

ART. XXI.—*Notes on the Friary at Penrith.* By
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THE Friary at Penrith has a very meagre record, and I have only been able to find one additional fact beyond those already recorded in the various published histories, but it may be advisable to collate what is known, so that it may make a sequence of events as far as possible.

In the year 1291, after the Parliament at Norham, and when King Edward I. was settling the rival claims of Bruce and Baliol to the Scottish Crown to no one's satisfaction but his own, the Austin Friars at Newcastle-on-Tyne had a grant of land made to them in Penrith by one John de Capella. This, I think, is probably the foundation of the Friary, and it is a reasonable supposition that some of the friars from Newcastle came over, built a house, and settled here.

The grant is in the following terms:—

19 Edw 1. Aug 8. 1291. Berwick on Tweed — License for the alienation in mortmain by John de Capella to the Prior and Augustinian Friars of Newcastle-on-Tyne of a messuage in Penrith. —*Calendar of Patent Rolls.*

John de Capella was interred in the burying ground of the friars at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

In 1299 King Edward gave alms to the friars, some of whom appear to have been in attendance on him during his journey south:—

Liber Garderobae — Elemosina — Fratribus Sancti Augustini de Penreth pro Eodem putura per manus fratris Ade de Ceteringeton apud Skelton. 24 die Junii, 2^s 8^d

Fratribus Sancti Augustini de Penreth pro putura sua duorum dierum in transitu Regis per ibidem de dono ejusdem per manus fratris Petri de Clare ibidem. 16 die Novembris, 5^s 8^d—(Jefferson.)

Jefferson goes on to say that in the *Calendarium Inquisitionum Post Mortem*, 1217-1413, occurs the following :—

5 Edw. III. Joh'es de Crumbewell pro priore de Penreth.
Penrethe i mess' et ii acr' terr' ibm.

and Tanner's book gives this extract :—

Escæt. Cumb. 7 Edw. III. pro ii acris contingens manso prioris
et fratrum ord. S. August. de Penreth, ex. dono Johannis de
Crumbwell

This would, no doubt, be the same John de Crumbwell who married the widow of Roger de Leyburne of the Cunswick family.

In 1356, Agnes Denton, widow, gave the friars by will 10s.

On their petition to Bishop Welton in 1359, he granted them license to officiate and perform divine service at the chapel of Newton Reigny, which they alleged to have been for some time destitute of a chaplain (Nicolson and Burn), and about the same time the bishop granted an indulgence of forty days to all who should be present when the friars lighted their candles on Christmas Day, and to those who made them presents, because they were very poor (Jefferson). This shows a very lamentable state of affairs, and I have no doubt the poor friars made themselves very useful by visiting the sick and tending wayfarers, as was their wont, and surely they deserved a better reward than this extreme poverty.

In 1365 Bishop Appleby granted license to Friar R., sacrist of the Friary, to officiate in the chapel of Newton for four years (Nicolson and Burn).

Richard, the 1st Lord Scrope of Bolton, who died in 1403, left a sum of money by will to the brethren :—

Item cuilibet domui Fratrum de Karlioli, Penreth, Appleby. xxs.
—(Jefferson.)

In 1489, Robert Wrangwis, Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, gave them lands at Penrith.

Dugdale gives no valuation for this house at the dissolution, and probably it was of little worth—most likely consisting of a poor building, and about four or five acres of land. It was granted in 1542 to Robert Tyrwhitt of Kettilby, Lincoln.

Built into the wall of the present house is a rudely carved head representing, I think, a monk with a cowl, and a pillar of red sandstone is built also into the wall at Abbot Bank. These are the only remains of the original building now traceable.

No outline of the original building exists, but Walker states that the house in Friargate, then known as the Friary, occupied the site of the convent, and that when the trenches for the foundations of the walls of the house called Abbot Bank (which adjoins the Friary) were being dug, the ground floor of the convent was discovered and a quantity of human bones found under the chancel, including a pair of thigh bones of extraordinary size, and several undecayed skulls, with teeth still fresh and even. The bones were exhumed on the day on which George IV. was crowned, and re-interred in a field which the prior and brethren had formerly held in free alms.

If this statement is correct, I should imagine that Abbot Bank is built on the site of the chapel of the Friary, and that the monastic buildings were on the ground now covered by the house called the Friarage.