

**Lea Hall
Capworth Street
and the
Forger Joseph Hunton**



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Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society

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Cover picture: Lea Hall, drawing by Thomas Moxon, circa 1834, although believed to be later than 1840.

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We only have it on the authority of the Rev John Kennedy that Lea Hall was built in the year 1626.¹ For whom it was built and by whom remain a mystery. However, it was a substantially built house and must have been intended for a rich city merchant who required a country residence with access to the City of London.

So why are we interested in a house about which we know so little? Firstly it was situated in Capworth Street of which the first recorded mention is in 1654 when one, Hugh Williams of Capper Street, was charged for repairing the highway² – possibly this relates to Lea Hall. Also a large part of the Lea Hall House and Estate lay in what became known as the Walthamstow Slip, a detached part of that Parish that was first known to be rated in 1676.³

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Leyton was a somewhat isolated village bounded by the great forest to the north and the River Lea at its southern-most. To the south-west there developed a small hamlet around one of the old manor houses, which became generally known as Capworth Street. It must have been a very quite and peaceful setting in those far off days. My Grandmother, who lived in Leyton in the 1890's, said that even then Leyton was a pretty place. One writer, going back further, has even described Leyton as being:

A Garden of Eden on a smaller scale. Pleasant walks abounded, and one like Isaac of old could meditate at eventide in the fields⁴.

The land on which Lea Hall was built had previously been owned by Sir William Ryder, who died in 1611. In his will his share of Leyton Manor was

¹ John Kennedy, *A History of the Parish of Leyton, Essex*, Phelps Brothers, Leyton, 1894, pp 332.

² John Kennedy, *A History of the Parish of Leyton, Essex*, Phelps Brothers, Leyton, 1894, pp 264.

³ From 1669 the Leyton Parish Rate was for the first time divided into four sections, normally, Leyton Street or Low Leyton, Leyton-Stone, Capper or Capworth Street and Landholders.

⁴ Rev F W Wilkinson, *A History of Leyton*, Independent Printing Works, Leytonstone, 1897 pp 15

left to his two daughters, Mary and Susan. A dispute arose over the will and after some time it was settled in favour of Mary, the wife of Sir Thomas Lake.⁵ In 1616 Sir Thomas Lake made a settlement of the manor on his two sons, Sir Thomas Lake, the younger and Sir Arthur Lake, this included the lands, rents and services of the freeholders and copyhold tenants. It was probably during this period that construction commenced on Lea Hall. The manor estate was once again sold in 1649 when it was divided into three shares. A third going to Robert Abbot, a gentleman of London, whose share mainly lay in the Capworth Street area.⁶ In turn, Abbot's share was purchased by John Smith, founder of the Almshouses, who gifted it to the Poor of the City of Lincoln. John Pardoe, of whom more will be said later, reunited the manor estate in 1794 when he purchased this share from the Corporation of Lincoln.

Hugh Williams

Hugh or Hugo Williams was a sequestered vicar at St Mary's Parish Church in 1647, having arrived from Norfolk, where he had been ejected as the rector of Forncett⁷. He remained Leyton in some official capacity and conducting some services until he was once again ejected in 1650 by the Puritans following the execution of King Charles I and the rise of Oliver Cromwell. After Williams had been ousted he is recorded as running a school in Capworth Street,⁸ strongly supporting the belief that he was occupying Lea Hall.

Hugh Williams and his wife had a number of children, whilst living in Leyton and with a fair share of heartache.

Benjamin, baptised 5th September 1647 at St Mary's, probably just after his fathers ordination.

Margaret, baptised 15th January 1647/8.⁹

Edward, buried 9th September 1650.

Edward, baptised 25th May 1651, buried 6th December 1664.

Theoffilus, was baptised on 25th September 1652.

Samuel, baptised 13th November 1655, buried 26th November 1655.

Daniel, baptised 13th November 1655, buried 26th November 1655.

Joseph, buried 5th October 1657.

⁵ Sir Thomas Lake 1567 – 1630, Member of Parliament and one-time Secretary of State to King James I.

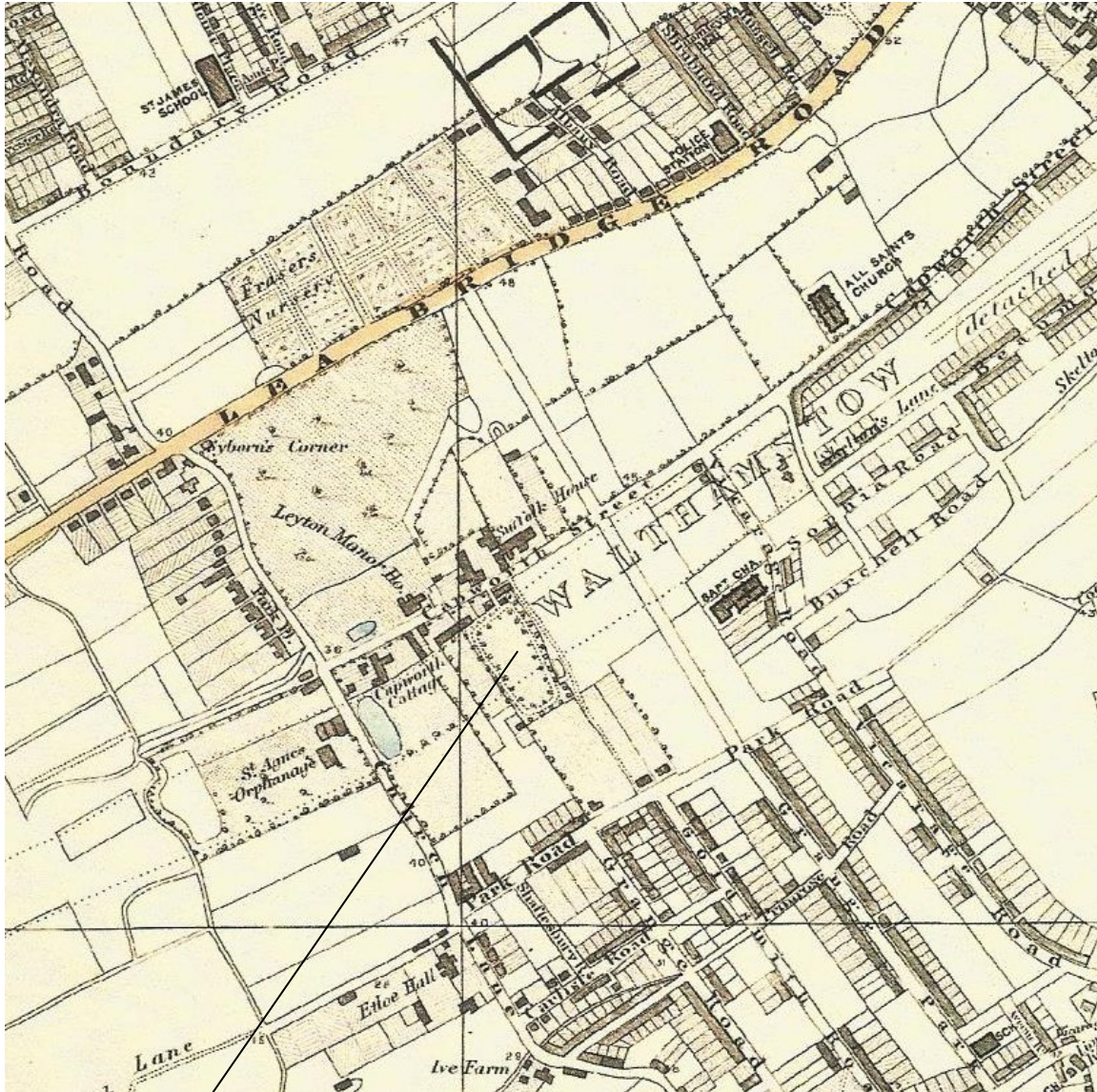
⁶ Mary Savile, *Leyton Past* #4, March 1976.

⁷ Francis Bloomfield *Essay towards a Typographical History of the County of Norfolk* vol 5, William Miller, London 1806, pp 261.

⁸ Elizabeth Osborne, *The History of Essex, from the earliest period to the present time*, Longman, London, 1814.

⁹ The Gregorian Calendar was introduced in 1582, but not accepted in England until 1752. Before this later date, dates were calculated as the preceding year until Lady Day (25th March). So Margaret was actually born in 1648.

Hugh Williams was appointed Surveyor of the Highways for Leytonstone in 1655 and died in 1660 and his will was proven on 13th July 1660.



Lea Hall

Stanford's Library Map of 1886

John Cookes

What is known for certain is that the first traceable occupier of Lea Hall in the Rate Books was John Cookes or Cook who was rated here for £3 11s 4p in 1699.¹⁰ He was also a trustee of the Ozlar School Charity in 1697.

John Cookes, a silkwormer, had been born in Tardebigg, Worcestershire on 4th August 1668. His first wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of John Knap, a London merchant, died in childbirth on 28th February 1683, giving birth to their daughter, Elizabeth. He married his second wife, also Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Sir William Russell on 11th February 1685. Together they had a number of children, some of whom died young:

Mary, baptised 17th February 1686

Thomas, 1688

Elizabeth, baptised 23rd September 1689

William, 1690

Susanna, 1691

William, 1695

John, born 18th November 1697 and baptised in St Peters-upon-Cornhill, 3rd December 1697

Henry, baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 11th May 1702

Anne, born 9th July 1703 and baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 23rd July 1703

Susanna, baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 5th August 1706

Edward, baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 29th July 1708

Jane, baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 2nd October 1710 and

Henrietta, baptised at St Mary's, Leyton 13th November 1711

John Cookes was listed as of Leytonstone, amongst the subscribers of John Strype's *The Life and Acts of the Most Reverend Father in God, John Whitgift*, in 1709.

His father-in-law, Sir William Russell, purchased the estate of Park House, in Leytonstone High Road, which he had rebuilt and in turn sold to John in 1704¹¹, although he continued to reside at Lea Hall until 1709. John Cookes died on 11th November 1720 and was buried in St Dunstan-in-the-East.

¹⁰ Leyton Poor Rate, 1699.

¹¹ David Boote, *Park House*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2007.

William Pitts

The next occupier of Lea Hall was William Pitts or Pits, of whom very little is known. Pitts appears in the Rate Books from Lady Day¹² 1709 until Michaelmas¹³ 1713. He was also surveyor of the Highways in 1712 and 1713.

Sir Robert Beachcroft

Following William Pitts as occupier of Lea Hall was Sir Robert Beachcroft, the former Lord Mayor of the City of London.

Robert Beachcroft had been born in Derby and baptised at All Saints Church on 28th April 1650¹⁴. His parents were Daniel Beachcroft, a yeoman farmer, and Mary Fox. In September 1668, when he was eighteen years of age, Robert travelled to London to take up an apprenticeship with Thomas Palfreyman, as a clothworker. After seven years he became a Freeman of the Clothworkers' Company on 5th October 1675. His early career is not known but he seems to have worked in Mark Lane. Later he is recorded as a factor at Blackwell Hall, then primarily involved in handling goods from provincial manufacturers. Beachcroft acquired considerable wealth so that he was able to purchase More Hall, the former home of Sir Thomas More. He sold More Hall in Hertfordshire in 1708 prior to moving to Low Leyton.¹⁵

As a Whig, Beachcroft became a Common Councillor for Tower Ward in 1699-1700 a Sheriff of the City of London and Master of the Clothworkers Company in 1700. On 24th October 1700 Beachcroft accompanied a number of city merchants to Hampton Court to welcome the return of King William III from the Low Countries. In return for his support Beachcroft was knighted the same day.

Sir Robert Beachcroft was elected an Alderman for Lime Street Ward in 1703 and he became Lord Mayor of London for the period 1710-11. He was a director of the South Sea Company in 1711, retiring in 1712. He was also a Colonel of the "Green Regiment" 1707-10¹⁶.

During his sojourn as an Alderman he sat in judgement at the Guildhall. On 20th October 1707 he resided over the trial of eight men all accused of homosexuality. Two confessed and the remainder were found guilty. The

¹² Old Lady Day 6th April – still in use as the new tax year.

¹³ Old Michaelmas Day 11th October.

¹⁴ Derbyshire Parish Records.

¹⁵ *The Clothworker*, Winter 2013 #8, pp 16.

¹⁶ Frederick Temple, *Alderman of London with Leyton Connections*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2010, pp 60.

punishment was not stated, but this would probably mean that the men would be placed in the pillory.

On 17th January 1706, at the age of fifty five, he married a widow, Margaret Parry, at St Mary's Parish Church in Leyton. So there was a earlier connection with Leyton than has previously been established. Margaret Parry nee Wilmer had been born on 18th April 1655 and baptised at St Mary's Stratford-le-Bow on 22nd April 1655.¹⁷ Her father was John Wilmer of Walthamstow and she married Richard Parry of the City Parish of Allhallows in 1679/80. The Beachcrofts first appear in the Leyton Rate Books from Lady Day 1714 and continued until Michaelmas 1720.

By good fortune there still exists an inventory of the contents of Lea Hall and it is listed room by room, giving us a complete picture of the household as of 1721 - a time when the first Hannoverian King, George I, was on the throne and the Whig, Robert Walpole became the first leader to be granted the title of Prime Minister.

A schedule or summery of the household goods, plate & jewells of Sir Robert Beachcroft late Knt & Alderman of the City of London deceased at his late dwelling house at Low Leyton in Essex & which are given and bequeathed in & by his last will unto Dame Margaret his widow and relict viz 17th June 1721¹⁸

In the Parlour

One large looking glass, one chimney glass, a print of King George Stove, greates, shovell & tongs, poker, fender, two paze of window curtains, eight chaires, one large ovall table, one smaller ovall table, a napkin.

In Sir Robert's Roome & Drawing Roome

Two Dutch tables, one chimney picture, two iron blacks, tongs, fire shovell & dogges, one looking glass, one chimney glass, four pictures, six elbow chaires, an iron hearth, two silk squabbs, five coloured silk cushions, six green ditto & three larges ditto.

In the Mens Chamber

One bedstead & curtains, feather bed, boulster, pillow, rugg, two blanketts, two chaires, three pistols & two swords.

¹⁷ Stratford Parish Records.

¹⁸ Inventory of Sir Robert Beachcroft's household goods, held by the Clothworks' Company, CL/G/MSS/Beachcroft/1/3.

In the Roome over the Kitchen

One bedstead curtains, valence cases, feather bed, bed boulder, two pillows, quilt counter : plain, two blanketts, dressing glass, table, hearth, shovell, tongs & doggs, six elbow chaires, cross bead hangings, bed, quilt boulder, two pillows, three blanketts, one looking glass, one table, four chaires, stove greates, tongs, fender, poker & picture over the the chimney, a pare of bellows, two pair of window curtains, Turkey work hangings, one fire shovell

In Mrs Coles¹⁹ Roome

One chest of drawers, a looking glass, a large chest, two boxes, one table, two chaires, stove greates & hangings

In Mrs Brafield's²⁰ Roome

One looking glass, one chaire, two elbow chaires, two pair of window curtains & a bell with hangings in the Roome

In the Store Roome

One bedstead, curtains, valence cases, two wheeling chaires, two easy chaires, one carrying chair, one chest, two drums, two trunks, one box, one screen, one stand, one pair of bellows, a feather bed & boulder, four large pillows, four small pillows, six blankets, one quilt, one tea table & china, one hand tea table & hanging & a table

In the Washer Womans Roome

A bedstead & mattress, a feather bed and old quilt, rugg, a glass lanthorne²¹, one hand lanthorne & a bell

In the Gazzetts

Two screens, three Turkey work carpets, a peg board, a Spanish table, a Jack & weight & three cloths basket

In the Lady Beachcrofts Roome

One bested curtains, valence cases, feather bed, boulder, quilt, three pillows, four blanketts, a press bedstead, feather bed boulder & pillow, a quilt, three blanketts, three pair of window curtains, a cabbinet & china upon it, a chest of drawers, two large looking glasses, two tables, two dressing glasses, one Dutch table, six elbow chaires, two stools, one easy chair, one iron back hearth doggs, shovell, tongs, stand, Dutch matted chair & hangings

¹⁹ Magdalen Cole.

²⁰ Mary Brafield.

²¹ A lantern.

In the Maids Rooms

A bedstead, curtains, valence & cases, a feather bed, boulder, two pillows, a quilt, rugg, two blanketts, two tables, a looking glass, three chaires, a stool, table hangings, a press bested, curtains, two pillows & two blanketts

In the Laundry Roome

One picture, a chest, trunk, two tables, a board upon trussells, a fire great, tongs & fender, three box irons coth greats to them, a wooden horse to dry cloths, one chaire, two close stools

In the Gardeners Roome

One half headed bedstead, a feather bed & boulder, pillow & rugg, two blanketts

In the Kitchen

Twenty pewter dishes, three doz & eleven plates coth armes on them, two doz small plates, four doz old plates, seven mazereen dishes, four pye plates, five pewter stands, one pewter cisterne, one flaggon, one pasty plate, one chesse plate, one dish cover, one fish kettle, two stew pans, three large hozzida bottle, two little bottles, one pan, one brass laddle & skimmer. Eight glass hand candlesticks, three high candlesticks, one pair of [illegible], one extinguisher, one table, eight [illegible], a spice box, a screen, an iron rack on a chaine, three spitts, one bird spitt, a pair of bellows, a frying pan, a dripping pan, a cullender, a gridiron, besides earthen wooden & tin wares, one tea kettle

In the Wash House

One brewing copper, two pails, a leaden underback²², cooler & trough

In the Cellar

Four hoggshead²³, six barrells²⁴, four kilderkins²⁵, one half hoggshead, one mash tubb, one working tubb, five taptubbs

In the Entry & Stair Cases

Thirty bucketts, seven mops, one Prospect of Bethlem, one gilded board with officers names, forty small & great pictures, nineteen prints, one clock

²² A vessel that receives the wort as it flows from the mashing tub.

²³ One Hogshead equals about 54 gallons.

²⁴ One barrel equals about 36 gallons.

²⁵ One kilderkin equals about 18 gallons.

In the Passage by the Mens Roome

One picture, one marble mortal & pestle, one pair of drafts, one pye board and a bell

In the Wood House

One brass kete, nine washing tubbs

In the Garden

Two benches, two foures, two rowling stones, one wooden rowler, besides gardeners implements, four vinbrellers over the parlour & deawing room windows

In the Back Yard

One bottle rack, one grindstone, a pair of steps, wooden plate rack, two folder horse to dry cloths on, horse to cut wood upon

Linning in the Severable Roomes

Three long table cloths, three pair of fine sheets, seven pair of fine old sheets, seven pair of flaxen sheets, ten pair of course sheets, ten large table cloths, three lesser table cloths, ten dozen napkins, three dozen huckaback towells²⁶, eight pair of pillow cases, four breakfast cloths, kitchen linning, seven table cloths, seven towells, three dresser cloths.

The inventory continues with a list of precious household items with what we must assume were the purchase prices.

	£
<i>Seven saucers</i>	95.-
<i>Two pair of branches</i>	
<i>Two pair of candlesticks</i>	} 84. 5
<i>One pair of snuffers & stand</i>	
<i>One tea kettle & stand</i>	91.-
<i>One plate for tea kettle</i>	48. 5
<i>Two coffee potts, one lamp</i>	74. 5
<i>Six salts, fifteen spoons</i>	
<i>One Soop Spoon</i>	} 47.15
<i>One punch bowle & coller</i>	91.10
<i>One Jews basket</i>	85.10
<i>One tankard, one mugg, one pozzinger</i>	}
<i>One hand candlestick, one pair snuffers</i>	52.15
<i>Three casters, two salts, fourteen spoons</i>	
<i>One guilt soop spoon, one wax candlestick</i>	} 73. 5

²⁶ Huckaback towels are an old weave that is sturdy and absorbent.

<i>One tea pott & lamp</i>		26.-
<i>One milk pott</i>		7.10
<i>One chausing dish²⁷, one saucepan</i>		28.-
<i>Twelve silver-hasted knives</i>		
<i>Twelve silver-hafted forkes</i>	}	32.-
<i>Seven tea spoons, six guilt forkes</i>		
<i>One pair of tongs, one tea strainer</i>	}	3.10
<i>Two tea canisters</i>		<u>16.10</u>
	<i>in all weight</i>	857.-
<i>One gold chaine</i>		12. 4

Sir Richard Beachcroft's personal wealth is listed as follows:

<i>Balance of cash in J B Account</i>		1780.09.0 8
<i>Arrears of rent due at the time of his death and</i>		
<i>Balance of cash in Mr Broughtons hand to Lady</i>	}	191.08.00
<i>Day 1721</i>		
<i>Balance of cash in Mr Joseph Brafields hands in his</i>		
<i>House at Low Layton</i>		8.06.09
<i>Nominal stock in the Bank of England</i>		3000.00.00
<i>Stock in the Million Bank</i>		6000.00.00
<i>Stock in the Sword Blade Company²⁸</i>		2000.00.00
<i>Capital stock in the South Sea Company</i>		4400.00.00
<i>More stock in the South Sea Company in the name</i>		
<i>of Jos Beachcroft</i>		1100.00.00
<i>South Sea Bonds coth Int from 25th March 1721</i>		1200.00.00
<i>1 Large Coach valued at</i>		30.00.00
<i>1 Burlin Charriot</i>		30.00.00
<i>1 Old Charriot & harness</i>		8.00.00
<i>1 pair of Coach Horses</i>		30.00.00
<i>A Scarlet Gound</i>		<u>7.07.00</u>
		19785.11.05 ²⁹

Probably due to his continuing ill health Sir Robert seems not to have had much interest in local affairs. He died of the palsy on 27th May 1721 and his tombstone in Leyton church reads:

²⁷ Chafing dish – a grate raised on a tripod.

²⁸ The Hollow Sword Blade Company, acting as an alternative bank to the Bank of England, as was the Million Bank.

²⁹ Around forty million in today's money.

M . S
Here Lyeth the Body of
S^R ROBERT BEACHCROFT K^T
Late Alderman & Lord Maior
of the City of *LONDON*
who departed ths life y^e 27th May
Anno Domini 1721 in the 72^d Year
of his Age.

This was formerly on the south wall of chancel, before being removed in 1853.



Sir Robert Beachcroft attributed to Richard van Bleeck

A memorial recording his charity was also erected:

MS

Near this place resteth the body of
 Sir ROBERT BEACHCROFT, Kt. late Alderman
 & Lord Mayor of y^e City of London, Son of
 DANIEL BEACHCROFT, of y^e Town of
 Derby, Gent. He was pious towards God
 Loyal to his Prince, True to y^e Religion
 Established, Firm to the Proteststant
 Interest, a Useful Member of
 that City: Kind to his Relations
 Beneficent and Liberal to y^e Poor
 in his life time, as well as at
 his Death, & particularly to y^e
 Hospitals of Christ's Church
 St Thomas & y^e Workhouse in
 Bishopsgate Street, As also to y^e Poor
 of several Parishes where he resided
 Who after a Long Sickness of y^e Palsey
 patient & submissive under GOD'S Hand
 departed hence May y^e 27th Anno Domini 1721
 in y^e 72nd Year of his age

In his will, proven 2nd June 1721, he left his estate of Preston Hall in Suffolk to his widow for life, and then, as he left no heir, to his nephew, Samuel Beachcroft. Margaret Beachcroft left Lea Hall shortly after the death of her husband and a final entry appears in the Rate Book for Lady Day 1721.³⁰

Margaret Beachcroft died and was buried in the churchyard of St Mary's Parish Church, Walthamstow on 15th December 1727.

Sir Richard Hopkins

Lea Hall now passed to another City merchant, Sir Richard Hopkins. He was born in 1677, the son of Richard Hopkins and his wife, Rose, the daughter of George Sherard of Bushby in Leicestershire. His father was a merchant of St Botolph's.³¹ He married Anne Lethieullier, of Clapham, related to the Lethieullier family of Aldersbrook, at St Dionis Backchurch, City of London, on 24th May 1711.

Richard Hopkins was a Turkey merchant (i.e. trading with Turkey), becoming a director of the Royal Exchange Assurance in 1720. From 1721 and 1736 he

³⁰ Frederick Temple, *Alderman of London with Leyton Connections*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2010, pp 63.

³¹ R Sedgwick (ed), *History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1715-1754.*, London 1970

was a director of the famous South Sea Bubble Company, after it had burst, before being appointed sub-governor in the closing years of his life. He was associated with the Cutlers Company, later transferring to the Fishmongers Company on 26th May 1730 where he became prime warden between 1730-33. He became Sir Richard Hopkins when he was knighted on 25th July 1722 at Kensington.³² He was elected Alderman for the Lime Street Ward 1724-36 and was a Whig Member of Parliament for the City of London 1724-27 although not without fight. Hopkins, along with Sir Felix Feast, was elected, but the incumbent MP Sir Richard Lockwood demanded a recount, although the situation resolved itself when Feast died on 24th February 1724. Sir Richard Hopkins was also elected Sheriff 1723-24.

Sir Richard Hopkins at first rented Lea Hall in February 1722 for £56 before purchasing it outright from Ambrose More of Leyton House in 1725³³. His name first appears in the Leyton Rate Book for Lady Day 1723 and continues until at least Lady Day 1733³⁴. His only local public office was that of Surveyor of the Highways in 1725. However, he did secure a portion of land from the Leyton Grange Estate, part of Copping Down, in order to extend his garden.³⁵ An interesting sideline to life at Lea Hall is that the family employed a black maid, Dorothy, who was baptised at St Mary's, Leyton on 29th June 1728.³⁶

His death occurred on 2nd January 1736. There is an account of his final journey taken from an unknown London newspaper and quoted by Frederick Temple:

*Last Friday about noon the corpse of Sir Richard Hopkins, late Alderman of Lime Street was carried from his house in Devonshire Square in a hearse preceded by 20 horsemen in mourning cloaks and followed by 10 coaches and 6 horses to Low Leyton Church where it was interned by daylight. The pall was supported by Sir Harcourt Master, Sir Robert Bayliss, Sir Francis Child, Sir John Thompson, Sir Henry Hankey and Sir John Salter.*³⁷

A memorial was erected on the north wall of the nave.

³² William Arthur Shaw, *The Knights of England: A Complete Record from the Earliest Times . . .* Volume 2, London 1906.

³³ Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965.

³⁴ The Rate Book for the period 1733-1755 is missing.

³⁵ Frederick Temple, *Aldermen of London with Leyton Connections*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2010, pp 63.

³⁶ John Kennedy, *A History of the Parish of Leyton, Essex*, Phelps Brothers, Leyton, 1894, pp 118.

³⁷ Frederick Temple, *Aldermen of London with Leyton Connections*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2010, pp 63/64.

in memory of
 S^r RICHARD HOPKINS K^T
 and ALDERMAN of LONDON
 who Died *Jan^y y^e 2^d 1735 Aged 59*³⁸
 His Experience in Trade
 and many Eminent Virtues
 Promoted him to Honours
 and trusts of Importance
 all which he Discharged
 with justice and Applause
 His widow 3^r Daughter
 Of Wm LETHUILLIER ESQ
 in Affection to y^e Best of Husband
 Erected this Monument
 Here also lieth his said Relict
 Dame ANNE HOPKINS; who
 Died *Feb^{ry} y^e 18th 1759 Aged 72*

Lady Anne Hopkins lived on at Lea Hall until her death on 18th February 1759 and was buried alongside her husband on 26th February 1759. Their coffins were found in the vaults during excavations in 1853 and again in 1962. His coffin plate, in copper, reads:

*Sr Richard Hopkins, Knight, Alderman of the City of London, died January 2d 1735, in the 60th year of his age.*³⁹

Lady Hopkins' coffin plate, in brass, reads:

Dame Anne Hopkins died Febr. 18th 1759, aged 73 years

Both plates bearing the Hopkins Coat-of-Arms.

In Sir Richard Hopkins' will, proven on 23rd February 1736, he left bequests to his brother Thomas, and to his unmarried sisters Elizabeth and Frances and to his relations William and James Sherard. As Richard Hopkins had died intestate his property had passed to his three aunts, sisters of his late father, Richard Hopkins. Of these, two sisters Mary Bellamy, the widow of Humphrey Bellamy, and Elizabeth Barrow of Hereford, widow of James Barrow, stood to inherit, as their third sister died before Sir Richard Hopkins. Sir Richard's

³⁸ Although the date of death is clearly shown on his memorial as 1735, due no doubt to the Gregorian Calendar he actually died in 1736.

³⁹ M L Savell *Church of St Mary the Virgin, Leyton Discoveries made during alterations, 1962*, Leyton Public Libraries, 1963 pp 3.

property was said to have been extensive and apart from London, it included Dorking and Kings Norton in Worcestershire, Essex at Leyton, Walthamstow, Stanway, Walton-on-Naze, Copford, Lexden, Frinton, Broxted, Great and Little Dunmow, Great Holland, Colchester, Great Canfield and Nazeing⁴⁰. Lea Hall passed to Sir Edward Bellamy, the heir of Humphrey Bellamy.

Sir Edward Bellamy

Sir Edward Bellamy was also a wealthy London merchant and a member of the Fishmongers Company. He was Prime Warden in 1724/6 and Alderman for Billingsgate Ward from 1723 to 1745 and for Bridge Ward Without from 1745 to 1749, becoming “Father of the City” in 1748/9 as the longest serving Alderman. He was elected Sheriff of the City of London in 1724 and Lord Mayor in 1734/5.

In 1741 Bellamy stood unsuccessfully as a Whig candidate for parliament. He was also a Colonel of the “Green Regiment” 1736 to 1749 and President of the Royal Artillery Company 1748/9. He was also President of St Thomas’ Hospital 1748/9. Edward Bellamy was also a Director of the Bank of England, becoming Deputy Governor from 1729 to 1731 and Governor from 1731 to 1733. He died on 28th March 1749, leaving the house on the north side of Capworth Street and some land to his daughter, Ann, the wife of George Lynn. His other property went to his son, Humphrey Bellamy of Walthamstow⁴¹.

According to the Victoria County History, it is believed that it was during the 18th century that Lea Hall was altered. Looking at the only existing drawings from the garden, it is possible that it was extended outwards to what appears to have been a greenhouse. It was known that during the time of Sir Richard Hopkins there were coach houses and stables at the east end⁴². Certainly Sir Robert Beachcroft’s inventory of 1721 would support this view.

Edward Brice

From 1764 to Lady Day⁴³ 1774 Lea Hall was let to Edward Brice. Little is known of Brice apart from him being Overseer of the Poor for 1770. He died in 1790 and was buried in Leyton church on 30th October 1790. For the years 1766/7 it was let to one, John Ridduck, of whom nothing is known.

⁴⁰ D/DMg T65, Essex Record Office.

⁴¹ Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965.

⁴² Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965.

⁴³ 25th March, from 1752.

Mrs Elizabeth Combes

Another longer let was to Mrs Elizabeth Coombes or Combes who occupied Lea Hall from Lady Day 1771 to Lady Day 1786.

Captain Humphrey Bellamy

Captain Bellamy took over the tenancy of Lea Hall from Michaelmas⁴⁴ 1786 until Lady Day 1787. It is believed that Humphrey Bellamy was the heir of Humphrey Bellamy of Walthamstow, who was dead by 1787. In 1790 Bellamy sold Lea Hall to William Northage of Walthamstow⁴⁵.

William Shepherd

William Shepherd rented Lea Hall from Humphrey Bellamy and appears in the Rate Books from Lady Day 1788 until Christmas 1814.

His wife, Elizabeth died in childbirth with their son, William, and both were buried in St Mary's Parish Church, Leyton on 21st June 1795. William must have remarried, as a daughter, Elizabeth Ann, was baptised in the Parish Church on 26th May 1799.

William Shepherd was shown as rated:

for the house of formerly S. R Hopkins, garden and land belonging £7 7s 10d⁴⁶.

William Northage

William Northage had retained ownership of Lea Hall, although at no time does he appeared to have lived there, and certainly does not feature in the rate books. William Northage had married Martha Holloway at St Mary's Parish Church, Walthamstow on 11th July 1798. They had two children, the eldest, Martha, born 1799 died in 1800 and is commemorated in St Pancras Church. A son, William was born in 1801, who was to inherit Lea Hall on the death of his father, William, in the same year.

The young William Northage sold Lea Hall to John Folder in 1813.

⁴⁴ 29th September, from 1752.

⁴⁵ Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965..

⁴⁶ Leyton Poor Rate, 1812.

John Folder

John Folder was a tobacco merchant from Neasden, Middlesex. He appears, along with his wife Sarah, in the rate books from Summer 1815 until Michaelmas 1820. They had at least one child, Isabella, who died and was buried at St Mary's Parish Church, Leyton on 14th February 1817, aged fifteen.

A John Folder, merchant, dealer and chapman, of Savage Gardens, Tower Hill was declared bankrupt on 25th October 1819⁴⁷.

Lea Hall was sold to Joseph Hunton in 1821.

The Execution of Joseph Hunton

It is safe to say that Joseph Hunton was a bit of a rogue all his life until it ended rather abruptly at the end of a rope in Newgate Jail.

Joseph Hunton was born in Norfolk circa 1770, and his parents were Samuel and Hannah Hunton, both devout Quakers. On 18th September 1806 he married Fulliretta Sewell at the Quaker Meeting House in Great Yarmouth, a wealthy woman who was said to have a personal fortune of £30,000⁴⁸.

His business life began as a slop-seller (ready-made clothing) in Yarmouth. A description of Hunton and his early days in Yarmouth were recorded in a history of his home town:

The next house fronting the Market place (No. 37) was in the first quarter of the present century occupied for many years by Joseph Hunton, linen draper, a dapper little man, always dressed in strict quaker costume, he being a member of the Society of Friends. He was active in mind and body; and might literally be called a "counter jumper;" for the facility with which he sprung from one part of his shop to another was marvellous.

In 1811, when there was a great scarcity of silver, he issued tokens to pass as shillings, "payable at J. Hunton's, Yarmouth, and at Blyth's and Co., Bury." Having, as it is believed, acquired by his industry some property, he sought a wider field of enterprize by removing to London,

⁴⁷ London Star, 25th October 1819, pp 724.

⁴⁸ Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965.

*where he opened a shop in Bishopsgate street, and entered largely into the trade of a drysalter, living himself with his family at Low Leyton.*⁴⁹

The couple had a number of children, some of whom were born in Leyton:

Hannah, born 14th January 1808 at Yarmouth, Norfolk
Joseph, born 27th January 1810 at Yarmouth, Norfolk
William, born 13th August 1811 at Yarmouth, Norfolk
Maria, born 3rd August 1814 at Yarmouth, Norfolk
Mary Ann, born 15th May 1816 at Southtown, Norfolk
Thomas, born 27th April 1818 at Southtown, Norfolk
Elizabeth, born 12th November 1820 at Southtown, Norfolk
James, born 28th November 1822 at Leyton
Charles, born 27th December 1824 at Capworth Street, Leyton
Jane, born 30th August 1826 at Capworth Street, Leyton

He lived at Lea Hall from Lady Day 1821 until Lady Day 1828. At some point Hunton gave up his two businesses in Great Yarmouth and Bury St Edmunds and went into partnership with Messrs Dickson & Co, warehousemen, situated in Ironmonger Lane, London. It was soon discovered that Hunton had lost a considerable sum in speculating on the Stock Exchange in Spanish Bonds. Having run into financial difficulties, he began a series of frauds.

His crimes were uncovered and Hunton was indicted at St Mary-le-Bow on 1st August 1828. His subsequent trials at the Old Bailey and final days were recorded at the time. It makes harrowing reading even today:

It appeared that a considerable number of forged bills of exchange had been put in circulation, and the result of the inquiries which were made by the Committee of Bankers for the Prevention of Frauds and Forgeries clearly fixed the offence upon Hunton. The bills were for the most part accepted in the name of Mr Edward Wilkins, of Abingdon, and purported to be drawn by the firm of Dickson & Co., of Ironmonger Lane, warehousemen, in which Hunton was a partner. It so happened, however, that intelligence was received in town, before several of them became due, that Mr Wilkins was dead; and upon inquiry it turned out that the whole of the acceptances in the name of that person were forgeries. Hunton received speedy information of the discovery of the frauds of which he had been guilty, and when inquiry was made for him he was found to have absconded. Officers were immediately dispatched in all directions to secure his person, and he was at length traced by Forrester,

⁴⁹ Charles John Palmer, *The Perilustration of Great Yarmouth with Gorleston and Southtown*, George Nall, Great Yarmouth, 1872, pp 287/8

the city constable, to the neighbourhood of Plymouth. He directly started in pursuit with some others who were employed on the same errand, and, upon inquiry there, they learned that the object of their search was upon the point of sailing for New York in the Leeds packet, on board which he passed under the assumed name of Wilkinson. The officers immediately proceeded to board that vessel, and, under pretence of having a letter to deliver, they were introduced to the forger. When they informed him of the nature of their mission he was not able to utter a word, but rose and followed them, and was immediately conveyed to the shore. It is rather extraordinary that the first paper taken from his pocket was a letter directed to the editor of The Times, stating that the amount of the forgeries ascribed to him in a paragraph in that journal was considerably exaggerated, and requesting that an acknowledgment to that effect should be inserted in justice to the party accused, who would return as soon as possible and pay off all his pecuniary obligations. There was also found in his pockets the copy of a letter directed to the house of Curtis & Co., informing them that, as it was not convenient for the firm to discount any more bills for him, he should absent himself for a short time from London. These were both directed from Deal, and were no doubt intended to mislead, as the writer never went near Deal in his route. He had entered the packet in his Quaker dress; but in the course of a few hours he had put on a light green frock, a pair of light grey pantaloons, a black stock and a foraging cap. It was ascertained that he had previously entered a French steamboat on the river, with the intention of proceeding to Boulogne, and that he had been actually in that boat at the time of its being searched by some officers who were endeavouring to procure his apprehension.

Upon his arrival in town he underwent an examination before the Lord Mayor, upon the charges which were preferred against him; and several cases having been substantiated he was fully committed for trial.

At the Old Bailey sessions, on the 28th of October, 1828, the prisoner was put upon his trial, and he was found guilty upon a charge of forging a bill for one hundred and sixty-two pounds, nine shillings, with intent to defraud Sir William Curtis & Co. On the following Tuesday, the 4th of November, he was again indicted for a similar offence, for forging a bill for ninety-four pounds, thirteen shillings, when a similar verdict was returned; and at the conclusion of the sessions, notwithstanding the recommendation of the jury to mercy, he received sentence of death.

A considerable time elapsed before the case of this unfortunate prisoner was reported to the Crown, in accordance with the custom which then

prevailed; and it was not until the 8th of December that his sentence was carried into effect. Before we describe the circumstances which attended the execution we must allude to a most extraordinary delay which took place in the report of the Recorder of London of the cases of no less than forty-nine prisoners confined in Newgate on various capital charges. It appeared that, his Majesty being at Windsor, the recorder proceeded to the Castle on Monday, the 24th of November, for the purpose of making his report, when three wretched prisoners were ordered for execution. In accordance with the usual practice it would have been the duty of the recorder to proceed forthwith to London to communicate the result of the deliberation of the Privy Council at Newgate, in order that the unhappy criminals, whose cases had been under consideration, might be at once relieved from the dreadful suspense in which, situated as they were, they would necessarily be placed. Monday night passed, however, and no intelligence was received of the learned gentleman, or of the decision which had been arrived at; and the greater part of Tuesday was permitted also to elapse before their dreadful anxiety was relieved. At five o'clock on that afternoon the clerk of the learned gentleman reached Newgate with the death warrant; and then only was it that the fate of the prisoners could be disclosed to them. The subject was brought under the consideration of the court of aldermen at the earliest possible period, with a view to the recorder giving some explanation of the very singular conduct of which he had been guilty; and he then stated that, the Council not having terminated until after eight o'clock on the evening of Monday, he was at that time too fatigued to return to town on the same night, and that though he started from Windsor on the following morning he was so long delayed on the road that he did not arrive in town until half-past three o'clock. This excuse, however plausibly it may have been put by the learned gentleman, was at least a lame one, and the remarks which were made upon his conduct at the time by the public, and by the Press, were confined to no very measured terms.

Although so many prisoners had been reported on this occasion, it was found that Hunton was not among the number -- a circumstance which gave him undue hopes and expectations that he would be spared an ignominious death. A second report, however, was made on Monday, the 1st of December, when the wretched criminal, with three others, was ordered for execution on the 8th of the same month.

Hunton bore the intelligence that he "was certainly to die" with apparent fortitude. He was lying on his pallet when the ordinary entered his cell at a little after eleven on Monday night. Upon hearing the cell door open at so extraordinary an hour he turned round slowly and said:

"Well, I suppose I know the news thou bringest?" "Yes," replied the ordinary, "Mr Hunton: you are, I hope, prepared for that which you have expected -- you are to be executed." Hunton said: "Indeed I have been expecting that intelligence: it is no surprise, and yet my case has many palliatives which should operate with grace at the seat of mercy. Pray tell me who are doomed to die with me." The ordinary mentioned the other names enumerated in the report, and Hunton observed that he should submit with calmness to his fate. "But," said he, "if wilt thou do me the great favour, friend Cotton, to permit my wife to come and stay with me alone before the time arriveth for the change?" The ordinary replied that he had not the power to grant any favour, but the request should be communicated to the proper authority, and no doubt every indulgence of a reasonable kind would be granted. During this conversation Hunton seemed to be perfectly resigned to his fate. It is singular that he never asked on what day he was to be executed. After the ordinary had assured him that he should be treated with kindness he turned about, and said, "Goodnight, friend," and appeared to resign himself to sleep. In the morning he rose, evidently in a state of the most wretched dejection: his eyes were filled with tears, and he deplored the inhumanity of the laws, by which a man who had committed an act which did not deserve the name of fraud was to suffer death. The spirits by which he had been supported ever since his committal to Newgate altogether abandoned him: he wrung his hands in agony, and complained of the bitter aggravation of delay. When he first entered Newgate he said: "I wish, after this day, to have communication with nobody; let me take leave of my wife and family and friends. I have already suffered an execution; my heart has undergone that horrible penalty." A few days afterwards a person called upon him to request that he would explain some document relating to certain bills not yet due. In an instant he gave the required explanation, fully to the satisfaction of the person interested; and when asked by the same individual what opinion he entertained of his own case -- "Why," said he, "my case resembles the condition of this paper" (holding the letter upon his finger): "a breeze of wind will turn it either way. Caprice may save or destroy me; but I rather think I shall live longer." On the Tuesday he was visited by his wife and several of the Society of Friends, and he told them he knew that to hope would be to court deception. He was, during the whole day, a most painful object to those who went to console him. He groaned as if his heart were bursting within him, and seemed to consider this life all that a human being could wish for.

The execution of a man who was known to have moved in so respectable a sphere of life as the unfortunate Hunton failed not to attract an

immense crowd of persons to the vicinity of the jail of Newgate on the morning upon which it was determined that his life should be forfeited. From the extraordinary efforts which had been made to save this unfortunate culprit, a very general belief was entertained that a respite would most certainly arrive for him even so late as on the morning fixed for his death. His safety was considered almost certain, and many were scarcely persuaded that he would really suffer even at the moment when the fatal cord encompassed his neck. The unfortunate man had, however, calmly composed his mind to meet his fate, and seemed to contemplate its approach without dread. He was on Sunday visited by several ladies and gentlemen of the Society of Friends, who were accommodated with an apartment, in which they remained in their peculiar devotions for several hours. Afterwards the unhappy man was attended by two gentlemen, elders of the congregation, who sat up with him in the press-room all night, during which time Hunton composed a very long prayer, appropriate to his situation and approaching death. He committed his thoughts to paper, and after he had completed the prayer he copied it, and directed it to his "dearly beloved wife." At halfpast seven the two elders left the miserable man, after they had "kissed," and their absence was supplied by the attendance of Mr Sparks Moline, of Leadenhall Street.

Fifteen minutes before the awful hour of eight the under-sheriffs arrived at the prison, preceded by their tipstuffs, and were conducted by Mr Wontner to the press-room. At the end of this gloomy apartment was observed, sitting at a long table which was strewn with pieces of paper and books, the ill-fated Hunton; immediately opposite sat his "friend," Mr S. Moline. Hunton, on turning his head and observing the group of officers as they entered the room, said: "I pray thee stop a minute; I'll not be long." He then concluded reading, in a distinct voice, the prayer he had composed in the night; it was couched in the most impressive and devout language that could be imagined. In it he expressed his dependence on the merits of Jesus Christ, and a hope that when the spirit was separated from the body it would join the angelic host above in singing praises to the Son of God, and to the Almighty. Hunton had a very peculiar kind of voice, somewhat shrill and effeminate; he, however, spoke with firmness. There was nothing in his manner to condemn, but it showed a perfect self-possession. Mr Moline, when the unhappy man had finished reading, bowed his head, and responded: "Amen!" Hunton then rose and, folding up the paper in a hurried manner, said: "I am quite ready now." Mr Wontner approached him, and said he might remain seated for a short time longer; he thanked the worthy governor and resumed his seat at the table, and occupied his time by perusing some

religious work before him. During this time John James, aged nineteen, who was condemned for a burglary in the house of Mr Witham, the barrister, in Boswell Court, and two others were brought into the room, attended by the reverend ordinary.

The wretched Hunton, during the pinioning of his fellow-convicts, conducted himself with the greatest calmness and devotion. He repeatedly addressed those who were to suffer with him, urging them to repentance. All having at last been properly secured, it only remained for the unfortunate Hunton to undergo the same ordeal as his fellow-sufferers. The unhappy man was indulging in a sort of reverie when Mr Wontner tapped him upon the shoulder. He instantly stood up, and deliberately took a white stock from his neck and approached the officers. He stood firmly, and when the man was in the act of tying his wrists he said: "Oh dear, is there any necessity to tie the cord so fast?" The officer made no reply; upon which Hunton said: "Well, well, thou knowest best." He again complained of the cord being too tight about his arms, which was slackened a little, and the unhappy man said: "Thank thee, thank thee." After he had been thus secured he said: "Wilt thou allow me to wear my gloves?" "Yes, certainly, sir," was the reply, and with some difficulty he put them on, and still kept the prayer addressed to his wife in his hand, All being now in readiness, the mournful procession moved towards the scaffold.

Before Hunton left the room he said to Mr Moline: "Thou will not leave me, friend?" "No," said Mr Moline, "I will see thee to the scaffold." Mr Moline then supported the unhappy man along the passage to the lobby at the foot of the scaffold, where he sat down by the side of his friend, still holding the prayer to his breast.

Hunton was the last to be summoned by the officers. When his name was pronounced he turned round and delivered the prayer to Mr Moline, when each shook the other's hand and kissed lips, the unhappy man observing: "You may say I am quite happy and comfortable -- fare thee well." He then quickly ascended the steps with the same unshaken firmness and deliberation which had marked his conduct throughout the trying period. He took his station under the fatal beam, and requested that a blue handkerchief, to which he seemed fondly attached, might be fastened over his eyes, which was accordingly done.

When the preparations of the hangman for the deaths of these unhappy men were completed, the Rev. Mr Cotton commenced reading a portion of the burial service, and at a given signal the drop fell, and the four

unfortunate beings were suspended. A loud shriek from some persons in the crowd followed the close of the melancholy scene.

The sufferings of the unhappy men were but brief. The rope by which Hunton suffered was longer than the rest, on account of his remarkably low stature; it soon reached its full tension, and he appeared to die instantly.

After the bodies had remained suspended for an hour they were cut down and removed into the interior of the jail, preparatory to their interment.⁵⁰

With Hunton's previously good reputation he had hoped for a reprieve⁵¹. Against this, the strong banking lobby made sure that all crimes involving forgery would end with an execution. However, this case could have been the start of change in the law to have the crime of forgery removed from a capital crime to that of a sentence of imprisonment for life, which became law in 1838. If so it came too late for Joseph Hunton. His body was buried at the Friends Burial Ground at Barking on 10th December 1828⁵².

The friend, Sparks Moline, who accompanied Hunton to the gallows is believed to have lived in the Walthamstow Slip as he was rated here from 1806 to 1811.

William Tooke Robinson

Following the execution of Joseph Hunton, Lea Hall was purchased by William Tooke Robinson. Robinson had been born in London, to his parents William Robinson and Catherine Tooke, and baptised at St Martin Outwich, on 15th March 1769. His father was living in Salway House, Woodford from at least 1804 until his death in Woodford in 1808. His heir, William Tooke Robinson had married Isabella Straker and lived at Woodford Bridge. In 1821 William Tooke Robinson moved to Water House in Walthamstow, and remained there until his death on 14th February 1837 at Portman Square, London. His eldest son, also William, born circa 1792, had married Jane Maltby on 8th June 1819 at St Mary's Parish Church, Walthamstow. From 1838 until 1840 William and Jane lived at Forest House, Leytonstone⁵³.

⁵⁰ Newgate Calendar

⁵¹ Of the 26 prisoners convicted and sentenced to death only four including Hunton were not given a reprieve from the King *The Times* 2nd December 1828.

⁵² Monthly Meeting of Ratcliff and Barking: Burials (1795-1837)

⁵³ For further information of the Robinsons in Woodford – see Georgina Green, *The Robinson's House at Woodford*, Woodford Times Newsletter, Autumn 2012.

James Henry Levin

It is clear that neither William Tooke Robinson nor his son ever lived at Lea Hall. During their ownership it was let to James Henry Levin from Lady Day 1830 until Lady Day 1836. He was born in Prussia circa 1781 and became a London merchant located in Broad Street. James Henry Levin married Mary Ann Woodhouse at Leominster, Hereford, on 26th December 1816. Of their large family of at least eight children, two were baptised in Leyton:

Samuel Butler baptised 2nd August 1832

Thomas Woodhouse born 27th April 1834 and baptised on 14th June 1834

In 1836 Levin was being rated by Walthamstow Parish for the house and grounds, amounting to 1 acre and 26 poles as they were included in the Walthamstow Slip⁵⁴.

James Henry Levin died in St Thomas' Hospital, Hackney on 24th February 1857 and buried in St John's Parish Church, Hackney on 2nd March 1857.

Thomas Moxon

William Robinson had sold Lea Hall to Thomas Moxon in 1838. The Moxon family continued to live here from Lady Day 1838 until April 1869.

The Moxon family originated in Yarmouth, the same home town as Joseph Hunton, although there is no information that they knew the family. Thomas Moxon's great grandfather, John Moxon, had three sons, one of whom we presume died young. Of the other two brothers, John and Thomas, one line emigrated to the New World. Thomas Moxon descended from his grandfather, the elder John Moxon, and then his own father, Thomas Moxon, the second son.

Thomas Moxon was born in Norfolk in Yarmouth on 2nd May 1792⁵⁵ to John Moxon and his wife, Anne Browne. Their son, Thomas Moxon had attended a boarding school in Hingham, Norfolk where he met and subsequently married seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Browne, the daughter of the headmaster, Rev John Henry Browne, on 6th January 1820, possibly at Twickenham. They began their married life at Pink Cottage, Lark Hall Lane in Clapham until about 1826 when they moved to Clevelands in Walthamstow, where they remained until 1834. There is the suggestion that Clevelands was in some way connected with the exploits of Barbara Villiers, the First Duchess of Cleveland and "Lady of the

⁵⁴ *Index to Coe's Map of 1822*, Walthamstow Antiquarian Society monograph 5A, 1966, pp 39.

⁵⁵ Certainly not in Leyton as has been suggested.

Bedchamber". However, it is not known where the Moxons lived for the next three years.

Thomas Moxon was a stockbroker in the family firm of J & T Moxon of 69 Old Broad Street, London. He would certainly have needed to be a successful stockbroker as Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth, had a reputed family of twenty children⁵⁶. Those that can authentically be accounted for are as follows:

Charles St Denys, born 9th October 1820, baptised Clapham 10th November 1820

James Edward, born 19th April 1822, baptised Clapham 15th May 1822

Henrietta, born Clapham circa 1823

Christina, born 21st December 1824, baptised Clapham 19th January 1825

Philip, born 18th January 1826, baptised Walthamstow 18th October 1827

Rose, born 14th September 1827, baptised Walthamstow 18th October 1827

Matilda, born 19th November 1828, baptised Walthamstow 17th December 1827, died 1829

Herbert Charles, born Walthamstow 15th February 1830, baptised Walthamstow 12th March 1830, died, 21st June 1864 and buried Leyton 25th June 1864

Matilda, born 14th October 1831, baptised Walthamstow 30th November 1831

Felix, baptised at St George the Martyr, Queen Square on 26th July 1833

Thomas, born 22nd February 1835, at St George the Martyr, Queen Square on 16th March 1835

Bessie, born circa 1836, baptised Twickenham 6th March 1850, died, 10th September 1860 and buried Leyton 15th September 1860

Julius, born Leyton circa 1839, baptised Fakenham, Norfolk 4th July 1855

Kate, born Leyton circa 1842, baptised Twickenham 21st August 1850

Octavia, born Leyton circa 1843, baptised Twickenham 21st August 1850

Henry, born Hyde Park circa 1845, baptised Twickenham 21st August 1850, died Chigwell 2nd April 1872

Thomas Moxon was one of the stockbrokers responsible for the issuing of shares in some of the French railway companies⁵⁷. His City address was 3 Austin-Friars, but in later years he moved to 3 Copthall Court. In local affairs Thomas Moxon appears in the Highways Rate Book from 1854 until 1858.

⁵⁶ Although only 15 can be reasonably accounted for including Octavia, the 8th daughter. We would have expected sons named John or Thomas or a daughter Elizabeth to be amongst the childrens' names.

⁵⁷ *The Times*, 9th July 1845.

The lives of their children make interesting reading. The eldest son, Charles, was said to have disappointed his father by not wishing to continue with the family firm of stockbrokers. Instead he began studying geology until 1848 when he took Holy Orders and finally became a parson in the Church of England at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Hempton, Norfolk⁵⁸.

James Edward Moxon, was a stockbroker and a keen horticulturalist. He travelled to South Africa from where he corresponded with Sir William Jackson Hooker, director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. His collection of plants now resides at Charterhouse School. A number of specimens collected at Leyton in 1839/40 are now in the Charterhouse School Herbarium. He died on 14th April 1890 and is buried in Farncombe cemetery.

Philip Moxon entered the East India Company and saw action at the Battle of Ferozeshah, in the first Anglo-Sikh War in the Punjab. On 21st December 1845 Ensign Philip Moxon was assigned Colours Officer and shortly afterwards he was killed. There is a painting showing the battle in progress. The body of Philip Moxon lay in front of the barricades, having fallen on his colours, now stepped in his blood⁵⁹. He was nineteen-years-old.

His younger brother, Thomas Moxon, also served in the Army as a Captain in the 45th Madras Native Infantry. He was a talented artist, like his brother Julius, and recorded his journey to Madras in a series of drawings⁶⁰.

The third brother to serve his country was Julius, a cadet in the East India Company, he was given the temporary rank of Ensign and then Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. He died at Quilon, Kerala in India in 1860.

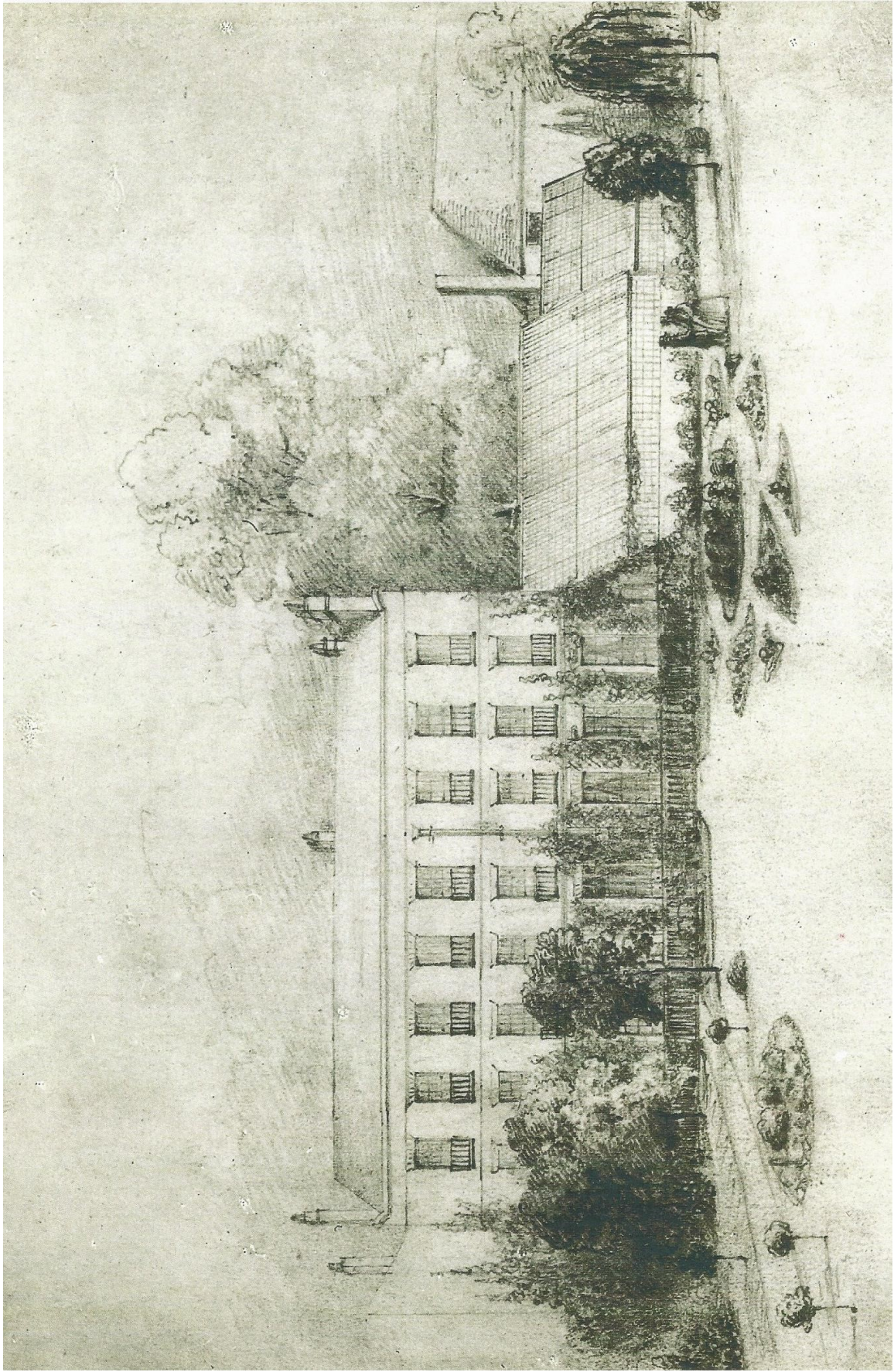
The first of three marriages which joined the families of Moxon to that of their neighbours, the Innes family of Walnut Tree House, took place on 14th August 1845. Seventeen-year-old Rose married James Lewis Innes, son of Robert Hugh Innes at St Mary's Parish Church, Leyton. It is said that James fell in love at first sight, seeing Rose at church service. Her sister, Matilda, married Lewis Charles Innes on 2nd January 1852⁶¹. Lewis Charles Innes became Chief Justice of Madras and Vice-Chancellor of Madras University. The third family wedding took place on 5th August 1856 when Herbert Moxon married eighteen-year-old Helen Mary Innes, the service being conducted by his brother Charles.

⁵⁸ For more information on Charles Moxon and the Moxon family – see the Moxon Magazine – various issues.

⁵⁹ The remains of the flag are now preserved in Winchester Cathedral.

⁶⁰ A series of his drawings are now held by the Royal Geographical Society in London.

⁶¹ Mary Savile, *Echoes of Old Leyton*, Walthamstow & Leyton Guardian 1965.



Lea Hall, 1840

On 5th December 1864 at Ryburgh, Norfolk, the wedding took place between Octavia Moxon and the Rev George Pardoe, the then vicar of Alkham in Kent. The Rev Pardoe is not thought to have been related to the Pardoe family of Leyton Manor. Rev George Pardoe was on hand when his sister-in-law, Kate Moxon married Charles Alix Griffith at Alkham in July 1872.

Elizabeth Moxon died in 1858 and was buried on 16th April 1858. Her husband, Thomas Moxon died on 6th April 1869 and was buried alongside her in St Mary's Parish Church, Leyton on 10th April 1869.

Cambridge House

Following the death of Thomas Moxon a long and difficult settlement of his estate followed, he having left no will, which took twenty-two years. In the meantime, Henrietta Moxon retained ownership of Lea Hall where she remained for the next couple of years. From January 1872 until October 1877 the house was leased to Dr Joseph Rufus Aldom as a school, which he renamed Cambridge House. He already ran a boarding school, Salway House, High Road, Leyton. In 1881 Charles William Pardoe⁶², brother to the Lord of the Manor of Leyton bought Lea Hall from the executors of Thomas Moxon. Dr and Mrs Aldom finally purchased Lea Hall outright and continued as owner/occupiers until April 1879.

Joseph Rufus Aldom was born in Holsworthy, Devonshire on 11th May 1821 and baptised in Kingsbridge on 10th October 1821. His parents were the Rev Isaac, a Wesleyan minister, and Jane Aldom. He married Martha Conquest at the Wesleyan Chapel in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire on 22nd June 1848. They had one child prior to moving to Leyton:

Francis Joseph, born 1849 in Trull, Somerset
Alice Martha, born 1853 in Leyton
Herbert Conquest, born 1854 in Leyton
Frederick Arthur, born 1859 in Leyton
Olive Jane, born 1861 in Leyton
Arthur Wesley, born 1862 in Leyton

In 1851 Dr Aldom became the proprietor and principal of Salway House School in Leyton prior to opening Lea Hall as Cambridge House. Dr Aldom was

⁶² No relation to the Rev George Pardoe.



Cambridge House around 1880
Dr Aldom is probably the figure to the right of the house

seized with a sudden illness on 26th August 1885⁶³ and died shortly afterwards on 29th August 1885 at Salway House. The funeral took place at the Wesleyan Chapel and his body was interred in the Parish Churchyard. His wife, Martha died on 29th January 1903 and is buried alongside her husband.

In the picture, immediately above, it shows the windows on the right side having been bricked up. Likewise in the drawing by Thomas Moxon, but not the one said to be dated 1840. One must assume that the Thomas Moxon drawing must therefore be later than 1840, which is more likely. This poses the question why when the Moxons had so many children.

Essex County Asylum

The first mention of Lea Hall, being leased by the county as an asylum, in an addition to Warley Hospital in South Weald, was in November 1878⁶⁴. Lea Hall was used to accomodate 46 female chronic and 'harmless' cases from

⁶³ Caesar Caine *A Brief Chronicle of Wesleyan Methodism in Leyton, Essex, 1750-1895*, T Hubbard, Leyton 1896, pp 94.

⁶⁴ A/H 10/1/1/5 Essex County Record Office.

January 1879. When, in 1891, the lease expired, the decision was made not to renew it, the reason being that Lea Hall now required too many repairs.

Lea Hall now went the same way as so many of Leyton's fine houses and estates. The Lea Hall Estate was offered up as building plots in 1892 by the trustees, following the death of the Rev John Pardoe⁶⁵, and Lea Hall was finally demolished in 1894. The first houses were built and offered for sale in 1897. The subsequent houses became Lea Hall Road.

⁶⁵ David Boote, *A Listing of the Streets of Leyton & Leytonstone*, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society, 2012.