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The Conventual Seal of the White Friars, Chester
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The White Friars of Chester

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(Read 26th November, 1929).

PREFATORY NOTE.

An attempt has been made in the following notes to recover, from what is almost oblivion, the story of the local community of one of the reforming brotherhoods of the middle ages. The legends relating to the foundation of the order are romantic and interesting, and there is much that is worthy of record in the recital, which is offered as another link in the chain of histories of individual religious establishments of the City of Chester. The Author has gratefully to acknowledge assistance afforded by the late Mr. John Brownbill, M.A., and Mr. Stewart-Brown, M.A., F.S.A., F.S.Gen.

1.—THE ORDER OF FRIARS OF MOUNT CARMEL.



THE Carmelite Order, in England called the White Friars from a white mantle worn over a brown habit, unlike the Grey and Black Friars, claimed a descent of great antiquity. Tradition says that Elias founded a community of hermits on Mount Carmel, and that they continued there without a break until the Christian era. Members were said to have been present at St. Peter's first sermon on the Day of Pentecost, and, as a result, they were converted and built a chapel on the mountain in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who, as well as the Apostles, enrolled herself in the order. The legend is picturesque, but, of course, cannot be accepted

as serious history. It is true that a Greek monk, who visited the Holy Land in the year 1185, mentions certain ruins of an ancient building on Mount Carmel, but the foundation of the Carmelite Order must be ascribed to a crusader of Calabria, named Berthold, who, with ten companions, in the middle of the twelfth century, established himself as a hermit near the cave of Elias on Mount Carmel.

About the year 1210 the primitive Carmelite rule of sixteen articles was ordained. It was purely eremitical; that is, the monks were to live in separate cells or huts, and devote themselves to work and prayer, in silence, seclusion, abstinence, and austerity. They were to meet only in the oratory for liturgical services. In the year 1226 the rule received papal approbation, and, owing to disasters to the christian arms in the Holy Land, about 1240 the order migrated to Cyprus, and from there to Sicily, France, and England, where Edward I. gave them their house in London. At this time "the Carmelites are said to have despised learning, but afterwards they found it necessary to pay some attention to the studies of the time."¹ The first general chapter of the order was held at Aylesford, in 1247, and St. Simon Stock, an English anchorite, was elected general. During his generalate the institution was adapted to the condition of western lands, the austerities were mitigated, and the life turned from eremitical to cenobitical, but on the mendicant rather than monastic model. The Carmelites became one of the great orders of mendicant friars, but, as the last to be formed, they gave place to the others in all general processions.²

Spreading all over Western Europe the Carmelites gained great popularity. In the course of time further relaxations of the rule were introduced and caused a division of the order into two parties, conventuals and observants, with resulting mischief, as in the case of the Grey Friars. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries various attempts at reformation were made, and resulted in the formation of semi-independent congregations owing a titular obedience to the head of the order. The Carmelite Friars seem to

have flourished to a special degree in England where, at the Dissolution of the monasteries, there were some forty friaries.⁵

2.—ESTABLISHMENT IN CHESTER.

Canon Morris suggests that the Friars, and it is evident that he has in mind three of the four chief orders, were established in Chester by Earl Randle Blundeville some time between 1221 and his death in 1232.⁴ It has been shewn elsewhere that this noble did *not* establish the Grey Friars in Chester,⁵ and it is clear that he cannot have established the White Friars, seeing that they did not arrive in this country until the year 1240, or immediately after.

Speed states that the White Friars house in Chester was in St. Martin's parish and that it was built by "Thomas Stadham, gent," in the year 1279. Tanner repeats Speed's statement,⁶ and so do Dugdale,⁷ Ormerod,⁸ Hemingway,⁹ and Morris¹⁰—some of them adding that the house was in the south-west part of the city, "then a suburb," near the street still called White Friars.

Now, as will be seen later, the *benefaction*, for it cannot be called *foundation*, of the house by Thomas Stadham or Stathom, did not occur until 1367, nearly ninety years after 1279. It would further appear that the actual establishment of the White Friars in Chester did not take place in 1279, but in or about 1289, or 1290, when a certain Hugh Payn granted seven messuages "in a suburb of the city of Chester" to the Friars of Mount Carmel for their habitation and in order that they might erect a church. Before this gift could be made absolute the permission of the King had to be obtained, and the following abstracts of the writ and inquisition *ad quod dampnum* relate to the case.

Edward, by the grace of God, king of England, etc., to his chosen and faithful subject, Reginald de Grey, justice of Chester, greeting. We command you, by the testimony of honest and law abiding men of your bailiwick (whereby the facts may be the more reliably ascertained), to make diligent enquiry as to whether it would be prejudicial to us, or to our said town, or to anyone, if we permit Hugh Payn to grant and assign seven messuages in our aforesaid town of Chester to

our chosen in Christ the Friars of Mount Carmel for ever in pure and perpetual alms, for their habitation and also to enable them to build a Church. And, if the proposed grant would be hurtful, then to who, and to what extent, and of whom the said Hugh holds the messuages, and by what services, and what they are worth per annum, and if the said Hugh possesses other land and tenements sufficient to pay his debts and customary dues, etc. Dated at Wodestoke, 10 Apr. 18 [Edw. I., 1290].

In response to this order an inquisition was taken at Chester on Friday next before the Feast of St. George 18 Edw. I. [21 Apr. 1290] respecting seven messuages belonging to Hugh Payn in a suburb of the city of Chester by the oaths of Robert de Candelan, Richard de Candelan, Robert the brother of Ithell, Thomas de Warwyke, Henry de Porter, Handekin de Bromley, William Dunfugell, John Dunfugell, Richard son of Warin, Walter the Goldsmith, Hermon the Baker, and Robert the Tailor, who said that the aforesaid messuages are held of the parish church of St. John of Chester, of the canons of the said church, that the greater and smaller tithes and oblations are valued at 5s. yearly, and that the said rent is not injurious to the king nor to the citizens nor to others. They also said that the said Hugh granted to the said Friars of Mount Carmel in Chester the seven messuages of which he held two of William Baggot [? by service] at the annual rent of 1d. and the other five of William de Newcastle by service at the annual rent of 1d. The messuages are valued at 20½ [?s.], and the said Hugh possesses other lands and messuages in the city sufficient to cover the aforesaid services, etc.¹¹

As was the case with the Grey Friars, it is probable that the Carmelites (whose patron saint was the Virgin Mary) met with some opposition in their scheme to found a house of their order in Chester from members of other religious bodies already established in the city, and that the miracle, which is hereafter related as having taken place in the abbey, was needed to overcome hostility. The account is taken from a little volume concerning the order in the handwriting of John Bale and now in the Bodleian

Library.¹² Bale relates that "at the city of Chester in England, wherein certain persons took umbrage at the Carmelites and asserted that they served St. Mary under no more special title than other religious orders, Abbot Thomas¹³ of St. Werburgh's monastery once ordained a general procession to be made to St. Werburgh. In the abbey, on the south side of the choir, at the head of the tomb of Godestald (a hermit who had once been emperor), there was an image of Blessed Mary the Virgin, by which God worked many miracles. When therefore the procession took place, and passed by that image with a great crowd of people, a stand was made near it. But as the Carmelites were passing by it and honoured it, the image raised itself up and with its finger pointing to them said in the hearing of all: 'Lo! my brothers beloved and forechosen,'" as if to each it should say that text—'He is made to me a brother especially,' (*Ecclus.* xxix). When the envious ones had seen this they did penance and afterwards paid great honour to the order."

3. STORY OF THE HOUSE AT CHESTER.

Under the date 1301 there occurs the first extant record of a considerable number of testamentary bequests to the Friars. Thomas de Macclesfield made his will in this year—it was proved in 1303—and left to the Friars of Mount Carmel in Chester half a mark.¹⁴

In 1309 and the next year a case occurred in which the prior of the White Friars and a Chester citizen and his wife were concerned. The first record of this is dated 7 July 2 Edw. II. (1309) when William Walran and Christiana his wife proceeded in the Chester Portmote Court against the prior and desired judgment and, afterwards, by the aid of the court, Margery, who was the wife of Thomas de Elton, was called to warrant. A day was given to them on which to appear, namely the Monday next after the Feast of St. James (28 July), and meanwhile the plaintiffs desired to take counsel of the judges if that could be done.¹⁵ On the 18 August the action against the prior was "put off agayne

by the judicatore to consider further." A week later, 25 August, it appears that the prior had commenced a counter suit and this was "put off to Monday of St. Denys" (? 13 October).

On 6 Feb. 3 Edw. II (1310) the King addressed a mandate to the mayor and sheriffs of Chester, instructing them to bring to trial Brother William, prior of the Friars of the Order of Mount Carmel of Chester, in order that, in accordance with justice, without delay and according to the custom of the city of Chester, he may deliver to William Walran and Christiana his wife the proper dowry due to the said Christiana out of the free tenement which belonged to Randle Godweyt,¹⁶ formerly her husband, in Chester, from which she had had nothing and from which, they complain that the prior had deformed them, as she says, and so far as they can reasonably, that is, lawfully, prove what the Friars ought to give them, lest he, the King, shall have any further complaint of lack of justice, by witness of his justiciar, Payne Tibetot.¹⁷ This record is included in the Portmote records, under date 8 (? 9) February, and a remark is made—"so a precept went to warn him [the prior] etc."¹⁸ The prior in question was William de Ho-etote and presumably the plaintiffs won the action or came to a compromise, as it is stated that the prior did not prosecute his suit.¹⁹

In the year 1317-8 the cemetery of the friary is mentioned as the scene of an assault.²⁰

Some years later, there is a note of a suit in the Pentice Court²¹ relating that on Friday the Morrow of St. Michael in 2 Edw. III. (30 Sept., 1328), William de Luda, prior of the Order of St. Mary of Carmel, with Roger de Notingham and John Ulkell his "confratres" made complaint against Thomas de Strangwas (Strangeways), Henry Hurel,²² and William Dalby, executors of John de Deresbur (Daresbury)²³, on account of a certain debt. Alan de Wheteley²⁴ is named as bondman in this action, which doubtless originated in a dispute relating to a legacy left to the Friars by Daresbury.

On All Saints' Day, 1348, Sir Gilbert de Haydoc purchased from Richard Pigas, prior of the Carmelite Friars and his convent in Chester, a perpetual chantry within the house for the sum of forty marks.²⁵

John Bars, by his will dated in 1348,²⁶ left directions that his body should be buried in the church of the Friars Carmelite of Chester, and that 40s. should be expended in wax to be burnt about the body at the time of the burial. Bars left one shilling each to Friars Richard Pigas, Walter de Cherburne, William Blound, and John de Lostock, and, as he does not mention the other friaries in the city, it may be assumed that all these Friars were attached to the Carmelite house, as was certainly Richard Pigas.

It would appear that about the year 1350 some privilege was sought by the Friars, and that this brought about the issue of a writ of *ad quod damnum* instructing the King's escheator to ascertain, by means of a jury, whether the desired grant would be prejudicial to his own interest or to that of any other person. As a result, on Friday in the feast of St. Gregory the Pope, 24 Edw. III. (1350), an inquisition was held before the mayor and sheriffs,²⁷ and it was found that a grant of the lane on the north part of the priory of the Friars of Carmel, namely from Eignion Bagh's²⁸ doorway, continuing to a lane called Berewardelone, containing four ells in length and five in width, would not be injurious to the interests of the lord the earl or "other citizens." Neither would a grant of the said (*sic*) lane which lay on the west part of the priory, namely, from the Grange (or barn)²⁹ which at one time belonged to Gilbert Dunfoull³⁰, continuing to the "Whitefrerelone," and contains 57 ells in length and 5 in width.

It is difficult to see how a lane on the north of the Friary, could have had any direct junction with Bearward's lane, now Linenhall Street,³¹ but the further difficulties raised by the exceedingly short lengths of the two lanes is removed by an entry in the Cheshire Chamberlain's Account for the year in question. This records the receipt of 16s. 4d. from the Prior and Convent of the Friars Carmelite of Chester

for having the seal of a certain charter of the lord's gift, for the soul of the said lord, for *two parcels* of two lanes by the said Friars' house in Chester.³²

The corresponding accounts for a subsequent year, 1353-4, shew the Earl granting £6 13s. 4d. to the Friars Carmelite of Chester, as well as sums to other religious bodies in the city.³³

The next record concerning the White Friars is dated in 1353, and a translated abstract is given below :—

Edward, etc., to our well beloved clerk, master John de Burnham, chamberlain of our county of Chester, Greeting. We command you to see that the "Freres Carmes" of the city of Chester have eight oaks in the parts of Pecforten as they had from John de Seint Pierre together with the tops and branches belonging to them, in the same way as they had had from the said Master John, as well as permission to carry them away from the said place without any hindrance or disturbance, etc. Given at Chester 20 September in the year, etc., of the king of England 27 and of France 14.³⁴

On 7 Oct., 1354, Edward, Prince of Wales, informed John de Brunham, his chamberlain of Chester, that he had pardoned "the Friars of the Order of Our Lady of Carme in our city of Chester" for purchasing certain plots of land in the city, held of the prince in chief, without his permission. Edward, at the same time, pardoned Richard de Wevere, and Joan his wife, Richard le Bruyne, and Robert de Hawardyn for alienating the land to the friars without permission. The record goes on to state that, the prince, in addition to the pardon, gave the Friars leave to acquire, for the enlargement of their house, land 200 feet in length and 160 feet in breadth, contiguous to their "mansion," and he gave permission to those by whom the said places were granted to alienate them for ever. The prince further confirmed the Friars in their house which they had had of his predecessors, Earls of Chester. This, of course, refers to the grant by Hugh Payn by permission of the then king. The prince concluded by commanding his officer to issue, letters of pardon, licence, and confirmation in due form.³⁵ In connection with this, the Accounts of the Chamberlain

of Chester for the period 1354-5 contain an entry of 16s. 4d. paid by the Friars of Mount Carmel for the fee of the seal by which the prince pardoned them for the trespass, without any fine being paid therefor.³⁶

1358, Sep. 8. The Prince, from Vale Royal Abbey, ordered John de Brunham, to deliver out of his treasure to the Carmelite Friars of Chester, 13s. 4d.^{36a}

Randle Whytlof, left 2s. to the Carmelites of Chester, by his will, dated 1361.³⁷

Five years later, 30 June, 1366, Roger de Swetenham, left to the Brothers of Mount Carmel in Chester, thirty shillings and three pence.³⁸

In the same year, in the Register of Robert de Stretton, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, the following Friars were admitted to some office "According to the constitution of the Cathedral."

Fr. John Querdray.

Fr. Thomas Becot (? Belot).

Fr. Richard de Drax (? Dounes).

They are all described as being of the Order of Mount Carmel, and belonging to "the Convent of Chester."³⁹ The office to which the Friars were admitted is not stated, but in another register, Bishop Norbury's, a Friar is shewn as having been admitted to exercise the office of Preacher and Confessor in the Diocese.

Among the deeds preserved at Hornby Chapel, near Lancaster, there is a grant, dated St. Jerome's day (31 July), 1367, from the prior and convent of the Friars of the order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel dwelling in Chester to Thomas de Statham and Isabel his wife. In return for gifts for the maintenance of the Friars and the building (? re-building or extension) of their house, the Friars undertook to make a special commemoration of their benefactors in the daily conventual mass; and, further, *since they had hitherto had no founder* they would regard them as founders, so that they, and their heirs after them, should have the title and benefits which a founder might

claim. The whole convent bound themselves to the fulfilment of the contract, and the names are given :—

Richard de Downes, prior.
 Thomas Pyk, reader.
 John Querdray, sub-prior.
 Mathew Fulbak.
 John Vanne.
 Thomas Belot
 John Whitey.
 Hugh Feuer.
 John Hepe (? Hope).
 Robert de Ormeskirk.
 William de Litherpool.
 John Fawkener.
 Walter de Chiltenham.
 John Horselee.

In addition, the licence of the provincial prior, Thomas Broom, and the assent of the whole English province in chapter at Winchester, had been obtained.

The seal of the prior and that of the convent were formerly attached to the grant, as also were those of the provincial prior and the chapter, but now only fragments of two seals remain. A small part of one shews the Infant Jesus in His Mother's arms; the other shews the Crucifixion, with St. Mary and St. John standing by the cross, at the foot of which there is a shield bearing the three leopards of England, with a Friar in supplication at each side.⁴⁰

It is obvious from this that the "gifts" bestowed by Thomas de Statham and his wife must have been very considerable.⁴¹

The next incident in the history of the house occurs in 1386 in connection with the marriage of Sir William Brereton, of Brereton, with Anilla, daughter of Sir Hugh Venables, and related to Sir William in the fourth degree on each side, as they were both descended from Sir Ralph Vernon. The marriage took place at Audlem in 1386, and was confirmed by a dispensation granted by the Pope through the medium of the prior of the White Friars of

Chester.⁴² This document was among the "evidences in the hands of William Brereton of Brereton esq. in 1578," and a transcript of it was made by Randle Holme. A translation is given below :—

We, Richard de Dounes, prior of the Friars of Carmel of the house of the Blessed Mary in the city of Chester, by virtue of the papal authority entrusted to us in this region, absolve, and restore to the communion of the faithful, and to the sacraments of the church, William, son of Sir William Brereton, knight, and Avenilla, daughter of Hugh de Venables, from every sentence of suspension, excommunication, and interdict which they were incurring by reason of a marriage contract between them (contrary to the canonical decrees) in the fourth degree of consanguinity on either side having entered upon, solemnized, and contracted, a salutary penance firstly having been imposed. In witness of which thing, because our seal is unknown to many, we have procured the seal of the office of the lord Archbishop (*sic*) of Chester to be affixed to these presents, and the authority of the office of the said lord Archbishop of Chester (*sic*). At the special request of the said Brother Richard we have affixed the seal of our office to these presents. Dated at Chester 12 Cal. June in the year of our Lord 1386.⁴³

Ormerod states that the indulgence was granted in consequence of the services of Sir William in the crusade against the intrusive king of Castile.⁴⁴ This is apparently based on another dispensation granted by Brother Walter Diss, of the Order of Mount Carmel, by authority of Urban VI., to William son of William Brereton (to the same effect as the other dispensation) who was going on the crusade against John, son of Henry, who had intruded into the kingdom of Castile and Leon; dated at London in the house of the order, 1 May, 1386. The Pope had made John of Gaunt "Standard Bearer of the Cross for the Pope and the Roman Church," for John, son of Henry, was an adherent of the Anti-pope.

In 1391 Nicholas d'Audley, lord of Red Castle and Helegh, bequeathed sums of money to the Friars of Chester.⁴⁵

In the next year Sir Lawrence Dutton bequeathed "to the four Orders of religious brethren of Chester and Warrington, to each of their convents twenty shillings."⁴⁶

On 16 Feb., 1398, Brother James Hyrleton, prior of the Carmelites of Chester was licensed to hear confessions.⁴⁷

On the day after Bolingbroke entered Chester, that is on 10 Aug., 1399, he apprehended Piers de Legh, of Lyme, a staunch supporter of King Richard.^{47a} What his offence was, or whether he was given the formality of a trial, is not known, but his decapitation took place on the day of his arrest. Probably his only "crime" was loyalty to his sovereign in a determination to preserve for Richard some charge left in his keeping. The body was treated with ignominy and the head was fixed on the East Gate "until the Carmelites, as soon as they dared, took it down, and interred it with his body in their Church."⁴⁸ A later manuscript relates that at this "time the head of Peter de Legh, by the decree of the duke, without cause was cut off and was placed upon the East Gate of Chester—on whose soul may God be merciful—and his body in the year following [was buried] in the church of the Carmelites of Chester. In the next year when all the insurgents [rose] against the magnates on account of the tallage the head was buried with the body."⁴⁹ The remains are said to have been subsequently removed to the Lyme chancel of the Church at Macclesfield and an inscription placed above them."⁴⁸

On 20 May, 1400, Henry, Prince of Wales, in response to a petition from the prior and convent setting forth that they were so impoverished by a great murrain and a raid committed in the parts round about them, that they could not serve God or live honestly without aid, gave the Carmelites permission to grind their corn at the mills of Dee, free of toll, and to be for three years "housefre" and "tolfre" in the same mills.⁵⁰

In 1402-3, Reginald Hope, a member of a well-known local family seated at Broughton, was buried in the White Friars.⁵¹

Among the cases recorded in the local courts is one, under date 1412-13, wherein William, a servant of the Carmelites, broke open the house of Alan by night and beat him and his wife.⁵²

About this time, John Coly, of Chester, died, and by his will of 1413, left to the Carmelite Friars of Chester 6s. 8d. to celebrate on behalf of his soul two trentals and one mass "*cum nota, cum exequiis mortuorum.*"⁵³ John Dedwode also left the White Friars 6s. 8d.⁵⁴

John Butler, on 22 Feb., 1420, bequeathed a sum of money in alms for the repose of his soul to the Friars of the four Friaries in Chester, Warrington, Preston, and Lancaster.⁵⁵ It is not clear to which of the Chester Friaries this legacy was left.

In the year 1424-5, about eleven o'clock on a certain night, a band of armed men, under William de Wodeay and Richard de Wermyncham, invaded the convent, broke open several doors and acted so riotously that the great bell of the church was rung, causing much alarm to the whole city. The rioters apparently included Robert de Thenwall, skynner; John Madok, wright; and William the servant of William de Stretton.⁵⁶

Richard Fyton, in his will dated 20 Feb., 1436, and proved 2 May, 1438, left 6s. 8d. to each order of Friars in Chester.⁵⁷

By his will, dated on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul (25 Jan.), 1439, and proved 19 May in the same year, John Hope directed that his body should be buried before the altar of the Blessed Mary the Virgin in the place where the chaplain stands to celebrate Mass in the Church of the Friars of Carmel of Chester near the burial place of his father, mother and brothers. He left 40 pounds of wax for burning about the body at his funeral, and a third part of this wax, as well as 6s. 8d., to the aforesaid Friars.⁵⁸

On the Monday after St. Wolfran's Feast, in 1454, John Somerford, Hugh, and John Geddenay, Carmelite Friars, with several adherents are charged with wandering through the city, armed, to the terror of the citizens.⁵⁹

There appears to have been a feud between the monks of the Abbey and the Carmelite Friars, as several cases are recorded in the Mayor's books where the members of the two bodies are bound over to keep the peace to one another.

For example, in 1462-3, Hugh Stockport, of Saint Werburgh's was bound over to keep the peace with Henry Colley, a friar of the order of Carmel.⁶⁰

Of the many Letters of Confraternity that must have been granted by the Friary there exists a transcript of one only. This was issued to a certain William Qwytherst or Withers and his wife in A.D. 1463. The original was seen by one of the Randle Holmes on 23 March, 1652, who had it from "Mr. Goulbourne of Eccleston preacher." The seal had been broken off, but Holme made a somewhat faulty transcript of the document⁶¹ and an imperfect translation of it is given below :—

Brother Richard, local prior and servant of the brothers of the Order of Blessed Mary Mother of God of Mount Carmel dwelling in the convent of Chester to our beloved in Christ William Qwytherst and Joan his wife . . . health and heavenly kingdoms through the outpourings of prayers. Diligently considering and commending in the Lord the sincere veneration which you have for our Order through reverence for Christ and the glorious Virgin Mary, by whose title our order is specially distinguished, as well as other things, and specially those concerning the salvation of souls, as far as we can in God we desire to make a saving return : Therefore, by these presents, we grant to you a perpetual participation of all masses, prayers, fastings, watchings, preachings, abstinences, labours and other good works which by our brothers resident in the same convent the loving kindness of Our Saviour may deign to effect both in life and after death : Adding and granting of our special grace, we will that when the memory of your departures shall be announced in our conventual chapter, the same [celebration] shall be made for you in all and every detail as is commonly accustomed to be made there for the brothers of our Order deceased. In witness of all which premisses the seal of my office as prior is appended to these presents. Given in our convent aforesaid in the year of Our Lord one thousand four hundred and sixty three.

Dame Cecill de Torbok, lady of Torbok, bequeathed 3s. 4d. to the "white freers" of Chester by her will dated 7 Mar., 1466.⁶²

Richard Cholmondeley the younger, by his will of 15 Jun., *circa*, 1488, bequeathed to each of the Chester Friaries 15d.⁶³

In 1494-5 John Ball, a friar of the order of Carmel of Chester insulted John Reyde, prior of the house and church of the Blessed Mary of the order of Carmel in Chester and with one "*gestis*" worth 4d. wounded him and drew blood by force and arms and against the peace, etc., and was fined 3s. 4d.⁶⁴ Between the years 1493-6 this John Ball is bound over several times to keep the peace to the brethren of his order.⁶⁵

Again, in 1494-5 [10 Hen. VII.] Richard Bowys, a friar [? of Mount Carmel] was fined 8d. for assaulting Henry Percy of the same order with a hanger.⁶⁵

John Hankey, of Aldford, by his will of 16 May, 1494 (proved 20 Apr., 1497), bequeathed to each of the orders of Friars of Chester 20d.⁶⁶

The will of John Hawarden, of Chester, was dated 13 Nov., 1496, and proved 2 Mar., 1496-7, and in it he left directions that his body should be buried "in the Church of the Whyte Freres of Chester in suche place as shalbe thoughte convenient by the prior of the same place, his brethren and by my frendes." "xiiij white gownes w^t hodes [to be] yeven unto William the belman and xij pouere to bere torches the day of my burying xij torches to be borne and brente aboute me xiiij or xiiij serges of wax w^t a principall as my frendys shall thynke conveyent to be brent at my dirige and masse vj of the said torches [to] be yeven unto the Church of the Whyte Freres aforesaid Out of a rent of twenty shillings of a meas in Brigge street my feoffee after the decease of my said wife . . . [shall] make a sufficient estate to the prior and convent of White Freres aforesaid and their successors of vj^s. viij^d. yearly, parcel of the said rent, that the said prior and convent and their successors may therefore yerly say an obite for my sowle and the sowles of my ffadre and modre and all xpen sowles I gif unto and bequeath unto the White Freres of Chester v marks. I gif and bequeath unto the said Freres xx^s. which my brother Thomas bequest unto

“ theym I gif and bequeath for a Tombe to be had
 “ over my beriall in the White Freres a forsaied x^{li}. of
 “ money.”⁶⁷

Matthew Johnson, alias Hewster, citizen of Chester, by his will dated 22 Feb., 1496-7, left 3s. to be divided between the three orders of Friars in the city.⁶⁸

1497. Mar. 31. Thomas Dedwood, of Chester, gentleman, left to each of the three houses of Friars within the city of Chester, 6s. 8d.^{68a}

In 1498-9 Thomas Haydon or Huydon, a friar of the order of Preachers on the Thursday next after the Feast of Circumcision within the liberties of the city of Chester made an affray by force and arms on George Palmer, prior of the order of Carmelites, with an “ armicudium ” called a dagger, worth 12d. on account of the skin rolled about it.⁶⁹

Henry Raineforde, priest, made his will on 14 May, 1505, and bequeathed to every “ fryere howse ” of Chester a torch if his executors could so “ accorde with them that “ have right and title to the same and redeme them with “ other recompenses.” He also left to each Friary 3s. 4d. “ And every fryer being a preest that be at my Dirige and “ Masse to have to his propre vse iiijd.”⁷⁰

1505, Jul. 23. Ralph Davenport, citizen and alderman of Chester left two torches “ to each of the orders of friars within the said city and to every of them ten shillings to celebrate a trental for the salvation of my soul immediately after my death.”⁷¹

1508, Sep. 16. Roger Smyth, of the city of Chester, citizen, by his will, left directions that his body should be buried in “ the Church of the White Freers there in the “ Chapell anenst the Revestey dore and for my ley stalle “ and the freers to pray for my soul I bequeath vj^{li}. xiijs. “ viij^d. to be stowed waren and disposed in and upon the “ said freers house or church after the mynde and discretion of myn executors and overseers.”⁷²

1508, Sep. 20. William Egerton bequeathed “ to the “ three freers in Chester to praye for my wyf and me and “ ycheon of them to say a trentall xxx^s. amongst theym.”⁷³

The next notice of the White Friars occurs in 1509 when a Chester friar and the prior of the Carmelites were indicted for breaking into the parish church of Frodsham, and stealing certain articles from it. The record of this gives a curious illustration of the benefits arising to both clergy and laity in the original exercise of the "benefit of clergy." The account of this case occurs in the Pleas of the Crown at Chester, before Sir Thomas Englefield, knight, on the Wednesday in the second week of Lent in the twenty fourth year of the reign of King Henry VII. (7 Mar., 1508-9). The jury present on oath that Christopher Burtonwoode, late of Chester, friar, and George, prior of the house and church of the Blessed Mary of the order of Carmel in the City of Chester, on the Friday in the first week of Lent in the twenty third year of the reign of King Henry VII., at Frodsham, broke into and entered the parish church of Frodesham, and feloniously took and carried away one cross of copper gilt [*cupra deaurata*] of the value of four marks and a certain little casket [*pixillam*] of silver of the value of ten marks, part of the goods and chattels of the parish of Frodesham, in the custody of Henry Brownwent and Richard Hogh, churchwardens of the parish of Frodesham aforesaid at the time. Christopher was found guilty and seeks the benefit of clergy, etc. And on this [? the justice] gives the said Christopher a book before the Court and he reads as a clerk, and he delivers [him] to Henry Sherman, bachelor of law, chaplain, and to Ralph Byrkenhead, gentleman, acting in place of John Veysey, doctor of law, archdeacon, charged with the seeking and claiming [as clerks] of seculars and any others incurring danger for accusations, etc.⁷⁴

1511, Dec., 3. Thomas Roncorne bequeathed "to the three houses of freres every place vi^s. viij^d."⁷⁵

1514/5. Jan. 4. Rafe Huxley, of Tattenhall, bequeathed "to the White freers of Chester, iij^s. iv^d."⁷⁶

1518, Aug. 24. Nicholas Deykyn, of Chester, feltcapper, bequeathed "to every of the iij orders of freeres for iij "trentals of masses"⁷⁷

1519, Apr. 17, William Rogerson, of Chester, alderman, bequeathed "to every of iij orders of freris x^s.⁷⁸

1520, Dec. 4. Margaret Hawarden, of Chester, in her will, directed that her body should be "buried in the Church " of O^r Lady of the Qwite Frerys on the north side in the " tombe." She bequeathed " to the makynge of the tombe " and reparacon of the said church iij^{li} vj^s viij^d and my " fornes of ledde at the ouersight of the prior and myn " executors; the prior of the said place and his brethren to " kepe myn obite days and to pray for me and thos yt I am " bounden to pray for. Item I gif to George Palmer prior " of the said White Frerys to pray for me x^s. Item to frere " John Wodwarde iij^s. iij^d. . . . And this is my will y^t S^r " Henry Devyas pray and say masse x years after my " deceste for my soule my husbandes soule for the soules " of my father and mother John Warren and Isabell his " wif, for the soules of S^r John Waren, S^r Henry Waren " sometyme parsons of Stokport, for the soule of S^r Otuell " Hoghton, my frendez soules, and all Cristen soules. And " to have for his wagez for his lab^r v^{li}. every yere and to " synge at the White Frerys or at Saynt Olaves church as " he thinkes most according for the tyme. And if the said " S^r Henry dye or [*i.e.* before] the said x yeres be fully " endet then I will that a nother prist well disposed be " taken w^t myne executo^rs and my overseers in to the " serves to pray for me and thos before named and to have " for his wagez for his labo^r iij^{li} vi^s. viij^d. a yere as longe " as the money will endure Item I bequeath to the " coostes of my burying and for all thinges necessary " therto pertenyng xx^{ti} markes. . . .⁷⁹

1520-1. Feb. 12. Peter Stanley, presumably Pyers Stanley, of Ewloe Castle, appointed escheator and sheriff of co. Merioneth, 22 Sep., 1485, stated, in his will, that, there was, in the custody of the Prior of the Whitefriars in Chester, a silver salt half gilt and twelve spoons, which he gave to the said prior and his house and in return desired their prayers.⁸⁰

1524-5. Feb. 26. Richard Fletcher, the elder, baker, of the parish of "St. Bryds," desired that his body should "be buried in the Whyte Frerys affore the image of O^r Blessed Lady" and bequeathed "for my laystall to the Whyte Frerys 3^s. 4^d. Also I bequeath 10^s. 0^d. for a trentall of masses to be songen in the Whyte Frerys for my soule. Also I will that a Frere syng every week . . . masse for my soule duryng the space of vii yers and that masse shalbe said on that day that I shall depart on." The names of the witnesses include "Rich. my son the prior of Whyte Frerys."⁸¹

1525-6, Feb. 10. James Godyker, of Woodchurch, bequeathed to the 3 orders of Freers in Chester to "every house 3^s 4^d."⁸²

1526, Jul. 3. Hugh Starkey, of Olton, bequeathed "to ye Whyte Freres of Chester to say a trentall of masses for me x^s."⁸³

1526, Dec. 8. William Danald, of Chester, bequeathed "to the three houses of fryers in Chester a bushel of barley to pray for my soul."⁸⁴

1527, Aug. 30. Thomas Sparke, doctor of Canon Law, left directions for "my bodye to be bured w^t in the white freris of Chester in thar chancell affore the revesture durr by my cosyng Roger Smyth and thai to have for my laystall xiii^s iiiii^d. . . . Item I will that every preest that comyth to my dirige and masse to pray for my sawle have iiiii^d and the poor people to have bredd. Also I will that the lights of wax that shalbe at my ffunerall be made as myn executors and overseer shall thynke moost according w^t owte greate pompe or pryed. . . . Item to the iii orders freris x^s that is to every howse iii^s iiiii^d to the paracon of there howses . . ." The testator directed that the residue of his goods, etc., should be sold and the amount realized together with what was left over from his funeral to "be att the disposicon of myn executors to wage a prest y^t is sadde virtuouse and gud of levyng and of goud name and fame to pray for my soule my faders mother and such as shalbe named and all cristen soules and the said prest

“ to syng masse w^t in the white frers at the hyght alter and
 “ he to have my missal to say masse upon as long as he
 “ doith syng for me and then the forsaid boke to remayne
 “ to the place.”⁸⁵

1527/8, Mar. 23. Elizabeth Hurleston, of Chester, widow, bequeathed “ to the whyte ffrers x^s.” George Palmer, “ prior of whyte freres ” is a witness to the will.⁸⁶

1531, May 17. Ralph Lawton, rector of Bebington, bequeathed “ to the iii orders of ffrerys at Chester to be
 “ evenly distribute amonges theyr iii howses iiiii^s for to
 “ have theyr praers for the welth of my soule and all cristen
 “ soules.”⁸⁷

1535, Dec. 25. Thomas Myddleton, of Chester, alderman, willed “ that every order of the ffriers of Chester have x^s.”⁸⁸

In 1537 Sir Piers Dutton of Hatton was sheriff of the county, and a number of charges were made against him in this capacity. During the summer one of Dutton's creatures, a coiner and poacher of the name of Feldy, was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death, but was taken out of the custody of Sir William Brereton, at Chester Castle, and taken to Hatton by Sir Piers Dutton who provided him with a confessor (presumably another of his creatures) and delivered him up on 4 Aug. It is related that when the said Piers Feldy was standing at Boughton, at the Cross there, before he went to execution he openly required a discreet ghostly father to hear his confession, although the priest appointed by Dutton had been with him all the previous day, and was there present at the time, having accompanied him from Hatton. Many priests and friars were standing by, and one of them, John Hurleton, prior of the White Friars of Chester, “ a very discreet man,” came forward at this request, but the servants of Sir Piers, in whose custody Feldy was, would not allow anyone to so act except the priest appointed by their master.⁸⁹

4.—THE UPHEAVAL.

Although the Carmelite Friary of Chester could not, by any means, have been a wealthy community towards the close of its existence as such, it does not appear to have

been reduced to the condition of poverty reached by the Chester Franciscans, and the inventory of the goods and chattels in the friary at the time of the Dissolution is fairly extensive.

The anxious days which must have been passed by the brothers culminated on 15 Aug. 1538, when Dr. Richard Ingworth, suffragan bishop of Dover (sometime a prior of the Black Friars of Rowley Regis), and appointed by the King to be visitor of the houses of the mendicant friars, in the presence of Fulk Dutton mayor, and certain aldermen, etc., entered the house of the White Friars in Chester, and "accepted" the surrender by the prior and his brethren of all the conventual property. The visitor then made an inventory, delivered it and the house with the contents into the hands of the mayor, and handed letters of discharge to each Friar. The formal "voluntary" surrender of the Chester White Friary is worded very similarly to other documents of the kind, and reads as follows:—

"Md. thys xv day of august in the xxx yere of kynge
 "henry the viijth whe the prior & convente of the Whyte
 "fryers in West Chehire w^tout any coaccyon [compulsion]
 "or cosell [counsel] but for very pouerte have and do resyne
 "ow^r howse w^t all y^t to y^t be longe In to the handds of
 "the lord vysytor to y^e kyngs vse besechenge hys grace to
 "be goode & gracyous to vs. In wytenes to thys byll whe
 "subscrybe ow^r namys w^t ow^r proper handds the day &
 "yere before wryten

Johannes Hurleton prior

Robertus Drake sub prior

Ricardus Bastwell

Thome Talyor

George Palm'

Richardus Glasior

Richardus Allkoc⁹⁰

Nicholas Segwyke

Rondulphus Catha⁹¹

Thomas Thornton⁹²

The inventory of the friary, made by Ingworth, is interesting. It is headed:—

“ The Whyte Fryers of Chest^r. ”

“ Thys indent^r makyth mensyon of all y^e stuffe of y^e Whyte Fryers off Chest^r deliu’d to Mr. Fowke a Dutton mayor there & to harry gee and Raffe goodman ald^rmen to saue tyll y^e kyngs plesure be forther knowyn. ”

The places mentioned are the Sextry, the Choir, the Chancel, the Steeple, the Kitchen, the Bulting House, the Convent Hall, the Chamber within the place, the Store House, and the Salt House. Appended to the list of articles in the various buildings there is this note:—

“ The Vysytor hath a lytyll chalys to y^e kyngs vse. “ Item delyr’d w^t y^s invetory in euydence old sealed—xxv or xxx pesys

“ Item vnsealyd vi pesys

“ Item in lesys vnsealyd iiij

“ Also a byll of detts as y^e prior seyth off ... viii^{li} ix^s ”

At the foot of the document are the names of the three trustees, and it is endorsed in the handwriting of the bishop of Dover as follows “ They deyd ther I coude noht cum to “ ye knoleche of y^t house but it is lytyll. ”⁹³

The Chester Friaries are mentioned in a list of “ The housses of Freres lately geven up which have any substance of leayd, ” in the handwriting of the Earl of Derby, who, after recording the lead at the Black Friars, remarks— “ The Whit Freres ther a Chapell w^t div’s^e gutt’s leade ” from which it may be gathered that the friary yielded little.⁹⁴

In this fashion ended the connection of the Order of Carmelite Friars with the habitation in Chester which had been their home for two and a half centuries. It will be noticed that the list of Friars, at the Dissolution, contains many names of local families, and it would be interesting to attempt to identify them with those families and to follow their subsequent careers, but this cannot be done here. It is, perhaps, noteworthy that the new see of Chester was to be filled three years later on 4 August, 1541, by one who had

been a Carmelite Friar. This man, John Bird, by name, Visitor General in England and Provincial of the Order was born at Coventry, but is said to have been of Cheshire descent. He appears to have possessed a very "convenient" conscience and in consequence, to have made himself useful to King Henry who rewarded him accordingly.⁹⁵

5.—THE FRIARS' SUCCESSORS.

In the accounts of the Ministers of the Crown for the year commencing Michaelmas 31 Hen. VIII [1539], the receiver charged himself with £2 7s. 10d.⁹⁶ for :—

(1) The farm of the site of the church of the Friars Carmelite together with the porch of the same, let to Robert Chaloner⁹⁷ by William Bolles and John Wyseman, the King's commissioners, at 12^d. per annum.

(2) The farm of a barn together with a piece of waste land within the parish of St. Martin, let to William Richardson,⁹⁸ by indenture of 30 Jun. 30 Hen. VIII [1538] for 24 years, of which 19 years are yet unexpired, at 16^d per annum.

(3) One garden in the parish of [blank] let to Elen Lyme⁹⁹ at 2s. per annum, by indenture of 10 Sep. 16 Hen. VIII [1524], for 30 years of which 16 years are yet unexpired.

(4) Two houses with a stone house outside of the house of the said Friars Carmelite, let to William Goodman¹⁰⁰ and George Palmer, clerk,¹⁰¹ at 4s. per annum, by indenture of 21 Jun. 1531 for [blank] years, and afterwards to the said William Goodman, by indenture of 10 June [?] 1530 for 100 years. [There was litigation in connection with this later].

(5) The farm of an orchard called the Quarrel in the parish of St. Martin, let to John Brykdale¹⁰² and Alice his wife at 4s. 4d. per annum, by indenture of 1 Sept. 5 Hen. VIII [1513] for 60 years of which 27 are yet unexpired.

(6) One garden in the parish of [blank] on the north part of the said friary, let to John Fryers¹⁰³ at 6^d per annum.

(7) Two chambers and one orchard let to John Hudleston [? Hurleton]¹⁰⁴ clerk, at 12^d per annum, by indenture dated [blank] and not shewn to the said auditors. These two chambers and " garden " (sic) described as within the house of the late Friars Carmelite of Chester and lately held by Friar John Hurleton were leased to Fulk Dutton of Westchester, gentleman, for 21 years at 6s. 8d. per annum on 6 July, 1540.¹⁰⁵

(8) The chief rent of the carpenters' house at 6d. per annum "*pro pagentibus suis imponendis.*"¹⁰⁶

(9) The farm of a small garden in the tenure of Elen Fletcher, widow, at 6d. per annum.

(10) A chamber on the north side let to Nich's Segewyke¹⁰⁷ at 20d. per annum.

(11) A hall, kitchen, and chambers over them let to Thomas Smythe¹⁰⁸ and others.¹⁰⁹

(12) Seven tenements in the parish of St. Martin, and 7 gardens let at 3s. 4d. to William Aldersey,¹¹⁰ etc.¹¹¹

On 5 May, 1544, the King granted to John Cokkes, citizen and salter of London, in addition to other property, all the house and site of the priory of the Carmelite Friars called the White Friars, within the city of Chester, lately dissolved, together with all messuages, houses, cottages, chambers, buildings, tofts, gardens, orchards, lands, tenements and hereditaments now or late in the several tenure or occupation of:

Robert Chalyner	John Huddelton [? Hurlton]
Richard Snede	Elen Falconer
John Offeley	Fulk Dutton
Nicholas Segewyke	William Goodman
Elene Fletcher	William Richardson
Elene Lyne	Hugh Hurleton
William Aldersey	John Brickdale and
John Fryere	Alice his wife

or their assignees, situated in the parishes of St. Bridget and St. Martin in the said city of Chester, and lately belonging to the said priory. And all that rent of 6d. issuing out of a certain house called the Carpenters' House belong-

ing to the Lord the King in the said parish of St. Bridget. . . . And all those messuages, houses, buildings, lands, tenements, orchards, gardens, etc. in the said two parishes whatsoever, lately belonging to the friary of the Freres of Carmel subject to a reserved rent of 5s. 4½d. due from the site of the said priory.¹¹²

Less than a fortnight later, on 16 May, the king granted permission to Cokkes to alienate to Fulk Dutton "all that house and site late the friary of the Carmelite Friars" as well as the rent issuing out of the Carpenters' house. The tenants names are given, and agree with the preceding list, except that Robert Chalynor's name is given as John,¹¹³ and the name of Elen Falconer does not appear.¹¹⁴ Three days later, on 19 May, Cokkes granted the property to Dutton.¹¹⁵

The details are again given in the exemplification of 8 Oct., 1593, wherein the grant of Cokkes to Dutton is recited in full. This shews further that the grant was *in capite* as the fortieth part of a knight's fee, and on payment by Cokkes to the king of 5s. 4½d., and by Dutton to Cokkes of £55 12s. 2d. Cokkes granted the premises to Dutton and his heirs in perpetuity and appointed William Brasy and William Leeche, drapers, his attorneys. The grant was enrolled by John Wyseman, auditor, the witnesses being Robert Maynwaringe, Henry Maynwaringe, gentlemen, [?William] Leche, Thomas Pyllyn the elder, and Thomas Pyllyn the younger.

Apparently possession of another building was negotiated by the attorney, William Brassy, about the same time, as on the occasion of the issue of the exemplification Edward Dutton made a further request and obtained enrolment of a deed shewing that he was possessed of a certain house called Le Loft on the Cath (or hath or Hall), parcel of the house and site of the Friars Carmelite and late in the tenancy or occupation of Ralph Godman, alderman. The witnesses to this being Thomas Birkenhead, gentleman, Ralph Goodman, "the above named George (*sic*) Leche," mercer, William Aldersey, merchant, Roger Tailor, sherman, Roger Cottrell, sherman, John Gonner, Richard Badeley, and others, per Wm. Brescy.¹¹⁶

As will be seen, from two petitions to the Court of Augmentations, Fulk Dutton did not enjoy peaceful possession of the friary, and that Cokkes doubtless exhibited a considerable amount of discretion in snatching what profits he could and leaving a local man to deal with local disputes.

To the right worshipful Sr Edwarde Northe knyghte Chancellor in the kyngs majesties Court of Augmentacon of the Revenewes of his graces crowne.

In most humble wise Compleyneth vnto yor maistership yor orator Folke Dutton of the Cite of Chester, alderman, that whereas the kynges magestie our sou'eigne lorde being seised in his demeyne as of fee emongst other his graces suppressed landes the revenewes of his highness Crowne of and in the holle plase of the late ffrierhouse called the Whyte freres in the Citie of Chester aforesaid dissolved and suppressed. And all meases, howses, chambers, buyldynges, gardens, lands, tenements and hereditamnces what so eu' to the same belonging with thaptennces set and lying within the said citie of Chester rightfully belonging to his highness Crowne as parcel of the revenewes of the same. And so seised thereof by his magesties letters patent dated at Westm. the fyfte day of May in the xxxvth yere of his magesties most noble reigne, for a certain some of money to his highness then in this hon'able Corte peyde by on John Cokkes citizen and salter of London, gave and granted unto the said John Cokkes emongst other his graces suppressed landes and late frerehowses in the said citie all the said holle plase of the seid late dissolved White freres and all the seid meases, etc., and other the premises with all and singular theyr apttences to have and to hold the same to the seid John Cokkes, his heirs and assigns for ever. By force whereof the seid John Cokkes entered into all and singular the premises and was thereof seised accordingly and so seised by gud and iust title to him rightfully comen by virtue of the kyng's magesties licence to him granted by his sufficient deede and assurance in the law dated the [blank] day of [blank] in the xxxv. yere of the kyng's seid magesties reign for a certain some of money to him the seid John Cokkes then paid by yor seid orator gave bargained and sold unto yor said orator all the seid holle plase of the said dissolved White freres and all the said buyldings chambers etc. to have and to hold to yor seid orator his heirs and assigns for ever. By force whereof he was seised accordingly by gud and iust title and conveyance in the law. Nevertheless right worshipful sir so it is on Thomas Smyth of the citie of Chester draper and Raffe Rogers of the

same cite merchant did syne the said [blank] day of [blank] in the said xxxv yere of the kynges said magesties reigne of theyr only extort power and force and stronge hande have withholden and yet doe withholden from yor said orator the dorter of the seid late White fryeres on Cloyster and a chamber called the priors chamber set lying and being within the p'cynct of the seid late frerehowse and parcel of the same eu' in the contynual occupation of the late freres in the same lately being. And the seid Thomas Smyth and Raffe Rogers in no wise will permitt and suffer yor said orator peaceably to have and enjoye the same according to the rightful estate thereto to him granted made and executed but with like force and stronge hande entendeth to keep the same from yor seide orator to hys gret losse & hyndrence so that yor orator wilbe compelled to sew the seide John Cokkes for repayment of his seide money which for the same amongst other the premises he heretofore paide before. By force whereof the seid John Cokkes will be compelled to sew to the kynges magestie for allowance and repayment of his said money that in the foresaid some he hath payd onles it may please yor worship to provide some redresse therein. Wherefore please it yor worship in tender consideracon of all and singular the premises to grant the kyngs writ of privie seal to the said Smyth and Rogers to command them thereby and either of them to appear before your worship imediat upon the receipt thereof hereunto to answeere and therupon to take suche order that yor said orator may be restored to the premises wth his expense sustayned in this behalf without any further suet and yor said orator shall deyley prey for your worship, etc.¹¹⁷

To the right worshipfull Sir Edward North, knight, Chancellor in the King's high court of Augmentations of the Revenues of his grace's crowne.

In most humble wise complayneth unto your good maister-ship your orator Folk Dutton of the cite of Chester alderman that, whereas our sou'eigne lorde, the king's majestie that now is king Henry theyght, being seised in his demesne as of fee amonge other his grace's suppressed lands etc. of and in the holle house of the late frerehouse called the White freres in the city of Chester aforesaid dissolved and suppressed and all meases chambers cottages buildings gardens lands ten'ts and hereditaments to the same belonging set lying and being in the city of Chester rightfully pertaining to his highness crowne as parcel of the revenues of the same and so seised by his majesties' letters patent dated at Westm' 5 May 35 ann for a certain sum of money paid by one John Cokkes citizen and salter of

London, gave and granted to him among other his majesties late frerehouses in the city of Chester the said holle place of the dissolved White Friars and all buildings etc. appertaining, to have and to hold for ever. By force whereof the said John Cokkes entered upon by virtue of the king's license dated [blank] day of [blank] 35 ann. and for a certain sum of money to him the said John Cokkes paid by your said orator he granted, sold, etc., to him the above White Friars premises for ever by virtue whereof your said orator was seised thereof. Nevertheless so it is one William Gudman of the said city of Chester alderman ever syns the said date with force and strong hand of hys only extort power hath withholden and yet doth withhold from your orator one stonnen house and loft over the same called a garnere and other holle howses and buildings to the same belonging parcel of the said late White freres house and lying within the precincts of the same ever in the continual occupacon of the late freres in the said late frere house lately beyng for the safekepyng of their cornes and other their messhes for the mayntennce of their hospitalitie, and other two cottages or houses lying within the said city of Chester near unto the said late frere house and belonging to the same being set by the said late freres for the yearly rent of xxiiij^s., and the said William Gud'man in no wise will suffer and permit your said orator peaceably to have and enjoy the same according to your said orators rightful estate thereof to him granted but doth by force and strong hand intend to keep your said orator from the same to the grete lose and hynderance of your said orator so that your said orator shalbe compelled to sewe the said John Cokkes for repayment. By force whereof the said John Cokkes will be compelled to sewe to the king for allowance and repayment unless your worship doe provide some remedie for redress wherefor it may please your good worship in tender consideration of the premises to grant the king's writ of privie seal to the said William Gudman to appear before your maistership immediatly upon recepte therof to answer and thereupon to take suche order and decre that your said orator may be restored to the premises and peaceably have and enjoy the same with sufficient costes etc. And this for God's love etc.¹¹⁸

6.—THE DESCENT OF THE PROPERTY AND LATER HISTORY.

Fulk Dutton made his will on 29 Aug., 1558, and left to Katherine his wife,¹¹⁹ among other things, a life interest in “ my whole purchase of the White freers, with all buildings,

yards, etc., to the same belonging. After her death the property was to pass to John Dutton his son and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten. In default of such issue, the said house of White Freers with the appurtenances to pass to the testator's son-in-law and daughter, John Leche and Elizabeth his wife, and to her heirs for ever.¹²⁰

On the 24 Sep., 1558, Fulk Dutton died and, on 22 March following, his inquisition *post mortem*, was taken in the Common Hall of Pleas for the City of Chester, and he was shewn to have died seised in his demesne as of fee of "the site or compass late of the house of the Carmelite friars in " Chester " and of one capital messuage there, etc., called the White Friars, and of 14 messuages or burgages, 1 dove-cot, 16 gardens, 1 orchard, 2 acres of land, and 6d. of free rent in the parishes of St. Bridget and St. Martin the bishop, in Chester, held *in capite* of the queen, as of her crown, by military service by the fortieth part of a knight's fee, and worth £8 *per annum*, and Richard Dutton was declared son and heir.¹²¹

The widow of Fulk Dutton married William Williams, esquire, and in her inquisition *post mortem* on 19 Sep., 1565, the property is again mentioned as her life estate. It is described as the " site of the house of the Carmelite Friars in the City of Chester and a capital house with divers edifices called Whyte Fryers," 13 burgages or cottages, 1 dove-cot, 1 orchard, 2 acres of land and a rent of 6d., Richard Dutton being reversionary legatee.¹²²

On 11 Apr., 1566, a further inquisition was held to ascertain who had received the profits of the estate of Fulk Dutton, and it was then declared that Fulk had devised much of his estate to his younger son John and a portion to Katherine Dutton, the wife of the testator, for life, and after her death, to the said John, and to Alice, daughter of the testator and wife of Thomas Daniel of Tabley. It was further stated that the said Katherine and William Williams, esquire, in her right, after espousals between them, had received the rents from the death of Fulk until 19 April, 1565 (on which date Katherine died at Chester), and that

Richard Dutton, gentleman, citizen and alderman of Chester had taken the profits of a third part of the estate, until the date of this inquisition, as son and heir of Fulk.¹²³

It is recorded that, when in 1567 Richard Dutton, esquire, was mayor of Chester, "he kepte howse at the White Freeyers, and in all the twelve dayes of Christmas kepte open howse for meate and drynke, at meale tyme, for any that came. All the Christmas Tyme was a Lo: of Misrule."¹²⁴ In the same year in the Recognizance Rolls of Chester there is an entry against Aug. 2, "Richard Dutton, son and heir of Fulk, writ of livery."¹²⁵

In June 15 Eliz. [1573] Richard Dutton, of Chester, alderman, by a deed of gift, granted his estate, real and personal, to Edward Dutton his youngest son, and, by the delivery of a gold ring, put him in possession of the same, with a proviso that if the donor should assure to his said son an annuity of 5s. issuing out of his lands in Chester, during his lifetime, that then this gift should be void.¹²⁶

In 24 Eliz. [1582-3] William Williams, esquire, owed £21 0s. 4d. for arrears on account "of the third part of ye scite or circuite of the Carmelet ffriers in the Cytie of Chester and of lands called the White ffriers ther, and of lands in the parish of St. Martin the Bishop,"¹²⁷ etc., which he had enjoyed in right of his wife.

Richard Dutton died on 2 Aug., 1583, and his inquisition *post mortem* held on 28 Apr., 32, Eliz. [1589-90], indicates that the bulk of his estate in the late possessions of the White Friars had been disposed of, as only "seven messuages in White freers lane parcel of the possessions of the late house of the Carmelite Friars or White Freers" appear, and on these there was a reserved rent of 2s. 2d. due to the King instead of the original 5s. 4½d. for the whole property.¹²⁸

The bulk of the friary had been disposed of to William Goodman, of Chester, alderman, and, on his death it was conveyed in marriage, by the widow to Edmund Gamull, a vintner of Chester, as shewn later.

It appears that on 22 July 25 Eliz. [1583] George Goodman and Ralph Goodman appeared before William Glaseor, vice-chamberlain of the county of Chester and made application for the enrolment of a grant, dated 9 days earlier, whereby the said George and Ralph, natural brethren of William Goodman, of the city of Chester, alderman, deceased, in consideration of £100, sold to Edmund Gamull, of the same city, gentleman, and to Elizabeth his wife, the site, capital messuage, mansion, tenement, or dwelling house called the White Freers in Chester, then in the occupation of the said Edmund and Elizabeth, with all buildings, etc., lying within the site and circuit of the said capital messuage, and enclosed within the compass of the uttermost stone wall belonging to the said messuage or mansion house together with the said stone wall. Included in the sale were all evidences, dedes, ch[arte]res, wrytings, escriptes, and mynuments concerning the premises or any part thereof. The witnesses were—Christopher Goodman, John Goodman, David Lloyd, Richard Lingley, Thomas Adams, Robert Bassnett and Rawff Langton.¹²⁹

Edmund Gamull, who is shewn as tenant *in capite* of the White Friars in 27 Eliz. [1584-5],¹³⁰ was chosen mayor of Chester in 1585, and the following note is written against a record of his year of office.

[1585, Edmund Gamull, mayor]. "Mr. Mayor was a very courteouse gent and gate moch love of the cittizens. He was a worthe housekeeper good unto the poore, he kept his mayoraltye at the White freeyers, being his own house; beinge verye rich in substance, (he was borne at burton, co Cestr. He was made but a freeman 23 QR upon marriag with Elizabeth widow of William Goodman alderman). (The dee milnes and freers & great welth he had by marriage w^t Mr. Goodemans widow w^{ch} dyed Mar.)"¹³¹

The next phase in the descent of the White Friary estate took place in 35 Eliz. [1592-3] when Edmund Gamull, of Chester, gentleman, granted to Thomas Egerton, her Majesty's attorney-general, for £350, all that the scite, capital messuage, mansion, tenement or dwelling house

called the White freers lying and being within the city of Chester with all and singular the houses, edifices, buildings, orchards, gardens, dovehouses, lands, tenements, etc., compassed and enclosed within the compass of the uttermost stonewall belonging to the same, and then in the occupation of the said Edmund Gamull or his under-tenants.

On 8 Oct., 1593, at the instance of Thomas Egerton, Edward Dutton, gentleman, produced the charter of John Cokkes in favour of Fulk Dutton, of Chester, alderman, dated 19 May, 1544, and enrolled by John Wyseman, auditor, relating to the house and site of the late priory of the friars Carmelite, vulgarly called the White friars within the city of Chester. Edward Dutton also produced a deed relating to a house called Le Loft, etc. At Dutton's request that these should be enrolled on the Recognizance Rolls, this was done.¹³²

On the next day Edward Dutton granted to Thomas Egerton, esquire, Her Majesty's attorney-general, for the sum of £50 a messuage in Chester adjoining or lying near to the site of the capital messuage called the White Friars now or late in the holding of Christopher Walker.

On 10 April, 1651, John, earl of Bridgewater, and others, leased the premises, or more probably a portion of them, to Richard Harrison, of Chester, beer-brewer, by deed of feoffment with livery of seisin. On the same date an indenture of bargain and sale was executed. On 3 May, in the same year, Sir Thomas Whitmore, baronet, and others assigned the property to Richard Harrison for the residue of a term of sixty years.

Thirteen years later, 25 August, 1664, part of the premises were leased by Harrison to Richard Hey and Alice his wife for three lives and twenty-one years.

Again, two years after this, 23 April, 1666, a small parcel of the ground was leased by Harrison to Richard Lea and Mary his wife for a similar term.

In the same year, 25 July, 1666, the "other part" of the premises was leased by Harrison to Robert Hyde, gentleman, for three lives.

Giles Vanbrugh, father of Sir John, came to Chester in 1667, and carried on business as a sugar baker, at the White Friars, the famous architect then being three years of age.

On 28 and 29 Sep., 1679, by indentures of lease and release Richard Harrison sold to Anthony Henthorne, sugar baker, his interest in the "White Friars" and the other messuages adjoining thereto.

It appears that Anthony Henthorne was tenant some years earlier, and it is interesting to note that the house on the site of the Carmelite friary was one of the first to be licensed in Chester for the furtherance of non-conformist doctrine. Following the passage of the Declaration of Indulgence the following appears in the License Book.

Chester, William Cooke, the house called the Grey [?White] Fryars, 8 May, 1672. Presbyterian.

Chester, William Cooke, in the house of Anthony Henthorne, 16 May, 1672. Congregational.

William Cooke or Cook was the minister ejected from the living of St. Michael's in 1672.¹³³

Matthew Henry relates "About the end of the year 1686 some business drew me to Chester, and I lodged at Mr. Henthorn's. I preached at his house two or three times . . . Mr. Henthorn and Mr. Greg came to solicit that if indulgence were granted I would be their minister" etc. For the time being, however, they secured the services of Mr. Tong to minister among them until their appointed pastor was able to come, and he preached about three months in Mr. Henthorn's hall. "Mr. Henthorn had always been forward to promote the gospel in that city where God had cast his lot and greatly blessed him for many years; he now opened his doors and offered to his neighbours the use of his house for the worship of God, which was large and commodious; he received Mr. Tong into his house, gave him a most kind entertainment, in everything treating him as if he had been his nearest relation. To his house the people resorted beyond all expectation; they only met at first between the hours of public worship, . . . but at noon and again in the evening they flocked to Mr. Henthorn's.

Their numbers increased every day, and some time before Mr. Henry came they found it necessary to provide a larger place; here again Mr. Henthorne was ready to supply them [and] a large out-building, part of the Friary which belonged to him was pitched upon to be the place. They set to work one Monday morning, and before the week's end they had it in that forwardness that the next Lord's Day it was opened.¹³⁴

It has been stated that the meeting place at the White Friars was on the site of the house in Bolland's Court in a summer house in the garden of which Matthew Henry is said to have written the greater part of his Commentary on the Bible.¹³⁵ This was, however, a later meeting place.

By indenture, dated 28 January, 1686, in view of a marriage to be solemnized between Samuel Henthorne, son of Anthony Henthorne, and Elizabeth, daughter of William Bennett, of Chester, alderman, and in consideration of the sum of £600 paid by the said William, Anthony Henthorne undertook to quitclaim to the said William any legacies due to Elizabeth from her father, acting as executor of his late brother, Randle Bennett, deceased. Henthorne is shewn as being seised of a moiety (or half) of those messuages, houses, buildings, stables, yards, orchards, gardens, and lands, tenements and hereditaments called by the name of The Friars, situated between White Friars Lane and Commonhall Lane, which had been purchased from Richard Harrison, alderman, deceased (a messuage in the holding of Richard Blackburn, and an orchard late in the holding of William Harvey, alderman, deceased, and lately sold by Henthorne to John Warrington, beer-brewer, excepted). The witnesses to this indenture were Nathan Jollie, Randle Vause, and George Bulkeley.

On 1 May, 1688, Henthorne made a formal agreement based on his interest in the premises, with Thomas Swinton, esquire, and John Shaw, clerk, in view of a marriage between his eldest son, John Henthorne, with Martha Harvey, spinster.

21 May, 1700. An agreement was executed between the above Anthony and John Henthorne relating to several debts owing by the first named and for other purposes.

26 May, 1706. A deed of statute merchant was executed by the said John Henthorne in favour of William Clayton, of Liverpool, esquire; the penalty being £1,600. On the 12 April following an agreement was drawn up by the said John, Martha his wife, and the said William Clayton. Clayton entered into possession of Henthorne's lease; and on 4 Dec., 1733, by indenture of lease and release, Elizabeth Clayton, of Liverpool, co. Lanc., widow of William Clayton, the elder, granted the "White Friars" to Brian Blundell, of Liverpool, merchant, in trust for Foster Cunliffe, of Liverpool, esquire; Henry Bennett, of Chester, esquire; John Marsden, of Chester, merchant; George Tyrer, of Liverpool, merchant; Banester Parker, of Cuerden, esquire; and Anne his wife; Thomas Case, of Red Hasles, in the same county, esquire, and Margaret, his wife; and Sarah Clayton, of Liverpool, spinster.

In the 1781 edition of Broster's *Chester Guide* when dealing with the White Friars it is stated that "a part of Mr. Robert Hesketh's house is formed of the Remains of the convent of the White Friars," and in the Directory included in the publication therein is this entry, "Robert Hesketh, Esq., Sugar House, Weavers Lane."¹⁵⁶

The descendants of Thomas Egerton retained the White Friars property until the second half of the eighteenth century when it, and a large quantity of other property was sold by Francis, the last Duke of Bridgewater, to provide funds for the making of the Bridgewater Canal.¹⁵⁷ It is said that the purchaser was a solicitor named Massey.

It is probable that much of the church and convent existed at the time of purchase by Lord Keeper Egerton, but he demolished the church and tower of the friary (the latter in 1597). Doubtless the bulk, if not the whole, of the conventual buildings were levelled by him in order to erect a mansion. Apparently, he made little use of it, and Pennant,¹⁵⁸ thus writes "The only remains of any hotel, and


“ that of no ancient date, stood in Old Common-hall lane, which, when entire, surrounded a square,¹³⁹ and communicated with Water-gate street. It was founded by Sir Thomas Egerton, chamberlain of Chester, afterwards lord chamberlain of England, and designed by him for a dwelling house. The small remainder, which faced the lane,¹⁴⁰ and was occupied by a poor family, on the 5th November, 1772, was the scene of a dreadful calamity. The first floor was engaged by a puppet show man gunpowder lodged in a warehouse beneath, exploded, and blew up three stories. This resulted in the death of twenty-six persons and injury of eighty-three others.¹⁴¹

In a plan of 1827 “ F. E. Barker, Esq.,” and “ P. Humberston, Esq.” are shewn as owners of land on the north side of White Friars Street between Bollands Court and Weaver Street.¹⁴²

Hemingway, writing in 1831, states that Egerton's house stood between White Friars and Common-hall street, on the site “ now occupied by the houses of Philip Humberston and Mrs. Kinloch.” He adds that some parts of the buildings, or boundary walls are still discernible on the north (? south) side of Common-hall street and on the west (? east) of Weaver street.¹⁴³

Pennant,¹⁴⁴ states that “ part of Mr. Marsden's house is formed of the remains ” of the White friary, and, as he continues that the church, as it appears in Braun's view, stood a little to the west of this house, the site of Mr. Marsden's house can be conjectured.

7.—THE CONVENTUAL SEAL.

The Seal depicts the Virgin and Child between two large candlesticks with the inscription S' P'ORIS . CESTRIE . FR'M . DE . CARMELO : —The Seal of the Prior of the Brothers of Carmel, of Chester, within a beaded border.¹⁴⁵ It is of thirteenth century date, and was probably in use from the date of foundation. The seal is in the shape of a pointed oval. The Virgin is depicted standing on a carved corbel, and bears the Child on her left arm.

8.—OFFICERS OF THE FRIARY.

The following list of Priors of the house has been collected from various sources :—

- 1309 and 10. William de Hogetote.
 1348. Richard Pygas.
 1366 (?), 1367, 1386. Richard de Downes (or Dounes).
 1398. James Hurlton. Doubtless one of the Hurllestons who were connected with Chester.
 1463. Richard.
 1470 or 1493. John Ryde or Reyde.
 1498-9, 1508-9, 1520, 1527. George Palmer. This prior appears to have surrendered his office and to have remained attached to the friary in a more humble position.
 1524-5. Richard Fletcher, son of Richard Fletcher, of Chester, baker. Doubtful.
 1537. John Hurlleston.

The last prior was possibly the John Hurlleston or Hurston, included in Fosters' "*Alumni Oxonienses*" as "Carmelite; B.D. of Cologne, sup. Nov., 1532 for incorporation; B.D. 7 Dec., 1532, D.D. (sup. Dec.), 1534."

9.—THE CHURCH AND PRECINCTS.

The Carmelite Church and precincts were situated within the quadrilateral formed by Commonhall Street (or Norman's Lane), Weaver Street (or Alban Lane), Whitefriars Street (or Fustard's otherwise Foster's Lane), and Bridge Street).¹⁴⁶ The property of the friars did not, however, include the houses and other buildings on the Bridge Street frontage.¹⁴⁷ On the north, or Commonhall Street side, the Hospital of St. Ursula, and, probably, the Common Hall stood between the friary and the street. Generally speaking, however, it seems that the friary property did extend as far as the highways on the north, west, and south. Traces of the buildings and boundary walls are, possibly, to be identified in the ancient stones still to be discerned in the walls on the south side of Commonhall Street and on the east side of Weaver Street.

The area, it will be seen, was considerably smaller than that occupied by the Franciscans, and much less is known about the buildings which stood on the site and were the centre of the fraternity's activities. Apart from the fragmentary remains of ancient boundary walls, no traces of the White Friary exist above ground. It is possible, and even probable, that some of the existing houses were erected on old foundations, and that a close examination of cellars, etc., might bring to light something which could be definitely associated with the friary. Further, it is probable that beneath the grounds surrounding the house now known as "The Friars" many of the old foundations still remain.

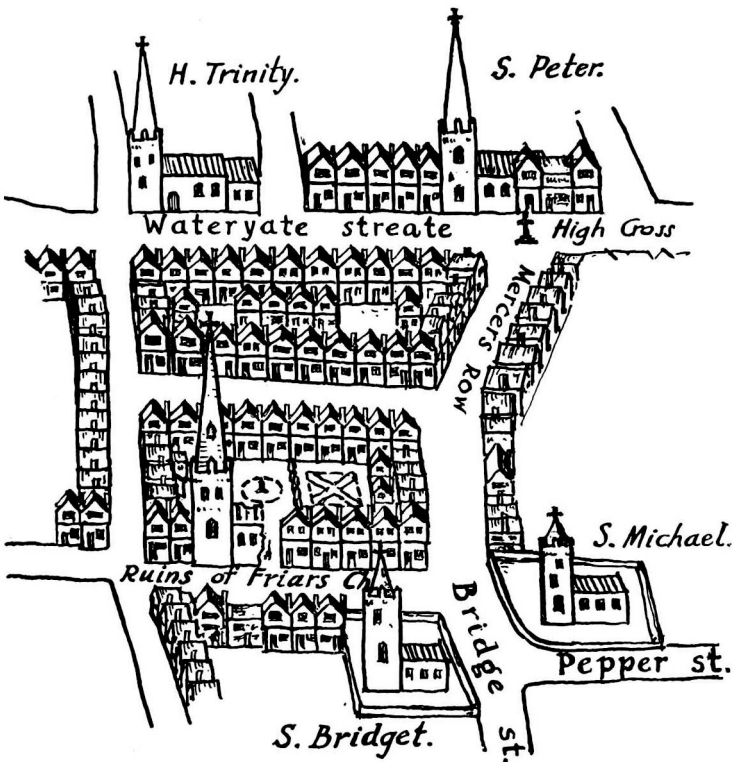
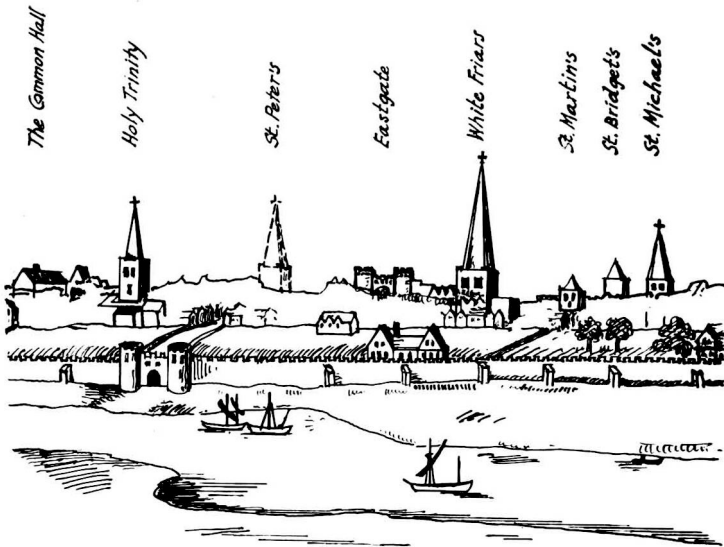
There is, however, little record of any excavations made in the locality, old maps and plans afford scanty assistance, and documents, although they give some idea, are vague on many points on which light would be particularly welcome. Under the circumstances it is advisable to abstain from conjecture, and confine what description is possible to deductions which are clearly evident from records and other materials available.

There are a number of sixteenth and seventeenth century maps or bird's-eye views and prospects of Chester, as well as later ones, and the facts that can be gleaned from them are summarized below.

1.—BRAUN'S MAP OF CHESTER, 1572-1618.¹⁴⁸ The pinnacled (see No. 3) tower and spire, together with a fragment of the Church, are shewn, and described as "Ruinosa fratrum ecclesia," on the western half of the lane. Alban Lane, Norman's Lane, etc., are not shewn.

2.—WILLIAM SMITH'S MAP, 1580.¹⁴⁹ The execution of this map is rough, but the tower and spire are shewn, as also is Norman's Lane, but not Alban Lane.

3.—WILLIAM SMITH'S WESTERN PROSPECT OF CHESTER, 1580.¹⁵⁰ The battlemented (see No. 1) tower and the cross-crowned spire are shewn against the sky-line, and described as "the Freers."



Plan and bird's-eye-view shewing the White Friars, Chester, from Braun's Map and Hollar's *Prospect of Chester*, with St. Peter's Church dotted in from Smith's *Prospect*.

(See pages 42 and 43)

4.—THE PROSPECT OF CHESTER ; THE SOUTH WEST SIDE. UNDATED,¹⁵¹ but later than Smith's. The tower and spire of the White Friars are shewn as in No. 3, but are wrongly called "Trinitie." The church of the Holy Trinity is mis-called "St. Peter's," and the last named church is omitted altogether.

5.—W. HOLLAR'S MAP OF CHESTER.¹⁵² A plain lofty building is shewn fronting Whitefriars Street, with high walls on either side, that on the west continuing along part of Alban Lane. A stranger to the locality would assume that the letter "H," immediately to the north of the building, was connected with it, but the letter "H" relates to the "Old Common Hall," and this building was on the north, not south side of the quadrilateral, that is, on the south side of Norman's Lane, which is shewn on the map. The high building is probably intended for the mansion which Lord Ellesmere erected on the site of the friary.

6.—SPEED'S MAP OF CHESTER.¹⁵³ Practically the same as No. 5. The lofty building has some details, such as a door and windows, and an enclosure is shewn in rear.

7.—UNIDENTIFIED MAP OF CHESTER, *circa* 1690.¹⁵⁴ Similar to Nos. 5 and 6, but with less defined details.

8.—BUCK'S SOUTH-WEST PROSPECT OF CHESTER, 1728.¹⁵⁵ and

9.—TILLEMANS'S SOUTH-WEST PROSPECT OF CHESTER (b. 1684, d. 1734).¹⁵⁶ No detail can be certainly identified with the friary.

The CHURCH of the White Friars is shewn, as already stated, to have occupied a site directly on the street called after it, and to have been in a ruinous condition when the first known bird's-eye view of the city was executed. From this view the church would appear to have stood in what are the grounds of the present "Friars" house. The scale of the engraving is, of course, too small to ensure exactitude, and, no doubt, only the general position of the church is indicated. The existing remains were scanty, and the eastern section had already disappeared. A portion of the roof of the western section had not perished and was attached

to the tower. Among other parts of the building, there are references to the Haydock Chantry (1348)—possibly the “chapel with divers gutters of lead” mentioned in the inventory, and to the Porch (1539).

The TOWER and STEEPLE or spire are shewn in Braun’s view as in a good state of preservation. The former in two engravings is delineated respectively as pinnacled and embattled. The steeple is said to have been of great height and beauty. It was erected on the site of an earlier one about the year 1495.¹⁵⁷ At the Dissolution there were “in the stepull iij bells.” On 21 July, 1597, this spire and, presumably, also the tower, were taken down by the Lord Keeper in order, that he might erect a mansion for himself on the site, and an old chronologer thus records his regret at the vandalism. “It was greate pittye that the steeple “was put away for it was a grace (or ornament) to the “Cittye to see it. The curious spier steeple might still “have stood grace to the Citty had not privat benefite the “devourer of antiquitie pulled it downe wth the church and “erected a house for man’s comodity wch since hath been “of little use so that the Citie lost so goodly an ornament “that tymes hereafter may more talk of it—being the only “semans mark for direction over the barre of Chester.¹⁵⁸

For the furnishing of the CHANCEL and other parts of the friary reference has been made to the interesting and somewhat extensive inventory made at the Dissolution. This records the following articles “In ye Chaunsell :—

iiij ault’s w^t tabulls iij off alablas^tr’ & on of wood
O^r lady ault’ iij hersses¹⁵⁹ off yron.

A yron condylstyck

A coffer & a store

A boxe w^t a hangyng lok

iiij long formes.”

In the CHOIR, or Quyere, as the inventory has it, were :—

“ij hye cadyllstekes off yron

ij small off brasse

A peyre off senssars off brasse

A peyre off organs in the quyere

a grate of yron braunchyd a bouthe y^e Justes tombe¹⁶⁰

iiij dexesse [? desks]

A bye ault' w^t a fayre frounte

iiij antyphones

A bassye for a lampe

ij grayles w^t spalt's [psalters]

ij ordynalls¹⁶¹ w^t ij colletres [collect-books]

A legende¹⁶² w^t a martylege [martyrology]

A grette peyre of organs ou'r the quere dore.

The VESTRY or Sacristy is mentioned several times. There was a chapel situated " anenst the Revestey dore " (1508), and the chancel was " affore the revesture durr " (1527). This was a normal position. At the surrender " The Sextrye " contained :—

iiij redde copys off scarlett branchyd

A shewte of o^r ladye p'ste decon & subdecon w^t ij copis

A shewte of grene coppes vestments lackyng a alb

A lenton cope & iiij vestments lackyng a alb

iiij sengull tenakulls w^tout albes of sylk

iiij dorneks¹⁶³ vestments lackyng on alb

A Raggon¹⁶⁴ vestment

A yelow vestment

A Redde Vestment

A chamlet vestment

iiij vestments off oure lady ij w^t albes & on lackyng

viiij ault' clothes

iiij corporas

ij syrples

v frontes for all y^e ault's

vj napkyns for ault's

iiij pyllowes for y^e hye ault'

A purse of Releks

A grette coffer for y^e vestments

ij crosses & ij baners

A pillar for the pascall [candle]

A borde w^t ij trestells

A clothe for the Roode

A cloth for ye sepulcre

A pype for the sacrament puresse wⁿ & a bande w^t tassells

iiij masse bokes & pystoles [epistles] boks.

The CLOISTERS and its buildings were, it may be assumed from certain indications, on the north of the church. The Cloisters are mentioned as in existence in 1543-4, but there is no mention, by name, of a CHAPTER HOUSE. Of other buildings which would occupy the eastern range, there is reference to the DORTER or Dormitory, and to a chamber called the PRIOR'S CHAMBER which, from the context, appears to have been, and, probably, was close by. This may be identical with "y^c Chamber wⁿ in ye place" mentioned in the inventory as containing "a Cele w^t certen lynn' in." Near by also was the RERE DORTER doubtless referred to at the Dissolution as "houses of office." By a passage through this range the CEMETERY would, ordinarily, be approached.

The north cloister range contained the REFECTORY or Frater, spoken of as the Hall and as the Convent Hall. The inventory records the following furniture: "in the convent hall a tabull w^t ij trestells & ij fornese & a old cobbord."

Mention is made of a Chamber over the Hall.

In the same range was "ye KECHYNG, with its

" iiij potts

ij pannes

iiij pewt' dysshes

A grat' off yron w^t a crabe

A broche w^t a peyre off cobbarts

A crok for water w^t other thyngs necessary for ye kechyg."

Many other buildings together with gardens, etc., are referred to in the records, but their situation is doubtful. At the Dissolution the " BOLTYNG " HOUSE contained:—

" A grette arke

A troughe to knede in w^t on' sekern [in convent"—erased].

The STORE HOUSE had:—

" Serten stuffe necessary for a howse

A sawt howse & a barrell."

The GATE HOUSE. There appears to have been a general belief that this building was situated at the eastern end of Whitefriars Street. That this was so is a subject of doubt, as the street (known as Fustard's Lane in the time of Edward III¹⁶⁵) was a public thoroughfare between Bridge Street and St. Nicholas Street, and was bordered by houses and lands in the possession of private individuals.¹⁶⁶ In 1884 excavations shewed that the eastern portion, at least, was superimposed on a Roman street running in the same direction. The older street must have been just within the southern wall of the Roman camp and it has been suggested it was identical with the *Via Sagularis*.

Be this as it may, there were, and, in a modified condition, there still are, the remains of some interesting mediæval buildings to be seen at the eastern extremity of Whitefriars Street. At this point, about the close of the eighteenth century, to quote from a contemporary guide book, "is " White Friars where the Carmelites or White Friars had " a convent in St. Martin's parish, and the ancient arch and " the gateways towards the city were lately remaining."¹⁶⁷

In the house at the northern corner of Bridge Street and White Friars and in the adjoining premises there are a number of arches of the late fifteenth century, and a contributor to the *Journal*¹⁶⁸ conjectured these to have formed part of the entrance gate and hospitium of the Friary.¹⁶⁹

Another possible site of the Gateway was at the entrance to Bolland's Court. Some interesting discoveries were made at this spot in 1884,¹⁷⁰ when an old building, which bore the name of White Friars Cottage was being pulled down. This house opened upon Whitefriars Street and was on the west side of Bolland's Court. While excavating the cellar for a new house to be erected on the site the workmen came across various remains at three feet below the surface. Firstly, what appears to have been a fire-place with a moulded hearth-stone, and, adjoining to it, a floor paved with glazed mediæval tiles of the fourteenth century and of a green colour, bearing a variety of geometric and what are described in the accounts as " a few heraldic " patterns.

The remains of this floor were slight, only about three to four square yards being left, and the tiles had evidently been disturbed, as there were, comparatively, few of them in proper sequence. Out of several hundred tiles found nearly all of them were broken, probably due to the floor, at some later period, having been that of a coal cellar, judging by several inches of slack which covered it. The excavations extended to ten feet back from Whitefriars Street. Subsequently traces of a similar pavement were found beneath the house on the opposite or east side of Bolland's Court which led the excavators to assume that the pavement had originally extended across the roadway. Two framed collections of these tiles are to be seen in the Grosvenor Museum.

A third suggestion as to an entrance to the Friary is made in the *Journal*¹⁷¹ in a report on excavations in Commonhall Street when, at a depth of seven to eight feet a pavement was discovered " which was traced to jambs of one of the doorways entering into Whitefriars Monastery " from which it was argued that those jambs shewed what must have been the level of the mediæval street.

10.—CONCLUSION.

The Church of the White Friars with its imposing steeple, the cloisters with the buildings grouped around them, and all that completed a sometime flourishing religious community have long since disappeared, and the place knows them no more. Beneath the shadow of the edifice and within its walls were deposited throughout three centuries the mortal remains of worshippers who felt assured that their bodies would rest in the consecrated area so long as this world existed. Little did they dream how soon the spot would lose its sanctity, and that their resting places would be forgotten, and covered by buildings devoted to various secular uses.

NOTES.

- ¹ Morris, *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Periods*, 146.
- ² Morris, *op. cit.*, 146.
- ³ *Enc. Brit.*, art. *Carmelites*.
- ⁴ Morris, *op. cit.*, 142.
- ⁵ *Journal*, N.S., xxii., 16.
- ⁶ *Notitia Monastica* (original and Nasmyth's editions), Cheshire VII., Chester 11.
- ⁷ *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1846 edition), VI., 1570.
- ⁸ *History of Cheshire* (Helsby edition), i., 349.
- ⁹ *History of Chester*, ii., 148.
- ¹⁰ *op. cit.*, 146.
- ¹¹ P.R.O., *Inq. ad. quod dampnum*, file 13, no. 7.
- ¹² Bodl. MS. 73, f. 49 (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., ix., 47).
- ¹³ There were three possible abbots of the name of Thomas—de Birchill's, 1291-1323; de Newport, 1363-1385; and de Yerdlesley, 1413-1434. Presumably the incident occurred in the time of the first named.
- ¹⁴ *Lancashire and Cheshire Wills* (Rec. Soc. of L. & C., xxx., 1).
- ¹⁵ B.M., Harl. MS., 2020, f. 514a. Portmote records.
- ¹⁶ Godwey's Hall in Bridge Street (*Sheaf*, 3rd S., xix., 83).
- ¹⁷ Ancestor of John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, etc.
- ¹⁸ B.M., Harl. M.S., 2020, m. 513.
- ¹⁹ P.R.O. Chester Plea Roll 22, m. 17, 40. (Supplied by Mr. J. Brownbill).
- ²⁰ Morris, *op. cit.*, 147.
- ²¹ B.M., Harl. MS., 2162, f. 357.
- ²² Sheriff of Chester, 1329-30 and 1337-8.
- ²³ Sheriff, 1320-1, and 1323-4.
- ²⁴ Mayor, 1355-6 and 1360-4.
- ²⁵ *History of the House of Lyme*, p. 26. Beamont says (*Journal*, O.S., iii., 149, the purchaser was grandfather of Sir Piers de Legh of Lyme (beheaded in 1399), but this appears to be an error. The paternal grandfather of Sir Piers was John de Legh, and his maternal grandfather, Thurstan or Adam de Norley. *Subsequent* to the execution of Sir Piers there was a connection between the families as his son married a daughter of the house of Haydock.
- ²⁶ B.M., Harl. MS., 2063, f. 134.
- ²⁷ P.R.O., Chester 3, Roll 2. *Vide 25th Report of Dep. K.P.R.* (appx.), and Ormerod, *History of Cheshire* (Helsby ed.), i., 349.
- ²⁸ i.e. Eignion bach or Little Eignion or Annion.
- ²⁹ The lane on the western side of the friary was Alban Lane now Weaver Street.
- ³⁰ Sheriff 1307-8, 1310-1, 1314-5, 1319-20, 1321-2.
- ³¹ There was another, but shorter, lane on the north or more correctly east, namely Pierpoints lane (in 1884 called Mill lane) which at one time gave, what was probably, an alternative access to the Common Hall. Morris, *op. cit.*, 256.
- ³² Rec. Soc. of L. & C., lix., 128.
- ³³ *ib.*, 216.
- ³⁴ P.R.O., Augm. Vol 279, *Camerarius Cestrie*, f. 65. (*Vide Black Prince's Reg.*, iii., 122.

³⁵ P.R.O., Augm. Vol. 279, *Camerarius Cestrie*, f. 94; also Chester 2/38. (*Vide Black Prince's Reg.*, iii., 177).

³⁶ Rec. Soc. of L. & C., lix., 227.

^{36a} *Black Prince's Reg.*, iii., 308.

³⁷ *Lanc. and Ches. Wills*. Rec. Soc. of L. & C., xxx., 7.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ William Salt Soc., New Series, viii., 30.

⁴⁰ *Cheshire Sheaf*, 3rd S., vi., 67.

⁴¹ The Stathom family takes its name from a hamlet in the parish of Lymme. They bore the arms of Lymme, and, it is supposed, they were descended from that family (Ormerod, *op. cit.*, i., 584). Isabel Stathom was a daughter of Sir John de Davenport, knight, of Davenport. She married, firstly, Robert de Eton, or de Stockport, rector of Alderley in 1339, and baron of Stockport, who died about 1350, leaving issue a son, Sir Richard. Isabel married, secondly, John de Stafford, who died between 1355 and 1360. She married, thirdly, before November, 1361, Thomas de Stathom, who died before 1370. As a fourth husband, Ormerod states, that she married William de Fulcham (Ormerod, *op. cit.*, iii., 68) but this is not correct (Earwaker's *East Cheshire*, i., 341, 343, etc.). She died in 1381.

⁴² Ormerod, *op. cit.*, iii., 83.

⁴³ B.M., Harl. MS., 1985, f. 300b, also 2077, f. 36d.

⁴⁴ Ormerod, *op. cit.*, iii., 83.

⁴⁵ *Cal. of Wills at Court of Husting*, London, 294, 295.

⁴⁶ Presumably the three houses in Chester and the one house in Warrington. Ormerod, *op. cit.*, i., 349, quoting Tabley MSS., C. 159. Hemingway, *op. cit.*, ii., 147, erroneously gives the testator's name as "Robert."

⁴⁷ Ormerod, *op. cit.*, i. 350.

^{47a} Or 9 August according to Morris, *op. cit.*, 35.

⁴⁸ Beamont, *History of the House of Lyme*, 24.

⁴⁹ B.M., Harl. M.S., 1989, f. 382.

⁵⁰ P.R.O., Chester 2/74 (*vide* 36 Rep., D.K.P. Rec., App. II, p. 101).

⁵¹ B.M., Harl. M.S., 1971, f. 93.

⁵² Morris, *op. cit.*, 147.

⁵³ *ib.*, 351.

⁵⁴ *ib.*, 143.

⁵⁵ Beamonts' *Hist. of Warrington Friary*, p. 33 (Chet. Soc., 1872, 1st S., lxxxiii).

⁵⁶ Morris, *op. cit.*, 147.

⁵⁷ P.C.C., 21 Luffenham. (*Vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xviii., 24).

⁵⁸ P.C.C., 25 Luffenham. (*Vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xvii., 105).

⁵⁹ Morris, *op. cit.*, 55 and 146.

⁶⁰ *ib.*, 130.

⁶¹ B.M. Harl. MS., 2099, f. 439.

⁶² B.M. Harl. MS., 2176, f. 27.

⁶³ *Lancashire and Cheshire Wills*. (Chetham Soc., 1st S., liv., 41).

⁶⁴ B.M. Harl. MS., 2125, f. 270. The note is apparently taken from the Mayors' Books.

⁶⁵ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁶⁶ P.C.C., 13 Horne (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xvii., 23).

67 P.C.C., 5 Horne (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xvii., 69, 70). According to the "Annals" in King's *Vale Royal*, 191, "John Hawarden, justice of Chester, dyed the fourth of October, 1502."

68 P.C.C., 35 Horne (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xviii., 92).

68a Earwaker, *History of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, Chester*, 30. According to *Sheaf*, 3rd S., xxii., 77, the amount was 2s. 6d. each.

69 B.M., Harl. MS., 2125, f. 270 (*vide Morris*, *op. cit.*, 146).

70 P.C.C., 14 Adeane (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xviii., 93).

71 P.C.C., 16 Adeane (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xxiii., 37).

72 P.C.C., 16 Bennett.

73 P.C.C., 3 Fetiplace (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xvii., 21).

74 This note is taken from a transcript of a document in Latin which is printed in Ormerod's history (Helsby edn., ii., 55). The concluding words in the above translation are suggested, but there appears to be some mistake in the wording, as printed in Ormerod. It is doubtful whether "seculars" means *laymen* or *secular clergy*, but the person charged was neither, being a friar or *regular*. The archdeacon seems to have had a representative in court, who took charge of such accused persons as were able to claim "benefit of clergy" and send them to the ecclesiastical court for trial.

75 P.C.C., 6 Fetiplace.

76 B.M., Harl. MS., 2079, f. 161a.

77 P.C.C., 11 Ayloffo (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xiv., 8).

78 P.C.C., 17 Ayloffo (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xiii., 90).

79 *L. and C. Wills* (Chetham Soc., 1st S., li, 7).

80 P.C.C., 12 Bodfelde (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xxvii., 13).

81 Harl. MS., 2099, f. 420. Possibly "Rich my son" and "the prior of the Whyte Frerys" were two individuals.

82 Harl. MS., 2067, f. 1 (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xx., 67).

83 Harl. MS., 2067, f. 3 (*vide L. and C. Wills*, Chet. Soc., 1st S., xxxiii., 12).

84 Harl. MS., 2067, f. 5 (*vide Sheaf*, 3rd S., xx., 67).

85 *L. and C. Wills* (Chet. Soc., xxxiii.), 16 et seq.

86 *L. and C. Wills* (Chet. Soc., 1st S., xxxiii.), 36, 38.

87 *L. and C. Wills* (Chet. Soc., 1st S., li.), 183.

88 P.C.C., 32 Hogan.

89 *Cal. Letters and Papers of Reign of Henry viii.*, vol. xii, part 2, 221.

90 "Attkoo," Morris, 147.

91 "Ralph Battia," Morris, 147.

92 P.R.O., Exchequer T.R. Misc. Books, Vol. 153, p. 17 (*vide Cal.*).

93 P.R.O., S.P. Hen. VIII., § pp. 255-60 (*vide Cal.*).

94 P.R.O., Exchequer T.R. Misc. Books, vol. 153, f. 7.

95 *Journal*, N.S., xiii., 110 et seq. The article is illustrated by an alleged portrait of this bishop.

96 The same amount is given in the undated account in *Augm. Office, Monasteries, Paper Surveys, Bucks.—London*, vol. 397. The friars' property is shewn as being in the parishes of St. Bridget and St. Martin.

97 Query, Robert Chalnor, of Chester, merchant, free 15 June, 1534.

98 Among the Chester citizens of this name at the time were a butcher, free 8 Oct., 1505, and an ironmonger, free 26 Oct., 1507.

⁹⁹ 8 Feb., 10 Hen. VIII. [1519], Isabella Mainwaring, widow, and Charles Mainwaring, esquire, etc., grant to John Harrison, of Chester, tailor, two pieces of land in the lane of the Carmelite Friars called white friars lane. (B.M., Add. MS., 47240). 15 May, 1525, John Harrison of Chester, tailor, conveys to Elena Lyme, widow, a piece of land in the city of Chester in the lane of the Carmelite Friars called le white friars lane together with a certain rent in the same. (*ib.* 47241).

¹⁰⁰ William son of Hamon Goodman was admitted a freeman 22 Aug., 1508. He was sheriff 1514-5 and mayor 1532-3, and 1536-7.

¹⁰¹ This is evidently the friar who was among those signing the surrender of the friary. It will be noticed that there was a prior of the same name, mentioned as such as late as 1527. It seems probable that the two are identical and that the prior resigned his office but remained attached to the house.

¹⁰² Sheriff of Chester 1513-4.

¹⁰³ A rather significant name. There was a family of Fryer or Frer in Chester at an earlier date.

¹⁰⁴ This was the last prior of the friary, and, doubtless one of the local family of Hurlstone.

¹⁰⁵ P.R.O., Augmentation Proceedings—Misc. Book 211. (*Vide Cal.—L. & P. of Reign of Henry VIII.*) Also Ministers Accounts, 31-32, Hen. VIII., 7384.

¹⁰⁶ It has been suggested that this may denote that the house had been leased to the Carpenters' Company for storing their "properties" used in the Chester Pageant.

¹⁰⁷ One of the friars who signed the surrender.

¹⁰⁸ A member of the well-known and important family of Smith of Chester and Hough.

¹⁰⁹ In 1543-4 the Crown leased to Thomas Smythe, of Chester, for two years this hall, kitchen, and "Chambers over le Cloyster" [? the Dorter], as well as other houses and buildings called "houses of office" [? the Rere-dorter], and land within the site circuit and precinct of the friary, at a yearly rent of 13s. 4d. [Augm. Podgs., Misc. Book 216 (*vide Cal.*). This property was the subject of litigation at a later period.

¹¹⁰ A member of a well-known Chester family.

¹¹¹ P.R.O., Ministers' Accounts, 7384.

¹¹² P.R.O., Pat. Roll, 757.

¹¹³ Probably an error as, in the "exemplification" of 1592-3, the name is given as Robert.

¹¹⁴ P.R.O., Pat. Roll, 764.

¹¹⁵ P.R.O., Chester, 2/259.

¹¹⁶ P.R.O., Chester Recog. Roll, 259, m. 1d.

¹¹⁷ P.R.O., Aug. Proc. 21/50.

¹¹⁸ P.R.O., Aug. Proc. 23/84.

¹¹⁹ Possibly a second wife. Fulk Dutton married firstly Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Ralph Egerton of Ridley.

¹²⁰ B.M., Harl. MS., 2067, f. 125.

¹²¹ P.R.O., Chester, *inq. p.m.*, 73, 1 Eliz., No. 3.

¹²² P.R.O., Chester, *inq. p.m.*, 75, 1 Eliz., No. 6.

¹²³ P.R.O., Chester, *inq. p.m.*, 75, 8 Eliz., No. 3.

¹²⁴ *Sheaf*, 1st S., i., 355.

¹²⁵ D.K.P.R., 39th Rep., Apx. (8-9 Eliz., m. 9).

- 126 B.M., Harl. MS., 1994, f. 145. Also *Duttons of Dutton*, p. 163.
- 127 Morris, *op. cit.*, 147.
- 128 Earwaker MSS. *Inq. p.m.*, f. 2386. Also Harl. MS. 2131, f. 160.
- 129 P.R.O., Recog. Roll, Chester 2/244.
- 130 Morris, *op. cit.*, 147.
- 131 B.M., Harl. MS., 2125, f. 215 (reverse). The remarks in round brackets are in another hand. The note has been indexed "Grey Friars" —evidently in error.
- 132 Chester Recog. Roll. 259, m. 1 d.
- 133 Urwick's "*Nonconformity in Cheshire*," xlix., l., lxvi.
- 134 *ib.*, 29 *et seq.*
- 135 *Journal*, new series, xxii., 174, 177.
- 136 Hesketh appears also to have had property which was on the site of part of the Grey Friars, *cf. Journal*, N.S., xxiv., 65.
- 137 Constructed between 1761 and 1776.
- 138 *Tours in Wales*, 1883 edn., i., 217.
- 139 Possibly the old cloister garth?
- 140 Now Puppet Show entry, one of the most ancient of the Water-gate row thoroughfares (*vide Sheaf*, 1st S., iii., 4).
- 141 Morris, *op. cit.*, 146.
- 142 *Sheaf*, 3rd S., x., 23.
- 143 *ib.*, 148.
- 144 *Tours in Wales*, 1883 edn., i., 235.
- 145 B.M. Seal 2923. Another cast of the same seal is B.M. Add MS. xciv. A sketch of the Seal, made from one, apparently in the Warrington Museum is given in the *Journal*, old series, vol. 1, against page 161.
- 146 Hemingway (i., 363), doubtless, by a slip, locates the friary as situated on the City Walls, between the present streets known as Grey Friars and Black Friars.
- 147 A contributor to the *Journal* (o.s., iii., 477), stated that there was a narrow street or lane extending from Commonhall Street to Whitefriars Street called Pierpoint Lane which he assumed made a connection with the second named street over the outer or southern section of what is now known as Bolland's Court. Such a lane would have cut off the friary from the Bridge Street frontage very clearly, but the existence of such a lane has not been established, and it was certainly not identical with Pierpoint Lane.
- 148 From *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, iii., pl. 3, and reproduced in Morris, *juxta*, 528.
- 149 Reproduced in Morris, *juxta*, 256.
- 150 Reproduced in Morris *juxta*, 512.
- 151 Reproduced in Hemingway, ii., frontispiece.
- 152 Reproduced in Hemingway, ii., frontispiece.
- 153 Reproduced in Morris, 227.
- 154 Chester Public Library. Print No. C. 308.
- 155 B.M. Print K. 93.* Also Chester Public Library Print No.A. 8.
- 156 Oilpainting in Grosvenor Museum, Chester. Reproduced in *Journal*, N.S., xxv., frontispiece.
- 157 *Sheaf*, 3rd S., viii., 84; *Vale Royal*, 190; Hemingway, ii., 148; B.M., Harl. MS., 2125, f. 205b.

¹⁵⁸ B.M. Harl. MS., 2125, f. 258.

¹⁵⁹ Horses or hearses were frameworks or canopies, originally shaped like ancient harrows, for candles. One use of the canopies was over the coffin or bier of the more important people, from which the modern use of the term will be evident.

¹⁶⁰ Query the Justice's tomb, *i.e.*, John Hawarden, deputy to the Justice of Chester, see page 20.

¹⁶¹ A book containing directions for the order of the Services.

¹⁶² A book containing the lessons to be read in Church, including lives of the Saints, etc.

¹⁶³ Dornic, stout damask linen cloth, originally made at Tournai.

¹⁶⁴ Rayyon or striped cloth.

¹⁶⁵ Morris, 256.

¹⁶⁶ *Ante* 1419. John de Ewloe held property of value in "White-frerelone"—*Sheaf*, 1st S., ii., 328).

¹⁵¹⁷. John Aldersey granted to John Tatton, etc., nine messuages in white frere lane and also a garden near the church of the Friars of Carmel, which the grantor had recently acquired of Elizabeth Palmer, widow, daughter and heiress of John Blimell, and of William son and heir apparent of the said Elizabeth (*Family of Aldersey*, 229).

¹⁵³⁰⁻¹. Master Nicholas, doctor of Fysike, indicted for a nuisance outside his house in White Friars Lane. (Morris, 264 and 370).

¹⁶⁷ *The Chester Guide*, 1797. Also *A Walk Round the Walls*, (Broster), 1782, 73.

¹⁶⁸ N.S., v., 302. In 1827 the house at the corner was the property of J. Swanwick (*Sheaf*, 3rd S., x., 23).

¹⁶⁹ Hemingway, ii., 34 and 355, describes what he suggests was an underground passage, found under Old Lamb Row, and leading from the direction of the White Friary. This was probably a Roman drain.

¹⁷⁰ *Roman Cheshire* (Watkins), p. 147, *et seq.* Also *Chester Courant*, 30 Apr., and 11 June, 1884. For plans see L. and C. Hist. Soc., xxxvi., p. 10, etc., xxxvii., p. 51, and lv., p. 63.

¹⁷¹ O.S., iii., p. 488.

