

Transactions  
OF THE  
Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire  
Archæological Society

(FOUNDED A.D. 1900)



VOLUME IV. PART IV.

EDITED BY THE REV. W. M. NOBLE, B.A.  
RECTOR OF WISTOW, HUNTS.

Cl

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY BY  
G. H. TYNDALL, THE MINSTER PRESS

1923

PRICE (NON-MEMBERS) SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

Contents of Part 4, Vol. 4.

---

Papers.

	PAGE
THE CARTULARY OF THE PRIORY OF ST. MARY, HUNTINGDON, by <i>The Rev. W. M. Noble</i> .....	109
A BELLARMINE JUG FOUND IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE, by <i>Mrs.</i> <i>Alice Yeatherd</i> .....	125
ABBOT'S RIPTON BRIEFS, by <i>The Rev. E. H. Vigers</i> .....	127
PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY, by <i>The Rev. John Griffin</i> ..	160
REPORT AND BALANCE SHEET .....	162

## A BELLARMINE JUG FOUND IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

In a quaint thatched cottage in the village of Wennington, Hunts., a curious discovery was made in January, 1914. A new kitchen range had to be put in and being too high for the old hearth first one and then a second course of bricks was removed. Upon digging below the old hearth the workmen came upon a quaint vessel of mottled brown earthenware with a glazed surface, which they unfortunately broke, but the cottager, Mrs. Mills, collected all the fragments and pieced them together, producing a bottle-shaped jug 9 inches high, 5 inches diameter at the widest part and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches diameter at the top.

It is what is known as a Bellarmine jug and has the usual caricatured face of the Cardinal on the front, and below it, in an oval medallion, is a shield bearing a rose and surmounted by a crest of a demi-lion rampant.

Roberto Francesco Romolo Bellarmino was born at Monte Pulciano in Tuscany, 4th October, 1542, and was a Jesuit at the age of 18; he became Professor of Theology at Louvain in 1570, Cardinal in 1598, Archbishop of Capua in 1601, Librarian at the Vatican in 1605, and died at Rome in 1621. He made himself obnoxious to the Protestants, who caricatured him by means of these jugs, which were made in England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth in Cologne ware in four sizes, seven fine examples of which may be seen in the British Museum. An interesting account of them is to be found in the "Connoisseur" for December, 1903.

There can be no doubt that this Wennington specimen had been used as a witch's bottle because when found it was full of clay stuck with pins, and undoubtedly in the past some woman had worked her evil charm and buried the bottle in a safe place where the victim would be unable to find it and so get released from the spell.

Tradition asserts that a witch took clay or earth, mixed with it a hair, a piece of nail (for choice cut on a Sunday off the left toe) or a scrap of skin, &c., of the enemy, and either baked it, or put it into a vessel stuck with pins; with the result that the victim would either suffer racking pains or dwindle away in proportion to the number and sharpness of the pins employed. In those days any person suffering from an illness that would not yield to usual remedies promptly suspected the "wise woman" or witch and tried first by bribery and then by threats to find out what she had done, believing it was necessary to secure the cauldron or bottle in order to break the spell.

ALICE YEATHERD.