



Knight Compositions

Chippenham

By 1628 Charles I was strapped for cash. At that time in theory every man with income of more than 40 pound per annum was supposed to present himself at the coronation to be knighted, but even then, as now inflation had greatly eroded the value of 40 pound.

Charles I did not want to create more knights. There were many who were technically eligible for knighthood but becoming a knight also imposed obligations on those knighted, in the nature of additional monetary obligations to the Crown for taxes, levies, subsidies etc. It did not suit everyone to be knighted.

Those who did not appear to be knighted could technically be summoned and fined for failing to appear.

Charles I did just that.

By such means he raised 170,000 pound - the equivalent of 3 Parliamentary subsidies.

Knighthood fines were "legal" as was his "ship money "

One way for avoiding the fine was to pay money to the Crown to avoid becoming a knight.

The payment was a composition.

Surname	Given Names	Title	Abode	£	s.	d.
Bayliffe	Henry	Esquire	Chippenham	25	0	0
Hawkins	Thomas		Chippenham	10	0	0