

BHSP13 - 1986

## THE NORTONS OF VIANA

by Manuel Artur Norton

In 1964 we began to study the genealogy of the Norton family. We noticed then that there were persons bearing that name who had no connections with the family<sup>1</sup>. When we spoke to members born during the last quarter of the 19th century to see if they could remember certain persons of that name, the majority did not know them but a few did whilst stating that there were no family connections. It all became so complicated that we decided to divide the work into three parts:

The first part was to deal with England, to find out who the Nortons were. The second and more difficult part was to initiate the drawing up of a family tree of the Norton family in Portugal. The third part, to find the correct coat of arms of the family. As time went by things became clearer and it is hoped to have the subject finalised in the near future provided that a work published in Viana does not contain discrepancies.<sup>2</sup> We wrote to England to two different bodies: the College of Arms and the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies who carried out the necessary research.

The genealogy of the family was registered with the College of Arms. Using the data collected and received, we can now give the genealogy of the Nortons of Dartmouth.

### I Nicholas Norton

had issue:

- 1 (ii) Nicholas Norton, q.s.

1. ADB, Viana do Castelo, Sta Maria Maior, Lo, Nascimentos 22 (1841-1848) fl. 123, reg. 2. Born on 2 and baptised on 7.12.1845 to Loduvina Norton Mendes, daughter of Francisco António Martins and of his wife Maria rosa Pereira. The godmother was D. Loduvina Mendes Norton!!!

2. ALPOIM, Maria Augusta de Vasconcelos, Maria Emilia, "Casas de Viana Antiga", Viana do Castelo Castelo, Camara Municipal, 1983, pp. 215-219

### II Nicholas Norton

- ° Devon, Stoke Fleming
- = Borough of Dartmouth, Clifton Hardness, 25-IV-1598, with Joan Terry. They had issue:
  - 1 (III) Nicholas Norton, q.s.

### III Nicholas Norton

had issue:

- 1 (IV) Andrew Norton, q.s.

### IV Nicholas Norton

- ° South Devon, Devonshire, Dartmouth. + Idem, Saint Petrox, 1-VII-1705.
  - = Mary... + Ibidem, 4-XI-1707.
    - 1 (V) Nicholas Norton
      - Ibidem, 14-III-1653. + Ibidem, 31-XII-1729.
      - Ibidem, 24-VI-1686, with Mary Luce. + Ibidem, 5-III-1715.
    - 2 (V) (a boy)
      - Ibidem, 19-V-1657
    - 3 (V) Andrew Norton
      - Ibidem, 20-VI-1658
    - 4 (V) Isaac Norton, q.s.
    - 5 (V) Margaret Norton
      - ° Ibidem, 8-VIII-1676. + Ibidem, 27-VIII-1676.

### V Isaac Norton

- § Ibidem, 12-VI-1661.
- = Mary... + Ibidem, 14-I-1713. They had issue:
  - 1 (VI) Isaac Norton
    - Isaac Norton
    - ° Devonshire, Dartmouth, St. Saviour's, 27-XII-1696. Ibidem, 3-I-1697. + Dartmouth, St. Petrox, 11-VI-1701.
  - 2 (VI) Andrew Norton, q.s.
  - 3 (VI) Isaac Norton
    - § Dartmouth, St. Petrox, 20-X-1700. + Ibidem, 20-VII-1702.
  - 4 (VI) Isaac Norton
    - § Ibidem, 25-X-1702
    - = Ibidem, 4-I-1726, with Elizabeth Ann Wise.

## VI Andrew Norton

- ° Devonshire, Kingswear. South Devon, Devonshire, Dartmouth, St. Saviour's, I-V-1698.
- = Grace .... + South Devon, Kingswear, 3-X-1780. They had issue:
  - 1 (VII) Andrew Norton, q.s.
  - 2 (VII) Isaac Norton
    - § Devonshire, Kingswear, 14-11-1731
    - = Ibidem, 2-X-1760, with Grace Hooper.
  - 3 (VII) Grace Norton
    - § Devonshire, Kingswear, 24-XI-1737

## VII Andrew Norton

- Of the English navy, where he fought on the "Tygress", and on the "Privateer" (1745).
- § Devonshire, Kingswear, 17-XII-1727.
  - = First, in 28-X-1745, with Elizabeth Winter. °Devonshire, Dartmouth. + Ibidem, St. Petrox, 13-IX-1753.
  - = Second, on 26-II-1754, with Susannah Waymouth.
    - °Devonshire, Kingswear.

Issue of the first marriage:

- 1 (VIII) Andrew Norton, q.s.
- 2 (VIII) Elizabeth Norton
  - § Dartmouth, St. Petrox, 19-IX-1749
- 3 (VIII) Ann Norton
  - § Ibidem, 3-VIII-1752.

Issue of the second marriage:

- 4 (VIII) William Norton
  - xp § Ibidem, 29-VI-1758
- 5 (VIII) Susannah Norton
  - § Ibidem, 11-XI-1755
- 6 (VIII) Grace Norton
  - § Ibidem, 13-X-1761
- 7 (VIII) Nicholas Norton
  - § Ibidem, 16-V-1775

## VIII Andrew Norton

Of the English navy:

- ° Dartmouth, St. Petrox, 2-III-1747.
- = Devonshire, Totnes, 5-V-1770, with Joan Warren.
  - § Devonshire, Totnes, 29-IX-1748. Daughter of William

Warren. They had issue:

- 1 (IX) Andrew Norton, q.s.
- 2 (IX) William Norton
  - ° Dartmouth, St. Petrox, 17-V-1772
- 3 (IX) Thomas Norton
  - § Ibidem, 6-VII-1775
- 4 (IX) Robert Warren Norton, q.s. Cap. I
- 5 (IX) Mathew Norton
  - ° Ibidem, 3-I-1786.
- 6 (IX) Honour Skinner
  - § Ibidem, 30-I-1784
- 7 (IX) Nicholas Norton
  - § Ibidem, 26-I-1786.

**IX. Andrew Norton.** He came to Portugal towards the end of the 18th century as a merchant dealing mainly in wines and "bacalhão".<sup>3</sup> He first lived in Oporto in Rua dos Ingleses (parish of São Nicolão). He later moved to Viana do Castelo and lived at the Casa Amarela. His life was taken up with business, politics and consular activities. To fulfill the position he had to become a naturalised Portuguese citizen<sup>a</sup> and so had to swear loyalty.<sup>b</sup> He obtained his new citizenship on November 6, 1807. He was appointed British Consul in Viana, Caminha and Esposende by Letters Patent from Lisbon on May 20, 1811.<sup>c</sup> He took an active part in politics. When on June 4, 1822 the city declared itself in favour of the movement against Dom Miguel, he wanted to sign publicly a manifesto in support of him and as a result had to leave Viana hurriedly.

It was Andrew Norton who ordered the building of the Casa

3. A. D. B. — Sisas: Viana do Castelo. Alfândegas Marítimas. 1-Saídas: PV 616.

(a) A. N. T. T. — Junta do Comércio. Requerimentos sobre Naturalizações e Casos de Consultas; Maço 239, No. 311. Requerimento de pedido de naturalização de Lisboa, 5-XI-1807.

(b) A. N. T. T. — Idem: Jurou o Termo de Vassalagem, em Lisboa, por Procuração do Porto. 31-X-1807, passada a favor de José António Branco, negociante da praça de Lisboa.

(c) NORTON, Manuel Artur: "Representantes (Os) consulares nos portos de Viana e Caminha". "Arquivo do Alto Minho". Viana do Castelo, 1977, vol. 22, p. 40-61. Vide: Documento No. 1.

Amarela with arches, the front of which overlooks the River Lima. He had fireplaces installed which at that time caused a furore by their originality. And like the true Englishman he was, he took a boat every year for the Algarve where he spent the winter months.

He was baptised in Dartmouth, South Devon, in St. Petrox Church on November 4, 1771 and later was converted to Roman Catholicism at the Chapel of Na Sa da Agonia on June 12, 1806.<sup>d</sup> He married on June 8, 1794 D. Ana Rosa Tavares de Resende who was born in 1777 and brought up in a convent in Estarreja, Avanda.<sup>f</sup> He died in Viana on May 13, 1842. She was the daughter of António Tavares de Resende,<sup>g</sup> an Army Captain, and of Josefa Simões. They had issue:

- 1 (X) D. Joana Tavares de Resende Norton, q.s. § 1
- 2 (X) Thomas Norton, q.s.
- 3 (X) D. Maria José Tavares de Resende Norton, q.s. § 2.
- 4 (X) D. Rita de Cássia Tavares de Resende Norton, q.s. § 3.

**X. Robert Warren Norton.** He came to Portugal where his brother Andrew was already living and was a merchant like him.<sup>a</sup> He was 3rd British Deputy Consul in Viana (Letters of Confirmation, Queluz, May 14, 1820).<sup>b</sup> In May 1847 during the Patuleia Movement the fort of Viana was surrounded by the Oporto Government Junta. He tried without success to supply food to the beleaguered town. The town garrison decided to retire during the night but this attempt was found out. When the officers sought asylum in the British Consulate the populace tried to break into it. It was also thanks to the Consul that all the officers

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(d) A.D.B. — Viana do Castelo, Sta. Maria Maior. Lo Nacimentos No. 18, fls. 98v.

(e) ADP — Secção do Registo Civil: Porto, Sto Ildefonso, Lo de Casamentos, No. 5, fls. 49-49v.

(f) He was brought up in the Santa Casa de da Misericórdia of Oporto in the care of Maria da Conceição, married to Damaso Monteiro.

(g) He was married to his cousin JPVF. One of their descendants was Doctor Egas Moniz, the only Portuguese Nobel prizewinner.

X(a) ADB — Sisas: Viana do Castelo. Alfândegas Marítimas. 1 — Saídas: PV. 618.

(b) NORTON, Manuel Arthur: *Idem*. opus. cit., p. 60. Vide: Documento No. 2.

managed to reach the British ship "Jackal" unharmed, although under arrest. This ship took them to Oporto.

<sup>o</sup> South Devon, Devonshire, Dartmouth. + a 12-VIII-1847

= Devonshire, Dartmore, with Mary Cloker Gween<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>o</sup> Devonshire, Dartmore.

+ 1856. They had issue:

1 (X) Mary Gween Norton, q.s.

2 (X) Ismaine Gween Norton, q.s. § 1

At least three Norton families of English origin are known in Portugal: the Nortons from Viana, which we are dealing with; the Nortons of Jamaica, so called because a Governor of that British colony had a daughter who married a Brazilian. He in due course emigrated to Portugal and has descendants living at present with one branch connected to the former Nortons. They no longer use this surname.

And in the second quarter of the 20th century a Portuguese married an English lady whose surname was Norton. This gave rise to the present Norton dos Reis family. There are also special cases in which a child was given the name and surname of his or her godfather or godmother.

The first attempt to study the genealogy and heraldry of the Norton family was carried out by General Norton de Matos who was at the time Portuguese Ambassador in Great Britain. He was not successful, possibly because he did not get in touch with the bodies appropriate to dealing with the matter.

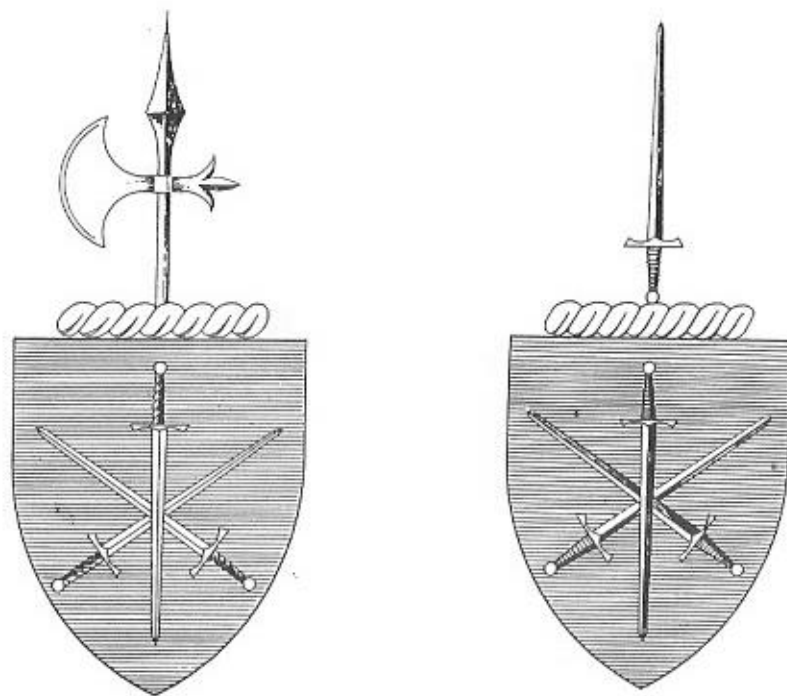
Many years later, after consulting Burke's Peerage, the family tried to find out if their coat of arms had been rendered correctly. The General's son-in-law had had it painted on the floor of the entrance to his house and there was another example of it on his tombstone. The coat of arms is described thus:

"Az. three swords, one in pale, point upwards, surmounted of the other two in saltire, points downwards ar. Crest. A halbert ppr. Motto. "Dieu et mon épée".

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(c) In the birth certificate of the grandson Alfredo, called after Dona Jerónima Norton.

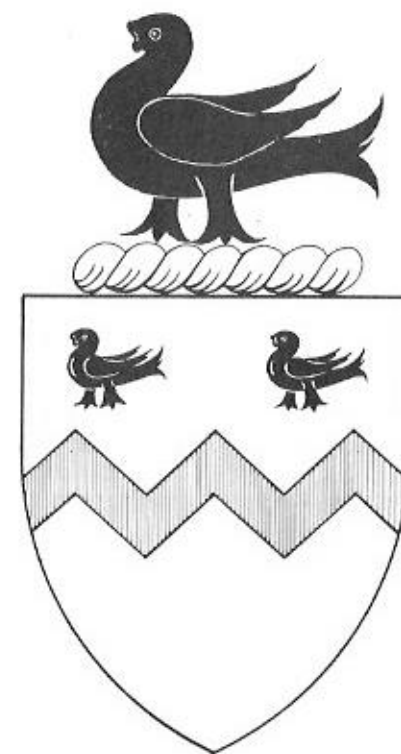
But on studying that description better and comparing it with one used by a branch of the family, certain discrepancies were observed. The first was that the crest shown in Burke is a halberd whereas the other on the shield is a sword. The second was the motto which was known to be "I know". Something was not right, especially as the Norton family bearing those arms were from Norfolk, Ricklinghall, and Suffolk, a part of England far removed from Devon.



The subject was engrossing in its complexity. The confusion over the coat of arms only became clear when the family formally requested that research be done into its genealogy and its later

registration. According to the College of Arms specialists it was not likely that the arms thus described belonged to the family in question unless better proof could be given. As no proof was forthcoming the investigation came to a stop. A few years later it was found that it was possible to go back some more generations in the genealogical investigation. This research was entrusted to the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies who have undertaken to carry it out.

It was then discovered that the inhabitants of Devon had received a heraldic visitation during the 17th century. These "visitations" served to legalise the use of arms and all those who could not prove a legitimate right to the same were subject to heavy fines. During the visitation of 1620 carried out by



Richmond Herald, Henry St. George, upon the orders of Clarenceux King of Arms, Camden verified that in Dartmouth the Norton family had a coat of arms which dated back to the 14th century:<sup>4</sup>

“Ar. a bar dancettée gu. in chief two martlets sa.”

These were the arms used by the Norton family in Dartmouth. How was it possible that a branch of this family could use such different arms?

Any answer to this can only be hypothetical until more information can be obtained. It would appear to be a mixture of ignorance and lack of interest lasting some generations which resulted in such confusion. The matter is now solved. These foreign arms have now been accepted by the “Conselho de Nobreza” and form an integral part of Portuguese arms.

We would like, however, to put forward a suggestion as to what really happened. As is well known, the Portuguese Court, like others, had a list of its suppliers. They were registered in proper books held by the Mordomia Mor (Lord Chamberlain). From them one can check that the gold and silversmiths were Portuguese but not the jewellers, who were English. At the beginning of the 19th century the best engravers of signet rings were the jewellers. Andrew Norton as a true Englishman would have ordered his signet ring from one of the English jewellers who were then the Court suppliers. He would have told him that his coat of arms was that of the Nortons. But did Andrew Norton know at the time what was the actual coat of arms of the Nortons of Dartmouth? Everything seems to point to the fact that he did not. But possibly the jeweller told him that it was not important since he would deal with this matter on his behalf.

The jeweller provided a good solution. He engraved a signet ring with the arms of a Norton family; but it was the Nortons of the Ricklinghall branch, a part of the country far distant from the Nortons of Dartmouth. And he included the motto “I know” in English, which is extremely rare in English heraldry. Could it have been irony?

Whether they noticed the mistake in the commission we do not know, but their descendants have at last discovered their correct arms as a result of a special investigation in the English archives.

<sup>4</sup> British Museum. Harleian MS 1080.