other to labour hiddir to shewe theire grieffes, in trust that for theym all I shulde bee a sueter unto your lordship to releasse theym of theire extreme oppressons and bondage, whiche most humblie I beseche your lordship amonges other your weightie busynes to considre. And thus the hoolie Trenytie evermore have you, my singler good lorde, in his hoolie governaunce. At Horton, the xvijth. daye of Merche.

Your lordshippis assured most boundon,

WYLLIAM PARRE.

The great priory of Lewes in Sussex was founded by William earl of Warren in 1077 or 1078. The priors were mitred and sat in parliament. Robert Crowham was the last prior. The site of this house was granted to Cromwell. The date of the surrender given in the last edition of the *Monasticon*, 6 Nov. 1538, must be incorrect. March 1537, is, of course, 1537. The following letter gives a singular picture of the devastations made in many of the dissolved houses.

XCI.

JOHN PORTINARI* TO CROMWELL.

[From MS. Cotton. Cleop. E. iv. p. 232.]

My lord, I humbly commend my selfe unto your lordshyp, the laste I wrote unto your lordshyp was the xxth daye of thys present monith by the handes of Mr. Wyliamson, by the whych I advertised your lordshyp of the lengthe and greatenes of thys churche, and how we had begon to pull the hole down to the ground, and what maner and fashion they used in pulling it down. I told your lordshyp of a vaute on the ryghte syde of the hyghe altare, that was borne up with fower greate pillars, having abowt it v. chappelles, whych be compased in with the walles lxx. stokes (?) of length, that is, fete ccx. All thys is down a Thursday and Fryday last. Now we ar pluckyng down an hygher vaute, borne up by fower

* Perhaps this is a disguised name, as the letter appears to be in the hand-writing of Richard Moryson.

thicke and grose pillars, xiiij. fote fro syde to syde, abowt in circumference xlv. fote. Thys shall downe for our second worke. As it goth forward I woll advise your lordshyp from tyme to tyme, and that your lordshyp may knowe with how many men we have don thys, we browght from London xvij. persons, 3 carpentars, 2 smythes, 2 plummars, and on that kepith the fornace. Every of these attendith to hys own office: x. of them hewed the walles abowte, amonge the whych ther were 3 carpentars: thiese made proctes to undersette wher the other cutte away, thother brake and cutte the waules. Thiese ar men exercised moch better then the men that we fynd here in the contrey. Wherfor we must both have mo men, and other thinges also, that we have nede of, all the whych I woll within thys ij. or thre dayes tell your lordshyp by mouthe. A Tuesday they began to cast the ledde, and it shalbe don with such diligence and savyng as may be, so that our trust is your lordshyp shall be moch satisfied with that we do, unto whom I most humbly commend my self, moch desiringe God to mainteyn your helth, your honour, your hartes ease. At Lewes, the xxiiij. of March, 1537.

Your lordshyps servant,

JOHAN PORTINARI.

Undernethe here your lordshyp shall see a juste mesure of the hole abbey.

The churche is in lengthe cl. fote.

The heygthe, lxiiij. fote.

The circumference abowte it, m.d.lviij. fote.

The wall of the fore fronte, thicke x fote.

The thyckenes of the stepil wall, x fote.

The thickenes of the waules *interno*, v. fote.

Ther be in the churche xxxij. pillars, standyng equally from the walles.

An hygh roufe made for the belles.

Eygth pillars verry bygge, thicke xiiij. fote, abowte xlv. fo.

Thother xxij. ar for the moste parte x fote thicke, and xxv. abowght.

The heygthe of the greater sorte is xlij. fo.; of thother xvij. fote.

The heygthe of the roufe before the hyghe altare is lxxxxij. fote.

In the middes of the church, where the belles dyd hange, ar cv. fote.

The heygthe of the stepil at the fronte is lxxxx. fote.

Binham and Beeston, mentioned in the following letter, were two priories in Norfolk. The first was a cell to St. Albans, although the writer of this letter states the contrary. It is said to have been as old as the time of the conqueror: the last prior appears to have been John Albon. Beeston was founded about the beginning of the reign of Hen. III.; its last prior was Richard Hudson or Hodgeson.

XCII.

SIR RICHARD RICHE TO CROMWELL.

[From MS. Harl. No. 604, fol. 67.]

Aftur my harty recommendacions, thes shalbe to render to yowe my most harty thanks for your good expedycion of my matter of Syon, for the wyche, on my faith, ye have and shall bynde me; for this and many other pleasures and gratuytes to me shewyd, I reken my self most bownden to owe to yowe my pore servyce (next to the king) duryng my lyff. My lorde, I entend to suppressse Bynham before my retorne, which pretendyth hit self to be a sell to Seynt Albonyes, yf ye advertyse me not to the conterary. I have fynez and other matters of record levyed by them not namyng the abbott of Saynt Albanys. Also contynually they make leasez under ther owne seale, not namyng the abbott. Also I entend to suppressse Beeston, which pretend them selffez to be fryers, which ys not true, but they ar chanons, and so apparellid, knowen, and taken. They consume the goodes and cattalles. I and other have sent to yowe a generall lettur of our procedynges in thes partyes.