

THE ARCHITECTURAL REMAINS OF THE MENDICANT ORDERS IN WALES.

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The architecture and conventual arrangement of the houses of the various orders of friars in this country is a subject but little touched upon in archaeological literature, a fact to be directly attributed to the exceedingly scanty and fragmentary nature of the remains which have survived to modern times. It will consequently be necessary to prefix to an account of the structure of the Welsh houses of the four orders, some observations on the peculiarities of plan and arrangement which distinguish the buildings of these orders. To do so it will be necessary to go farther afield than Wales and to base one's conclusions on a study of the buildings of the mendicant orders throughout the British Isles. It is a curious fact that the marked peculiarities observable in the friars' churches in this country are not in any way, as in some of the older orders, traceable to a continental original. The Dominicans in France,¹ the mendicant orders in general in Brittany,² and the Dominicans and Franciscans in central Italy,³ evolved highly distinctive types of plans, but in no case does this bear any resemblance to the typical friars' church in England, and one is forced to the conclusion that the building, whose salient features are about to be described, was evolved independently within these islands.

The friars' church in the British Islands consisted of two main parts, the quire, forming the private chapel of the friars and the nave, forming their public preaching-place. These fundamentals produced a plan very closely approximating both in form and use to the ordinary parish church. Two marked differences, however, are noticeable, which seldom, if ever, appear in this country, outside the

¹ For typical examples see plans in Viollet le Duc *Dictionnaire* i, p. 272 (Jacobins, Paris), and i, p. 299 (Jacobins, Toulouse) and P. Lauzun *Les Couvents d'Agen* (Jacobins, Agen).

² For a typical example see plan in *Congrès Arch. de France* 1914. (Jacobins, Morlaix).

³ K. Biebrach, *Holzgedeckten Franciskaner u. Domin. Kirchen in Umbrien u. Toskana*.

mendicant orders and which may be taken as characteristic of their buildings and theirs alone. The first of these is the form and structure of the steeple, which in the larger churches is placed over an oblong space or crossing (generally termed the 'Walking Place' in mediaeval documents), interposed between the quire and the nave. This space, being oblong, the steeple itself had to be supported on two sides, the north and south, by arches sprung across from the side walls and seldom carried down to the ground; two narrow arches opened east and west into the quire and nave. The form of the steeple itself was, in England, commonly polygonal but in Scotland and Ireland invariably square. In France the polygonal steeple is common to the friars' houses,¹ but it is invariably set flanking the church on one side or the other and is never set astride the building as in this country. In the smaller houses the place of the masonry steeple was taken by a similar erection in timber, carried on arched principals, spanning the church. Masonry towers of this character still survive in England at Coventry (Greyfriars), King's Lynn (Greyfriars) and Atherton (Austin Friars); in Scotland at Dunbar (Trinitarian Friars) and in Ireland at Quinn, Ennis, Muckcross (Greyfriars), Athenry (Blackfriars) and numerous other places. No example of the timber steeple has survived, but it seems to have existed at Hulne² (Whitefriars) and there are still existing remains of the structure at Denbigh (Whitefriars). No doubt it was the common form in the lesser houses and would leave no trace of its presence where the walls are destroyed below the roof-level. The space under this crossing was commonly used in the larger houses as the main entrance from the outside into the cloister.

The second marked peculiarity of the friars' churches is the single and generally disproportionate transept, opening out of, and forming an annexe to, the nave. Symmetrical transepts are exceedingly rare in friars' churches and in England and Wales there was commonly no transept of any sort, but in nearly all the Irish houses³ and at

¹ Cf. Toulouse (Black, Grey and Austin Friars), Avignon (Grey and Austin Friars), Angoulême (Grey Friars), Agen (Black Friars), etc.

² *Arch. Journ.* XLVII, 105.

³ See the excellent series of plans of Irish

friaries in Reports of Public Works (Ireland), 1901-1914, including Buttevant, Creevelea, Clare-Galway, Kilcrea, Sherkin Island, Sligo and Timoleague, also *Architectural and Topographical Record* for Askeaton, Ennis, Quinn, etc.

Richmond, Yorks¹ (Greyfriars), Warrington² (Austin Friars) and Lanfaes (Greyfriars) the curious single transept was present. It opened out of the nave by one or more arches, commonly had a chapel-aisle on the east side and lay on the side of the church remote from the cloister.

With regard to the conventual buildings, friars' houses show a marked disregard, in many instances, of the normal monastic arrangement. Thus the frater stood west of the cloister at London (Greyfriars) and Canterbury (Blackfriars) and the dorter was south of the cloister at Denbigh, instead of the normal positions, south and east of the cloister respectively. A second peculiarity is the common practice of incorporating one or more of the cloister alleys within the main outer walls of the ranges to which they belonged, thus causing the dorter or frater, as the case might be, on the first floor, to stand partly over the cloister alley. This practice is exemplified in most of the surviving friars' buildings in England and Ireland and no doubt was dictated by a desire for economy either in space or material.

The historical aspect of the various houses of the mendicant orders in Wales has been clearly and succinctly dealt with by Miss R. C. Easterling³ in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, where she has effectively disposed of the various doubtful houses and has reduced the total number of definite friaries in the country to ten. Valuable evidence as to the buildings is also provided by the Suppression Inventories of Bangor, Llanvaes, Rhuddlan, Denbigh, Cardiff, Carmarthen and Haverfordwest, printed also in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*.⁴ These have been considered in relation to the existing remains, together with results of excavation and it is hoped that the present paper may in some sense complete the survey of the Welsh friaries which the foregoing contributions have so ably begun.

The Welsh friaries included five Dominican houses—Bangor, Brecon, Cardiff, Haverfordwest and Rhuddlan; three Franciscan houses—Cardiff, Carmarthen and Lanfaes; one Carmelite house—Denbigh, and one house of Austin Friars—Newport. In this order is it proposed to deal with the remains.

¹ See plan in *Victoria C. Hist. Yorks. N. Riding* i, 31.

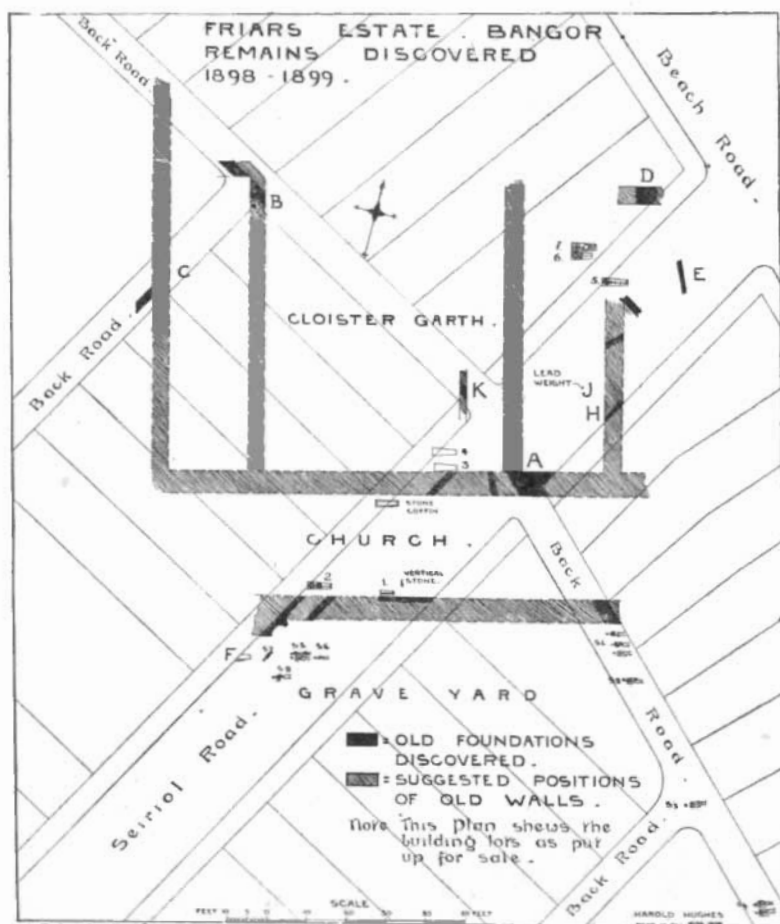
² See plan in *Victoria C. Hist. Lancs.* iii, 315.

³ *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, pp. 323-356. *The Friars in Wales.*

⁴ *Ibid.* Original Documents—1870.

BANGOR. BLACK FRIARS.

Little need be said of this establishment, which seems to date from the middle of the thirteenth century—it is first mentioned in 1251.¹ The remains, noted and described by Mr. H. Hughes and Mr. P. S. Gregory,² probably



[By courtesy of the Can. Arch. Soc.]

BLACKFRIARS PRIORY, BANGOR.

belonged to this house, though some little doubt has arisen as to the existence of a second house of friars at Bangor. The remains seemed to indicate a small establishment with a cloister 62 feet from east to west, and lying on the

¹ *Ibid.* 6th Ser., xiv, p. 333, citing Close Roll 35 Hen. iii, m. 20.

² *Ibid.* 5th Ser., xvii, p. 24 *et seq.*

north side of the church. Of the church itself there were remains of an aisleless building (26 feet wide), probably the quire, with traces of the start of a wider building, probably the nave, to the west. Walls found to the east of the eastern range served to indicate that a chapter-house projected in this direction, as two carved stone coffin-lids were found within its area. Two other carved coffin-lids were also discovered, one with a curious heraldic *checky* design, with the silver indicated by lead run into the alternate squares.

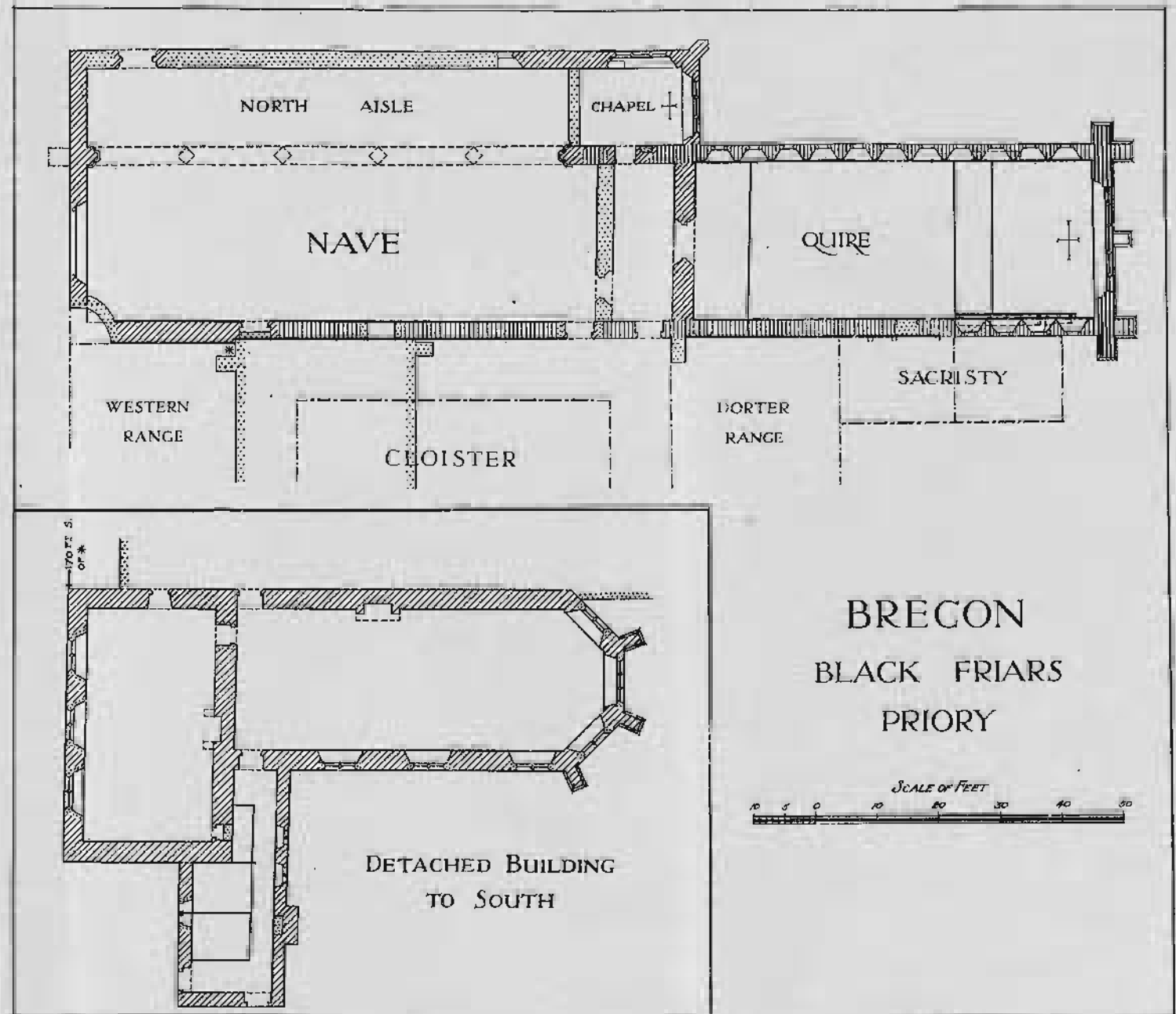
BRECON. BLACK FRIARS.

The Black Friars' house at Brecon was founded about the middle of the thirteenth century and is first mentioned as existing in 1269.¹ Its remains are the most extensive and important of all the Welsh friaries, their partial preservation being due to the founding or refounding of a school there by Henry VIII. The remains consist of the quire of the church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, still intact and in continuous use as the chapel of the college since the dissolution—the ruins of the nave, with a north aisle—some indications of the position of the cloister, dormer and sacristy—and a detached group of buildings to the south, the purpose of which will be discussed later.

The *Quire* (65 feet by 26 feet) is a mid-thirteenth-century building, with a large east window (plate ii), consisting of five lancet-lights of unequal width, and all incorporated under a two-centred outer order or head. The north wall has a series of eleven lancet windows (plate i), divided by attached shafts with moulded capitals and bases and having moulded rear-arches; below the third window from the east end is a recess in the wall with a moulded segmental-pointed arch, probably the founder's tomb. The eastern part of the south wall has four lancet windows uniform with those opposite; below them and set in a projection are the double piscina and sedilia of four bays (plate ii). At the back of the piscina and in the westernmost bay of the sedilia are squints, now blocked, but formerly communicating with the sacristy, which was entered by a doorway further west and now also

¹ *Ibid.* 6th Ser., xiv, p. 337, Provincial Visitation in 1269.

FIG. 2.



blocked. The quire is closed at the west end by an inserted cross-wall of the fourteenth century, pierced by a two-centred archway of two orders. This wall was no doubt inserted to support either a bell-tower or a bell-cote, replacing the original structure which was probably of timber.

The *Nave* (95½ feet by 26 feet) is now roofless and stands only some 12 feet high. The whole structure appears to have been rebuilt and perhaps extended in the fourteenth century. The north wall had an arcade, opening into the aisle, and probably of five bays, of which only the lower parts of the east and west responds now remain; east of the arcade is a pointed doorway, opening into the north chapel. The south wall has, at the east end, traces of the blocked doorway from the cloister; further west is a second doorway, of fourteenth-century material, but probably not *in situ*. Of the two other doorways in the western part of this wall, the eastern is modern but the second is of the fourteenth century and is valuable as giving some indication of the western extent of the cloister. Intruding into the south-west angle of the church is a rounded projection of post-reformation date. In the west wall of the nave the bases of the splays of a large west window still remain. Across the east end of the nave is a modern wall, enclosing the existing vestibule, which may represent an ancient feature, which together with the west wall of the quire perhaps supported a steeple.

The *North Aisle* (12¾ feet wide) has a chapel at the east end, which is still in use. It has much restored windows in the east and north walls and a double piscina in the south wall. The chapel is closed in on the west by a modern wall. West of this chapel only a short length of fourteenth-century walling survives, with the splay of one window; beyond this point the wall is a reconstruction of uncertain date, incorporating, towards its western end, a reset fourteenth-century archway.

The *Cloister* has been entirely destroyed, but the weathering of its former roof is visible on the south wall of the nave, extending from a modern buttress on the east to the modern school-building on the west. If the doorway, referred to above, be considered as representing its western limit it must have been some 71 feet from east to west.

The range, flanking the cloister on the east, contained the *Dorter* on the first floor, as there is in the south wall of the quire, at this point, a fifteenth-century doorway, now blocked, which can only have served for the night-stairs from the dorter. The position of the *Sacristy* is indicated by the blocked doorway from the quire, already referred to, and by three corbels of its former roof, which still remain above this doorway. It possessed also an eastern extension, kept low to avoid the windows of the quire, and into which opened the two squints already described. There are, however, no traces of the junctions of the walls of these buildings and only excavation can determine their precise extent.

It now remains to consider the detached group of buildings, standing 170 feet to the south of the nave of the church. The group consists of two halls set at right angles to one another, one terminating eastwards in a three-sided apse, and a smaller range extending to the south. The whole group is of the fourteenth century and though the windows are almost entirely modern and most of the doorways are much restored, it seems to retain its original features, otherwise, largely unaltered. Both halls have large fireplaces and retain much of their original roof-construction; the roof over the eastern hall has curved principals meeting under the collars. The roof of the western hall is of more ornate character but of similar construction; the principals are trefoiled on the under side, as are the curved wind-braces. The two stone fireplaces have heavy hoods, resting on corbelled projections, and though extensively restored, are still, in part, of the fourteenth century. The wing to the south, though contemporary with the rest, has no features of interest. It is very difficult to come to any definite conclusion as to the purpose of this very singular block of buildings. Three explanations may be suggested but it is not pretended that each of them is not open to serious objections. They are—(a) a combined guest-house and infirmary; (b) a provincial's lodging; (c) the earliest buildings of the grammar-school. The first of these is perhaps the most probable. The hall to the west would serve as the guest-hall; it was formerly entirely cut off from the eastern hall, the existing doorway in the party-wall being modern. The



BLACK FRIARS, BRECON
Windows in N. wall of Chancel



BLACK FRIARS, BRECON
Chancel, looking N.E.



BLACK FRIARS, BRECON
Piscinae and Sedilia in S. wall

eastern hall would serve as the infirmary, the body forming the hall of the sick and the apsidal end as the chapel ; on this hypothesis the two parts must have been separated by a wooden screen, after the fashion prevalent in many mediaeval hospitals. It should, however, be said that there is no existing evidence, such as a piscina, that the apsidal end contained an altar. A provincial's lodging was provided for in certain of the greater houses of friars, such as the Black Friars, London,¹ but the existence of such a structure at Brecon is unlikely and in any case provides no explanation of the two halls side by side. The school-building theory is a suggestion only ; practically nothing is known of such structures, in the middle ages, so it will be profitless to pursue the subject.

CARDIFF. BLACK FRIARS.

The house of the Black Friars of Cardiff was founded before the year 1269,² on a site without the west gate of the town. Though nothing was standing above ground its remains were completely excavated by the late Marquis of Bute in 1887,³ and are still exposed to view. The rubble walling has been brought to a general level in brick and the floor-surfaces of the church repaved. There is little to indicate the date of the various structures, though the church appears to have been shortened after its destruction in 1414, the nave being then reduced to 80 feet in length. The few fragments of mouldings and window tracery, found on the spot, date mainly from the first half of the fourteenth century and do not reflect the rebuilding of the church after its burning by Owen Glendower in 1404. The disposition of the buildings is sufficiently explained by the accompanying plan and little further need be said save to call attention to the small but interesting infirmary block, on the north of the site. This, with the exception of the small establishments at Hulne⁴ by Alnwick (Northumberland) and Clare (Suffolk), is the only friars' infirmary that can be certainly identified in this country.

¹ *Archaeologia* lxi, p. 71.

² *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv., p. 337. Provincial Visitation in 1269.

³ J. P. Conway in *Arch. Camb.* 5th

Ser., vi, 97 and C. B. Fowler, *Excavations on the site of the Black Friars' Monastery*, 1897.

⁴ *Arch. Journ.*, XLVII, 105.

The suppression inventory¹ of this house mentions the vestry, high altar, Lady altar, a pair of organs and the kitchen.

HAVERFORDWEST. BLACK FRIARS.

The date of the settlement of the Black Friars at Haverfordwest is unknown, but they were established there in 1246² and according to Leland the site was changed in 1256. The buildings stood on the east side of Bridge Street, between it and the river, on the site now occupied by the Black Horse Inn, a foundry and other premises. These buildings are mainly constructed of rubble, but there is no recognisable fragment of pre-Reformation work, now visible, though lead coffins and a stone coffin are said to have been found on the site. A letter from Edmund Yardley to Browne Willis, about 1739³ says that there were then little or no remains, but that two effigies had been dug up.

The inventory of goods,⁴ taken at the dissolution mentions the 'candllbemys' and a table of alabaster as they stood in the church and in the quire, a table at the high altar, the new stalls, the hall and two bells in the steeple.

RHUDDLAN. BLACK FRIARS.

The Black Friars were established at Rhuddlan somewhere about the middle of the thirteenth century⁵ and must have begun their buildings soon afterwards. The outbuildings of the existing farm, called Plas newydd, surround a square yard which no doubt represents, to some extent, the cloister. No trace is left of the church or of the eastern range, the site of which is occupied by a modern building, but the whole of this range was standing when the brothers Buck made their drawing (plate iii) in 1742.⁶ This drawing is particularly valuable, as it shows not only some highly interesting details but also indicates that the buildings at Rhuddlan were on a much more ambitious scale that was

¹ *Arch. Camb. Orig. Documents*, p. xxxvii.

² *Ibid.* 6th Ser., xiv., citing Lib. Rolls Hen. iii.

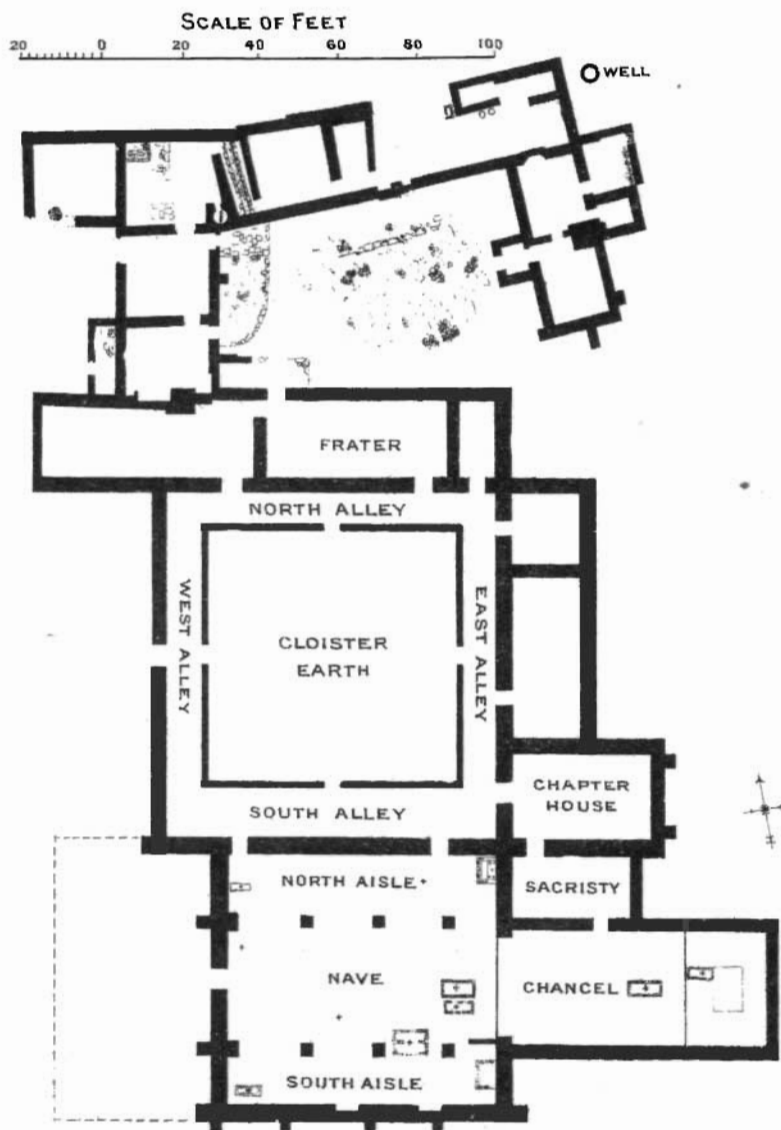
³ Printed in *Arch. Camb.* 5th Ser., xvii., p. 69.

⁴ *Arch. Camb. Orig. Documents*, p. xli.

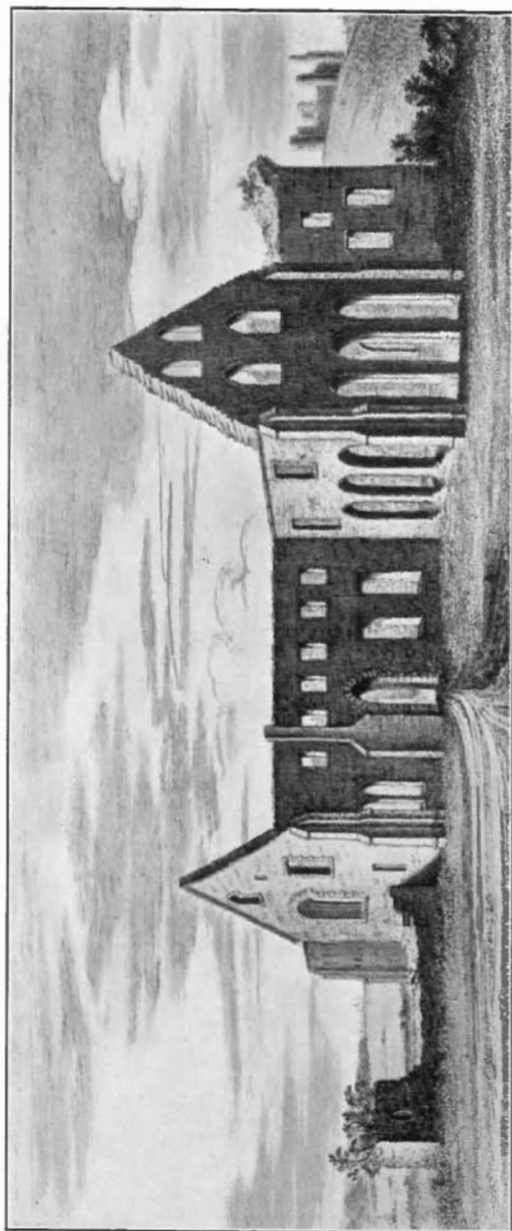
⁵ *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 334.

⁶ See *Flintshire Hist. Soc. Journ.* v.

FIG.3.



BLACKFRIARS.CARDIFF



[By courtesy of the Flintshire Hist. Soc.]

BLACKFRIARS PRIORY, RHUDDLAN, BUCK'S VIEW (1742)

usual among the lesser friaries. The whole length of the building shown was no doubt occupied by the dormer on the first floor and at its north end is some indication of the junction with the church, though even then this building had been entirely destroyed. Projecting eastwards from the range is a gabled structure, with three lancet-windows in the east end and three in the south return wall; this was undoubtedly the chapter-house with a room above it. Further south, in the main range, is the archway of a passage from the cloister, and still further south a chimney-stack, probably that of the fireplace in the warming-house. At the south end of the range is a large doorway, at the dormer-level, evidently that leading to the re-re-dormer, the ruins of which, with its connecting bridge, are also shown. Of the southern range of the cloister court, the eastern part of the inner or north wall is still standing and contains four small square-headed windows of red Chester stone, set high in the wall, above a string-course which probably marked the level of the cloister-roof. The rest of the range seems to have been rebuilt, but the south side of it is shown in steep perspective in Buck's view. The only other ancient portion of the existing buildings is the northern portion of the outer wall of an outbuilding on the west of the yard. It appears to have projected westward from the original western range, as there is a return angle at the south end. It contains two pointed windows, probably of the fourteenth century, and blocked with ashlar. The rest of this range contains other pointed windows, but they appear not to be original and the walls themselves to be of post-suppression date.

Built into the garden-wall, to the north of the yard, are portions of a moulded and cusped arch of early fourteenth-century date and probably part of a tomb-recess. Of the various funeral monuments built into the walls of the buildings round the yard, it will only be necessary to give a list as they have mostly been already described and photographed. On the east side of the yard: (a) effigy in high relief of a civilian in hood with flap, belt with skirt of gown tucked into it and holding in both hands a baton, or possibly a mace, probably fourteenth-century; (b) part of a coffin-lid with inscription.

On south side of yard: (a) incised slab with figure of an

archbishop¹ in mass-vestments with cross-staff and marginal inscription to William Freney, archbishop of Rages, *c.* 1290. This slab has now been removed to the parish church; (b) slab with raguly cross in relief, head in a quatrefoil, sword at side and inscription to Robert, son of Robert de Bridelton, early fourteenth-century.

On west side of yard: coffin-lid with elaborately enriched cross on stem inscribed 'Hic jacet Snaisii,' the rest of the inscription destroyed, thirteenth-century.

The inventory of goods taken at the suppression² mentions the quire with a table of alabaster on the altar and new stalls, two bells in the steeple and the kitchen.

CARDIFF. GREY FRIARS.

The date of the foundation of the Grey Friars at Cardiff is uncertain, but the remains uncovered carry it back, at any rate to the end of the thirteenth century. The house is first mentioned in 1399.³ The remains, like those of the Black Friars' house, were excavated in 1896 by the late Marquis of Bute⁴ and the walls and flooring of the church treated in the same manner as at the sister house. Further excavations were carried out in 1925 by Mr. J. P. Grant, F.S.A., who has, very generously, placed his notes and plans at my disposal. The accompanying plan is based on that of Mr. Grant and shows the walls uncovered in these excavations. The lighting area interposed between the cloister and the nave and shown on the earlier plans (*Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser. i, 72) does not appear to be substantiated by the latest excavations. This, however, was a not uncommon feature in friars' houses and occurred elsewhere at London Grey Friars and Norwich Black Friars. The domestic buildings were largely built over by a mansion of the Herbert family, the ruins of which are still standing. The presence of this structure renders the identification of the various parts of the mediaeval structure peculiarly difficult; the indications of the date of the domestic buildings, shown on the plan, must thus be considered only

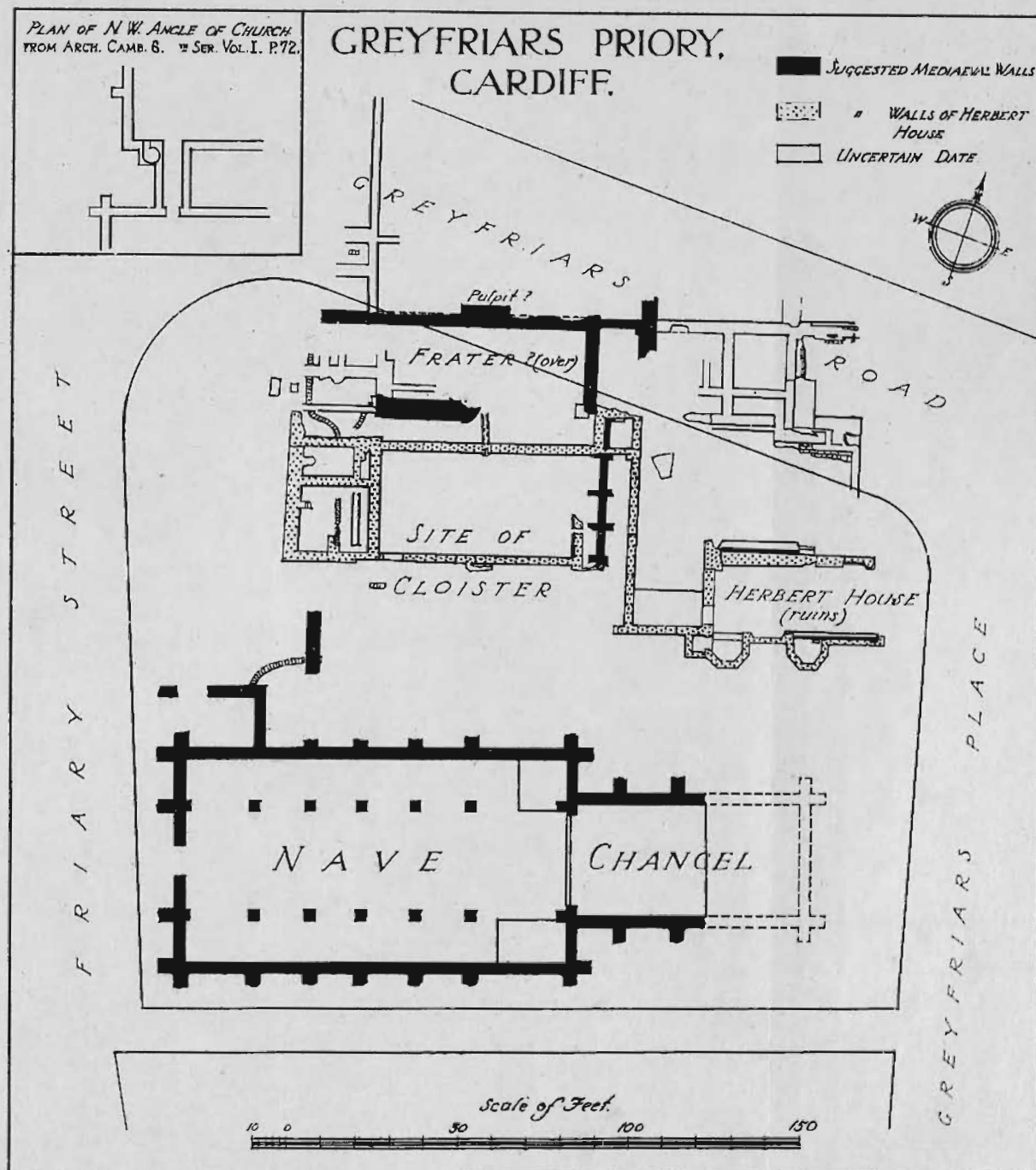
¹ Illustrated in *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xii, 123.

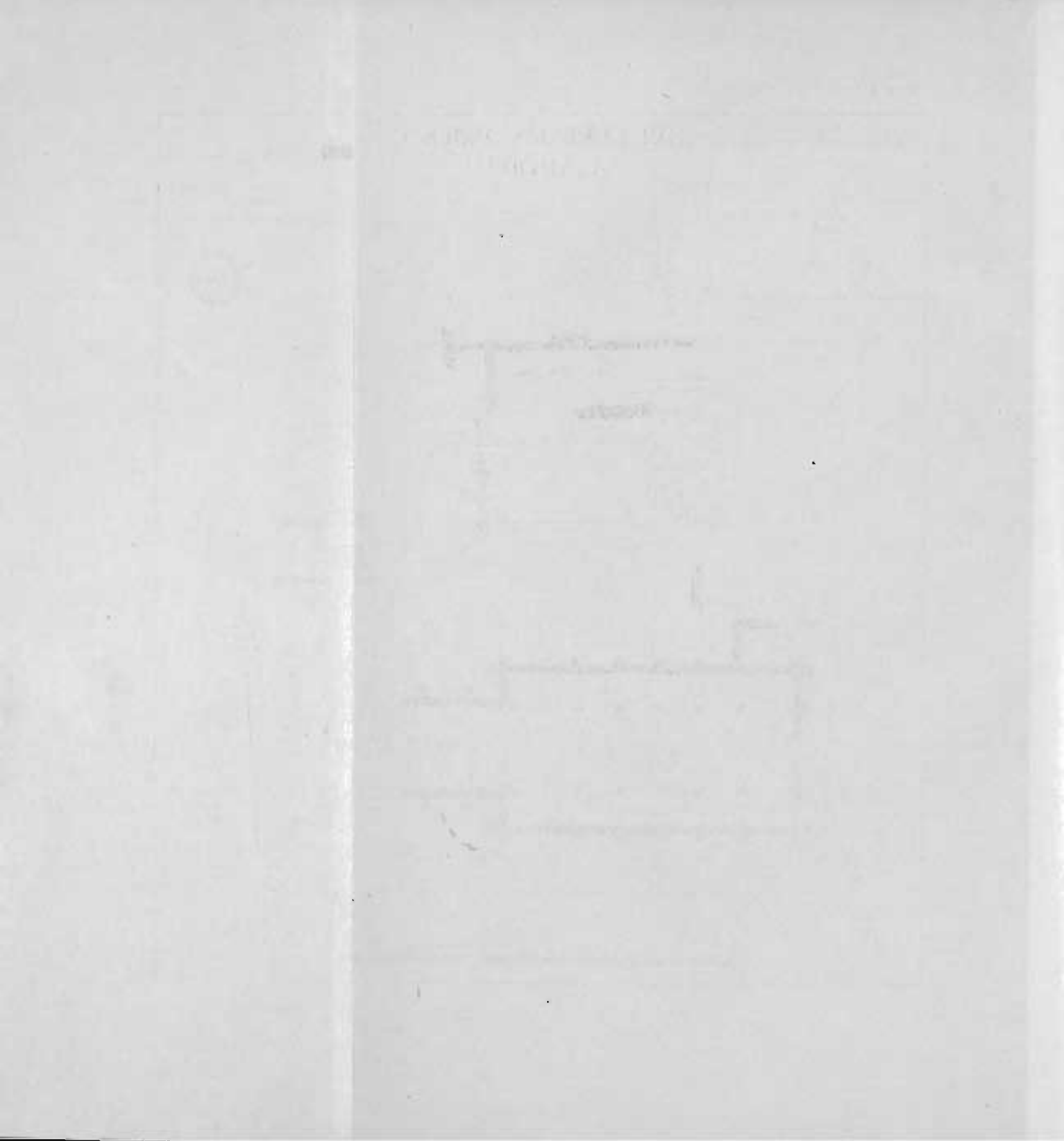
² *Arch. Camb.* Orig. Documents, p. xlii.

³ *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 340.

⁴ C. B. Fowler. *Excavations on the site of the Grey Friars' Monastery, Cardiff*, 1896.

FIG. 4.





tentative. The extensive remains of the nave arcades of the church, discovered during the excavations, show that they were erected about 1300, but provided no explanation of a curious feature of the plan—the extra width of both the east and west bays—though perhaps this was in some sort a legacy from an earlier building that occupied the site. This house was spared by Owen Glendower in 1404, by reason of his well-known favour for the Franciscan Order. The suppression inventory¹ mentions the quire with a table of alabaster, a pair of organs, five tables of alabaster in the ‘church’ (nave), a bell in the steeple, the vestry, kitchen, hall and a new chamber, also a grate of iron that stood in the quire.

CARMARTHEN. GREY FRIARS.

The Grey Friars’ house at Carmarthen was founded before 1284² and stood in Lammas Street, to the west of the castle.³ No structural fragment of it now remains above ground and there is little or no indication of its plan or arrangement. The suppression inventory⁴ mentions, the sextry, a pall for the Earl of Richmond’s tomb, the quire with a pair of organs and a goodly tomb of Pryce ap Thomas, a grate of iron about him, the church with five tables of alabaster and a frame of iron, through all the church, before the altars, for tapers, the steeple with a clock and two bells, the king’s chamber, the inner chamber, the chamber next the lavery, the chamber next the parlour door, the kitchen, brew-house, hall and buttery. From the mentions of the church it would appear to have been a building of considerable size and importance; the ‘church,’ i.e. the nave, had apparently five altars with an iron screen before them. The two tombs, mentioned, have fortunately both survived, that of Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, being now in St. David’s cathedral and that of Sir Rhys ap Thomas in St. Thomas’ church, Carmarthen. The steeple is said to have remained standing until about the beginning of the last century.

¹ *Arch. Camb. Orig. Documents*, p. xxxviii.

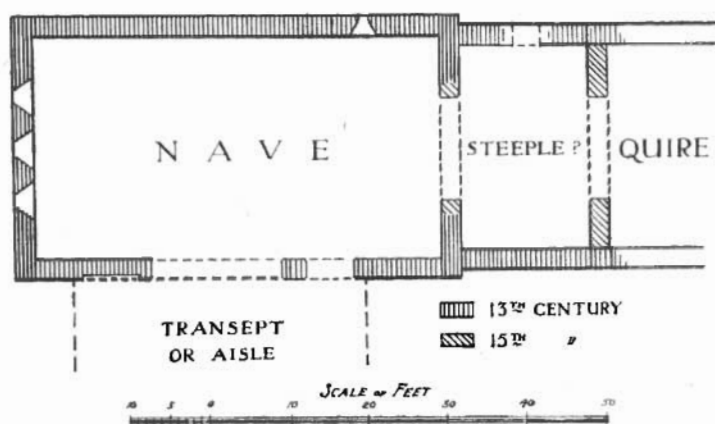
² *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv., citing *Mon. Fran.* ii. p. 287.

³ *R. Com. Hist. Mons. Wales. Carmarthen*, p. 259.

⁴ *Arch. Camb. Orig. Documents*, p. xxxix.

LLANFAES. GREY FRIARS.

The Grey Friars were established at Llanfaes by Llewellyn the Great, the church being dedicated in 1237.¹ The house was thus one of the earliest friaries to be founded in Wales. The modern house called the Friars, a short distance to the east of Beaumaris town, may possibly contain reused material, but there are now no structural remains of the mediaeval buildings above ground. The last surviving structure was destroyed in the third quarter of the last century, but before that time it was, very fortunately, planned and the plan published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*.²



GREY FRIARS, LLANFAES.
Ground Plan.

There can be no doubt that this structure was the western part of the church, the remains exhibiting just those peculiarities of plan which are so commonly met with in churches of the Irish friaries.

The Nave (51 feet by 28 feet) had a triplet of lancet-lights in the west wall and in the south wall a large arch, 17½ feet wide, with a doorway to the east of it, both opening into a large transeptal chapel or chapels and corresponding very closely to the arrangement at Buttevant, Multi-farnam, Muckcross (Irrelach) and many other Irish friaries. West of the large arch and in the transept, was a recess, probably for a tomb. To the east of the nave was a division

¹ *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 331.

² *Arch. Camb.* 3rd Ser., i, 76.

(21 feet by 26 feet) opening to the east and west by segmental arches, which are said to have been of 'Perpendicular' character. This was no doubt the 'walking-place' between the friars' quire and the nave, and above it was the steeple. I have indicated a doorway in the north wall, which was probably present, as this was commonly the only entrance from the cloister to the friars' quire. Marks in the turf were noted, in 1855, indicating a destroyed building extending 18 feet further east. This was the friars' quire, which in the first church, perhaps included the space under the steeple and making a total length of 41½ feet. When the fifteenth-century arches were inserted the quire must, however, have been lengthened towards the east. This alteration may have been part of the reconstruction indicated in the charter of Henry V, dated 1414. As to the domestic buildings, they must have stood on the side of the church opposite to that of the transept, namely the north side, but there is no further evidence concerning them. An unusually fine tomb-slab, with the half effigy of a lady, and elaborate foliage, is now preserved in the grounds of Baron Hill, Beaumaris, and is illustrated, together with a slab bearing a cross and interlaced knotwork in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*.¹ The effigy has been ascribed to Joan, daughter of king John and wife of the founder, and appears to date from the middle of the thirteenth century.

The inventory of goods,² taken at the dissolution, mentions the quire with a fair table of alabaster over the high altar, four tables of alabaster in the church, a bell in the steeple, the vestry, brew-house, kitchen, hall, store-house and cloister. Here the term 'church' no doubt includes the transeptal chapels.

DENBIGH. WHITE FRIARS.

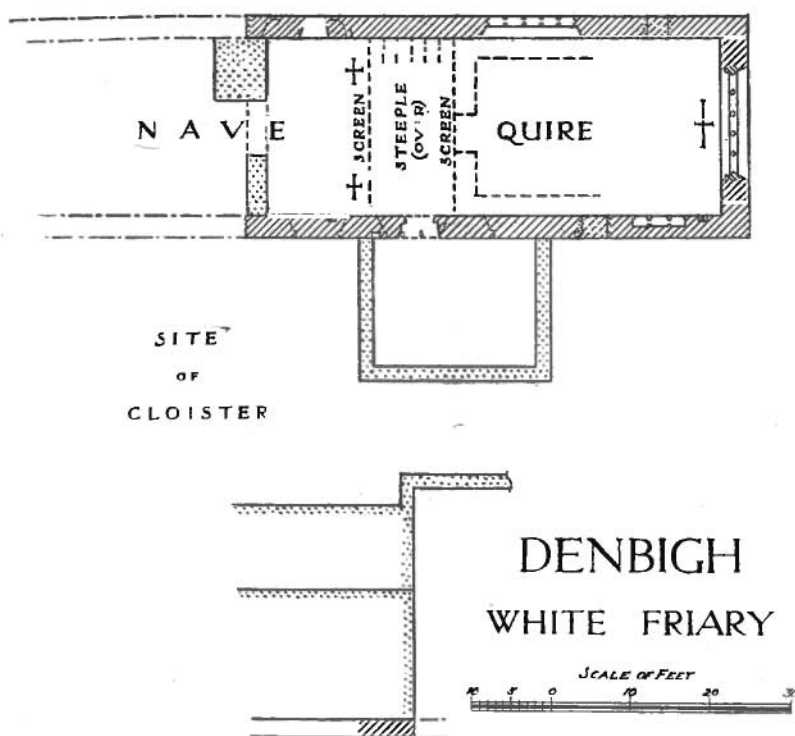
The White Friars were established at Denbigh in the last years of the thirteenth century, about 1289,³ and the surviving portion of their church dates from a few years later. It stands at the foot of the hill, on the north side of Denbigh town and is a building of considerable interest. The part remaining, 57½ feet by 22½ feet, is the friars' quire

¹ *Arch. Camb.* 3rd Ser., i, 80.

² *Ibid.* Orig. Documents, p. xliii.

³ *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 347.

and part of the nave of the church. The *Quire* occupied the eastern $33\frac{1}{2}$ feet and has a large east window (plate iv) of about 1300, altered early in the fifteenth century⁶ into a window of five cinquefoiled lights, with a transom and vertical tracery in the head. In the north wall is an opening of doubtful age and further west, an original window (plate v) set high in the wall, to avoid the stalls of the friars



and consisting of five lights with double mullions, cinquefoiled ogee heads externally and plain ogee heads internally. In the south wall is a piscina and three bays of sedilia, all of about 1300, and further west, a blocked window, corresponding in size and position with that just described. The limits of the quire, westwards, are determined by the position, one the north wall (plate v), of seven curved roof-

⁶ Tanner is cited in *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 347 as mentioning an enlarge-

ment of the church in 1399, which may be the date of the tracery of the east window.



WHITE FRIARS, DENBIGH
East Window



WHITE FRIARS, DENBIGH

(1) Remains of timber supports of steeple. (2) Window in N. wall

principals, carried down below the main wall-plate on to a lower wall-plate, supported, in its turn, by stone corbels. The same arrangement is indicated on the south wall opposite, by a recess in the wall. These principals supported the timber steeple, which is described, in the suppression inventory, as being like the louvre of a hall. This, so far as I am aware, is the only surviving trace of the timber steeple of a friars' church in the country, though several masonry towers remain intact. The space under a friars' steeple was kept open and served generally as the chief means of communication between the cloister and the quire and often with the cemetery to the north of the church as well. The space was closed to the east and west by walls or, as in this case, by screens. In the south wall is the doorway from the cloister and above it a three-light window. Immediately outside this doorway, and to the west of it, is a recess, probably for a stoup.

The small surviving portion of the *Nave* has, in the north wall, the eastern splay of a fourteenth-century window, blocked early in the sixteenth century, when another window was inserted at a higher level. This second window has a moulded internal lintel of oak extending west beyond the line of the existing west wall. In the south wall is a blocked window, probably original, and below it is the piscina of one of the two nave altars, placed against the west screen under the steeple. The existing west wall is comparatively modern, but how far the nave extended beyond it, cannot be determined, except by excavation; the broken end of the south wall is visible externally. It is unfortunate that the original roof of the building was destroyed by fire in 1898.

Of the domestic buildings, the only surviving fragment appears to be the lower part of the south wall of a barn, running parallel to the church at a distance of about 61 feet to the south.

The suppression survey,¹ after describing the aisleless church, roofed with slate, mentions the little cloister south of it, one or more of the flanking ranges of which, incorporated the adjoining cloister alley or allies; the chapter-house and bishop's lodging, on the east side; on the south side the dorter (possibly with the frater beneath it); on the

¹ *R. Com. Hist. Mons. Denbigh*, p. 70.

west side a little hall (possibly the guest-hall or the frater), the buttery and a chamber; an old kitchen, a gatehouse and an old stable, of which the positions are not specified. It should be noted that the traditional relative positions of the various buildings was not maintained at Denbigh as was not uncommonly the case in other friars' houses. The inventory of goods¹ mentions the quire with two tables of alabaster, two bells in the steeple, the vestry, chamber, hall, kitchen, brew-house and buttery.

NEWPORT. AUSTIN FRIARS.

The only house of Austin Friars in Wales was established at Newport in 1377.² It was situated between Church Street and the river Usk. In 1800 Cox³ describes the remains of the friary as consisting of several detached buildings, including a spacious hall with Gothic windows, the dilapidated body of the church and a small but elegant north transept. Mr. T. Wakeman,⁴ writing in 1859, says that all the remains had then been destroyed and gives an illustration of a sixteenth-century building and some other fragments, which had recently been demolished. There is now nothing of recognisable antiquity on the site, but it may be noted that the mention of the north transept implies that here, as at Llanfaes, the Irish type of church with the single transept was adopted.

I am indebted to Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler for the photographs of the Black Friars at Brecon and to Mr. W. J. Hemp for those of the White Friars at Denbigh.

The block of the plan of the Black Friars at Bangor has been kindly lent by the Cambrian Archaeological Society, and that of Buck's view of the Black Friars at Rhuddlan by the Flintshire Historical Society.

¹ *Arch. Camb.* Orig. Documents, p. xlii.

² *Arch. Camb.* 6th Ser., xiv, 332.

³ Cox. *Tour in Monmouthshire*, p. 56.

⁴ T. Wakeman. *The Monastery of Austin Friars at Newport* (1859). Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiq. Soc.