FRANCISCANS, OR GREY FRIERS.

St. Francis was born of noble extraction at Assise in Umbria, a province of Italy. His order, called Minores, was confirmed by Innocent III. in 1207; by Honorius III. about 1220; and by Gregory IX. in 1229. They first came into England in 1224, two years before the death of St. Francis2; and, when their order flourished here, this province was divided into seven districts, called custodies; of which the fifth was the custody or wardenship of Oxford, which had eight monasteries; Oxford, Reading, Bedford, Stamford, Nottingham, Northampton, Leicester, and Grantham 3. They were called Franciscans from their founder; Grey Friers from their cloathing; and Friers minors out of their pretended humility. Their habit was a fingle coat of grey colour, girt with a cord, and reaching down to their ancles, with a cowl of the fame, and a cloak over it when they went abroad 4. They went barefoot, and possessed nothing, but lived on charity.

Their priory at Leicester was founded by Simon Montfort the second earl of Leicester of that name. In some collections, however, made by Mr. Stow (a MS. formerly in the possession of John Anstis, esq. Garter king of arms) out of the records of 23 Edward III, the house is said to have been founded by one Gilbert Luenor and Ellen his wife; and Mr. Peck, in one of his MSS. mentions John Pickering, of Stampwick, either as the founder or as an early benefactor.

This priory stood on the South fide of St. Martin's church-yard, towards which there is a portal remaining, but all the other building is quite demolished.

Their church was probably that mentioned in Charyte's Rentale as " Ecclesia Sanctie Trinitatis," which is plainly described to be within the parish of St. Martin; and is probably the same that is sketched in the funeral procession exhibited in plate XVII. fig. 11.

In 1252, the guardian of this house made an award in a dispute concerning tithes between the church of

Lichfield and priory of Lenton 6.

In 1402, the master of the Friers Minors of Leicester, being convicted of treason, was hanged at Tyburn, at the same time with sir Roger Clarendon, a natural fon of the famous Black Prince. Stevens? fays, that, in 1402, some affirmed that king Richard II. was alive, and a conspiracy was discovered, for which some were put to death; among these, some were Grey friers; of which one Richard Friseley, doctor of divinity, being asked what he would do if king Richard were present, answered, "that he would fight in his quarrel against any man, even to death;" whereupon he was drawn and hanged in his religious habit 8. Shortly after, fir Roger Clarendon, bastard fon of the Black Prince, and with him a squire and yeoman, were beheaded; and eight Grey friers hung and beheaded at London, and two at Leicester; all & Johe Smith, commissionariis dni nri regis, &c. 2017 which had published king Richard to be alive?.

Oxford, is noticed by Wood as an early prælector at

Hereford 10.

Brother Gregory de Rosellis, of this order, and bred fcribe their lands and possessions 22:

in the school at Oxford, was prælector in their priory at Leicester 11.

Robert of Leicester 12, a frier of this order, was educated at Oxford, where he obtained the degree of D. D. and became afterwards prælector in divinity in the Franciscan priory in his native town. Leland says of him, "Splendidam ex literis gloriam fibi comparavit, quo titulo inter Franciscanos totus eluxit. Scripsit "Commentarios" Longobardum illustrantes; "Quodlibeta" etiam, ac libellum "de paupertate Christi." He wrote also "De computo Latinorum ad Ricardum Swinfeld episcopum Hereford. tom. i." Two works of his are preserved in the Bodleian Library (Digb. 212.) 1. "De ratione temporum, sive de computo Hebræorum, aptato ad kalendarium Latinorum," divided into four parts; and "De computo Hebræorum, lib. i." A MS. in Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, mentions also, by this author, "Lecturas scripturarum lib. i;" and "Distinctiones, lib. i." He died at Lichfield in 1348, and was buried there in the Francifcan priory 13.

Master John of Leicester; parson of Whethamsted; obtained the privilege of that manor temp. Edward 1.14 Richard of Leicester (it is not quite clear that he

was a Franciscan) wrote "De articulorum simboli distributione secundum Numerum Apostolorum;" a MS. formerly preserved in the library of Sion College 15.—This feems to be the "master Richard Rider, of Leicester," whose father's tomb Leland noticed in St. Mary's church; the same that in those dayes, as apperith by his works, was a great clerke"."

Peter Swynersled, the 8th provincial of the Grey Friers in England, and William Nottingham", S.T.P. the 19th provincial, were both buried in the church of this priory rs.

Adam Bill was warden 1521 19; but the last warden was William Gyles, who, with feven other friers, fur-

rendered his convent 10 Nov. 1539.

" Frater Willus Giles, gardianus domûs seu prioratûs Sancti Francisci de Leicestr', ordinis Sci Francisci, vulgariter nuncupat' le Gray Freers in com' Leic', alias dictus Wills Giles, prior domûs five prioratûs vulgariter nuncupat' le Gray Freers de Leycestr', in com' Leyc', & ejusdem loci conventus. Nov. 10, anno regni 30%

Per me Wylfum Gylys, gardianu.

Per me fratrem Simonem Harve, lectorem.

Per me fratrem Henricum Schepzed.

Per me fratrem Johannem Standysche.

Per me Robertum Afftun.

Per me Radulphum Hyryk.

Per me Wyllum Abbot.

Recognitum fuit hoc presens scriptum per supranominat' capitulum & conventum 13° die Novembris, anno tricesimo, coram nobis, Johe Catlyn, Georgio Asheby,

In Speed's Catalogue, no revenues are accounted William of Leicester, a Franciscan frier, educated at for as belonging to this house; whence they are supposed to have subsisted upon alms 21; but the Ministers Accompts in the Augmentation office thus de-

Matthew Paris, p. 286. ² Batteley, Antiquities of Canterbury, p. 54. 3 Stevens, Monasticon, vol. I. p. 95, 96. See their dress, with and without the mantle, in plate XX. fig. 2, 3. 5 Tanner, Notitia Monastica See before, p. 295. ⁷ Monasticon, vol. I. p. 112. Stow's Chronicle, p. 347.

10 Hist. & Antiq. Universitatis Oxon. p. 69. Stevens, vol. I. p. 127. Another Robert of Leicester was archdeacon of Ely 1238-1241. See Le Neve, p. 73. Tanner's Bibl. Brit. p. 636. 24 Salmon's Herts, p. 146. Tanner, Bibl. Brit. p. 636.

16 Itinerary, vol. I. p. 16. William of Nottingham, a canon and chanter of York cathedral. None of his works are printed; but there are feveral of them in the libraries of England; and, among others, some Questions upon the Four Gospels, Reslections upon all the Gospels of the Year, Questions upon the Lord's Prayer, and a Treatise against the Errors of Pelagius. He died Oct. 5, 1336. Dupin, 14th Cent. p. 63. Leland's account of him, with notes, is in Tanner, Bibl. Brit. p. 362. Le Neve, Fasti, p. 316, puts him among the præcentors of York. Having gone through the office of profesfor, he succeeded Richard in that of provincial minister; in the catalogue of which ministers, we have these words concerning him: "B. William Notyngham, doctor of Oxford, who made the famous Exposition on the Four Gospels, lies at Leicester." Stevens, Monasticon, vol. I. p. 132.—Quare de Will'o Nottingham circa 1330. Bale, p. 414.

History of the Grey Friers, part 2. p. 12; and Stevens, vol. I. p. 97. a.

19 Mr. Cole of Milton, MS. in a letter to Dr. Farmer.

From the original furrender in the Augmentation-office. See the feal, plate XVII. fig. 11; and a fac-simile of the handwriting of the guardian and prælector in plate XX.

21 History of the Grey Friers, London, 1726, 4to, part 2. p. 29. 22 Communicated by Mr. Caley. V fator of fictional of

Rents

Rents of affize.

"Four shillings for free-rent of the heirs of William Wigston, for land and soil, where a certain house of poor is situated.

Site of the late house, with the lands within the precinct.

Twenty shillings for the rent of the soil and land where the buildings of the said house were constructed, with all other lands and gardens within the precinct of the same, being in the hands and occupation of the late prior and co-brethren.

Sum total — £1.45."

"The Gray Freres of Leircester stode at the ende of the hospital of Mr. Wigeston. Simon Mountefort, as I lernid, was founder thereof; and there was byried king Richard III. slayne at Bosworth-field, and a knight caullid Mutton, sumtyme mayre of Leyrcester."

"The dead corps of Richard was as shamefullie carried to the towne of Leicester as he gorgeouslie the day before with pompe and pride departed out of the fame towne; for his bodie was naked and despoiled to the very skin, and nothing left about him, not so much as a clout to cover his privy parts; and was truffed behind a pursevant of arms, one Blanch Senglier, or White-boar, like a hog or calf; his head and arms hanging on the one fide of the horse, and his legs on the other fide; and all besprinkled with mire and bloud, he was brought to the Graie Friers church within the town, and there laie like a miferable spectacle 2; and afterward, with small funeral pomp, was there interred 3."-" But to leave the tyrant as he died, you shall understand king Henry the Seventh caused a tomb to be made, and set up over the place where he was buried, with a picture of alabafter representing his person 4; which at the suppression of that monastery was utterly defaced: since when, his grave, over-grown with nettles and weeds, is not to be found; only the stone-chest wherein his corpse lay is now made a drinking-trough for horses, at a common inn in Leicester, and retaineth the only memory of this monarch's greatness. But his body (as is reported) was carried out of the city, and contemptuously bestowed under the end of Bow-bridge 5, which giveth passage over a branch of Stowre, upon the West side of the town. Upon this bridge (the like report runneth) stood a stone of some height; against which king Richard, as he passed toward Bofworth, by chance struck his spur; and against the same stone, as he was brought back, hanging by the horse's side, his head was dashed and broken, as a wife wo nan forfooth had foretold; who, before his going to battle, being asked of his success, said, that where his spur struck his head should be broken. But these are but reports "."

barous crueltics upon his dead body, they gave his royal earth a bed of earth, honourably, appointed by the order of king Henry the Seventh, in the chief church of Leicester, called St. Mary's, belonging to the order and society of the Grey Friers; the king in short time after causing a fair tomb of mingled-coloured marble, adorned with his statue, to be erected thereupon; to which some grateful pen had also destined an epitaph, the copy whereof (never fixed to his stone) I have seen

in a recorded manuscript book chained to a table in a chamber in the Guildhall of London, which (the faults and corruptions amended) is thus represented, together with the title thereunto presixed, as I found it?:

" Epitaphium Regis Richardi Tertii, sepulti ad Leicestriam, justu et sumptibus Su Regis Henrici Septimi.

"Hic ego, quem vario tellus sub marmore claudit, Tertius a justà a voce Richardus eram.

Tutor eram patriæ b, patrius pro jure nepotis;
Diruptâ, tenui regna Britanna, fide.
Sexaginta dies binis duntaxat ademptis

Æstatesque tuli tunc e mea sceptra duas.

Fortiter in bello certans desertus ab Anglis,
Rex Henrice, tibi, septime, succubui.

At sumptu, pius ipse, tuo, sic ossa dicaras Regem olimque facis regis honore coli.

Quatuor exceptis jam tantum, quinque bis annis,
Acta trecenta quidem, suftra falutis erant.

Anteque Septembris undena luce kalendas,

Reddideram rubiæ jura petita f Rosæ.

At mea, qui quis eris, propter commissa precare,
Sit minor ut precibus pæna levata g tuis."

** Various readings in this epitaph, in a copy given by Sandford, p. 435, from the Heralds College MSS. vol. I. p. 3:

Multa.

Nam patriæ tutor.

Decoras.

Dedita jura.

Fienda.

Englished:

"I who am laid beneath this marble stone, Richard the Third, posses'd the British throne. My Country's guardian in my nephew's claim, By trust betray'd I to the kingdom came. Two years and fixty days, fave two, I reign'd; And bravely strove in fight; but, unsustain'd, My English left me in the luckless field. Where I to Henry's arms was forc'd to yield. Yet at his cost my corfe this tomb obtains, Who piously interr'd me, and ordains That regal honours wait a king's remains. Th' year thirteen hundred 'twas and eighty-four, The twenty-first of August, when its power And all its rights I did to the Red Rose restore. Reader, whoe'er thou art, thy prayers bestow, T'atone my crimes, and ease my pains below."

"The wicked and tyrannical prince king Richard III, being flain at Bosworth, his body was begged by the nuns [friers] at Leicester (alitèr Grey friers), and buried in their chapel there; at the dissolution whereof, the place of his burial happened to fall into the bounds of a citizen's garden; which being (after) purchased by Mr. Robert Heyrick (some time mayor of Leicester), was by him covered with a handsome stone pillar, three feet high, with this inscription: "Here lies the body of Richard III. some time king of England." This he shewed me (Christopher Wren, B. D.) walking in the garden, 1612 "."

The Rev. Samuel Carte, vicar of St. Martin's in Leicester, says, in 1720, "I know no other evidence that the stone cossin formerly used for a horse-trough was king Richard's, but the constancy of the tradition. There is a little part of it still preserved at the White Horse Inn, in which one may observe some appearance of the hollow, fitted for retaining the head and the shoulders."

Probably Moton; but no such name occurs in the list beginning in 1268. If he was mayor, it must be before that time.

Holinshed, p. 760. "Then was the corps of Richarde, late king, spoyled and naked as he was borne, caste behynd a man, and so caryed unreverently overthwarte the horsebacke unto the Fryers at Leycester: where after a season that he had been that all men myght beholde him, he was there with lytell reverence buryed." Fabian, p. 418.

"Occidit in bello miseranda cade Richardus

Crinibus attractus dum ferro sævit hostis."

Dr. John Hird, in Hist. Angl. cited by Buck, in The Complete History of England, vol. I. p. 542,—" And after all," fays Buck, to complete their barbarism, they threw his body behind one upon a jade, and so conveyed it to Leicester."—" The body, after many indignities and reproaches, was obscurely buried; for though the king [Henry VII.] of his nobleness gave charge unto the friers of Leicester to see an honourable interment to be given unto it; yet the religious people themselves, being not free from the humours of the vulgar, neglected it." Lord Bacon's Life of Henry VII. Ibid. 578.—T. Carte, vol. II. p. 818, fays, "Richard's corpse, with a rope about his neck, thrown like a calf across a horse, was carried, and, after being treated with horrible indignities, was at last buried in the church of the Grey Friers without any solemnity."

Baker's Chronicle, p. 251.—Grafton, p. 852, fays, "he was with no leffe funerall pompe and folemnitie enterred then he would to be done at the burrying of his innocent nephewes, whom he caused cruelly to be murthered, and unnaturally to be quelled."

Holinshed, v. II. p. 761. I cannot find Mr. Hutton's authority for calling this a scrubby monument. See his Bosworth Field, p. 142.

See hereafter, p. 301. 6 Baker, ubi fupra. 7 Buck's Richard III, in the Complete History of England, vol. I. p. 5776

At that time tutor, at St. John's College, Oxford, to the eldest fon of sir William Heyrick of Beaumanor; in whose family wren's Parentalia, p. 114.

DKINST (date?)

16/2 still grave still

THIS IS SPECE

paid in a

Mr.

Mr. Throsby adds, "When I was a boy, the end that then remained stood as a part of a heap of rubbish, in the inn-yard, of brick-ends, stones, &c. and was in appearance like the sketch here annexed "."

And Mr. Hutton fays, "I took a journey to Leicester in 1758, to see a trough which had been the repository of one of the most singular bodies that ever existed; but found it had not withstood the ravages of time. The best intelligence that I could obtain was, that it was destroyed about the latter end of the reign of George the First, and some of the pieces placed as steps in a cellar at the same inn where it had ferved as a trough 2."

In 1513, the king's letters patent were obtained, by William, Thomas, and Roger Wig Ston, for founding the hospital of St. Ursula, now called Wigston's Hospital, on ground which was within the precincts of the Grey Friers; to which, in 1520, William Fisher, the first master of that hospital, obtained the addition of St. Francis's garden. For all this, the heirs of William Wigston engaged to pay for ever to the Crown an

annual quit-rent of 4s.

A procession to a funeral in this church is thus described in the MSS. of Mr. Peck:

" Processio quedam funebris antiqua, quâ cadaver vespillonibus tedas ferentibus precessum est, & Fratribus Mendicantibus asportatum, sequente magna collachrymantium turbâ.—1. Vespillones atratis vestibus cereos magnos cadaveri preferentes.—2. Frater niger, five predicator, ordinis Sancti Dominici.-3. Frater leucopheatus, sive minor, ordinis Sancti Francisci.—4. Frater albus, sive Carmeliticus 4, ordinis beate Marie de Monte Carmeli. ____ 5. Frater Eremiticus, ordinis Sancti Augustini .- 6. Confanguinei, affines, proximi, pauperes, populique plurimi alii subsequentes, condolentesque.

Notandum est, quòd cum unicuique domui mendicantium aliquam eleemosinam dono dederit vir mortuus, tum cadaver ejus veste fratris mendicantis indutum est; idemque uniuscujusque ordinis frater unus lintcolis ad. ecclesiam sepulchrum versus asportat, & in hunc modum eorum omnium confratri agnoscitur mortuus, & bonorum operum cujuscunque ordinis mendicantium (uti afferitur) fit particeps. Nec mirum igitur, quod super tumulos suos, & monumenta sepulchralia, laicorum etiam mortuorum effigies, vestibus religiosis à sculptoribus indute, non raro videntur expresse s.

The fite of the Grey Friers was granted, in 1536, to John Bellowe, elq. and John Broxholme, gentleman; who had before obtained the manor of Willoughby, with many very confiderable possessions in this and leveral other counties ; and, on the 31st of August that year, paid £200. to fir John Williams, knt. treafurer of the Augmentation of the provisions of the Crown, as the last payment on the sum of £2370. 19s. oid. due for their immense purchase; amongst which were the fite of the late Grey Friers of Leicester; the 45. quit-rent paid yearly to the faid house of friers by the heirs of William Wig fton; the fite of the Friers

Augustines within the same town, and all the tenements belonging to that priory.

The Particular for this grant of the Grey Friers, &c. is in the Augmentation-Office, and agrees with the Ministers' Accompt before-mentioned, with this addition, that the house and lands were valued at the faid fum of £1. 4s. by the officers of the king at the time of the furrender; and there is also to the Particular this note: "Memorandum, the king's highnes hathe no more lands and tenements belonging to the faid late Fryer-house then be above mentioned, to the auditor's knowledge. These premises were fold to Bellow and Broxholme at twenty years purchase."

The church was foon after demolished; as we find among the payments of the churchwardens of St. Martin's, in 1545, fix load of freestone from the Freers at 18s. the load; 7d. a day to the chief workmen; and of 15s. for a beam to be laid on the high roof, fetched - Dean from Cf we from the Freers .

The fite of the Grey Friers ' became afterwards the property of Sir Robert Catlyn; from whom it paffed to Alderman Robert Heyrick 10, who died June 14, 16,8; and, by his last will, charged this estate with the following annual payments; one shilling to each of the poor people in Trinity Hospital (then 110); 40s. to poor widows of the Borough; and 13s. 4d. to the school-master that teacheth the petties, or under-usher of the free-school in Leicester ".

This part of the Alderman's property was fold, in 1711, by his great grandson, Samuel Heyrick, clerk, to Thomas Noble, efq. whom Mr. Carre, in 1720, describes as then having "a very fair house within the precincts

of the priory of the Grey-friers."

About the year 1731, a brass seal " was dug up in a garden in the Frier-lane, belonging to a house of Mr. Simpson, within the precincts also of this priory. In the centre, under a rude Gothic arch, IDS, and round it, EST AMOR ME', making, when complete, Jelesselle Amor meus"; an inteription not unfrequent on old monuments and on rings 14.

"The fine spacious grounds belonging to this friery extended from the upper-end of the Market-place nearly to the Frier lane meeting-house; much of which has been built on in my time. When the workmen were digging for the cellars to the range of houses which face St. Martin's church, they cast up, I remember, many human bones; one skeleton entire 15."

The late Rogers Ruding, esq. devisee of Mr. Noble, after allotting a piece of ground throughout for a common street, now called New-street, in which many good houses are since built, fold the site of the Grey-

friers, to different purchasers.

The mansion-house and gardens were fold by Mr. Ruding to Mr. Garle in 1752, and by Mr. Garle's heirs in 1776 to Thomas Pares, junior, esq. F. A. S. who has lately beautified the house, and added two extensive wings to it. From this house the original quit-rent still continues to be paid.

HOSE BLOVAKED + 2 wy sadded 1776

Throfby's Leicester, p. 291. See this copied in plate XX. fig. 4.

See plate XVII. fig. 11. 4 If this sketch of a funeral was originally made for one that took place in the church of the Grey Friers at Leicester, as Mr. Peck supposed, it should seem as if there had once been a small cell of Carmelites, or White Friers, in this town.

5 Peck, MSS. vol. V. (Harl. MSS. 4938.) p. 11. See several grants to them in 36 & 37 Hen. VIII. in Jones's Index, vol. I. under the Originalia temp. Hen. VIII. 7 Stevens's Monasticon, Appendix, p. 4, 5.

Churchwardens' Accompts of St. Martin's parish. It was called, in title-deeds to property which it bounded, "lands formerly belonging to fir Robert Catlyn, knt. deceased, and now the land of the heirs of Robert Heyrick, gent. decenfed;"-this in 1620. Robert died in 1618. - In another, dated 9 Car. " formerly, &c. and now the lands of the heirs of Tobye Heyricke, clerk." Tobias died in 1027. In another, dated 1653, "formerly, &c. and now the land of John Heyrick, gent."

In a letter to his brother Sir William, Jan. 8, 1615-16, Mr. Robert Heyricke fays, " For the Blake Fryars, I nevar ment, nor doe not, to part with them, but you shall be pryvy to it or yt go; although Mr. Archdeacon and 2 or 3 more have fent to me to know if I would fell yt. And I thinke I doe yt somewhat too deare to them; yet one was so round with me that I tolld him I must except that yf a frend of myne wolld challenge my former promes, I must perform yt." And in another letter; Dec. 17, 1616, "This morning, about 9 of the clok, as I was cooming forthe of my chambre, the bells at Sent Marten's very fodenly rung aloud; and presently word was brought me, that the fire was at Frydrs; and presently word cam that yt was a kylln of Robart Cocke adjoyning to the Fryars, in a very dangerous place, where the stac of corn and hay lay nere; but, the Lord be praised! it was quickly quenched." From the originals at Beaumanor.

This appears from "Certain Braunches of the will of Mr. Robert Heyrick, one of the Aldermen of this Burrow of Leirester," hung up in the Town-hall parlour by the side of the picture, and printed under Houghton on the Hill, vol. II. p. 617.

12 See plate XVII. fig. 10.

In the will of William of Wickham is this bequest: "Item, lego domino meo archiepiscopo Cantuariensi unum anulum aureum, cum lapide de ruby. Item, unum par precum de auro appenfum ad unum monile de auro, habens hæc verba insculpta, I. H. C. est Amor meus." Dr. Lowth's Life of that Prelate, Appendix, p. xxxviii.

14 Gent. Mad voi LX VID 438 15 Thromus Lecester, P.201

