

Prowse Register Report



The Prowse family has a long and storied history in Devonshire, England, dating back to the late 12th century. They held many lands in the shire over the years and Sir William Prowse (born circa 1245) is a well-known 13th magnate to students of Devonshire history. The "family homestead" of Gidleigh or Gidley Castle still survives as a Norman ruin, although the bulk of the original manor house was demolished in the 16th century to make way for a newer manor. The keep -- seen above -- survives. A wonderful history of Gidley Castle, and the source of the picture above, can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/4294/gidleigh1.html>.

The same source, written by the late C. A. Howis Croxford, provides a wonderful description of the evolution of the name of the castle from its original Saxon moniker: *"...It was Gydden Leh or Ghidderleia at the time of Doomsday, Giddeleia and variations in the 12th century, Gudelegh, Gudeleghe and Giddeley in the 13th century, and finally Gidley or Gidleigh. Although tradition claims that the name derives from the Danish princess Gydda, who owned the manor and was the mother of King Harold, the English Placename Society comes down in favour of a derivation from the Saxon word "Gydda" meaning a clearing (curiously the same spelling as the princess' name) combined with "leah" meaning land not under cultivation..."*

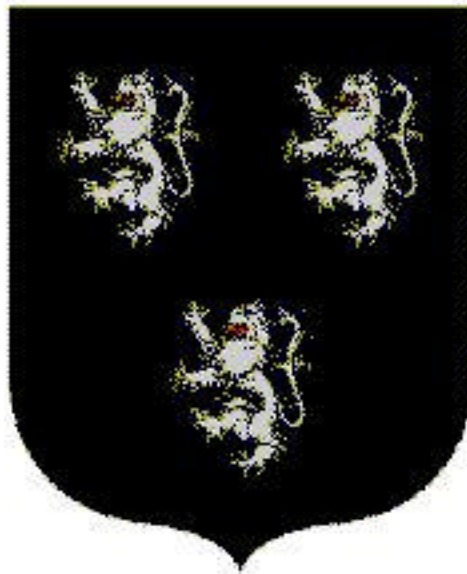
Surname variations include de Probus, Le Prouz, Prous, Prouse, Proutz, Prouz, and Prowse.

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The original family coat of arms were described as: *Arms: Quarterly, sable and argent, a bend or. Crest: A demi lion or* and have been rendered by the good folks at <http://www.prowse.org> as:



In addition, the [prowse.org](http://www.prowse.org) site provides the coat of arms that is specific to the Gidley Castle Prowse family: *Arms: Sable three lions rampant argent*



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First Generation

1. **Sir Peter¹ PROWSE^[1]** married **Mary RIVERSON DE VERNON^[1,2,3,4]**, daughter of **Earl William RIVERSON DE VERNON** and **Maud/Mabel/Mabirie DE BEAUMONT** in 1200.

They had one child:

2 i. **William**

Mary second married **Sir Robert DE COURTENAY^[3,5,6]**. He was born circa 1183^[7] and died circa 27 July 1242 or 1243; he was 59^[8]. He is buried in Ford Abbey, Devonshire, England^[9]. Robert was the Feudal Baron of Oakhampton, Devonshire, England and the Sheriff of Devonshire, England in 1216^[8].

Generation: G23 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 61,165,568 / 61,165,569 (via Elias Maverick) and 61,425,152 / 61,425,153 (via Moses Maverick)

Second Generation

Family of Sir Peter PROWSE (1) & Mary RIVERSON DE VERNON

2. **William² PROWSE**. (*Peter¹*) We currently know nothing of William or his wife.

They had one child:

3 i. **William**

Generation: G22 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 30,582,784 / 30,582,785 (via Elias Maverick) and 30,712,576 / 30,712,577 (via Moses Maverick)

Third Generation

Family of William PROWSE (2)

3. **William³ PROWSE** (*William², Peter¹*) married a daughter of **Lord DINHAM**.

They had one child:

4 i. **William**

Generation: G21 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 15,291,392 / 15,291,393 (via Elias Maverick) and 15,356,288 / 15,356,289 (via Moses Maverick)

Fourth Generation

Family of William PROWSE (3) & [a daughter] DINHAM

4. **William⁴ PROWSE OR DE PROBUS** (*William³⁻², Peter¹*) married a daughter of **Giles DE GIDLEY**. William lived in Gidley or Gidleigh Castle, which still exists as a Norman ruin eight miles southeast of Okehampton, Devonshire, England and eleven miles southwest of Sandford, Devonshire, England^[1].

They had one child:

5 i. **William**

Generation: G20 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 7,645,696 / 7,645,697 (via Elias Maverick) and 7,678,144 / 7,678,145 (via Moses Maverick)

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Fifth Generation

Family of William PROWSE OR DE PROBUS (4) & [a daughter] DE GIDLEY

5. **Sir William⁵ PROWSE Knt.**^[10,11,12,13] (*William⁴⁻², Peter¹*) died before 21 October 1270, when his *Inquisition post mortem* was held^[14].

Like his father, William was of Gidley or Gidleigh Castle in Devonshire, England^[15]. He held the manors of Gidley, Stodbury, Cumesheved, Hacche and Colton, all in Devonshire, England^[14]. William was Sheriff of Devonshire, England in 1269^[14].

William first married **Alice DE WIDWORTHY**, daughter of **William DE WIDWORTHY**.

They had one child:

6 i. **William**

Generation: G19 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 3,822,848 / 3,822,849 (via Elias Maverick) and 3,839,072 / 3,839,073 (via Moses Maverick)

Circa 1250 William second married **Alsice/Alice FERRERS**, daughter of **Sir Fulk Fitz Gilbert DE FERRERS & Alice DE HELION**^[14]. Alsice was the daughter and heir of her father and was from Throwley or Throwleigh, Devonshire, England -- which is located about one mile from Gidleigh^[14].

They had one child:

7 i. Richard

Sixth Generation

Family of Sir William PROWSE Knt. (5) & Alice DE WIDWORTHY

6. **Sir William⁶ PROWSE Knt.**^[16,17,18,19,20,21] (*William⁵⁻², Peter¹*) was born circa 1245^[16], as estimated from the fact that he was aged 25 in 1270. William died shortly before 26 April 1316, which was the date of his *Inquisition post mortem*; he was 71^[16]. He was buried in first at Holbeton, Devonshire, England^[16]; but under Bishop Grandisson's mandate of 19 October 1329, his bones were reburied at Lustleigh, Devonshire, England in accordance with his will.

William was his father's heir^[16] and continued to live in Gidleigh Castle in Devonshire, England^[22]. In addition, he held the manors of Affeton/Aveton, Gifford, Gidleigh/Gidley, Holbeton and Lustleigh, all in Devonshire, England^[16]. He was Conservator of Peace for Devonshire in 1308 and Commissioner concerning the Statute of Winchester in 1310^[16]. William was a 13th century magnate who is apparently well known to students of medieval Devonshire^[22].

Before 1275 when William was 30, he married **Alice DE REIGNY**, daughter of **John DE REIGNY**^[16].

They had the following children:

8 i. **William**
9 ii. Alice

Generation: G18 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 1,911,424 / 1,911,425 (via Elias Maverick) and 1,919,536 / 1,919,537 (via Moses Maverick)

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Family of Sir William PROWSE Knt. (5) & Alsice FERRERS

7. Sir Richard PROWSE. (*William⁵⁻², Peter¹*) was born sometime after his parent's marriage in 1250^[15] and died after 1340, when it is noted that he was still living^[15]. He was the second son of Sir William^[15] and was of Aston or Ashreston, Devonshire, England^[15].

Child:

10 i. Thomasine

Seventh Generation

Family of Sir William PROWSE Knt. (6) & Alice DE REIGNY

8. William⁷ PROWSE (*William⁶⁻², Peter¹*) was of Chagford, Devonshire, England and married **Eristacia WADECOTTE**.

They had one child:

11 i. **John**

Generation: G17 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 955,712 / 955,713 (via Elias Maverick) and 959,768 / 959,769 (via Moses Maverick)

9. Alice PROWSE.¹⁶ (*William⁶⁻², Peter¹*) was born circa 1285/6^[16]. At the age of 50, Alice was baptized shortly before 15 November 1335^[16]. She first married **Sir Roger DE MOELS, Knt.** and second married **William DE MOELS**.

Family of Sir Richard PROWSE (7)

10. Thomasine PROWSE. (*Richard⁵, William⁵⁻², Peter¹*) married **Sir John CHUDLEIGH, Knt..**

Eighth Generation

Family of William PROWSE (8) & Eristacia WADECOTTE

11. John PROWSE (*William⁶⁻², Peter¹*) is known only from his mention in legal documents concerning Devonshire real estate in the 1300s. In 1385, John Prowse purchased the manor of Lower Dodderidge, in Sandford, Devonshire, England^[25]. In addition, on 25 June 1355, "John Proutz, squyer" levied a fine (in the modern sense, rent, rather than a legal fine) against John Pedehale and his wife Joan for a messuage, meadow and rents in Dodderidge, Sandford, Devonshire, England. [*Pedes Finium, Devonshire, no. 1443*]

We know nothing of John's wife.

They had one child:

12 i. **John**

Generation: G16 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 477,856 / 477,857 (via Elias Maverick) and 479,884 / 479,885 (via Moses Maverick)

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Ninth Generation

Family of John PROWSE (11) & [not known]

12. John⁸ PROWSE. (*John⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) was often called "of Chagford", Devonshire, England in some sources. This is a reference to the fact that he and his wife Maud received lands in Chagford from trustees in 1432^[26]. However, there is considerable legal evidence that, by 1418, John Prowse of the manor at Dodderidge (also known as Higher Dodderidge), in Sandford, Devonshire, England was the joint patron (presumably with his wife, Maud) of the manor at Cruwys Morchard, just north of Poughill, Devonshire, England^[6,22,23]. Incidentally, the manor house at Higher Dodderidge was noted as still habitable in 1909^[23].

John married **Maud CRUWYS**, daughter of **John CRUWYS**.

They had the following children:

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|--------------|
| 13 | i. | Roger |
| 14 | ii. | John |

Generation: G15 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 238,928 / 238,929 (via Elias Maverick) and 239,942 / 239,943 (via Moses Maverick)

Tenth Generation

Family of John PROWSE (11) & Maud CRUWYS

13. Roger⁹ PROWSE. (*John⁹⁻⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) was living at the manor at Prowse, near Dodderidge in Sandford, Devonshire, England in 1455^[27]. He received many lands by right of his wife and her inheritances, which eventually passed through the heirs and the years to the Gye family^[23].

Roger married **Joan RADFORD**.

They had one child:

- | | | |
|------------|----|-----------------|
| 15. | i. | Nicholas |
|------------|----|-----------------|

Generation: G14 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 119,464 / 119,465 (via Elias Maverick) and 119,976 / 119,977 (via Moses Maverick)

14. John PROWSE. (*John⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) was born circa 1377^[26] and died sometime after 1447, when he is known to have been alive^[26]. John was his father's heir^[26] and his descendants through the late 1500s via his son Richard are outlined in Weis' Ancestral Roots, 7th edition, line 246G-35+. John's primary residence were the lands at Chagford, Devonshire, England^[26]. He married **Agnes BAMFIELD**^[26], daughter of **Thomas BAMFIELD & Alice COPLESTONE**.

Eleventh Generation

Family of Roger PROWSE (12) & Joan RADFORD

15. Nicholas¹⁰ PROWSE. (*Roger¹⁰, John⁹⁻⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) We currently know little of Nicholas. According to the Patent Rolls, was coroner of Devonshire in 1498^[25] and his name occurs in local records during the years 1494-1498^[22]. Other than that, we know nothing more of him or his immediate family, save his son Thomas.

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They had one child:

16 i. **Thomas**

Generation: G13 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 59,732 / 59,733 (via Elias Maverick) and 59,988 / 59,989 (via Moses Maverick)

Twelfth Generation

Family of Nicholas PROWSE (14)

16. Thomas¹¹ PROWSE. (*Nicholas¹¹, Roger¹⁰, John⁹⁻⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) lived at the manor of Prowse, in Sandford, Devonshire, England^[22]. He married **Jane BAYTUN^[28]**, daughter of **Henry BAYTUN**.

They had the following children:

17 i. **John**
18 ii. **Mary**

Generation: G12 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 29,866 / 29,867 (via Elias Maverick) and 29,994 / 29,995 (via Moses Maverick)

Thirteenth Generation

Family of Thomas PROWSE (15) & Jane BAYTUN

17. John PROWSE. (*Thomas¹², Nicholas¹¹, Roger¹⁰, John⁹⁻⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) All we currently know of John is that he was a clerk living in 1516, when a fine speaks of the manor of Dodderidge as being held by John Gye, Mary his wife and John Prous, clerk^[22].

18. Mary¹² PROWSE^[28] (*Thomas¹², Nicholas¹¹, Roger¹⁰, John⁹⁻⁸, William⁷⁻², Peter¹*) was still alive in 1533, when her son Robert was born. Ironically, we know much more about the land Mary held than her vital statistics. She grew up at the manor house of Prowse, in Sandford, Devonshire, England^[24]. Sandford is a parish in the Hundred Of Crediton. Poughill lies just north of Sandford. Dowrish House, Prowse and Dodderidge are adjoining manors or farms in Sandford^[23], thus explaining the intermarriage of the Prowse, Dowrish and Gye families at this time.

In her 1509 marriage settlement with John Gye, Mary brought the lands known as "Upcott" or "Uppecot" (amongst other spelling variants...) in Cheriton FitzPaine, which was located near Poughill, Devonshire, England. These are some of the lands which came down through the family via the inheritance of Roger Prowse's wife John Radford circa 1455.

In 1516, she and her husband John claimed the lands of her father Thomas Prowse which lay in Poughill, Dodderidge, Ilsington and elsewhere in Devonshire, England^[22]. That same year, legal action involving a fine notes the fact that the manor of Dodderidge is held by John Gye, his wife Mary and "John Prous, clerk".

In 1509, Mary married **John GYE**, son of **John GYE & Elizabeth SPENCER**.

They had one child:

i. **Robert^[28]**

Generation: G11 Grandparents twice

Person Numbers: 14,932 / 14,933 (via Elias Maverick) and 14,996 / 14,997 (via Moses Maverick)

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15. Ibid. line 217-32.
16. Ibid. line 52-33.
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24. Ibid. 115:248.
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