DESCENDING LINES AND THE SEARCH FOR CONNECTIONS IN AN EXPANDING POPULATION

Roy Prideaux

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This brief account of my research into the ramifications of a family described as numerous by Professor W. G. Hoskins in his Devon may be of interest to demographers as well as genealogists. I began as an amateur family historian with a taste for west country studies and inadvertently wandered into the territory of the demographers; I regarded them at first as social historians with a bias towards statistics, and looked to them for guidance when I first became aware of the mass of data which I should have to analyse if I wished to disentangle my own line of descent. I then became interested in population studies as they relate to the history of families and households in the west of England, and particularly to their social and geographical mobility. What follows reflects to some extent the shift of interest as I explored the various paths which open before anyone who persists in exploring his more remote antecedents.

I began in 1978 by exploring the background in Plymouth and Devonport of my father’s parents and grandparents. Father was born in 1876, both his parents in 1853 and his grandfather William was born in 1813. He married a smuggler’s daughter from Cawsand in 1835 and lived until 1898. My father was the eldest of eight children, his father was the youngest of ten children. I obtained no help from the census returns in spite of having many relevant addresses, but much was recorded on the fly-leaves of two family bibles. One of these had been handed down to me, and the other came to light when I was able to locate in Australia a daughter and a grandson of William’s eldest son John, who had settled in Victoria. William was successively a carpenter, cabinet-maker and chair-maker; with his children and grandchildren he represented a fair cross-section of Victorian working-class life, poor, respectable and for the most part industrious. The boys took advantage of the new training opportunities offered by the Royal Navy from 1853 onwards; and some like my father moved into the lower middle-class by becoming Warrant Officers, and in his case a Chief Writer and then Paymaster.

The Devon Family History Society had by 1979 done much work on the parish registers of St Andrews in Plymouth and Stoke Damerel in Devonport, which had started as Plymouth Dock and was by 1788 a working-class town nearly half the size.
of Plymouth; by 1801 it had a population of 23,787 to Plymouth’s 16,378, and by the
time it was re-named Devonport it had more than 30,000 inhabitants living under
appallingly overcrowded conditions.\textsuperscript{2} It was a relief to learn that the bulky Stoke
registers contained few Prideaux(Px) entries before 1800, and that the same was true
of St Andrews. To seek the origins of families attracted to Plymouth and Dock by
the massive building programmes of the Napoleonic wars, and all the jobs
connected with supplying and manning the ships, was a formidable undertaking.
They probably came from most of the hundred parishes which are within striking
distance of the rivers Tamar, Plym and Lynher, and many came from further afield
to join the Royal Navy or Royal Marines. I had to find some clue to the parentage of
William born in 1813, and fortunately the Stoke registers recorded his baptism on 23
May as the son of John and Maria, Sawyer of Plymouth Dock. John was buried on
21 December 1824 ‘aged 48’, six months after the burial of his son John ‘aged 13 ½’
who was baptised on 21 October 1810. I searched the registers back to 1800 for
John’s marriage to Maria and found no trace of it or of earlier baptisms.

A tale had been handed down to me along with the family bible that William’s father
was a well-spoken man, like William himself, who had come originally from
Launceston and was the illegitimate son of a judge. The parish registers of the
Launceston churches are at the Truro Record Office, so I began by looking through
the bishop’s transcripts from 1773 which are housed at Exeter. Neither then nor later
did I find the Sawyer’s parents at Launceston, but there was a Px family which
married in the town for four generations from 1680 to 1786; so perhaps the Cornish
parishes west and south of this strategic point would be worth exploring.

At this point Ann Chiswell, the energetic secretary of the Devon Family History
Society, drew my attention to the fact that one of the three Px marriages in Stoke
Damerel between 1700 and 1809 was between sojourners whose parishes of origin
were therefore recorded. The entry for 23 January 1706 told me that ‘John Prideaux
of Altarnoun in Cornwall’ had married ‘Ann James of Landulph’. Altarnun is about
eight miles south west of Launceston and twenty miles up the Lynher from Saltash.
Landulph is three miles above Saltash and five miles up the Tamar from Dock. Might
Launceston and Landulph have become confused in my grandmother’s memory
during the passage of time? there was a hundred year gap between John of
Altarnun and John of Dock, but Landulph was an interesting link.

The long journey to Truro Record Office was rewarded by the archivists making
available to me the registers deposited only a few weeks earlier by the incumbent of
Landulph’s historic church. It was a few hours work to list more than a score of
baptisms and marriages between 1720 and 1790, and the first entry was John Px’s
second marriage to Mary Pascow of Landulph. By his first wife Anne I later found he
had a son William baptised in 1715, and there was no doubt that all the thirteen
children registered were baptised to the ‘John of Altarnoun’ who had married at
Stoke. Five of his sons lived to marry and have children — William, Pascow (1727),
John (1730), Job (1732) and Thomas (1735). These five had nineteen children
between them, of whom five sons again married and had more than twenty
offspring. It was a considerable population explosion in Landulph, and one
descendant of this family still lived there in 1980.
John, baptised in 1730, was buried a pauper on 3 June 1790. His son John I later discovered was married in St Mabyn, near Bodmin, on 28 June 1778, but his six children were baptised in Landulph and subsequently listed in the register of apprentices. The archivist at Truro put me greatly in his debt by sending me a list of sixteen young Px who had been indentured between 1773 and 1811; they provide evidence of the hard times which had come to this once prosperous medieval port on the Tamar.

Elizabeth was baptised on 18 April 1789 'Daughter of John Prideaux (pauper) and Mary his wife', and was registered on 4 February 1790 to John Willow with no age given (as it was for all the other indentures). So Elizabeth's father and grandfather were both paupers by 1790. I found no trace of her parents' burial in Landulph or elsewhere. But my eye was drawn to her brother's baptismal entry on 18 April 1779, and to the notable double entry in the register of apprentices. For 1 June 1786 I read 'John Px, 9 yrs, to Thomas Snell of Wayton (a hamlet near Landulph), two copies, one endorsed with assignment of indentures to Benjamin Snell of Plymouth Dock, Innkeeper, 13 November 1787'. For 13 April 1792 I found 'John Px 13 years to Benjamin Snell Yeo'. Clearly John was seven, not nine years old, in 1786 and the error was corrected in 1792 on his thirteenth birthday. The link with Plymouth Dock made it an attractive hypothesis that the innkeeper's apprentice became the sawyer who was my great-great-grandfather. His true age at burial would be forty-five, not forty-eight, but such discrepancies are common. In order to clinch this connection I needed to find his marriage to Maria, which was not in Stoke, or Stonehouse, or Plymouth, or Landulph, or any of the contiguous parishes. I began to wonder whether they had been married.

When I searched the parishes of Altarnun, St Clether and Lanteglos-by-Camelford to the south and west of Launceston there were by the early eighteenth century nine conjugal family units living within a few miles of each other, and they were descended from four families of the same parishes headed by Joshua and Nicholas in Altarnun, Jonathan in St Clether, and William in Camelford. The Altarnun registers are badly damaged, missing or illegible until about 1697, but the bishop's transcripts reveal a few baptisms. Nicholas, who had married in Launceston in 1680, had children baptised from 1681, and Joshua from 1691, but none were named John. In St Clether Jonathan had married twice, in 1645 and 1655, and had died before 1683. His son John was baptised in 1658 but did not marry in St Clether until 1718, and made a second marriage in 1723. William was buried in Camelford in 1705 but was not born there according to the parish records which began in 1558. He was mayor in 1689 and 1695, an office also filled by his son James in 1716.

In the ancient church of Altarnun there is an altar rail carved along its length with the following inscription: JOHN RUDDLE MINISTER OF LAUNCESTON PREB OF EXON AND VICAR OF THE PARISH ANNO 1684 WILLIAM PRIDEAUX AND SAMPSON COWL CHURCHWARDENS. The transcripts for Altarnun show a William baptised in 1683 to William and Margaret Px. The father was presumably the churchwarden, but whose son was he? He was not buried in Altarnun but Margaret was, on 28 February 1716. He was not baptised in Camelford, but neither
was the mayor. The best hypothesis seemed to be that the churchwarden was the mayor's son. As to the mayor's parentage I had only one clue — a William Px was buried in St Clether on 29 January 1657. Was he the ancestor of all the nine families established in this area sixty or seventy years later? If he was, from whom was he descended?

I had not got this far with my enquiries without becoming aware of the substantial collections of information already made by both amateur and professional genealogists of the Px family. I had also learned to use the computer file index [CF1] of the Church of Latter Day Saints, available on microfiche at the Bodleian Library and many record offices. This index has been compiled mainly from parish registers, but not all English parishes have yet been searched, and the Saints do not record burials. This vast record of marriages and christenings, filed under counties and surnames, is an invaluable source of clues and signposts even when it is less than definitive. It directs one to places where fuller details can be found, and used in conjunction with Hugh Peskett's *Guide to the Registers of Devon and Cornwall*, the microfiche indicates what is available at the relevant record office, in the Genealogical Society [GS], the Devon and Cornwall Record Society [DCRS], Boyd's Marriage Index and other sources. The GS and DCRS have some printed, and occasionally indexed, copies of parish registers. The DCRS collection is conveniently housed next door to the Devon RO at Exeter, and is in the same west country studies library as the Computer File Index for both Devon and Cornwall. There are now valuable collections of indexed materials held by the Devon Family History Society, and of course county archivists hold many records as relevant to a search as the parish registers; in my case the Protestation Returns of 1641-2, seventeenth-century wills and the registers of apprentices all proved particularly important.

In searching for the antecedents of the St Clether, Camelford and Altarnun families I naturally turned to the two main works on the Px pedigree which were published about a hundred years ago. A massive research into the parochial and family history of the area between Bodmin and Camelford was undertaken by Sir John Maclean as part of which he investigated the claims of the seventeenth-century landed gentry to have pedigree stretching back to the Norman invasion. A documented reference for 1234 plausibly links the Pridias or Prideaux line with an iron age hill fort in the parish of Luxulyan, but the earlier pedigree is sketchy and Maclean comments dryly that it 'has been admitted by the Heralds, and in the absence of other evidence must be received'.

I became more interested than I should have thought possible ten years ago in the late medieval period in Devon and Cornwall, but here I am mainly concerned with lines of descent from about 1400. These occupy fifteen pages of genealogical tables, with a supplement in addition, for what may conveniently be called the Prideaux clan as described by Maclean. To these must be added the twelve pages of tables which resulted from research by Dr T Engledue P Prideaux during the sixteen years after Maclean's work was published. More than two thousand individuals are shown on these two pedigrees. They are for the most part the same people as make up the more than twelve hundred entries of the CFI, but this cannot be so for
periods and places where parish registers have not survived or had not been searched when these records were made. It was evident that Maclean had not followed the descent of all the younger sons of younger sons in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and I began to feel intimidated by the scale of my search.

I realised at this point that I had no idea of the rate at which the Pxi clan had increased across the centuries, and little idea of how they had moved across the landscape. How many were they in 1500, in 1600, in 1800 — for that matter, what were their numbers in 1980? If I could make some estimate, however rough, of their present numbers, would that enable me to make ‘back projections’ to the probable size of the clan in past centuries? On the assumption that it had expanded in step with the rest of the population, could I gauge what would be involved in selecting the pattern of pieces that interested me most from a large jig-saw puzzle only half of which had been assembled?

The ratio of telephone subscribers to total population in the United Kingdom (allowing for various commercial and technical factors) was one to three or four. A few hours counting subscribers in the directories at a Crown Post Office gave me a total of 240 named Prideaux. This suggested that by 1980 the clan numbered between 700 and 1000. I knew there had been considerable migration in the last 150 years, so a friend counted about thirty entries for me in the Australian and New Zealand directories. A less systematic look into those of Canada, South Africa and the USA found fewer than twenty. Ignoring the question of ratios in other countries, I guessed that the world-wide Pxi population was not more than 1200, and that calculations based on the round figure of a 1000 might not be subject to an error of more than 20 per cent. I knew that the life expectations of the gentry were, until fairly recently, very different from those of farm workers or Cornish miners, but I reckoned that for my purpose variations in net increase due to social structures or environmental factors could be ignored.

The count of telephone subscribers pointed strongly to the West Country origin of the clan. Even in 1980 there were eighty-nine Pxi listed in the directories for Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Bristol and Bournemouth, as against eighty for London and the Home Counties. Of the remainder fifteen were in Leeds, six in Merseyside and Manchester, and four in Scotland. Fewer families had in the last two hundred years migrated to the Midlands or the North than had settled overseas. The movement to London was mainly after 1820. The capital had recorded the presence of the gentry from time to time, mainly on business, but with rare exceptions they had not brought up their families there. I found eleven baptisms in four families in London and Middlesex between 1700 and 1750, and two of these families may have settled in Holburn. Doubtless there were a few more, for I have not made an exhaustive search of London parishes.

Wrigley and Schofield’s *The Population History of England 1541 to 1871* was not published until the year following my first essays in ‘back projection’, but in Table 1 below their figures are given.’ My calculations are based on a 1980 population assumed to be 45 million for England and a thousand for Prideaux, so that we have now nearly five times the number of people in this country that we had in 1805, and
fifteen times as many as we had in 1550. The Px figures are scaled down pro rata. I suspected that the gentry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries lived longer and had more children, more of whom survived to marry, than the average Englishman of the period, in which case my estimate for 1550 would prove too high. Gentry casualties during the Civil War might affect the rate of increase in the opposite direction.

Table 1. Population figures estimated for England and Prideaux

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1550</th>
<th>1700</th>
<th>1790</th>
<th>1805</th>
<th>1850</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2,969,289</td>
<td>5,026,877</td>
<td>7,648,209</td>
<td>9,116,801</td>
<td>16,515,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prideaux</td>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>100-120</td>
<td>150-180</td>
<td>200-250</td>
<td>300-400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While searching for my great-grandfather’s family at St. Catherine’s House I listed all Px deaths for the period 1838-57 and found they totalled 246. An average number of deaths of 12.3 a year over this period, when the expectation of life for many poorer people was not better than forty, suggested to me that the clan population was below 500 at the mid-century. I found it encouraging to translate these crude estimates into family groups on the simplistic assumption that the typical unit was two parents and three or four children. I had only to identify some fifty collateral family units in 1805, only a dozen in 1550, perhaps thirty in 1790.

The volumes of Boyd’s Marriages Index gave me further encouragement not to exaggerate the scale of my search. It is far from comprehensive, does not indicate second or third marriages by widows and widowers, but it lists spouses by county, year and parish, reproducing abbreviations and spelling variations from the registers. The crude totals for Devon and Cornwall were not widely inconsistent with my estimates. They are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Prideaux marriages listed in Boyd’s Marriages Index

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1538-1600</th>
<th>1601-50</th>
<th>1651-1700</th>
<th>1701-50</th>
<th>1751-1800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The years of these marriages I entered against the villages or towns where they were recorded, using the maps in a 1967 AA Book of the Road.
During three hundred years the Px parishes were scattered over a hundred miles from Penzance to Colyton on the Dorset border. People had moved from near Modbury in the South Hams to Holsworthy and Barnstaple in north Devon. I had to familiarise myself with more than a hundred localities and the network of minor roads connecting them, and the AA book proved a very convenient working document in my car and an invaluable aide-memoire at my desk. I selected first the areas with the most marriages in Boyd and plotted them on skeleton grids; the vertical axis measured time in decades and the horizontal axis showed the east-west position of the parish, ignoring latitude. By increasing the scale of my grid as I collected more information I was able to add baptism and burial dates and names. This made it easy to notice continuities of baptismal name, especially the more distinctive family names of Humphry, Nicholas, Stephen and Jonathan. The commoner names of John, William, Mary and Joan proved nearly as significant in combination.

I kept notebooks with collections of names by parish and by first name, in two separate systems. The CFI set me on the right road for the latter by its listing of baptismal names in date order with the parish as the random factor. The cross-
referencing made possible by these two lists was of critical importance when tracing families which married outside their parishes and then settled in a new village either permanently or for a time. Camborne registers have about 150 entries between 1653 and 1837, and there is increasing movement and settlement elsewhere, but usually not far before 1780. For other cross-referencing I relied mainly on memory or routine checking; as I became more involved in aspects of the search for connections it was easy to recall that a name had appeared in protestation returns, apprenticeships or wills, and material copied from these sources I kept under those headings but separately indexed. In general I kept Devon records apart from Cornish ones, for the Tamar is more than a geographical barrier. There was much movement across it during the Civil War and I had to follow the fortunes of war as they affected the family. The bishop of Worcester on one side and Cromwell’s attorney general on the other illustrated the severe conflicts of loyalty felt by the clan, and the contrast between the penalties imposed on the losers and the rewards enjoyed by victorious parliamentarians. One episcopalian minister was banished from Oxford to Newcastle upon Tyne where his son did well in trade and raised a large family. Several branches faded from the pedigrees, and for me the question was: had their lines died out in battle or exile, or had they merely descended the social scale to a point where no one was interested in recording their survival?

After searching the registers of thirty-six Cornish and thirty Devon parishes and relating my findings to the material from other sources, it was possible to give a coherent account of the clan’s expansion without internal inconsistencies or conflicts of evidence, and with very few items of information unaccounted for. The original line at Luxulyan had died out in 1388 on the pedigree, and neither in that record or elsewhere is there any evidence of the Truro branch, briefly prosperous, having descendants who survived beyond 1400. Survival rates for the sons of nobles and gentry in the century following 1348 have been calculated as less than one per cent. Geoffry, who married the heiress of Orcharton before 1224, did well to found a line on the banks of the river Erme in the rich farming land of south Devon, for his great grandson Roger de Pridias, knight of the shire in 1321, had two sons who were established in adjoining manors, and in the early 1400s there are two knights, Sir John of Orcharton and Sir John of Adeston, whose heirs provide well documented support for claims that all subsequent persons bearing their name can be traced to them. The Orcharton manor was sold before 1600 and descendants of that branch disappear from the pedigree.

Sir John of Adeston had two grandsons who seated themselves in new manors acquired by marriage, one at Luson in Ermington close to Modbury and the other at Theuborough near Holsworthy in north Devon. The houses of Luson and Theuborough proved prolific. Between 1548 and 1605 the baptisms of seventy-eight children have been recorded, fifty-six of them from these two houses. By the end of Elizabeth I’s reign thirteen distinct families can be identified. Because the record of burials is incomplete, for children especially, one can only guess that in no year before 1600 were there more than eighty people living who belonged to those families, taking parents and children together. By the end of the seventeenth century the thirteen families have become twenty-six, with children who together are unlikely to have numbered more than 150 in any year. By 1810 there were fifty-one
families distinctly in view. I cannot be sure that I have a full count in any one year, but the Px population was by then about 250.

Of the thirteen Elizabeth families seven, lived in south Devon, and five of these were well researched a hundred years ago. The Luson line had by 1820 produced twelve families, all but one prosperous and living in Plymouth or the South Hams. The two neglected lines were found registered as Predis and Preddis at St Andrew’s, Plymouth, with twenty-two baptisms between 1587 and 1605, a tribute to the town’s prosperity at that time. They were clearly grandchildren of Orcharton, for they moved back to the parishes between Modbury and Plymouth during the reign of James I. Their descendants lived there as yeomen and husbandmen until the second half of the eighteenth century. I have traced only one into the nineteenth, and he is listed in the Dock section of the 1812 Plymouth Directory as William Prideaux, Tailor, of George Street.

Of the six families in north Devon two were by 1600 settled in Braunton and Barnstaple; their descendants did not seem to have been researched, but they moved no further than Landkey and Swimbridge until about 1800, when one family moved to London and settled in Marylebone. Of the other four two were the children and two the grandchildren of Humphry of Theuborough. ¹⁰ His third son’s eldest son built Prideaux Place at Padstow, a house occupied by the family since that date. The senior line at Theuborough came to an end in 1710 leaving many younger sons of the Civil War period ‘hanging loose’ on the pedigree of that branch. Humphry’s second son was William of Trevose in the parish of St Merryn, who married the niece of the last prior of Bodmin and acquired some valuable leases which his family did not retain beyond the royalist defeat in 1645, though they may have lost them earlier. He was buried in Padstow, and in a will of 1564 bequeathed ‘two parts of the manor of Trewsosell and Trebatheke and part of the tythings of Padstow’ to his wife and eldest son John, whose son John is shown in a will of 1633 as ‘Gent’ of Cubert, a village twelve miles south-west of Padstow. With some difficulty I traced his descent to eight families settled by 1780 in or near Camborne. Their occupation or status are not recorded, but their children were miners, carpenters and one farmer.

William of Trevose’s second son, Richard, settled at St Issey, the parish adjoining Padstow. His will of 1625 has an inventory which supports the description ‘Gent’ — ‘three bedsteads and a trundlebed, three feathers beds, six pillowes of feathers, four chests and a press cupboard’, etc. His son, by his first marriage, had three sons, all baptised in St Issey, of whom the third, named William after his father and great-grandfather, looked more likely than the others to provide me with a line of descent. After much testing of alternative hypotheses I was able to fit the various fragments of information together. William married a second time, and his wife Emlyn placed me in her debt by leaving a long and explicit will in which she named all the children of her husband’s first and second marriages. As her husband had signed the Protestation Returns at St Clether in 1641 and she was buried there on 15 February 1668, describing herself in a will of 1664 as ‘of the parish of Altennon’, she made all the essential connections. Her son Jonathan had signed the Protestation Returns in Warbstow but returned to St Clether to marry. Her other sons Joshua,
Nicholas and Thomas had finally settled in Altarnun. Her step-son William, baptised on 19 October 1628 in St Issey, had settled in Camelford by 1679, for he signed the Parliamentary Indentures on that date and became the mayor in 1689, and again in 1695, as noted earlier.

The churchwarden of Altarnun was baptised on 11 October 1658 in St Breward to William Pณ, gent, then the agent and steward of Sir William Godolphin. He outlived his son who, on 15 September 1691, made a will ‘being weake of body but of perfect memory’, gave twenty shillings to the poor of Altarnun and five shillings to the poor of St Clether, and then bequeathed all his ‘messuages, lands and tenements in Trenarrot within the parish of Altarnon to John Prediaux my son, his heirs and assigns for ever’; other lands and tenements were left to his son William, with a life interest to ‘Margarett my wife’; and there were bequests of £150 to his daughter Susanna and £100 each to his daughters Margaret and Embling. The inventory totalled £656, of which £450 was ‘debts and specialities’, followed by ‘six oxen, eight cows, seven steers, six horses, forty-six sheep, twelve pigs . . . beds and bed clowth, crocks, bras & puter, wheels and ploughshares.’

John of Altarnun married Ann James of Landulph and settled there. He named his first child Margaret and another girl Susanna, and of course two of his sons were John and William. Evidently he did not return to the farm in Trenarrot. Did he find some profitable business with the new dockyard down river from Landulph, perhaps with the Victualling Office? Would he have been surprised to forsee that his son John would be buried a pauper? Or that his great-grandson would be a Sawyer at Plymouth Dock? In Quethiock — not a CFI parish — I found that John Prideaux of Stoke Damerel married Maria Hurdle, spinster. The Snell family to whom this John was apprenticed had property in Quethiock and Landulph, and probably they employed him in both places before he was transferred to the innkeeper at Dock. To that obscure village he returned to make Maria his wife on 9 July 1806. Their children, born in Stoke Damerel, were John, William, Susanna and Catherine. My line of descent from Geoffrey of Orcharton was fully documented.

It has only been possible to present a small part of the detailed evidence which led me to select one strand from a tangle of hypotheses as I explored a range of sources. The family fortunes had to be seen in their economic, political and social context which often provided the key to understanding what had happened to them. I am not a historical demographer, but even a genealogist, as soon as he looks beyond his lines of descent, is involved in population studies and social structure, longevity as it affects inheritance, frequency of remarriage and numbers of surviving children, and all the many issues discussed in Peter Laslett’s *The World We Have Lost.*

**NOTES**

5. The hill fort is marked as an antiquity on OS 186.0656. 'Prideaux' and 'Little Prideaux' name the house and farm on the two hills and the Hill themselves. The derivation 'near the waters' from the French is geographically plausible but scholars are doubtful.

6. T. E. P. Prideaux, Pedigree of the family of Prideaux of Luson in Ermington, Devon, 1889. A copy is held at the library of the Society of Friends, Friends House, Euston Road, NW 1.


8. More than a score of alternative spellings are met in parish registers, pedigrees, wills and other records, all in contexts indicating that the same family is being followed from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. Variations include: Predeaux, Predaux, Prediaux, Predioux, Predyaux, Predoeche, Prediox, Predix, Predox, Predoix, Predyke, Predyx, Predys, Predis, Preddis, Predise, Predies, Predice, Preddes, Preddice. The traditional pronunciation can still be heard in Cornwall and Plymouth, and may be indicated by 'Predix' with a short 'e'.

9. M. Coate, Cornwall in the Great Civil War and Interregnum, 1933. Out of print, but still the definitive social and political work. A number of well indexed references illustrate the family's active involvement on both sides of the struggle.

10. A. L. Rowse, Tudor Cornwall, Portrait of a Society, 1941 and 1957. In this classic study of Cornwall from 1485 to 1603 there are numerous Px references, well indexed; see especially pp. 174-31 for a detailed account of Nicholas Px's activities. As Humphrey's brother and chief agent of the last prior of Bodmin at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries he disposed of convent leases to the great and permanent advantage of the family, including his nephew William of Trevoose.