

CHAPTER B15

The PROWLE Family

“From the South-West “

Our GG-Grandmother was **Harriet Prowle**, wife of **Charles Thomas Hambly**. The Prowle name does not seem to be common and appears to exist in the south-west of England, particularly around Bristol and Somerset. In some cases, Prowle seems to have been spelt as Prowel, Proul, Proule or Proal, for people within the same family. Unfortunately, we have not been able to discover much information about this line, and the earliest we have been able to find has been ...

John Proal (b. circa 1820)

Our GGG-Grandfather was John Proal, born around 1820 in Williton, Somerset. We know that his father was a carpenter called William Proal, but that's the only information we have on him.

John Proal appears in the 1841 at Littleton, near Winford, Somerset, where he is aged 20, unmarried and working as a labourer. In this census, his name is spelt as “Prowl”. Littleton is a small hamlet on the B3130 road about 0.5 mile SE of Winford and about 6 miles south of Bristol.

On 14th April 1842, John married Matilda Croker (daughter of James Croker). Matilda was born in Blagdon, Somerset about 1821. At the time of their marriage, John & Matilda were living in West Street, Bedminster. This is now a suburb in the south of Bristol, but at that time it would have been a separate village.

In the 1851 census, he is still a farm labourer living at Littleton, but by this time he is with his wife Matilda and they have 5 children with them :

Mary Ann Prowel	b.circa 1841, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Mercy Prowel	b.circa 1843, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Harriet Prowel	b.circa 1845, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Elizabeth Prowel	b.circa 1847, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Henry Prowel	b.circa 1850, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset

By the time of the 1861 census, he is still living and working as an agricultural labourer at Littleton and he has 5 daughters living at home with him.

Eliza Prowl	b.circa 1842, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Elizabeth Prowl	b.circa 1847, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Jane Prowl	b.circa 1852, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Emily Prowl	b.circa 1854, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset
Anne Prowl	b.circa 1856, at Littleton, Winford, Somerset

By 1871, John is 53 years old and his wife has died. Most of the children have left home and the only ones remaining are his daughter , Anna (age 12) and a 6 year-old grandson named John Prowle.

By the time of the 1881 census, John is 63 years old and perhaps unable to support himself as he is then living at the Bedminster Union Workhouse. We are unsure when he died, although he was still alive in 1891 and still living at the Workhouse in Bedminster

As stated earlier, we have little more information on previous generations, although there are a few others listed in Somerset census records who may be siblings of John:-

James Prole	b.circa 1818, Williton, Somerset (living at St.Decuman in 1871)
William Prole	b.circa 1819, Williton, Somerset (living at Williton in 1881)
Robert Prole	b.circa 1825, Williton, Somerset (living at Bridgewater in 1861-81)
Mary Prole	b.circa 1827, Williton, Somerset (living at St.Decuman in 1851)