

A History of the English Austin Friars

SOURCES AND LITERATURE

What is extant of the records formerly in possession of the English Austin Friars is too meager to be of great help to an historian. Not much was left of monastic libraries and archives after King Henry suppressed the religious houses of his realm in 1538 ; of the Augustinian records only one cartulary, a few documents, and about a dozen manuscripts have survived to this day. The history of these friars must be based on other sources.

1. *Publications of the English Public Record Office (PRO).*

The extensive collections of the Public Record Office are the chief source of English history. Their uniform publication in digest form is unparalleled anywhere. The most important for Augustinian history are the Calendars of Patent Rolls (*Rotuli litterarum patentium*) and the Calendars of Closed Rolls (*Rotuli litterarum clausarum*). The Patent Rolls contain records of almost all acquisitions of real estate because the law of mortmain of 1279 required royal permission for any alienation of taxable property into mortmain. In the Closed Rolls, which contain similar material, we find also personal touches in the account of royal transactions affecting the order or individual friars. Both Calendars have been preserved almost in entirety, and most of the portions referring to years of interest to us have been published. Other Rolls, such as the Liberate Rolls and the Rolls of Fine, are much less to our purpose in this treatise.

2. *Episcopal Registers.*

The publication of the extant episcopal registers is an under-

taking of various English learned societies, among which the *Canterbury and York Society* has done some of the most notable work. This edition is superior to that by the PRO because it gives the whole text and not a mere digest. Episcopal registers are of limited usefulness to the historian of the Austin Friars, however, since they like the other Mendicant Orders were exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, depending on the local bishops only for permission to make new foundations and for the license to hear the confessions of the people. Occasionally we may find references to a grant of indulgences, to a violation of the right of sanctuary, or to some transgression of episcopal right. Their chief value lies in the lists of men on whom the bishop conferred Holy Orders. But the value of some of these lists is diminished by the failure of editors to distinguish between Austin Friars and Augustinian Canons, a matter of special importance in cities where both Orders had monasteries. Since a great number of Episcopal Registers has not yet been published I am especially obliged to Dr. A. B. Emden, Oxford, for putting at my disposal ordination lists of several dioceses; these have proved very valuable for our study.

3. The Archives of the Priors General, Rome.

The archives of the Priors General in Rome are another important source. My confrère Alberico de Meijer has made a complete transcript of all items concerning English history. This work, entered upon with a view to publication, has not yet appeared in print; the items concerning the Irish Vicariate, however, have been edited in collaboration with Father F. X. Martin, O. S. A., in the *Archivum Hibernicum* (1956) 61-134. The archives of the Priors General are by no means complete. The letters originating in England and addressed to the Prior General, for instance, have been lost. What we have is the fourteen Registers numbered Dd 1-17, covering parts of the period from 1357 to 1538. These Registers are a kind of journal recording the full or condensed text of official letters to the various provinces.

This source was extensively used by such leading historians of the Order as Thomas Herrera and Aloysius Torelli, although they omitted much of great interest to scholars of our time. The more recent publication of many of the more important items in the

Analecta Augustiniana, the official organ of the Order, was too selective to promote thorough understanding of the material. The Registers must therefore be considered a neglected warehouse of historical data, as important for the religious and intellectual history of the English Province as the Royal Letters Patent are for the story of its material progress.

Since it was the prerogative of the Prior General to appoint candidates for academic degrees, his correspondence preserves many names and sheds much light on the more important members of the Province. The religious and moral life of the English Augustinians can now be described, and their school system, of which almost nothing was formerly known, can be presented in a more or less coherent manner. The Prior General could give conventuality to any Augustinian in any house of the Order, he could grant dispensations from the constitutions, and he alone could render a decision in certain difficult matters. It was he who had to decide, for example, in the divided election of 1419 and in the dispute between the Irish Vicariate and the Mother Province in England.

As valuable as this source is, it must be used with great care. By its very nature it is overloaded with disputes, wrongs, and exceptions to the Rule. An ever-increasing flow of dispensations undoubtedly reflects a real deterioration of discipline, for example, but not if other sources tell of the devoted pursuit of sanctity and the zeal for reform that existed at the same time. Also, some changes were less factual than jurisdictional shifts. The absence of academic appointments in the later volumes results not from intellectual decay but from the increased jurisdiction of the Provincial in such matters. Finally, the archives are far from complete. We have mentioned the absence of letters sent to Rome from the English Province and the Registers themselves contain entries for a total of only 78 years.

What survives of the Acts of the Chapters General has been published in the *Analecta Augustiniana* (AA) and is thus readily available, but these do not include the special additions given to each Province separately. Before the advent of printing a copy of definitions passed for the entire Order was given to every Province, but directives concerning a single Province were given to that Province alone. Thus the destruction of the English archives entailed the loss of all the additions applying specially to England.

4. Charters and Cartularies.

In his report to Cromwell on his visit to the Austins at Droitwich in 1538, the Bishop of Dover complained that he had found in the Prior's coffer « eleven bulls of the bishop of Rome and above an hundred letters of pardon ». But Droitwich was a small house. Larger houses, such as York, Lincoln, Cambridge, and the Provincialate in London must have possessed great treasures of this kind. All papal documents were destroyed by order of the King, and the King's officers made no great effort to preserve other papers and records, so that in our own time we can only surmise how much must have been lost.

One important kind of record was the cartulary. It was necessary to preserve original documents by withholding them from casual use, and it was very desirable to make the information they contained readily available. The cartulary was a record into which all such documents were transcribed. The only Augustinian cartulary extant is that of Clare, Suffolk, now Harleian Manuscript 4835. The earliest document in this cartulary is from the year 1265, while the latest is from 1453. The first of the three parts into which the manuscript is divided contains the real estate transactions of the house ; the second concerns agreements with neighboring houses and their friars, as for example loans of books or the rearrangement of mendicant districts to provide for new foundations ; the third and most interesting part preserves the texts of episcopal letters conferring on the monastery indulgences and other favors. Only one papal document is included.

Because so few documents have come down from the Augustinian Houses in England, other printed and unprinted sources have been diligently searched for items concerning our history. Collected in one volume and reproduced by mimeograph, they have been available since 1950 under the title *Collectanea Anglicana OESA*. The documents of the thirteenth century are published in this issue.

5. Chronicles.

The oldest Austin chronicle of which we have any knowledge is the *Liber historiarum venerabilis memorie fratris Willelmi de Clare*, which frater Thomas of Tyfford borrowed from the Clare library

in 1299*. This William was prior of London about 1270* and is not identical with William of Sengham, the first recorded Englishman to join the Order. Some doubt has been expressed, whether this *liber historiarum* is really a chronicle or only a biblical concordance. We'll never know as this work is now lost as is that of John Mason, who made excerpts from the *New Book of Chronicles* once kept in the choir of the Austins at Gorleston.

The important *Chronicle of England* by the Augustinian John Capgrave has survived. Not knowing them or believing them incorrect, local historians have overlooked the very early dates Capgrave gives for the foundation of several houses. On first examination these dates, some of them actually prior to the year of the Great Union, seem to boast of an impossible antiquity. They are, however, strongly supported and even proved by recent researches. The detailed knowledge of this historian is clearly demonstrated in his notice on the house of Lynn. He certainly had ample opportunities as head of the English Province to study the documents of the friaries under his care.

The last of the English chroniclers was Master Bernard André, the blind poet, who migrated from Toulouse to London and became the tutor of Prince Arthur, the brother of Henry VIII. His work is entitled *Historia Regis Henrici Septimi* (RS). Like Capgrave he has information which has been overlooked by local historians.

Except for Walsingham's *Chronicles* in which some of the most exciting moments of the London friary are dramatically recounted, other medieval histories are not fruitful sources for Augustinian history.

6. Secondary sources. Literature.

Dugdale's famous *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1849) will always have an important place among the histories of English monasticism because of its many documents. In all other respects, however, it is being supplanted by the comprehensive *Victoria County History* (VCH). Unfortunately, the account of friaries received a rather inadequate treatment until the late G. A. Little was engaged; and now that he is dead the history of the friaries is being written as poorly as before.

The first modern monograph on the English Province was written by Father Aubrey Gwynn S. J. under the title *The English*

Austin Friars at the time of Wyclif (Oxford 1940) X and 295 pp. It is a reliable, scientific study with an astounding wealth of new material ; but it concerns itself principally with the great theological dispute of the day, from Fitzralph's *De pauperie Salvatoris* to Wyclif's *De domino divino*, and with the position taken by the English Augustinians on the questions raised. For the first time men like William Flete, Geoffrey Herdeby, Thomas Winterton, John Erghom and the brothers (?) Waldeby have come alive and taken their proper place in English and Augustinian history. Father Gwynn's book, as the title indicates, was not planned as a comprehensive history of the English Province, and a great deal can be added for the 13th, 15th, and 16th centuries. Still, this excellent work firmly establishes him as the first modern historian of the English Province of the Augustinian Order.

The present study is planned as a reference work for future historians. It is to be a synthesis of the known material concerning the development of the province and individual houses as well as the lives of important friars. A great deal of the general history of the Order has been included because it is so little known in English literature.

To the many friends who contributed to the preparation of this outline by giving of their time and knowledge I wish to express my heartfelt thanks. The greatest debts I owe to Father Benedict Hackett for carefully reading my manuscript and to Father Daniel Sullivan for giving it its proper English form.

PREAMBLE

*The Austin Friars before 1256*¹⁾.

A general reorganization of religious life was decreed by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. Henceforth no religious Rules but those of St. Augustine and St. Benedict were to be permitted. Religious houses with similar ideals and modes of life could no longer remain independent but were required to form groups. These groups were to be real centralized Orders with superiors general, provincial and general chapters and of course one of the two authorized Rules. It was permissible to have special statutes so long as they were not incompatible with the Rule that had been chosen. Furthermore, each of these Orders had to seek and obtain papal approval, a requirement that brought many small religious communities into the light of history. In some cases approval was given as much as thirty years after the Council; this fact indicates not only lack of haste on the part of the Papacy but also and more importantly a real steadfastness in carrying out the original plan.

One of the Orders owing its origin to this centralizing policy was the hermits of Tuscany, in the official language of papal document *Fratres Heremitarum in Tuscia Ordinis Sancti Augustini*. There is no certainty that any of their constituent houses were of great antiquity; only a few of them are known to have possessed records reaching into the first years of the twelfth century (1116). At first each of these hermitages followed the usage of eremitical tradition quite independent of all other houses, yet under the control of the local bishop, who did not hesitate to depose a superior when he had not supervised or confirmed the election. In 1223 five of these houses were united in a loosely organized brotherhood, which was joined five years later by eight additional houses. On the re-

¹⁾ The sources for the following facts can be found in my biography of Cardinal Richard Annibaldi in *Augustiniana* vols. 2-4 (1952-4) and separate. We quote it as ROTH, *Annibaldi* giving first the page of the separate edition and in parenthesis that in *Augustiniana* (= AUG.). An excellent summary of the events in 1256 was also given by my confrère Benedict HACKETT, *The seventh centenary of the Great Union of Augustinians*, in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 87 (1957) 13-24. I. RODRIGUEZ, *VII Centenaria de la llamada « Magna Unio »*, in *Religión y Cultura* 1 (1956) 273-80.

quest of two brethren, Stephen and Hugh, Pope Innocent IV charged Cardinal Richard Annibaldi with the task of uniting all Hermits in Tuscany except the Williamites. This was accomplished in 1244 at a meeting held at St. Maria del Popolo in Rome, to which each house had to send two delegates. Cardinal Richard immediately withdrew them from episcopal jurisdiction, bound them to the Rule of St. Augustine, gave them new constitutions, and placed them under the authority of a superior general. In less than a decade he made the new Order into a highly efficient organization. The so-called Order of St. Galganus was absorbed, as were many other independent hermitages, thus swelling the number of houses to more than sixty-one by the year 1253. In the following year Cardinal Richard obtained for them as their Mother House St. Maria del Popolo in Rome, which had formerly belonged to the Franciscans. The Hermits of Tuscany were the largest, the fastest growing, and the most important of the groups joining the Great Union of 1256.

Another group of hermits developed in Northern Italy under the immediate example and leadership of St. John Bonus (1168-1249), who asked for the Rule of St. Augustine and accepted the grey habit of the hermits in 1225. Fifteen years later Gregory IX required them to lay aside the grey habit, which looked too much like that of the Franciscans, and commanded them to wear either white or black in the future. St. John Bonus gained considerable influence with the laity by establishing a lay « Order of brothers and sisters of the Penitence », probably the first lay Third Order founded by Mendicants. The Johnbonites or Zambonini, as they were popularly known, were by 1251 divided into three provinces. The election of a new superior general to succeed St. John Bonus resulted in such bitterness that the Order was split into two warring factions. One of the seeds of contention was the fact that the Order had at first been entirely under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Cesena but had later expanded beyond his diocesan boundaries, and the various houses could not agree on the exact legal relationship between their bishop and that of the Bishop of Cesena. The breach was healed in 1252 when their Cardinal Protector, William Fieschi, decreed their exemption from episcopal control. At the same time he gave them the official name, « Order of Hermits ».

A third group of hermits dwelt in the marquisates of Ancona and Treviso. From their origin near the little town of Brettino they

took the name of Brettini. Their life was one of extraordinary rigor, and they practiced the severest kind of religious poverty. Accepting the Rule of St. Augustine in 1225, they continued to wear grey sackcloth because it was the cheapest and rudest material available. They were, of course, easily confused with the Franciscans, and at times they probably received alms that were intended for the sons of St. Francis. Acting on the representations of the Franciscan Order, Rome began to insist that the Brettini wear the black Augustinian habit. This regulation, threatening as it did to make the Brettini seem very much like the older monastic orders in the eyes of the people, touched an extremely sensitive point. It was not obeyed. In subsequent decrees on this matter, which were addressed to the Brettini alone rather than to all the Augustinians, Pope Innocent IV adopted a sharp and even peremptory tone. His continuing inability to obtain the obedience of these otherwise holy men, he came to realize, called for a more radical solution than the mere reiteration of his commands.

The Williamites, too, presented the Pope with a knotty problem. They were hermits who followed the Rule of St. Benedict. They had been founded by St. William of Maleval, who died in 1157 and was canonized in 1202. The Williamite Order had expanded across the Alps and had penetrated even into Hungary. In Belgium, it flourished. Unfortunately, they were governed by two different superiors general, one residing at Maleval and the other on Montefavali²⁾. The founders of new monasteries on the far side of the Alps, moreover, developed a very independent spirit. Their Superior General at Maleval, John, was forced by the Pope to resign, because he was unable to control these unruly elements.

It is clear that the multiplicity of eremitical Orders created difficult administrative problems. The project of uniting them would have seemed attractive to the Pope on this ground alone. There was, however, a more urgent reason for union. The Church had an almost desperate need for workers in the battle against the heretical movements of the day. The Franciscans and Dominicans had done great things, but much remained undone on account of the lack of men. It seemed reasonable to seek the necessary manpower

²⁾ I suspect that Montefavali was at times confused with Montefallio near Naples. The first is never mentioned by Augustinian historians of the past, the other quite frequently.

and zeal in the eremitical life, which was known to have generated the most powerful forces for religious betterment in the preceding century ³⁾. Was it Richard Annibaldi, Cardinal Protector of the Tuscan Hermits and one of the leading figures of the Papal Curia, who first suggested the reorganization of the hermit groups into one active Order on the Mendicant model? Its foremost advocate, at least, he certainly was. The Pope placed the three eremitical Orders of Augustinians and the two branches of the Williamites into his hands, at the same time commanding that they should be welded into an integrated whole. The Cardinal was to lead them from the quietude of their hermitages into the busy life of the city, « there to preach and hear confessions and edify the people by the holiness of their lives » ⁴⁾.

The Cardinal summoned two delegates from each house to a meeting in April, 1256. The place was St. Maria del Popolo, Rome, where he had united the Tuscan Hermits twelve years before. The purely oral character of the directives he had received from his uncle, Pope Alexander IV, made it easy for him to exercise absolute authority over the meeting. He told the delegates what was required and they voted their acquiescence. Lanfranc Septala, head of the Zanonini, was accepted as the first Prior General. The new Order was divided into Provinces. The Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Tuscans were imposed on all. In his bull *Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae* of April 9, the Pope gave his unqualified approval to everything that had been done ⁵⁾. In this manner was founded the third of the four great Mendicant Orders, commonly known among the English as the Austin Friars. Officially, the name was and remains *Ordo fratrum eremitarum sancti Augustini*, the no longer apposite eremitical designation serving to distinguish these Mendicants from the Canons of St. Augustine.

Documents do not support the Augustinian tradition that the union was planned for Augustinian groups only. In a bull of 1257 Pope Alexander IV stated that he had charged Cardinal Richard

³⁾ G. BAUM, *Der Wanderprediger als Vorläufer der Bettelmönche*, in *Cor Unum* 10 (1952) 72-6

⁴⁾ *Jordani de Saxonia OESA, Liber Vitasfratrum* ed. R. ARBESMANN and W. HÜMPFNER (New York 1943) 57 sq.

⁵⁾ Best edition by A. DE MEIJER in *AUG.* 6 (1956) 9-13.

to combine *all hermits of any Order whatsoever* ⁶⁾. It soon became evident, however, that this plan was too ambitious. When the Williamites learned from their delegates that they had lost their independence, their name, their Rule, their habit and their eremitical life, they protested so vigorously to the Holy See that on August 22, 1256 they regained their former status. Other eremitical Orders hastened to safeguard their independence. The Hermits of Camaldoli for example who seemed affected by the bull even though they had sent no delegates to the meeting made strenuous efforts to preserve their autonomy. They received permission to continue as a separate Order at the same time as the Williamites ⁷⁾. In the end, Cardinal Richard had to recognize that only homogeneous groups could join in an enduring combination.

⁶⁾ « Richardus... qui auctoritate nostra omnes heremitas cuiuscumque ordinis uniens... »: *Iustis petentium*, 23 Octobris 1257 in *Les registres d'Alexandre IV*, no. 2299, ed. RONCIÈRE-LOYE, etc. Italics ours. See also Doc. 15.

⁷⁾ AUG. VI, 18.

PART I

Origin and Development

Chapter I

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY ⁸⁾

On September 3, 1249* King Henry III welcomed to England the Friars Hermits of the Order of St. Augustine, intending that « they shall stay in his land and that good be done to them by everyone ». September 1249, therefore, marks the beginning of the Austin Friars in England. English Chroniclers give as a rule the year 1250* but the difference of a few months is insignificant. In no other country can Pre-Union Augustinian beginnings be dated so exactly.

The testimony of the royal document of 1249 is unimpeachable. Nevertheless there exists a fourteenth century lonely statement, based on hearsay, that gives English Austins a much higher antiquity. This solitary statement concerns the foundation of the Order in Winchester, where the City Council tried to block in 1352 the transfer of the Austins into the city proper arguing that the Friars

« for more than two hundred years, it is said, held a suitable house in the suburbs of Winchester, well built and contiguous to the city, in which many bodies of nobles and others lie buried » (Doc. I).

The city fathers would not have made this appeal to oral tradition if they had been able to cite documents, but neither would they have exposed themselves to telling a transparent lie. The only satisfactory explanation is that Winchester had long existed as an eremitical foundation, when the Pope's command of unification in 1255* brought it into the Augustinian fold. Or it might be that the Austins had been granted or had purchased an ancient religious establishment when they started their house in Winchester.

The Austins welcomed by King Henry III in 1249 were a distinct religious group, known by a definite title and recognized by reli-

⁸⁾ Wherever an asterisc (*) accompanies a date, it refers to the document of that year in the publication of our *Sources for a history of the English Austin Friars* which begins with this issue of AUG.

gious authority. The title was given exclusively to the Augustinian Hermits of Tuscany ⁹⁾ who had been re-organized by Cardinal Richard Annibaldi in 1244. This Order had for its principal aim retreat from the world to attain full union with God. They were so rich in vocations and so filled with enthusiasm for their way of life that they were prepared to expand overseas. England seemed to be a fertile field for their mode of life. The eremitical tradition was exceptionally strong on the British Isles ¹⁰⁾ and the Austins, therefore, were striking roots in congenial soil. They were also attracted by the well-known favorable disposition of Henry III towards all mendicant Orders. Equally well known is the eagerness with which men of noble birth sought burial in the friars' churches. Much was also due to the influence of Richard Annibaldi, their Cardinal Protector whose powerful position in the Roman Curia had early attracted the attention of the English Court. King Henry III seeking the archbishopric of Canterbury for his uncle, Boniface of Savoy ¹¹⁾, enlisted the Cardinal's aid in December 1243*. He needed him again in his ambitious plans for the Crown of Sicily, which he sought to procure first for his brother Richard of Cornwall and then for his son Edmund. Richard Annibaldi often used such occasions to advance the interests of his family and to promote the expansion of the Order under his protection ¹²⁾. It is significant that the foundations of Clare and London took place at a time when the services of the Cardinal were greatly in demand. One of the king's most traveled and experienced diplomats, Richard Earl of Gloucester ¹³⁾, began the foundation in Clare; and a blood relative of the king's, Lord Humphrey of Bohun, High Sheriff of England, made the foundation in London.

⁹⁾ ROTH, *Annibaldi* note 186.

¹⁰⁾ R. M. CLAY, *The hermits and anchorites of England* (London 1914).

¹¹⁾ Boniface of Savoy became an uncle to the English king by Henry's marriage to Eleanor of Savoy in 1236. Eleanor was an ambitious woman and like all rulers of this period used her new position to promote the interests of her family. When Cardinal Richard switched from Richard of Cornwall to Charles of Anjou as a candidate for the *Regno* he lost little prestige in certain English circles, because Charles was a nephew of Queen Eleanor through his marriage with Beatrix of Savoy. For England's contacts with Cardinal Richard see doc. 3 and ROTH, *Annibaldi*, notes 47 and 124.

¹²⁾ The most striking example is the foundation of Würzburg: ROTH, *Annibaldi* note 59.

¹³⁾ N. DENHOLM-YOUNG, *Richard of Cornwall* (Oxford 1947) 87-8.

Since it is only lately that the influence of the Cardinal on the Order has been examined, older historians give all the credit for the establishment and organization of the Order in England to the saintly leadership of such men as Albert of Verona, Angelo of Hetruria, William Sengham, and « other learned and holy men who expanded the Order marvelously in England » (Doc. 7). Pamphilus is the first chronicler to mention these names. Unfortunately he has been misunderstood by later writers. He says only that Albert and Angelo were contemporaries of William Sengham, not that they were his collaborators in England. For the work in England he gives credit only to Sengham, the first native to join the Order. Panfilo found the name in Bale's Catalogue of British writers. Bale himself took it from the *Collectanea sacrorum dogmatum* of Thomas Colby, Carmelite friar and bishop of Waterford, Ireland, when John Capgrave was preparing for the priesthood (before 1400). The *Collectanea* are now lost but Bale preserved some passages by way of citation. He tells us that the first Augustinians were sent to England in 1252* by their prior general Lanfranc of Milan ; it is not clear from the context, whether this is Bale's own account or whether he took it from Colby. The Augustinians referred to would in any case be the Brethren of St. John Bonus, also called Zambonini. A chronicle quoted by Bale supplies the additional information that at their coming « happened such a grievous pestilence that the like was never known before » (Doc. 5). These new arrivals must have been stouthearted men. Instead of retreating when confronted with the dreaded malady, they stayed and took root.

It can be argued of course, that the report preserved by Bale includes an erroneous date. Perhaps the event recounted by him occurred immediately after the Great Union at which Lanfranc was chosen prior general of the whole Order. Such an account would be much simpler. We could then accept the idea that Augustinian life in England stems from a single group that arrived in 1249. The most simple account, however, is not always the correct story. Since Lanfranc was prior general of the Zambonini in 1252 he could have sent his men to England at that time, thus the account in Bale ought to be presumed accurate until it can be proved false.

It seems more reasonable to hold that various accounts of Augustinian beginnings in England, far from contradicting each other, refer to distinct and separate groups which were merged in the Great Union of 1256. This view harmonizes our English data with what

we know of the Pre-Union history of the Order in other countries. We may assume that the Austins welcomed by the King in 1249 were different from the Zanbonini who arrived three years later ; that both groups assimilated some independent hermitages existing in England before them ; and finally that all these Augustinians were among those united according to the terms of the Papal Bull *Licet ecclesiae Catholicae* of 1256.

Our speculations receive additional support from an authentic letter of Pope Alexander IV from the year 1255* in which the « Prior General of the Hermits of St. Augustine in France and England » is exhorted to « reform » all hermits in these two countries that is to reorganize and unite them according to the laws of the Fourth Lateran Council and other subsequent legislation. This interesting document leaves no doubt that the Tuscan group played as dominant a role in England as it did in Italy. It also proves that its members were united with the Austins in France, probably those of Provence, where the oldest houses of the Order are to be found and where Beatrice of Savoy ruled. Beatrice, whose sister Eleanor was married to King Henry III, greatly favored the Order ¹⁴).

Erection of English Province.

The administrative union of Austins in two countries can easily be understood in view of English political domination over great parts of France. This union still existed in 1260*, when John of Gubbio is called Vicar General of the Order in France and England, but in 1265 John of Gubbio is called Prior provincial of France only and about the same time we have the first record of an independent English province and the name of the first prior provincial, named John (Doc. 27). His small province consisted of about eight houses, all of which were in the first stages of development. His first great project was the establishment of a house of studies in Oxford (1266*) to provide for the best possible educational facilities for the youth of the province. Since he was able to enlist the cooperation of the King to such an extent, that Henry III is regarded as the very founder of the Oxford house, he must have been a man of high quality. Perhaps he can be identified as Johannes de Anglia, who is called

¹⁴) ROTH, *Annibaldi* 148 (IV, 14).

« a man of great sanctity », and is enumerated among the early saints of the Order (Doc. 93).

The first houses ¹⁵⁾.

John Capgrave, « the most learned among the English Austin Friars », gives us the first notice of English foundations :

« In the year of Our Lord 1230 Alexander the Pope gave us leave to build convents in these places : Surek, Clayanger, Clare, Sidingborn and others. But there took no place but Clare and Wodous (Woodhouse) which was then called Bica or else Vilen-tynge. Then had this Order leave for to enter and build. But they built not greatly until the year of Our Lord 1248 » (Doc. 4).

We know nothing about the Surek foundation, but documents can be found for the early existence of the other houses. The implication is that Capgrave was well acquainted with the documents of his Province. Woodhouse and Clare, always known to be among the oldest English Augustinian houses, were built before 1250. The recently « discovered » records of Clayanger (Middlesex) and Sittingbourne (Kent) indicate approximately the same antiquity. Woodhouse a place as remote and lonely as its name implies was located about two miles West of Cleobury Mortimer, Salop. Around it were clustered Leicester and Ludlow (both in 1254*) and Shrewsbury (1255*). Excavation of the site of Ludlow has provided new evidence for the antiquity of this house. As for Shrewsbury, there is a difference of opinion. Owen, the famous historian of the city, identified the poverty-stricken (*miserabiles*) friars of Coulane, who were granted a new location by Henry III in 1255, with the Austins. Others deny this. The royal document does not call them members of the Austin Hermits, but Capgrave's date coincides with that of the documents and seems to justify Owen. Of other early hermitages mentioned by Capgrave we know something, although of course not nearly enough. Near the Kentish town of Sittingborne was a hermitage called Shamele which was connected with a chapel built in honor of St. Thomas the Martyr. The caretaker, Friar Silvester of the Order of St. Augustine, received from the royal Exchequer a daily allowance of 3^d « as long as he celebrated divine

¹⁵⁾ Sources and literature for the history of the various houses will be given in chapter 4.

services in the chapel ». He seems to have joined the Order, and several messuages were acquired in Sittingborne with a view to establishing a monastery (Doc. 12). The project apparently foundered when Friar Silvester, who is called from 1256 on a chaplain to the King without reference to any Order, refused to accept the changes of the Great Union. As for Clayanger, now a disinhabited place in Middlesex : on the road to Clayanger was a Chapel of St. Lawrence that seemed ideal for an eremitical foundation ; and after accepting a petition King Henry III ordered an *inquisitio ad quod damnum* in 1257*. Before the foundation could be made, however, the Austins were required to move into the cities « there to give example of good life ». Huntingdon, a house of the Order that was an object of royal favor and interest throughout its history, is first mentioned in 1258*. The original buildings were erected with the king's financial assistance. When they burnt to the ground in 1286*, King Edward I and John le Romaine, archbishop of York, helped to rebuild the monastery greater than before. — Another ancient foundation was Tickhill (about 1260). Here the ideal of solitude was so remarkably preserved that a century later John Waldeby still called it « our solitary place » ¹⁶⁾. — Much older than some historians would have us believe was Warrington, founded by Sir William Fitzmaurice Botiler, High Sheriff of Lancastershire in 1259*. It is shown by the excavation of the monastery church to have been begun some time before the Decorated Period (1272-1377).

The house in London was the largest and the most important in the Kingdom, and as early as 1289* it numbered sixty-three brethren. It left so deep an impression on this teeming metropolis that its church is still known as Austin Friars, despite four centuries of use for Dutch Huguenot worship. It existed before 1261, because in that year Lord Humphrey of Bohun, its founder, was buried there. The year 1253 which John Stow gives in his famous *Survey of London* seems, therefore, to be quite accurate. John Stow's parental home adjoined the Friary and he probably had access to documents which are now lost.

Following London in importance was Oxford (1266*), a *studium generale*, second only to Paris and apart by a mere ten years. In 1283 Giles of Rome, the earliest master and greatest scholastic of the Order, received his doctor's biretta in Paris. Nine years later,

¹⁶⁾ G. R. OWST, *Preaching in medieval England* (Cambridge 1926) 65.

in 1292*, William of Hegham, the first known Augustinian doctor of Divinity at Oxford, was master regent at this university. The briefness of the interval indicates a zeal for learning among the English Austins and shows vigorous enterprise, even though the English *studium generale* never produced a line of theologians to rival that begun by Giles at the French capital. The Oxford house of the Austins, has always been thought a foundation of Henry III. He not only gave generously towards the construction of its buildings, but also enlisted the help of other leading men. He induced Bogo (Bevis) de Clare, brother of Clare's founder, to give some of his land to the Austins (Doc. 39). His son Edmund, the Chancellor of the university, and the mayor of Oxford were among the witnesses to the earliest deeds (Doc. 31, 39). They were all anxious to provide new facilities for the growing university, and the monastery lay so near to the main body of the schools that its buildings were regarded from the beginning as a part of the university plant. Church and Chapterhouse served as School of Divinity until the university erected its own building in 1480¹⁷). The Faculty of Arts used the monastic refectory as its lecture hall, and in 1326 a law was passed by the University that no one could be promoted to academic degrees without responding at least once in this grammar school; Oxford students therefore spoke of « doing the Austins », an expression they retained in their vocabulary nearly to the end of the nineteenth century. Neither school was directed by the Order, although their masters regent taught in the School of Divinity like other professors. The Austins merely supplied the buildings and were remunerated for their use by the University. Their own students were, of course, taught in the monastery (*schola interna*), and only those selected for a degree attended lectures on the outside.

The Cambridge Monastery (before 1289*) became the third important *studium generale* of the Order. The founder was George Picheford, a high official in the service of Edward I. Its first known master regent was John of Clare, who sided with the university against the Dominicans and Franciscans in the great quarrel of

¹⁷) Thus it happened that Wyclif was teaching in Austin Friars when the news of his condemnation reached him: « *Ista praedicta condemnatio promulgata est publice in scholis Augustiniensium, ipso Magistro Johanne sedente in cathedra, et determinante contrarium* », *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, RS, ed. W. W. SHIRLEY (London 1858) 113.

1300¹⁸⁾. Cambridge University, like Oxford, made use of the Augustinian buildings, and the University's Grace Books record many functions as having taken place in the church of the Austin Friars.

An old Augustinian tradition credits Aegidius Romanus with the establishment of one English house. Capgrave makes it Clare, but Giles was still an infant, when Clare was founded. He dedicated, however, two of his philosophical works to Sir Stephen Maulay (de Malo Lacu), a rich landowner of Yorkshire. We also know that a Lady Margaret Maulay was buried in Austin Friars, York. All this points to the conclusion, that it was York, the most important Northern foundation, not Clare, that owes its origin to Giles of Rome.

Lincoln (1270*) and York (about 1272*) became provincial studies of theology (*studia concursorialia*). Norwich (1289*) and Leicester provided schools of philosophy (*studia particularia*).

Concurrent with the foundation of houses of studies was a sudden expansion of the Order in the North. This was doubtless at the behest of the King, who had political interests to cultivate in his Scottish dependency. First came Berwick, a site that has escaped the notice of former historians of the Order although it is mentioned as « Berwae » in the Registers of the Prior General. Gifts of the English King prove its existence in 1300*. It must have been an earlier foundation, however, since otherwise the title of John Gubbio in 1260*, « in regnis Francie, Anglie et Scotie partibus... vicarius et visitator generalis », would be meaningless. Newcastle originated before 1291*, when it founded the house in Penrith. Newcastle became a great house with buildings so well appointed that they were reserved for the King's use after the dissolution of the monasteries. Berwick and Penrith, however, suffered from their remoteness ; they were never anything more than outposts.

Other thirteenth century foundations are the two important houses in Lynn (before 1295*), and Gorleston or Little Yarmouth. Gorleston, an older place than it was formerly thought to be, received a pittance of 13^s4^d as early as 1277*. The amount indicates the presence of nineteen friars. Probably Gorleston is the same as the « Gosle ordinis sancti Augustini » that received simple pro-

¹⁸⁾ J. B. MOORMAN, *The Grey Friars in Cambridge 1225-1538* (Cambridge 1952) 36/7, 231.

tection from King Henry III on October 10, 1267*. Grimsby (1293*) and Orford (1299*) were houses of second rank.

Two foundations failed in the half century following the Great Union. One was Chichester, where the Franciscans protested and Archbishop Pecham sustained them in their legally correct objections (1282*). The other was an attempt made at Devizes, Wiltshire, where Henry Le Parker donated to the Austins of Oxford a mesuage in 1296*, but the foundation never materialized. It seems that the local clergy or the city fathers were uncommonly obstinate against the permanent settlement of any religious within their boundaries. At any rate, Devizes was the only English city where no religious order ever succeeded in founding a house.

Ireland.

From England the Austins spread to Ireland. They grew but slowly in the new country, founding houses only in territory held by the English Kings. They settled first in Dublin about 1280 and added four more houses before the end of the century (Doc. 79). After their settlements became staffed with native Irish religious the Order began to prosper, and at the time of the Reformation there were twenty-two houses in an almost independent Irish Vicariate. It was formerly thought that the Irish friaries were of far greater antiquity and much more numerous, but this view can no longer be sustained ¹⁹).

Danger of Suppression

By the year 1300 the Austins had twenty-two houses in England and five in Ireland with a membership of about 500 Religious, certainly ample proof that the Order was able to attract English vocations and plant itself firmly in the land. In our day such growth would be considered exceptional, according to thirteenth century standards, however, the Austins were doing only moderately well. Limitations peculiar to the Austins and the Carmelites prevented faster growth until the fourteenth century.

The Fourth Lateran Council had forbidden the foundation of any new Orders, and in 1274 the Council of Lyon suppressed all

¹⁹) The solution of this problem is given by F. X. MARTIN in AUG. VI, 353.

Orders which had been founded since its prohibition ²⁰). Both Carmelites and Austins existed before 1215, but were not organized into modern Orders until later, hence they were regarded as new and perhaps illegal. The enemies of the Mendicants no doubt thought their suppression inevitable but they had reckoned without the Cardinal Protector of the Austins.

Cardinal Richard had become old and crippled by arthritis, but in this hour of danger he came out of his retirement at Molara and began exerting all his tremendous influence to save his beloved Austins. Saba Malaspina leaves no doubt that he alone stood between the Order and the forces working to suppress it. And to Cardinal Richard's wishes Gregory X reluctantly bowed. The Cardinal scored a major triumph when the official conciliar decree acknowledged the existence of both Orders before 1215. This should have guaranteed their continuance, but Gregory wanted a free hand in settling the problems posed by the independence of all friars from episcopal control. He therefore permitted the continuance of the Austins and the Carmelites only « until it would be decreed otherwise » ²¹). Thus the two Orders lived as under the sword of Damocles. The danger that they might be suppressed at any moment was very real and not at all conducive to healthy and vigorous expansion. In some parts of Europe it was even rumored that they had been officially suppressed. This rumor caused officials to deny the assistance requested of them, and the people to withhold their customary alms ²²). In England, the lack of all documents between

²⁰) R. EMERY, *The second Council of Lyons and the mendicant Orders*, in *Catholic Historical Review* 39 (1953) 257-271.

²¹) ARBESMANN, AUG. VI, 135-6.

²²) Our presentation differs considerably from Augustinian historians of the past. That it is correct, can be substantiated by a letter which Archbishop Frederic of Salzburg sent to the secular and ecclesiastical authorities of his diocese. In it he declared the rumors that the Austins were also suppressed in 1274 as untrue.

« Tenet multorum opinio, quod ordo fratrum heremitarum ordinis sancti Augustini in proximo generali concilio Lugdunensi sit penitus revocatus, cujus pretextu non solum ipsi fratres contemnuntur a pluribus, sed etiam a consueti auxilii et gratie beneficiis repelluntur. Sed quia sic non est et multorum in hoc fallitur opinio, videlicet quod eorum ordo sit in dicto concilio revocatus vel quod ipsorum auctoritati in aliquo sit detractum, immo solum dominus papa sue dispositioni quid de ipsis adhuc in futurum ordinare preposuerit reservavit. Rogamus universitatem vestram et hortamur in domino tandem vobis firmiter iniungentes, quatenus ipsis fratribus non repulsis per papam sed potius reservatis nulla pretextu

1272 and the end of 1274 reflects the sudden standstill caused by the Council of Lyon.

Fortunately for the two Orders, the anti-mendicant policies of this Council were not continued by Gregory's successors. Pope Martin IV and especially the first Franciscan Pope, Nicholas IV (1288-1292), proved real friends to the Augustinians. The Popes could not but be impressed by the continuous efforts of the third Prior General, Bl. Clement of S. Elpidio, to give his Order uniformity of habit as well as unity of mind and action. Bl. Clement had but one motto in office : « Ut Ordo unus sit » ²³). To that end, he and Bl. Augustinus Novellus revised the Constitutions and gave them such compact form that the text was not again revised for the next 250 years, although of course additions were made. Bl. Clement published new liturgical books, held for the first time a General Chapter outside of Italy, and gave the Order a uniform theological teaching in prescribing in 1287 the doctrine of Aegidius Romanus for all schools of the Order ²⁴). It is to be regretted that the destruction of the libraries and archives of the English Province has left us no records of the way in which this last-mentioned direction was carried out in the British Isles. This devoted and intelligent leadership of the Order must have been favorably noted by the Papal See. Nicholas IV, therefore, did his share to help and protect the Austins. Cardinal Richard had died in 1276 but no successor had been appointed. One of the first acts of Nicholas IV was to give the Order, in 1288, a new Cardinal Protector : Bernard de Languissel, Archbishop of Porto ²⁵). The Pope also protected the Order, wherever it was attacked, particularly in Germany and Paris. He chose for his penitentiary Bl. Augustine Novellus ²⁶). One cannot stress too much the beneficial influence of this saint, who exerted a remarkable influence on the Papal Curia.

Papal favor bestowed on the Austins turned out to be a good investment. When Boniface VIII fought the bitter contest with the

huiusmodi opinionis gravamina vel iniurias irrogetis nec irrogari per alios velut attinentes sinatis sed potius eis pium vestrum caritative eos ac benigne cum ad vos venerint et vos et vestrum auxilium requisierint, pertractantes ». 23 Jan. 1275. *Salzburger Urkundenbuch*, ed. F. MARTIN 4 (Salzburg 1933) 85-6.

²³) ARBESMANN, AUG. VI 141 and 144.

²⁴) AA II, 275.

²⁵) ROTH, *Annibaldi* note 386.

²⁶) *Acta Sanctorum*, May IV p. 619.

Crown of France he found among the Augustinians his staunchest and most distinguished supporters. Giles of Rome jeopardized his high standing in Paris by publishing one treatise after another in defense of the Pope. Blessed James Capocci, later Archbishop of Naples ²⁷⁾, Augustine Trionfi ²⁸⁾, and several other Augustinians ²⁹⁾ were mighty warriors in the Pope's cause. It is not to be wondered at, then, that Pope Boniface VIII came energetically to the rescue of their Order. On May 5, 1298, which might well be considered the second birthday of the Order, he modified the threatening decree. Previously, it permitted the Order to continue « until other arrangements have been made ». The Pope now caused it to read, « We will that the Order continue as fully approved » ³⁰⁾. Upon this solid foundation of papal approval the Order has rested until this hour.

In England the changed attitude of Gregory's successors was soon noted. Both the Suffragan of Norwich in 1279 (Doc. 67) and Archbishop Pecham in 1284 (Doc. 80) were quite conscious of the high esteem in which the Papal Curia held the Austins. Even before Boniface VIII guaranteed their continuance the Austins must have been somehow reassured concerning their future ; otherwise, their renewed spirit of enterprise could not be explained. Shortly after Gregory's death they moved into Ireland. In England itself a great building activity is evident in all houses, and at least five new foundations were made in the final decade of the century. By 1284 the Austins felt strong enough to place under interdict the Friars Minor of Oxford for accepting one of their members without the permission of his superiors. Archbishop Pecham, a former Franciscan, showed in this case more partiality to his Order than befitted his high position. He thought it most proper that the Austins or any other religious should join the Franciscans, but was horrified at the thought that the superiors of the Austins insisted on their rights in such matters (Doc. 80). The new confidence of the Austins is even more evident in Grimsby, where they established their new

²⁷⁾ D. GUTIERREZ, *De B. Jacobi Viterbiensis OESA vita, operibus et doctrina*, in AA 16 (1937-8) and separate.

²⁸⁾ B. MINISTERI, *De Augustini de Ancona OESA († 1328) vita et operibus* in AA 22 (1952) and separate.

²⁹⁾ U. MARIANI, *Chiesa e Stato nei Teologi Agostiniani del secolo XIV* (Roma 1957).

³⁰⁾ « ut in solido statu permanere volumus » : ARBESMANN, AUG. VI, 136.

place against the wishes of the parish church, which was held in advowson by the abbey of Wellow. But in this case they overreached themselves. When the Abbot of Wellow insisted that they be placed under interdict Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln, gave in to his demands. The ban plagued this establishment for almost two decades. Although it was canonically lifted in 1300 when William Hegham, the second known Prior Provincial, completely surrendered to Sutton's successor, the troubles caused by it were still continuing in 1307 (Doc. 141).

NOTE

English independent hermitages and the Austin Friars.

The first Augustinians in England led an eremitical life as they had done in Italy. We have described this mode of life in our *Anni-baldi* 55 (II, 127). After they entered the cities in 1256 and formed an active mendicant Order like the Franciscans and Dominicans, they continued to call themselves *fratres ordinis eremitarum sancti Augustini*. Because this title stressed the eremitic ideal, which had been officially abandoned, it proved confusing to historians. Some have tended to assume that all *fratres eremitae* were Austin Friars. The assumption is false. Although the Austins have always been known as Eremitani in Northern Italy, they have not been called by any such name in other parts of Europe.

We ought not designate as Austin Friars the brethren of independent English hermitages, especially in the case of houses founded after the Great Union of 1256. Such communities are clearly distinct from the Austins, constituting separate and canonically unrelated groups. Contemporary officialdom always used the distinctive modifier '*ordinis sancti Augustini*', when they referred to houses of the Austin Friars. The « Friars Hermit of the Hill of Shotindon », Warwick were given a grant of royal protection for three years on August 9, 1260 (Pat. Henry III p. 67). — The « Friars Hermit of the house of St. John, Witlesmere », Cambs. were granted simple protection until Easter on December 3, 1264 (Pat. Henry III p. 391). The latin text says nothing of '*ordinis sancti Augustini*'. It is to be remembered that official documents always referred to religious communities by their proper titles. Neither hermitage, then, was affiliated with the Austin Friars. Furthermore both seem to have

been founded after the Great Union. The « Brethren of the hermitage of Bridesdale » (Breadsall, Derby) were granted in frankalmoin a messuage and twenty acres of land on August 20, 1260 (Pat. Henry III p. 630). We can be sure that these religious were not Austins at that time because twenty acres was more land than early Austins would use. In later times the Bridesdale hermitage was certainly not of the Order.

The words « fratres eremitae ordinis sancti Augustini » might be plausibly used in reference to the hermitage at Blackmore, Dorset, which was affiliated with the Augustinian Canons. Official records, however, speak only of the « Friars [Brethren] hermit of Blackmore » (Pat. 1315 p. 356) or the « Prior and Convent of Blakemore » (Pat. 1316 p. 480). To call the occupants simply Austin Friars as has been done since Tanner is wrong. In 1310 the property was given for life to Henry de Haddon, parson of the church of Lindelinch (Pat. 1310 p. 179). Such a gift is unheard of in the history of English Austin Friars and it would have been an outrageous violation of the laws protecting the Order. It follows that this hermitage could not have been an Austin Friary.

Confusion sometimes develops because Augustinian Canons were so often called fratres. In their case the word should always be translated with brethren and not friars. The latter translation applied only to Mendicants. In the case of Peterstone, Norf., the editors of the Patent Rolls 1318 pp. 66, 166 vacillated between the two expressions, though the hermitage belonged to the Augustinian Canons.

Austin Friars and Friars of the Sack.

It is also important to distinguish between the Austin Friars and the Friars of the Sack or Friars of the Penitence of Jesus Christ. The Sack Friars who did not arrive in England until 1257, followed the Rule of St. Augustine but it was a fully separate group that was always called by its own proper title in official documents. After their suppression in 1274 many of their houses were taken over by the Austin Friars. It is false that the Austins absorbed their entire Order. This has been pointed out by R. EMERY in *The Friars of Sack*, *Speculum* 18 (1943) 323-34 and ROTH, *Annibaldi* 69 (II, 141). For further details see D. KNOWLES and R. N. HADDOCK, *Medieval religious houses : England and Wales* (London 1953) with Additions and Corrections in the *English Historical Review* 72 (1957) 60-87.

THE AUSTIN FRIARIES AT THE END OF THE XIIIth CENTURY
AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP

	<i>founded</i>	<i>1277/ 1278^{a)}</i>	<i>1283/ 1284^{b)}</i>	<i>1289^{c)}</i>	<i>1296/ 1297^{d)}</i>	<i>1298^{e)}</i>	<i>1300^{f)}</i>
1. Berwick	ab. 1260	—	—	—	—	—	4, 6
2. Cambridge	1289	—	—	20	36	—	—
3. Clare	1248	—	—	—	29	—	—
4. Gorleston	ab. 1267	20	—	—	—	—	—
5. Grimsby	1293	—	—	—	—	—	—
6. Huntingdon	ab. 1257	—	—	—	—	—	—
7. Leicester	1254	—	—	—	—	—	—
8. Lincoln	1270	—	33-24	—	—	—	30
9. London	1253 ?	—	(40)	64	48-56	60	47-55
10. Ludlow	1254	—	—	—	—	—	—
11. Lynn	1295	—	—	—	—	—	20
12. Newcastle on Tyne	ab. 1290	—	—	—	—	—	25
13. Norwich	1289	—	—	15	—	—	—
14. Orford	1299	—	—	—	—	—	—
15. Oxford	1266	40/31/21	—	—	—	—	—
16. Penrith	1291	—	—	—	—	—	8/8
17. Shrewsbury	1255	20	—	—	—	18	18
18. Tickhill	ab. 1260	—	—	—	—	18	18
19. Warrington	ab. 1260	—	—	—	—	—	—
20. Winchester	ab. 1256	—	—	—	—	—	—
21. Woodhouse	1250	—	—	—	—	—	—
22. York	1272	—	—	—	—	33	46

a) Doc. 58 b) Doc. 76 c) Doc. 90 d) Doc. 126 e) Doc. 129 f) Doc. 135

If we figure 60 men for London, 40 each for the houses of theology in Cambridge, Oxford and York, 30 for Lincoln, 20 each for Clare, Gorleston, Leicester, Lynn, Newcastle, Norwich, Shrewsbury and Tickhill, 15 each for Canterbury, Grimsby, Huntingdon, Ludlow, Warrington and Winchester, 7 each for Berwick, Orford, Penrith and Woodhouse, we arrive at a total of 488 members. If we include the five Irish priories which were then occupied principally by Englishmen, we easily pass the 500 mark. This is still lower than the figures of Professor Russel, but he included various hermitages which we did not consider.

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(to be continued).