

**NORTON, SIR GREGORY, Bart. (born circa 1603, died 1652)**, regicide and parliamentary radical, MP 1645 (Midhurst), was son of Henry Norton of Charlton, Wantage, Berkshire, and Elizabeth, 4<sup>th</sup> daughter of William Nelson of Chaldeworth, Berkshire. His uncle, Sir Dudley Norton, was Secretary for Ireland under Elizabeth. His great-great-grandfather Sir Anthony St. Leger (died 1559) had also been Lord Deputy for Ireland. And his third cousin Sir William St. Leger (died 1642) was MP, Privy Councillor, and President of Munster. These many Irish connections would explain why the regicide, when he was created Baronet 27 April 1624 aged about 21, was made Baronet of Ireland. Norton had an only brother, Horden, who died young prior to 1623 (*Visitation of Berkshire 1623, Middlesex Pedigrees*, Harleian Society, Vol. 65, 114-6; *Complete Baronetage*, I, 257-8; Ashmole MSS. 852, 278-9 in Bodleian; Harleian MSS. 1551, f. 79). Norton married Martha, daughter of Bradshaw Drew, Esq., of Dewsworth or Densworth in Sussex. After his death she remarried Robert Gordon, 4<sup>th</sup> Viscount Kenmure, at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, 20 October 1655. Kenmure died 1663, she died 1671. Norton had two sons and a daughter, Elizabeth, born circa 1621. The elder son, Gregory, born circa 1623, matriculated at Jesus College, Cambridge, 1638, and died 1652, before his father. The younger son Henry thus became the Second Baronet. This baronetcy is only presumed to be extinct and may thus be in abeyance.

Norton was admitted to Grays Inn 3 August 1629, contemporary with John Alured and John Bradshaw the regicides, as well as John Cooke, who was to prosecute the King, and his younger brother James Cooke. At the time of his admission, he was of Hampden, Buckinghamshire, and was still there 15 November 1640 (CCC, 2363), making him near neighbour of Adrian Scrope the regicide. He then became JP in West Sussex in 1640, when he was living at West Thorney near Chichester; he continued JP there until his death. In 1639 Norton received a demand from the King that he provide money for the expedition against Scotland (CSPD, 1639, p. 83). In mid-1644 he was assessed for £500 (CCAM, 404). Norton was elected as recruiter in 1645 as MP for Midhurst in Sussex, the other MP for which was William Cawley the regicide. They seem to have coordinated their activities (Tanner MSS., 59/2, 665). On July 24, 1645, Norton was added to his first parliamentary committee (CJ, IV, 2112a; LJ, VII, 504) with Humphrey Edwardes the regicide, who was to become his most intimate friend and, because Norton disinherited his son, heir (P.C.C. Wills, Prob-11-223, p. 203). Norton was in high favour quite soon, for on September 20 he was ordered to be given £1000 and Sir Roger Palmer's sequestered house at Charing Cross for his residence (CCC, 25). The money did not all materialize (CCC, 1715-6), so a year and a half later, Norton reported a concealment in compounding by the royalist Sir Henry Hastings, from the resulting confiscation of which Norton finally got the rest of his £1000 (*Ibid.*, 1760). He apparently overdid it, however, for six years later his widow was ordered to repay £516 excess which he received (CCAM, 1122-3). A few days after Pride's Purge, Norton began to appear on crucial committees of the Rump with other hardcore radicals, suppressing critical publications, and with four other regicides he joined the Committee of Revenue to consider the custody and conditions of the King (CJ, VI, 96b, 97b, 98a). He was then added to the Committee of Compounding (*Ibid.*, 99a). Norton was named to the High Court of Justice to try the King, attended nearly all the sittings, and signed the Death Warrant. He afterwards received Richmond Palace for himself as well as much of the King's furniture (Noble, II, 102). He was appointed to

a number of further committees (CJ, VI, 127b, 168b, 171a, 178b, 180a, 352a, 363b). However, he died early and was buried 26 March 1652 at Richmond, Surrey, aged only about 49. His disinherited son, Sir Henry, managed to achieve a reconciliation with his mother (C35/20/79, in PRO) by 1655, and married Mabella, daughter of Sir Richard Norton, Bart. [unknown if a relation], 14 October 1656 at St. Margaret's, Westminster.