys were the basis of county mapping until the middle of the 18th century, copied for Camden's 'Britannia' and the atlases of Speed, Blome and Morden. The printing plates also had a long lifespan: after being eclipsed by John Speed's atlas of 1611, the plates were re-engraved and re-issued in 1642 by William Web; most of the other plates were



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still being printed as late as 1770. The engraver, Francis Scatter, is only known by the three maps he engraved for this atlas, two signed 'Franciscus Scatterus' (this map and Cheshire) and one identified from the Burghley proof of the atlas (Radnor, Brecknock, Cardigan & Carmarthen). It has been suggested that he was the Flemish émigré Franchoijs Schatter.

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