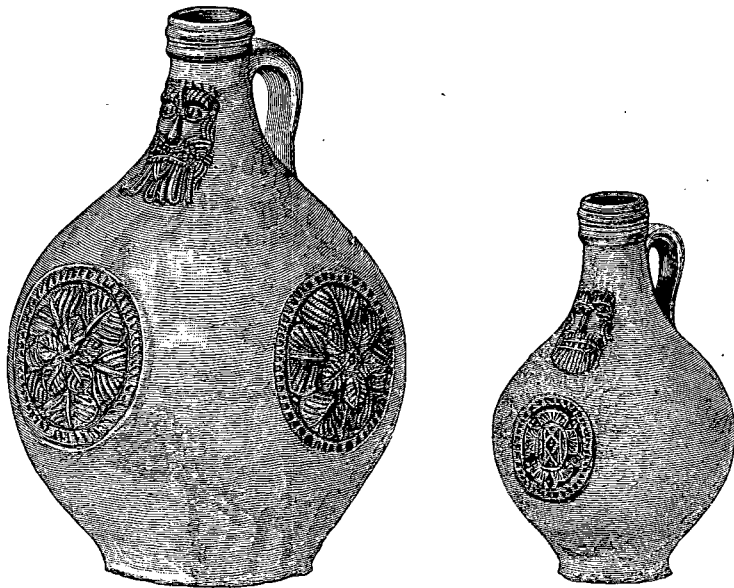


## II.

NOTICE OF TWO VESSELS OF GREY STONEWARE (BELLARMINES OR GREYBEARDS), ONE FOUND FULL OF QUICKSILVER IN SHETLAND, THE OTHER AT EYEMOUTH. BY JOHN J. REID, ADVOCATE, CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM.

The larger of the two vessels now exhibited (fig. 1) was found filled with quicksilver in the year 1882 (Sept.), having been exposed to view on the surface of a piece of mossy ground near the shore, after a storm of



Figs. 1, 2. Bellarmines or Greybeards, found in Fetlar and at Eyemouth.

sea spray followed by much rain, in the island of Fetlar, one of the Shetland group. The smaller vessel (fig. 2) I have obtained from the Society's collection. It was found in digging the foundations of a house at Eyemouth in 1863, and is evidently a production of the same class as the

other. The dimensions of the two vessels are as follows:—Fig. 1, height, 11 inches; diameter of mouth,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch; circumference, 26 inches; greatest diameter,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches; diameter of base,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Fig. 2, height, 8 inches; diameter of mouth, 1 inch; circumference,  $15\frac{1}{4}$  inches; greatest diameter, 5 inches; diameter of base,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. As regards capacity, the larger holds a gallon, and the smaller one a quart.

There seems no doubt whatever that these objects belong to a class of mediæval pottery known as Greybeards, Longbeards, or specially *Bellarmines*. Some descriptions of these jugs may be summarised; and it will be apparent that they apply well to the two pieces before you. Ranging in capacity from  $\frac{1}{2}$  a pint to 2 gallons, the material of which Bellarmines are made is described as a greyish stoneware covered by a mottled brown glaze. The body or belly is rotund, and the neck narrow; while the jug, in front often ornamented with a Silenus-like mask, has a loop handle at the back, and sometimes is furnished with a spout. Later specimens have ornamented devices in place of the grotesque face, but the mask in many varies much. In some it scarcely can be said to have a human resemblance; in others the features are not only worked out with care, but present a grave and dignified aspect. In many instances there occurs below the face a seal, either circular or oval, and bearing a crest or an armorial coat, sometimes, though rarely, of families, and more frequently of cities and towns in the Low Countries and parts of Germany. These coats may give an indication of date, but occasionally the actual date is given on the jug itself, and those so dated range from 1580 to 1610. Some are further ornamented by medallion busts of warriors wearing "salades" of various fashions, or by foliated designs, such as those upon the larger jug now before us.

So much for the general characteristics of the class of mediæval pottery to which these vessels belong. It may, however, be interesting to trace, very briefly, the existence of similar pottery combined with grotesque faces down from early times.

Among the most ancient remains of Egypt and Greece are to be found jugs of a type not very dissimilar; and, yet more curious to relate, Mexico and Peru furnish us with allied specimens. That the Romans were acquainted with what are called in the north of England

“boggle” or “boggart” (goblin) drinking cups, we learn from their literature—

“Sum figuli lusus, rufi persona Batavi.  
Quæ tu derides, hæc timet ora puer.”

—*Mart.*, xiv. 176.

Where, oddly enough, the reference seems to take us to the Low Countries; or again—

“Ebrius hæc fecit terris, puto, monstra Prometheus  
Saturnalio lusit et ipse luto.”

—*Mart.*, xiv. 182.

In our own literature the allusions refer to the period of Elizabeth, James VI., and Charles I. No doubt, if it be true that the grotesque face was intended to be a caricature of the features of Cardinal Bellarmine, the jugs would be popular in this country at a time when King James was engaged in disputes theological with that prelate, and when also the controversy between the Roman and Reformed Churches had been, if possible, intensified by the able writings of the Cardinal.

Bellarmino, from whom these vessels take a generic name, was born in 1542, and died in 1621. He is described by Fuligati, his biographer, as “very short of stature, and hard featured”; but assuredly, whatever had been his personal appearance, these grotesques would have represented as ill a face as they could. Probably the attempt at caricature would not last long, though the fashion of placing a face on the jug still continued. Ben Jonson says of a landlord (“New Inn”),

“Who’s at the best some pound grown thing, a jug  
Fac’d with a beard that fills out to the guests.”

And again (*Bartholomew Fair*, iv. sc. 3)—

“He hash wrashed so long with the bottle here that *the man with the beard* hash almost streak up his heelsh.”

They are both evidently allusions to jugs of this kind. Again, it seems likely that we have a reference to this particular species of pottery in the Inventory of Jewels in Edinburgh Castle, 1578, and also in the List of the Queen of Scots’ movables, 1562.

We gather that in England such jugs were known of four distinct sizes; the "gallonier," holding a gallon; the "pottle pot," holding two quarts; "pot," holding a quart; and "little pot," with a capacity of one pint. An imitation of the continental jugs very soon began, and in 1671 Dwight of Fulham took out a patent in connection with this manufacture. The further history of the patent is not known, though in 1737 the death of a Dr Dwight, possibly a descendant, is recorded. Fulham pottery works, however, still exist. Dwight's jugs were just the same as those from Cologne of that period.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1831 there is an account of a jug which may probably have been of the Bellarmine type. It was dug up from 14 feet below the surface in a chamber in a rath at Doone Glebe, Limerick. At the same time and place were found several silver coins, a gold spur, and other jars, of which this alone was left. It was 7 inches high and 16 inches in circumference at the thickest part. The engraving appended to the description shows a very finely wrought face, with a flowing beard. Besides this face, the body of the jug at its thickest part was ornamented with foliated scroll work between two defining parallel bands, and divided at equal intervals by two small medallions with human heads. From these parallel bands projected in relief above and below four feather-like sprays of work, and below in the spaces between the sprays were medallions of larger size, representing a man with a helmet and raised visor. There is no sign of a spout in the engraving.

In 1810, similarly when a rath at Cork was levelled (Ballyvolane), a fragment of a jar of this kind was found, but it was of a very rough class indeed. The face had no beard, and generally the work was quite inferior to the Limerick jug.

Marryatt, in his *Notes towards a History of Pottery* (p. 75, fig. 36), figures a Bellarmine very like the Limerick jug, but with an inscription in place of the bands of foliation. This jug has also sprays and medallions like the other, but the pottery is fine, of a whitish-yellow, and without glaze. It may be of earlier date, as I am inclined to think is the Limerick one. Possibly, from the style, these may be referred to a period about 1450, and to Jacqueline of Hainault, who died in 1436, and was celebrated for making this kind of pottery.

Jewitt, in his work on Pottery, also refers to Bellarmines (p. 92), and gives us engravings of several. These are of later date, as I think is shown by the use of rings round the neck and beard, an elaboration not observable in earlier forms, and also by the substitution of coats of arms and scroll work for the medallions, and the use of a formal and repeated marking instead of foliations between the parallel lines.

Bellarmines continued to be made, especially in Holland, whence they received the name of "Dutchmen" down to a pretty recent period, and they are now reproduced in several of the pottery works in Germany from the old designs. They were no doubt in quite common use as ordinary receptacles for wine, beer, &c., during a long period. Sir Walter Scott (*Monastery*, chap. ix.) makes reference to one of these jugs:—"Ye may keep for the next pilgrim that comes over, the gruns of the greybeard."

In the case of the larger jug before us there is no doubt that it was actually full of quicksilver when found; indeed, when examining it, I had occasion to invert it, and several minute globules of that metal rolled out on to the table. Why or how it should have been put to this use it is not easy to say.



Earthenware Jar found full of Coins, chiefly of Edward I., near Kinghorn, Fife.