

LEABRIDGE FARM AND THE BLACK MARSH SILK

A history project funded by the
Waltham Forest Borough of Culture Year 2019
By Lea Bridge resident Claire Weiss
December 2019

Dedicated to the knowledge and insights of the late Katy Andrews

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PREFACE



The Leabridge Farm, as imagined by Lindsay Topping

©Lindsay Topping

Sensing a new interest in the history of the regenerated Lea Bridge area, I, as a local resident, resolved to trace the story of the Leabridge Farm whose original footprint is now the site of the new 'Motion' estate near Lea Bridge station, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London E10.



Fig. 1: an extract from Chapman & Andre's map of 1777 courtesy of Tim Fransen, 2018.

Although Leabridge Farm can be seen on this and other 1770s maps - some of which show the presence of barns, stables, meadows and orchards - it has been absent from local history until now. Having discovered that its original name was 'Black Marsh Farm' I became more aware of an even earlier history: the marshes once drained had provided fertile farmland from the Saxon period onward¹.

¹ Weinreb and Hibbert, 1983

Having probed archaeological studies to find explanations for the name 'Black Marsh Farm' and having examined the various crossings including the Black Path across Leyton Marsh, I went on to explore the development of horticulture there, including osier beds and the background to 19th-century silk dyers settling at the farm. I have contemplated that the farm's location at the Lea Bridge Turnpike four-mile marker stone would have boosted its endeavours in the 18th-century with greater efficiency of conveying farm produce to markets in London.

Finally, I return briefly to the older history of the Black Marsh, what emanated from it, and offer some suggestions as to why it has been forgotten. This part of the story needs further thinking!

The Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society has supported the project which includes imaginative artwork which could later stimulate the creation of a permanent artefact such as a mosaic or roundel installation to record this rich little example of Lea Valley history.

If you have any information to contribute or are interested in knowing more, please contact Claire by email on claireweiss@hotmail.com.

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[NB: maps show North being at the top of the page, except where otherwise indicated.]

Introduction

I want to share my discoveries of how a view like this



[Fig. 2: features that Leyton marshlands might have exhibited prior to the post-Saxon agricultural development² - as exhibited in contemporary image of Rainham Marshes]

² According to 'From Ice Age to Essex', Pamela Greenwood et al. Museum of London 2006

..... might have become something like this



[Fig. 3: A Farm on Walthamstow marshes, 1781 engraving by R. Laurie, R., aquatint]

..... then, much later, this



[Fig. 4: the art deco commercial frontage of 97 Lea Bridge Road Leyton, London E10 - my photograph taken 2016]

..... and finally this



[Fig. 5: what the replacement 'Motion' estate at 97 Lea Bridge Road Leyton, London E10 will look like on completion in 2020 - an artist's impression].

Leyton and its marshes:

Early times and archaeology: Stone Age, Ice Age, Bronze Age

The archaeologists and geologists have learned much about the origin, structure and development of the Lea valley over the countless millennia, dating back to the time when the [future] territory of the British Isles was still part of the European mainland. The Ice Age itself, and the raising of sea levels after its termination shaped the coastlines, estuaries and river valleys that we now inhabit. Those movements of ice sheets and glaciers over different rock material and formations have left behind alluvial debris in what we now call the Lea valley. This holds trails of physical evidence of the peoples who preceded us. Our part of the Lea Valley is designated an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) because of this rich resource.

According to the fascinating book *From Ice Age to Essex*³, the Middle Stone Age camps, Bronze Age and Iron Age artefacts, Saxon boats and mediaeval water mills revealed by archaeological investigations in the Lea Valley '*reflect the way earlier inhabitants have used the resources of the valley for food, transport, industry and religious ritual*'. The earliest farming in the east of London is said to date from the 4th millennium BC. While I've not traced any direct link from those times to the site of the Leabridge Farm, I've found it fascinating to delve into early times and try to put the farm's existence into a historical trajectory, as pictured in the introduction.

³ Pamela Greenwood et al, Museum of London 2006

Exploring ancient features of the Lea Valley

Learning that the River Lea, emerging from the Ice Age, was said to be a mile wide from the present-day Ware, Herts location southwards, and that it remained actively tidal northwards as far as Leyton Marsh until as late as 1500⁴, I remembered that the river was reputationally tidal⁵ as far as the confluence of the Flood Relief Channel until the completion of mitigating works at the Prescott Lock in Bow prior to the 2012 Olympics.



Fig. 6: My 7 February 2014 photo of a tidal water warning sign (since removed) adjacent to the Lea at the spot marked ● on the map in Fig. 7 following.

The informative website leabridge.org.uk/nature-and-open-space/lammas-lands/the-saxons-and-the-origin.html mentions the possibilities of Saxon cultivation on the marshes and discusses the pre-Roman background to the Lammas half-year grazing system. The late notable historian and naturalist of the Lea marshes Katy Andrews also attests to this⁶ citing that *'the dates for opening and closing the marshes to beasts remained those based on the Celtic and Christian calendars, not on the Roman or Saxon'*

⁴ 'A History of the Parish of Leyton Essex' Vol. 1 p 377, Rev John Kennedy 1894 (hereafter: 'Kennedy')

⁵ www.london.gov.uk/questions/2012/0004

⁶ 'The Chronology of the Marshes' unpublished notes of a talk given to Walthamstow Historical Society, Katy Andrews, 2013 (hereafter 'Katy Andrews')

While this provides no tangible mention of agricultural activity specifically at the site of the Leabridge Farm it's of relevance to trace the changes in the natural environment from ancient times. See Fig. 7 below.

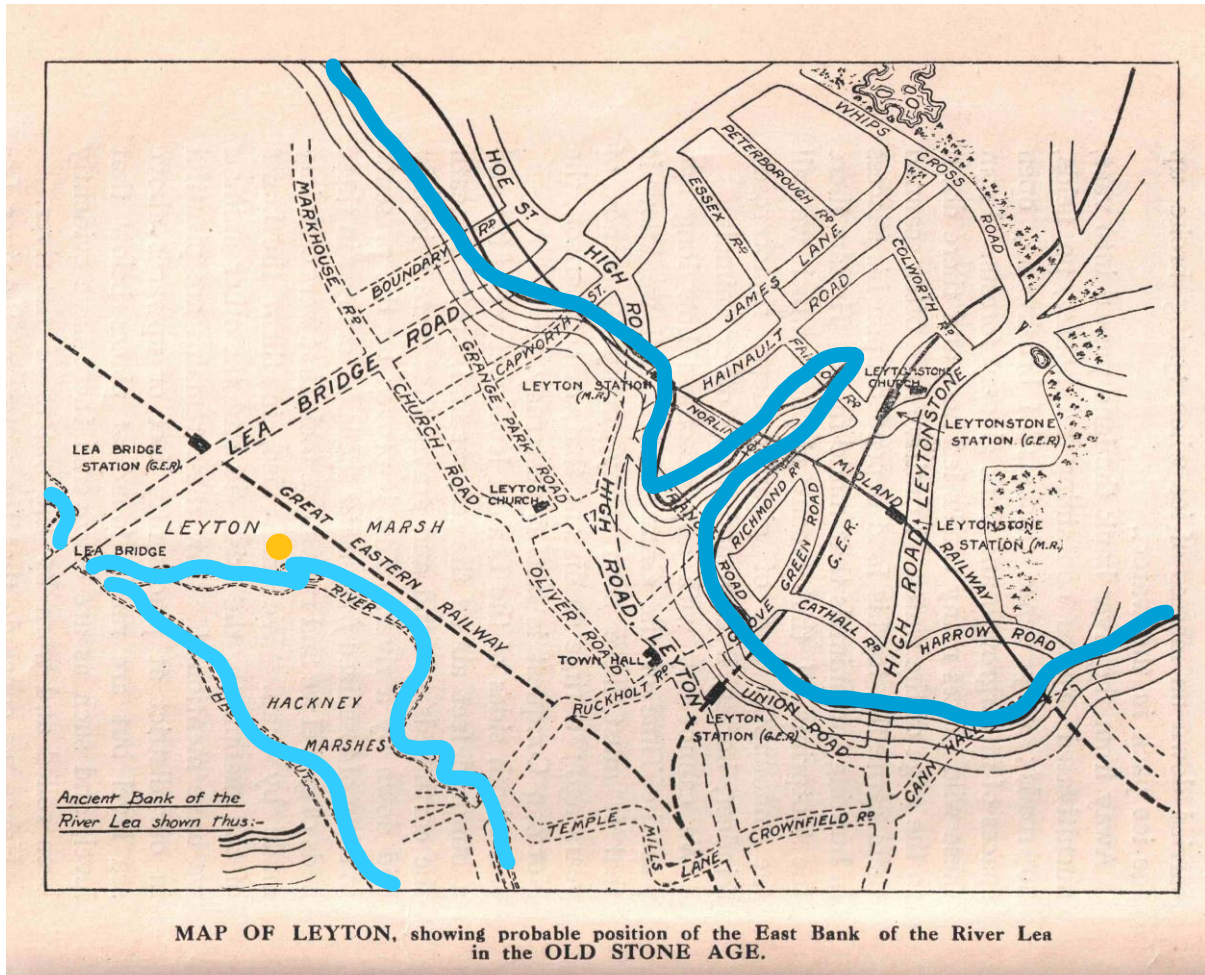


Fig. 7: Adapted from W.H. Weston 'The Story of Leyton and Leytonstone'

Weston, writing in 1921, held that this was 'probable' scale of the east bank of the River Lea around the time of the Late Stone Age (c15,000 years ago) when viewed against the contemporary street map.

- ● yellow spot marks the approximate position of tidal water indicated on the Environment Agency's sign at Fig. 6.
- The line coloured **deeper blue** follows Weston's claimed extent of the eastern bank of the Lea in ancient times.
- The line in **paler blue** marks the route of the Lea waterways in 1921.

The passing of many millennia, after the Lea's east bank had reached as far as Weston's claim, brings us to the subject-time of a 2014 report, *A Late Bronze Age Enclosed Settlement at the Oliver Close Estate, Leyton, London Borough of Waltham Forest*⁷. Bishop and Boyer describe a large ditched enclosure dating from the Late Bronze Age (c3,000 years ago).

Reading in *'From Ice Age to Essex'* that the Lea marshlands at that time would have looked something like Rainham Marshes now, as in Fig. 2, it seems feasible that the Bronze Age people had set their enclosure on the slightly higher land on the east side of the valley. Incidentally, this was about one-kilometre south-east of the [future] site of Leabridge Farm, and very close to the [future] Ive Farm, an entity that existed in comparable times and circumstances to those of the neighbouring Leabridge.

Since those ancient times the eastern banks of the Lea have retreated from the **deeper blue** position that I traced on Weston's map to the **paler blue** line we now recognise. I haven't seen detailed evidence of any phasing of that retreat, but I note with interest that the pre-mediaeval Lea, according to Kennedy, accommodated ninth-century Danes and Vikings sailing up to Ware to make fortified camps, sacking ancient villages on the way.

The resulting wide floodplain of the Lea marshes - which since pre-mediaeval times has been drained variously by ditches, sewers and channels - are our legacy. Some watercourses formed naturally but some resulted from the building of water-powered industry installations such as mills. Yet others were dug out to prevent flooding, and later drainage was designed to supply clean water to the increasing population in London and to take remedial measures against pollution flows. Kennedy argues that the building of embankments, locks and drains on the Lea from 1500 onwards would itself have reduced its width.⁸ Other historical accounts support this and pose that once drained, the Low Leyton 'level' was a rich and fertile terrain.

⁷ Transactions of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society 2014, Vol. 65, p51-102. 52p

⁸ Vol. 1 p 377

Crossing the marshes between Clapton and Leyton

A key consideration, in terms of seeking a starting point for the Leabridge Farm, is to examine the existence and absence of crossing routes over the Lea and its marshes.

The Black Path

Glancing back to Roman times, I read in Katy Andrews' notes a suggestion that Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe in the Norfolk area, used Leyton Marsh in 60AD as a stopover camp for her army on their way from Colchester (Camulodunum) to attack London (Londinium). I have found no evidence one way or the other, but Katy's argument that Boudicca might have decided to prepare for battle here rather than on the main route across the Lea at Bow further south, has its attraction. She poses that Boudicca and her army might have used the ancient Black Path route across the Marshes on their way from present-day East Anglia to burn the 30,000-strong Roman settlement of Londinium. This would make the Black Path ancient indeed.

More detail of the Black Path is at leabridge.org.uk/nature-and-open-space/black-path.html where, moving us on a thousand years from Boudicca, the website refers to the Black Path possibly originating as the mediaeval pilgrimage route from London to Waltham Abbey and beyond to Walsingham, Norfolk. Walsingham with its shrines was a centre of pilgrimage from 1061 until the dissolution of monasteries in 1538. With that event, the Black Path as the basis for a pilgrims' way in East Anglia fades more into legend.

However, the way from Walthamstow westwards was well-used and became known as the Market Hauliers, or Porters' route along which barrows and carts were pulled to take produce to London markets. Indeed, the field on Leyton Marsh behind the current Ice Centre is still named Porters' Meadow.

A pleasing description of the Black Path with additional points of history is surely that of The Gentle Author⁹ in his beautifully illustrated blog:

'The route of this primeval footpath is still clearly visible upon the map of the East End today, as if someone had taken a crayon and scrawled a curved diagonal line across the grid of the modern street plan. There is no formal map of the Black Path yet any keen walker with a sense of direction may follow it as I did.'



'Tracing a trajectory running northeast and southwest between Shoreditch Church and the crossing of the River Lea at Clapton, the Black Path links with Old St in one direction and extends beyond Walthamstow in the other. Sometimes called the Porter's Way, this was the route cattle were driven to Smithfield and the path used by smallholders taking produce to Spitalfields Market.'

Sometimes also called the Templars' Way, it links the thirteenth century St Augustine's Tower on land once owned by Knights Templar in Hackney with the Priory of St John in Clerkenwell where they had their headquarters. No-one knows how old the Black Path is or why it has this name, but it once traversed open country before the roads existed.'

Fig. 8: Statues representing market porters resting on the Porters' Way at London Fields, The Gentle Author 2018

The Gentle Author's last point, about open country before the roads existed, has been critical to my understanding of the marshes. When

⁹ <https://spitalfieldslife.com/2018/04/22/a-walk-along-the-black-path/>

looking at maps of the marshes I was finding it a challenge to visualise the area *before* it was crossed by a sustained¹⁰ road (1757), the railways (1840 and 1872), the aqueduct (1852 - 3) and the Flood Relief Channel (1950s - 76).

John Rocque's 1746 map (below) has been useful because his survey was done prior to the arrival of that infrastructure. In particular, his map precedes the 1757 Lea Bridge Turnpike that has ever since bisected Leyton marsh east-west. With Rocque's map I undertook a layering exercise with a later image on which the Leabridge Farm was already marked in order to envisage where both it and the Black Path were before the Lea Bridge Road existed. This is the result:

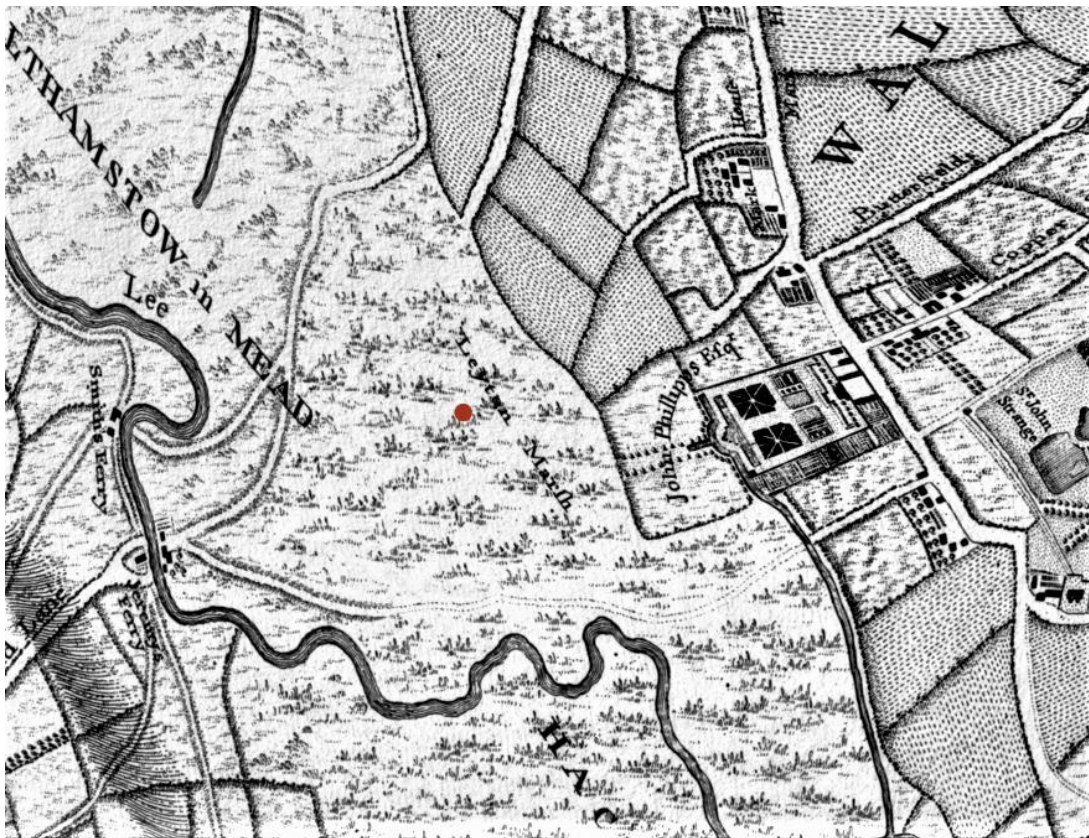


Fig. 9: Here, an extract from John Rocque's map 'London 10 miles round', 1746 is layered¹¹ on a contemporary map of the Lea valley. The Leabridge Farm buildings footprint is marked by the red dot - ●

¹⁰ In this study I have not attempted to cover the mediaeval crossings of the Lea such as the Causeway described in <https://leabridge.org.uk/rivers-bridges-and-weirs/crossing-the-lea/lea-bridge.html>

¹¹ <https://www.layersoflondon.org/>

Rocque's map suggests that the Lea Valley at that time had no direct constructed east - west crossing route between Clapton and Leyton. There are two tracks, one quite faintly represented, but both seem to avoid the mid-marsh area. The more northerly track emanating from the east side of the marsh is the Black Path. It comes down from Walthamstow, following the edge of a field and then striking out westwards following the Leyton - Walthamstow parish boundary before veering south-westwards to the Lea at the crossing labelled 'Jeremy's Ferry' (NB label is written vertically).

The southerly track from the east side of the valley is a continuation of Marsh Lane, a roadway that survives to this day. It meets the Black Path at Jeremy's Ferry. Neither of these tracks pass by my red dot marker of the Leabridge Farm. The map illustrates starkly how isolated the farm was, far from any bridge over the Lea! This all began to make sense when I discovered that 'Leabridge Farm' was not its original name: it was the Black Marsh Farm.

From Katy Andrews' description of the 1587 configuration of lanes and tracks in Leyton it's possible to infer or note from Rocque's map Fig. 9:

- Westward from the north-eastern corner of the map, Butterfield Lane (Welstret in 1537 and 1645), Wide or Wild Street led to the junction with Markhouse Lane and Church Lane, today's Markhouse Corner. Butterfield Lane is now part of today's Lea Bridge Road. Markhouse Lane and Church Lane are now each named as Roads.
- From the junction of Markhouse Lane with Butterfield Lane, the short roadway leading westwards was Hemstall Lane. Described in 1630 as a forest Chase Lane, it continued westward to Hemstall or Hemstead Green, where it bridged the Dagenham Brook. This is now the western part of today's Lea Bridge Road. It is estimated to be in the area of the present Hare & Hounds pub, built in 1861¹²

¹²<http://www.leytonhistorysociety.org.uk/Hare%20&%20Hounds%20v9a.pdf> David Boote, 2011/ 2015

There were various attempts to bridge the Lea and its marsh¹³, but now there is a further map to check out, Milne's 1800 Land Usage map.

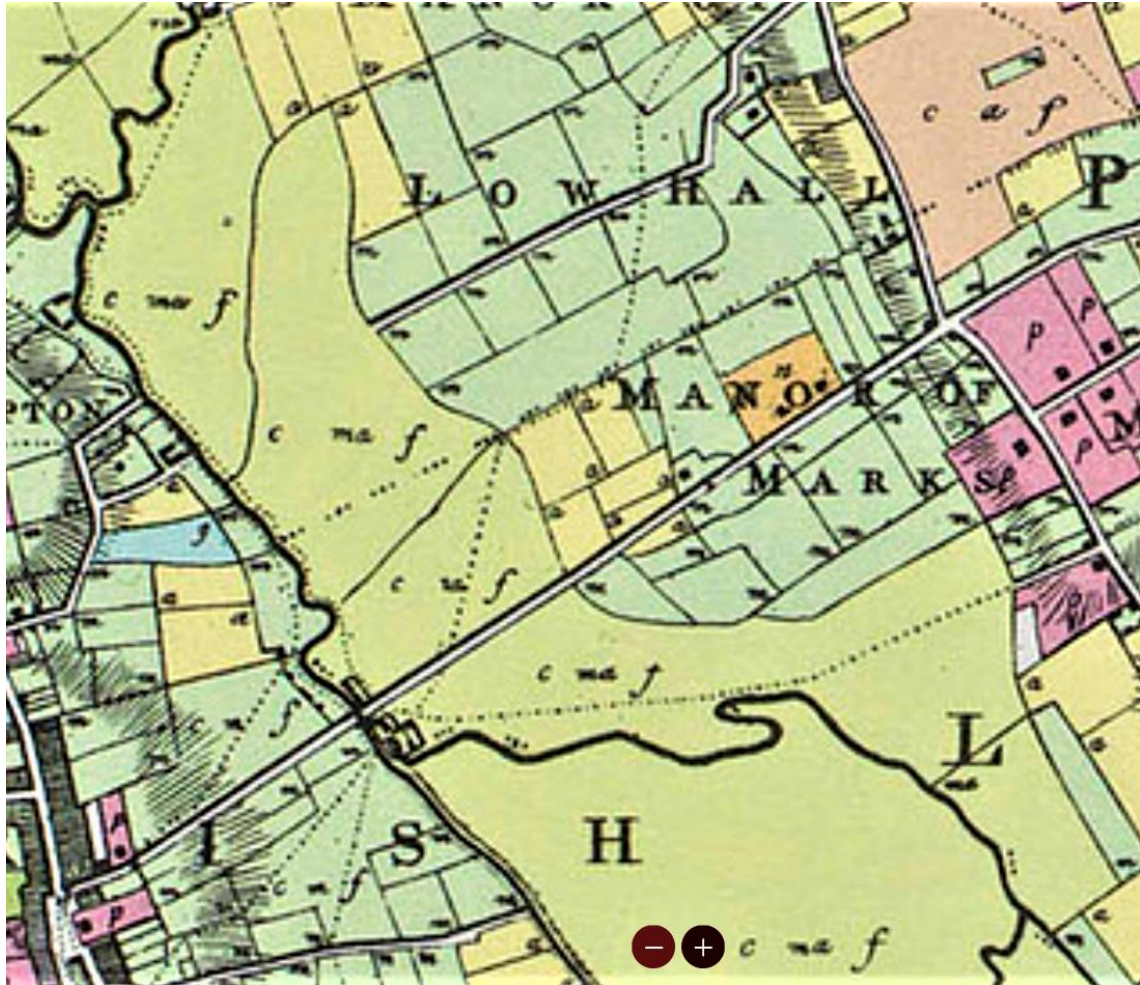


Fig. 10: Extract from Milne's Land Usage map 1800, a trigonometrical survey 1795 - 1799

A significant difference from Rocque's 1746 map is the presence of the Lea Bridge Turnpike - here linking the junction of Markhouse Lane and Church Lane to the crossing of the Lea and going directly past the Leabridge Farm. The general benefit of this map is in the colour coding and legend that indicate the usage of land at the time. The key revelation for us is the very clear representation of the Leabridge Farm buildings and land. The outline shape is unmistakable as it appears on many other subsequent maps. I have marked it on a segment following in Fig. 11.

¹³ Summarised in 'The Road to Jeremy's Ferry', Waltham Forest Oral History Project 2003 and the source in footnote 10 above.



Fig. 11: segment of Milne's Land Usage Map 1800 on which I show the entrance of Leabridge Farm, as I did in Rocque's map earlier, with a red dot: ●

This segment of Milne shows the Leabridge Farm being in the Manor of Mark and its proximity to the Leyton - Walthamstow parish boundary (marked by a series of three dots along the uppermost line). The farm plot is coded green marked 'm' for marsh. The yellow fields to the left of the map bear 'a' for arable. The farm is not far from an orange-coloured plot labelled 'n' for nursery. Connections between the farm and the nursery became closer later on.

David Boote's article '*The Black Path*'¹⁴ first describes the route across the Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes to the River Lea. Then matching it as the Porters' Way via London Fields to Shoreditch, David points out that whereas the Black Path crossed the common marsh fields diagonally, where the arable land was enclosed and at the parish boundary between Walthamstow and Leyton, it followed those boundaries. The parish boundary, well known to those who participate in the annual 'Beating the Bounds'¹⁵, was marked by a row of Black Poplar trees planted in 1752, of which, according to Katy Andrews, only one remained in 2011.

¹⁴ www.leytonhistorysociety.co.uk

¹⁵ Led by Save Lea Marshes. See www.saveleamarshes.org.uk



David Boote has also provided a contemporary map on which a modern route of the Black Path is traced. I have reproduced it here as Fig. 12

Fig. 12: Contemporary map by David Boote showing with green arrows the route along present streets and pathways that are closest to the Black Path.

To help readers envisage the location of the farm site (which is 220 years later this map than the one in Fig. 9) I have marked the current 97 Lea Bridge Road - the successor to Leabridge Farm - with a similar red dot: ●

People today walk the Black Path using the route on the map above and these signs provided by the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA).

Fig. 13: My photo of the contemporary Black Path on Leyton Marsh and the wayfinding sign pointing its direction for walkers, taken 22 August 2019.

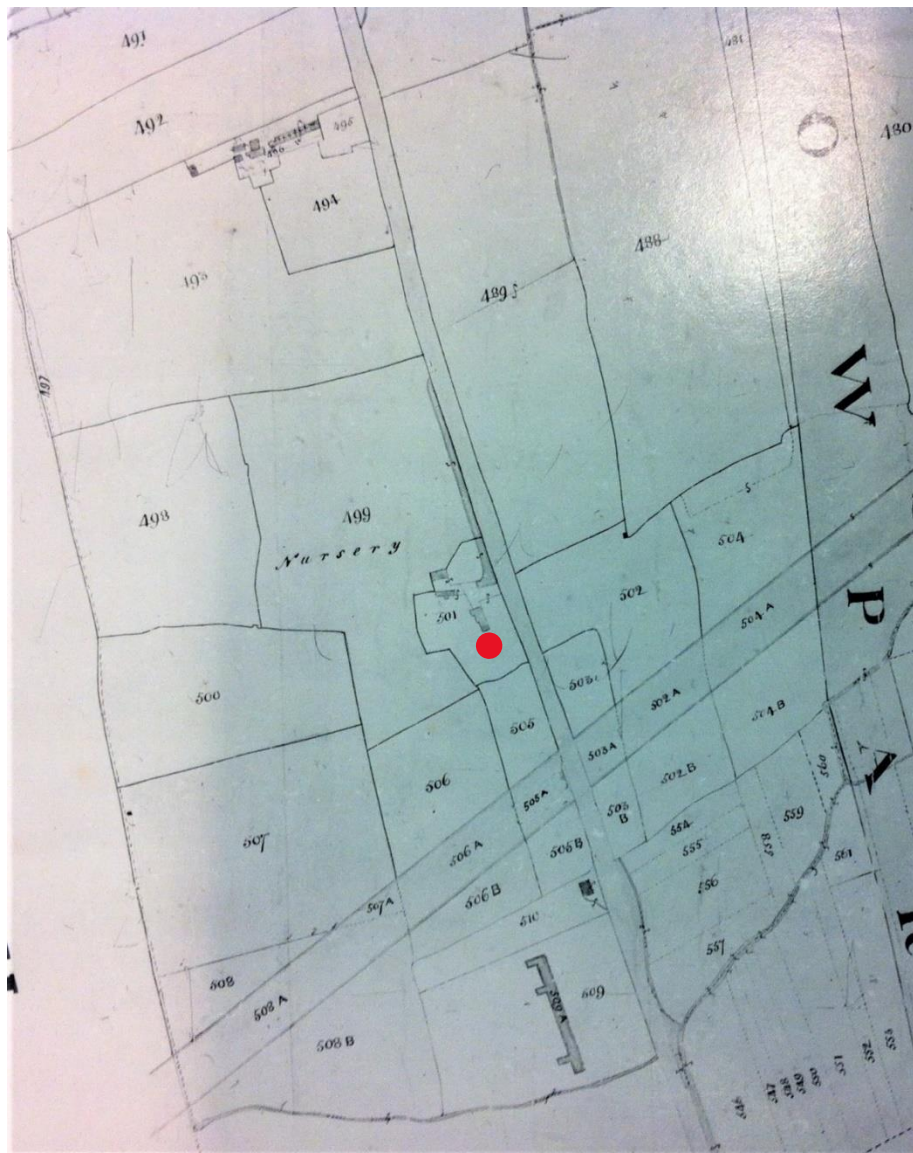
The Lea Bridge Road remains to this day a main route for motorised traffic, cycles and pedestrians.



From the Black Path to the Black Marsh Farm

The Holbrooks and the Black Marsh Farm

More detail about the Black Path and the Lea Bridge Turnpike is known, but I want to focus now on the Leabridge Farm, which was previously known as Black Marsh Farm, and muse on the likelihood of their connections. Black Marsh Farm is referenced in the Leyton 1839 Tithe map extract below.



East ↑

Fig. 14: section of Leyton 1839 Tithe Map showing Black Marsh Farm which I have indicated, again, with a red dot. ● Note the outline and position which fairly matches that of the Leabridge Farm I identified in Milne's 1800 Land Usage Map extracts at Figs. 10 and 11 above. A legend and explanation of the Tithe Map follow.

Checking out the Schedule to the Leyton 1839 Tithe map, and consulting Kennedy¹⁶ I found that James Holbrook held the Black Marsh farmland, and I was intrigued to learn that it included four messuages (land plots with buildings) occupied by three tenant farmers. I have colour-code-marked the numbered plots of land in relation to entries on the Schedule:

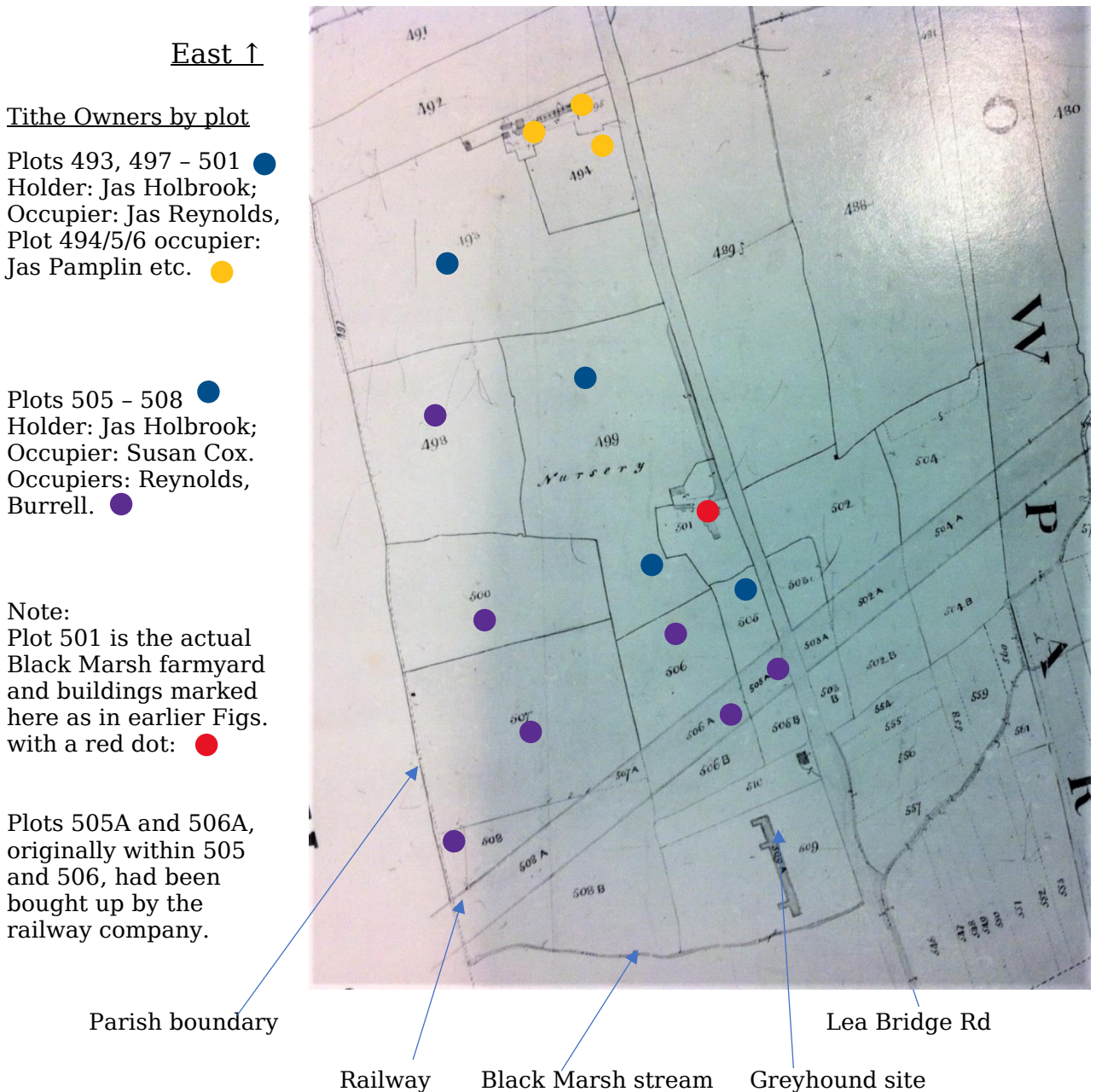


Fig. 15: same section of Leyton 1839 Tithe Map as in Fig. 14 but showing James Holbrook's landholding and his tenant occupiers.

¹⁶ Kennedy vol 1 pps. 320 - 344

Black Marsh Farm inventory of landholders, occupiers and acreage:

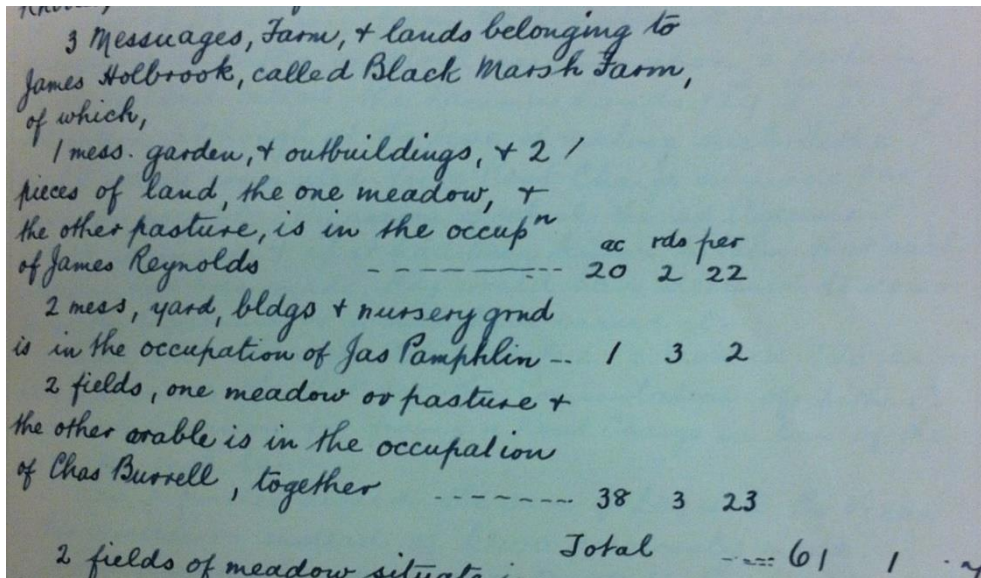


Fig. 16: James Holbrook’s Black Marsh Farm Tithe-free holdings of 61 acres/ 1 rood/ 7 poles (a/r/p)¹⁷ in 1839. Taken from Kennedy.

Table 1: breakdown¹⁸of Black Marsh Farm by land type, cultivation, acreage and Tithe status, 1839.

Holder	Plot no.	Occupier	Land type	Cultivation	a/r/p	f.s.d. to Vicar	f.s.d. to Improprator
Holbrook J.	497 505 505A	Reynolds J.	Osiers Arable Arable	Osiers Arable Arable	-1/2 -3/27 -2/10	1s. 5s.6d. 4s.	- 5s.8d. 3s.
Holbrook J.	498	Burrell C.	Arable	Arable	5/2/23	1.8s.6d	1.19s.6d
Holbrook J.	499 493 501	Reynolds J.	Arable House, offices, garden	Arable Garden	8/2/26 9/2/33 1/2/- 19/3/19	Tithe free	
Holbrook J.	494 495 496	Pamplin J. Cox Susan Tan Wm	Nursery Cottages, gardens Cottages, gardens	Nursery Garden Garden	1/2/33 -1/5 -2/32	Tithe free	
Holbrook J.	500 506 506B	Burrell C. Burrell C. Burrell C.	Meadow Arable Arable	Meadow Arable Arable	4/2/37 2/1/4 -3/22 7/3/23	Tithe free	
Holbrook J.	507 508 508A 535	Burrell C. Burrell C. Burrell C. Burrell C.	Arable Arable Arable Open marsh	Arable Arable Arable Meadow	<u>15/1/8</u> 35/1/3	Tithe free	

¹⁷ a/r/p: 1 acre = land ploughable by 1 person in 1 day; 4 x rods = 1 acre; 40 poles/perches/rods = 1 rood

¹⁸ Data from 1839 Tithe documents at Vestry House Museum, E17, Table 1 devised by me.

From Figs. 15 and 16 and Table 1, it seems that Black Marsh farmland was of a significant size, extending from The Greyhound Tavern land eastwards along Lea Bridge Road almost as far as Hemstal Green and the Dagenham Brook bridge which some say was Blackbridge. The position at the four-mile marker of the Lea Bridge Turnpike Road gave good transport links to the markets in London and Westminster for selling the produce. It was comprised mostly of arable land but also included Pamplin's Nurseries, some meadow, osier beds and open marsh. Financially it must have benefitted from the Tithe-free status. The Frith and Pardoe landholdings were the only other Tithe Free acreages in Leyton in 1839/40 covering 281 acres between them of meadow and undefined land.¹⁹

The Holbrook dynasty and tenants

James Holbrook doesn't seem to have been the first with the Holbrook name to have connections with land in Leyton as can be seen first from this portion of the Poll²⁰ for the Knights of the Shire to Represent the County of Essex taken on Monday & Tuesday 17th & 18th October 1774 for 'Layton'. Middle column is place of abode. Right columns indicate votes.

1774				ham	cts
ornchurch			Layton.		
to			Bofanquet Samuel, Esq.	Layton	
vering			Bofanquet William, Esq.	ditto	
to			Bull Walter	ditto	
fett			Crewze Francis, Esq.	Stapleford Tawney	
ivestock			Gowlett William	Layton	
xwell			Holbrook William	ditto	
ornchurch			Hewes Joseph	ditto	
to			Jackfon Charles	ditto	
to			James Robert	ditto	
to			Keighley, Rev. Mr.	ditto	
to			Keys Jeremiah	Hallingbury Great	
to			Matthews Joseph	Westham	
to			Pardoe John, Esq.	Layton	
to			Stracey Adam	Harlow	0 16 16
to					
	7	14	10		
omford			Nafing.		
eat Ilford			Campe Edward	Nafing	
uth Ockendon			Banks Thomas	Harlow	0 2 2
dersbrook					
arking			Plaiftow.		
to			Graves Edward	Plaiftow	0 1 1
eat Ilford					
inbury			Romford.		

Fig. 17: William Holbrook of Layton on Poll for Knights of Shire 1774

¹⁹ Rev Daniel Lyons 'The Environs of London' 4 vols 1796. Note this land in Leyton formerly belonged to Stratford Langthorne Abbey prior to the dissolution of monasteries.

²⁰ London Metropolitan Archives

I note that William Holbrook had sufficient status to take part in the Poll alongside the wealthy Bosanquets²¹ – Lord of Low Hall Manor and John Pardoe, Lord of the Manor at Leyton. I have found several references to the name William Holbrook in the records of baptisms, marriages and burials at St Mary’s church, Leyton from 1768 through to 1820. There is also a William Holbrook listed on the following Essex Land Tax Redemption Register²² of 1798. This seems to be indicative that Holbrook family members held Black Marsh Farm over two or three generations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Fig. 18 below.

Leyton

No. of Register.	Names of Proprietors.	Names of Occupiers.	Sums Asses'd.			Date of Contract.
			£.	s.	d.	
00972	Hill Wells	Ferdinand Jaques	1			
	W ^m Munday		1			
1176	W ^m Pocock	Tho ^s Staffing	12			1798
	Mary Gramer	D ^r Farling	8			
12672	Jn ^s Turner	Andrews & others	1			
	Mary Mills	Witch & others	1			Nov. 25 th 1799
00376	W ^m Southage Esq ^r	M ^r Shephard	7			
		M ^r Gullet	3			
	Trustees of Lincoln's Inn	M ^r Clark	9			
		M ^r James	2			
	W ^m Storey	M ^r Cotton	6			
	Jn ^s Knowles	M ^r Clementson	4			
	W ^m Crockett	Self	8			
7077	W ^m Hitchcock	M ^r Blake	3			Feb ^r 16 th 1799
	Chas ^r Hamerton Esq ^r	M ^r Ventor	2			
	W ^m Holbrook	M ^r Wilkinson	5			
		M ^r Siborn	2			
15376		M ^r Carter	1			
	Sam ^l Tyson Esq ^r	M ^r Hunt	2	16		
	Sam ^l Bosanquet	M ^r Vaux	2			11 th Feb ^r 1799
6069 A	D ^r	Himself	8			D ^r
		<i>R^r James - 3 Ten^{ts} 4th proportion - 10th charged on 2nd 10th 3rd 4th - on third</i>	2			D ^r
7187	M ^r R ^d James	Self	2			Nov ^r 6 th 1799
20079	David Jebb Esq ^r	M ^r Black	4			Feb ^r 16 th 1799

Fig. 18: extract from the Essex Land Tax Redemption registers of Leyton of 1798

²¹ *The Silk Road to Leytonstone*, David Boote, www.leytonpast.info/page208a.html

²² London Metropolitan Archives

Fig. 18 reveals that Wm Holbrook proprietor had three occupiers at the time whose 'affected sums' referred to: Mr Wilkinson £5; Mr Siborn £2 and Mr Carter £1. I found that the tenant Mr Carter was possibly a William Carter who had married at St Mary's church Leyton in 1759, or perhaps the same named person who married there in 1796. This extract appears to relate to his tenancy at the farm:

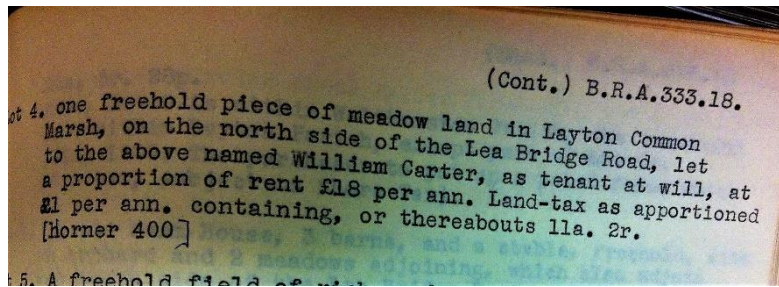


Fig. 19: 'Lot 4' from the 1799 sale of land following the death of John Pardoe. From *Index at Vestry House Museum, E17*²³.

Mr Wilkinson could have been either Henry or William Wilkinson. They farmed the land from 1790 to 1830²⁴ and insured it as the Leabridge Farm, Leyton Essex with Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Group on 16th September 1790.²⁵ This is the first formal documentary reference to the premises with that name that I have found. I believe this makes them the first farmers proper of a Leabridge Farm.

The Mr Siborn here was probably the elder: there was a Richard Siborn who, according to John Harvey in *'Early Nurserymen'*²⁶ ran the nursery in Lea Bridge Road from 1755 to 1774, and Richard Siborn the younger, born 1751 and buried at St Mary's Leyton on 25th February 1821. There is an entry for Richard Siborn in the 1811 London and County Directory. Later it was tenanted by Pamplin, as shown in Fig. 16 - from which we know that the nursery was part of the Holbrook holdings.

²³ Particulars of freehold estates in Leyton and Walthamstow late the property of J. Pardoe Esq. deceased to be sold in Chancery Lane 21 November 1799.

²⁴ Transactions of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society incorporating the Middlesex Local History Council Volume 24 J 973 Bishops gate Institute, Bishopsgate, London E.C.

²⁵ London Metropolitan Archives

²⁶ Phillimore, 1974, p. 87

The ditch at Black Marsh Farm

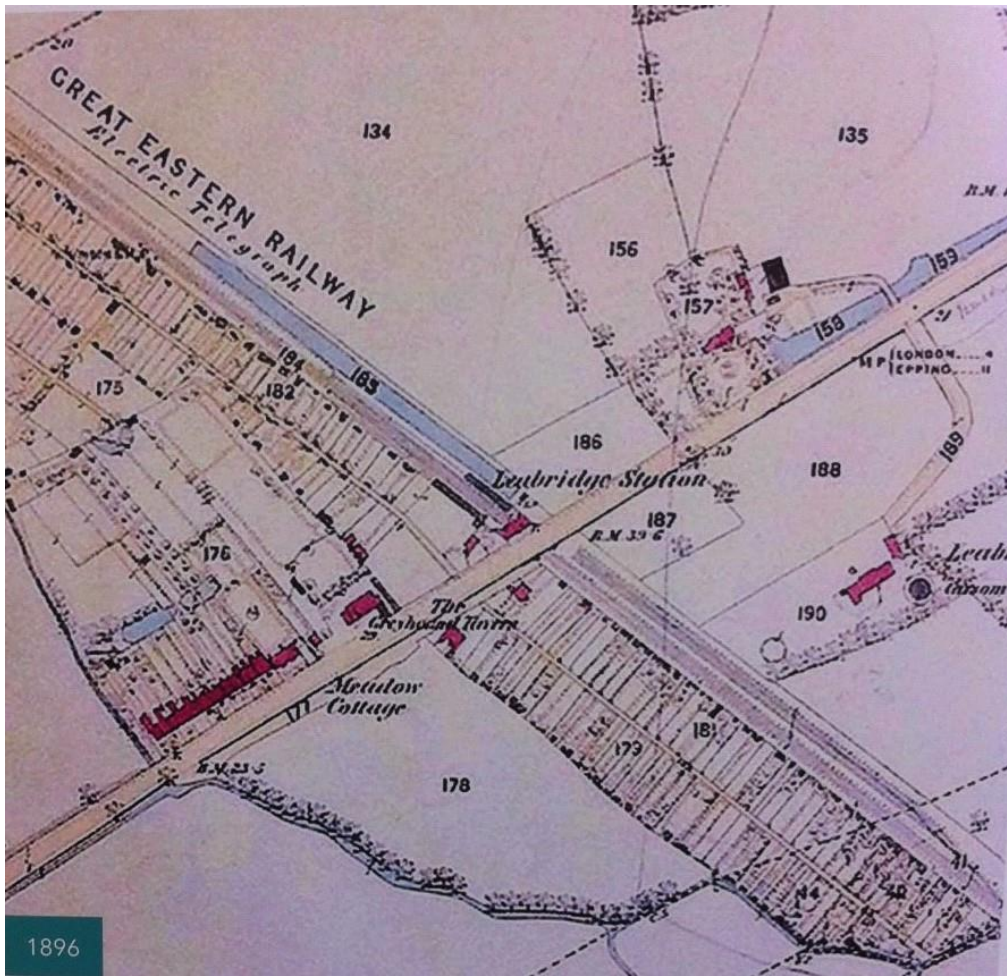


Fig. 20: Reproduction of the 1896 OS map as prepared by prospective developers of the Leyton Gas Woks site for a public consultation in November 2019

According to the minutes of the Lea Bridge Turnpike Trust of 23rd November 1812²⁷ a protracted legal dispute began which the trustees eventually lost. The Trust in 1794 (twenty-seven years after the turnpike opened) had placed landmark posts on the side of a ditch which ran between William Holbrook's land and the turnpike.

Holbrook is recorded as having recently taken over this particular portion of land that had lately been occupied as a plant nursery by Richard Siborn. He persisted in laying claim to the ditch, wanting to build a bridge over it and build houses along the road. The trustees were unable to get Holbrook

²⁷ Quoted in 'The Lea Bridge Turnpike and the Wragg Stage-Coaches', W. G. S. Tonkin, Walthamstow Antiquarian Society 1974, p. 10

to attend any conciliatory meeting, so they started taking the case to the Assizes at Chelmsford. When the trustees eventually withdrew their challenge, Holbrook had won the day. The case swung on the basis that the Lea Bridge Turnpike was built over the line of a former lane and that therefore the soil in question belonged to the Lord of the Manor. I deduce that this former lane was the 'little-used footpath route'²⁸ between Blackbridge at Hemstall and Lockbridge at Clapton. Holbrook's significant waterway along the Lea Bridge Road which appears to be bridged by a roadway that joins the turnpike at the four-mile post, is at Fig. 20 above.

This map at Fig. 21 below shows Holbrook's fairly substantial ditch some thirty years earlier, at which time he apparently had not yet been able to bridge the waterway or make an access road as had been acceded to him by the Trust in 1813 and as does appear in the 1896 map at Fig. 20.

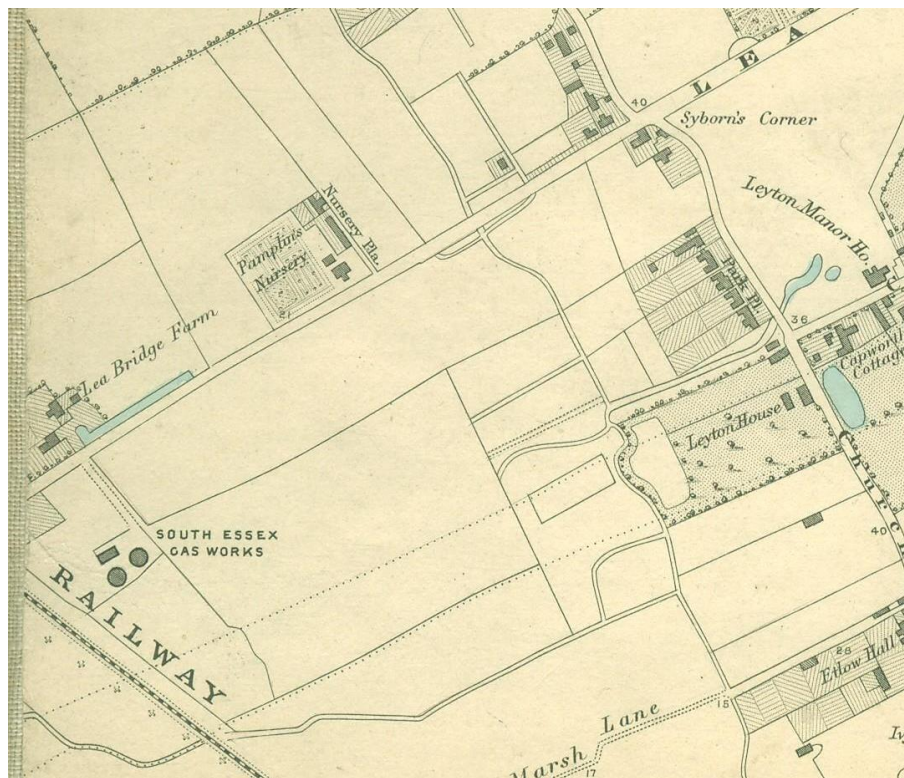


Fig. 21: 1862 - 1871: Stanford (Edward), Library Map of London and its Suburbs

Some sixty years prior to Holbrook's winning of the argument with the Turnpike Trust the South Essex Gas Works (later Lea Bridge Gas Works)

²⁸ Katy Andrews page 6 (see footnote 6).

had come to this part of Leyton.²⁹ The Great Cambridge railway had been laid and the Lea Bridge Station opened in 1840. As can be seen from Fig. 20 a multitude of land strips were defined along the railway. It was clearly becoming a busy and industrious area. Compare that with the earlier map, Fig. 21 above.

The 2015 Wessex Archaeology report on 97 Lea Bridge Road ³⁰ states:

“There was considerable occupation in the study area throughout the post-mediaeval period with a farm visible on a 1777 map along with possible land management in the form of drained marshland”, and it mentions the farm ditch as ‘a water feature in the eastern corner’ and observes that it ‘is likely to have been excavated down.’

It adds that an evaluation³¹ undertaken in 1994 revealed an accumulation of silts interpreted as part of the moat of Low Hall Manor and several post-mediaeval field drains. One of the advantages of the farm’s location on marshland may have been that it was not too difficult to accumulate water resource, by digging trenches. This photo, quirkily, gives some idea.



Fig. 22: My photo taken on 7th February 2014 when the water levels in the Lea, the Flood Relief Channel and Dagenham Brook were high. It shows that the natural water table has risen along the unused portion of railway track at the pre-reopened Lea Bridge station. This would seem to match the ditch location next to the railway at Fig. 20.

²⁹ 1853

³⁰ ‘Archaeological Desk-based Assessment 10840 97 Lea Bridge Road Waltham Forest Greater London’ April 2015 www.wessexarch.co.uk

³¹ For Low Hall, A. Douglas for NMUS 1994

The question arises: what was the Leabridge Farm ditch used for? Before responding to this I note that the farm ditch in question was not the only one in the area, and that a similar stretch of water is shown on Fig. 20 alongside the railway. But regarding the farm ditch there have been ideas of it being a watercress growing area³² or it an osier bed – tenant James Reynolds did have a holding of osiers indicated for Tithe plot 497 (see Table 1 earlier). Neither of these are ruled out, and since it doesn't look like a traditional farm duckpond, a different suggestion could be more likely: that the water availability was good enough to support silk-dyeing.

The Reynolds family and the Black Marsh Farm silk

The use of the Leabridge Farm for silk-dyeing came up as a surprise discovery. I was looking for tenant James Reynolds' details on the nineteenth-century censuses and found him in 1851 listed not as a farmer but as a silk-dyer. James, aged 39, his wife Jane aged 35 and family were on the record as residents of 'Lea Road' and they were next-door to William Pamplin, a nurseryman. There are several instances of the name Reynolds in Leyton and Walthamstow records, but I knew from this slightly uncommon name of the neighbour that the address 'Lea Road' must have been that of the Black Marsh Farm. The Reynolds' son Edward aged 17, was also listed as being a silk-dyer. James had been born at Bethnal Green and his wife Jane at Norton Folgate which were both silk industry areas.

James Reynolds did have extensive fields to manage, as detailed in the Tithe records and this led to my assumption that the silk-dyeing must have been carried out at Leyton - rather than James and Edward travelling elsewhere. My guess seems to have been borne out. The Reynolds family appear to have made an adequate living since in addition to the four younger children in the household there was also a resident servant whose job was given as a groom, and a cook who, interestingly was born at Spitalfields, the centre of London's silk industry. There were several other silk dyers and dealers in Leyton in the mid-1800 censuses.

³² www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp197-205

Ten years later in the 1861 census the Reynolds family was recorded as resident at 23 Lea Bridge Road. I suspect this was not the result of a move from the previous address of Lea Road but was due to new house numbers being allocated perhaps the result of more residences being built. The family was still next to the Pamplins, and newly listed across the road was the manager of the gas works. By then James was defined as a retired silk-dyer, so most likely this had been his main trade. I wanted to find out how he had ended up in Leyton.

After 1830, the London silk-weaving industry had gone into a terminal decline with 30,000 said to be unemployed in the East End in the 1830s. The discovery of synthetic dyes in the mid-19th century was an additional factor in triggering decline. The steam-powered loom gradually took over from handloom-weaving. Many silk-workers took casual work on the docks, but some migrated to other silk-working areas.³³ James Reynolds, who hadn't appeared on the 1841 census at Leabridge, was therefore possibly one of the silk industry migrants during that decade.

The basic technique of silk-dyeing was the soaking of skeins of raw silk in tanks containing the dye-stuff.³⁴ There was always a demand for garments of black silk and it's not impossible that James Reynolds and family at Black Marsh Farm had walnut trees in the farm orchard, the hulls of which produces a black colourant. The 1896 map at Fig. 20 shows trees to be bordering the farmyard and there is a documentary reference to an orchard. Leabridge Farm, with its ready supply of water in the drainage ditch, stabling for horses and access to transport on the turnpike road was perhaps an ideal choice.

Even so, the ditch does appear to be of quite a generous size, and there may have been other uses. Possibly landowner William Holbrook's plan, in taking over Pamplin's land and laying claim to a bridged ditch with cart entrance was to seek income from offering a watering stop for the horses of passing travellers. Although his land adjoined that of The Greyhound

³³ www.brh.org.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/THE-SPITALFIELDS-SILK-WEAVERS.pdf

³⁴ <http://www.silk.org.uk/>

Tavern, which appears to have been the official stagecoach stop of the Lea Bridge Turnpike, complications had developed there about its access³⁵ when the bridge to carry the Turnpike over the new railway was



constructed. The Railway Act (1836) made the bridging of the road over the railway at any intersection incumbent upon the railway company. Not only that, the bridge design had to block the view of passing trains on the railway from the turnpike traffic. Thus, the bridge had a long slope which reached the level of the

Greyhound's first floor and adjoined it. An extra floor was then added on top of the Greyhound since its original ground floor had been robbed of any daylight and was left with nothing but the bridge wall as a view.

Above: Fig. 23: My contemporary photo of The Greyhound

Horses and their coaches were obliged to use the arches in the opposite Lammas Road to access the stables and water troughs behind the tavern. This road was originally The Greyhound's private road and had led to a level crossing that preceded the bridge.



I muse that Mr Holbrook's Leabridge Farm open ditch and stabling may have been more convenient to turnpike travellers!

Right: Fig. 24: My contemporary photo of the archways in Lammas Road

³⁵ leabridge.org.uk/gazetteer/photo-album/the-geyhound-ph.html

The Wragg company stagecoaches³⁶ had been running services using the Lea Bridge Turnpike from Walthamstow and Leyton to Bishopsgate in the first half of the nineteenth century. When the railway came to Lea Bridge horse buses made the shorter ride from Walthamstow to the station³⁷. But this affected the viability of running through traffic on the turnpike and so an additional tollgate was erected between the Leabridge Farm entrance and the Blackbridge. By the end of the century with urban development encroaching westwards from Leyton a tram system was installed in Lea Bridge Road. The days of the Leabridge Farm were numbered.

The Blackmarsh Stream and the Blackbridge

There is still more background to glance at before we reach a pause in the history of the Leabridge Farm. There are questions of location, of ownership, of usage and of geology. While the Black Path has survived as a name, Black Marshes as a recognised part of Leyton and Walthamstow marsh has not. Nevertheless, it's temptingly easy to assume that the Black Path's name derived from the fact that it crossed the Black Marshes. There is no consensus on this. Katy Andrews states that:

“In Walthamstow the route became known locally as The Black Path, as it led over the causeway from the Lockbridge on the River Lea to the Blackbridge - supposedly in Low Leyton, but more likely on the Porters' Way at the Parish Boundary between Leyton and Walthamstow where it crossed the Blackmarsh Stream through the Common Mead.”

Katy's suggestion is not completely upheld by other sources that Blackbridge was the crossing of Lea Bridge Road over the Shortlands Sewer. The Blackmarsh Stream is marked (by me) on the Tithe map at Fig. 15 above. Once, it may have linked into the Shortlands Sewer (which does still exist on the south side of the present Lea Bridge Road). But now it barely exists, mostly having been merged the Flood Relief Channel³⁸.

³⁶ 'The Lea Bridge turnpike and the Wragg stage-coaches' by W. G. S. Tonkin. Walthamstow Antiquarian Society, 1974

³⁷ 'The Road to Jeremy's Ferry', Waltham Forest Oral History Project 2003

³⁸ <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp263-275#fnn254>

However, traces remain, and the image below offers an interesting perspective. The pylons on Leyton Marsh follow the Flood Relief Channel and in places, as in this photo, straddle the remains of the Blackmarsh stream.



Fig. 25: My photo 22 August 2019 of the Blackmarsh Stream evidenced by green growth amid the sun-dried grass with, amazingly, the successor occupant of the Black Marsh Farm (Leabridge Farm) site clearly in view as the tower blocks of the new 'Motion' estate at 97 Lea Bridge Road.

Early background to the Black Marsh area

- As can be seen from Rocque's 1746 map at Fig. 10, the farm site was located in the Manor of Mark. This land of this manor was mostly within Leyton parish, but some of it was in Walthamstow, bordering the Low Hall Manor. As a result, tracing the early history of the Black Marsh area and the Black Marsh Farm involves consideration of three manors – Mark Manor and Low Hall Manor in Walthamstow Parish and Leyton Manor. Mark Manor's historical legacy includes the name Markhouse Road and Markmanor Avenue.
- The ownership of Mark Manor lands in the manor has been traced as coming into the hands of either David Gansel (d. 1714) or his son David (d. 1753) at which point it was united with the manor of Leyton. That land was then purchased by John Pardoe in **1783** from General William Gansel's heirs with the Leyton estate, with which it descended thereafter.³⁹ This provenance has been summarised in the 2015 archaeological report presented by the developers to Waltham Forest⁴⁰thus:

*“There are documentary records of residential property boundaries dating from **c1223** which may be related to the Manor House of Mark which may have been amalgamated as early as **1248**. The manorial estate passed to St Helen's Priory in the **late 15th century** and went through a number of owners until it was merged with the manor of Leyton.”*

- In **1608** there was a Deed enrolled by indenture in Chancery in which Edward Ryder sold to Sir Baptist Hicks parcels of ground including 10 acres called **Black Marsh Meadow** and 40 acres called **Blackbridge** that had the River Lea on the west, the Common Marsh of Layton on the North and certain grounds of Ruckholts on the south. This would seem to fit with the position of the Black Marsh

³⁹ www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp184-197

⁴⁰ Wessex Archaeology 2015

Farm later identified in the 1839 Tithe Map. It could also support Katy Andrews' view of the Blackbridge location.

- The **Black Marshes** extended over the Walthamstow - Leyton parish boundary according to the Waltham Forest Inquisition taken at Stratford Langthorne on 11 May **1620**. **Black Marshes** were one of twenty lands in the Manor of Lowe Hall.
- Interestingly, the neighbouring Low Hall Manor, of which the manor house stood between Markhouse Lane and the Dagenham Brook, was sold to Samuel Bosanquet in 1741⁴¹ and remained in the hands of the Bosanquet family comprising in 1843 a demesne of 225 acres. It had been let to Charles Burrell from 1837 and here remained there until 1863.⁴² It is likely that this is Charles Burrell aged 44 listed in the 1841 Census as a farmer at Low Hall. He or other Burrell family member may have been the tenant of 38 arable acres of the neighbouring **Black Marsh Farm** in 1839 as given in Fig. 17 above.
 - A Deed of **1648** was an indenture between Sir Thomas Lake, Richard Collard and Thomas Fool citizens and Aldermen of London: 40 acres called the **Black Marshes in Leyton** abutting the Common Marsh in the west, marshlands in the south, the Vine Acres of Mr Pigott in the east and the marshlands in the north of John Benfield and Lady Ashfield. There was a separate Deed in the same test sale of **1648** which included several pieces of 45 acres called the **Black Marshes** with all waies⁴³ in the Common Marsh of Walthamstow occupied by John Benfield and Richard Collard. In the same document **Black Marsh** was listed as separate from Walthamstow Marsh.
 - **Black Marshes** and the Seventeen Acre Marsh were transferred in a Deed of **1648**.
 - In **1697** Robert Ozler left £300 in his will for the building of a school at Low Leyton with an annual rent charged from his land on **Black Marshes**.⁴⁴

⁴¹ See also footnote 21 re '*The Silk Road to Leytonstone*', David Boote.

⁴² www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp253-263

⁴³ Obsolete spelling of 'ways'.

⁴⁴ www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/essex/vol6/pp233-240

- In **1705** Matthew Todd was subject to the Poor Rate at 12s 8d. for the **Black Marshes** and paid £38 rent.
- In the **1753** Deeds of Leyton and White Notley a lease was given to Martha Wakelin widow of Charles Bocock (Ive Farm owner) for land adjoining the **Black Marshes**.
- The **1783** Half-year rent assessments included £50 from Thomas Davis for the Black Marsh Farm 'formerly Todd' rated at £5. (By comparison Charles Bocock paid £131 for Ive Farm and was rated at £13.2s.0d. this appeared to be the largest property of that year).

NB. There is more work to be done on interpreting this historical data!

Black Marsh - possible origin of this name

In an archaeological survey of a site, 'E10 Enterprise Park, Argall Way Leyton' which is immediately to the north-west of the Leabridge Farm site⁴⁵, results from four trench diggings showed that underneath the 'made ground' (surface material not occurring naturally) was a layer of clay described variously as:

*"Very dark grey sandy clay, with occasional charcoal flecks
Very dark grey sandy clay, with occasional brick fragments and charcoal flecks
Very dark brown grey sandy clay, with occasional CBM fragments and charcoal flecks
Very dark brown grey sandy clay, with occasional CBM fragments and charcoal flecks
(CBM = building materials from baked clay)"*

I have found no evidence, not even a folk tale, that the dark colour of the ground in this area of the marshes explains its name. But it would seem to make neat sense of why there are so many features using the colour black in their name. So, I was looking for a geological explanation. Apparently, the nature of wetlands is that - whether they experience high or low rainfall it makes no difference - if soils remain wet, then plants will die and sink to the bottom of the water. They decompose slowly, and often stay

⁴⁵ C. Edwards, AOC Archaeology Group, 2005

very dark in colour (black). All that is required is low lying areas that do not drain well⁴⁶

Interestingly, a geological survey of the excavation of the first reservoirs at Walthamstow marshes, recorded at the south-west corner, a band of peat and beneath that a layer of black gravel that had been stained by the peat above it.⁴⁷ All of that offers a logical explanation of why this part of the marshes and associate features have the name 'Black'. As to why the names have all but disappeared, except the Black Path, who knows, but it is perhaps something that could be further investigated.

The end of the farm

The farm had ended by 1904. This is one of the last maps, dated 1902, to have the name and outline of Lea Bridge Farm marked.⁴⁸ The farm appears to have kept its ditch alongside Lea Bridge Road together with its roadway access. The name of the farm is now spelt in two separate words: Lea Bridge.

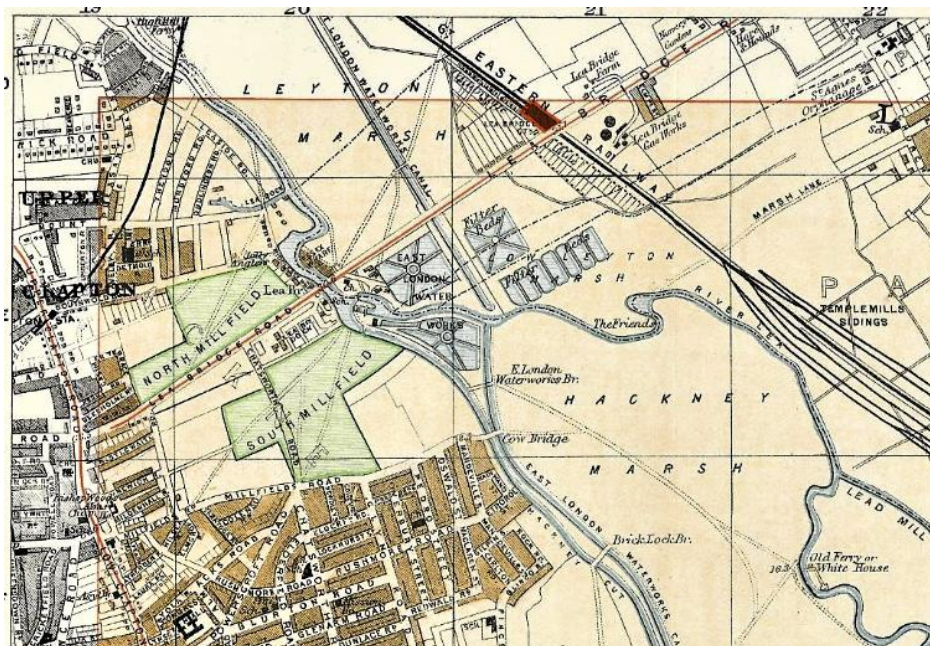


Fig. 26: OS map 1892 - 1914

⁴⁶ <https://sciencetrek.org/#decomposing>

⁴⁷ Steve Ayers, Waltham Forest History Network

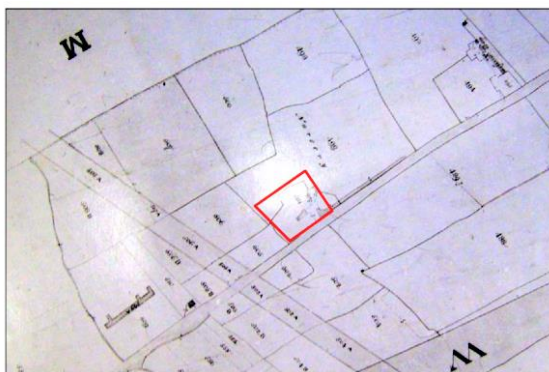
⁴⁸ 1902 *Atlas of London* George Phillip & Son

Here is a side-by-side view of a map that shows a late version of the farm site together with the same view on a contemporary photograph:

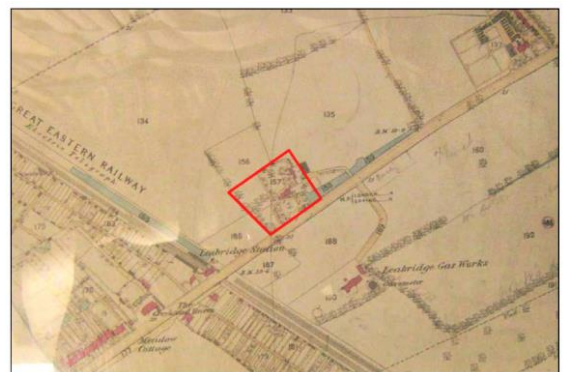


Fig. 27: Lea Bridge area 1896 and 2018

Finally, here is the Motion Estate developers' view of the site history. Four images show the red rectangle shape of the new site at 97 Lea Bridge Road overlaid onto maps of the 19th and 20th centuries.



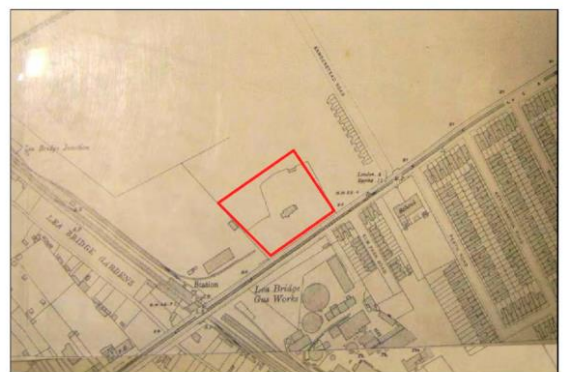
1839 St. Mary Leyton Tithe Map



1863 Ordnance Survey



1894 Ordnance Survey



1915 Ordnance Survey

Fig. 28: the 97 Lea Bridge Road plot 1839, 1863, 1894, 1915

Interim, tentative findings for discussion

- Farming seems to have taken place on the Lea marshland from Saxon times once the valley had been significantly drained.
- Early draining of the marshland and human marshalling of the water-flows over the centuries may have fostered the development of layers of dark clay which could have been difficult terrain to travel through but could have been quite fertile.
- Ancient paths across the Lea marshland from Clapton to Leyton and Walthamstow appear to have avoided the areas of dark clay which, at the time, were in the centre of the valley.
- This impassable terrain may have become known as the Black Marsh. This may have given rise to the names Black Path, Blackmarsh stream, Blackbridge, Black Meadow and Black Marsh Farm.
- The Black Marsh Farm was most probably arable and provided crops of hay fodder and osiers for Leyton, Walthamstow, Clapton and Hackney inhabitants, also potatoes, market garden produce and nursery plants for them and for the increasing populations of London.
- The Black Marsh Farm produce might have been sent via the Black Path and Jeremy's Ferry to London markets - since its land extended to the Leyton - Walthamstow parish boundary.
- The existence of the Lea Bridge Turnpike from 1757 appears to have upgraded the economic fortune of the Black Marsh Farm, resulting in the documenting of the name 'Leabridge Farm'.
- The heyday of horticulture, market gardening and plant nursery cultivation in and around Leyton occurred during the first half of the 19th century. But as a result of prior industrialisation in the 18th century these activities were being pushed northwards in the Lea Valley from the lower Lea areas around Bow.

- The early arrival in 1840 of the railway at Lea Bridge challenged the economic viability of what had been a late-developed turnpike. This in turn may also have adversely affected the farm's economy.
- The sale of adjacent agricultural lands for the railway, the waterworks, the gas works and associated industries strategically altered the position of the farm from being in the centre of the marshes to being on its eastern side.
- Combined with the further push northwards of horticulture towards Tottenham and Hertfordshire due again to industrialisation and additionally the housing developments, an alternative use of the farm's resources in the shape of silk-dyeing was its final stage of development prior to closure of the plant nursery in 1870 and sales of the land.
- Further study is needed to trace the onward history of the site. Light engineering, industrial process uses and commerce spanned the twentieth century. The railway, the waterworks and the gas works all saw decline. Struggling to survive the economic pressures of the early twenty-first century the site was converted to residential uses by Waltham Forest Council in 2016, and is now in use as high-density, high-rise housing accommodation.

Appendix

Origin of the project

Christina Holloway, of the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MOLA) speaking to the Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society in April 2019 explained that, but for the great wave of construction developments, there would not be the resources available to her organisation to investigate this Archaeological Priority Area in any depth. It follows that those of us who embark on subsequent studies of local history benefit from these primary investigations. Indeed, it is due to one such that I embarked on this study of the previously little-known Lea Bridge Farm. In 2015 the developer Hill Associates proposed building on a site identified as 97 Lea Bridge Road Leyton, a location that, unbeknown to almost everyone, encompassed the footprint of the former Lea Bridge Farm.

While these windfalls of archaeological opportunity are useful, sometimes the precise spot where construction developments are planned are not in an ideal position for excavating. And sometimes there may not be a consensus among experts about the importance of ancient relics suspected to be underneath a construction site. This was the case with the 2015 archaeology report⁴⁹ submitted in 2016 to Waltham Forest Planning Committee alongside Hill's application for permission to build at 97 Lea Bridge Road. The report's revelation that there was, according to maps, a "post-mediaeval farmhouse" on the site failed to impress everyone from the Planning Committee at the time, to Historic England experts several months later. Their rationale had been that there were other buildings of the same period known about in Waltham Forest. As a result, no pressure was placed on the developers to allow time for an archaeological dig or for a more thorough documentary investigation. Later, Waltham Forest Council did express regrets to the Lea Bridge Community Ward Forum that they had let this opportunity pass.

I had formed the view that while there may be examples of post-mediaeval buildings in other areas of Waltham Forest, the Lea Bridge Farm stood within the parish of Leyton, a part of the borough that has a long history but relatively little tangible heritage.

An opportunity arose to seek Waltham Forest London Borough of Culture Year 2019 funding to pursue all this, and the Lea Bridge Ward Councillors, Cllr. Masood Ahmad, Cllr. Mohammad Asghar and Cllr Yemi Osho were supportive of the bid. And so, the project was born.

⁴⁹ 97 Lea Bridge Road Waltham Forest Desk-based Assessment 2015 Ref 108480, Wessex Archaeology, p. 23.

Acknowledgements

I would like to give the warmest thanks to all those who have supported the idea of this project and its implementation including the Waltham Forest London Borough of Culture Year 2019, the Waltham Forest History and Heritage Network and also individually the following people and organisations who have joined in so fruitfully:

Barry Buitekant	Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society
Bella Donnelly	Lindsay Topping
Celia Coram	Lissa Chapman
Christina Holloway	London Metropolitan Archives
Dalston Seniors	Marilyn Payne
David Boote	Mary Katherine 'Lifting Yourself Up' programme on ELR
David Moore	Mary Wallace
Denise Wylie	Matthew Saywell
Eamonn Lawlor	Mike Cleverley
East London Radio	Ricca Bunda
Emily Blyth	Rob Cooper
Essex Record Office	Save Lea Marshes
Gary Lewis	Simon Rix
Gillian Lawrence	Steve Ayers
Imparta Mari	The Gentle Author
Jannah Redouane	Tim Fransen
Jo Parker	Up Your Street
Joan Yeadon	Waltham Forest Archives Vestry House
John Rogers	Waltham Forest Planning Department
Jonathan Brind	
Julian Cheyne	
Karl Weiss	

Cllr Masood Ahmad, Cllr. Mohammad Asghar, Cllr Yemi Osho

And all others who showed interest. Please accept my apologies if I have not listed everyone. **All errors in, or omissions from, the work are my responsibility**, and please do point them out, so that I can re-edit this first attempt and improve it. Many thanks in advance!

Postscript



The pleasing Mediterranean ceramics adorning the entrance of the tile shop which traded for some years in the twenty-first century at the 97 Lea Bridge Road art deco premises.

Photographs, taken July 2012, courtesy of Jannah Redouane.

