

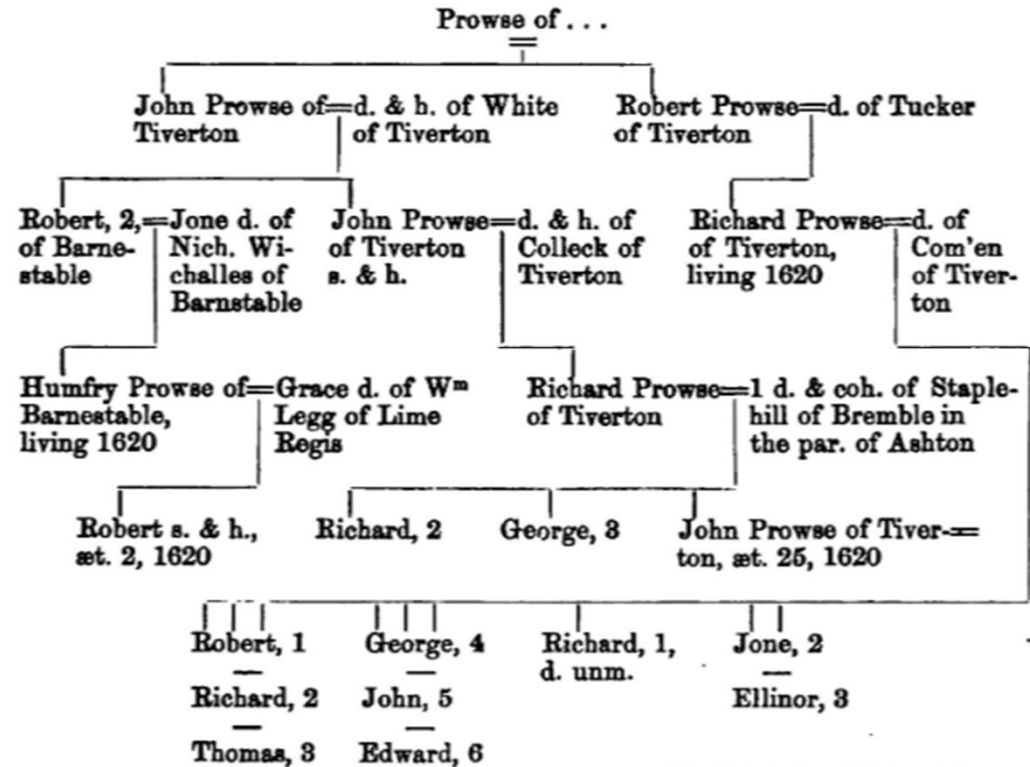
# 1620 Visitation Devon Prowses



## Prowse.

*ARMS. Sable, three lions rampant argent.*

*Note.*—This Prowse saith that he descended out of the house of Prowse of Chagford.



HUMFRIE PROWSE.  
JOHN PROWSE.  
RIC. PROWSE.

# John Prowse of Tiverton 1516-1585: Elizabethan Tycoon

- 1559 Purchased the Manor of Weston Peverell, Plymouth from Peter Carew: 20 messuages 14 tofts 2 mills (now large part of the City of Plymouth including Home Park of Plymouth Argyle - and still mostly held by John's GG Grandson in 1690)
- 1560 Bought half the Manor of Helsett, North Cornwall from Sir Gawen Carew 25 messuages 8 cottages + 2,000 acres where Humfry Prowse died in 1638 (John Prowse's grandson) and sold by Robert Prowse his son during the Civil War
- 1564 Manor of Chilton Prowse, Thorverton from the Luttrell family famous for Dunster Castle and sold following the death of Thomas Prowse of the West Country Parliamentary forces by his son another Thomas after 1682
- Date unknown - Great & Little Dorweeke (Dowrish) of Silverton mentioned in the IPM of John Prowse (d 1585) and an abstract of his will is also listed as 'of Silverton'
- Bolham & Rix of Tiverton from Carew & Sir Walter Raleigh a number of mills and extensive lands by the River Exe. Listed in the IPM of his son John (d 1601) as purchased by his father. Other extensive land holdings in Tiverton and Halberton

## John Prowse of Tiverton's (d 1585) 5 Sons - spread across the Westcountry and further!

**John** (d 1598) Clothier - G Grandson was Richard Prowse lawyer and aid to 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Clifford of the CABAL in Charles II reign and John his grandson became Lord of Pennycross. One daughter Agnes married John Trowbridge of Taunton and another Richarda married Roger Giffard of Tiverton Castle

**Robert** (d 1592) Merchant & MP for Barnstaple – family later of Mamhead, Exeter and Cornwall

**Thomas** (d 1597) Merchant - His son Roger MP for Taunton then his son Thomas of the Civil War

**Richard** (d 1596) Yeoman in Tiverton and died without marrying

**George** (d 1625) Lawyer - his family spread the Prowse genes across Somerset and Cornwall – South Petherton, Truro, Wellington/Norton Fitzwarren, they married into gentry families but later many faced a number of bankruptcies!

## But what of John Prowse's (d 1585) 2 brothers and their lines?

**Edward Prowse (d 1598)** – Yeoman and Churchwarden in Tiverton, he left money to the poor, but seems to have been happy to stay a farming the land he inherited from his father Robert Prowse who came to Tiverton from Chagford. Although it appears he helped finance his brother John's property ventures over the years! His son flourished in Tiverton.

**Robert Prowse (d 1586)** – Clothier who had 3 sons – 2 seem to have made their way in the South Hams (John & Thomas) and the youngest Richard continued in the Tiverton wool trade and led in civic life - his heir married a niece of one of the richest men in England - the famous Peter Blundell – they inherited a fortune!

## The South Brent Connection

**Robert Prowse Clothier of Tiverton (John's younger brother) died in 1586 but his will of 1582 raises some questions that point to an earlier connection to South Brent.....but leaves property to his 3 sons John, Thomas and Richard.**

*Item I give and bequeath unto **Thomas Prowse my sonne** my best bedsted over the hall and my cupboard that is in my house at my bargain at Moor, to be delivered him after the decease of Joane my wife for that my Will and desire is that she shall likewise have the occupation thereof during her life. Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Joane my bedsted in the parlor at moor and my table bord in the hall at Moor after the decease of my wife....*

## Extracts from the Leger Book and Other Ancient Documents of the Abbey of Buckfast

A heriot, the best beast, and xij<sup>s</sup>. vi<sup>d</sup>. for a reliefe upon the death of John Prouse, a freeholder, for a tenement and lands in Westmore. Anno 26 Hen. VIII (1534–5).

### **The Deeds at the Devon Heritage Centre for the Feoffees of a South Brent Trust reveal a long connection: listing these early South Brent Prowses**

1552 Robert Prous

1588 John Prowse the younger of Moore, Gentleman and Robert Prowse of North Harburneford

Members of the Prowse family as trustees through to the mid 1700s



## West Moore South Brent

West Moore is a fine listed manor house established in Medieval times and is surrounded by an extensive collection of ancient stone buildings.

Moore is some distance from South Brent village, nearer to Diptford and Harberton and the estates of the Prowse family settled here spread across these nearby parishes and North Huish, Ermington, Rattery and through marriage to many parishes near the growing market town of Newton Abbot.



## Sir William Petre of Torbryan

**William Petre** was born in the parish of Torbryan the son of John a tanner and yeoman of Tornewton.

Educated at Exeter College Oxford – a lawyer and MP - and he became the tutor of George Boleyn.

Later appointed deputy or proctor to Thomas Cromwell.

During the Dissolution of the Monasteries became 'Visitor' to the greater houses alongside Richard Rich. Through this work he became owner of tracts of the estates of abbeys in the south and particularly the Westcountry.

He held the former lands of Buckfast Abbey including many manors in South Devon including South Brent and surrounding parishes.

Later he was Secretary of State to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary & Elizabeth he died in 1572 and was succeeded by his son Sir John Petre who sealed many documents in favour of the Prowses of Moore.

***There are numerous Prow(u)se entries from the early registers of Torbryan from the 1560, including a Phillippus Prouse buried 'of Tornewton'.***



This document shows the Prowse family of Moore extending their estates with Thomas the son of John Prowse who is later found in the records of the neighbouring parish of Rattery. Interesting that Robert's name is spelt with a Z

## South Brent Manor: Admission for 2 lives in reversion. 1580

Repository	Devon Heritage Centre
Reference number	<i>123M/M/4</i>
Description	<p>Admitted: John Thewell and Thomas son of Robert Prowze of More.</p> <p>Premises: reversion, on death of Margery Stephen widow, of tenement in Brent Towne and meadow called Aysmede, which Margery Stephen widow holds for her life.</p> <p>Rent 28s. 10d. for the tenement, 18s. for Ayshmede, heriot best beast, services accustomed, to plant one oak, elm or ash annually or forfeit 6d. for every tree, until by view of the steward there are sufficient trees for the repair and maintenance of the premises.</p> <p>Fine: £120.</p> <p>Sig. of John Petre, knight, lord of manor, frag.</p> <p>arm.seal.</p>



An initial lease of the Manor of Colemore, his grandson was to purchase the freehold - and the family hold the manor for many generations. The 'Lordship' of the Manor is presently for sale at a bargain price!

■ Ilbert of West Alvington » 📄 Ilbert of West Alvington: 1st Deposit » 📄 TITLE: Leases » 📄 Parishes H

## 📄 North Huish; *Colemore*: Lease for 99 years, 1581

Repository	Devon Heritage Centre
Reference number	316M/0/TL/H/50
Description	1) James Marthewe, esq., Dodbrooke, Ursula, his wife, Edmonde, his son 2) Robert Prouse, yeoman, South Brent  Premises: tenements, messuages and lands called <i>Colemore</i>  Consideration: £210  Rents: £6, and 8d p.a.
Date	1581

# 10 Easy Instalments of £214.50!



LORDSHIP TITLE OF COLMORE

**£2,145.00**

County: Devon

Parish: North Huish and Ermington

History from: Unknown

History to: Prior to 1500

Documented history: No

Domesday Book: No

Interesting Facts:

This Lordship Title has laid unused for over 500 years.

**THIS TITLE IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO RESERVE AT CHECKOUT AND COVER THE COST ACROSS TEN EQUAL MONTHLY PAYMENTS.**

1 in stock

# Prowse of South Brent Settlement Deed 1681

This Indenture made the four & twentieth day of June in the third & thirtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles the Second by the grace of God of England Scotland France & Ireland King Defender of the faith &c — Annoq Domini 1681 Between John Prowse the Elder of Moor in the parish of South Brent in the County of Devon Gent & Margaret his wife John Prowse the younger Gent son & heir apparent of the said John Prowse the Elder William Dyer of Woodland in the said County Gent & John Knowling of Harborton in the said County & Yeoman of the one part and Arthur Holo of Stort in the parish of Diphford and Richard Dunning of Walkhampton in the said County Gent of the other part Whereas the said John Prowse the Elder Margaret his wife & John Prowse the younger (for the selling of the Mesuages lands tenements & hereditaments hereafter mentioned to & for the use & behoofe hereafter expressed and in such sort & manner as is hereafter declared) did in Easter Term last past in his said Majties Court of Common pleas at Westminster before his said Majestys Justices there in due form of Law levy & acknowledge One fine sur Cognisance de Droit come report of the said Mesuages lands tenements & hereditaments unto the said William Dyer & John Knowling and the heirs of the said William Dyer forever by the name or names of three Mesuages two Tofts three Courtlages three barns three gardens six Orchards one hundred twenty & three Acres of land twenty & three Acres of Meadow one hundred & three Acres of pasture ten Acres of Wood thirty eight Acres of furze & heath and fifteen Acres of Moor with the appurtenances in Moore at Westmoore Moor also Eastmoore Blackwell Gosworthy Nothoway Colmoor Keaton Worth Holo Hillslands South Brent Harborton North Huish & Emington in the said County of Devon The which said fine was delivered by Proclamations according unto the form of the statute in that case made & provided as by the said fine



Moors Head Manor, Dean Prior, taken in the early 1900s, formerly known as Moreshead. A 15<sup>th</sup> Century built manor abandoned in 1878 and now described as a ruin on OS maps. Will of Richard Prowse of South Brent 1716.



Lutton, South Brent – another manor of Richard Prowse but in much better order today!





## Parishes of South Devon

Lay Subsidy Tax 1524 – Prowses assessed in just 6 parishes.

Lay Subsidy Tax 1543 – Prowses assessed in 15 parishes

By the Protestation Oaths 1641 (aged 18 or over) in 25 parishes including of these parishes:

4 in Kingsteignton, Brixham & South Brent

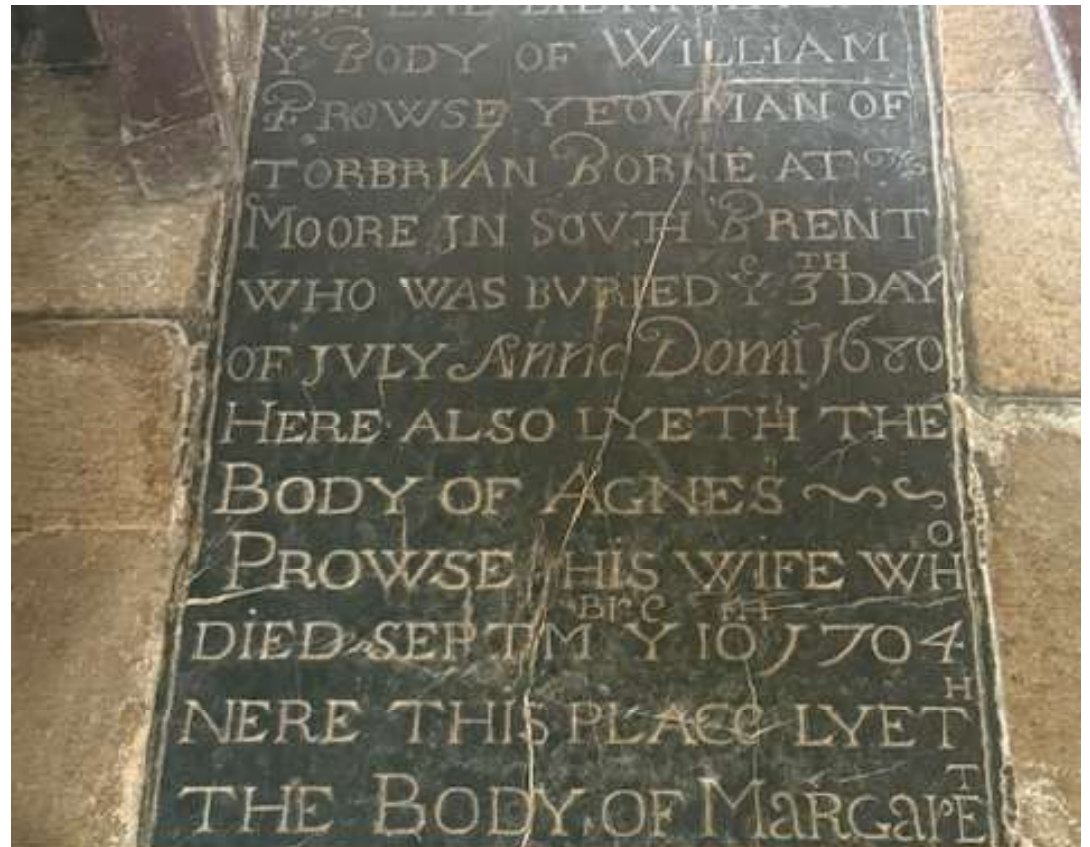
5 in Highweek, Blackawton & Ugborough

And my 9 X Great Grandfather Roger Prowse of Moreleigh!



## The South Brent line disperses and dies out

- John Prowse dies in 1756 'of Moore' with no male heir.
- His uncle another John had died earlier - again with no male heir.
- William Prowse (ledger stone to right) had settled at Wrenwell in Torbryan and died in 1680 leaving a 5 year-old John.
- John later married Elizabeth Hele of Ideford in 1701 and had 3 sons – John, William and Robert all baptized in Torbryan but all died with no offspring!
- We know John was buried at Ideford 30 June 1753 and his younger brother Robert at St Mary Arches, Exeter in 1762. I have been unable to discover what happened to William.
- John's will was challenged .....



W<sup>m</sup> Prowse  
Common Ancestor

1. John  
Son & Heir

Nelle

2. Catherine  
married

Edw<sup>d</sup> Lyde

3. Margaret  
died unmarried

John  
1. Son & Heir  
died without  
Issue

Cove

2. William  
died without  
Issue

Anstis

3. Robert  
died without  
Issue

Mills

1. Edward  
Son & Heir -  
died without  
Issue in  
America

2. Peter  
married

Mary Sent

1. Sent Lyde  
Son & Heir

Atherton

2. Peter  
died a  
Bachelor

Philip Lyde  
living 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Aug. 1784.



# The Estate of Well, Olchard of Ideford

## Another fine Grade II\* listed house

- 'John Prowse of Ideford, gent, purchased the bankrupt estate 'at a price of £930 which was the best price and the most money that was bid by any person or could be got for the same and by the terms of such survey'. The Will of John Prowse, dated 1753, leaves the house and farm at Well to his wife for her life 'according to the settlement made on their marriage'.
- The residue of John Prowse's estate was left to his brother Robert, grocer of Exeter but within ten years he too had died without issue. His aunt inherited, but neither she nor her sister had heirs. Eventually Well passed to Jent Lyde of Brixham, a distant cousin of Robert Prowse. By 1811, Jent's son Philip Lyde, father of five daughters, had died leaving Reverend Gilben Burrington of Chudleigh and Jeffrey Lang of Ipplepen as trustees to sell up and do what they could to provide for his family, only two of whom were married. There was another survey. Again, the estate was bankrupt.



MP3

## Slide 17

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**MP3**

Malcolm Prowse, 2025-08-04



## Friends in high places – Richard Prowse Notary 1629-1705 Agent & Solicitor to HM Customs

- Richard Prowse b 1629 at Chudleigh son of Richard Prowse of Tiverton (1599-1630) great grandson of John Prowse – the Tycoon! The second of 3 sons – his elder brother John inherited Pennycross in Plymouth and George entered the Church, later Vicar of Ashburton.
- His grandmother was Elizabeth Staplehill of Ashton, whose sister Anna had married Thomas Clifford (who was sometime Vicar of South Brent). The next generation of Cliffords and Prowses also married 2 sisters. This family connection was to open many doors for Richard....
- He grew up with Thomas Clifford (later the 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Clifford) a lawyer who rose to become an MP and Lord High Treasurer under Charles II – he was the ‘C’ in the infamous CABAL.
- Clifford was ennobled by the King in 1672 but resigned the next year under the threat of the Test Act. He was a Roman Catholic – some say he took his own life in 1673 – but more likely the result of gall or bladder stones!
- Richard Prowse continued to look after the affairs of Elizabeth his widow, he like was, as Clifford, a lawyer based at the New Inn of Middlesex. His second wife and 2 children are buried in St Paul’s, Covent Garden. Seems to have spent most of his adult life in London
- Records show Richard continuing as Agent to the Customs – retiring in 1684 ‘being in years and indisposed prays leave to resign’. Although working during the Restoration with a Catholic – he and his offspring willed monies to the Independent Chapel of Tiverton!
- Richard Prowse died in 1705 home in Tiverton and left a very large fortune, his surviving son inherited but died in 1712 without any children and extensive lands went to a sister’s family.

## Lord Thomas Clifford

### Lord High Treasurer of England 1630-1673

- The CABAL of Charles II reign following the Restoration - Clifford: Arlington: Buckingham: Ashley & Lauderdale
- Clifford's Devon backgrounds were modest and his Ugbrooke Estate had came through a Courtenay marriage but was to grow.
- Richard Prowse was acting as Clifford's agent from his entry to Parliament in 1660 until his death.
- *Through a mutual friend I approach the present Lord Thomas Clifford to access the Clifford papers and in particular references to Prowse....*
- I Only received a copy of a letter from Sir William Strode (of Newnham) to Richard Prowse at New Inn, London asking help on his uncle's will.
- A detailed search found an unpublished biography of 1935 by JJS Shaw presented as a thesis to the University of Glasgow – the present Lord's father had given him access to the Clifford papers. It mentions Prowse a number of times.
- 'with one break of 18 months Prowse's accounts are extant until the summer of 1673' - Lord Clifford died in the October.
- 'Clifford died at home in Devon while Richard Prowse was winding up his estate in London.' and 'Shortly before his retiral into Devon his outstanding debts to Prowse amounted to £7873 and the way they were met does not suggest any lavish bounty from the King'.



# Thomas Prowse of Cullompton 1607-1644

Thomas PROWSE of Hillersden House, Cullompton

- Son of Roger Prowse lawyer & MP and Mayor of Taunton and Elizabeth Bond, and grandson of Thomas Prowse, Merchant of Tiverton.
- Hillersden was the 'premier' manor of the town - which thrived on the wool trade – it was bought by his grandfather Thomas who was one of the main exporters of woollen cloth to the continent alongside his brother John Prowse both in Tiverton.
- Many of the merchants involved in the Cloth trade were Puritans – Robert Prowse in Barnstaple, Richard & John Prowze in Exeter – all 3 were MPs and Mayors. Not surprising that their descendants supported the Parliamentary cause in the English Civil War.

*all of these and descended from the family in Chagford – but the 'old' line stayed loyal to King Charles I and are listed in the Royalist musters.*

Hillersden House today a grade II\* listed mansion – it was sold in 2020 for £8.6m





Protestation Oaths of 1641: Cullompton -  
all males over the age of 18 years.

*Top of the pile is Thomas Prowse gent!*

on yourm nor of any Rites or

Thomas Prowse gent	Richard Solly	Thomas Pfullman	Charles Watfon
Anthony James	William Ringet	Robert Bowe	Wm son of Wm
John Moulton gent	Christopher Taylor	Arthur Couther	Thomas Campie
John Hardon senn	Robert Galter	George Mayo	John Mylman
Jonas Rendall	John Gobier	William Norman	John Pfullman senn
Humphry Sanford	William Langbridge	George Saltor	Thomas Cloak
	John Lake	John Langbridge	



# The Court of Chivalry – Thomas Prowse

543 Prowse v Gyrd alias Knight British History Online 1638

- Prowse was from a family that had been gentry for up to 300 years.
- Gyrd alias Knight 'said that I spake falsely, and gave me often the lye or once at least and said he was as good a gentleman or better than myself, adding that the Prowses were no gentlemen, but the Prowzes were gentlemen; and lately he called me base fellow.'

# The Red Lion by Cullompton Church

Witnesses' depositions taken 28 July 1638

Henry Skinner vintner

John Norris blacksmith

Rosa Skinner landlord's wife

Henry Cann 16 year-old servant at the Inn

Verdict: Gird to pay 200 marks for the use  
of the crown within 12 days (12 May 1639)



# The will of Thomas Prowse of Cullompton of 1642

[illegible]

**THOMAS PROWSE**, the elder, of Collumpton, Devon, esq<sup>r</sup>. Will dated Feb. 13, 1642, proved June 10, 1646, by Agnes **Prowse**, the relict. [85 *Twisse*.] Being "now resolved to use my best endeavour to extirpate those Locusts and Caterpillers who have now invaded this Countie of Deavon, & doe endeavour, as much as in them lye, to alter the fundamental Lawes of this Kingdom of England, & that which is most dear to a Christian, the Protestant Religion now established within the said Kingdom, in which Religion I am now resolved to live and die, &c. To be buried in the Chancel of the Church of Colompton, in such a convenient way as a man of quality ought to be. £5 to poor of the parishes of Dunkeswell & Collumpton, Devon, & Wilton, Somerset. I am possessed of an estate of the Orchard & Manor of Wanstrowe, Somerset, lately purchased of James Mabb, Prebend of the same, for 89 years, if the said Thomas **Prowse**, & Robert & Thomas **Prowse**, sons of the same, shall live so long. Also Chattle Leases in Copley, Devon, Dalwood, Dorset, & Taunton S<sup>t</sup> James, Somerset, for years yet to come. My debts to be paid. Overplus to my youngest son George **Prowse** at age of 21; if he dies, then to my two sons Roger & Thomas **Prowse**. To my five daughters, Grace, Elisabeth, Agnes, Joane, & Prudence **Prowse**, £20 each at ages of 21. Farm of Welford, in Dunkeswell, to my eldest son John **Prowse**. John Tanner, Clerk, of co. Devon, gave by will to my eldest daughters, Grace & Elisabeth **Prowse**, his grandchildren, £500 each; the tenement called the Bell Inn, Taunton, lately purchased by me of my father Roger **Prowse**, gent., late dec<sup>d</sup>, & the Manor of Chilton **Prowse**, in the parish of Thorverton, Devon, &c., to be sold to pay them the said £500. Residue



[illegible]



## Transcription of Priscilla's Petition

Shows that your petitioner's husband was a man that stood zealously affected to the Parliament's proceedings and the Parliament's forces, having occasion to raise men for the safety of the kingdom. And he was very willing upon all occasions of service and served as a soldier under the command of the Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Prowse at Modbury in this county and at Stratton in the county of Cornwall. And during all the first Siege of Exeter, he was a soldier under the same Mr Prowse's command, in which siege your petitioner's husband received a shot in the arm. By means thereof, he shortly afterwards died and left two small children void of all comfort and relief, except the charitable benevolences of well-affected people. And upon their charity they now live and will (if some speedy course shall not be forthwith taken for them) be in great want and penury.

# The struggle for the Westcountry and Lt Colonel Thomas Prowse

**Thomas Prowse writes his will 13 February 1642**

**1<sup>st</sup> Siege of Exeter: December 1642 – February 1643**

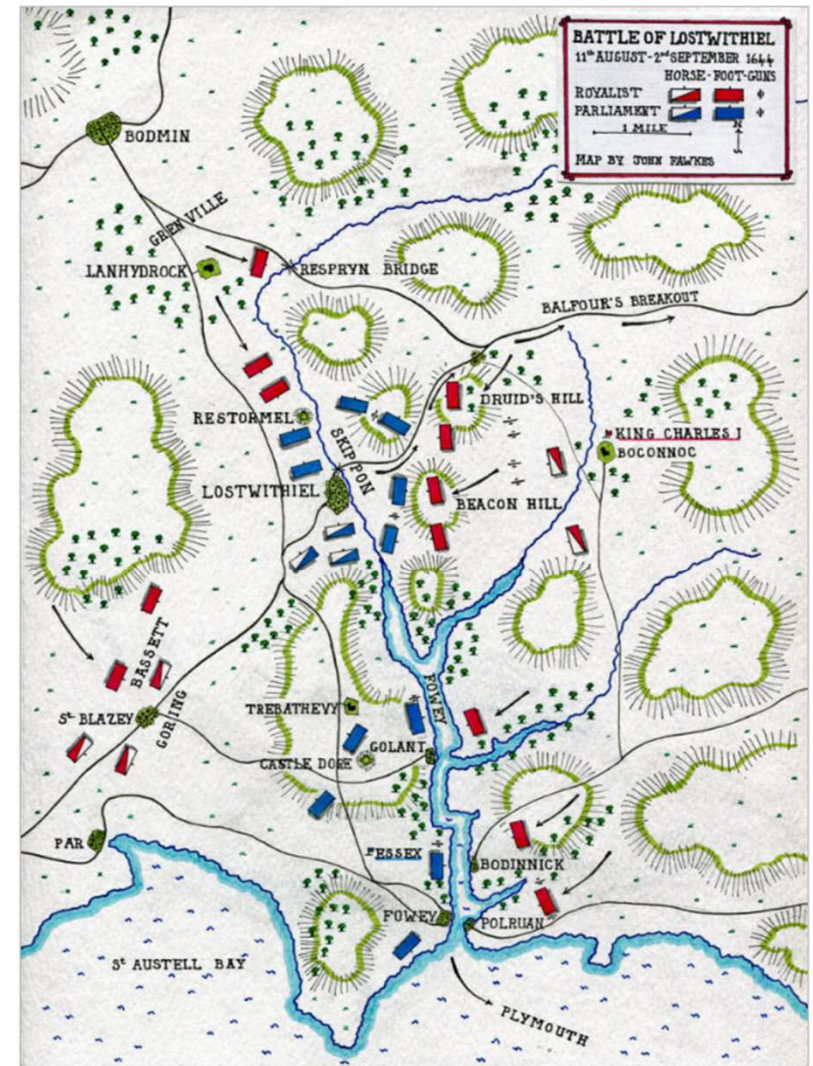
**2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Modbury: 21 February 1643**

**Battle of Stratton, North Cornwall: 16 May 1643**

**Battles of Lostwithiel: 21 August – 2 September 1644**

**Thomas Prowse Gent buried 21 October 1644 @ Cullompton just 37**

# The Battle of Lostwithiel 1644 – a Royalist triumph



Map of the Battle of Lostwithiel 11th August to 2nd September 1644 in the English Civil War: map by John Fawkes

