

Robert was among the earliest scholars at Magdalen College, for it had only been founded in 1448 by William of Waynflete, bishop of Winchester, who had become Chancellor of England in 1446. Robert subsequently became a canon of Oseney abbey. The list of the abbey's properties is written in a professional hand, whereas the names of the tenants are added in the cursive style of the period, evidently by the collector himself. In the course of his duties Robert must have visited the abbey's properties in Sibford Gower, and he had probably been born there.

As well as the John Sowdan mentioned above, the Oseney cartulary refers to further Sodens, all named John, as occupiers of tenements in St. George's parish in Oxford between 1453 and 1460, viz.

- (a) a tenement of the same kind as Adam the gatekeeper's next to St. Thomas's chapel, occupied jointly with John Brandon in 1453 at a rent of 13s.4d.
- (b) No. 1 Fredeswyde occupied jointly with Richard Tanner in 1453, and by John alone in 1454, and jointly with William Barber in 1455-6 at a rent of 13s.4d.
- (c) the sixth cottage of Roger Comnor with a meadow, in 1455-9 at a rent of 13s.4d.
- (d) a tenement named Evetrays, with another cottage and garden, occupied jointly with William Woodcock in 1460 at a rent of 6s.8d.