

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the nuncupative last will and testament, dated 21 September 1607 and proved 27 January 1608, of Sir Robert Zinzan alias Alexander, who jousted against Oxford in a tournament in 1571, and whose son, Sir Sigismund Zinzan (d.1663), married the widow of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who leased the land on which the Globe playhouse was built to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon and other members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men on 21 February 1599. See TNA REQ 4/1/2, and the will of Nicholas Brend, TNA PROB 11/98/348. For the tournament in which Oxford and the testator jousted, see Segar, William, *The Book of Honor and Armes* (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975) pp. 94-6.

### ***FAMILY BACKGROUND***

The testator was the son of Alexander Zinzan, gentleman, of Ashampsted, by Anne Norres alias Graunt, the illegitimate daughter of Sir John Norris (d. 21 October 1564), of Yattendon, Berkshire. The testator's mother, Anne, albeit illegitimate, was a niece of the courtier Henry Norris, beheaded 17 May 1536 for alleged adultery with Queen Anne Boleyn, and a first cousin of Henry Norris (c.1525-1601), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Norris (c.1525-1601), whose grandson, Francis Norris, married Oxford's daughter, Bridget de Vere.

The testator's maternal grandfather, Sir John Norris (d. 21 October 1564), was the eldest son of Sir Edward Norris and Frideswide Lovell, sister of Richard III's Chamberlain and favourite, Francis Lovell (died c.1488), Viscount Lovell.

The testator's maternal great-grandfather, Sir Edward Norris, was the eldest son and heir of Sir William Norreys (c.1441 - c. 10 January 1507) and his first wife, Joan de Vere, daughter of John de Vere (1408-1462), 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, by Elizabeth Howard (c.1410-1473/4), daughter of Sir John Howard (1385-1410) and Joan Walton, and granddaughter and heir of Sir John Howard (d.1437) and his first wife, Margaret Plaiz (d.1391). See the *ODNB* entries for John Howard (d.1485), 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Norfolk, and John de Vere, 12<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, and the pedigree in Ross, James, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford (1442-1513), 'The Foremost Man of the Kingdom'*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), p. 24.

For the foregoing, see also Rogers, Charles, *Memorials of the Earls of Stirling and of the House of Alexander*, (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1877), Vol. II, pp. 172-8; and Napier, Henry Alfred, *Historical Notices of the Parishes of Swyncombe and Ewelme in the County of Oxford*, (Oxford: James Wright, 1858), pp. 339-46 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=JwY5AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA339>

See also Banks, T.C., *The Dormant and Extinct Baronage of England*, Vol. II, (London: T. Bensley, 1808), p. 395 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=8TUvAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA395>

For the testator's maternal great-great-grandfather, John Norreys (d. 1 September 1466), see his will, TNA PROB 11/5/240, and:

[http://www.teachergenealogist007.com/2010\\_05\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.teachergenealogist007.com/2010_05_01_archive.html)

The testator's great-grandfather, Sir William Norreys, was attainted for his part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Buckingham's rebellion against Richard III, escaped abroad, and returned to England with the future Henry VII. See Harris, Barbara J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham, 1478-1521*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 139; and Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2011, Vol. I, pp. 350-2.

See also the Norris pedigree in Rylands, W. Harry, *The Four Visitations of Berkshire, Vol. II*, (London: Harleian Society, 1908), pp. Vol. LVII, 184-6 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/fourvisitationso5657ryla#page/184/mode/2up>

For the arms of Norris of Yattendon see Rylands, *supra*, Vol. LVII, p. 10 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/fourvisitationso5657ryla#page/n33/mode/2up>

The arms of Norris of Yattendon there depicted are the same as those given for Sir Edward Norris when he and his younger brother, William, were knighted after the Battle of Stoke (16 June 1487). See Metcalfe, Walter C., *A Book of Knights Banneret, Knights of the Bath, and Knights Bachelor*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1885), pp. 13-14, 17 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/bookofknightsban00metcuoft#page/14/mode/2up>

*Knights made at the foresayd batell of Stoke by Newarke*

*Sir Edward Norryys*  
*Quarterly 1 and 4, Argent, a chevron between*  
*three ravens' heads erased Sable; 2 and 3,*  
*Bendy of six Azure and Or within a bordure*  
*Gules; over all a label of three points Gules.*  
*Crest A raven Sable.*

*Sir William Norryys*

For the Norris family see also the entries in David Nash Ford's Royal Berkshire History at:

<http://www.berkshirehistory.com/bios/wnorreys.html>

According to the Zinzan pedigree, the testator married the daughter of one Westcote of Handsacre Hall in Staffordshire, by whom he had three sons, Henry Zinzan, Robert Zinzan and Sigismund Zinzan (who married the widow of Nicholas Brend), and two daughters, Mary and Dulcibella. It seems likely that the testator's wife was a descendant of Nicholas Westcote, brother of the justice and legal writer, Sir Thomas Littleton (d.1481), for whom see the *ODNB* article. Nicholas Westcote married Agnes Vernon, daughter and coheir of Edmond Vernon of Handsacre, Staffordshire, by Joan Handsacre, daughter and sole heir to William Handsacre of Handsacre. See Lodge, John, *The Peerage of Ireland*, (Dublin: James Moore, 1789), Vol. VII, p. 124 at:

[http://books.google.ca/books?id=\\_18UAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA124](http://books.google.ca/books?id=_18UAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA124)

See also the Zinzan pedigree in Rylands, W. Harry, ed., *The Four Visitations of Berkshire, Vol. I*, (London: Harleian Society, 1907), Vol. LVI, p. 320 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/fourvisitationso5657ryla#page/320/mode/2up>

See also the Zinzan pedigree in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of Berkshire 1664-6*, (Exeter: William Pollard, 1882), p. 116 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=IAQHAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA116>

The testator was an equerry of the stable, and in May 1585 conveyed horses from Queen Elizabeth to King James in Scotland. He was knighted by King James on 23 July 1603 as Robert Alexander of Hertfordshire. See Shaw, William A., *The Knights of England*, (London: Sherratt and Hughes, 1906), p. 116.

LM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ni Rob{er}ti Zinzan milit{is} al{ia}s Alexander

Memorandum, that on Saint Matthew's day, being the one and twentieth day of September Anno Domini 1607, Sir Robert Zinzan alias Alexander of Walton upon Thames in the county of Surrey, knight, being of perfect mind and memory, made and declared his last will and testament nuncupative in manner and form following, or like in effect, viz.:

First he bequeathed his soul to Almighty God, and his body to the earth;

And being then demanded by John Comporte, then present, how he would dispose of his estate if it should please God to call him to his mercy, answered and said, 'I give unto Dame Margaret Zinzan alias Alexander, my wife, all my household stuff, house and lands during her life if she do not marry', and after her death or marriage, he willed and bequeathed all his said goods to his two sons;

And he further gave and bequeathed all his patents granted unto him by the late Queen Elizabeth to be likewise divided between his two sons, and also one grant of recusancy from the King's Majesty that now is to his said two sons towards the payment of his debts;

And being also demanded by the said John Comporte on whom he would bestow his plate, he answered and said 'At the discretion of my executors';

And of the same his last will and testament nuncupative he made his said wife, Dame Margaret, Sir Sigismund Zinzan alias Alexander, knight, and Henry Zinzan alias Alexander, his sons, his executors, which words he so spake and uttered in the presence and hearing of divers and sundry credible persons.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro Domino Iohanne Bennett militi legum doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Magistro Custode siue Commissario legitime constituto vicesimo septimo die Mensis Ianuarij Anno Domini iuxta cursum et Computacionem Ecclesie Anglicane Millesimo sexcentesimo septimo Iuramento Henrici zinzan alii Alexander filij defuncti et vnus Executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Cui commissa fuit Administracio bonorum Iurium et Creditorum defuncti de bene et fideliter administrandis &c ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iurat Reservata potestate &c Domine Margarete Zinzan alii Alexander relicte et Sigismundo zinzan alii Alexander militis Ceteris executoribus cum venientibus &c

[=The above-written testament was proved before the worshipful Sir John Bennet, knight, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twenty-seventh day of the month of January in the year of the Lord according to the course and reckoning of the English church the thousand six hundred seventh by the oath of Henry Zinzan alias Alexander, son of the said deceased and one of the executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., with power reserved etc. to Dame Margaret Zinzan alias Alexander, relict, and Sigismund Zinzan alias Alexander, knight, the other executors, when they shall have come etc.]