

Part 3 - Philip Lea 1699

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Philip Lea

Philip Lea, the final subject in this short series, was apprenticed to Robert Morden in the Weavers' Company in 1675.¹ As the records of that Company prior to the Fire of London are somewhat fragmentary, Morden's own apprenticeship is not recorded, but it is thought that his master was Joseph Moxon - the first subject of the series. Not formerly free of the Weavers' until 1689², Lea was certainly in business by 1683, when he advertised in the *Term Catalogue*. He traded primarily as a map seller, and in partnership with Morden and William Berry, as a globe maker. He married in 1684 but of six children, there was only one son, Philip, who was no more than five when his father died in February 1700. The contents of the will and the subsequent valuation of the estate are particularly revealing. The following summary is based on Sarah Tyacke's published abstract:

To Anne Lea (his wife) - 'one third part of all my Mapps, Globes and Copper Plates for printing Mapps and Globes'. The balance was held in Trust by his wife and his brother-in-law Samuel Fitch, for his surviving children, Ann, Deborah and Philip. The total asset value of estate - £337.5s.10d - with £80 owed to the landlord for rent. One room in the house contained a printing press. There was no valuation for cases and founts of type, and Lea's letterpress publications were printed for him by others, so that this was presumably a copper-plate rolling press. In the shop there were 16 cwt of copper plates, valued at 18d per pound - total value £132. 8s. The valuation separately noted a one third share (with William Berry and Robert Morden) 'of the two sise (sic) of globe plates' at £10. A set of shared plates for the large map of London, Westminster and Southwark was also separately valued. Two parcels of maps and prints were valued at £35.15s and £8. respectively, with £40. 8s. worth of bound and unbound books. Particularly frustrating is to find a valuation of £22. 10s. 6d. for 'mathematical instruments of Brass and Wood of all sorts', for as with the maps, charts and books no detail is given as to exactly what was included.

The valuation of Philip Lea's estate is revealing in that it shows that mathematical instruments represented a relatively small proportion of his shop stock - just under 8.5% in value. As with Joseph Moxon, mathematical instruments were just a part of a retail stock, added to the core business - in the case of Lea, a printer and publisher of maps and charts, and a partner with two others in at least one globe making venture. The valuation indicates clearly that copper-plate print-

ing was undertaken at Lea's premises, but there is no indication that he had either workspace or tools for making mathematical instruments, or specifically for constructing globe bodies. Given that in his advertisements and in the books he published Lea usually described himself as 'Globe Maker' this may seem surprising. Certainly for globe making, in addition to the capital costs locked-up in the copper plates used to print the gores, there was a need to have access to specialist jigs and forms to construct the spherical globe bodies. Quite how this part of globe construction was organised in seventeenth century London, remains to be investigated - but it is unlikely that each and every one of those who followed Joseph Moxon into globe production actually tooled-up to make the spherical globe bodies onto which the gores were pasted. Evidence from Dutch and subsequent English practice indicates that the specialist equipment used to make globe bodies was as much an asset as the printing plates.³ Indeed, as late as 1791 larger globe bodies in London were subcontracted to only one workshop. Even George Adams junior, proprietor of one of the largest London instrument-making businesses, was locked into this single supplier. For a valued continental client, Adams had to explain in detail the delay of over a year in supplying a pair of 18-inch diameter globes:

It is not easy for me to say how uneasy I have been that your orders should have been so neglected and it appears to me almost incredible that the Globe should have been so long in hand, yet such has been the unfortunate chain of circumstances that if I had been to have received the whole wealth of the India's for the Globe, I could not have got it executed. - To explain this, I must inform you that these globes are manufactured by a particular set of men, the principal of these dying the beginning of the year, the rest of the workmen struck, that is would not work unless their wages were raised which lasted a considerable time before they could be reduced to order. - In the mean time orders accumulated one upon another, the sale of many pair were lost - and we have not yet recovered from the inconveniences therefrom. ever since the workmen got to work, I have been fed with hopes of having the globe week after week. It was vain to be angry for I had no resources, the ball could have been had of no other.⁴

There are two broadsheet catalogues issued by Philip Lea in the Bagford Collection at the British Library (*Bagford Harl. 5947.058 and 081*), neither is dated, but they can be dated to between 1689 and 1695. However the copy printed in this article comes from a more comprehensive 24 page pamphlet which provides a very detailed listing of stock sold by Lea at the very end of the seventeenth

century. It too is in the British Library, but within an extensive collection of sale catalogues. The press mark is SC. 84(3), but readers are expected to use the microfilm copy - PB mic.B619/13. Many of the pages of interest to cartographic historians were reproduced some years ago in the context of Lea's re-issuing of Saxton's county maps, for which he had acquired the plates in or before 1694.⁵ Though undated, the catalogue can be quite closely dated to 1698/9. It must have been printed before Lea's death in February 1700, whilst the text includes references to the slide rule designed by William Hunt (published 1697), and the analematic sundial designed by Thomas Tuttell which appeared May 1698.⁶

A
CATALOGUE
OF
Globes,
SPHERES, MAPS,
Mathematical Projections,
B O O K S
AND
INSTRUMENTS:

LONDON:

Printed for, and sold by *Philip Lea*, at the Sign of the *Atlas and Hercules* in *Cheapside*, near the corner of *Friday-street*.

[The reverse of the title page is plain - the rest of the pamphlet, which is printed on two signatures, is paginated 1-22.]

[p. 1]

A CATALOGUE of
Globes Spheres, Maps, Mathematical Projections, Books and Instruments, Made and Sold by Philip Lea, at the Atlas and Hercules in Cheapside, near the corner of Friday-street, London.