**THE NORTON FAMILY**

**The Norvilles Become the Nortons**

After winning power in 1066, the first thing William the Conquerer did was to consolidate his power, but he allowed some earls, such as Edwin of Mercia and Morcar of Northumbria, to keep their lands and their titles.

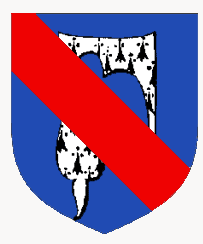
In 1068, the earls, Edwin and Morcar, led a rebellion against William – the first *'Rising of the North'.* William’s reaction was swift and decisive; he moved an army north and disbanded the rebels and lay waste their land. He then established Norman rulers throughout and built many castles to tighten his grip on the area.

**Le Seigneur de Norville[[1]](#footnote-1)** came to England with William and was his constable. He was one of the nobles sent by William to put down the uprising in the North of England and was subsequently given land there. The sixth generation descended from the Seigneur de Norville through the direct male line assumed the English form of the name, **Nortown** or **Norton**. This Seigneur de Norville or Norton married a daughter of Sir John Hadscoke and had a son.

**The Norton Inheritance**

The last inheriting Norton was Margaret Norton (their being no male heirs) and she married Roger Conyers[[2]](#footnote-2) in about 1300. Roger, or their son Adam, assimilated the Norton name and the family name was thus established as **Norton-Conyers**, although the 'Conyers' appellation was variously dropped by some of the later generations.

Norton Conyers, near Ripon in East Yorkshire[[3]](#footnote-3), was the main family home of the Norton family from the time of the Normans until the Reign of Queen Elizabeth l. The family aggregated a lot of land and great wealth over this period. Their coat of arms is given below and appears to be an adaptation of the Conyers coat of Arms.

Conyers arms [](http://www.nortonfamily.net/arms.htm#york)Norton arms

The main feature of the Conyers arms was a hanging piece of fabric or 'maunch'[[4]](#footnote-4). It appears that after Robert Conyers married Margaret Norton a red diagonal band or 'bend'[[5]](#footnote-5) was added.

Richard Norton, son of the aforementioned Adam, was appointed the Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas of England in June 1413 by Henry V. Adam's grandson, Sir John Norton was made a Knight of the Bath By Henry Vll, and perhaps erected the present mansion at Norton Conyers in the reign of Henry Vll.

Five generations after Adam Norton, in direct line, was Sir John Norton-Conyers who was born about 1442 at Norton Conyers[[6]](#footnote-6), and most reports say that he died in 1520. He married Margaret Ward who was born about 1459 at Givendale and she is also said to have died in 1520. Their children were Margaret, **John**, Henry, Ann and Jane.

**Two Nortons of Consequence**

The Nortons or Norton Conyers were a noble, land-owing family in Yorkshire for several centuries. Whilst their principal home was at Norton Conyers, they appear to have held several other manors in North and East Yorkshire and Lincolnshire such as the ones at Hartforth and Gilling.

They were very well connected with other noble families of Northern England, particularly the Percys and Nevilles (which were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland), and the Markenfields. They were especially bound to them by their common adherence to the old catholic faith and support for Mary Queen of Scots in the 16th century. This faith, however, ultimately led to their downfall and the two last inheriters of the Norton legacy were John Norton and his illustrious son, Sir Richard Norton. The Norton connection with Rylstone, which came through marriage, lasted for only two generations and started and ended with John and Richard. Their family and life histories - so far as we can discern them - are given below and then their lordship of Rylstone and how the family lands at both Rylstone and Norton Conyers were lost are described.

**John Norton Esquire**

John Norton (Conyers) was born at Norton Conyers in about 1475 and his death is given as 16 January 1556 or 1557.

He married Ann Radcliffe (born about 1478) in the January of either 1492 or 1493 at Norton Conyers. Ann was the daughter and sole heiress of Sir William Radcliffe[[7]](#footnote-7) and his wife Agnes Tempest. Sir William was the eldest son and heir of Miles Radcliffe of Threshfield, who had married Isabel de Rillestone, daughter and heiress of John de Rillestone in about 1434. Thus, Isabel had inherited the Rylstone manorial estate from her father and bequeathed it through her own grand-daughter Ann to the Norton family.

John and Ann had six sons and three daughters (Whitaker, 1878;various family websites) as follows:

* **Richard** (later Sir Richard Norton - see below) was probably born in 1494 (rather than the often cited 1502). He married Susan Neville and, much later, Philippa Trappes. He died in either 1585 or 1588[[8]](#footnote-8).
* **Thomas** was born about 1496 and married Elizabeth Ashe of Skimmington and Ashe. He was actively involved with his elder brother in the Uprising of the North and was executed in May 1570.
* **William** was born in 1498 and died in March 1592.
* **Christopher** was born between 1500 and 1505, with his date of death unknown.
* **Marmaduke** was born about 1502 and his date of death is unknown.
* **John** was born about 1504. He was said not to have had issue and his date of death is unknown. One report says that he died in Spain or, more likely, in the Spanish Netherlands.
* **Isobel** was born about 1506 and is said to have married someone with the surname of Battie of Hewick. Her date of death is unknown, but it is said to have been in Spain or the Spanish Netherlands.
* **Anne** was born about 1508. Most reports[[9]](#footnote-9) say that she married Robert Plympton (aka. Plompton) in 1538 and then Robert Morton in about 1541. She died about 1546.
* **Margaret** was born between 1504 and 1510. She married Sir Thomas Markenfield in about 1533 and died 3 March 1609.

Hicks (2004-2016) states that John was treasurer to the household of Henry Percy, fifth Earl of Northumberland, who was based at Topcliffe Castle, and that some of his children (e.g. Richard his eldest son) were brought up there. There is also evidence that he acquired considerable property during his lifetime, often through connections with other family members, marriages and inheritances.

Given that he held an important position with the Percy's, and that his main family seat was at Norton Conyers, it is not clear how much time he actually spent at Rylstone. It is evident, however, and as a later section will describe, that he and his son Richard were very active in Rylstone over a number of decades.

**Sir Richard Norton**

John and Ann's eldest son Richard, inherited the family estates, including the Rylstone manor and lands, from his father, although this did not happen until he was quite old. He led a long and illustrious life, became Sir Richard Norton (Conyers), and was often known as 'Old Norton' in his later years when he sported a distinctive grey beard. Richard is said to have been born at Norton Conyers Hall and to have been partly brought up at the Earl of Northumberland's estate at Topcliffe. He is also said to have lived until 1585 when he was 91. The photograph below shows a painting of Sir Richard in his later years, with the Norton coat of arms clearly visible. The painting is hung at Markenfield Hall, and the Markenfields during Tudor times were close friends of, and inter-married with, the Nortons.

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Richard was married twice and firstly to Susan Neville, fifth daughter of Lord Richard Latimer. Susan, sometimes also recorded as 'Susana', was born on 28 April 1501 and died about 1560, although some reports - almost certainly wrong - give her date of death as being much earlier. Their marriage is commonly reported as having taken place in 1525, but it must have been rather earlier than this - maybe around 1520 - since their many children start to be born from this year onwards.

Richard was said to have married his second wife, Philippa Trappes, in or before 1563. She was the daughter of Robert Trappes and the rich widow of Sir George Gifford of Buckinghamshire. In his biography of Richard, Hicks (2004-2016) says that Richard, because of his large family and many commitments, was frequently in debt and his new wife brought much-needed funds into the Norton family at this time.

Richard is usually said to have had 18 children. There are question marks about many of the dates of their births and deaths, with some authors clearly mixing up family members of the same name, but from different generations. These mistakes are then perpetuated through other records. One or two articles say that Richard could have had 20 children and maybe there were children who did not survive for long, as was often the case in Tudor times. There are, however, reports of a further daughter existing who was named Alice. (See Brown, 2013, pp. 145 and 182).

Then there is, of course, the apocryphal Emily Norton of Wordsworth's famous poem, *'The White Doe of Rylstone'*. There are no compelling records for Emily, but nevertheless she is said by Walbrun (1838) to have been the last daughter of Richard Norton and he credits Emily with having embroidered the banner which her father is said to have carried into the Uprising. Walbrun also states that, *'Emily the survivor of this ill-fated race, lingered long in the solitude of her paternal abode at Rylstone in Craven'*. The legend says that she is buried with her mother in Rylstone churchyard and that after her death, a white doe made a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone to Bolton Abbey church.

The birth order of the sons of Richard and Susan Norton, if not their exact birth dates, is relatively well documented. The lives of those children for whom reasonable records are available[[10]](#footnote-10) are outlined below.

* **Francis** (Esq.), the eldest son, was born about 1520 and married in 1542 to Albreda Wimbish (aka. Audrey Wymbush), an heiress, with whom he had three sons, but none survived for very long. Some records also state that he had a second wife or mistress. His family home was at Balderslie, Lincolnshire, but he is also frequently cited as being at Norton Conyers and occasionally also Rylstone.

Francis took part in the Uprising of the North, although some reports say that he tried to dissuade his father from participating in it and was a reluctant participant himself (see mentions made in poem below).

It was also said that afterwards he tried, but did not wholly succeed, in getting a pardon from Queen Elizabeth and even renounced the catholic faith. There is one report (Wright, 1838) that he even succeeded in saving some of the family estates after the Uprising when most of the Norton lands were confiscated by the crown. Most authors agree that he was a fugitive with his father in Spanish Flanders and died in about 1576 in exile.

* **John**, the second son, was born sometime in or after about 1521 at Norton Conyers. He was married in 1555 to Jane Morton and received a jointure[[11]](#footnote-11) from his father at this time. He then married Margaret Renshaw (aka. Readshaw). and was said to reside at Ripon and Lazenby, Lincolnshire. He did not take part in the Uprising, or at least escaped punishment, and died in 1585. There was no surviving male issue.
* **Edmund** was born about 1534 and was said to reside at Clowbeck in North Yorkshire. He also received a jointure from his father when he married Cecily Boyton sometime between about 1553 and 1555. He did not take part in the Uprising. Because of the lack of male heirs from his two elder brothers, Edmund's line led to the Lords of Grantley, with his descendant, Fletcher Norton, being the first Earl of Grantley and speaker of the House of Commons. (See photograph at end of this article).

From various of the old texts referenced, it appears that Edmund was especially active in land management and sought to protect whatever he could of the Norton estates after the Crown confiscated much of their lands. Edmund died in about 1610, but one report gives the date as being 27 February 1613.

* **William** the fourth son was probably born sometime between 1534 and 1539, and married Anne Boynton, second daughter of Matthew Boynton in about 1554/5. His home was recorded as being at Hartforth in Yorkshire, which was an estate of the Norton family. He took part in the Uprising, was said to have been arraigned in 1570 and pardoned. He died in about 1594.
* **George** the probable fifth son[[12]](#footnote-12) was born about 1539 and was married in 1559 when he received a jointure from his father. He took part in the Uprising, but was not executed and was a fugitive with his father in Spanish Flanders. He was still living in 1591.
* **Thomas** the probable sixth son's date of birth is not known with certainty (bizarrely it is often given as being about 1557, which must be wrong). He died without issue and was not implicated in the Uprising.
* **Christopher**, an ardent catholic, was a major activist with his father in the Uprising of the North. He secured a position in the guard of Lord Scrope at Bolton, where Mary Queen of Scots was being held and planned her rescue. Although that scheme came to nothing, he had communications with Mary which probably guided the rebels later in the year. He was seen by a spy (Captain Shirley) at Raby in December, and is described by Sir Ralph Sadler as *‘one of the principal workers’* in the rebellion. When the rising failed he was taken prisoner at Carlisle in December 1569, and brought to London. Here, he was convicted and executed with his uncle Thomas in May 1570 at Tyburn.
* **Marmaduke** firstly married Elizabeth Killinghall and then Frances Hedworth. He took part in the Uprising, was caught and tried, installed in the Tower of London until 1572, and then pardoned. He died in 1594 at Stranton, near Durham.
* **Sampson**, the ninth son is thought to have been born about 1545 and to have married Bridget, daughter of Sir Ralph Bulmer in 1570. He received a jointure from his father upon his marriage. He was a fugitive with his father and died before 17 Nov. 1574.
* **Richard**, died without issue in 1564.
* **Henry**, also died without issue in 1564, perhaps of the same cause as his brother.

All Richard's daughters were said to have married well, and it is evident that they married into other leading catholic families of the North (see e.g. Sharp, 1840, pp. 287 and 288; Hicks, 2004-16). It is very unclear, however, where each fits in terms of birth order within their male and female siblings. They were:

* **Katherine** (also cited as Catherine) was born between 1522 and 1525 and died before the end of April 1596. She married Francis Bulmer of Tursdale in about 1542 (see Bulmer, 2016).
* **Mary** was possibly born around 1526 and was married, firstly, to one of Richard's wards, John Green of Newby who, with his brother, was imprisoned after the Uprising in Durham jail. After his death, she married John Lambourne.
* **Elizabeth** was said to be born about 1527/28 and was married to another ward of Richard's called Henry Johnson, who was son and heir of Sir Thomas Johnson of Walton, York. Henry was strongly implicated in the Uprising, was attainted for his involvement and narrowly escaped execution (Sharp, 1840, p.288). Elizabeth is reported to have been at Richard's side in Flanders and when he died. An Elizabeth Johnson was recorded as being his, or an, executor.
* **Clare** (aka Claire or Clara) was born about 1528 and married Richard Goodrick[[13]](#footnote-13) (aka. Goodrich; Goodricke) of Ribstone Manor in about 1548. He was High Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1579 and his photograph is given at the end of this paper. Clare was a widow in 1581 and her death is usually given as being in either 1596 or 1598.
* **Jane** married Richard Gascoigne of Sedbury in about 1548 since there is a record of a pre-marriage settlement dated 1 April 1548 (Brown, 2013[[14]](#footnote-14)). The Gascoignes were catholic baronets. Jane was a widow by 1604/05, although her own date of death is unknown.
* **Joan** married Gerard Salvin of Croxdale, County Durham, the Croxdales being another staunchly Catholic and landed family of the North (see p. 535 Burke, 1823) and Gerard Salvin is said to have been imprisoned in 1569 (Sharp, 1840).
* **Ann(e)** married Robert Bernard (aka. Byrnand) Esq. possibly of Knofrist or Knaresborough.

Richard Norton was a very active nobleman who remained faithful to the Catholic religion, even though the Church of England was the official state religion and Catholics were banned and persecuted. He took part in the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536-7 but was pardoned by Henry Vlll. He subsequently held several important state positions. In 1545 and in 1556 he was one of the Council of the North and in 1555 and 1557 he was Governor of Norham Castle, but apparently lost these offices on the accession of Elizabeth. He was High Sheriff of Yorkshire from 1568–69.

In 1569, Richard was a ring-leader of the Rising of the North along with the Lords of Westmorland and Northumberland. In fact he was known as the *'Patriach of the Rebellion'* and is described at this time as *‘an old gentleman with a reverend grey beard'*. The rebellion against Queen Elizabeth also involved many family members, retainers and friends, but especially Richard's brother Thomas and seventh son Christopher, who was quite young at the time (e.g. Bastow, S.L.; Clifford, 1809; Hicks, 2004-16); Percy, T.; Sharp, 1840; Wright, 1838). The aim of this insurgency was to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion and to release Mary Queen of Scots from prison and possibly to make her Queen of England.

Verses from an unattributed ballad cited in Thomas Percy's (1765) *'Reliques of Ancient Poetry'* set out the involvement of Richard and his sons in the Uprising. The relevant verses start with his son Christopher arriving from the Earl of Northumberland with a message for his father and end with Richard berating his eldest son Francis for his initial reluctance to join the insurgency.

*He (Richard) sayd, "Come thither, Christopher Norton,*

*A gallant youth thou seemes to bee;*

*What does thou counsell me, my sonne,*

*Now that good erle's in jeopardy?" "*

*Father, my counselle's fair and free;*

*That erle he is a noble lord,*

*And whatsoever to him you bight,*

*I wold not have you breake your word."*

*"Gramercy, Christopher, my sonne,*

*Thy counsell well it liketh mee,*

*And if we speed and scape with life,*

*Well advanced shall thou bee.*

*Come you hither, my nine good sonnes,*

*Gallant men I trowe you bee:*

*How many of you, my children deare,*

*Will stand by that good erle and mee?"*

*Eight of them did answer make,*

*Eight of them spake hastilie,*

*"O father, till the daye we dye*

*We'll stand by that good erle and thee."*

*"Gramercy now, my children deare,*

*You showe yourselves right bold and brave*

*And whether soe'er live or dye,*

*A fathers blessing you shall have.*

*But what sayest thou, O Francis Norton*

*Thou art my eldest sonn and heir*

*Somewhat lyes brooding in thy breast*

*Whatever it bee, to mee declare.*

*Father, you are an aged man*

*Your head is white, your beard is grey*

*It were a shame at these your yeares*

*For you to ryes in such a fray.*

*Now fye upon the coward Francis*

*Thou never learned this of mee*

*When thou wert young and tender of age*

*Why did I make soe much of thee?*

*But father I will wend with you*

*Unarm'd and naked will I bee*

*And he that strikes against the crowne*

*Ever ill death may he dee.*

*Then rose that reverend genteman*

*And with him came a goodlye band*

*To join with the brave Erle Percy*

*and the flower o' Northumberland.*

As Hicks (2004-16) states in his biography of Richard:

*'The rising was disastrous for the Nortons, their friends, and tenants, many of whom were executed, dispossessed, and exiled... Richard Norton, his five sons Francis, George, Christopher, Marmaduke and Sampson, and his brother Thomas were attainted. Two sons surrendered at once, and soon four Nortons were in custody. Richard's brother Thomas and son Christopher were executed at Tyburn on 27 May 1570. William and Marmaduke were spared and eventually released.*

*Richard himself, Francis, George, and Sampson fled first to Scotland and onwards in 1572–6 to the Low Countries and France, where they were pensioned and whence Francis sought a pardon'.*

There is a poignant account given in a letter from Robert Constable to Sir Ralph Sadler (Clifford, 1809) of a meeting with Richard Norton in Scotland where he had fled after the rebellion. Richard sought information about his sons and wife, sought Constable's help in getting some money sent to him (since he had fled with nothing), and asked his advice on what to do and where to flee next if a pardon was not forthcoming (it wasn't).

Hicks provides further information about the later fate of Richard and his surviving sons:

*Sampson died by 1574 and Francis in 1576. Richard and George visited Rome, returning to Paris in 1577 with a recommendation for George from Gregory XIII to Don John of Austria, who passed him on to the Duke of Guise. Elizabeth Johnson, his daughter was in the Gatehouse prison in 1580 but was with Richard at his death.*

*Richard occurs at Brussels in 1577–8 and in France in 1581–4. He plotted endlessly and communicated with relatives, friends, and co-religionists at home, where they were feared and persecuted. George visited Scotland in 1581, Rheims in 1582, and Scotland again in 1584, whence he went as an English agent to Richard in the hope of earning a pardon. Despite reports to the contrary, it was not George who was the very old man captured and wounded by a caliver blow to the head by English soldiers in Flanders in April 1585; probably it was Richard himself, who died at sea on 9 April, en route perhaps for an English prison. Richard's will the same day bequeathed garments to George and Marmaduke, referred to a servant Leonard and to assets in Italy, France, and Flanders, and urged his widow to repay his debts. Elizabeth Johnson, his executor, applied from Edinburgh for a pardon, probably successfully'.*

Following the unsuccessful rebellion, the various Norton estates, then held by Sir Richard Norton, including Rylstone manor, were confiscated by the Crown and Rylstone was then given to the Norton's arch-enemies, the Cliffords (see next section). The Crown sold Norton Conyers to Sir Richard Musgrave and his family in 1624 who soon passed it on the Graham family who have held it, apart for 20 years, ever since. The current owner is Sir James Graham. See photograph of Norton Conyers Hall in the photograph section at the end of this article.

One of the confiscated Norton estates was Hartforth manor (in the parish of Gilling[[15]](#footnote-15)) and this was the home of William Norton. Interestingly, about the time of his second marriage it is said that Richard Norton settled Hartforth manor on his second wife Philippa. It is clear from other evidence, however, that she did not hold it for long and after the Uprising it was leased (presumably by the Crown) to a William Stockdale.

As a post-script to the ill-fate of the Nortons, (Sharp, 1840)) it is concluded that:

*'The family, though deeply implicated, did not totally perish, as the blood of old Norton is widely diffused through some of the best and worthiest houses of Yorkshire'.*

Indeed, there is much evidence from family trees of the considerable inter-marriage of the younger Nortons with other landed gentry in the area. There is also considerable mention made of their property dealings and movement of property between family members and in-laws. (See Baildon, undated, for one on-going property saga involved various Norton brothers, sisters, in-laws and children).

**The Nortons at Rylstone**

When John Norton became Lord of the Manor of 'Rillestone', he began the administration of the estate of something more than 400 acres. The rest of the Rylstone township was divided into 43 tenements.

As noted earlier, it is not known how much time the family actually spent at their Rylstone manor, but some people believe (Whitaker, 1878; Raistrick, 1967) that it was mainly in the summertime. It was evident, however, that in his lifetime, John Norton sought to improve and augment the Norton estates, including his Rylstone manor. There are various records of his buying and selling land, including land at Rylstone and Hetton (see Brown, 2013 p.52).

John Norton was said by some sources (see Whitaker and Raistrick ibid; Stoney, 1979) to have rebuilt the ancient manor-house, or hall, of the de Rillestones towards the end of the 15th century. As Mary Stoney writes:

*'The foundations of this hall are now, in part, covered by the 17th century farm and its out-buildings, together with the church and church-yard, all enclosed, but not a stone remains.*

*It was still standing in the 18th century, and had mullioned casements and pointed arches, square turrets, capacious fire-places and clustered chimneys. Near the hall was a pleasure ground with topiary works, fish ponds and an island in one of them, and mounds for archery butts. There was a little enclosed meadow-land near the hall, but greater part lay open in the town field, including the arable land'.*

St. Peters Church in Rylstone was probably a foundation of one of the earlier De Rillestones, but the side aisles with the tower are no older than the early part of King Henry the Eight's reign. They were probably the work of John Norton since, on the South aisle is a shield with the Norton arms, and one of the bells bears the cypher, 'J.N'. and the Norton motto *'God us aid'*. The South chantry belongs to Rylstone Hall. It is thought probable that John Norton maintained a priest at the Hall to serve the church and family.

The whole township was said to be ranged by about 130 red deer, the property of the Lord of the Manor, and John Norton built an enclosed deer park on Rylstone Fell above his manor house. The remains of the deer-park boundary are still evident today (see article on the Deer Park).

It was in John's lifetime that the dispute over the hunting of deer in the Rylstone lands began with the Cliffords of Skipton Castle, who were the Earls of Cumberland. This dispute became long and bitter, for the Cliffords envied the Nortons their land and hunting rights at Rylstone, and would have liked to add the manor to their Skipton fee. This led at one point to a court case and depositions taken by the President of the Council at York when Lord Clifford claimed the right to hunt deer within the Rylstone manor. John Norton, however, won the case and maintained his deer-hunting rights (Raistrick, 1967).

The disputes continued into Richard Norton's lordship of Rylstone and it was said that Richard built Norton Tower in the mid fifteenth century, partly as a summer lodge for recreational purposes and partly as a look-out tower from which to keep an eye out for the Cliffords.

The antagonism between the Nortons and Cliffords, however, was not just borne out of a local clash about deer-hunting rights, but also because the Nortons were strong adherents to the 'old' catholic faith, whilst the Cliffords were protestants and staunch supporters of Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth. Hicks (2004-16), in his biography of Richard Norton, states that:

*'In October 1536 John and Richard diverted the Pilgrimage of Grace into besieging Cumberland's castle of Skipton in Craven, from which Robert Aske called them to Doncaster and to the Pontefract Council. Neither was involved in the 1537 uprising, when John was a juror at the rebels' trials'*.

We also know that Richard was actually pardoned for any role that he had in this cabal.

After the later Uprising of the North, Rylstone manor and lands were forfeited by the crown and given to the Cliffords in 1605. The Cliffords soon sold the 47 tenements, which existed at this time, and only retained the manorial dues. The old hall and manor never had a resident lord, thereafter.

The story of the ill-fated Nortons is utilised by Wordsworth in his *‘White Doe of Rylstone'* and the so-called 'facts' set out in the poem continue to intrigue historians.

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**Medieval and Tudor Terms Used in the Text**

**appurtenant:** pertaining to something that attaches to a property, including any right or restriction which goes with that property.

**attainder:** An act passed by parliament against a person for a crime, or supposed crime, usually treason. It was a way to punish or even sentence someone to death for a crime without them actually standing trial.

**berewick:** A detached portion of farmland that belonged to a medieval manor and was reserved for the lord's own use.

**carucate:** A **carucate** or carrucate was a medieval unit of land area approximating the land a plough team of eight oxen could till in a single annual season.

**demesne:** Part of the manor either kept by the lord in his own hands or farmed for his own profit.

**fee** (also called fief or feoff): Normally, land held by a vassal of a lord in return for stipulated services, chiefly military. Can also apply to an official position. Often called a Holding.

**foot of fine** (plural, **feet of fines**) is the archival copy of the agreement between two parties in an [English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England) [lawsuit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawsuit) over land. The procedure was followed from *c*.1195 until 1833, and the considerable body of resulting records is now held at [The National Archives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_National_Archives_(United_Kingdom)), [Kew](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kew), London.

**gramercy:** An archaic expression used to express surprise or gratitude.

**honor**: Land, holding or group of holdings forming a large estate, such as the land held by an earl or a tenant-in-chief.Similar to a European *feudum.*

**jointure:** A late Middle English term denoting the joint holding of property or an estate by a husband and wife for life (OED).

**messuage:** A dwelling house together with its outbuildings, curtilage, and the adjacent land appropriated to its use.

**moiety**: Each of two parts into which a thing is or can be divided; e.g. 'the tax was to be delivered in two moieties'.

[**wapentake**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wapentake): A subdivision of a [county](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County) used in [Yorkshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorkshire) and other areas of strong [Danish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denmark) influence. It is similar to *hundred* or a *ward*. It was used in [Yorkshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorkshire), [Lincolnshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincolnshire), [Nottinghamshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nottinghamshire), [Derbyshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Derbyshire), [Leicestershire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leicestershire) and [Rutland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rutland).

**Photographs**



Fletcher Norton, first Earl of Grantley (1716-1789) Speaker of the House of Commons.



**Norton Conyers House**: A late medieval residence with Stuart and Georgian additions.



Richard Goodrick of Ribstone, husband of Clare Norton (Conyers)

1. *'de Norville'* - meaning in French *'New Town'* was probably taken by its original bearer from his place of residence. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *'Conyers'* was almost certainly also a Norman name and had the ancient spelling of *'Coigniers'*, which no doubt was later anglicised to *'Conyers'*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Norton Conyers is in the parish of Wath, three miles to the North -East of Ripon and a 'wapentake and liberty' of Allertonshire. Differing records cite particular Norton family members as having been born and domiciled at Norton Conyers, Wath, Allertonshire or Ripon, and we can be pretty certain that they are all referring to the family estates at Norton Conyers. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **Maunch**, (fr. manche): an ancient sleeve as a frequent device in the earliest rolls of arms. Sometimes in French arms it is called *'[manche](https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglossm.htm" \l "Manche) mal taillée'*, to distinguish it from an ordinary [sleeve](https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglosss.htm#Sleeve). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. **Bend** (fr. bande): the bend dexter is perhaps one of the most frequently used of [Ordinaries](https://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglosso.htm#Ordinaries), q.v., being a straight piece extending from the dexter corner to the opposite edge of the shield. It is said to derive its origin from the belt, baudrick or baldrick. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. His parents were Sir John Norton and Jane Pigot. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The spelling is also given as Ratcliffe in some documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. It seems most probable that Richard Norton was born about 1494, rather than 1502 which is given in some documents, since 1494 was the year after his parents' marriage and Richard was their eldest child and heir. His date of death is given as either 1585 or 1588 and if it is true, as some reports suggest, that he lived to be 91, then his death was more likely to be in 1585. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Whitaker is out of line with other authors about Ann(e), saying that she married a Robert Byrnard of Knaresborough, but this Ann is more likely to be Richard's daughter. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See e.g. Byrdges, 1812; Hicks, 2004-16; Whitaker, 1878 and various on-line ancestry sites given in this paper's bibliography). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Mention is made (e.g. Hicks 2004-16) of several sons having received a 'jointure' from Richard at the time of their marriage, and it is probable that this meant that they were given the use of one of the subsidiary manors owned by the Norton Conyers family. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. There is some doubt as to whether George or Thomas was the fifth son; reports vary on this, but the more reliable ones say George was the elder. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. see [www.geni.com/people/**Richard**-Goodrich-I/6000000006444065837](www.geni.com/people/Richard-Goodrich-I/6000000006444065837) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Most reports say that Jane Norton married Richard Gascoigne, but Brown (2013) calls her 'Joan', and mixes her up with her sister. He also says that in the marriage settlement, if she died before consummation of the marriage, her dowry was to go to her sister Alice, for whom there is very little information; if indeed she existed. She is only rarely cited as being a daughter of Richard Norton. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. [¶](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp71-84" \l "p19" \o "p19" \t "_self)Gilling*,* which passed at the Conquest to Count Alan, and was at the time of the Domesday Survey the chief manor in the district afterwards called Richmondshire. The berewick of Hartforth, amongst many others, was appurtenant to this manor but Count Alan soon made Richmond his chief seat. Gilling lost all its old importance. In 1475, after the attainder of Richard Earl of Warwick, it was granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, (Richard III) and, in 1495, to John Norton of Norton Conyers, representative of the lords of the adjoining vill of Hartforth, and his heirs. [(fn. 21)](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp71-84#fnn21) The Nortons held Hartforth and Gilling Manors until Richard Norton lost his lands by attainder in 1569.[(fn. 22)](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp71-84" \l "fnn22) The manor was in 1572 leased to William Stockdale for 21 years, the manorial rights being reserved [(fn. 23)](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp71-84#fnn23); and was finally granted to Robert Bowes, [(fn. 24)](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp71-84#fnn24) who was treasurer of Berwick and ambassador to Scotland. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)