

Thomas Lambe the Linen-Draper – Some New Evidence

The London linen-draper Thomas Lambe (1612-1686) has long been a subject of interest for students of seventeenth-century Baptist history, although the details of his life have been obscured in the past by scholars who have confused him with Thomas Lamb the London soap-boiler (*fl.* 1629-1672).¹ The distinction between the two men has been noted within Professor Brackney's recent *The Early English General Baptists and Their Theological Formation* (2017), where they are given separate treatments.² Thomas Lamb the soap-boiler has perhaps received the lion's share of historical interest over the years, mostly due to his influential tracts *A Confutation of Infants Baptism* (1643) and *The Unlawfulness of Infants Baptism* (1645). That is not to suggest that Thomas Lambe the linen-draper³ has failed to attract the interest of historians. His association with John Goodwin and the Leveller William Walwyn is noteworthy, and his relationship with the Presbyterian Richard Baxter has generated considerable attention, particularly as it sheds light on Lambe's eventual break with General Baptists and his eventual return to the Church of England.⁴ Within this short study I wish to call attention to two new sources which have hitherto not been discussed by historians considering Lambe's life.

A. Thomas Lambe's Petition to London Authorities about Reforming Ludgate Prison (c. 1675)

¹ On the strength of the reference to a 'Mr Lamb, Bell-Alley Coleman-street' contained in *A Collection of the Names of the Merchants Living in and about the City of London* (1677), Alexander Gordon asserted that Lambe carried on his business as a soapboiler in London well into the 1670s (*DNB, Volume 32* (1892): 4). This is incorrect and is driven by a conflation of the lives of Thomas Lamb the soapboiler (†1672) and Thomas Lambe the linen-draper (†1686) within the *DNB* article. Long ago Thomas Crosby, *The History of the English Baptists, Volume 3* (1740): 56-57, asserted that a distinction between the two was needed.

² Thomas Lambe, the soap-boiler on pages 189-206, and Thomas Lamb, the linen-draper on pages 206-209. Murray Tolmie, 'Thomas Lambe, Soapboiler, and Thomas Lambe, Merchant, General Baptists', *The Baptist Quarterly* 27 (1977-78): 4-13, was among the first to point out that the two men had been wrongly conflated.

³ The common description of Thomas Lambe as a 'linen-draper' is based on William Walwyn, *Walwyns Just Defence* (1649): 30. As far as I am aware this is the only reference in contemporary literature describing him as a linen-draper (Walwyn says he was 'a Linnen Draper in Cornhill').

⁴ G. F. Nuttall, 'Thomas Lambe, William Allen and Richard Baxter: An Additional Note', *The Baptist Quarterly* 27 (1977-78): 139-40.

Most discussions of Thomas Lambe the linen-draper note that following his abandonment of Baptist ideals and his return to the established church, one of the main focal points of his life was the plight of poor men and women jailed for their poverty. In Professor Brackney's words, 'He spent the remainder of his life devoted to philanthropic projects particularly interested in the poor and prisoners, as illustrated in his *Appeal to Parliament* (1660).' (Figure #1)⁵ This dimension of Lambe's life was something that was noted in the funeral sermon preached on 23 July 1686 by Richard Lucas (1648-1715), the vicar of St Stephen's, Coleman Street.⁶ Lucas spoke passionately of Lambe's abiding commitment to the idea of 'Charity to men' as an essential expression of true Christian faith. He noted in particular how Lambe's involvement in prison reform exemplified this charity within his life:

[H]e was not only a faithful Steward and dispenser of other mens Bounty, but also bountiful himself even to the diminution of his estate. To go on therefore to the point, several Hundreds of Prisoners were by him, with great travail and expence set free; Nay, Prisons themselves were set free from some oppressions and cheats that had obtain'd in them, and rendred more hospitable and tolerable to the miserable Inhabitants Fees being reduced to a Lower rate and Maintenance and Provision for Prisoners much better settled.⁷

Lucas's assessment is corroborated by a new primary source demonstrating Lambe's advocacy for prison reform which has not previously been published. I recently purchased from an autograph dealer a newly available document containing a petition written by Thomas Lambe. The document is a single folio page (360 x 480mm), folded in half and yielding four pages, with the petition written on the first page and a clerk's descriptive annotation written on page four (pages two and three are blank). This document offers a rare opportunity to add to what we know about the activities and interests of the erstwhile General Baptist leader Thomas Lambe. We shall here discuss the contents of the petition, presenting a critical, line-by-line edition of the full text of it for the benefit of future scholarly investigations (Document #1). Most importantly, this petition

⁵ *The Early English General Baptists and Their Theological Formation* (2017): 205. The author of *An Appeal to the Parliament Concerning the Poor* (1660) is identified only by his initials, 'T.L.' The pamphlet is attributed to Thomas Lawson in EEBO.

⁶ Richard Lucas, *A Sermon Preacht at the Funeral of Mr Thomas Lamb, July 23, 1686* (1686). The sermon was reprinted in Richard Lucas, *Twelve Sermons Preached on Several Occasions* (1699): 53-80.

⁷ Richard Lucas, *A Sermon Preacht at the Funeral of Mr Thomas Lamb, July 23, 1686* (1686): 19-20. The pamphlet contains a Dedication written by Lucas to Thomas Lambe's son John Lambe, who was the rector of Wheathampstead in Hertfordshire.

serves as confirmation of what Professor Brackney, and others, have sometimes suggested about Thomas Lambe's philanthropy.⁸

A few preliminary remarks about this petition are in order. First of all we note that Lambe identifies himself as a citizen of London and a member of the Leathersellers' Company of London, one of the ancient Livery Companies of the city with a royal charter dating back to 1444 (line 3). This alerts us to the way in which Lambe thought of himself professionally, and suggests we should perhaps stop describing him as a 'linen-draper' (something which Lambe himself never does)⁹ and begin describing him as a 'leather-seller'.¹⁰ Lambe was in fact a prominent member of the Leathersellers' Company and was made a freeman on 2 March 1637 after having served an apprenticeship to Henry Heald.¹¹ He himself took on at least seven apprentices within the Leathersellers' Company during the years 1637-1652. These seven apprenticeships were: Robert Tredway, son of Robert Tredway of Lough in Lincolnshire, on 20 March 1637; Francis Lambe, son of Robert Lambe of Longthorpe in Northamptonshire, on 28 January 1639; William Treavis, son of William Treavis of Morton Hillmarsh in Gloucestershire, on 17 March 1643; John Goodwin, son of John Goodwin of London, on 1 September 1644; Thomas Webb, son of William Webb of Longworth in Berkshire on 21 November 1647; Samuel Reynauld, son of James Reynauld of Kensington in Middlesex, on 2 March 1650; and Thomas Aynscombe, son of Michael Aynscombe of Reigate in Surrey, on 10 January 1652. The second apprentice, Francis Lambe, was Thomas Lambe's younger brother; the fourth apprentice was most likely the son of John Goodwin, the Independent minister in London with whom Lambe was closely connected.¹² Lambe rose through the administrative ranks of the Company, serving as a Second Warden in 1666-67 and as Master in 1673-74.¹³

Returning to Lambe's petition, we note next that the petition is addressed to the Lord Mayor of London, the Aldermen of the city, and the Common Councillors of the city (lines 1-2). Together these three addressees represented the civil administration of the city of London. London had twenty-six Aldermen, one from

⁸ See R.L. Greaves, 'Lamb (or Lambe), Thomas (d. 1686)', *Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century 2* (The Harvester Press: Brighton, 1983): 166-167; Stephen Wright, 'Lamb, Thomas (d. 1686)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008). Inexplicably, Murray Tolmie, 'Thomas Lambe, Soapboiler, and Thomas Lambe, Merchant, General Baptists', *The Baptist Quarterly* 27 (1977-78): 4-13, fails to mention Lambe's concerns for the poor and imprisoned.

⁹ Lambe describes himself as a 'Merchant' on the title page of his *Truth Prevailing against the Fiercest Opposition* (1656).

¹⁰ This means that the record to the leatherseller Thomas Lambe, who on 11 July 1642 pledged a horse and arms for the service of Parliament, is a reference to him. In my *William Kiffen and His World* (Part 4) (Regent's Park College, Oxford: Oxford, 2013): 22, I wrongly attributed this record (TNA, SP 28/131/Part 3, folio 7 recto) to Thomas Lambe the soap-boiler.

¹¹ Lambe is named as living at Heald's near Gracechurch Street Conduit and paying the Poll Tax in July 1641 (TNA, E 179/251/22/29, folio 19 verso).

¹² I am grateful to Jerome Farrell, the Archivist for the Leathersellers' Company in London, for his assistance in these matters.

¹³ He was thus following in the wake of another Baptist leader, William Kiffen (c. 1616-1701) who served as Master of the Leathersellers' Company in 1671-72.

each of the constituent wards into which the city was geographically divided. The Common Council consisted of 236 members drawn from across the various wards. The most important civic authority was the Lord Mayor who was the king's representative in the city. The Mayor served for one year and was annually elected on Michaelmas Day (29 September).

Determining who precisely the Mayor of London was at the time Lambe submitted his petition is not an easy task, mainly because the petition itself is undated. However, it does contain a couple of passing references to events which took place in 1674 (in lines 4, 10 and 19) which indicate that a likely date for the petition is early 1675. This means that the Mayor of London to whom Lambe addressed his petition would have been Sir Robert Vyner (1631-1688), a London goldsmith and influential banker within the city (Figure #2).¹⁴ Vyner is perhaps best remembered as the goldsmith responsible for producing the crown and regalia used in the coronation of Charles II in 1660. Vyner lived in Swakeleys House in Ickenham in west London; it was a large property bought by Vyner from the wife of Sir James Harrington following Harrington's exile to France in 1660. The diarist Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) visited Vyner at Swakeleys on 7 September 1665 and related an incident that reflects unfavourably on Vyner's sensitivities to other people. Pepys says that Vyner showed him the body of a black servant boy who had died of consumption; after his death Vyner had the servant dried in an oven and placed in a box so that he could show his body to visitors.¹⁵

We turn now to consider the content of the petition. In lines 4-6 of the petition Lambe explains that in July 1674 he had been employed by the Leathersellers' Company to ensure that the charitable bequests named within the will of the late George Humble were paid out in accordance with the wishes of the deceased. The details of these charities are not provided beyond the fact that they were designed to assist in the release of freemen of the Leathersellers' Company who were being held in Ludgate prison as debtors.¹⁶ Fortunately the will of George Humble has survived and it makes clear precisely what provision was intended for the incarcerated freemen.¹⁷ It also explains Humble's interest in the matter: he too was a member of the Leathersellers' Company in London, eventually rising to serve as Master in 1628-29. Humble († 1640) had a multi-faceted career and distinguished himself in a number of fields, notably as a seller of prints and maps, which is where the bulk of his wealth came from.¹⁸ A number of provisions were made within the will for the Leathersellers' Company, including the establishment of scholarships to both Oxford and Cambridge, and £500 to be lent to younger members of the Company in need of assistance in establishing themselves in the trade.¹⁹ Most significant for our concerns here is the provision that is made by

¹⁴ G. E. Aylmer, 'Vyner, Sir Robert, baronet (1631-1688)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2014).

¹⁵ <https://www.pepysdiary.com/diary/1665/09/07/>.

¹⁶ An informative discussion of what life was like within the prison some years later is contained in *The Present State of the Prison of Ludgate* (1725).

¹⁷ Humble's 26 page will was signed on 28 September 1638 with a codicil added on 8 December 1640; the will was probated on 31 December 1640.

¹⁸ Antony Griffiths, 'Humble, George (d. 1640)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008).

¹⁹ Humble's portrait still hangs in the hall of the Leatherseller's Company, and four silver goblets presented to the Company as a legacy of his will are still used in ceremonial

Humble for helping unfortunate members of the Company who had fallen into debt and found themselves imprisoned in the Ludgate prison. The will stipulates:

Item: I give more unto the said Company of Leathersellers the some of Two hundred poundes in mony To be layd out & bestowed by them (w[i]th what convenient speede may be) in the purchasing of so much freehold lands & tenements as farr as the same will extend To this intent and purpose That out of the Rents & profitts arising out of such lands and tenements so to be bought as aforesaid there may yerely and every yere for ever be acquitted & Released out of the Prison of Ludgate London three fower or five poore men which shall lye in there for debt (those that bee free of the said Company of Leathersellers being p[re]ferred before others in this my Guifte).²⁰

It is precisely this provision within Humble's will that Thomas Lambe attempts to address within his petition about prison reform.²¹

Lambe goes on to describe how the keeper of the prison was abusing prisoners and deceiving the prison's benefactors by demanding fees and rents from the prisoners which were based on an illegal table of rates that violated the rules established by the Court of Aldermen (lines 6-9). He stated that on 6 October 1674 he made a complaint to the Court of Aldermen and requested that a committee be established to investigate the matter, which was granted (lines 10-11). Lambe claimed that at two subsequent meetings of the committee he proved the complaint, based on the cases of two prisoners who, according to the keeper's notes, owed him £16 16s 16d (lines 12-14). According to Lambe's investigations this was £4 more than the keeper should have legally received (lines 14-16). In consequence the committee required the keeper to refund the overpayment (line 16). In addition, they ordered the keeper to withdraw a suit for £20 which he had brought against one of the prisoners and to pay a fine of 8 shillings for unjustly arresting him (lines 16-18). Moreover, Lambe related that in December 1674 the sheriffs of London²² came to Ludgate prison and informed the prisoners in the presence of the keeper of the prison that they were to pay one, two or three pence per night (depending on the level of accommodation desired) instead of the two, four and six pence per night that the keeper had been exacting from them (lines 19-22). The sheriffs also promised the prisoners that if they had any further difficulties in these matters, then upon complaint and proof of abuse, they would set things right (lines 23-24). The matter of an established rate for accommodation

dinners. See Penelope Hunting, *The Leathersellers' Company, A History* (The Leathersellers' Company: London, 1994): 94-95.

²⁰ TNA, PROB 10/611, pages 21-22. A copy of the will is found in TNA, PROB 11/184, pages 369 verso-370 recto .

²¹ A number of other benefactors also provided gifts and legacies for debtors imprisoned in Ludgate prison. See Marmaduke Johnson, *Ludgate – What It Is: Not What It Was* (1659): 43-49, for details.

²² The two sheriffs for London in 1675 were Sir Nathaniel Herne (†1679) and Sir John Lethieullier (†1719). There is record of them being sent by the Court of Aldermen on 12 March 1675 to Ludgate prison to review what repairs were needed there (Repertories of the Court of Aldermen - LMA, COL/CA/01/01/084 – 3 November 1674-28 October 1675, page 130).

within the prison was a contentious one that had been addressed at several points over the years by the London civic authorities. For example, there was a complaint submitted by a group of Ludgate prisoners in 1663 to the Lord Mayor Sir Anthony Bateman, the Court of Aldermen and the Common Council which similarly discussed the topic.²³ It was here recorded that a price differential was in place depending on the quality of the accommodation provided. Prisoners staying in the Long Ward and the Lumberies Ward were to be charged one pence per night; prisoners staying in the Horne Chamber, the Two Knights Wards, and the Portcullis Chambers were to be charged two pence per night; and prisoners staying in the Star Chamber, the New Chamber, the Carpenters Chamber, the Sun Chamber and the Chequer Chamber were to be charged three pence per night.²⁴ It was claimed that the keeper of the prison at the time, Robert Nicholl, was overcharging for all of these accommodation costs. In addition Nicholl was accused of a number of other abuses, including overcharging for bedding, inflating the cost of beer and ale from the cellar, selling the prison bell for his own profit,²⁵ and deliberately destroying the prison's accounting books and the register of legacies which were granted to the prisoners.

Lambe further reported to the Mayor and the Court of Aldermen that when the keeper had been reproved for his faults he tried to justify himself (lines 25-26). The keeper argued that he had paid a great deal of money to secure his position and questioned whether anyone had the right to prescribe rules to him (lines 26-27). It was suggested that by purchasing the place the keepers reckoned that they had purchased freedom from all laws and had a dispensation to govern as they saw fit (lines 28-29).

Lambe next turns to address the issue of how the keeper of the prison was appointed and notes that while a new keeper had recently been named, a corresponding table of legal fees had not been publicly posted (lines 30-31). He points out that the keeper's position had reportedly been sold by the city for a great deal of money, something which had never been done before (lines 31-33). He notes in passing that a previous keeper, identified as the son of 'Old Nicolls', had 'made merchandising' of the keeper's position, a move that was legally questionable and certainly was to the detriment of the poor freemen in the prison and the benefactions in place designed to help them (lines 33-38). It is unclear who the son of 'Old Nicolls' was, but it is likely that this is a reference to Robert Nicholls, who inherited the position as Keeper of Ludgate from his father John Nicholls.

In light of these abuses of the system Lambe requests that the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen find some other way to ensure that the public positions of trust, such as the keepers of prisons, should not be sold but rather freely elected from amongst men of virtue so that these offices would always be put into the hands of worthy people (lines 39-44). He also asks that a committee be appointed to renew the previous act of Common Council agreed in 1606 which governed fees and chamber rents so that the current corrupt practices and disorder could be brought to an end (lines 44-47). Finally, Lamb requests that a new table of legal fees be set up as soon as possible so that the prisoners might know what they had to pay, and the keeper might know what he was allowed to demand and no more

²³ TNA, SP 29/88, pages 133-139.

²⁴ Also see Marmaduke Johnson, *Ludgate – What It Is: Not What It Was* (1659): 68-70.

²⁵ There is a receipt dated 27 August 1672 for £17 18s for the installation of a new bronze clock bell weighing over 200 pounds (LMA, CLA/033/01/018).

(lines 48-50).²⁶ Lambe concludes the petition with a pledge always to pray that the blessings of those willing to perish might come upon the Mayor and the Court of Aldermen (lines 51-52).

B. Thomas Lambe's Will (17 October 1685)

The second new source of information about Thomas Lambe is his will, which has not hitherto been included in scholarly investigations of his life. Lambe signed his will on 17 October 1685; it was probated on 4 July 1686 (Document #2). Within the will Lambe named his wife Barbara, noting that she had recently deceased (lines 10-11).²⁷ He also stated that he lived in a house in Bartholomew Close and that he had previously agreed with his wife that the house should go to her family after his death (lines 11-12). Lambe mentions that he had some legacies which were to be paid out, although he does not specify what they are (line 14); it is possible that these included gifts in support of prisoners in places like Ludgate. Once these legacies had been paid out, and debts and funeral costs covered, the remainder of his estate Lambe left to his eldest son John and his son's family (lines 12-16). He also named John as the sole executor of the will (line 16); this is the John Lambe who was Rector of the parish church at Wheathampstead and was the person to whom Richard Lucas dedicated his funeral sermon (discussed above).

The Leathersellers' Company record relating to the apprenticeship between Thomas Lambe and his younger brother Francis (noted above) opens another avenue of investigation in that it specifically named Robert Lambe as their father. The will of Robert Lambe has survived and it provides further details of Thomas Lambe's family which were previously unknown. This will was signed on 14 April 1635 and probated on 11 June 1635.²⁸ From the will we learn that the family came from Northamptonshire, that Thomas's mother was named Sarah, and that he had at least four brothers (Robert, William, John, and Francis) and two sisters (Sarah, and Waller). Some indication about the religious environment of the family can be seen by the fact that within his will Robert Lambe bequeathed his copies of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and John Calvin's *Institutes* to his sons Robert and John. Mere possession of such books (which were very expensive to buy!) is in itself an indication of the importance of religion within the household. Further investigation within Northamptonshire records reveals that Thomas Lambe's father Robert married Sarah Whiting on 7 July 1603.²⁹ This information also allows us to answer another question that has long eluded historians about Thomas Lambe,

²⁶ A Table of Fees for Ludgate Prison agreed by the London civic authorities dated 19 January 1687 is contained in John Strype, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* (1720): Book 3, pages 175-176, and in *The Present State of the Prison of Ludgate* (1725): 9-10.

²⁷ Barbara is perhaps most famously remembered for her letter to Richard Baxter in which she provided details of her husband's theological struggles over infant baptism and the break with John Goodwin's church (see *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (London: 1696): Appendix iii, 51-53). For more on this follow the discussion in John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution: Religion and Intellectual Change in Seventeenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006): 100, 249-252.

²⁸ TNA, PROB 10/539; a copy of the will is found in TNA, PROB 11/168, pages 152 verso-153 recto.

²⁹ Parish Register of Elton, Northamptonshire – 1587-1737, unpaginated.

namely, when and where he was born? We now can confidently state, through the invaluable gift to historians of an Elizabethan parish registry system, that Thomas was baptized on 20 September 1612 in Peterborough in Northamptonshire.³⁰

Summary

The place of Thomas Lambe the linen-draper as a significant leader among seventeenth-century General Baptists has long been recognized and has recently been re-affirmed within Professor Brackney's *The Early English General Baptists and Their Theological Formation* (2017). However, there are always new things to learn about such figures of the past. Knowledge about Thomas Lambe has been enlarged significantly by a number of fresh primary sources discussed within this study. Most important among these is the petition that Lambe submitted to the London civic authorities in *c.* 1675 arguing for reform in Ludgate prison, a document which serves as a vivid illustration of Lambe's philanthropic ideals. Details about his association with the Leathersellers' Company in London also speak to his professionalism with that body as a master tradesman. The identification of Lambe's will (written in 1685) and that of his father Robert Lambe (written in 1635) provide further details of his family, and also contain the means to track down the record of Thomas Lambe's baptism in a Northamptonshire parish in 1612. In short, knowledge about the life of Thomas Lambe is thereby widened, and the value of him as a seventeenth-century figure worthy of contemporary consideration is asserted.

³⁰ The Parish register of St John the Baptist, Peterborough, Northamptonshire – 1559-1644, unpaginated.

Figures

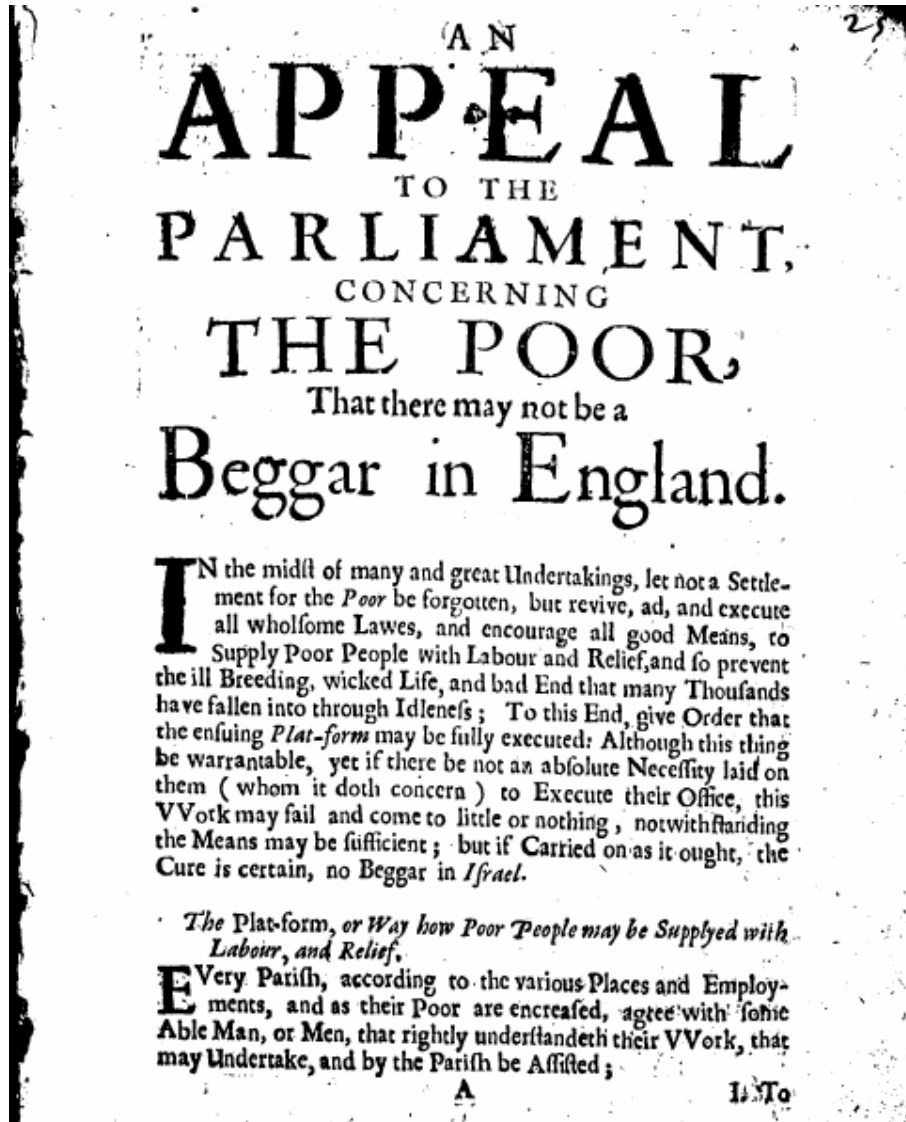


Figure #1: Title Page of Thomas Lambe's
An Appeal to the Parliament Concerning the Poor (1660)



Figure #2: Engraving of Sir Robert Vyner (1631-1688)
by William Faithorne (1665)

Documents

#1. – Thomas Lambe’s Prison Petition – c. 1675 (Private Collection of Larry Kreitzer).

[Page 1]

To the Right Honourable The Lord Maior, Aldermen and
Commons of the Citty of London, In Common Counsell Assembled

The Humble Petition of Tho[mas] Lambe Cittizen and Leatherseller of London

[5] Humbly sheweth That being Employed by my Company In July 1674 to apply the
Charities of Georg Humble Esq deceased to the poor freemen In the prison of
Ludgate, for their Release according to his will, I found the keeper In demand-
ing Fees, and Chamber Rent to have No Regard to the publike Rules of this Court,
which was then shewed him, but made his demands by false Table of Illegall
Fees to the greevous oppression of the freemen, and deceiving of all the benefactors

[10] That upon the 6th of October 1674 I made my Complaint to the court of Aldermen
and Requested A committee to Inspect this matter w[hi]ch was presently granted
That at Two Meetings of the Committee, I effectually proved the Matter of
my Complaint, For that In Two Mens cases where the keeper by his Notes, made
16 16 16d due to him. I proved that from the poor men themselves, and from
[15] the Charities for Releef hee had Received about Four Pounds More then was due to
him by law, which the worthy Committee caused him to Refund, and ordered him to
with-

draw An Action of 20li which hee had entred against one of them, and pay 8
s[hilling]s
for unjustly Arresting him.

That the Next week after being In December 1674 The sheriffs at that Time most
worthily

[20] Repaired to the prison In person and told the prisoners before the keepers face that
they

had
but A penny Two pence and Three pence per night to pay where he had for severall
years exacted Two pence Four pence and Six pence besides divers Illegall Fees
And promised that for the future if they Received Injury upon complaint and proof
they would Right them

[25] Lastly I would Informe your Lordship and this Court That the keeper when hee hath
been

Reproved for his faults was wont to urge for himselfe That hee had paid A great
Summe of Money for his place and what had any one to doe to prescribe Rules to him
So that by purchasing the place they seem to Reckon they doe with that purchase free-
dome from all lawes And procure A dispensation to govern Arbitrarily

[30] Now Forasmuch As that there Is A New keeper And No publike
Table of Legall Fees set up In the house And that the place Is
lately sold as Is Reported for a great Summe of Money Which
I have heard was Never sold by the Citty before (though it was
by Old Nicolls his Sonne to the late keeper

[35] And forasmuch as that Making Merchandise of this and the

like places of Trust Is very New And the Legality questioned
And that Experience prooveth An occasion of great Injury to the
poor Freeman And Worthy benefactors)

My humble Request is That your Lordship And this Court would consider and find out
[40] some other way (If it may bee done conveniently) to ease the burthen of the
government

That this and the like places of Trust May Never bee sold More But that using
your freedome of choise Amongst Men of Vertue This and the like places may
allwaies

bee put Into the hands of Men that are most worthy of them.

And that you would Appoint A Committee to Renew your old Act of Common
counsell

[45] In 1606 and to Reestablish the good lawes of it, Not onely for the Fees and Cham-
ber Rent, But for the government of the house, and Cellar, which the corruption
of Men and Times hath brought to great disorder

And withall Speed to Set up A New Table of Legall Fees In the house That the prison-
ers may know what they have to pay. And the keeper what hee hath to demand

[50] upon his perill And your Petitioner Shall ever pray That the blessing of them that are
Ready to Perish May come upon you.

[Page 4]

Peti[ti]on Lamb

v[rsus]

Keep[er] Ludgate

**#2. – The Will of Thomas Lamb – signed 17 October 1685; probated 4 July
1686 – The Commissary Court of London: Registry of Wills, 1686-1687
(DL/C/B/004/MS09171/040, page 150 verso).**

October ye 17th 1685

In the name of God Amen

I Thomas Lamb of London Leatherseller being in good health

[5] of body and perfect memory Doe make this my last Will and
Testament (Revokeing all former Wills in manner and forme
following Impri[m]is I bequeath my soule unto the hands of Allmighty

God My body to the Grave in hope of a Blessed Resurrection to
Eternall life through the meritts of my Deare Redeemer Jesus
Christ My Worldly Estate I dispose as followes First I Confirme

[10] the settlement made by myselfe and my wife Barbarah Lamb
(lately Deceased) of my house in Bartholomew Close upon

her Heires after my Death as for all my other Estate both

Reall and personall my Debts and Funerall Charges

and Legacies being first paid I Give to my eldest sonne

[15] John Lambe Rector of Whettamstead for the goods of himselfe
his wife and Children and make him my sole Executor

Thomas Lamb Signed Sealed and Delivered in

the presence of Thomas Day Mr Lavingtons man Dorothy

Upton Jane Lavington

- [20] Vicesimo Quarto die mensis Julii
Anno D[omi]ni Mill[es]imo sexcen[tes]imo Octoge[s]imo sexto
Cor[am] Ven[erabi]li Viro D[omi]no Thoma Pinfold Milite et
Legum D[octo]re Surro[gato] Ven[erabi]lis et Egregii Viri D[omi]ni
Thome
Exton Militis legum etiam D[octo]ris D[omi]ni Episcopi Lond[on]
Com[missa]rii
- [25] l[eg]itime constituti Juramento Johannis Lamb filii et
unici Ex[ecuto]ris in d[ic]to Testamento no[m]i[n]at[i] Cui
Com[missa] fuit Ad[ministra]tio
&c primitus de bene et fidelit[er] adm[ini]strand[o] Eadem ac de
pleno &c Ac de pleno &c jurat &c salvo jure &c

[Translation of lines 20-28]

- On the Twenty-Fourth day of the month of July
- [30] In the Year of the Lord One thousand six hundred and eighty six
Before the Venerable Gentleman Lord Thomas Pinfold Knight and
Doctor of Laws Surrogate of the Venerable and worthy gentleman
Lord Thomas
Exton Knight also Doctor of laws, of the Lord Bishop of London
the legitimately
appointed Commissioner, On the Oath of John Lamb son and
sole Executor named in the said Testament To Whom was Committed
- [35] the Administration
&c first concerning the good and faithful administration of the Same
and concerning
the full &c And concerning the full &c he having sworn &c with the right
preserved &c