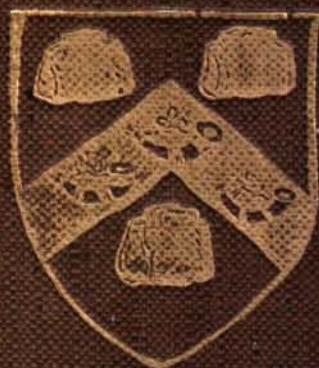


BLACK
JACKS &
LEATHER
BOTTELS



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LEATHER
BOTTELS

THIS BOOK
IS
DEDICATED
TO

WILLIAM JOHN FIELDHOUSE,
C.B.E., J.P.

TO WHOSE ENTHUSIASM
AND GENEROSITY IT
OWES ITS PUBLICATION.



HERALDIC JACK OF THE OXFORD JOINERS' GUILD
(now in the collection of W. J. Fieldhouse, Esq.)

Black Jacks and Leather Bottells

Being some account of
Leather Drinking Vessels in England
and incidentally of other Ancient Vessels

By

Oliver Baker

Fellow of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers
Member of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists
Royal Cambrian Academician

With numerous illustrations by the Author



(Arms of the Bottle-makers and Horners Guild)

Privately Printed for
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Foreword

I CAN well remember the puzzled interest with which, as a small boy, I regarded an old inn whose sign bore the words "The Old Leather Bottle"; but I was more than eighteen before I had seen a black jack. It was at Coventry that Mr. John Anderson (then Head Master of the School of Art) showed me as a great prize the jack he had picked up for five shillings, from a hawkler's stall in a Coventry street; and the singular but delicious contour, the rich surface of the leather worn to a silky smoothness round the handle, came to me as a revelation, the thrill of which is even now quite unforgettable. A number of years after this the discovery, in an old copy of *The Reliquary*, of two fascinating sketches by Llewellyn Jewitt made a great impression on me, as I had no idea till then as to what a leather bottle was like. It was therefore a welcome surprise when, only a week or two later, my friend Mr. R. H. Murray mentioned casually that he had seen one hanging in a blacksmith's shop at Coppcutt Elm, in Worcestershire. There was a third person present when he told me, so I was fain to dissemble my excitement till his attention had been drawn in another direction—he was moreover a doctor, and your doctor of medicine is a demon for collecting—when I begged Mr. Murray to buy it, which he eventually did, and I gave him a spinning wheel for it.

That bottle became the starting point of my small collection, including a bombard (also discovered by Mr. Murray), two jacks, and some bottles. My specimens having attracted the notice of the late Mr. Jethro A. Cossins, President of the Birmingham Archaeological Society, he asked me to read a paper on them at one of the Society's meetings. This paper was printed in their *Transactions* for the year 1890. From that time the subject became more and more a monomania with me, and finding that it had attracted no more than a passing glance from any writer on antiquarian subjects, I set to work to study the historical side of it, in the rich treasury of ancient records with which this country is so abundantly endowed. I found it, moreover, a delightful hobby to hunt these forgotten vessels in their ancient lurking places, where sometimes their existence was unknown even to their owners.

Such, briefly, was the origin of this book, but so far it has proved impossible to find a publisher. It was pronounced an uninteresting subject, and I had made and collected such a number of drawings and photographs that the cost of such a book was a serious problem. The question of its publication has, therefore, hung fire for a long time; not an unmixed evil, as meanwhile many interesting facts have come to light which have added to its interest.

In 1906, the late Mr. A. H. Bullen, of Stratford-on-Avon, the well-known Elizabethan scholar, contemplated publishing the book, but by way of introduction he induced me to cut down some of the most important chapters into a series of articles for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of which he was then the Editor. The completion of the series was prevented by the decease of the magazine, but I mention it because the articles were anonymous and have been copied by other writers without acknowledgment. I am unwilling that facts which cost me much time and labour to unearth should be supposed to have been borrowed from this source without effort. Some years ago, on going to Messrs. Merryweather's at Greenwich, one of their staff showed me a large scrap album into which he had pasted all the information he could find from newspapers and magazines concerning leathern vessels. I was astonished to find that I had practically written them all, although only one of them mentioned my name. They had all been either written by me, or taken more or less from articles that I had published.

I take this opportunity of thanking the numerous owners of leathern vessels who have given me facilities for seeing and sketching them, especially Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse, who, when the printing of the book seemed impossible, has made it possible; also to Mr. Henry Peech of Wimbledon, Mr. H. C. Moffat of Goodrich Court, Messrs. Harding of St. James' Square, the late Sir Francis Boileau, Bart., the Viscount Lifford and the late Marquis of Northampton, who all lent me their jacks to sketch. I am much indebted to Mr. D. T. B. Wood, of the British Museum MSS. Department, for frequent help and advice; and to the Marquis of Granby, for searching the Rutland MSS. at Belvoir Castle; to Mr. Richard Savage, for help with Stratford documents; to Miss M. Dormer Harris, in connection with those at Coventry; and Monsieur J. J. Jusserand, with French records. I owe thanks also to Dr. R. R. Sharpe and his successor, Dr. A. Hermann Thomas, of the Guildhall records; to Mr. Chas. Welch and Mr. Bernard Kettle, of the Guildhall Library; and Mr. Walter Powell at the Birmingham Reference Library. Dr. Francis Collins sent me copies of the *Botellar's Ordinances* at York Guildhall a long time before they were printed by the Surtees Society, and Mr. Howard S. Pearson made valuable suggestions.

Mr. Alfred Watkins of Hereford, Sir Benjamin Stone, M.P., and Mr. R. H. Murray were untiring in discovering and photographing the objects of my quest.

The Dower House,
Stratford-on-Avon.

January, 1921.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, enclosed in a rectangular box. The signature reads "Oliver Baker".

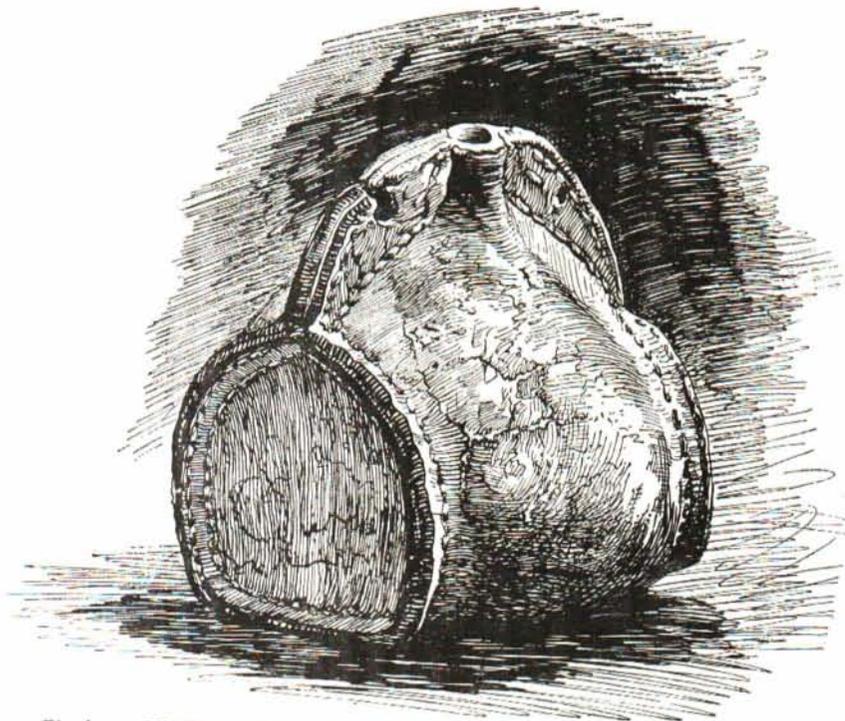


Fig. 1 LEATHER BOTTLE FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE revolution which the last century witnessed in English domestic life has been so complete, the changes so vast and so radical, that it is hard to realise how near the past is to us.

The wanderer through this island of ours (so ancient under its veneer of newness) may sometimes encounter in castle, college, or manor-house, certain strange vessels—huge pitchers and corpulent bottles, of leather. So venerable are they, and in their material so unlike any now in use, that one is apt to regard them as belonging of necessity to some foreign land, or to some far distant age. In reality they are peculiarly English, and have been a feature of English life down to almost modern times.

It is true that the art of preparing leather is as old as civilization itself, and that vessels of hide and skin have been used in various parts of the world from remote ages for carrying water and wine. Such no doubt were the "wine-bottles old and rent and bound up" which the Gibeonites showed to Joshua. But it is certain that these Eastern vessels were not what we call bottles, nor were they made of what we understand as leather, but were simply skins prepared by some primitive process, most probably by smoking. The Psalmist says, "For I am become like a bottle in the smoke."

Most mediaeval earthenware vessels consisted of pitchers for liquids, and large pots which were used for preserving and storing.' But they must have been very few, as in mediaeval wills, inventories, or house-keeping accounts, they are very rarely mentioned. The uses to which our modern earthenware or china is devoted, were served by platters and vessels of wood for the most part, and to a smaller degree by those of silver, pewter, brass, or leather. After 1500, vessels of brass and other metals were more in use, and earthenware was less scarce. The latter however was for many years chiefly imported, for in the patents granted to makers of the better class of pottery in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I and Charles I, it is stated that such ware had never been made in England before.¹

At the end of the 16th century there had been a great increase in the use of pewter vessels. Harrison, writing in 1580, says "There are old men yet dwelling in the village where I remaine which have noted three things to be marvellouslie altered in England within their sound remembrance." One of these was the great increase in the number of chimneys, and the second "the great amendment of lodging." "The third thing they tell of is the exchange of vessell, as of treene platters into pewter, and wooden spoones into silver and tin. For so common were all sorts of treene stuff in old time that a man should hardlie find foure peices of pewter (of which one was peradventure a salt) in a good farmer's house."² Contrasting this with his own time, he says the farmer now has "a faire garnish³ of pewter on his cupboard with so much more going about the house, a siluer salt, a bowle for wine, if not a whole neaste and a dozen of spoones to furnish up the sute."

Our ancestors then, in the earlier times of which we have authentic records, made their domestic vessels chiefly of wood, brass, and of pewter. There were nearly always a number of vessels made of silver; and that folks lived up to the maxim, "There is nothing like leather," is also manifest, as besides employing it for innumerable articles of domestic utility, great use was made of that material for drinking vessels, but they were always lined with pitch, pewter, or silver.

THE BOUGET, THE JACK AND THE BOTTLE.

The leather vessels which may be considered English, and with which we are more immediately concerned are the water-bouget, the leather bottle and the black jack, including under the latter term all pots of leather.

The water-bouget consisted of a pair of water-tight leather bags joined together by their necks. It may fairly be classed as a drinking vessel. In antique sculptures and pottery, people are sometimes represented as drinking from wine and water-skins,⁴ and in Gwillim's "Display of Heraldry" (1610) he speaks of the "Water-bowgets which in ancient times were used to carry and consume in the camp that usefull element of Water." It is stated by writers on heraldry,

1 "Lardaria. Item vij ollae luteae pro diversis rebus servandis." *Priory of Finchale*, 1397. Vol. 6, *Surtees Soc.*, p. cxviii.

2 See page 31.

3 Harrison's *Description of England* prefaced to Holinshed's *Chronicle*.

4 "A garnish of pewter," he says, "doth contain twelve platters," twelve dishes and twelve saucers." In 1541 Wm. Molyneux left to his cousin Fraunces Molyneux "a holl garnyshe of pewter vessell newe, that is to say, xij platers, xij dishes, xij sawcers, xij potedgers"; *Testa, Ebor.*, Vol. 106, *Surtees Soc.*, p. 141.

5 On the Assyrian bas-reliefs and Greek vases for instance, in the *British Museum*.

to have been introduced into England during the Crusades, but, as I shall presently show, it was common in this country centuries before. Also they are mistaken in supposing that it was a purely military vessel, as it was constantly used for domestic purposes through mediaeval times and down to the 17th century.

The leather bottle continued to be used till comparatively modern times, although it is probable that the manufacture of them had nearly ceased by the end of the 18th century. They were so durable however that people still living can remember seeing them used in the harvest field, and I know of one instance myself of a leather bottle that is still so used.¹

Of the black jack there are fewer specimens left. It was a jug, mug or pitcher of leather, but went by various names. In modern times it is frequently, but erroneously, called a leather bottle, to which it had no resemblance.² As a leather "pot" I have seen it mentioned as early as the 14th century. It was frequently used in old fashioned houses till the beginning of the 19th century.

In addition to the three kinds of leather vessels already named, two others, the skin (corresponding to the wine-skin of warmer countries) and the leather bucket, may be dismissed in a few words.

Stitched up skins for carrying liquids were not unknown in this country. They were doubtless in general use in England's primitive days for carrying water, but the sheep-skin vessel illustrated at Fig. 3 is an example of those used in the 19th century for smuggling illicit Scotch whiskey over the border into England, for which purpose its convenience will be obvious. This example I bought at Carlisle, but such skins were used in a similar manner, within living memory, to smuggle illicit whiskey from the Welsh hills into England.

Buckets of leather are mentioned in old accounts as early as the 15th century, but they seem to have been used for the special purpose to which they are now confined—that of extinguishing fires—and not to have been connected with drinking. Those stitched with a thick projecting seam down one side are ancient, but when put together with metal studs and rivets, they are comparatively modern.

Small leather buckets about six inches high or less are sometimes seen in curiosity shops, and are vaguely described by dealers as leather "beer buckets." But I believe that they really originated in a custom of some of the earlier Fire Insurance Companies, who used to have miniature fire-buckets with a brass trade mark in relief on their sides hung up in their offices.

As a material for drinking vessels the use of leather was fostered by the artificial cheapening of the raw material by laws passed to discourage or forbid its export, and by heavy tariffs on imported vessels of every kind. In the reigns



Fig. 3

English skin vessel, used for smuggling whiskey across the Scotch Border.

¹ I regret that since this was written, the owner has sold it to a marine store dealer for half-a-crown.

² Even in a Glossary printed in 1915 black jacks are explained as being "leather bottles."

of Edward II, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth, various laws were passed against the exportation of tanned leather or raw hides,¹ and in the latter reign a ballad called "The Shoo-makers Delight" predicts great gain to all leather-workers when leather has been cheapened by checking its exportation. It is headed "The Gentle Crafts Complaint" or the "Jolly Shoe-makers humble petition to the Queen and Parliament: with their great hopes of the Advancement of the Leather Trade."

"The Jolly Shoemakers it is said
Have found a great decay of Trade.
And lately have been sore dismay'd,
And in a dismal taking,
Because the Leather was grown dear,
And carried over sea we hear:
But gentle Craftsmen never fear,
You'll still be brisk Shoemaking.

All others too that in Leather deal,
The comfort too will also feel,
What those trades are we shall reveal," etc.

In the 14th year of Charles II's reign it being found that articles made of leather were still very expensive, an Act was passed to discourage still further its exportation.² It was found, however, that while the result aimed at (the cheapening of leather wares) was not attained by such stringent regulations, undesired effects, such as the discouragement of cattle breeding and the fall in the value of land, were produced. Six years later therefore the export duties were reduced to very moderate amounts,³ and this was, perhaps, among the causes which contributed to the decreased manufacture of leathern vessels in the 17th century.

A reason already given for the continued use of leathern vessels, was the scarcity of native earthenware and glass and the costliness of such ware when imported. Some extracts to illustrate this are given in an Appendix to this volume, from the "Customs and Valuations of Merchandise" printed in 1612, and other works of 1689 and 1754.⁴ They show that glasses and earthen and glass bottles and flasks paid very heavy duties on arriving in English ports.

It was by such laws that this country in its domestic life was fenced off and separated from that of the Continent, as well as by the distinctive habits and traditions of a people always tenacious of their ancient customs.

LEATHER VESSELS IN FRANCE.

That leathern vessels were comparatively little known on the Continent, is shown by the absence of examples in foreign museums at the present day, and it is also noteworthy that in the elaborate lists of imported articles, from which extracts are quoted in the Appendix, no mention is made of vessels of leather.

¹ Book of Rates, 1689, p. 181.

² *Ib.* p. 181.

³ Book of Rates, 1689, pp. 210 & 211.

⁴ See Appendix.

To ascertain exhaustively the position of leathern vessels in foreign countries, would obviously be a task beyond the scope of the present work ; but the evidence that I have found accessible confirms the impression that those which still survive here were peculiar to England.

If Heywood, who wrote in 1635 of "the great black Jacks and bombards at the Court," was correct, such vessels were unknown in France in the middle of the 17th century, for he continues, "which when the *French-men* first saw, they reported at their returne into their Countrey, that the Englishmen used to drinke out of their Bootes."¹ The celebrated French archaeologist Viollet le Duc, in his "Dictionnaire du mobilier Français" says that bottles of glass were not used in the Middle Ages for keeping wine, but that it was kept in barrels, or in vessels of earth. He adds "*Les Anglais fabriquaient des bouteilles de cuir qui etaient fort estimees.*"²

In a book printed in Paris at the end of the 18th century, the "*Histoire de la Vie privée des François*" by Legrand d'Aussy a passage occurs on the use of leather vessels in France, but it refers only to a kind of bottle which was virtually a bag or sack, and the author seems to be unaware of any other leather vessel.³ But he adds that at a repast given by Philip of Valois to the kings of Scotland, of Majorca, of Bohemia, and of Navarre, there was on the royal dresser no vessel of gold or silver but only a bottle of leather. These bottles he says were called in the 13th century, *bouchaus*, *boutiaux*, *bouties* or *boutilles*, names which were afterwards applied to those of earth and glass, and he goes on to say that in a charter of 1206, which is among the MSS. of Ducange, one finds that when the Bishop of Amiens marched at the king's summons, the Tanners of the town were bound to furnish him with two pairs of "*bouchiaus*" of leather, good and sufficient, the one holding one hogshead, and the other twenty-four sestiers. The Butchers on their part had to furnish grease to cover the said *bouchiaus*. On this the author of the book remarks "If, in this place the word "*cover*" signifies to "*stopper*" as the sense indicates, assuredly it is very strange that these *bouchons* of grease were used for a canteen destined to contain wine." But the explanation of this word "*couvrir*," which so puzzled him, is that these French bottles were flabby and collapsible bags of leather, which when continually wetted and dried by the filling and emptying of liquids, were liable to crack, and that this tendency was corrected by rubbing them with grease externally, and thus preventing them becoming dry and brittle. These *bouchiaus* in fact must have been very similar to the English water-bougets, a pair of which (as will be seen later) was practically one vessel.

Ducange says that a charter of the year 1332 from the register of St. Germain des Prés (an abbey in Paris) mentions a bottle of leather "*unam Boutailliam de corio*," also that in another document dated 1405, in the register of the King's Keeper of the Records, a little one holding about half a pint, "*Une Boutillete de cuir, tenant environ une chopine*" occurs.⁴

¹ Philothonista, or the Drunkard opened, dissected or anatomized, 1635, p. 45.

² Tom. II., article Bouteille.

³ Histoire de la Vie privée des François par P. J. B. Legrand d'Aussy avec des notes, corrections et additions par J. B. B. de Roquefort, 1815, original edition, 1782 p. 420.

⁴ Ducange Glossarium, under Boutaillia Charta ann. 1332, ex Tabul. S. Germ. Prat.

⁵ Ib. under Butta. Sic nostris Boutillete diminut. a Bouteille. Lit. remiss. ann. 1406, in Reg., 161. Chartolp. reg., ch. 49.

Actual bottles of leather were, however, in existence in the hotter parts of Europe, in Asia and in Africa, where they are still used to a lesser extent. On some of the Assyrian bas-reliefs are carved, not only skins, but elegantly shaped bottles, and there is evidence that such vessels were used by the Greeks and Romans. It is none the less true, however, that England was for the greater part of her history the home *par excellence* of leather drinking vessels, that they were made and used here in larger numbers, and for a greater length of time than in other European countries.



Fig. 2

1. Modern Bottle of soft leather from Spain.
2. Small Black Jack.
3. Wooden Piggins from Christ's Hospital, H. Syer Cuming Collection.

continual wars with France, being royal on this state of isolation.

English bottles had the characteristics of strength and solidity, and were made of tanned ox-hide which was thick and rigid; while foreign ones generally seem to have been—and still are, where they exist—composed of a lighter and thinner leather obtained from the goat, pig or sheep, which was generally cured in such a manner as to remain flexible.' (Fig. 2) Moreover pots, mugs, and pitchers of leather were peculiar to England, and leathern bottles of English make had a great reputation on the Continent.

For this persistent attachment of the English to vessels of leather there were many reasons.

It is difficult to realise to what an extent this country was severed, in the past, from its Continental neighbours. "We in our distant island had, throughout the Middle Ages, all the advantages of obscurity,"² and as Monsieur Jusserand has pointed out, even the rather than national, had little effect

While Continental countries had a plentiful supply of pottery of various qualities and also of glass, our native earthenware was coarse and scarce, and native glass vessels for centuries were almost non-existent. On the Continent there were flasks of iron and steel, which are rarely heard of in this country;³ and they also used bottles of silver, pewter and tin to a greater extent, and in earlier times. English earthenware was very heavy and was only made where suitable clay existed and in mediæval times the carriage of goods was slow and often costly.

¹ There are some exceptions to this.

² Town Life in the 15th Century, by Mrs. J. R. Green. Vol. I., p. 32.

³ Iron was scarce and very dear in England in the Middle Ages. Six Centuries of Work and Wages. Rogers, p. 87.

High tariffs and the risks of travel made drinking vessels expensive when imported, while the native leather workers were skilful and well organized; and from very early times tanners have been a numerous class in this country. After Roman and Saxon times, right through the Middle Ages and even as late as the middle of the 17th century, pottery making seems to have remained at a very low ebb in England. In works on English Ceramics it is often taken for granted that the craftsmen described in mediaeval documents as "potters" were makers of earthenware; but this is a mistake. An examination of their effects, where these have been recorded, shows that the pots they made were of metal.¹ Sometimes a potter of those times is found to have been also a bell-founder,² an ancient bell at Norwich is inscribed with the name of the potter who made it.³ The "Complaint of the trade of Potters of London," translated by Riley in his "Memorials of London and London Life," shows that they were all makers of metal pots.⁴ In the account rolls of early times, the vessels bought from the potter or sent to him to be repaired are pots of metal,⁵ and in one instance a potter was paid for making a brazen mortar.⁶ Then in the Roll of Freemen of York, though potters are numerous, it is evident they were not makers of earthenware, because when one of the latter was admitted (which was very seldom) he is distinguished by being entered as an "erthpotter" or "erdpotter."⁷ Moreover in 1505 John Eschby was admitted as a "potter and belmaker;" and in 1537 Thomas Ryché as "belfownder and potter." There was in early times a guild of Potters in London, but they were absorbed along with the kindred crafts of Braziers, Bladesmiths and other metal workers into the Armourers' Company.⁸ Even as late as 1564 the churchwardens of St. Martin's, Leicester, "Solde to the pottr. iij c and iij quartarns of bras, at xixs the hundrith."

This misconception as to the occupation of the potter has led most writers on English ceramic industries to over-estimate the amount of earthenware produced in this country during the Middle Ages. The pots made by the mediaeval potters were the large three-legged cooking-vessels and smaller skillets for the kitchen, variously described as of brass, latten or bell-metal, such as are still sometimes met with in old houses and museums. The authoress of the Life of Josiah Wedgwood, in upholding the view that "this country was not dependent on foreign sources for the supply of its ordinary earthenware, but had an abundance of its own,"⁹ quotes the Roll of Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford, to show that in 1289 "cups, dishes, plates and saucers were to be bought in the various market towns of his diocese." It is true that the editor of the Roll, came to the conclusion that these vessels were of "crockery-ware,"¹⁰ but there is no evidence in the text to support that view and there can be little doubt that they were of wood.

1 Riley's Memorials of London, p. 61.

2 *Ib.*, p. 100.

3 L'Estrange's Church Bells of Norfolk, p. 26.

4 Riley's Memorials, p. 118.

5 Account Rolls of Durham Abbey. Surtees Soc. Vol. 99, p. 90.

6 *Ib.* p. 82. Also in 1485 "Ric'o

Pottar pro emendacione lez Sethyng pott et lez Swyllingpan ac alterius parve pattelle

4 s." *Ib.* p. 98.

7 Freemen of York. Vol. 96. Surtees Soc., pp. 178 & 187.

8 Hazlitt's Livery Companies of London, p. 26.

9 The Life of Josiah Wedgwood, by Eliza Meteyard, Vol. 1, p. 66.

10 Roll of the Household Expenses of Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford. Camden Soc., 1853, pp. 24, 70 & 98.

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Stitched up skins for carrying liquids were not unknown in this country. They were doubtless in general use in England's primitive days for carrying water, but the sheep-skin vessel illustrated at Fig. 3 is an example of those used in the 19th century for smuggling illicit Scotch whiskey over the border into England, for which purpose its convenience will be obvious. This example I bought at Carlisle, but such skins were used in a similar manner, within living memory, to smuggle illicit whiskey from the Welsh hills into England.

Buckets of leather are mentioned in old accounts as early as the 15th century, but they seem to have been used for the special purpose to which they are now confined—that of extinguishing fires—and not to have been connected with drinking. Those stitched with a thick projecting seam down one side are ancient, but when put together with metal studs and rivets, they are comparatively modern.

Small leather buckets about six inches high or less are sometimes seen in curiosity shops, and are vaguely described by dealers as leather "beer buckets." But I believe that they really originated in a custom of some of the earlier Fire Insurance Companies, who used to have miniature fire-buckets with a brass trade mark in relief on their sides hung up in their offices.

As a material for drinking vessels the use of leather was fostered by the artificial cheapening of the raw material by laws passed to discourage or forbid its export, and by heavy tariffs on imported vessels of every kind. In the reigns



Fig. 3

English skin vessel, used for smuggling whiskey across the Scotch Border.

¹ I regret that since this was written, the owner has sold it to a marine store dealer for half-a-crown.

² Even in a Glossary printed in 1915 black jacks are explained as being "leather bottles."

to have been introduced into England during the Crusades, but, as I shall presently show, it was common in this country centuries before. Also they are mistaken in supposing that it was a purely military vessel, as it was constantly used for domestic purposes through mediæval times and down to the 17th century.

The leather bottle continued to be used till comparatively modern times, although it is probable that the manufacture of them had nearly ceased by the end of the 18th century. They were so durable however that people still living can remember seeing them used in the harvest field, and I know of one instance myself of a leather bottle that is still so used.¹

Of the black jack there are fewer specimens left. It was a jug, mug or pitcher of leather, but went by various names. In modern times it is frequently, but erroneously, called a leather bottle, to which it had no resemblance.² As a leather "pot" I have seen it mentioned as early as the 14th century. It was frequently used in old fashioned houses till the beginning of the 19th century.

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of Edward II, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth, various laws were passed against the exportation of tanned leather or raw hides,¹ and in the latter reign a ballad called "The Shoo-makers Delight" predicts great gain to all leather-workers when leather has been cheapened by checking its exportation. It is headed "The Gentle Crafts Complaint" or the "Jolly Shoe-makers humble petition to the Queen and Parliament: with their great hopes of the Advancement of the Leather Trade."

"The Jolly Shoemakers it is said
Have found a great decay of Trade.
And lately have been sore dismay'd,
And in a dismal taking.
Because the Leather was grown dear,
And carried over sea we hear:
But gentle Craftsmen never fear,
You'll still be brisk Shoemaking.

All others too that in Leather deal,
The comfort too will also feel,
What those trades are we shall reveal," etc.

In the 14th year of Charles II's reign it being found that articles made of leather were still very expensive, an Act was passed to discourage still further its exportation.² It was found, however, that while the result aimed at (the cheapening of leather wares) was not attained by such stringent regulations, undesired effects, such as the discouragement of cattle breeding and the fall in the value of land, were produced. Six years later therefore the export duties were reduced to very moderate amounts,³ and this was, perhaps, among the causes which contributed to the decreased manufacture of leathern vessels in the 17th century.

A reason already given for the continued use of leathern vessels, was the scarcity of native earthenware and glass and the costliness of such ware when imported. Some extracts to illustrate this are given in an Appendix to this volume, from the "Customs and Valuations of Merchandise" printed in 1612, and other works of 1689 and 1754.⁴ They show that glasses and earthen and glass bottles and flasks paid very heavy duties on arriving in English ports.

It was by such laws that this country in its domestic life was fenced off and separated from that of the Continent, as well as by the distinctive habits and traditions of a people always tenacious of their ancient customs.

LEATHER VESSELS IN FRANCE.

That leathern vessels were comparatively little known on the Continent, is shown by the absence of examples in foreign museums at the present day, and it is also noteworthy that in the elaborate lists of imported articles, from which extracts are quoted in the Appendix, no mention is made of vessels of leather.

¹ Book of Rates, 1689, p. 181.

² *Ib.*, p. 181.

³ Book of Rates, 1689, pp. 210 & 211.

⁴ See Appendix.

To ascertain exhaustively the position of leathern vessels in foreign countries, would obviously be a task beyond the scope of the present work ; but the evidence that I have found accessible confirms the impression that those which still survive here were peculiar to England.

If Heywood, who wrote in 1635 of " the great black Jacks and bombards at the Court," was correct, such vessels were unknown in France in the middle of the 17th century, for he continues, " which when the *French-men* first saw, they reported at their returne into their Countrey, that the Englishmen used to drinke out of their Bootes."¹ The celebrated French archaeologist Viollet le Duc, in his " *Dictionnaire du mobilier Français* " says that bottles of glass were not used in the Middle Ages for keeping wine, but that it was kept in barrels, or in vessels of earth. He adds " *Les Anglais fabriquaient des bouteilles de cuir qui etaient fort estimees.*"²

In a book printed in Paris at the end of the 18th century, the " *Histoire de la Vie privée des François* " by Legrand d'Aussy a passage occurs on the use of leather vessels in France, but it refers only to a kind of bottle which was virtually a bag or sack, and the author seems to be unaware of any other leather vessel.³ But he adds that at a repast given by Philip of Valois to the kings of Scotland, of Majorca, of Bohemia, and of Navarre, there was on the royal dresser no vessel of gold or silver but only a bottle of leather. These bottles he says were called in the 13th century, *bouchaus*, *boutiaux*, *bouties* or *boutilles*, names which were afterwards applied to those of earth and glass, and he goes on to say that in a charter of 1206, which is among the MSS. of Ducange, one finds that when the Bishop of Amiens marched at the king's summons, the Tanners of the town were bound to furnish him with two pairs of " *bouchiaus* " of leather, good and sufficient, the one holding one hogshead, and the other twenty-four sestiers. The Butchers on their part had to furnish grease to cover the said *bouchiaus*. On this the author of the book remarks " If, in this place the word " *cover* " signifies to " *stopper* " as the sense indicates, assuredly it is very strange that these *bouchons* of grease were used for a canteen destined to contain wine." But the explanation of this word " *couvrir*," which so puzzled him, is that these French bottles were flabby and collapsible bags of leather, which when continually wetted and dried by the filling and emptying of liquids, were liable to crack, and that this tendency was corrected by rubbing them with grease externally, and thus preventing them becoming dry and brittle. These *bouchiaus* in fact must have been very similar to the English water-bougets, a pair of which (as will be seen later) was practically one vessel.

Ducange says that a charter of the year 1332 from the register of St. Germain des Prés (an abbey in Paris) mentions a bottle of leather " *unam Boutailliam de corio,*" also that in another document dated 1405, in the register of the King's Keeper of the Records, a little one holding about half a pint, " *Une Boutillete de cuir, tenant environ une chopine* " occurs.⁵

1 Philocothonista, or the Drunkard opened, dissected or anatomized, 1635, p. 45.

2 Tom. II., article Bouteille.

3 Histoire de la Vie privée des François par P. J. B. Legrand d' Aussy avec des notes, corrections et additions par J. B. B. de Roquefort, 1815, original edition, 1782 p. 420.

4 Ducange Glossarium, under Boutaillia Charta ann. 1332, ex Tabul. S. Germ. Prat.

5 Ib. under Butta. Sic nostris Boutillete diminut. a Bouteille. Lit. remiss. ann. 1406, in Reg., 161. Chartolp. reg., ch. 49.

A passage in the "Encyclopédie Méthodique" of 1791 under the article "Boute" (which is apparently much the same thing as the "boutie" or "bouchau,"¹) described it as ox-hide prepared and sewn, and as used for carrying wine and other liquids over mountains. It speaks of these vessels as better for that purpose than barrels of wood, because the latter are not pliable like vessels of leather, and therefore galled and wounded the mules and other beasts of burden which were used for that kind of work. The Encyclopédie adds that "boutes" were without hair, and their making was like that of "outrés" or goat-skin vessels, which are used specially for carrying oil in Provence and Languedoc.² This, and its huge capacity, show that the *boute* or *bouchau* was a stitched bag of ox-hide, and indicates that many French bottles of leather were closely allied to the wine-skin and the water-bouget, the word "*outrés*" evidently referring to a bag-like and supple bottle, not like the English ones. For the uses to which leather bottles were put in England,—hunting, travelling, etc.,—it was customary on the Continent to use not only those of tin and pewter, which occur in later English documents, but also bottles of iron and steel, sometimes covered with leather. The "Dictionnaire de l'Ameublement et de la Decoration," says that "for long journeys they made bottles of iron or steel and covered them with leather," and quotes from the Comptes de Charles VI, 1383, an instance in which Martin the carter was paid for bottles of steel covered with leather, bought from him to carry wine for the King, and to Guillaume Tireverge for other bottles of steel and smaller ones to put water in.

There were rigid bottles of leather made in France, but they were copied from English imported ones. Another extract from the "Dictionnaire de l'Ameublement," testifies to this and shows the unique position held by the leather bottles made in England. Under the word "Bouteille" it quotes "Le Livre des Métiers" as mentioning bottles of pewter and leather, and says that the latter in old times were intended to be carried as gourds are,³ and that one meets with them fairly often in ancient inventories. But of the two examples given, the first is that of two bottles which were bought in London!⁴ The second shows that in the middle of the 15th century the King, when hunting, did not disdain to carry his wine in a bottle of leather. The same work goes on to say that these bottles were made by the case or sheath makers; which was not so in England till very late times, as will appear subsequently. But the most important passage says "Ces bouteilles en cuir étaient l'oeuvre des gainiers. Les plus renommées toute fois étaient importées d'Angleterre. Souvent celles fabriquées en France étaient copiées sur les modèles importés, et faites à la mode d'Angleterre. (Voir comptes de l'Hotel 1487)."⁴ Another passage in the "Histoire de la vie

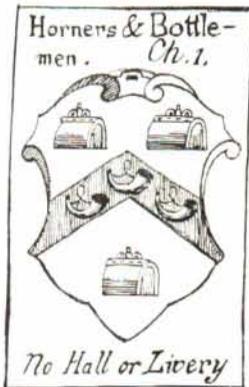


Fig. 4

From R. W. Seale's Map of Middlesex, c. 1750.

¹ 1791, Tom II., p. 394.

² Gourd-shaped vessels, probably of leather, were made in England, as "gourd makers" are often mentioned in the 14th century, in the "York Roll of Freemen."

³ Pour il bouteilles de cuir achetées à Londres. See Chap. II.

⁴ "Dictionnaire de l'Ameublement et de la Decoration," par H. Harvard, p. 387.



Two great Beer Bombards, one small Jack, four Leather Bottles, including one of the rare upright shape. (Chap. I.)

Plate 2



privée des François" gives to the English bottles of leather an important role, and shows that they were thought worthy to be presented by Edward IV to a French King. After speaking of the journey which the Earl of Warwick (who had placed Edward IV on the throne of England) made in France, and describing the manner in which King Louis received him, the presents, fine pieces of gold, cup of gold, plate, jewellery and other precious objects which were heaped upon him, it adds that on the return of Warwick to England, Edward, informed of all his, sent in return, to the King "des trompes de chasse et des bouteilles de cuyr."

An examination of many old French inventories produces hardly any instances of leather vessels. In the *Comptes de l'Hotel du roi Charles VI*, 1380, is a payment to Jacques aux Varins "pour une bouteille de cuir neufve," but it was to put ink in, "pour mettre enque en la dicta chambre."

As to leather pots in France, the fact of their finding no place in the above accounts of leathern vessels in that country shows that they must have been few. A search through large numbers of old inventories, both printed and manuscript, has only revealed one purely French instance. In the *Inventaire de Chateau Enghien*: "Une canne de cuir boulli."

The exception which proves the rule is provided by one example of the use of such things in France, but though it is an instance of leather pots in that country, they were the property of a community of English monks who settled at Douai at the beginning of the 17th century. The fact that they used vessels of leather does not indicate the general use of such things in that part of the Continent, as the community is known to have clung to its English customs and nationality. The following extracts from their records show that though living in a wine country they brewed their native beverage, and drank it from jugs of leather. In 1624 they possessed two small leather pots commonly called black Jackes ("duo pocula coriacea quae vulgo black Jackes uncupantur") commonly called, that is, in England. In another inventory of the monks' effects, dated December, 1624, there were "two Blacke Jackes to draw beare in," no doubt the same two vessels. In March 1626 they possessed a gallon pot of leather (Lagena de corio), in 1629 two leather Jackes and a leather bottle," in 1636 two "black Jackes," in 1645 two blacke Jackes for the Convicters' Refectory."³

As to other European countries, a necessarily limited enquiry fails to produce any existing examples of such leather vessels as are met with in England, or any evidence of their manufacture in ancient times.

In the case of Germany, the perusal of numbers of old inventories has failed to produce more than one or two doubtful examples. On the other hand it appears that leather bottles used there were imported from England, as we have already shown to have been the case in France. In the expenses of the Earl of Derby in Russia in 1391 is an item which shows that he purchased at Leipzic, two English



Fig. 5

Saxon Drinking Cup of leather, from Bateman's "Ten Years' Diggings."

¹ De la Vie privée des François," Tom. II., p. 420.

² "Douet d'Arg. Comptes de l'hotel," p. 97.

³ There was a boarding school for English boys attached to the Monastery. Since the Catholic Emancipation Acts, this community has been settled near Bath in Somerset, where the documents above-mentioned are preserved. For the extracts from them and for searching French MSS. I am indebted to Mr. Edmund Bishop.

bottles (*j pare botelles de Anglia*) for 2/3.¹ These must have been made of leather. England was not then producing bottles of other materials, except some of wood and earth with perhaps a few of metal.

In reply to enquiries made twelve years ago at the National Museum at Nuremberg, the Director was very emphatic: "We do not possess any leathern drinking vessels in the collection of our Museum, nor is there in Germany anything known of such vessels. Neither could we in the literature accessible to us find anything concerning leathern vessels."²

The researches in Holland, Germany and Italy of a Dutch friend provided with photographs of characteristic examples of English jacks and bottles did not unearth any trace (among archaeologists, museums or curiosity dealers) of anything corresponding to them. German and Dutch toppers seem to have been devoted to enormous flagons of pewter, many examples of which are still in existence, and the Scandinavian races of Northern Europe greatly prized huge wooden tankards covered with elaborate carvings.

In Spain and other parts of Southern Europe, certain flask-like leathern bottles are still in use, in conjunction with skins, for carrying wine, but as already indicated they are not at all like the old English kind. The Spanish bottles are called "bota," and are chiefly used in travelling. In the north of the peninsula such bottles have a screw stopper of horn, but in the south are of much simpler construction. Both kinds, however, are small bags of leather, of flask or globular shape, and of thin and supple material. A typical example of the Spanish "bota," is shown in a group of vessels at Fig. 2 from the collection of Mr. H. Syer Cuming.

THE HISTORY OF LEATHER VESSELS.

The early inhabitants of Britain, who in the Neo-lithic Age occupied caves and rude dwellings in various parts of the island, are believed to have been acquainted with some means of curing hides and skins, and it is possible that they tanned them with bark. They are stated to have procured boiling water by dropping red-hot stones into water contained in vessels of pot-stone, wood, bark or leather.³

Very few remains of hide or leather belonging to so remote a period have been found; a fact sufficiently accounted for by their comparatively perishable nature. A drinking vessel however, survives as one example of such material. In October, 1867, a rude cup of hide was exhumed from a great depth in West Smithfield, London; and has since remained in the collection of Mr. H. Syer Cuming at Kennington. It was found in close proximity to Neo-lithic remains, and may have been preserved by some astringent property in the surrounding soil. An illustration of this archaic cup is shown on Plate 3.

As to the later pre-historic races of Britain, the researches of modern times have shown that the Bronze-folk and the pre-historic Iron-folk made use of leather or hide prepared in some way,⁴ and it is probable that they also made leather and skin vessels. A part of the earliest known commerce between Britain and the Continent consisted of traffic in leather, according to the account given of the products of the island by Strabo, in the reign of Augustus.⁵

1 "Derby Accounts," Ed. by Miss L. T. Smith, Cam. Soc., 1894, p. 18.

2 Subsequently a small leather flask of no great age was discovered there.

3 "Man before Metals," N. Joly, 1883, p. 356.

4 "Early Man in Britain," W. Boyd Dawkins, p. 294.

5 "Strabonis Geographia" (Bohn's Trans.), iv. 5. 2.

The accounts left by the Roman invaders, concerning the domestic life of the peoples they found in Britain are very meagre. We learn, however, that they used skins for clothing and hides for boats,¹ and it is highly probable that they had drinking vessels of similar materials. But it must not be forgotten that they had some skill in metal work, and that British pottery has been dug up in quantities so considerable that many, perhaps the majority, of their vessels may have been of earthenware.

During the occupation of this island by the Romans, the imposition of their mature civilization produced so much change in social life that, for the greater part of the time, the better kinds of drinking vessels were probably Roman in character. Numbers of vessels have been exhumed by accident or otherwise, which, while Roman in design, were made and used here.

IN SAXON TIMES.

Unlike the Romans, who had been builders of towns, the next invaders, whom we call "Saxons," and who came from the north of Europe, were rural in their tastes and occupations, and may have used vessels of leather before, as they certainly did after they settled here. The vessels of Saxon workmanship which have been most frequently exhumed in England are of pottery and glass or of wood bound with metal, but there is at least one instance of a leathern vessel. When a "barrow" at Benty Grange, eight miles from Buxton, was opened by Mr. T. Bateman in 1848, the remains of a silver-edged leathern cup were found, with a helmet of iron bars and some enamelled ornaments, all of Saxon workmanship. Of the cup, little but the silver mountings and ornaments remained. It was three inches in diameter at the mouth, and, in addition to the silver rim, had four wheel-shaped ornaments and two crosses of thin silver affixed by pins of the same metal and clenched inside.² (See Fig. 5.)

As early as the Tenth century drinking vessels occur among the leather wares in use in this country. A manuscript of that time called the Colloquy of Archbishop Alfric, preserved in the Cotton MSS.³ contains a passage in which the "shoe-wright" replying to questions describes the nature of his occupation. The document is in Latin with an Anglo-Saxon gloss,⁴ and the answer of the shoe-maker is to the following effect.

"I buy hides and skins and I prepare them by my craft, and I make of them boots of different kinds, shoes, ankle-leathers, and bottles, bridle-thongs, flasks and bougets, spur and other leathers, bags and purses, and nobody would wish to go through the winter without my handicraft." This comprehensive list shows that the Anglo-Saxon "shoe-wright" was not only a tanner and a currier, but was also a maker of nearly every article that was then wrought in leather, including bottles, flasks and water-bougets.

For this last vessel the word used in Wright's version of the document is *calidillia*, but in a later edition edited by R. P. Wülcker,⁵ it is stated that in the original manuscript the word is probably *casidilia*; which in a mediaeval vocabulary

1 "Caesar, De Bello Civili," l.c. 54.

2 "Ten years' Diggings," by Thomas Bateman, 1861, pp. 28 & 29.

3 Privately printed in "Vocabularies," by the late T. Wright.

4 Printed in "Vocabularies," by T. Wright, 1857, p. 9. See Appendix to this Volume

5 "Vocabularies," by T. Wright, ed. by R. P. Wülcker, 1884, p. 97.

is glossed "pung" an Old English word for a leathern pouch. Moreover in the Colloquy, the word has the gloss "higdifatu," which means "hide vessels," and Ducange has under "Bulga," "Gloss, Saxon, Aelfrici Bulga, Hydig-faet, i vas ex corio confectum." Bulga is the word most used in mediaeval Latin for the water-bouget.

The shoe-wright does not speak of making any kind of pots or pitchers, and it is probable that there were none then in use bigger than the cups of leather already mentioned. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were expert makers of wooden vessels, and perhaps used them instead of leather pitchers. They appear to have been fond of bucket-shaped vessels of wood, richly bound with rings and hoops of iron or brass, which were perhaps for serving drink in, and are supposed to be referred to in the poems of Beowulf. There are remains of several in the British Museum.

IN NORMAN TIMES.

The passage in Archbishop Alfric's Colloquy is probably the earliest mention of leather vessels in England. During the six centuries of Saxon dominion, great changes must have taken place in the domestic habits of the people. They had been inaugurated by the destruction of towns, and the interests of the conquerors being chiefly in agriculture, even such craftsmen as the shoe-wrights worked in the fields during the spring and summer. Leathern vessels and wooden ones could be made under such conditions, in the homes of individual workers, but pottery and glass even of primitive character would doubtless require a greater degree of systematic co-operation, and the making of these declined. With the lapse of time the crafts would tend to become more sub-divided as towns grew and skilled labour became concentrated in them, and it is probable that before the Norman Conquest the shoe-wright had ceased to make so many different kinds of leathern wares, as had been usual in the 10th century, though even as late as the end of the 13th century, the organization of the London shoe-makers—the guild of Cordwainers—included several different industries connected with the making and working up of leather.³ This much is shown by a set of ordinances made in 1272, which exists among the municipal MSS. at the Guildhall, and is the earliest known document relating to the Cordwainers' Company.⁴ It is in Latin and is rather obscurely worded, but was evidently intended to define the rights and regulations of the different leather workers mentioned in it—tanners, curriers, cordwainers, cofferers, workers in tan leather and workers in alum leather—and their relation to one another. An abstract of it in English has been printed in the Report of the Royal Commission on the London Livery Companies⁵ but it is not quite reliable, and the "Cistarii," there rendered "Curriers," were certainly Cofferers, *i.e.*, makers of males and leather-covered trunks, etc.

Bottles are the only leather vessels mentioned in the "*Liber de Utensilibus*" of Alexander Neckam, a distinguished scholar, born in 1157 at St. Albans. It was written in Latin, and the version printed by Thomas Wright, from a copy

1 Vocabularies by T. Wright, ed. by R. P. Wülcker, 1884, p. 11.

2 An account of the Cordwainers' Company prefixed to the catalogue of an Exhibition they held in 1895 says the company is mentioned in 1087, but I can find no authority for the statement.

3 The leather of Cordova was called in England "Cordevan" or "Cordewayne," hence the name cordwainers for shoe-makers.

4 Liber Horn., fol. 339b.

5 London Livery Companies' Commission Report, Vol. 3, p. 301.

in the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum, has an interlinear gloss in the Anglo-Norman dialect. Describing the furniture and utensils of the Norman household, Neckam says, "there are in the store-room, the cellar or the larder, barrels, leather bottles, tuns, cups," etc. "In promptuario sive in celario sive in penu sint cadi, utres, dolea, ciphi" etc.¹ It may here be remarked that where the word "utre" or "uter" is used in mediæval records it may be taken to stand for a bottle of leather. A manuscript of the 14th century, quoted in Albert Way's edition of *Promptorium Parvulorum*, says "Uter, Anglice a botel sed collateralis Anglice a costrelle de cute dicis utres, de ligno collaterales."²

A GUILD OF BOTTLE MAKERS IN LONDON.

Early in the 14th century each of the chief leather-working crafts had a guild of its own, and one of these was the fraternity of bottle-makers. It is, however, noteworthy that the Cordwainers' Guild in London and other towns continued to exercise supervision over the tanning and currying of leather. A mass of interesting detail relating to the ancient industries of the city exists in the archives of London preserved at the Guildhall. Repeated searches among these records led me to a series of manuscripts relating to a guild,—the Company of Botellars or Bottle-makers—which was the trade organization of the makers of leather vessels.³

The earliest of these documents containing the Ordinances of the Guild, made in the 14th century, occupies about half a page of a huge parchment folio. By permission of the Court of Common Council, I am able to give illustrations of this extremely interesting document (Plate 3) and of some of the succeeding ones. In London, it seems, the makers of leathern vessels had been important enough to be organized from very early times; the above Ordinances of the "Botellars" averring, in 1373, that "the mistery had been well and in order made from the time whereof memory does not run to the contrary." Though this was a stock phrase often used about that date, it no doubt indicates that the Guild had been in existence for a considerable time.

This document is the earliest actual record of the bottle-makers as a community, and sets forth in Latin how their honest men (*probi homines*) appeared before the Court of Aldermen and presented a Bill, which is given in full in the French language, and requests that certain stringent regulations for the conduct of the industry shall be enforced. The concluding paragraph, in Latin, states that the request was granted, and that the Court decided in addition that every bottle-maker should put his mark on the vessels he made that they might be identified.

Translated, the text is as follows:—

"To the Husting held for pleas of land on the Monday before the feast of St. Clement the Pope in the year of the reign of King Edward the third after the conquest the 47th have come here the honest men of the mistery of botellars and have delivered to the Mayor and Aldermen a certain bill in these words. To the honourable Lords the Mayor and Recorder of the City of London the good

¹ In "Vocabularies," T. Wright, 1857, p. 98, the word "utres" has the gloss "couterous."

² Camden Soc., 1842, Tom. I., p. 95.

³ Some of these MSS. are now indexed, with abstracts, in the "Calendars of Letter Books," edited by Dr. R. R. Sharpe.

people the botellars of the same city. Shew that whereas their mistery has been well and in order made from the time whereof memory does not run to the contrary that (?if) any of the said mistery shall make false botelles as appear by their works to the great damage of the Lords and Commons and the slander of the same good people, who are several times reprov'd by the Lords by reason that such defaults are not redressed and punished that it may please your Lordships to ordain and grant that two or three of the best of the said mistery may be elected and sworn to rule the said mistery well and loyally, and if any default henceforth to the said mistery be found, that it may be brought before you and at the first default may he be amerced, and at the second default more grievously and at the third time may he be punished by your good ordinance. Which bill here being read and advice being hereupon held between the Mayor and Aldermen, it has been agreed and granted between the same that it be henceforth done as the bill aforesaid requires, and besides this it has been ordered by the Mayor and Aldermen that every botillar should affix his sign to the "botellis" and other vessels by them henceforth to be made of leather in order that it may be known whose work it shall be, under penalty falling etc. And hereupon on the Tuesday next after the Feast of St. Edmund the King in the 47th year aforesaid have been chosen masters of the said mistery viz. Peter de Trente and John de Staunford sworn to oversee the mistery aforesaid and the default which they shall find thereupon to the Mayor and Aldermen who for the time shall be faithfully present from time to time."

THE BOTTELLARS MADE POTS.

One of the facts to be gleaned from these Ordinances is that the "botellars" were makers of other leather vessels besides bottles, which goes to show that they were the makers of leather pots. This is placed beyond all doubt, however, by other documents, now at the Record Office, which prove that the "botelmakers" as the same craftsmen were called after the reign of Edward III, both sold pots and repaired them. In Chapter V, a 14th century manuscript is quoted which records the purchase of a gallon pot from a "botelmaker" and there is another MS. in the Duchy of Lancaster Records, giving the account of Simon Bache, "Treasurer of Hostel," which shows that the Clerk of the Buttery in the 21st year of the reign of Richard II paid to a "botel-maker" named Peter Rypon fourteen pence for mending five pitchers of leather.²

The "Botillars'" fraternity³ is again mentioned in the records at the Guildhall a few years later when, in July of the first year of Richard II, William Karlille and Thomas Tyrold, Masters of the Company, are recorded as having been sworn.⁴

In the following year (1378) the same two craftsmen represented the Fraternity at a trial, an account of which is given in a Latin document also at the Guildhall.⁵

1 Letter Book G., fol. 310.

2 Other instances are also given from Durham in chapter viii.

"Clerico Buterie super cerivisia per manus Petri Rypon Botel-maker pro emendax v oillis correis per comp secu fact xix die Sept. xiiij." Duchy of Lancaster records, Class xxviii., Bundle I, No. 8.

3 The word Botillar or Boteler is generally taken to mean butler, and was often used in that sense, as when Lord Howard in 1463 notes in his Household Book: "And I gafe my boteleres the same day ijs." But the ancient documents, here quoted, as well as others in the York Guildhall, make it certain that the Botillars of the 14th and 15th centuries were makers of leather drinking vessels.

4 Letter Book H., fol. 61.

5 Letter Book H., fol. 88.

It appears that in the second year of Richard II, an overseer of the Cordwainers brought before the Mayor and Aldermen forty-seven tanned hides taken from Nicholas Burle, a tanner, which he had exposed for sale in the city and "all of which were raw and false and forfeitable"; which Nicholas then present in Court said—that he bought the same hides at the town of Rothwelle and brought them to London to sell to saddlers, girdlers, bottle-makers, and other misteries, for which they were suitable and might very well serve, and he did not admit that as they were not good for the trade of cordwainers they might not serve for other trades. And the Cordwainers said that the hides were altogether false and fit for no trade, and asked that they should be forfeited. And the said Nicholas averred that they were good, and put himself as to the same on the oath of the girdlers, "botel-makers," tanners, curriers and cordwainers, and the Cordwainers did the same. Therefore precept was given to Robert Markell, sergeant of the Mayor, to bring on the Friday next after the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, before the Mayor and Aldermen, two or three reputable men of each of the misteries aforesaid. Of this jury William Karlille and Thomas Tyrold were of the trade of "botel-makers." Their verdict was given against the hides, and the latter were forfeited to the Commonalty.*

BOTELMAKERS COMBINE WITH HORNERS.

Up to this time there is every evidence that the making of leather vessels was an important and flourishing industry. Direct evidence of their use is not very obvious earlier than the 15th century, but this partly arises from their very abundance; bottles as a rule being of leather, the material was nearly always taken for granted. They are more easily identified in later times when bottles of other kinds had become more numerous and materials are more often specified.

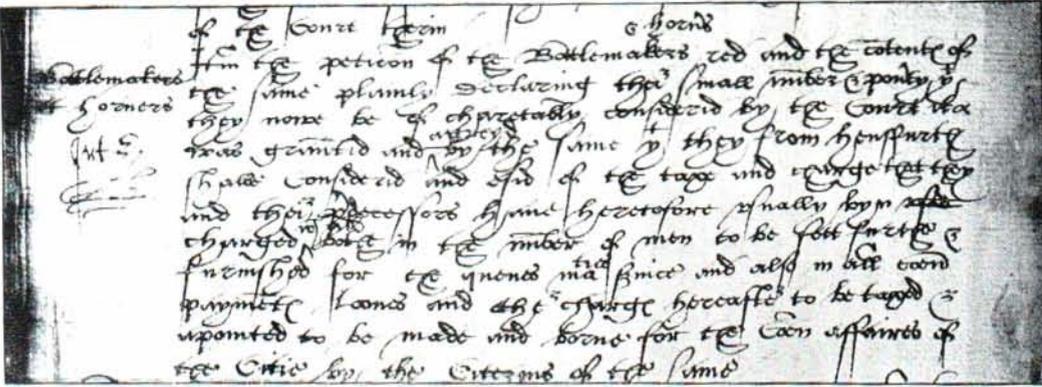
As time went on and habits gradually altered with the growth of mechanical ingenuity, and greater facility of access to the industrial arts of other lands, changes of fashion and material were brought about. Bottles of metal came more into use, and pots of tin and pewter were much more common. This was naturally not without important effects on the producers of the more simple vessels of horn and leather. Even as early as the end of the 15th century these effects had become very marked, as is made evident by another document in the archives of the Guildhall dated the 5th of March in the 16th year of Edward IV. (1476). In this it is stated that the two crafts of horners and "bottilmakers" of London had been so distressed and impoverished that they were no longer able to bear the expense of separate organizations. For this reason, and also because divers members of the Craft of Horners practised also the "fete" of bottle-making, they prayed the Court of Aldermen to grant that henceforth members of both Crafts might join together in all things concerning the regulation of the two industries, as well as in their responsibilities towards the City or the King. The document itself is in English and is entered in one of the paper volumes called "Journals," at the Guildhall, but it is also beautifully engrossed on parchment in one of the Letter Books,¹ with a statement at the beginning in Latin, that the petition had been delivered; and another also in Latin, to record that

¹ As a translation of this document has been printed in Riley's "Memorials of London," 1868, p. 420, I have not given it in full. It would appear from it that the bottle making industry must have been of more importance in the 14th century London than those of the girdlers or the pouch makers.

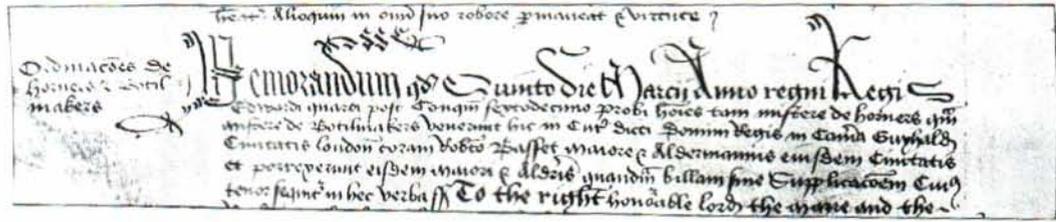
² Letter Book L., fol 116.

it had been granted. The latter copy has the marginal heading "*Ordenances de Horners et Botilmakers,*" and with the Latin portions translated, reads as follows:—

"Be it remembered that on the fifth day of March in the sixteenth year of the reign of Edward the fourth after the conquest, the honest men as well of the mistery of horners as of the mistery of Botilmakers came here in the time of the said lord in the chamber of the Guildhall of the City of London before Robert Basset Mayor and of the Aldermen of the City and set out before the same Mayor and Aldermen a certain bill or supplication of which the tenor follows in these words." "TO THE RIGHT honorable lord the maire and the right wirshipfull sou'aignes, the aldremen of the Citee of London, Besechen in humble wise youre goode lordship and maistershipps all the p'sones enfraunchesed as well in the Craft of horners as in the Craft of Botilmakers of the saide citee: That where thei in tyme passed haue honestly lived and continued wt in the saide Citee, by their Occupacions and seu'ally haue born all suche charges as haue been laied unto them for the Worship of the Kyng and of the saide Citee after their favour and power. And nowe it is so that the said Crafts been so distresed and empouissed that thei be not able nor of power iche of the same Crafts by hymself to Doo or bere w'tn the saide citee anythyng chargeable that mought be to the Worship and pleasure of our Sou'aigne lord the Kyng or to the saide citee When thei been comaunded by you saide Lordship and Maistershippes, Wherefore pleas it youre Saide goode Lordship and Maistershippes for the cousideracion above-rehersed and also forasmoche as div's p'sons of the saide Craft of Horners occupie and use the fete of Botilmaking, to graunte and establissh that fromhensfurth the saide p'sones of bothe the saide Crafts may be as Brethern and occupie and joyne togeder aswell in all things to be born and doon w'tn the saide citee by commaundement of yor saide lordship and Maistershippes for any matier tochyng our saide Sov'aigne lord the Kyng or ells the saide citee as in observyng and kepyng good Rule and Guydyng concernyng the occupacion and werkmanship of the saide Craftes accordyng to their ordenaunces entred in the Yeldhall, and that all suche commaundements as hereafter shall come from youre said lordship and maistershippes for anything or matier of charge to be doon for our saide Sov'aigne lord or the saide citee that the same commaundements be directed ioyntly to bothe the saide Crafts or ells if any commaundement be yoven to that one craft that it be as a commaundement directed unto them bothe to thentent that thei may be bothe contributorie to the same charges and from hensfurthe all thoo p'sones occupying the craft of horners and here after shall take any apprentices that the same apprentices may be made free of the same craft of horners and yt all tho p'sones occupiying the craft and fete of Botil-making and also hereafter shall hapne to take any apprentices that thei may be made free of the same craft of Botilmakers and also that the wardeyns of bothe ye saide crafts from hensfurthe that shall have the Rule and oversight of the same crafts, be chosen by the ffeolashippes of bothe the saide crafts So that the same wardeyne be able in connyng to oversee and serche both the same craftes accordyng to their Rules and ordenances entred in the Yeldhall, and youre saide Besechers shall pray to God for your prosperites duryng their lives." "And then the which bill or supplication having been read in the presence of the said Mayor and Aldermen and having been fully discussed by them. Since it seemed to them, that the articles in the said bill were good and honest and in accordance with Reason, they



Facsimile of a document in the Guildhall crypt relating to the Guild of Bottle Makers and Horners. (Chap. I.)



Facsimile of the opening sentences of the Ordinances of the Horners and Bottlemakers. (Chap. I.)



Designs of three old tokens, one showing a man's head and the other two Pewter Tankards, with inscriptions. (Chap. IV.)



Four large Bombards at Helmingham Hall, Suffolk, in the possession of Mary Lady Tollemache, from a photograph by Sir Benjamin Stone. (Chap. III.)

56
 A Pleasant new SONG, in Praise of the
 Leather Bottell.

Shewing how Glasses and Pots are laid aside,
 And Flaggons and Noggins they cannot abide,
 And let all Wives do what they can,
 'Tis for the praise and use of Man;
 And this you may very well be sure,
 The Leather Bottel will longest endure:
 And I wish in Heaven his soul may dwell,
 That first devised the Leather Bottel.
 To the Tune of, *The Bottel-makers Delight.*



God above that made all things,
 the Heavens, the Earth, and all therein,
 The Ships that on the Sea do swim,
 to keep Enemies out that now comes in:
 And let them do all what they can,
 'Tis for the use and praise of man,
 And I wish in Heaven his soul may dwell
 That first devised the Leather Bottel.

Then what do you say to these Cans of Wood,
 in faith they are, and cannot be good;
 For when a man he doth them send
 to be filled with Ale, as he doth friends,
 The bearer falleth by the way,
 and on the ground the liquor doth lay,
 And then the Wearer begins to ban,
 and thus are it is long of the wooden Can,

But had it been in a Leather Bottel,
 although he had fallen, yet all had been well,
 And I wish, &c.

Then what do you say to these Glasses fine
 and pes, they shall have no praise of mine;
 For when a company they are met;
 for to be merry, as we are met;
 When if your chance to touch the Wine
 down falls the liquor and all therein;
 If your Table-cloth be never so fine
 there lies your Beer, Ale, or Wine;
 No stay he for a small abuse,
 a young man may his vertice lose;
 But had it been in a Leather Bottel
 and the stoopie had been so, then all had been
 well,
 Then I wish, &c.

Early Broadsheet of the "Song of the Leather Bottell," now in the Bodleian Library. (Chap. II.)

unanimously ordered and decreed that the aforesaid articles should be entered in the Record in the manner and form in which they sought so that they might be observed in future times."

This document completely explains the causes of the connection between the Horners' and Bottle-makers' Guilds, a union which, though suggested by the fact that the shield of the Horners' Company still bears three leather bottles sable (their arms being argent on a chevron sable, three bugle-horns stringed, of the first, between as many leather bottles of the second), has not hitherto been proved to have existed. A passage in Stow, in the 1633 edition, says they were "two distinct Companies combined in one," but that is all. No trace of the union occurs in the existing records of the Worshipful Company of Horners, or in the small "History of the Horners' Company" by Mr. W. H. Compton.¹ Since the above was written, a valuable document of thirty-three vellum pages, bound in the original leather with metal bosses and centre ornaments, and having clasp catches and link for a chain, was sold at Messrs. Sotheby's on March 2nd, 1909. It relates chiefly to the Horners' Company from the time of Richard II to 1635, but the Ordinances of Edward IV's reign (as given above) are quoted, and also the Horners' Orders of Richard II, both of which conclude with the following comment: "The bottellmakers have continued in the company of the Horners a hundred fourscore nine yeares and nine months, wrytten the last daie of November Anno Dni One thousand five hundreth and fiftie and seaven."² The Horners' Company are to be congratulated on having purchased this manuscript, but it adds nothing to the facts I have already given, as to the Bottle-makers.

BOTTLE MAKING LESS PROSPEROUS.

It can readily be understood that a certain amount of intimacy between these two crafts might arise from the connection between the two animal substances, hides and horns, used by them both. The bottle-maker and the horner would each have to go to the tanner for his material, the horns being sold by the butcher attached to the raw hide. It is, however, a curious and instructive fact that there were craftsmen who made drinking vessels of both materials, and this makes the union of the two companies a perfectly natural one.

Indeed the fact of their having amalgamated does not necessarily mean that the horning and leather bottlemaking industries were declining, as such unions were frequent about that time among these craft-guilds which were allied in their callings. For example the Spurrier's Company combined with the Loriners, the Armourers with the Bladesmiths, the Stringers with the Bowyers, the Silkmen with the Meters, while the Hosiers, Hatters, Cappers and Brace-makers Companies grouped themselves under the Drapers; and there are other instances too numerous to mention. Nevertheless in the case of the Horners and Bottlemakers, it is explicitly stated that the cause of the union was poverty; and that fact decidedly points to a falling off in the demand for their wares.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to explain the words Company and Mistery,

¹ Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, in his book on the London Livery Companies, in writing to the Horners Company, says "Although the armorial bearings of the Horners explicitly testify with them of the at least equally ancient Guild of Bottlers, the latter are not freely recognised as connected with them. But whether or not, such was unquestionably the fact long prior to the charter of 1638." On page 534.

² This document is fully described in "The Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries."

so often used in connection with these craft guilds. Of course the Company of Bottle-makers was not a company in our modern sense, nor is it to be confused with the mediaeval "Mystery," though those "Mysteries" or miracle plays were often produced by the Craft Guilds. The Company of Bottle-makers was simply an organization of the expert craftsmen of that industry, who combined for its protection and regulation. The word "mistere" or "mistry" used so often in their records is derived from the old French "*mestier*" and closely related to "*metier*" or trade. The power of search, which was one of the important attributes of such guilds, grew naturally from the conditions under which the work was carried on, that is, within a certain limited area and in the homes of the individual craftsmen. This surveillance by the Wardens of the Guilds, each over its own industry, died out in modern times with the gradual increase of factories and workshops on a large scale. But it was usual in the 16th century, and it is another evidence of the dwindling importance of the Bottle-makers' industry, that before the close of the 15th century they had ceased to have the over-sight of the wares they made. It will be seen by a document quoted in Chapter VI. that the power of search over "bottelles and pottes" had passed into the hands of the guild of Pouch-makers, before the year 1517. Less than ten years later than the date of the document last given, the bottlemakers and horners are mentioned in a list of trades that had been injured by foreign competition. In the year 1483 an Act was passed "for the setting of the Handicrafts men of this Realm on work." It says that it was shown in Parliament by the artificers as well of the City of London as of cities, boroughs and villages of the realm that certain trades, which are mentioned and include horners, bottlemakers and coppersmiths, "in times past were wont to be greatly set awork and occupied in the said crafts," but in consequence of the wares imported by merchants and others they were greatly impoverished and like to be undone for lack of occupation.'

That the combined resources of the bottle-makers and horners did not enable them to hold a very high place among the City companies is shown by a document in one of the Letter Books at the Guildhall which gives a list of the Crafts, and the proportion of their contributions to the Midsummer Night Watch in the 31st year of Henry VIII (1540). In this list they are not higher than forty-seventh. The list is headed as follows:—"Memorandum that the hole waye wch the watche shall go on mydsom' nyght extendeth to ix^m vi^c foote of assyse and xiiij foote between every Cressett wch requyreth for the furnytur of the same cyrcuyte 7^c Cressetts wherof we have apoynted V^c Cressetts upon certein crafts as foloweth. The charge everye Cressett extendeth to ijs iiijd lytle more or lesse wch amounteth in the hole the V^c cressetts to lviii li ziiis iiijd."² In the list of crafts which follows, the bottle-makers and horners are bracketted together, as shown

23 *Boffymakers & Jnyg*
horers

in the accompanying facsimile. This midsummer Night Watch in the City was a picturesque relic of still more ancient days, and the above quoted manuscript is especially interesting because it refers to the last occasion on which the custom was kept up. A minute account of the order observed is given in the 1618 edition of Stow.³ After a long description of the street decorations "bone-fires" etc., and the standing watches all in bright

1 Act I., Richard iii., cap. xii.

2 Letter Book P., fol. 317.

3 "Stow's Survey of London," 1618, p. 157, *et seq.*

harness, he says "every Cresset had two men, one to beare a bagge with light, and to serve it: so that the poore men pertaining to the Cressets taking wages, besides that every one had a strawne hat with a badge painted, and his breakfast in the morning amounted in number to almost 2000 men." And so on, in great detail. Of this brilliant concourse there would be four men provided by the crafts of bottle-makers and horners, with their "strawne hats" no doubt painted with the arms of the allied companies, the three black bottles on a silver shield, and the sable chevron with its three silver bugle-horns, between them, each bearing a lighted torch or cresset.

CONTINUED DECLINE OF THE GUILD.

Though the amalgamation of the two companies enabled them to hold their own for a considerable time, the drift of events was too much for them. Their wares were evidently being superseded, for in 1562, less than a century after the union, poverty had again overtaken them, and they were once more appealing to the Court of Aldermen; this time for relief from the pressure of taxes. One of the volumes of MSS. at the Guildhall called "Repertories" contains the following entry written on the 8th of October in the 4th year of Elizabeth¹:—

"Item the peticon of the Bottle-makers and Horners red and the contents of the same plainly declaring their small nu'ber and pou-ty yt they nowe be of, charetablely considerid by the Court it was graunted and agreed by the same yt they from hensfurth shall be considerid and esid of the taxe and charge that they and their predecessors haue heretofore vsually byn chargid with'll, bothe in the nu'ber of men to be sette furthe and furnished for the quenes Maties s'uice and also in all cōon paymetes loones and other chargs hereafter to be taxed and apointed to be made and borne for the cōon affaires of the Cite by the Citezens of the same."

So far, there is nothing to show that the bottle-makers and horners were not equally unlucky, but two years later a document occurs among the Guildhall records, which shows that the former craft had been going down hill the faster of the two. Though drinking horns must have been exposed to the same competition as cups of leather, the horners had a more enduring source of profit from lantern and comb-making, while hunting horns, horn-hooks, and other articles of horn continued in demand. Thus they seem to have maintained a greater degree of prosperity than their partners in the Guild. It seems from this document, dated the 14th of November in the sixth year of Elizabeth (1564), that they (the horners) had become desirous of shaking off the connection with the bottlemen, and the reasons they give show a sad state of things among the latter. It is possible, however, that their statements as to the decay of bottle making may have been exaggerated as they did not convince the Court of Aldermen, and the decision arrived at was not to sever the connection but to augment if possible the number of bottle-makers in the Company.

The document is as follows:—"Item after the readyng of the supplicac'on of the companye of the Horners that they myght clerely be Severyd and dyschargid from the companye of the bottelmakers and remayne and be sole companye of themselves. Yt was agreyd that forasmuche as the nu'ber of those p'sons that

¹ A badge was, of course, quite distinct from either arms or crest, but it does not seem probable that the Bottillars and Horners had any special badge.

² Repertory 15, fol. 129b.

usyd of late to make botteles and were of late yeres unityd unto them the said Horners are nowe by deathe and otherwyse sore wastyd and decayed yt yf they the said Horners can espye eny honest pesons beying forreyns skilfull in makynge of bottells wch wylbe contentyd to be free of their said company yt they shalbe favorably receyvyd into ye said fredome in their said company to the intente to augment and increase the same."¹

While it is certain from these documents that there must have been a great decline in the leather vessel industry by this time, there is still such constant evidence of the use of these vessels throughout the 17th century, that such a complete collapse before the end of the 16th seems surprising. One inference is that though numerous after that time their use was insignificant compared to what it had previously been. It has also to be remembered that in earlier days the English leather bottle-makers had a demand for their wares on the Continent. On the other hand the horners were evidently not proud of their connection, and the Court of Aldermen seems to have thought that they might have "espied" more bottle-makers who were "foreigners" (that is not members of the Fraternity) if they had wished.

EFFACEMENT OF THE LONDON BOTTLE MAKERS.

Having failed to obtain the separation they sought, the Company made, five years later, another application to the Court of Aldermen, this time with the object of obtaining a re-arrangement of the Guilds Ordinances and an alteration in its name, "to have and beare from henceforth onely and soly the name of horners." Their statements, as recorded in another volume of the Repertories,² on the 14th of November in the 9th year of Elizabeth's reign, show that either the Bottlemakers continued to decrease, or that the horners must have been allowing the bottle-making members to die out without admitting new ones. In spite of the undoubted decay of the industry, it seems certain that the condition of things within the London company did not faithfully reflect the state of the trade in the country generally. The horner members of the fraternity seem to have been deliberately ostracising the bottle-makers, as there was according to the document in question only one member left who used and exercised the trade. The petition is set forth at length in the Appendix.

BOTTLE MAKING NOT EXTINCT.

It is possible that London and the district supplied from it, would be influenced earlier than the rest of the country by new fashions from abroad in the use of drinking vessels, as in other things, and leather ones being very enduring and often handed down from one generation to another, the supply may have overtaken the demand. Still it does not seem credible that there should have been in the year 1569 only one skilled maker of leather vessels in the city of London.

Doubtless the decay of the industry continued and was one of the chief causes of the condition of things shown by these manuscripts, but other influences have to be taken into account. The guild system itself was decaying and its power departing. The craft guilds were far from being what they had been in the 14th

¹ Repertory 15, fol. 393.

² Repertory 15, fol. 393. The petition is set forth at length in the Appendix.

century. They had continued to degenerate through the 15th and 16th centuries, and in the reign of Edward VI suffered from the spoliation of their property. They had also become much more exclusive as time went on; their aims being no longer solely for the good of the craft they represented or the weal of the commonalty, but pursuing rather the advantage of the guild members and their sons than the public interest. Entrance fees were made heavier and difficulties placed in the way of admission, the right to which was often inherited and not earned. In many ways their influence had suffered and their power and position declined, so that the importance of the guild can no longer be taken as an accurate index to the importance of the craft. It is evident from these Guildhall MSS., especially from the one dated 14th of November 1564, that there must have been bottle-makers in London who were not free of the Company.

From this time there is very little to be gleaned as to the doings of the Bottle-makers' Guild. Under the style and title of the Horners' Company, the fraternity has had a continuous existence down to the present day; but having changed its name it no longer mentioned the bottle-makers in its official transactions. There is among the Guildhall records, a Report on a petition of the Horners' Company in the year 1600¹ with the Rules and Ordinances for their Government, but it contains no allusion whatsoever to the bottle-making members.

Neither do the records that exist in the possession of the Worshipful Company of Horners throw any more light on the subject. In 1638 the Guild obtained a Charter from Charles I which gave them new privileges. This charter recites the former grants to the Company from the reign of Edward IV, but it contains no allusion to the union with another craft. Nor does a manuscript volume of the Ordinances in the Company's possession, made in 1638, contain any reference to it. The Minute Books giving the proceedings of the Horners' Company to the present day also exist, but they afford no trace of the ultimate fate of the bottle-making members. Under the name of the "Fellowship of the Mystery of Horners," they successfully petitioned in 1846 for a Livery, and the petition gives briefly an account of the fraternity, nominally to the time of Edward IV, but mentions no members of any other occupation. This silence seems to suggest that the gradual decay of the bottle-makers had ended in their disappearance from the Guild, at no great length of time after the last mention of them in the records. But if this was so, it seems strange that the Company was popularly known as that of the Bottle-makers and Horners for quite a century after the alteration of the title. It is also noteworthy, that in the last few lines of the last manuscript, provision is made for the election of wardens from either of the two occupations, which suggests that they anticipated a continuance of the bottle-making members.

Writing of the London Companies, Stow in the 1633 edition of his "Survey of London," calls the one in question "the Bottle-makers and Horners," and remarks, "As for bottle-makers and horne-makers, the precedent times have remembered them to be of antiquity, and two distinct Companies combined in one: But I finde no record that they were at any time incorporated."² With this paragraph a shield is given with the arms of the combined companies. This is the earliest representation of these arms I have seen, and the bottles are indicated as of barrel shape with hoop-like bands. It is also the only shield which makes

¹ Letter Book B.B., fol. 42 *et seq.*
² Stow's "Survey," 1633, p. 168.

any attempt to give the tinctures of the coat, which being argent and sable were readily represented with paper and ink. (Fig. 7.)

In R. Wallis's London Armoury printed in 1677, are large copper-plate engravings of the arms of the City Companies. The forty-seventh is a fine shield surrounded by an elaborate border, seven inches high, with huntsmen blowing horns and holding hounds in leash. (Fig. 6). The bottles on this shield are (unlike those on the last) of the usual shape with flat bottoms, the seams being well defined and even the stitches indicated. This shows that the designer of the plate knew something about the company, and that the bottle-makers were makers of *leather* bottles.

By the middle of the following century, the horns have been given the precedence. Round the edges of R. W. Seale's map of Middlesex, issued about 1750, are a number of shields of the City Companies, and one has the inscription "Horners and Bottlemen," (Fig. 4). It has also the letters "CH, I" to indicate that its charter dates from the reign of Charles I, and below the shield are the words, "No hall or livery." The bottles on this shield are ordinary leather bottles with flat bottoms, and there are four strokes along the top seam to indicate stitches.

Strype's edition of Stow's Survey gives the same heading as the earlier edition already quoted ("Bottlemakers and Horners") and also the paragraph quoted above, together with some additional details as to the Horners.¹ But the arms in Strype are somewhat differently treated, and give the bottles as trefoil-shaped at the ends.

A book printed about 1760 and entitled, "The Citizen's Companion, being a concise Account of all the Companies belonging to the City of London, with the Arms of each Company curiously engraved on Box," speaks of the Fraternity as that of the "Bottlemakers and Horners" and gives their arms on a plain shield.² If the Company had ceased to contain bottle-makers one would think the authors and editors of these works would have discovered the fact, especially as the official name was "The Horners."

INCREASED COMPETITION OF OTHER VESSELS.

Fragmentary and slight as these evidences of later history may appear, they are all that are likely to be forthcoming, and are therefore of interest in the absence of official records. I have already shown that long before the reign of Elizabeth the prosperity of the craft had been declining and after that time the competitions of other wares would continue to increase. About the year 1580 a patent was granted by Queen Elizabeth to a Venetian named Verselini, for making Venice glasses. At that time there was already an Association of "Glass Sellers" having fifty members, who pleaded the great injury to their own trade likely to accrue from the grant. Stow also says that in 1570, Jasper Andries and Jacob Janson, removed from Norwich to London, and that they set forth in a petition to Queen Elizabeth that "they were the first that brought in and exercised the science of pottery making in this realm."³ In 1626 a patent was granted to Thomas Rous and Abraham Cullen of London, for the manufacture of "Stone Potts, Stone Jugs and Stone Bottells."⁴

¹ Strype's continuation of Stow's "Survey of London," 1755.

² Citizen's "Companion," 1760, p. 33.

³ Their names seem to indicate that they were Dutchmen.

⁴ The name Cullen suggests that Abraham came from Cologne, whence many stone jugs, bottles, greybeards, etc., were imported, and known as "Cullen pots."

The fact that the Dutch potters, probably to avoid the heavy duties, established themselves on English soil, is mentioned by Heywood in 1635. Speaking of drinking pots "model'd of earth" having become more numerous, he says, "Insomuch that the *Dutchmen* have removed hither their Furnaces and driven a great trade, as if our owne Nation and soyle could not either afford vs earth and clay enough or workemen sufficient to maintaine our ryotts."

In 1635 a patent was granted to "David Ramsey Esquire, one of the groomes of our pryvie chamber, Michael Arnold and John Ayliffe, of the citty of Westminster Brewers" for the heating of boilers, etc., and "alsoe that they have found out the Arte and Skill of Makeinge and Dyeinge of all sortes of Panne Tyles, Stone Juggs, Bottles of all sizes, Earthen Wicker Bottles, etc. which now are made by Straungers in Forraigne Partes." Here then were new sources of competition with the makers of vessels of horn and leather, which go far to explain the reduced importance of their once prosperous industries.

In Chapter VI of the present work it is shown that leather pots and bottles were made after the middle of the 16th century by the Pouch-makers craft, and later still by the Cordwainers. It does not appear however that the leather vessels, which were undoubtedly made in considerable quantities in the 17th and 18th centuries, were necessarily produced by some other craft of leather workers than the bottle-makers, because there are indications that the latter were still pursuing their calling to some limited extent, at least as late as the reign of Queen Anne. In a Customs Notice in the *London Gazette* in the year 1711, they are mentioned among the craftsmen who would be likely to possess stocks of dressed hides or skins. This document sets forth that by an Act lately passed for laying a duty on hides and skins for thirty years for prosecuting the war, it is necessary that every worker of, or dealer in leather shall advise the proper officers of the whereabouts of his trade premises. It then proceeds, "And whereas several Tanners, Tawers, Dressers, Curriers, Sellers of Hides or Skins tanned, tawed or dressed, Coach-makers, Collar-makers, Bridle-cutters, Sadlers, Trunk-makers, *Bottle-makers*, Merchants and other Sellers and Dealers in Hides or Skins,.....have or may have on the 24th day of June, several Stocks or Quantities of such Hides or Skins, etc." It is also set forth at great length the manner in which the respective leather workers (mentioning the bottle-makers several times) shall give particulars of their stocks of leather and the penalties for omitting to do so.*

ANOTHER GUILD OF BOTTLE MAKERS

The Fellowship or Fraternity of Bottle-makers of London must have been by far the most important of such bodies. Indeed I have met with no traces of any other guild of that craft except at York. At that city in the year 1415, a document was entered in the Corporation records, entitled "*Ordo paginarum ludi Corporis Christi*," in which is a list of all the pageants performed, and of the crafts which took part in them. In this list the "Bottellers" are bracketted with the Pouch-makers and Capmakers, and the Miracle Play which they undertook was "Lazarus in the Sepulchure," and required only five characters—Lazarus, Mary and Martha with two wondering Jews "*(ij Judei Admirantes)*."³

1 "Philocothonista," 1635, p. 46.

2 "London Gazette," No. 4862/5.

3 "York Plays," edited by Miss L. Toulmin Smith, pp. xxii & xxiii.

It does not seem that this York fraternity of "Botellers" was a very numerous or wealthy body at the beginning of the 15th century, or it would not have combined with two other crafts to produce so small a play. Nor could their numbers have been greatly augmented during the rest of the century, as the Roll of Freemen of that city shows that admissions of bottle-makers were but few. In the 16th century however they are more frequent, especially during the first half, from 1500 to 1551.¹

The further history of the York Guild of "Botellers," as traced from documents in the York Guildhall, is given in Chapter V, in connection with the making of

leather water-bougets. From these manuscripts it will be seen that late in the 15th century the craft was combined with those of the patten makers, and "Bowge" makers in one fraternity; and that the connection between these crafts still existed in the reign of Henry VII. It is possible that traces of other guilds of bottle-makers might be found by exhaustive search among the earlier records of those English towns which were populous and important in ancient times, but it is not probable that in those of only moderate size, they were numerous enough to be organized independently. Evidences of individual makers of bottles are occasionally found in documents relating to old towns of small size, but there were, in such places, fraternities of a more comprehensive kind, such as the Hammermen's Guild and the Stitchmen's Guild at Ludlow, and in those bodies, small crafts like the bottle-

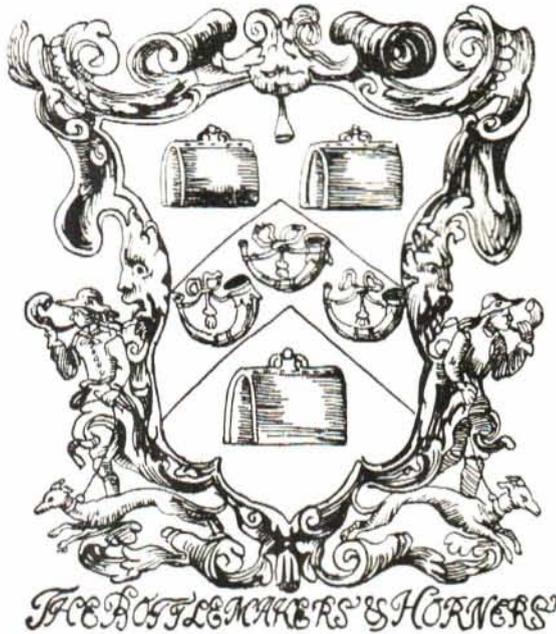


Fig 6

Arms of the Bottle Makers and Horners.

makers may have been represented. There are, however, no traces of them in the existing records of those two fraternities, or of any similar ones that I have investigated.

To understand the position in our history occupied by these vessels of leather, it is necessary to know something of their surroundings in the ancient life of which they were part. As already indicated in the foregoing pages, they have held for long centuries a place in English domestic life. But not in domestic life only. Of all the vessels devised by man, there can scarcely have been any more ubiquitous than were these leathern vessels in England. They were associated alike with the retirement of the cloister, and the open hospitality of the baronial hall; with the loneliness of the hillside pasture and the jollity of the city tavern.

¹ "Freemen of York," Vol. 96, Surtees Soc., pp. 253, 260, 265, 270, etc.

Pills to Purge Melancholy.

T Ho' Jesty Suld me long, he met disdain,
His tender Sights and Tears, were spent in vain;
Give o'er said I give o'er,
Your silly fond Amour,
I'll ne'er, ne'er, ne'er, ne'er, ne'er comply;
At last he forc'd a Kiss,
Which I took not amiss,
And since I've known the bliss,
I'll ne'er deny.

Then ever when you Court a Lass that's Coy,
Who hears your Love, yet fears to shun its Joy;
If you press her to do so,
Ne'er mind her no, no, no,
But trust her Eyes;
For Coyness gives denial,
When the wifes for the Tryal,
Tho' she swears you shan't come nigh all,
I'm sure she lies.

* * * * *

The Leather Bottle.

NOW God above that made all things,
Heaven and Earth and all therein;
The Ships upon the Seas to swim,
To keep Foes out they come not in:
Now every one doth what he can,
All for the use and praise of Man;
*I wish in Heaven that Soul may swell,
That first devil'd the Leathern Bottle.*

Now what do you say to the Canna of Wood?
Faith, they are nought, they cannot be good;
When a Man for Beer, he doth therein lend,
To have them fill'd as he doth intend:
The bearer stumblers by the way,
And on the Ground his Liquor doth lay;
Then straight the Man begins to Ban,
And swears it 'twas long of the wooden Cann;
But had it been in a Leathern Bottle,
Although he stumbl'd all had been well;
So safe therein it would remain,
Until the Man got up again:
And I wish in Heaven, &c.

M 4

Music of the "Leather-Bottell," from D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy." (Chap. II.)

(138)

Black Jack. ○○○○
Longways for as many as will.))))

Lead up all, and down Δ That again, set to your own and fall back Δ That again.

The first man cast off and goes round, the 2. man and the 2. Wo. follows him into their own places, the first Wo. and the 2. man does as much Δ The first couple leads down the middle, and back again, and then cast off into the 2. place and foot it Δ Do this to the last.

The first man take his wo. in his left hand, and the second wo. in his right hand, and leads to the wall and back, then turn about and take the 2. man and lead to the wall, and back Δ Take all hands and go half round and foot it, go back again, the first couple cast off into the second place Δ Do this to the last.

The first couple cast off into the Second place, take hands, and lead up all a breast and back Δ The first couple being in the 2. place, take hands and turn, the other couple set the men, then they turn, and the other set Δ Do this to the last.

"Black Jack" Tune, from the "English Dancing Master," 1686. (Chap. IV.)



Small silver-rimmed Jack, two bottles in the shape of human heads, large leather bottle from Canons Ashby, two curious Jacks, and a Flask, all from the Fieldhouse collection. (Chaps. II. and IV.)

They rode with the hunter in the excitement of the chase, and cheered the solitude of the woodman when the hunt had gone by. No place seems too obscure and none too exalted for them, nothing too sacred. They appeared on the tables of prelates; fine ladies pressed them to their lips; they rode with princes; they stood before kings. In the sanctuary they held the sacramental wine, and were only prevented by special edicts from serving as chalices in the mass.

The supersensitive ideas of to-day, which sometimes assume a humble or even a squalid position for them, are altogether mistaken. Doubtless their use extended to any stratum of society in which there were people who could afford to buy them, but they are heard of, for the most part, among the great, in societies of learned men, or skilled craftsmen; and not, as is often supposed, among the poor and indigent.



Fig. 7

Arms of the Bottlemakers from Stow's "Survey of London."

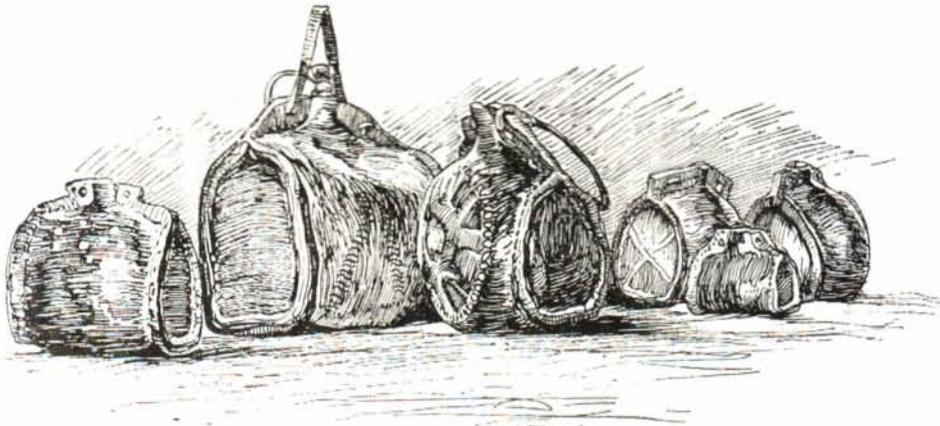


Fig. 8

Early Leather Bottles from the collection of Mr. S. B. Russell, Broadway.

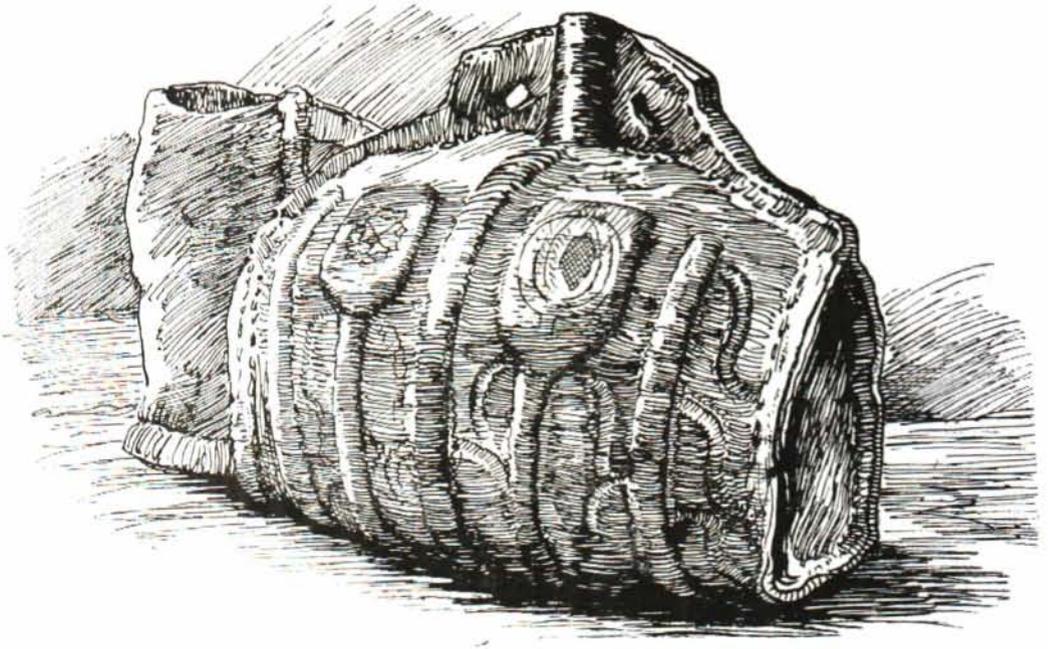


Fig. 9

Medium-sized Jack and Large Leather Bottle with the Pomegranate and Tudor Rose on Raised Shields, in the Ashmolean Museum.

CHAPTER II.

THE LEATHER BOTTLE AND ITS RIVALS.

EVERYBODY remembers the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and his followers at the Leather Bottle Inn at Cobham, but though many people must have noticed other old taverns which display the same sign, few have any definite knowledge of the vessel after which they were called.

It was not without a sense of fitness that our ancestors named these old inns after the leather bottle and the black jack, for about those vessels had gathered—more especially about the former—a halo of convivial associations; intensified, no doubt, by the wide-spread popularity of one of our early drinking songs, “The Leather Bottell.”

In these days the sign has but little meaning for the majority of us. Even when we applaud the singing of a modern rendering of the old ballad, not many have much idea as to what the actual bottle was like that it was written to extol, and it is rare to find a reference to it that approaches accuracy in modern books or journals. Illustrators too, as a rule, rely upon their own imagination, and depict bottles which are as pale and shapeless as the real thing was black, massive and full of contour; and which, moreover, would have possessed none of the advantages which the song so eloquently sets forth.¹

The fact is that the “leather bottell” of the song was not a bottle, according to our modern ideas of that word, but was more like a miniature Gladstone bag.

¹ A brilliant exception must be made in the case of the late E. A. Abbey, R.A., in his illustrations to the song, in “Harper’s Magazine” for August, 1888; though his “can of wood” is quite wrong.

It is also a fact that, though in use in some parts of the country as late as the first half of the last century, it is now rarely found except in remote places.

An idea of its appearance and construction will be obtained from the illustrations here given, but (like all the work of the old craftsmen) these bottles were not turned out by the gross to one mechanical pattern, but each had much character of its own. Those which have survived are sometimes found to be mutilated by having a piece taken out of one side. This mutilation is referred to in the last verse of the "Leather Bottell," and the whole of the song throws a flood of light on the uses of this old drinking-vessel and the high esteem in which it was held in ancient times.

Most musical people are more or less familiar with a modernized version of it, on which they are accustomed to see the heading, "Author unknown, Music traditional." There are numerous versions of the words, but it is hard to say which is the earliest. Chappell, in "National English Airs," published in 1840, says: "There is a black-letter copy in the British Museum, at least two hundred years old,"² but the version he gives is much modernized. In "Popular Music of the Olden Time," published twenty years later, the same author says: "I have not found any copy printed before the reign of Charles II."³ In this he probably refers to the same broadsheet as before, though there are other versions as old as the reign of Charles II. One occurs in Henry Playford's "Wit and Mirth, an Antidote against Melancholy," printed in 1682,⁴ and in an edition of the same collection printed in 1684. These are probably the earliest dated copies in existence, but they are shorter by several stanzas than some versions from broadsheets which are probably quite as early.

HARDLY A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SONG.

It is possible that the song is much older than the time of Charles II. Chappell says: "the irregularity of the number of lines in each stanza, eight, ten and sometimes twelve in the earlier copies, gives it the character of a minstrel production, such as Richard Sheale's "Chevy Chase," rather than the Eldertons, Deloneys or Martin Parkers of the reign of Elizabeth or James, who all observed a just number of lines in their ballads. The word bottle was not pronounced 'bottel' in the time of Charles II or even of Shakespeare, but belongs rather to that of Chaucer, or Piers Plowman." Whatever its pronunciation, the word bottle was frequently spelt "bottel" in the time of Shakespeare and considerably later, but there is no doubt something in Chappell's contention. The refrain is very suggestive of the times before the Reformation, and the omissions also are significant. There is no mention in the song of a pot (generally of silver or pewter, with a handle and hinged lid) which has been called, for nearly three hundred years, a "tankard." In the Middle Ages a tankard was a large wooden can (the can of wood *is* mentioned in the song) and it was not till the beginning of the 17th century or thereabouts that the metal pot now called by that name was evolved. All the vessels with

1 He gives no reference, but it is probably one of those in the Bagford or Roxburgh Collections.

2 National "English Airs," W. Chappell, 1840, p. 53.

3 Popular "Music of the Olden Time," W. Chappell, Vol. II., p. 513.

4 "Wit and Mirth, an Antidote against Melancholy, Compounded of Witty Ballads, Songs and Catches, and other Pleasant and Merry Poems." The third edition enlarged. London, printed by A. G. & J.P., and sold by Henry Playford near the Temple Church, 1682, p. 1.

which the "leather bottell" is compared in the course of the song are ancient, and none of them are bottles of other materials.

There do not appear to be any references to the song in early literature, unless the line "So merely pypys the mery botell," from an old Interlude; "The Four Elements," supposed to have been first printed by Rastall in 1510, is an allusion to it.¹ A ballad in the Douce Collection, "Hey for our Town or a fig for Somersetsshire," has

"Come sing us a merry catch quo' Bob.
Quo' Scaper, what's the words?
In praise o' th' Leather Bottell quo' Bob,
For we'll be merry as lords."

The following verse, which is of the nature of a comment, is prefixed to two different versions of the song printed on broad-sheets.

"Showing how glasses and Pots are laid aside,
And Flaggons and Noggins they cannot abide,
And let all Wives do what they can,
'Tis for the praise and use of Man,
And this you may very well be sure,
The Leather Bottel will longest endure:
And I wish in Heaven his soul may dwell
That first devised the Leather Botell."

VARIOUS VERSIONS.

In addition to those already mentioned, there are copies in the Bagford, Roxburghe, and other collections of ballads, in the list of those printed by Thackeray, the "New Academy of Compliments" 1694 and 1713 editions; and in D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy, or Wit and Mirth" 1719. The song is also found in Dryden's Miscellaneous Poems and in numerous other works down to the present day.

It must have been constantly (perhaps chiefly) sung by those who could neither read nor write, and so was handed down from one generation to another orally. This would account for the great variations, which occur in the different versions that have found their way into broad-sheets and ballad books, or which have been taken down by antiquaries from the lips of old men in different parts of the country. The versions which are generally given in modern music books have suffered so much change as to be comparatively uninteresting, but the older copies of the words are very quaint. One of the oldest, longest, and most interesting versions is contained in a broad-sheet in Anthony à Wood's collection in the Bodleian Library.² (See Plate 5.) As it is unique in some respects, and most of the others have been reprinted, I give it in full. It is headed "A Pleasant new Song in Praise of the Leather Bottell," but it is unlikely for reasons given later,³ that the song was altogether new at the time. Not being

¹ A new Interlude and a Mery, of the Nature of the iij Elements," 1520.

² Wood, E., 25, 56.

³ See page 46.

in the habit of "crying stale fish," the writers of these broad-sheets and the chapmen who sold them, sometimes described as new, things which were decidedly old. It begins in a very archaic manner.

God above that made all things,
the Heavens, the Earth and all therein,
The ships that on the Sea do swim,
to keep Enemies out that now come in :
And let them all do what they can,
't is for the use and praise of man,
And I wish in Heaven his soul may dwell
That first devised the Leather Bottel.

This opening is quite unlike a ballad of the time of Charles II, and was greatly altered in later versions. On the other hand it is like mediaeval ones, which sometimes began with a reference to the Creator before broaching the actual subject. One written in the reign of Henry V about the siege of Rouen, begins,

God that deyede on the Rood tre,
And bought us all with Hys blode so fre ;
Until Hys blysse He hem brynge,
That will listen to my talkinge."

Only a few years later than the reign of Charles II, the opening lines and the refrain were so much at variance with the spirit of the time that they were condemned as irreverent by a prominent clergyman, in a book called "The Great Abuse of Musick." The following extract will show how completely the reverend gentleman misunderstood the motive of the writer :—

"The *Song* in the Praise of a *Leathern Bottle* begins with that Gravity as if it was on the Nativity of our *Lord* ; and the works of God are first related most solemnly to make them afterward appear the more ridiculous

*Now God above that made all things,
Heav'n and Earth and all therein,
The Ships upon the Seas to swim,
To keep out Foes, they come not in.*

The blunder in this last line, I suppose, was only designed to make merry at that which went before. However, the Poet stops not here. He mentions these Acts of *God* only to show that they are not to be compared with that Act of Man on which he afterwards treats, as appears from the Management and Humour of the whole *Song*, and especially from the *Chorus*—

*But I wish in Heaven that Soul may dwell
That first invented the Leathern Bottel.*

This *Sporting* with sacred things was always accounted not only to be unsafe but also a Sign of the utmost *Profaneness*, and the mentioning of *God* on such trifling

Occasions to be a Mark of Irreligion even in the Heathen World." A 15th century commentator would have known that no irreverence was intended.

In later versions the opening lines were altered to

" When I survey the world around,
The wondrous things that do abound "

and the refrain became

" So I wish him well where'er he dwell
That first found out the leather bottel "

The second verse is modernized and much curtailed in late copies, but is generally to the same effect as the older ones.

Then what do you say to these Cans of Wood,
in faith they are, and cannot be good ;
For when a man he doth them send
to be filled with Ale as he doth intend,
The bearer falleth by the way,
and on the ground the liquor doth lay,
And then the Bearer begins to ban,
and swears it is long of the wooden Can,
But had it been in a Leather Bottel,
although he had fallen, yet all had been well
And I wish etc.

THE WOODEN CAN.



Fig. 10

Can of wood in the Author's possession.

Nothing in this interesting ballad is more worthy of study than the manner in which the contemporaries and rivals of the leather bottle are contrasted with it. It has already been stated in Chapter 1 that wooden vessels are of remote antiquity in this country, and were very numerous among the vessels of ancient households. The can of wood occurs so often in mediaeval inventories that it must have been a feature of the domestic life of all classes. Chaucer says, " a lord in his household, ne hath not every vessel all of gold ; some ben of tre." They are met with under many different names, " tymbre tanckerdes," wood cannes, wood stoups, ollis lignei, treen, or borde vessell, etc.

They were plain hooped jugs made of staves like a barrel, but the sides were generally straight and sloped in at the top.

1 " The Great Abuse of Musick," by the Rev. A. Bedford, M.A., 1711, p. 86.

Such are occasionally met with, depicted in the carved details of churches or other ancient buildings. Under one of the carved folding seats called "misericords" of 14th century date which enrich the stalls of Ludlow church, is an early instance. The subject of the carving is of the semi-humorous type often found in such devices, and depicts the doom of the ale-wife who gave short measure. She carries her wooden can in her hand and wears a rich head-dress, but is without other clothing, as that was the mediaeval manner of representing a soul after death. (Fig. 11.)

These mediaeval cans have hoops of wood, but iron hoops were used in very early times, as shown by the item, in 1294, given by Prof. Thorold Rogers "for iron-binding 13 tankards 3s." Illustrations of two iron-hooped tankards, probably of the 17th century are given at Plate 9, which are both Herefordshire examples, the taller



Fig. 11

Misericord from Ludlow Church, showing the Doom of the Ale-wife.

being from the old Court House of the ancient village of Pembridge, and the other from the collection of Mr. Alfred Watkins in Hereford city. Generally the edges of a wooden can are the full thickness of the staves, but in these two, they have been carefully shaved down till the rims of the tankards are quite thin, evidently for greater convenience in applying them to the lips. Both are of oak. A somewhat similar tankard of oak stands in the 14th century great hall at Maxtoke Castle, Warwickshire, but it has an iron handle of rather mean proportions and three iron hoops, the topmost being level with the rim of the vessel.

In the 17th century (and no doubt earlier) the can of wood frequently had a cover or lid. One in my own possession, an illustration of which is reproduced at Fig. 10, is probably of this date, and has oaken staves and hoops of ash. Its lid is ingeniously hinged to the top of the handle, and the whole strongly resembles one in a picture by Cornelius Bega, painted about 1630. (Fig. 12.)

At New Place Museum, Stratford-on-Avon, is a wooden can with an ornamental handle and domed lid. It is said to have been used by Shakespeare himself, but this is only a tradition handed down by former custodians. In a catalogue of 1868 it is simply described as "A wooden tankard with brass hoops." The handle and lid appear to be of mulberry wood, and the staves alternately of mulberry wood and oak. (Fig. 13.) It has altogether the



Fig. 12

Can of wood, from a painting by Cornelius Bega, 1630.

air of being later than the time of Shakespeare, and the probability is, that it

was made by an admirer, with oak from the poet's house and mulberry wood

from the old tree which was planted by Shakespeare, and cut down by order of the Rev. Francis Gastrell in 1758.



Fig. 13

Wooden Can of Mulberry Wood and Oak at New Place, Stratford-on-Avon.

Mr. Pepys no doubt referred to a can of wood in his Diary on January 4th, 1667, when he wrote of having, at a supper party at his own house, "a flaggon of ale and apples drunk out of a wood cup, as a Christmas draught which made all merry; and they full of admiration at my plate." There is a small one without a lid in the Mediaeval Room at the British Museum but lids were usual. If, however, the bearer fell by the way they would not prevent the catastrophe foretold in the ballad.

THE DRINKING GLASS.

The glass vessels which are disparaged in the verse that follows, seem to have been exceedingly scarce in English mediaeval life, for, although the wealthy classes possessed such things, they were extremely few, and were regarded as extraordinary curiosities, being imported from foreign countries in very limited numbers.

The account given by Sir A. Wollaston Franks in the Preface to his description of the Slade Collection of Glass, and an important and more recent work on "Old English Drinking Glasses" by Mr. Albert Hartshorne (besides smaller handbooks by others), make it unnecessary to say much about glass vessels here. Mr. Hartshorne argues that such vessels must have been made by the mediaeval makers of glass windows, but admits that no native-made glass vessels of between the end of the Anglo-Saxon era and the reign of Elizabeth are known to exist. It is quite possible that this verse was a comparatively late addition to the song :—

" Then what do you say to these Glasses fine ?
 yes, they shall have no prase of mine ;
 For when a company they are set
 for to be merry as we are met ;
 Then if you chance to touch the Brim
 down falls the liquor and all therein ;
 If your Table-cloth be never so fine
 there lies your Beer, Ale, or Wine:
 It may be for a small abuse,
 a young man may his service lose.
 But had it been in a Leather Bottel
 and the stopple had been in, then all had been well.
 Then I wish," etc.

The next verse of the song compares the leather bottle to the black pot, which no doubt was a pot of leather. One of the later versions has "black jack" instead of pot, as follows:—

"What say ye to these black jacks three?
Faith they shall have no praise from me;
For when a man and his wife are at strife,
Which much too often is the case in life:
Why then they seize on the black jack both," etc.¹

As a separate chapter will be devoted to that ancient vessel, there is no need to linger over it here. Suffice it to say that, as it was often nearly as wide at the top as the bottom, there was much force in the criticism.

The Bodleian version runs as follows:—

"Then what do you say to these black pots three?
true they shall have no praise from me,
For when a man and his wife falls at strife,
as many have done, in faith in their life;
They lay their hands on the pot both,
and loath they are to lose their Broath,
The one tugs, the other's hill,
Betwixt them both the liquor doth spill;
But they shall answer another day
for casting their liquor so vainly away:
But had it been in the Leather Bottel,
The one may have tug'd, the other have held;
And they might have tug'd till their hearts did ake,
And yet this liquor no harm would take.
Then I wish," etc.

THE SILVER FLAGON.

The flagon of silver, which is referred to in the next verse, was an important feature of ancient households among the upper and middle classes, occurring in great numbers in old wills and inventories:—

Then what do you say to the silver Flagons fine?
true, they shall have no praise of mine;
For when a Lord he doth them send
to be filled with Wine as he doth intend;
The man with the Flagon doth run away,
because it is silver most gallant and gay:
Oh then the Lord begins to ban,
and swear he hath lost both Flaggon and man,
There is never a Lord's Serving man or Groom
but with his Leather Bottel may come.
Then I wish, etc.

¹ "The Universal Songster, or Museum of Mirth," 1828, Vol. II.

Fig. 15, from another of the Ludlow misericord carvings of the time of Richard II, shows "the man with the flagon" in the act of filling it with wine, and clad in the peaked hood and tunic of a 14th century serving-man. It exhibits the usual disregard shown by mediaeval artists for the laws of perspective, but the great disproportion of his flagons to the cask out of which he has to fill them may be intended to deride the gluttony of the drawer, who seems to be an early version of "Simon the Cellarer," and bends over to catch the gurgling of the liquor with an

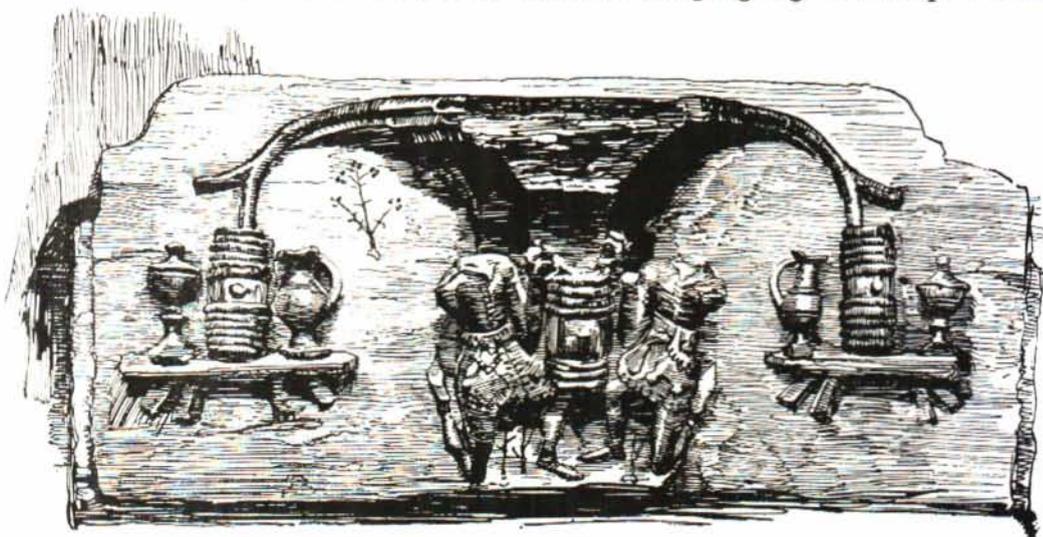


Fig. 14. Flagons and cups of the 14th century, Ludlow Church.

eagerness quite grotesque. Other flagons and cups of the same date are shown at Fig. 14.

The passage from Mr. Pepys' Diary just quoted in connection with the wooden can, seems to show that as late as the latter part of the 17th century they looked at the silver vessels and drank from the wooden ones.

Though expensive compared with other vessels, the leather bottle, from its fitness for their purposes, must always have been used by agricultural folk of all grades, and was certainly high in their favour when the next four verses were written.

"A Leather Bottel is good
 Far better than Glasses or Cans of Wood,
 For when a man is at work in the Field,
 your Glasses and Pots, no comfort will yield ;
 Then a good Leather Bottel standing him by,
 he may drink alwayes when he is dry,
 It will revive the spirits and comfort the brain,
 wherefore let none this Bottel refrain.
 For I wish, etc.

Also the honest Sith-man too,
 he knew not very well what to do,
 But for his Bottel standing him near
 that is filled with good household beer.

At dinner he sit him down to eat,
 with good hard cheese, and bread or meat,
 Then his Bottel he takes up amain,
 Saying, good Bottel stand my friend,
 and hold out till this day doth end.
 For I wish, etc.



Fig. 15. Flagons of 14th century, Ludlow Church.

Likewise the merry hay-makers they,
 When as they are turning and making their hay,
 In Summer weather when it is warm,
 a good bottel full then will do them no harm,
 And at noon tide they sit them down ;
 to drink in their bottels of Ale nut brown ;
 Then the Lads and Lasses begins to tattle
 what should we do but for this bottel :
 We could not work if this bottel were done,
 for the day is so hot with the heat of the Sun.
 Then I wish, etc.

Also the Loader, Lader and the Pitcher,
 the Reaper Hedger and the Ditcher,
 The Binder and the Raker, and all
 about the Bottel's ears doth fall.
 And if his liquor be almost gone,
 his bottel he will part to none,
 But saying my Bottel it is but small,
 one drop I will not part withall,
 You must go drink at some spring or well
 for I will keep my Leather Bottel.
 Then I wish," etc.

The first and third of these four verses appear in more or less altered guise in almost all the different versions of any age. They do not appear, however, in those printed by Playford in 1682 and 1684. The other two occur in very few versions. They are not in Playford's or D'Urfey's collections, and may have been a late addition to the song.

THE NOBLEMAN'S FRIEND.

Another verse shows the bottel's popularity in aristocratic circles:—

“ Thus you may hear of a Leather Bottel,
when as it is filled with good liquor well,
Though the substance of it be but small,
yet the name of a thing is all.
Ther's never a Lord, Earl or Knight,
but in a Bottel doth take delight :
For when he is hunting of the Deer,
he often doth wish for a Bottell of Beer ;
Likewise the man that works at the Wood,
a Bottel of Beer doth oft do him good.
Then I wish,” etc.

It is easy to show that this verse does not exaggerate the esteem in which the leather bottle was anciently regarded by high and low. In the roll of accounts of the personal expenses of John, King of France, when a prisoner in England, for the year 1359 is the item—“ *Pour deux bouteilles de cuir, achetees a Londres pr. M. S. Philipe ix sols viii deniers.*”¹ Monseigneur Philipe, it will be remembered, was the younger son of King John, and with him was taken prisoner by the Black Prince at the battle of Poitiers, and afterwards shared his father's captivity in England. Though a prisoner, the housekeeping of King John was on a lavish scale, and these bottles must have been articles of consequence, nine shillings and eight pence being a large sum in those days. In the inventories of ancient times such bottles are sometimes named among the goods of important people. The earliest I have noted is in the will of John de Scardeburgh, Rector of Tichmarsh, in Northamptonshire, who died in 1395 possessed of considerable property, when three bottles of leather and one glass which cost twenty-two pence, sold for two shillings. “ *Tres botelli de correo, et unus vitrinus pret. xxijd vend. pro ijs.*”²

The largest number I have found recorded in any one house, were in the possession of Robert Morton of London. An inventory of his effects in the British Museum dated 1488, shows that there were in the “ *celer, vij bottelles and vj pottes of ledyr* ” valued at three shillings and four pence, and there was also a “ *botell of ledyr* ” in the dry larder.

When they were the personal property of princes or noblemen, they were used for travelling or hunting. In the buttery of the Earl of Northumberland in 1514, were “ *ij lether boutylls for carrynge of drinke when my lorde rides.*”³ Examples are occasionally found among the household accounts of the wealthy classes

¹ “ *Journal de la depense du roi Jean en Angleterre.*”

² *Surtees Soc.*, Vol. 45, p. 7.

³ Grose's “ *Antiquarian Repository*,” Vol. IV., p. 346.

through the 16th and 17th centuries, but the above instances are enough to show that the song was justified in claiming high patronage for the "bottell."

The final verse explains how it is that so many of the leather bottles that still exist have a large hole cut in one side. (See Fig. 16.)

"Then when this Bottel it doth grow old,
and will good liquor no longer hold,
Out of the side you may take a clout
will mend your shooes when they are out ;
Else take it and hang it upon a pin
it will serve to put many odd trifle in,
As Hinges, Aules, and Candle ends
for young beginners must have such things
Then I wish in Heaven his soul may dwel,
That first devised the Leather Bottel."

Many existing bottles would have been long since destroyed but for the fact that when leaky they had been so utilized.

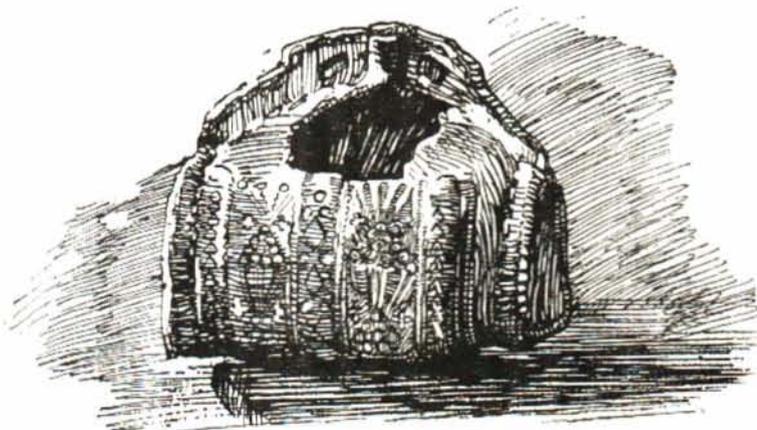


Fig. 16

Late Gothic Bottle of Leather, from Mr. H. H. Edmondson's collection.

BOTTLE KICKING.

Not seldom, the fate of an old bottle when traced with much patience to its last home, has been summed up in the sentence, "Oh, we gave it to the children for a football," and this has doubtless been the end of many a worn-out bottle in ancient times also. At the village of Hallaton in Northamptonshire, the old custom of bottle-kicking is still kept up. There is there an annual holiday, on which the youth of the place engage with any neighbouring village that will accept the challenge, in a game they call "bottle kicking," played like football, but the only object of the Hallatonians is to prevent their opponents kicking the bottle into their own parish. The bottle used is now of wood, but who can doubt that it was originally a leather one? And have we not here the origin of football?

The custom at Hallaton is of great antiquity. A piece of land was given at some long past date, to pay for an annual new bottle and to provide an immense hare-pie and two dozen penny loaves to refresh and recuperate the bottle kickers. When one remembers the close resemblance in general form and dimensions, of the leather bottle to the football, a resemblance that in remote times was probably even more close, the conjecture as to the origin of the latter becomes inevitable. Possibly the oval shape of the Rugby ball is a survival of a bottle tradition. It strongly recalls the leather bottle of the southern midlands.

The game of football under that name was, of course, well known in the Middle Ages, but that genuine "football" can be played with a leather bottle was made plain to me years ago when I rescued an old example from rival bands of market-gardeners in the Vale of Evesham, who had long used it for playing that game. It is still covered with mud and has one end burst in, as a result of the fate which has no doubt overtaken great numbers of its fellows.

THE OLD BROADSHEET.

The Anthony à Wood broadsheet is signed at the foot "John Wade" and has the imprint "London Printed for R. Burton, at the Horse-shoee in West Smithfield." There is no date, but it certainly belongs to the middle of the 17th century, not only from the costume of the figures in the rough wood-cut on the first page, but because Burton's name occurs in a list of publishers of black-letter ballads in the 17th century, thus: "Burton, Richard at the Horshoee in West Smithfield 1641-1674."

Reasons have already been given for believing the song to be much earlier than the 17th century, and it seems more likely that John Wade (whose name is attached to several other ballads) re-wrote and perhaps considerably lengthened an old song about the leather bottle, than that he wrote a new one. On the broadsheet already described and on one in the Roxburghe Collection are the words "To the Tune of, the *Bottel-maker's Delight*." It is quite possible that this was the name of the original song, and that the "Leather Bottell" was a new and enlarged version of it.

The rude but picturesque wood-cuts which illustrate these old broadsheets frequently have little or no reference to the particular song they happen to garnish, but were used and re-used as a rough sort of embellishment, which would help to sell the sheet. In this case there are two, a drinking scene and a heraldic bull. Neither of them seems to have been specially executed for the purpose, as the only bottle is the shape of the glass bottle of that time; so they have not much bearing on the song. (See Plate 9.)

THE MUSIC OF THE "LEATHER BOTTELL."

The quaint and lively tune to which "the Leather Bottell" is now sung, has, like the song itself, undergone much modernizing and alteration, and bears but slight resemblance to the original air, so far as one can tell what it may have been. Chappell in "National English Airs" (1838) gives what he calls "the traditional copy," but does not say from what source. It is also printed in Chappell's

"Popular Music of the Olden Time," 1860; but he gives there no statement as to the date or origin of the tune, which is as follows:—

The fact, however, that it has been for so many years recognized as the genuine ditty would be evidence against the claims of any other "Leather Bottell" melody. There is no tune given with the words of the song, by the music publisher, Henry Playford, in either the 1682 or 1684 editions of his "Wit and Mirth," nor, as far as I know, in any of the numerous song books, published during the second half of the 17th century; nor in any of the still older collections of virginal books. Neither the words nor the tune appear to have gained the attention of the authors of Musical Histories.

In D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy," edition of 1719, the song is headed by a tune of which the illustration on Plate 6, is a fac-simile.² If due allowance is made for the imperfections of music-printing at the beginning of the 18th century, there is little difficulty in fitting the words of the first verse of the song to this melody; but this is not the case with the succeeding verses of the D'Urfey copy of the song nor with any of the earlier versions. It is probable that the tune to which these long and irregular stanzas were sung, must have been of a still more primitive character. There are some points of resemblance in this melody to the one given by Chappell, but they are insignificant.

Cheerfully.

'Twas God a - bove that made all things, The heav'ns, the earth, and
all therein, The ships that on the sea do swim To guard from foes that none come in; And
let them all do what they can, 'Twas for one end,—the use of man, So I wish in heaven his
soul may dwell, That first found out the leather bot - - tel.

Fig. 17

LATER VERSIONS.

The melody given by Chappell in "National English Airs" in 1838, is reproduced in the "Songs of England" edited by Hatton, and in all or nearly all later copies of the tune, whose number is legion. It is essentially the same as that so often sung by Sir Charles Santley. The pianoforte accompaniment in all prints

¹ Vol. II., p. 514.

² Vol. III., p. 246.

of the beginning of the 19th century and later is altogether modern. All pianoforte or harpsichord accompaniments of the 18th century or earlier were expressed by figured basses.

On the first page of the broadsheet from which I have quoted, the song is, as already stated, directed to be sung to the tune of the "Bottel Maker's Delight." No ballad of this name is known to have survived, and it is now impossible to say if the tune was the one given in the illustration from "Pills to Purge Melancholy." In Chappell's "Old English Popular Music" the editor of the latest edition says that he cannot tell. In many old-fashioned districts, especially in South Warwickshire, memories of this song derived from tradition, linger among the older men, who speak of it as "the Leatherin' Bottle."

It appears that the song of the "Leather Bottell" is claimed by the Worshipful Company of Leathersellers of London as peculiarly their own; and is sung with enthusiasm at their feasts and entertainments. One cannot but rejoice that this ancient and flourishing fraternity should have had the good taste to perpetuate the memory of one of their early industries in so pleasant and appropriate a way. To those who have read the first chapter of the present work, it will be apparent, however, that as far as London Companies are concerned, the one which has inherited the most ancient claim to an interest in the leather bottle is the Worshipful Company of Horners. To-day that fraternity is not the important body it once was, and they have not yet published an exhaustive history of their Guild (such as Mr. Black's sumptuous work on the Leathersellers) which would have made them aware of the significance of their ancient shield. On the other hand, it will be seen in Chapter VIII. that the Leathersellers' Company in the 17th century included a craft of pouchmakers who had been making bottles of leather for at least a century and a half, and who were still making them at that time.

AT THE SIGN OF THE LEATHER BOTTLE.

Inns named after the leather bottle are still to be met with, though

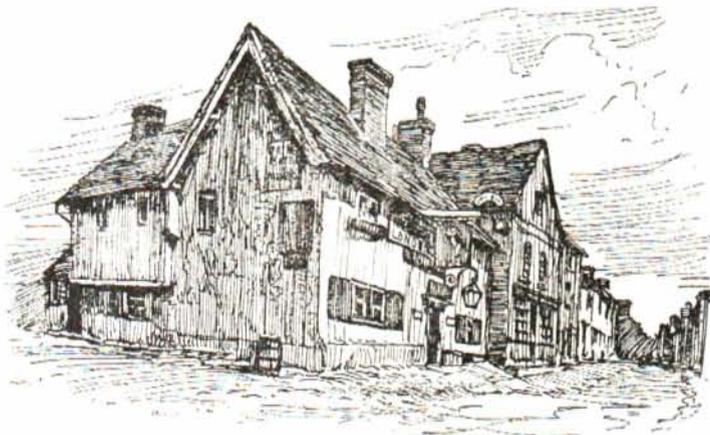
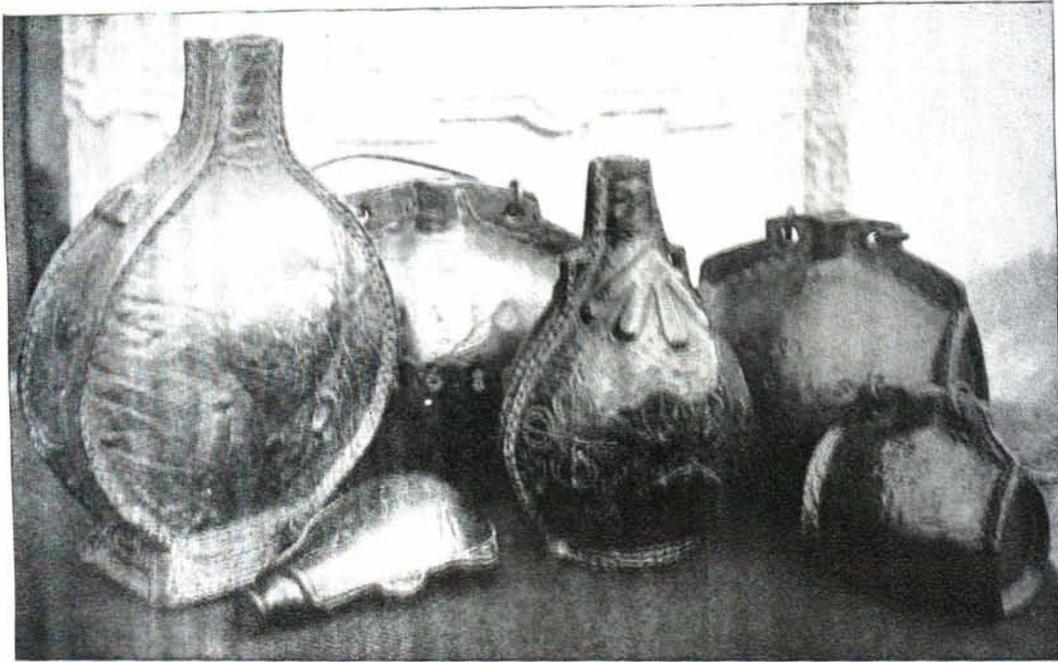


Fig. 18. Leather Bottle Inn at Cobham.

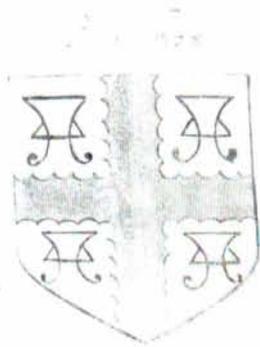
suspended a model of an ancient leathern bottle.

Unfortunately the name is often the only ancient thing about them. One of those which retains its old fabric, is the celebrated Leather Bottle Inn at Cobham in Kent, immortalized by Dickens in the *Pickwick Papers*. It is a good old building of simple character modestly hiding its half-timber walls under a coat of plaster. The sign which swings over the door displays a painting of Mr. Pickwick, but above it is (Fig. 18.) This was copied

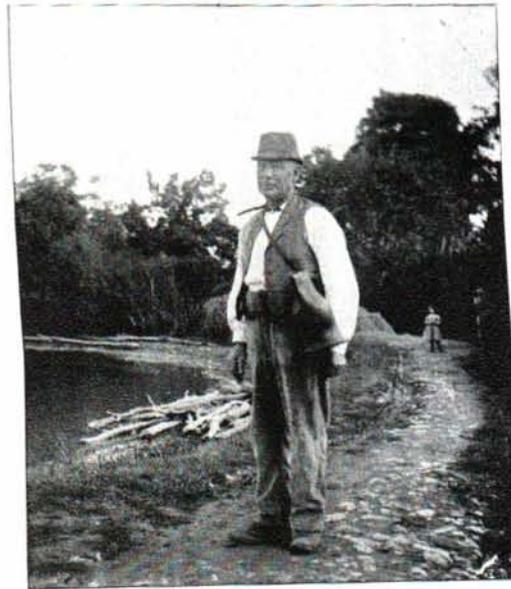
1 "Old English Popular Music," by William Chappell, F.S.A. A new edition with preface and notes by H. Ellis Wooldridge, 1893, Vol. II, p. 142.



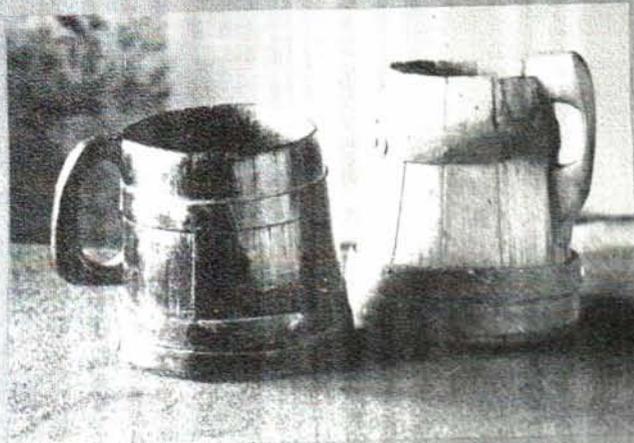
Two French and two English Bottles of leather and one Flask with three English Bottles, from the Fieldhouse collection. (Chap. II.)



Shield with degenerate Water Bougets, from a manuscript at Windsor Castle, photographed by Sir Benjamin Stone, M.P. (Chap. VI.)



Black Jack carried by the Chief Bellringer of Crowle, Worcs., to the farm-houses of the district. (Chaps. IV. and VII.)



Iron-hooped Wooden Cans, Herefordshire, from a photograph by Mr. Alfred Watkins. (Chap. II.)

Black Jacks formerly at Canons Ashby, now in the collection of Mr. S. B. Russell. (Chap. IV.)

Late Leather Bottle, said to have been used by the great Duke of Wellington. (Chap. II.)

The Jack of Corra in the possession of Sir Everard Cayley, Bart. (Chap. IV.)

from the real bottle of leather which used to hang there, the host, having awakened to its value, now keeping it under lock and key.

A huge gilded wooden model of a leathern bottle (which I sketched in "the eighties," as it hung from the Leather Bottle Tavern in Leather Lane, at the corner of Charles Street, London), is now in the Guildhall Museum, the house, a plain Hogarthian building of brick, having been destroyed. Another gilded model of a leather bottle, which yet remains over the door at Messrs. Hoare's Bank in Fleet Street, is a relic of the days when places of business as well as taverns were distinguished by signs. The leather bottle still figures on the cheques of this bank, and various theories have been advanced to explain its connection with the firm. It has been said that the latter's first founder came to London carrying all his wealth in an old leather bottle; and again, that it was intended to symbolize the bank's stability, as it was a bottle that would not break. In reality no explanation is needed beyond the one given above. As long as it was found convenient for all places of business to be distinguished by signs instead of numbers, there was as much fitness in conducting a bank at the sign of the Leather Bottle, as at the Three Squirrels, the Golden Anchor, or the Grasshopper, all of which were the signs of London banks in the 18th century. In the "Little London Directory for 1677," "James Hore at the Golden Bottle in Cheapside" is one of the goldsmiths that kept "runninge cashes," and in 1693 Mr. Richard Hoare, a goldsmith, was at the Golden Bottle in Cheapside.

The old Leather Bottle Inn at Garrett Lane, Wandsworth, was the scene of Foote's farce, "The Mayor of Garrett," and has long been identified with an old custom, and a singular functionary called "the Mock Mayor of Garrett" who was elected on the green in front of the inn. In contemporary drawings of the election, in 1781, of Sir John Harper, the old sign is shown, having on one side a painting of the bottle and on the other the words "The Leathern Bottle." The house has been re-built since then, but is not glaringly modern and is surrounded by old stone buildings roofed with pan-tiles. An old leather bottle still hangs in the bar, and is of a very unusual kind. (Fig. 19.) The present host of this historic tavern received with some scorn my questions as to the history of the old bottle he possesses. "Has it been here long!" he exclaimed. "It was *left* here by Oliver Cromwell, when he invaded England!" This being all I could glean of its history, I give it on its merits, without vouching for its accuracy. The height of the bottle is 12½ inches, width seven inches, and it is suspended by a strong chain. This kind of bottle is decidedly rare and I only know of three others, one in the Museum at Glastonbury, and another in the old Castle at Taunton. The third is in my own collection, and came from an old village in Kent.

In Deritend, the most ancient street of Birmingham, an old house, with its sign depending from picturesque iron-work, which stood until twenty-five years



Fig. 19.
Leather Bottle at the Leather Bottle Inn,
Wandsworth.

ago, was "The Old Leather Bottle" tavern. (See Fig. 20.) The license having in recent times (1895) been revoked after more than two hundred years' existence, the house has been demolished. The old oval sign lay for some time in the back-yard of the dismantled hostelry. It bore on both sides, (within a border inscribed with the words "The Old Leather Bottle"), a faded painting of a powder-flask shaped bottle with metal stopper, which, though old, is not the kind of bottle after which the inn was originally named. Probably some enterprising sign-painter, when the older kind had become scarce, painted what



Fig. 20

The Leather Bottle Inn, Deritend, Birmingham.

he considered a more "up-to-date" version. It is all the stranger that this should have been done because one of the early keg-shaped bottles of leather had been preserved in the house for nobody knows how many years, and was in the possession of the owner of the premises until 1895, when it was sold at a sale of his effects. It now belongs to Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse. It is in excellent preservation (its surface being as black and polished as ebony), and may be as old as the 17th century, though there is on one end a date 1711 in tiny brass nails.

In addition to the four above described there are, or were, Leather Bottle Taverns at Maidstone, Northfleet and Deal in Kent; at Cranley and Harbington in Surrey; in the towns of Nottingham and Walsall; and on the Thames at Cholsey, Oxon. An old and narrow street in Gloucester, near the cathedral, is called Leather Bottle Lane, after a tavern of that name which still flourishes. Leather Bottle inns have been noted in Essex, at Little Laver, Blackmore, West Hamingfield, Lexden and Pleshey. At the last named village, an old and accurate painting of a

leather bottle hung from the branch of a tree opposite the inn, but it has been restored and is now misleading. At Lexden there is no longer a pictorial sign, but the Leather Bottle inn must have given the name of "Bottle End" to the part of the parish in which it stands. In Woolmonger Street, Northampton, an old stone house is pointed out as having been, within living memory, an inn called the Leather Bottle. There was also an inn with that sign at Waventon in the same county. And at Michaelstow in Cornwall

is an old blacksmith's shop, which was once an inn and is still called the Leather Bottle. At Banbury, I have often seen on an inn sign in the market place, a gilded representation of an ancient leather bottle; but on a recent visit was disgusted to find it painted out and the old house quite modernised. At Wootton Bassett in Wiltshire was in 1840 an inn still known as the Leather Bottle. There is no doubt that leathern bottles must have been generally kept in inns even more than in ordinary houses, but the only old instance I can recall, besides those in Birmingham and Wandsworth, is that of a Stratford-upon-Avon inn-holder who died in 1603, possessed of two leather bottles and two jacks.¹ Some twenty years ago the host of the Falcon Hotel in the same town had several specimens, which are mentioned in the local guide-books, and was well known as an effective singer of the old song. Two leather bottles still hang on the ancient panelling of the dining chamber.

THE ENGLISH BOTTLE WAS LEATHERN.

To some it may appear a sweeping and even a startling statement that during the earlier centuries of English History, most native bottles were bottles of leather. It will not seem at all a wild assertion, however, to those who have followed the foregoing pages with attention, and it is, I believe, quite possible to justify it. Those of other materials were so few, that the words *bottel*, *utre*, or *bottella* in old records may nearly always be accepted as meaning a leathern bottle until the 16th century, unless there are accompanying them, qualifying or descriptive words in a different sense. It is true that as early as the middle of the 14th century, an instance occurs of bottles being specified as of leather ("*bouteilles de cuir*"), but they are among accounts kept by a foreign visitor to this country, a member of the household of the King of France, to whom bottles of other materials would be much more familiar.² After the 15th century bottles of leather are more frequently to be identified in old documents, and it is partly, if not chiefly, because they were less commonly used and their material was no longer taken for granted.

It is only by casual references in their records that the fraternities of Botellars of ancient times can be proved to have been makers of *leathern* bottles. They are simply "Botellars" or bottlemakers from the 14th century to the 17th; that they made them of leather being taken as a matter of course.

Even as late as the time of Shakespeare the word bottle was sometimes used, where a leather one was meant. There is an instance in "Much Ado About Nothing," where Benedick, repelling the suggestion that he will ever look pale with love, says, "If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam." This obviously could not refer to a glass bottle, but was an allusion to the ancient, though far from humane custom, of suspending a live cat in a leather bottle from the branch of a tree, and shooting at it with arrows, as it swung to and fro. The cat was inserted through the large hole which, as already explained, was generally cut in one side of a worn-out bottle.

¹ "Inventory of Thomas Dixon," "Stratford-on-Avon records in Shakespeare's Birthplace."

² See p. 41.

We have seen that the bottle of leather, in the earlier and simpler days of our history, was used by all ranks of people who were able to purchase it. But so early as the first part of the 16th century it was beginning to be regarded with less consideration as compared with more modern ware. In John Skelton's "Colyn Cloute," written about 1529, the leather bottle is referred to in a connection suggestive of mean surroundings. In rebuking prelates puffed with pride, he tells them they were :—

" Brought vp of poore estate,
With pryde inordinate,
Sodaynly vpstarte
From the donge carte
The mattocke and the shule,
To reyne and to rule ;
And haue no grace to thynke
How ye were wont to drynke
Of a lether bottell
With a knauysse stoppell."

Later in the same century (about 1568) there is an equally slighting reference to it in "The Scholemaster," by Roger Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's favourite tutor, where in criticising the paraphrasing of Latin authors into worse Latin, he says: "Soch turning the best into worse is much like the turning of good wine out of a faire sweet flagon of siluer into a foule mustie bottell of ledder." Tusser's "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry," in 1557, suggested a singular use for the big agricultural bottle :—

" Some pilfering thresher will walk with a staff,
Will carry home corn as it is in the chaff ;
And some in his bottle of leather so great
Will carry home daily both barley and wheat."

By the end of the 16th century the use of such bottles was getting still more limited to the farming classes, and other workers in the woods and fields. To Shakespeare the leather bottle was a symbol of bucolic simplicity and hard fare, in contrast to the monarch's golden cup, as we see by the delightful description of rural life in the Third Part of King Henry VI.³ :—

" Ah, what a life were this ! How sweet ! How lovely !
Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy
To kings that fear their subjects treachery ?
O, yes it doth ; a thousand fold it doth.

1 " Skelton's Works," ed. 1843, Vol. I., p. 336.

2 Ed. 1812, p. 50.

3 Third Part of King Henry VI., Act 2, Scene V.

And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curds,
 His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
 His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
 All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
 Is far beyond a prince's delicates,
 His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
 His body couched on a curious bed,
 When care, mistrust and treason, wait on him."

Thos. Heywood in the early half of the 17th century, in a work already quoted from,¹ emphatically states that the leather bottle was chiefly found among the rural population. "Other bottles wee have of leather, but they most used among the shepherds and harvest people of the countrey."

The opening verses of a 17th century ballad called, "The Wiltshire Wedding," of which copies occur in the Roxburghe, Pepys and Douce collections, give an interesting description of a rustic of those times as he plodded his way to work :—

" All in a misty morning, so cloudy was the weather
 I, meeting with an old man who was cloathed all in leather,
 With ne'er a Shirt unto his back, but woollen to his skin,
With a how do you do, and a how do you do, and how do you do again.
 The rustic was a Thresher and on the way he hy'd,
 And with a leather bottle fast buckled by his side ;
 And with a cap of woollen that covered cheek and chin,
With a how do you do and how do you do and how do you do again."

In early times these bottles are sometimes mentioned as containing ink, but in 1692 Sir Richard Newdigate of Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, recommends them for making it. In his diary (the ink of which by its blackness after more than 200 years, testifies to the excellence of the method) he makes the following note, " Put eight ounces of Galls to steep for Ink in rain water, with two ounces of Copperas and four ounces of Gum Arabic. The Receipt is to steep the Galls ten days, stirring them every day ; then put in the Copperas and stir it for a day or two. Then put in the Gum and hang it for some time in a Leather Bottle behind a door that is often opened."²

In the 18th even more than the 16th and 17th centuries, to Gay, as to Shakespeare, the leather bottle was an agricultural vessel. The works of the former poet twice refer to it in that sense. "The Parson's Maid" in the ditty, addressing her absent lover, says :—

" In misling days when I my thresher heard,
 With nappy beer I to the barn repaired ;
 Lost in the musick of the whirling flail
 To gaze on thee I left the smoking pail :
 In harvest when the Sun was mounted high
 My leathern bottle did thy drought supply."³

1 "Philocothonista," 1635, p. 45.

2 "Cavalier and Puritan," by Lady Newdigate Newdegate. p. 294.

3 "Gay's Works," 1807, p. 140.

Again, in "The Dirge," the dying Blouzelinda in bequeathing her effects, says:—

"My leathern bottle long in harvest try'd,
Be Grubbinol's—this silver ring beside."

It seems odd that in both these references, it is the maid who owns the leather bottle.

Even in the 18th century, instances are to be found of leather bottles being possessed by people who were not farmers.

There is one described and sketched in "Sussex Archaeological Collections" by the Rev. F. H. Arnold, who says it was discovered at Singleton and bought by him in 1903, as a relic of a famous huntsman whose name it bears in white paint: "THOMAS JOHNSON, Huntsman to ye Duke of Richmond, 1734."

WOODEN BOTTLES.

By the middle of the 18th century, bottles of wood had to a great extent superseded those of leather even in the harvest field. There are very rare instances



Fig. 21

The Evolution of the Wooden Bottle.

of such wooden bottles, whose shape might lead to the idea that the wooden bottle of to-day might have been evolved from the leather one, as they are built on that model. It is not however to be inferred that this supplies a "missing link" between the modern keg of wood and leathern predecessors, as wooden bottles have been in use for many centuries, though they are not at all common in old inventories or account rolls, even during the last two or three hundred years. They are called "collateralialia" or "costrels" in early documents, and were probably of similar build to those still in use, which are fairly well known to the observer of rural life, and are simply barrels on a small scale, each with a handle and mouth-piece. Some early specimens are of the shape of a wooden drum, iron taking no part in their construction. In later ones sometimes the same drum-like shape is retained, but the bands at each end are of iron instead of wood. Later still, iron handles with pieces of chain instead of string, to enable them to be hitched upon a horse's collar, became common, and finally the diminutive barrel with iron hoops and handle of thick wire replaced them (Fig. 21.)

Now, however, the most modern developments of the wooden keg have ceased to be made and are being in their turn superseded by the stone jar. There are still old-fashioned districts in England in which the traditions of the leather bottle date

from early in the 19th century. In these places such bottles, in more or less perfect condition are even now to be found by close and diligent search ; generally hanging on a wooden pin or a nail, in order to serve after the excision of a clout for the conservation of odd trifles ; and stray echoes of their history are to be heard among the older inhabitants. It is not often that they are found in old mansions. There is one at Parham Park the Sussex home of Lord Zouche, and a large one at Somersall Herbert, the old half-timber manor-house of the Fitzherbert's in Derbyshire. At Baddesley Clinton Hall, the venerable moated home of the Warwickshire branch of the Ferrers family, an imperfect one, which some years ago I rescued from a corner of the court-yard—it having previously lain for an indefinite time at the bottom of the moat—now hangs in the great hall.

A bottle belonging to Mr. W. B. Redfern of Cambridge, one must regard with an exceptional degree of respect, for it came, many years ago, from Anne Hathaway's house at Shottery. While it is ancient enough to have been there during the visits of Anne's lover and Warwickshire's greatest son, there is of course nothing to prove that it was not a later possession of the family.

THE MEDIAEVAL BOTTELL.

So far, one "leather bottell" only—that of the keg or costrel shape—has been discussed in these pages ; for though other leathern bottles of widely different forms and kinds have been in use in this country, that one was *the* leather bottle *par excellence*. Its supremacy rested not only on a vastly greater numerical superiority, but on qualities which had been tried by centuries of service. It had been evolved, as it were, out of the demands of the times, the exigencies of the material and the stress of the work it had to perform.

So admirable is its design and so antique its shape and character, that one willingly accepts it as the representative bottle of England's past—as the "lether bottle" of Stuart and Elizabethan shepherds, as the "botel" of Canterbury pilgrims, the "uter" or "botella" of monkish computus rolls—nay, even that it hung in the cellars of Plantagenet Kings and at the saddle-bows of Norman barons, that it went to the Crusades with Coeur de Lion and fell in the forest with William Rufus. One even wonders if the "butericas" made by Saxon "shoe-wrights" for thane or swine-herd, may not have been an early development of it.

This keg-shaped bottle of leather remained throughout five, at least, of the centuries during which it has existed, substantially the same in general build. This much might almost be assumed from the early character of some existing specimens. Their very "Gothic" design and the extremely ancient appearance of the leather composing them when compared with the oldest dated examples, suggests that they may be as old as the 15th century. But as the latter are seldom earlier than the seventeenth, further proof seems to be demanded. This fortunately I am able to produce.

On the buttress at the north-east angle of the north porch of Inkberrow church, Worcestershire, is one of those grotesque carvings with which most ancient churches are enriched. It represents a man drinking ; and, though the figure is not too realistic and has a most elfish appearance, his drinking vessel is well defined, and is a representation of a leather bottle of the 15th century (about 1430), to which

period most of the building belongs. As will be seen by the accompanying illustrations, this mediaeval bottle does not differ much from those examples which still survive. It has however three perpendicular ridges up the sides, parallel to those made by the end seams. They are purely ornamental, and are not intended for hoops, because they are not continued under the bottom (which as seen from the ground level is the most conspicuous part), and also because the middle one would, if continued, have gone over the mouth of the bottle. (See Plate 16.)

Some actual bottles exist in which these raised bands (always on one side only) form part of the decoration, and I believe them to be all mediaeval examples.

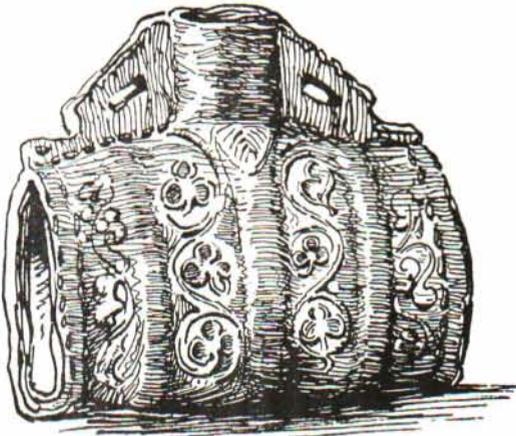


Fig. 22

Diminutive 15th century Leather Bottle at the London Museum.

One diminutive but charmingly designed bottle is in the London Museum at Lancaster House, and has, between three vertical raised bands, lines of foliate decoration of Gothic character. It was found in the Town Ditch at the Old Bailey in 1913, and is of great interest as giving a rich example of the bottle of the Middle Ages. It measures nearly four inches in length and three and three-quarters in height. (Fig. 22.)

An enormous bottle of late Gothic character is preserved at Oxford in the Ashmolean Museum, and is of extraordinary interest, being decorated on one side with two raised shields, on one of which is incised the Pomegranate, and on the other the Tudor Rose. These shields must

indicate that the bottle once belonged to Henry VIII or to his elder brother Prince Arthur, as the pomegranate was the badge of Katherine of Aragon. The bottle is sixteen inches long and thirteen inches high and has five vertical raised bands, the centre one dying off at the top into the bottle neck. The two end ones finish about an inch from the top seam, and the remaining two are surmounted by the shields already described. The holes on each side of the neck in these early bottles are never round and small as if for a cord (which is invariable in late bottles), but are elongated slits as if for a thick leathern thong. Between each raised band on this Ashmolean bottle, are a series of curved forms punched in the leather for decoration. There can be no question as to the genuineness of this grand old vessel. The outlines of the two badges have obviously been incised when the leather was new, as the edges have slightly curled up, which they would not have done if cut when the leather was old; and it must have had a wooden block specially carved to mould it upon. Since it ceased to carry the wine of the King of England, it has gone through various adventures. On the neck and shoulders are the initials (W.E.) of a less important owner, which suggest that it has passed a considerable portion of its 400 years of existence in the capacity of a harvest bottle. Later still, some soulless

vandal has cut out a piece of leather (fortunately on the plain side) to make it serve as a receptacle for "hinges, awls and candle-ends." As to how or when it came to the Museum, nothing seems to be known except that it was part of the "Old Collection" there. (Figs. 9 and 23.)

In some notes on leathern jacks and bottles in the 17th volume of the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Mr. H. Syer Cuming gives a drawing of a leathern bottle then in the British Museum, but which unfortunately has been missing for thirty years. It is engraved in the *Catalogue of the Roach Smith Museum of London Antiquities*, and there is a still better engraving of it in Halliwell Phillip's folio edition of Shakespeare's plays, illustrating the Third Part of *King Henry VI*. It is there stated to be in the Roach Smith collection. In a paper by Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt in the *Reliquary* for 1884, is a slight sketch of this bottle, probably taken from an engraving which Mr. H. Syer Cuming told me that he had made in the "sixties" while it was in the British Museum, to illustrate his notes above mentioned. There is also a wood-cut of it in an article on "The Homes of the Past" in the 1884 volume of the *Leisure Hour*. This bottle was an extremely fine one, and Mr. Roach Smith classed it among his mediaeval antiquities. It is represented in all the illustrations as quite cylindrical in shape, with raised bands on the sides and the usual mouth-piece in the projecting top seam, through which ornamental slits were pierced for thongs. Its dimensions are not given, but it is stated by Mr. Roach Smith to have held a quart.¹ It is the only cylindrical one I have heard of, except one owned by the village blacksmith at Over Whitacre, Warwickshire, which he burnt with two others of the usual shape about ten years ago. It is noteworthy that the "three leather bottles sable" on the earliest shield of the arms of the Guild of Bottlemakers and Horners are of this round shape with raised bands.

Unlike the water bouget, the leather bottle was not adopted by great people as an armorial charge, so early representations of it are scarce; and, with the exception of the instances already mentioned in Chapter I, only occur on a few old seals in the possession of the Horners' Company. There can be no doubt that the bottles of the Company's arms would be of the ancient and most usual pattern, and though they vary in detail on shields of different dates, the type is always the same. The bottle which appears on certain copper tokens of the 17th century is also of this same type. In fact it would be difficult to produce an old representation of a leather bottle depicted in any other shape.

This then was the bottle of bottles, the theme of ballads, the companion of princes, the darling of peasants, the attendant alike on lord and labourer.

"Altho' the substance be but small,
The name of it is all in all;
For there's never a lord an earle or knight
But in this bottel doth take delight."

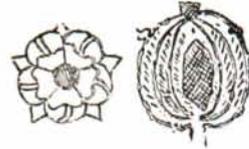


Fig. 23

Tudor Rose and Pomegranate
on the Ashmolean Bottle.

¹ "London Antiquities," C. R. Smith, p. 133.

THE FLACKET.

While this was undoubtedly the usual type of bottle in England, it seems that there was a leathern flask contemporary with it even in remote times. Flasks (flascones) as well as bottles are mentioned in Alfric's Colloquy in the 10th century as being made by the shoe-wright; and a vessel called a flacket is sometimes met with in old records, especially in the north and east of England. The latter may have been only an old name for a bottle, and was sometimes of wood, but more often of leather. Among the goods of Thomas Nevell of Raby were in 1570, "a mortar to braye spice, one pottinger and one ledder flackett with certen wood vessell;" and such entries are fairly common in northern inventories.

It seems possible that a flacket was a flask-shaped leather bottle, and if so was perhaps a good deal like a specimen which is in the museum at Glastonbury; a very unusual bottle and suggestive of a link between the massive leather costrel and the flatter and more slender flasks of later days. This bottle is 10½ inches in height, 6½ in greatest width, and holds about three pints. It was obtained from a labourer in a village near Glastonbury. As already stated at page 50 there is a similar bottle to this one in another Somerset museum, in the old keep at Taunton Castle, and a third example of the same character and size, but more elegantly shaped hangs in the Leather Bottle Tavern at Garrett Lane, Wandsworth (Fig. 19); another is in my own collection and came from Kent, but I only know of these four.

Somewhat akin to this kind of bottle is a smaller one, of which I only know three examples to exist. A photograph of one is shown at Plate 7. This bottle is in the collection of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse, and is seven inches long without the seam or the stopper, and holds about three quarters of a pint. It is of an elongated pear shape, and there is a fairly thick projecting seam continuous right round it. In this seam are rounded projections, two on each side, which form loops by means of which it was carried, the seam is not thickened but simply consists of the edges of the two sides brought together. Another example of this kind of bottle is in the museum of the Hawick Archaeological Society, and is said to have belonged to Johnnie Armstrong, the famous moss-trooper. It is eight inches long without the stopper and is practically the same as the one in the Fieldhouse collection. In both the stopper is of wood, and screws into the leather of the neck, which is a very unusual arrangement. The third is in the collection of Mr. James Whitfield, of Birmingham, and is in all essentials the same as the other two.

A PRESENTATION BOTTLE.

An unusual variety of the flask-like bottle has been for three centuries at Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwickshire, the ancient seat of Lord Leigh. It has a rather long neck and two equally bulging sides stitched together without projecting edges. There was a flat bottom on which it could be placed upright, but it is now missing. There are slight remains of darkish glass in the neck which suggest that it was the kind of vessel sometimes described in 17th century inventories as "a leather bottle of glasse." In the inventory of 1597, at Helmingham Hall, Suffolk, there were "i glass bottel covered with leather" and "i other wicker bottle of glass."

1 "Wills and Inventories," Sur. Soc., 1835, p. 331.

In a 1610 inventory, privately printed by Halliwell Phillips, are "Item four leather bottles of glasse. Item two wicker bottles one of glasse." The Stoneleigh bottle was presented to Sir Thomas Leigh, an ancestor of Lord Leigh, by the City of London. He was Lord Mayor in 1558, and rode before Queen Elizabeth into the City on her accession to the throne. On one side of the bottle is an elaborate "Tudor Rose" within a circular border around which is this inscription:—"VERTOVS AND HAPY LIFE BE GEVEN TO THE RYGT WORSHIPFUL THOMAS LEE AND HIS WYFE," sprays of foliage being disposed outside it. The other side of the bottle has a heart-shaped ornament in the centre, with the initials S.T. to the left and L. to the right. Below are the initials I.I. and the date 1600, all of them of large size so as to fill up the space; and all, like the ornament on the other side, are incised, not stamped. (Fig. 24.) Since the above account was written this bottle was missing for some years, but by means of a photograph and description that I took in the "nineties" has recently (1919) been found in a remote corner of the Abbey.



Fig. 24

Leather Bottle presented to Sir Thos. Leigh in 1600 by the City of London, now in the possession of Lord Leigh.

It is possible that a more ancient but less rare kind of leather bottle, and the most bottle-like of all to our modern ideas, which is figured in front at Plate 2, may be the flask of mediaeval times. A group of two such bottles are now at the Public Record Office in Fetter Lane, where they were brought with the national records from the Chapter House at Westminster Abbey. When exhibited by permission of the late Sir T. Duffus Hardy they were stated to be of the time of Henry III and to have been used at Westminster for keeping ink in. While there is nothing to prevent their having so great an antiquity, one would have liked to have had some authority for it. These were the only leather bottles which had anything approaching the shape of the modern glass bottle, and were made, as were the leather drinking jacks, from two pieces of leather only, the one forming the body and the other the bottom of the vessel. On one side only is a strong seam of some projection, continuous vertically from top to bottom of the bottle. This seam was generally allowed to project at the bottle's shoulder, where it was cut off square to form a kind of ear, which was pierced by a hole for a suspending cord. A corresponding ear with a similar hole was ingeniously contrived on the other side of the neck, out of a short seam extending from the mouth to the shoulder. This upright bottle was never large and could be slung at the side of the traveller or sportsman, or even thrust into a fairly capacious pocket. Specimens of this kind of bottle are rare. Besides these two at the Record Office, there is one in the collection of Mr. James Whitfield, of Birmingham, eight and a half inches high and three and a half wide, which came from Oxfordshire. Mr. W. H. Duigman, of Walsall, had one slightly larger, which is said to have come from Rushall Castle,

Staffs; and there is a portion of one (the upper half) in the collection of Mr. W. B. Redfern, of Cambridge. At the Guildhall Museum is one such bottle, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, which was found in Windmill Street, City Road, in 1868. It is labelled circa 1500, and is probably at least that old. There used to be a similar one in the collection of Mrs. Lewes Gibbs, of Stratford-on-Avon. Another excellent example is at Goodrich Court, the property of H. C. Moffat, Esq., who has also three other very fine English leather drinking vessels.

A vessel in the possession of Mr. J. Whitfield, of which two views are given at Fig. 25, is one of the most remarkable of leather bottles. In its upper part it has some resemblance to the bottle last described, as the mouth and two

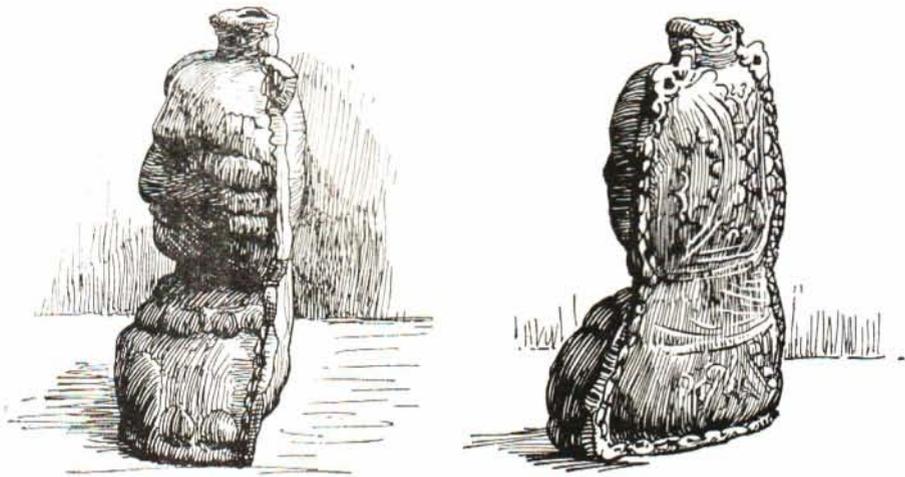


Fig. 25

Front and back views of Leathern Flask in the shape of a woman's head.

ears with holes for suspending cords are similar, but its main portion is modelled into the shape of a woman's face and bust. This strange bottle is formed of three pieces, composing respectively the front, the back, and bottom. The back is almost flat and is covered with a conventional pattern made by stamping it with a semi-circular punch. The lower part has, in plan, almost the shape of a letter D. Another seam of moderate projection, in which the front and back pieces are joined by two rows of stitches, runs up both sides and over the top. In this seam are the two ears already mentioned. The hair is suggested by the modelling of the leather, and raised blobs round the neck represent a necklace. The face and hair have been painted in natural colours, also the dress, but all is now defaced by time.

Among the vessels of ancient Greece and Rome bottles of terra-cotta in the shape of human heads have been found, and this may have suggested the leather one. In a book in the British Museum' on the treasures of the ruler of Brandenburg, is an engraving of an antique bronze bottle in the form of a female

1 "Thesaurus Brandenburgicus selectus," Laurentius Beger, 1701, Vol. III.

head very similar to this leather one, having the aperture at the top of the head, and a loop on each side of it, but the latter joined by a metal handle. The book is in Latin and gives no account of the bottle. The only other flask like this one, that I am aware of, is in the collection of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse, at Wootton Wawen. It has lost some of its original shape through saturation and neglect, and might not be recognised at the first glance as representing a female head; but it has evidently been made in the same mould as the last described. It had a pewter neck with a screw fixed to the leather orifice, and is the same size as Mr. Whitfield's. There is another bottle, shaped like a human head in the collection of Mr. Fieldhouse, but it represents a very realistic negro in a big turban, and is in wonderful preservation, being as smooth and glossy as when it was made. It probably dates from the 18th century, when negro servants were fashionable in England. It is distinctly larger than the other two head-shaped bottles, being $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, and is probably unique. (See centre of Plate 7. The female head bottle is to the left of it.)

There is a somewhat remarkable bottle in the collection of Mr. James Whitfield. It stands on a circular base, and has a body which, without being quite globular, is one of considerable bulge at the front and back. It has projecting seams down each side in which are two ears pierced for cords. The lower part of the neck has a projecting moulding, and the whole of the bottle is rather richly treated with incised ornament. In the centre of the front is a circular ornament with a scroll pattern carried round it, enclosing a *fleur de lis*; and above it are some stamped stars. The base is several inches high and has a continuous incised pattern. (Fig. 26.)

In the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington is a very similar leather bottle to this, which is marked "Italian." If this label is correct it is the only Italian example I have ever heard of, but I am inclined to think that both bottles are French.



Fig. 26

Leather Bottle, probably French, in the collection of Mr. J. Whitfield.

THE LEATHERN PISTOL.

The desire to improve upon the bulging contour of the ordinary "bottell," and provide a longer and more conveniently stowed flask for personal use, led to various developments, and perhaps the most extraordinary of these bottles is one

which assumed the shape of an ancient dagg or horse-pistol. An example of this kind of bottle, which was considered unique, was brought under the notice of the British Archaeological Association in 1847 by Mr. J. R. Planché, and described as "Robin Hood's Pocket Pistol," and as having been found at St. Ann's Well, near Nottingham. Mr. Syer Cuming examined it some years later and gave a very slight sketch in the *Archaeological Journal*, together with the following description:—"It is in the shape of a pistol of the 16th century, about eighteen inches long, the little cylindrical neck being at the end of the globose butt. Four strokes on each side in place of the lock have been taken for the date 1112, and a band on the under side has in it two perforations for cords."

A somewhat similar bottle was exhibited by Lord Boston at the British Archaeological Congress in 1861. It was discovered about a century before

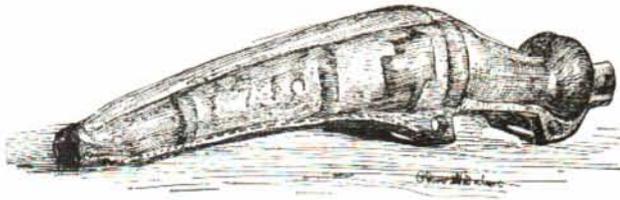


Fig. 27. Pistol-shaped Leather Bottle.

buried in the sand five or six miles from Amlwch in Anglesey. It is similar to the one drawn at Fig. 27, and is 19 inches in length. This one is very much more like an old pistol than the first, having not only the characteristic knob on the butt, which made the early pistol almost as formidable a weapon after it had been discharged as

it was before, but it also has a well defined barrel, which is supposed to be attached to a massive stock, with three broad bands. Between the two nearest to the butt-end is a raised piece on each side the pistol to represent the lock and trigger, under which a projection of the seam has a hole which, with a corresponding one near the bulb, served for the suspending thong, and to suggest a trigger-guard. There is a real hole at the mouth piece (which projects from the butt-end) to drink from, and a sham one (which is plugged within by a piece of wood) to look like the muzzle of a pistol at the other end.

As to the age to which these strange bottles may safely be assigned, it is hardly worth while to controvert the idea that one of them bears a twelfth century date, or had any connection with Robin Hood. At a time when there were no real pistols there would not be any imitation ones of leather, and Arabic numerals would not have been used for the date. It is recorded in the *British Archaeological Journal*, Vol. III, that Mr. Rayner, the owner at that time of the bottle in question, sent it to Sir Walter Scott, who "returned a very guarded reply, which only showed that he could not tell what to make of it." This bottle is now in the Municipal Museum at Warrington, where there are also two others of the more usual keg-shape.

The likeness of these curious drinking flasks to the dagg of the 16th century is shown at Plate 23, in which one of them is photographed with an actual pistol of that time. It will be seen that in all salient features the leather flask is intended to correspond with it, and the fact of this similarity indicates the 16th century as the time of the origin of these vessels. That the same pattern was adhered to in later times is proved by the existence of several specimens with 17th and 18th

1 "Archaeological Journal," 1861, Vol. XVII., p. 274.

century dates upon them. The explanation of its retention is, no doubt, that the pattern had become traditional among the makers, and also because the later pistols were not so convenient in shape for the purpose. I have only found two instances of such bottles in old records, but they confirm the above theory as to their date. In a manuscript inventory of 1597 at Helmingham Hall, Suffolk, in the Buttery, "i drinking botell in forme of a dagg" was among the goods of Sir Lyonel Tollemache, remaining in the Hall at that date. The other was among the goods of a Stratford on Avon dyer in 1595.¹ He had "a brushe and a leather Jack to drynk in—rd." and a "Calyver Flaske" valued at double the amount, which (as a caliver was the smallest kind of gun then in use) was doubtless a pistol-shaped bottle.

I have met with four dated examples of the dagg-shaped bottle, unquestionably authentic. The earliest is in the collection of Mr. James Whitfield, and about 40 years ago came from an old house near Nottingham. This bottle, though somewhat the worse for wear, is quite complete, and has on both sides the date 1681 stamped in the leather when made, but now about half worn off. The stock, barrel and lock are closely imitated as in the one already described, but the projections from the seam in which the holes for cords are perforated are rounded in this 17th century example. This bottle is 23 inches long.

The second example in order of date is in the Black Gate Museum at Newcastle on Tyne. It is of the same shape as the above described, and is dated 1697. Nothing is known of its history, but it has been in its present quarters in the old Castle for many years.

The third dated example is the property of Mr. James Whitfield, and is nearly 20 inches in length, $4\frac{1}{2}$ across the widest part, and is capable of holding nearly a quart of liquor. It is in very good preservation, jet black in colour, but slightly cracked and wrinkled, and one side has the appearance of being a little out of shape by exposure to damp. The date 1704 is stamped into both sides, and also the monogram TC near the lock, but they can only be read on the one side, the other impressions being traceable with some difficulty. The vessel must have seen considerable service, for the cord holes are nearly worn through.

The fourth bottle of dagg shape is in the private collection of Mr. W. H. Fenton of Heston House, Heston, Middlesex. It is in excellent condition, having been well cared for during its 200 years of existence. It was bought by its present owner from a house at Maidenhead, in Berkshire, and is very much like the last described but rather smaller, and has retained its shape in every line and curve to a surprising degree. A photograph of it is given at Plate 23. The pattern is the same as those of the three last mentioned, but the date is 1710, on both sides between the bands. An undated example was lately sold in the collection of Mr. Edward Bidwell, of Twickenham, and is now the property of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse. It is in splendid preservation, twenty inches in length, and about the same age as the last, but has no date upon it, and there is another good example in the recently opened London Museum at Lancaster House.

It thus becomes certain that these old flasks, from which we no doubt get our modern term of "pocket pistol" for a glass drinking flask, are not necessarily older than the reign of Queen Anne, though they *may* be much earlier. The motive for having them of this particular shape can only be conjectured, but it is easy

¹ Worcester Probate Registry

to understand that anyone travelling in those days of footpads and highwaymen would find a pistol a very useful companion, and that where a pistol could be carried a pistol-shaped bottle might conveniently be stowed away. Also that, as such marauders were rarely courageous, something that looked like a pistol was perhaps nearly as useful as a real one, and a traveller caught refreshing himself from such a bottle was not without the means of making formidable demonstration. It must have been a leather pistol of this kind which Falstaff carried and offered to Prince Hal with the words, "if Percy be alive thou gettest not my sword, but take my pistol if thou wilt," and which the Prince threw at him in disgust when he found it was a bottle filled with sack.¹

RARE BOTTLES.

Bugle horns being a usual part of a hunter's equipment, and powder and drinking flasks fashioned out of the horns of cattle being frequently carried, it is

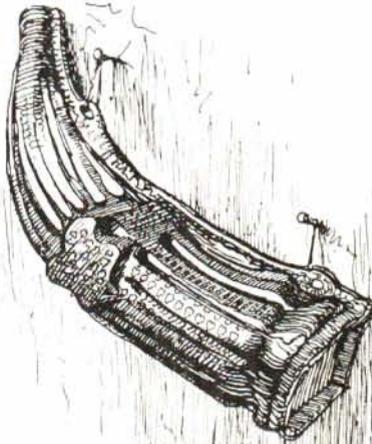


Fig. 28
Horn-shaped Bottle of Leather, Victoria and Albert
Museum.

perhaps natural to make a leather flask in the same shape. In the Victoria and Albert Museum is a black leather bottle, in the form of a thick bull's horn, but the horn model has only been followed so far as it was convenient, the side that rested against the owner's body being nearly flat. There are projecting seams down the edge of this flat side, in one of which are two holes for cords. The rounded portion of the bottle is fluted with hollows and stamped over with ornaments of two different patterns; it has also a shield of late design modelled in the leather on which is the date 1659. The bottle is formed of three pieces, a rounded body, flat side and D shaped bottom. On the Museum label it is marked "French," so it was probably one of those spoken of as "*faites a la mode d'Angleterre*." It was bought from the Hailstone collection, and cost £10.

Of the bottle figured at Fig. 28 an account is given in Vol. xv of the Archaeological Journal by Mr. W. H. Syer Cuming (in whose collection at Kennington it still remains) in the following terms. "To the specimens already cited I add another of the 17th century, which presents considerable difference in contour. It is of true bottle form, holding about a quart, and of rather squat proportions, being eight inches high, six inches and $1\frac{5}{8}$ diameter at the neck. It is convex at front and back and has straps attached to the sides and bottom through

¹ First Part of King Henry IV., v. 3.



HERALDIC JUG OF THE OXFORD CORDWAINERS' GUILD
(now in the collection of H. C. Moffat, Esq.)

which the leathern belt passes, the latter having a square buckle to regulate its length according to the requirements of the wearer, for this, like those previously described, is a costrel." This bottle, though of evident age, is in excellent condition and its surface black and glossy. It is made of extremely thick leather, and the seams are "closed" without projection. Mr. Cuming told me that he bought it at a Vauxhall marine store, and that the old woman who sold it, led him to understand that it came from Garrett Lane, but as she was in a state of semi-intoxication he paid little heed to her statements.

The only other of this kind that I have heard of is in the collection of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse of Wootton Wawen, and is, though quite perfect, in a more mouldered and venerable-looking state, having the appearance of either having been buried or left for many years a prey to damp and neglect. In this one the seams slightly project and are continued into loops on each side for a cord, unlike Mr. Cuming's bottle which has bits of leather stitched on to hold the suspending strap.

A singular and enormously capacious bottle, which is probably not English, is apparently of leather. It belonged to Mrs. Lewes Gibbs, of Stratford-on-Avon. Nothing is known of its history. A remarkable feature of the construction is that it has no apparent seams, but is made of layers of thin leather or skin cemented in some way upon one another. A similar bottle, an illustration of which appeared in *The Exchange and Mart*, is said to have been used for carrying wine from Lincoln to the Bishop's Palace at Stow Park, but there is no possibility of this being true, as all such bottles appear to be of foreign origin and to have contained some substance sold by druggists in fairly modern times. A late military bottle, which is photographed on Plate 9, and belongs to Mr. Adney of Ludlow, is said to have belonged to the first Duke of Wellington.

EXIT THE LEATHER BOTTLE.

From the preceding pages it will have been gathered that while in later times there were leather bottles of very various shapes, but in numbers only few, there was one predominant leather bottle whose general characteristics did not vary much, but followed one distinctive model; and that this was the bottle of which for several centuries the praises have been chanted in ballads, and the merits and defects have been loudly sung.

That the attractions which it so long possessed for the bucolic mind were associated with alcoholic beverages of some kind or another is to be gathered from the old song in its praise, and from the number of inns named after it, but that it was probably used for milder fluids and was a feature in more peaceful scenes is shown in the exquisite lines from Shakespeare already quoted, and in the works of other old authors. In the poem of Argentill and Curran, written by William Warner in 1586, a passage describing the outfit of a shepherd says, "Sweet or whig his bottel had as full as it would hold."

And so we find the poor old bottle which in past centuries had moved in high circles, had held the red wine of kings, and gone a hunting with abbots and knights, was in the 17th century carrying the curds and whey of the peasant and sharing the revels of clowns and boors; and when in the 18th century its career draws to a close

and wearing out, it is more and more seldom renewed, still the resources of the "bottell" are not exhausted, for, rescued from wholesale cutting into clouts by its fitness for "hanging on a pin and serving to put odd trifles in," it is still usefully if humbly employed. Finally in the 19th century, cast out by a generation that had forgotten its services, it is handed over to the children for a football, or at best is hung from the timbers of some old wain-hovel as a receptacle for cart-grease. The hoary-headed swains who sang its praises, to hearers that knew it not, have gone; and the leather bottle is numbered among the things that have been.



Fig. 29

Leather Bottle representing Charles II.,
from Mr. Edmondson's Collection.



Fig. 30

The Buttery Hatch at Winchester College.

CHAPTER III.

THE BLACK JACK.

THE black jack was, as we have already seen, a kind of leathern pitcher or jug, always lined with pitch or metal. Of massive and sturdy build, often corpulent and always capacious, its imposing stature quite dwarfs all rival pots. "Sir John," as he was playfully called in the time of the Stuarts, was during the greater part of his history emphatically an aristocratic vessel. We have traced the leather bottle through a career of some distinction, till it retired to a pastoral seclusion two centuries ago, but its bulkier relative to this day remains associated with old seats of learning, with the castles of noblemen and ancient manor-houses.

The latter half of the name "black jack" was probably an allusion to the leathern coat worn by soldiers and armed men generally. Minsheu, in his 1617 edition, says: "A Jacke of leather to drinke in, because it somewhat resembles a iacke or coat of mail." This defensive coat was known in England, for several centuries as "the jack," and when adopted by the French archers was called "jacque d'Anglois." The prefix "black" was no doubt added to the name of the drinking jack to distinguish it from this leather jerkin, which would generally be made of buff leather, and was therefore, as a rule, of a lighter colour; but

Hostillar" in the accounts of the same abbey in 1454 were five amphorae of leather, which were apparently not the same as pots, for wine pots of tin are mentioned in the same entry, the passage being "*In le Somer-hall v olle stanno pro vino, iij amphore de corio et iij de ligno.*" As wooden tankards were very large in mediaeval times, probably these amphorae of leather were the extra big sort that were called in later times "bombards."

COLLEGIATE JACKS.

The foregoing examples, and others given later,¹ are enough to show that the ancient monastic establishments of this country were usually possessed of leathern pots, although among the numerous inventories of monastic goods made

at the Dissolution they are very rarely to be found, the lists as a rule having but few details of strictly domestic drinking vessels. Those, however, of such institutions as did not end their career at the Reformation but survived with more or less modification to the present time, continued to make use of leathern pitchers and pots down to the beginning of the 19th century.

The black jack was a feature of the cellars, butteries and dining halls of our ancient hospitals, colleges and grammar schools till modern times, and in some cases until quite recent years.

The chief reason of their survival in such places is that the jack was essentially a vessel for the refectory or the baronial hall; so that while the ancient mode of



Fig. 31

Black Jack with Shield Arms at Eton College, from a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher.

living prevailed and every man of substance took his meals in his hall with his family and servants, it held a high place. But when more luxurious fashions came in and the lord took his meals privately in parlour or dining-room, the leathern pot remained in the hall with a greatly diminished staff of retainers and serving-men. Where the ancient mode of living was kept up, and large groups of people dined together, as in palaces, colleges, hospitals and grammar schools, there the black jack almost always remained in use. In old houses also they lingered on, but as the great hall passed out of use for meals, they were in later times generally confined to the servant's hall, with the exception of those that were silver-mounted. These latter were small as a rule and more richly treated, were edged with silver and often lined with that metal or with pewter, and in the 17th and 18th centuries were highly prized. An account of this kind of jack is given in Chapter V.

Professor Thorold Rogers gives in his *History of Agriculture and Prices in England* a great number of instances in which the ancient colleges of Oxford and Cambridge purchased, from the beginning of the 15th century to the end

¹ Early in Chap. VII.

of the 17th, many pots of leather which are variously entered as drinking jacks, leather *ollae*, leather gallons, jacks (with their capacities given), and finally as black jacks. These extracts relate only to those colleges whose old housekeeping accounts happen to have been preserved, and to have been accessible to Professor Rogers, but they are numerous enough to show that these leathern pitchers were a usual and important feature of the college halls of Oxford and Cambridge. The names of individual colleges are rarely given, but in Oxford, Magdalen, Corpus Christi, New College, Queen's and Merton Colleges are mentioned as frequently buying jacks, and in Cambridge, King's, Corpus Christi, and St. John's.

Unfortunately, very few of these collegiate black jacks remain in their original homes, but others, identified by the arms upon them, are said to exist in private collections.

At Cambridge no black jacks remain at any of the colleges, but at Oxford two still possess them, Queen's and New College. At the former there is a grand old jack in the buttery,¹ but its presence there only dates from modern times, as the following inscription, written in 1857, is pasted on the bottom: "1507-1517. This Black Jack was presented to Queen's College, Oxford, by the Rev. Arthur Eden, Vicar of Ticehurst, Sussex, and formerly member of the said College. It formed part of the furniture of Hever Castle in Kent, a Baronial Hall celebrated as the Birthplace of Anne Boleyn, daughter of the Earl of Wiltshire and wife of Henry VIII. Hever Castle was also the abode of Anne of Cleves, where she died in 1556."

At New College there is a smaller and later black jack, which is said to have come from Winchester College, though it is more probably a survival of the jacks once used here. It is kept in the ancient buttery, behind the hall screen. The buttery hatch too is very interesting and has carvings of black jacks and flagons in its arch spandrels, a more detailed account of which is given later.

At Winchester College black jacks were in use till "the sixties," and four or five still remain, one of which is in the porter's lodge and one in the cellar. The latter is 21 inches high and 30 round the body, with a capacity of twelve quarts, and the other which is illustrated at the top of Plate 21, is smaller, holds six quarts, and is 16 inches high and 25 round the centre. Both are as late as the 18th century, have round handles, and are more open at the mouth than earlier specimens. The one illustrated gives a fair idea of the character of both.

It is in such ancient institutions that the use of leather drinking vessels, especially of black jacks, lingered longest. The Warden of Winchester College, in 1897, remembered that when he was a boy at school there, black jacks were in daily use, the beer being brought into Hall in them and transferred to pewter mugs. The Rev. W. Tuckwell, in "Winchester Fifty Years Ago," written in 1893, as an account of the school-life of that period, says: "beer was brought up from the cellar in mighty leathern 'black jacks' and served in pewter jorums." The making of four jacks for this College at the beginning of the last century is alluded to in Chapter VIII., but the discontinuance of their use seems to have been gradual, as the general style of living became more luxurious. In Mr. T. J. Kirby's book on Winchester College, the first allusion to leather beer jacks in the Bursar's Computus is given as occurring in 1433. "*Sol pro olla de corio empt Londini pro generosis.*" Another entry in 1495 is for

¹ See illustration at end of Chap. V.

19 jacks. "*In sol pro xix ledyr gallyn pottes ad viijd, cum xijd. pro cariagio, pro mensa puerorum xiijs. viijd.*" which costing so much for carriage were probably also bought in London.



Fig. 32

Jacks, Candlesticks and Saltcellars at St. Cross Hospital, from a sketch by Hanslip Fletcher.

IN HOSPITALS AND SCHOOLS.

At the ancient Hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester, are two large leather cans, respectively eighteen and fourteen inches in height, which are possibly of pre-Reformation date.² (Fig. 32 gives a sketch of them.) The larger holds about three gallons. One of the Brethren who was living in 1896 assured me that he remembered, many years before he became an inmate of the Hospital that leather black jacks were used at the "Gaudy Day" festivities which were kept five times a year. A friend of Mr. H. Syer Cuming also remembered their being in use there early in the century. There does not appear, however, to be any documentary evidence remaining which relates to the use of such vessels.

In another old hospital, the London Charterhouse,³ black jacks were used down to modern days. The late Mr. W. H. Forman was a "Master's pupil" at Charterhouse School, and in his school days black jacks were in regular daily use in the dining-hall. His vivid recollections of them suggested (when Mr. H. Syer Cuming was writing his paper in the *Archaeological Journal*) the search which is thus described therein. "But one solitary black jack now remains at the Charterhouse. Its existence was denied by the officials, but Mr. Forman and myself succeeded in dragging it once more into the light of day. It is greatly injured by damp, but it is still a curious relic of conservation."⁴

¹ "Annals of Winchester College, 1892," p. 227.

² In more than one local guide these jacks are stated to date from 1444, but no authority is given for this.

³ The Charterhouse, originally a Carthusian monastery founded in 1371, was in 1575 converted into a mansion for Sir Edward North. In 1611 the Earl of Suffolk sold it to Thomas Sutton, who founded the present Hospital and School.

⁴ "Archaeol. Journal," Vol. XV., p. 342.

The jack thus rescued yet remained in the Buttery when I asked for it in the "nineties," but since 1900 has been in the museum of the new Charterhouse School at Godalming, and is an interesting example of considerable age, probably more than 200 years. It measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the base and is 8 inches high, but was originally more, as the top has been cut down, doubtless on account of injuries to the edge. It is illustrated at Fig. 33. It was not until about 1830 that these leather tankards gave place in the Hospital to more modern ware. Some early "store Books" of the Manciple (who had the charge of the drinking vessels) still exist at the Charterhouse, and contain interesting references to the purchase of drinking jacks, which must have been used there from the time of Sutton's foundation in 1611, for as early as 1617 they were being repaired. In that year occurs the item "Symounting sowing scouring and mending of Jacks xxij s." In 1618 "Black Jackes" were bought for Li, iis, xd. In the same year "mending of pottes and pannes with waxing clensing and colouring of Jackes xiiij s." In 1621 a "New Jacke with mending and scouring of the old" cost xxix s, id. and again "Black Jacks with mending the old" were xxiiij s, viij d." In 1622 "Jacks and cannes xxviij s, vjd."

There can be but very little doubt that at all colleges and large schools of ancient foundation in which the students were resident, black jacks were part of the domestic outfit. Besides Winchester College and the Charterhouse School and Hospital, evidences of their former use are forthcoming at Eton College, Westminster School, Christ's Hospital and Repton School. These evidences are so casual in their nature, and in the causes of their preservation so accidental, that the schools to which they refer may be regarded as samples taken at random, from the ancient grammar schools of the country, illustrating their domestic life. With these exceptions, the leathern pots seem to have disappeared without leaving any trace, though further instances of their having existed in old schools may yet be forthcoming in a manner as unexpected, for example, as at Westminster School, where the evidence of their use is quite recent. When I first enquired no jacks were known to survive, nor was there any record of their use in the past. Shortly after, however, two fine old specimens were discovered there, each capable of containing two gallons. Both have under the spout a triangle of stamped stars and one has lower down a fleur de lys stamped three times. One jack is slightly taller than the other, being $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches on the nose side, while the other jack is $15\frac{1}{2}$. Still more recently, on the departure of the predecessor of the late Dean from Westminster Abbey, a large number of old documents were found in the Jericho Parlour of the Deanery, and among them some accounts relating to the Westminster School Play. In one of the latter, entitled "The expenses of twoo playes.....plaied by the children of the Grammer Shchoole in the colledge of Westminster and before the Quenes maiestie, anno 1564," is the entry "and for a black Jack iijs."

Professor Thorold Rogers gives a great many instances from the records of Eton College of black jacks having been purchased for the use of the College. These entries extend from 1414 to the end of the 17th century, and show that the leather drinking jacks bought generally cost from $\frac{2}{4}$ to 3/-. In 1617, however, Eton gave $4\frac{3}{4}$ each for three new jacks, but in 1623 again only $\frac{2}{6}$ each. This difference was probably due to the jacks bought in 1617 having been of

extra large size, though the tendency is for the price to increase with the alteration in the value of money. In 1623 another was bought for 2/6. The price continued to rise, and in 1694 the College bought a jack for five shillings. There is now only one black jack in the buttery at Eton College. It is of some considerable size, being 14½ inches high, 9 inches across the base, and holding nearly two gallons. A sketch of it appears at Fig. 31. On the front a coat-of-arms has been painted, which, though somewhat injured by time, can easily be



Fig. 33

The Charterhouse Black Jack.

recognised as the shield of the College, azure three lilies slipped and leaved argent, two and one; a chief per pale azure and gules; on the dexter side a fleur de lis or on the sinister a lion passant guardant of the last. The jack is in good preservation, but is quite old enough in its shape to be one of those of the purchase of which documentary evidence remains.

By a passage in Charles Lamb's essay called "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty years ago," first published in 1820, we know that black jacks were used at that ancient foundation school at the end of the 18th century.

Relating in the third person many incidents in his own life at the school, he contrasts them with the treatment of another boy in whose name he writes. Lamb, it seems, "had his tea and hot rolls in the morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf, moistened with attenuated small-beer, in wooden piggins (see Fig. 2), smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from." The other boy is believed to have been S. T. Coleridge.

In a book called "Things not generally known," printed in 1861 by John Timbs, F.S.A., is the passage: "Leathern jacks are used at Christ's Hospital for bringing in the beer, whence it is poured into wooden piggins." They were disused, however, soon after that time and no black jacks have been known to exist at the Hospital for the last thirty years, but the term "Jack-boy," as one of the school "trades or domestic occupations," survived till more recent times. The jacks which were carried by them at the time the custom was superseded were of wooden staves bound with iron hoops, and had an iron lip and hinged handle across the top. Several of these wooden "jacks" are still in existence, and must have inherited the name from the real jacks which preceded them.

At Repton School, Derbyshire, black jacks were used up to and during the 18th century. Dr. Bigsby gives, in his "History of Repton," a description of the style in which the boys of the old school lived, which he derived from an ancient inhabitant. They used "wooden spoons and trenchers and pewter dishes; their drink was supplied in coarse earthenware mugs, replenished from leathern bottles, commonly called Black Jacks." One of these old jacks still

1 "Essays of Elia, 1894," p. 12. One of the wooden piggins from Christ's Hospital is shown at Fig. 2. It is now in the collection of Mr. H. Syer Cuming.

2 "Hist. of Repton" (1855), p. 396. The Doctor's informant falls into the usual error of confusing bottles with jacks.

survives in the possession of an old inhabitant at Repton, whose ancestors were in the school as boys. It is seven inches high, of unusual barrel-like contour and has three bands of indented lines going round its circumference.

In addition to the above instances, black jacks were used at the naval Hospital at Greenwich and at the Military Hospital at Chelsea till recent times, but as they were huge enough to be dignified by the name of bombards they are dealt with under that title in Chapter V. In the old Inns of Court of the City of London there are no known traces of the use of the black jacks. At Lincoln's Inn, some of the green earthen pots mentioned by Dugdale as being used by the Society of the Inner Temple, are still preserved, together with one of the old stone bottles called "greybeards."

THE JACK IN GUILD LIFE.

Feasts were an important feature of mediæval guilds, both of those which were semi-religious and educational, and also of the craft guilds; so that leathern pots would naturally be present at such gatherings and form a part of guild property in those times, as there is ample evidence that they did later.

Details are not often forthcoming to show what were the materials of the great tankards of ale and wine, of which we read in connection with the guild feasts of the Middle Ages; but of those used by the Stratford-on-Avon Guild of the Holy Cross in 1454, thirteen were black jacks. An inventory of the Guild's property in the thirty-sixth year of King Henry VI. exists among the records of the town at Shakespeare's birthplace, and among a number of wooden vessels—"tancards, cuppis and bollis of tree,"—there were "xiiij pottis of ledir whereof iij galoneris and x potillers."¹ The same jacks are mentioned in another inventory, four years later, in almost the same words, and the old half-timber Guild Hall in which they were kept and used, still stands, as it is to be hoped it may stand for ages to come, as apart from its great antiquity, it was there that William Shakespeare must have seen his first play. (See Fig. 34.)

I have met with seven actual examples of black jacks which within the last 300 years were owned by craft guilds. Five of these were at Oxford.

In the year 1887 Mr. L. B. Philips, F.S.A., exhibited at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries a black jack fifteen inches high, of which he gave an account, from which the following is an extract: "On the upper part of the front are the arms of the University of Oxford on an ornate shield, and on either side is a much defaced shield, that on the dexter charged with the arms of the Barber's Company. Quarterly 1st and 4th sable a chevron between three fleams argent 2nd and 3rd argent a rose gules, crowned or, over all on a cross gules, a lion of England. The sinister shield is difficult to make out; the field is argent charged with three fleams and another object gules. The lower part of the front is inscribed "William Sherwin." The Barbers' Company was incorporated in 1348, and remained incorporated until 1675, when they received a new charter from the University. The fourth Master under the new charter was William Sherwin, whose name appears on the jack. He was elected in 1678, which gives the probable date of the vessel. The jack continued the property of the Company till 1839, when it was sold."²

¹ "Stratford Records," Div. 12, No. 184.

² "Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries," Vol. XL.

In the possession of Mr. Brinsley Marley is a large jack which is in many respects a most interesting example. Its history was not known, but it has considerable traces of painted arms upon it, by which I have ascertained that it belonged, like that last described, to the Barbers' Company of Oxford. On the upper part of the front is a defaced shield of late character, which has certainly borne the arms of Oxford University, azure, between three crowns or, an open book proper inscribed "*Dominus illuminatio mea.*" On the sinister side of the jack the arms correspond so far as they exist to the remains on the one described by Mr. Philips, but are only discernible as being gules on an argent field. Those on the dexter certainly correspond to those on the Barbers' Jack, though it can only be deciphered as follows: Quarterly 1st and 4th sable, a chevron between three defaced objects gules, over all, on a cross gules, traces of a charge or. The lower part of the front has the name "Tho Wells." The silver rim is modern.

Mr. Philips traced with some difficulty the jack he described, and I have carefully examined it. In the time which has elapsed since he first saw it the arms have become still more defaced, but the style of them, the shape of the shields, and peculiarities in the lettering of the name, so exactly correspond to those of Mr. Brinsley Marley's jack, that there can be little doubt that they were both painted by the same hand and probably near to the same time. Unfortunately Mr. Philips gave no references, and has forgotten the sources of his information, or it would no doubt have been possible to ascertain with accuracy when Thos. Wells was Master of the Barbers' Company.

THE JOINERS' JACK.

In the summer of 1895 a black jack of great size, and resplendent with arms and ornament, was sold for £18 15s., with the household effects of the late Mr. Hall, of Folly Bridge, Oxford. It afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Harding of St. James' Square, who discovered from the coats-of-arms painted on it that it had been the property of the Joiners' Company of Oxford. An illustration is given at Plate I, from which it will be seen that it is an extremely fine and picturesque example, and that its emblazoning is much more decorative than is usual with black jacks. The front has a large shield with the arms of the old Joiners' Company; on the dexter side of the jack is a shield with the arms of Oxford City. Under this shield is the date 1712. On the sinister side is another shield with the words "John Baker, Master." The date of the arms and painting is therefore not earlier than the reign of Queen Anne, but the jack itself has the air of being rather older, and there are incised lines on the spout portion arranged in a pattern not unusual in jacks of the 17th century. It has also the letters "I.G." twice impressed in the leather, which are doubtless the maker's initials. John Baker must have re-painted, and, perhaps, presented the jack while holding the office of Master. It is 19 inches high and 9 across the bottom, and now forms a striking feature of the collection of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse at Wootton Wawen, near Stratford-on-Avon.

THE CORDWAINERS' JACK.

In the possession of Mr. H. C. Moffat, of Goodrich Court, Herefordshire, the modern castle which Sir Samuel R. Meyrick built to contain his celebrated collection of armour, is a black jack of picturesque and remarkable character.

A photograph of this, which was taken for me by Mr. Alfred Watkins of Hereford, led me to think that it had belonged to the Cordwainers' Company of Oxford. Its present possessor acquired it from a dealer of that city, who knew nothing

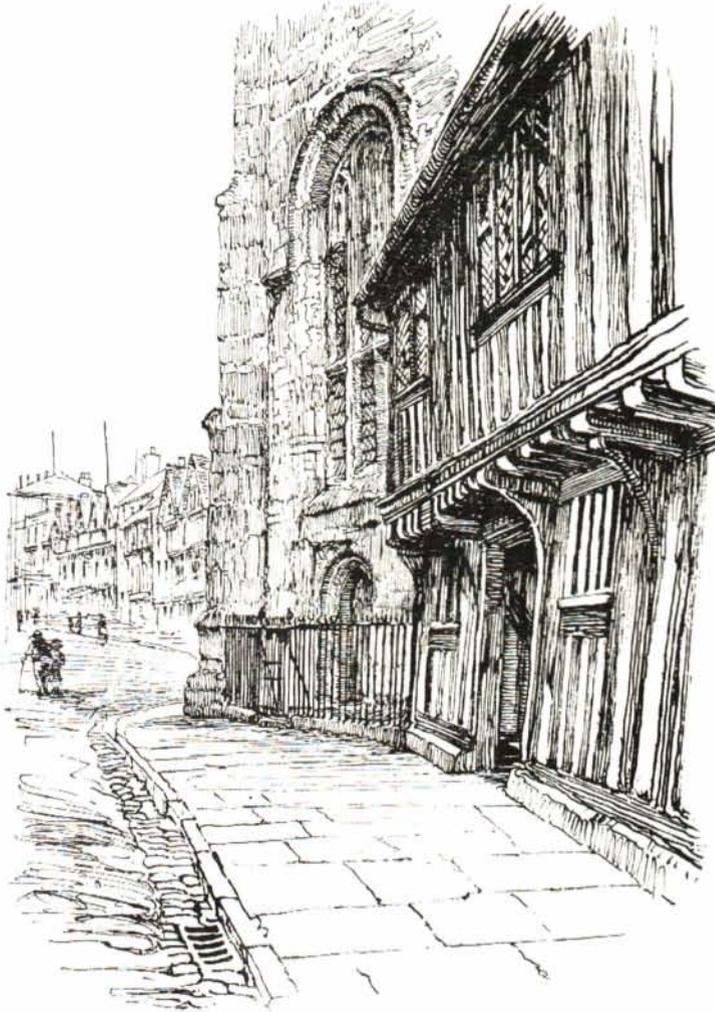


Fig. 34

The Guildhall, Stratford-on-Avon, where thirteen drinking jacks were in use in 1454.

of its history, but the researches kindly made for me by Miss L. Toulmin Smith proved that my surmise was correct, and by the courtesy of Mr. Moffat I was able to make a careful drawing (See Plate 10) of this interesting jack, which is one of the most picturesque in existence. Colour is not the strong point of black

jacks as a rule, but the colour of this huge old flagon is excellent, and lends it an air of great distinction; the metal portions being gilded and the arms so toned by time that their tinctures are a valuable addition to the harmony of the whole.

It has every appearance of having been originally made in the 17th century, but at some subsequent period it has been elaborately mounted, lined with metal and fitted with a metal lid, the external parts being covered with gold leaf. Probably at the same time it was painted with three coats of arms. A large shield on the front is that of the Oxford Cordwainer's and is surmounted by their crest, a goat's head argent. On the dexter side are the arms of Oxford University, and on the sinister those of Oxford City. Across the lower part of the front is a gilt label with the inscription "John Holmes, Oxford," and under it, in white paint, the date 1806.

The Guild of Cordwainers and Corvesors of Oxford was one of great antiquity, its records dating back to the time of Henry I. An old inn, long known as "The Three Goats," is believed to have been the Cordwainers' Hall, which they were building in 1595. At that time it was the custom for an annual feast to be paid for by each newly-elected Master "of hys fre and franke good will," but early in the 17th century this dinner was given up. In 1631 it was revived and the cost defrayed out of the guild funds. Up till this time the existing books of the Company show no sign of their having possessed any black jacks, but in 1646, "Three silver boules and Two black Jacks" occur. In the November of each year the property of the guild, as handed over by the old Master and Warden to their successors, is noted in the Book of Accompts and Receipts. In 1650, and annually till 1655, there were "three silver Bolls and two Black Jacks." In the latter year the entry runs "three silver bowles two great black Jacks, and one little Black Jack tipped with silver given by George Stayner." This is very interesting, because the present owner of the Company's documents also possesses their silver mounted jack. Its donor was a Cordwainer, and was selected Warden in 1660. In 1661 "three greate black Jacks" were handed over, a new one having been recorded in the "Disbursements." "Item paid William Tounge for the Jacke o. i. o. Item paid Will. Wise for paynting it o. i. 6." As Tounge was a member of the Company it would seem likely that he had made the jack, but one shilling, considerably less than the cost of painting it, was a very low price for a great black jack in 1661, and it is very doubtful if the jacks were new when they were acquired. In 1665, fourpence, and in 1691 four shillings, was paid "for mending the Jacks," and in the latter year "for paynting the Jacks—o. 5. o." In the year 1700 the great black jacks were for the first time four in number, and in the accounts of the same year an entry "paid for mending Mr. Faulkner's Jack o.o.2," seems to indicate the source from which the additional one came, Daniell Faulkner having been Master of the Company. If he did present it at this time it could not have been a new one or it would not have required mending. An entry at the same date says "paid to Mr. Smith for mending three Jacks o. 5. o." and in 1701 is another payment to the same member of one shilling for mending a jack.

In 1702, the first year of Queen Anne, five black jacks, in addition to the silver-mounted one, are mentioned for the first time, though nothing is said in the

1 The records of the Guild are now in the possession of Mrs. F. P. Morrell, of Oxford, by whose permission the late Miss Lucy Toulmin Smith examined them for me.

accounts as to any gift or purchase of the fifth, and the five continue yearly to be recorded till 1712. The usual form of the entry is as follows, and gives the whole of the guild's property, the streamers and truncheons having been originally bought when James II. visited the city: "Memorandum that the old Master and Warden delivered to the new Master and Warden several charters and writings, belonging to the Company, together with three silver bowles, six dubble handled silver cupps, five black Jacks, one little Black Jack tipped with silver, one silver flaggon, one silver seale and beadle's staffe, two streamers, two truncheons, and one instrument under the City seale."

In 1712 the following addition occurs: "And also one Guilded Black Jack the giuft of Mr. Edward Wordsworth, one of the Bayliffs of this City the last year." This vessel was doubtless an unusually fine one, as it is mentioned separately by name till 1727, after which date six black jacks are put down besides the little one each year. In 1742 the number of jacks dropped to five without apparent cause. Probably the guild was less flourishing, as their other vessels had dwindled, there being only "one dubble-handled silver cup" instead of six. In 1799, Thos. Fox Bricknell being Master and Thos. Hen. Taunton being Warden, the five black jacks were sold; for in the accounts are the following items under the head of receipts:—

Recd. of Mr. Taunton for a pewter flaggon and two black Jacks	0. 11. 6.
Do. of Mr. Rushbridge for 1 black jack	0. 2. 0.
Do. of Mr. Jno. Holmes for 1 ditto	0. 5. 3.
Do. of Mr. Coleman for 1 ditto	0. 4. 0.

Edward Rushbridge was a member of the Company in that year, but had not paid his quarteridge. After this there is naturally no mention of the black jacks in the Company's accounts. The little jack tipped with silver seems to have disappeared after 1742, but how, does not appear, and which of the large ones is the one now in the possession of Mr. Moffat is not absolutely certain. Gilded jacks are very rarely heard of, and the one in question has all its metal mountings and much of its decoration covered with gold leaf. It therefore seems at first sight that it might have been the "Guilded Black Jack the giuft of Mr. Edward Wordsworth, one of the Bayliffs of this City," presented in 1712. It has, however, two different sets of names and dates upon it, one of which seems to show that it was in 1712 already in the Company's possession. On the metal base with which the jack has been strengthened is a date of which the first three figures, 170, are quite clear, while the fourth is nearly obliterated; there is also a name of which only the initials, C.P., can be read with certainty. However, the documents of the Guild show that the Master in 1700 was Charles Prince, and with this as a clue the name is unmistakeable, and if the indecipherable figure was a 2, the jack which mysteriously appears in the records in 1702 would be accounted for.

The gilt label across the front of Mr. Moffat's jack bears the words "John Holmes, Oxford," and the date 1806, has already been alluded to, so that the history of the jack as gathered from its appearance, its arms, inscriptions, and the

papers of the Guild of Cordwainers, appears to be as follows :—Originally made in the middle of the 17th century, it was presented to the Company about 1700, by Charles Prince, who was Master in that year, and probably at that time it received its metal mounting. In 1799, when the goods of the Company were being dispersed, it was bought again by Mr. John Holmes for 5/3, the largest sum that any jack sold for. In 1802 Holmes was one of the Wardens of the Company, was elected Master on the 21st of October, 1805, remaining in office till the same day of 1806. He must therefore have had the jack re-painted to celebrate that event and doubtless produced it at the annual feast which it had so long adorned.

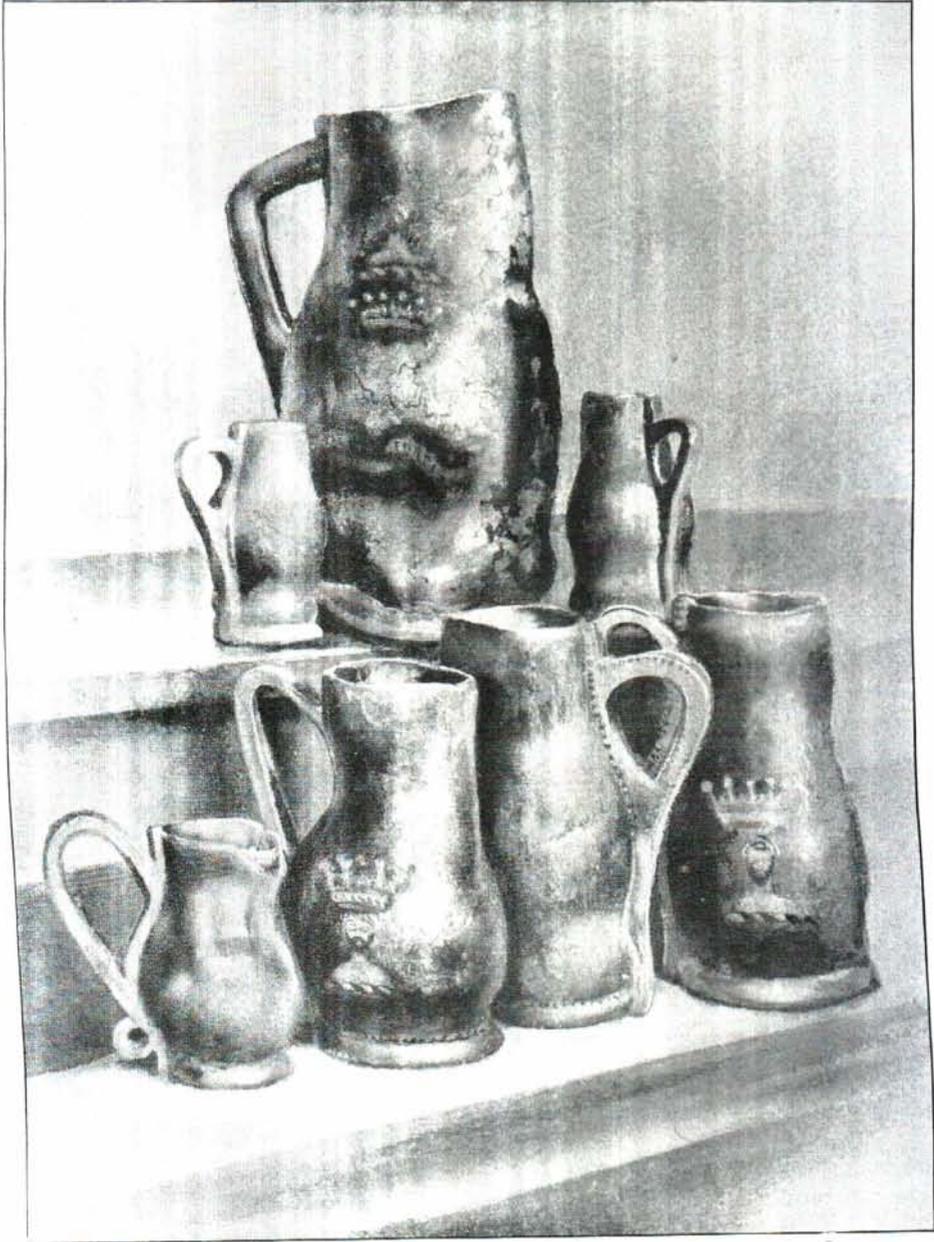
At that time the name of Charles Prince was no doubt on the front of the vessel, and Holmes in substituting his own, must have had the original donor recorded on the bottom, which being quite flat, would be liable to rapid wear and tear, and so the inscription has become obscure.

THE MASONS' JACK.

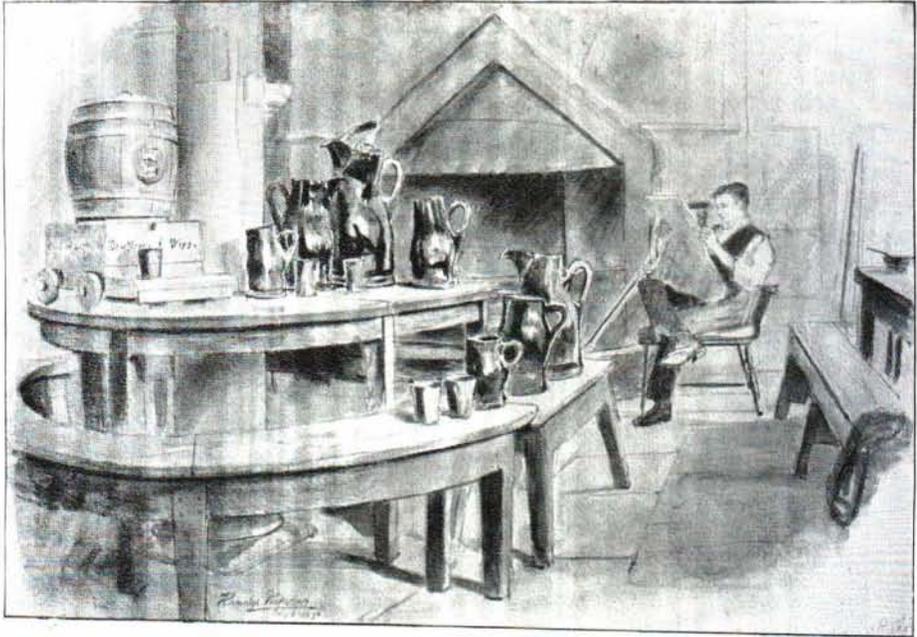
A handsome and finely-modelled jack of large size, which has remained for generations in the family of the late Viscount Lifford, bears on the front a painted shield of arms (Fig. 35). It is considerably worn with age, but can be identified as the ancient arms of the Worshipful Company of Masons of London. The shield is oval in shape with a wide border of scroll work, and the arms are sable, on a chevron argent, a pair of compasses of the first, between three castles of the second. The jack is more than sixteen inches high and has a gilded band round the top. In the middle of each side are five rosettes arranged diamondwise, stamped in the leather, which ornament also occurs on the middle of the front, with the makers initials, I.S., over it. The character of this jack shows it to belong to the middle of the 17th century, and the arms may be a little later, but not much. The shape of the shield, and the style of its border, is the same as those on the jack of the Barbers' Company of Oxford, which bears the name of Wm. Sherwin, Master of that great fraternity in 1678. This is about the date of the coat-of-arms on the Mason's jack.

Mr. Edward Conder, who has written a history of the Masons' Company of London, has found no trace of black jacks in their records, and as the inventories of the guild for the last half of the 17th century are very complete, it is possible that the jack belonged to one of the companies of Masons, which existed in a few of the older towns, as it was the habit of provincial guilds to use the arms of the corresponding London Company.

At Lincoln, the Guild of Bellringers possessed a large leather jack, which is now the property of the landlord of the Black Boy Tavern, having been left in pawn, so it is said, for ale, before the guild became extinct. This jack is 16½ inches high, 9 inches across the bottom, and 4 across the top. Its rather small spout makes it awkward to pour from, which is a consideration, as it holds eleven quarts and is always filled with real "home-brewed" on Christmas eve and other special occasions. Across the front it bears the words "City Ringers" in large gold letters; on the dexter side is a large bell "proper" with enrichments or, and on the sinister a shield of late design with scroll work and a coat-of-arms, argent, on a cross gules a fleur de lis or. Round the body is this inscription: "This Jack was the Gift of Alderman Bullen to the Company of Ringers," and



Bombard and group of Jacks at Madresfield Court, in the possession of the Earl Beauchamp.
From a sketch by the Author. (Chap. III.)



The Duke of Bedford's Black Jacks, Woburn Abbey, from a drawing by Hanslip Fletcher.
(Chap. III.)



Three Spurious Jacks. (Chap. VIII.)

under the spout is the date 1782 in gold letters. The general character of this fine Jack (apart from its very handsome decorations) is that of at least two centuries ago. The date no doubt records the year of its presentation to the Ringers' Company, but it was probably not then a new one. The Company seems to date from the year 1612, judging by their Ordinances.'

In the Fieldhouse collection is a handsome mug-shaped jack with silver mount and a shaped shield on the front bearing the arms of the Leathersellers' Company. Round the rim is an inscription of apparently later date.



[Fig. 35

Black Jack of the Guild of Masons, in the possession of the Vicountess Lifford.

At the present day the leather jack has become exceedingly scarce, and it is to be looked for in public museums and among the hoards of collectors. Nevertheless, in addition to those already described, a considerable number are yet to be found which remain in their original quarters; and more wonderful still, a few are even yet applied to their original purpose.

JACKS AT MADRESFIELD.

In some of the ancient castles and old manor-houses of England which have weathered "the wreckful siege of battering days," and the still more destructive attentions of man, there yet exist such vessels in good condition. Probably the

1 Assoc. Architec. Soc. "Reports," Vol. XX., p. 35.

finest array of black jacks now remaining in use is at Madresfield Court, the ancient seat of Earl Beauchamp, near Malvern. Here in the servant's hall, the windows of which overlook the still waters of the moat, hangs a row of ten grand leather pitchers of various sizes, some of which were, when I sketched them, in daily use for serving beer at the servant's table. As will be seen by the group of seven of them at Plate 11, they are of different shapes, periods, and capacities, ranging from a huge bombard of fourteen quarts to a modest flagon of one quart. Five of them are emblazoned with the Beauchamp crest (a savage's head affrontée, couped at the shoulders), over which is an earl's coronet.

The largest jack, which is evidently of greater age than the others, has on one side the remains of the coat-of-arms of the Beauchamps; argent two lions passant, in pale, tails fourchée. The supporters are, on the dexter side, a bear proper, muzzled collared, and chained or, and on the sinister, a swan argent, wings elevated gules, ducally gorged gules, beaked and legged sable. The painting of these arms is considerably perished with age, but more than half of the motto, "*Ex fide fortis*," can be made out beneath them. Over the shield an earl's coronet is painted, and over that the Beauchamp crest. This jack is probably some centuries old. The smaller jacks of ten, nine and six quarts respectively are of shapes not uncommon in the 17th century, but the one which stands second in the front row (see Plate 11) is in my experience quite unique in contour. It holds six quarts and has a rather slender curved handle which is attached low down the somewhat globose body of the jack.

The first jack in the same row has a curious ewer-like shape which is unusual but not unique. Its handle is somewhat similar to that of the last-mentioned, and quite unlike those of most jacks of its size (which are often only separated from the seam at the back of the vessel sufficiently to admit the hand of the carrier), it makes a wide loop, sweeps boldly away and rejoins the jack near its base. A singular feature of this jack is a ring which grows out of the back seam near the handle and forms part of it, being cut from the same leather as the whole vessel. It was probably intended to enable the jack to be hung up in an inverted position to drain. Of the three smallest jacks, only two of which are shown, one is one-and-a-half, one two, and another one quart respectively.

This extraordinary group of ten jacks is in excellent preservation throughout, and forms altogether as fine an example as could be found of the leathern pots of a great mansion in olden times. Continuous use has saved them from neglect or destruction, and perhaps the powerful "home-brewed" which still circulates in them may have helped to preserve them.

Next to those at Madresfield may be placed a set of seven fine jacks in the possession of the Duke of Bedford at Woburn Abbey. They are quite plain, having neither arms nor ornament, but are of great interest, as they are known to have been in regular use throughout the 19th century and were only superseded a few years ago (in 1896), when they had become so saturated with long use as to compare unfavourably with modern vessels.

They are all of the same period, and were probably made about the time that the house was built (1718). The three largest, holding respectively twelve, ten and six quarts, have been furnished with metal spouts of a curved shape, which gives them a very quaint and acquiline appearance. The largest of all has also a leather strap over the top to serve as an additional handle. This is a fine

jack 19 inches high. The other four are of the shape usual at the end of the 17th century and have not been altered. Of these the largest is a rather squat vessel, 13 inches high, and holds four quarts. The next is 12½ inches and holds two quarts. The other two hold one quart each and are 7½ and 8 inches high respectively. The drawing at Plate 12 shows all the seven in the Servants' Hall at Woburn Abbey, in which they have so long served, and gives a good idea of their general character. The jack waggon near them is interesting, and was used to push along the table after the cloth was removed, so that each could fill for himself. Round the waggon are four inscriptions: "Be merry and wise," "Avoid all disputes," "Repeat no old grievances," "Live in Friendship."

At Stoneleigh Abbey, in Warwickshire, the historic home of Lord Leigh, is a very large leather jack which is still used daily in the servant's hall, and to carry liquor to the "field" when the hounds meet in Stoneleigh Park. Its size is so great, however, that the modern serving men have found it too much to carry in the original jug-like fashion, so a handle of copper has been fixed over the top to enable it to be carried bucketwise. So also, in order to avoid the exertion of pouring from it in the ordinary manner, a brass tap has been inserted in the bottom, no doubt at the same time. It has had emblazoned on the front the arms of the Leighs, gules a cross engrailed argent, in the first quarter with a lozenge of the second, the supporters being unicorns armed, maned tufted and unguled or, ducally gorged gules. Over the arms is a barons' coronet, and over that the remains of the Leigh crest, a unicorn's head erased argent, armed and crined or. The arms are, however, considerably damaged by age and use.

The house is of various dates, of great size, and contains considerable remains of the 12th century Cistercian Abbey. In an old vaulted crypt now used as a brew-house, another black jack is hung, high up in the arch of a great lancet window. It is in rather bad condition (being all the worse for the reek of innumerable brewings, which hangs about the old walls), but yet has considerable interest. The larger jack is 19½ inches high and 30½ round the middle, and holds four gallons. This one is 15 inches high, 27 inches round, and would have held about two gallons.

At Stanton House, Stanton-in-the-Peak, now one of the seats of the Duke of Rutland, three leather jacks holding respectively a gallon-and-a-half, a gallon, and half-a-gallon, were in daily use by the servants, till the autumn of 1880. At the death in that year of the owner they were bought at a sale by dealers from Manchester, and realised high prices.

Black jacks are still in use in the great Jacobean house of the Marquis of Northampton, Castle Ashby near Northampton, but one of the three that remain in the servants' hall there, has become leaky and is disused. All of them have been fitted with brass taps, which is evidence of their having remained in active service till modern times. The largest is a large and picturesque bombard of four gallons, measuring 20 inches in height and 10 across the bottom, and though in daily use is still in perfect preservation. It has gilt bands at top and bottom, and across the front the Compton crest, on a mount vert, a beacon fired proper, behind it a riband inscribed "*Nisi Dominus*" is painted, and over it the coronet of a Marquis. It has a handle of enormous proportions, of the triangular shape, and is probably nearly 200 years old. (Plate 19.)

1 This jack has since been taken down and repaired, and with the larger one is kept in a room called "The Museum."

The second in point of size is 18 inches high, and is in the upper part of very unusual shape, being decidedly wider from side to side than it is from back to front, so has no trace of spout. It is only slightly later than the larger jack, and has the same angular handle and a similar brass tap, as may be seen at Plate 19, in which it is figured to the right of the centre one. The painting on it shows the same crest and coronet, but much more clumsily executed and at an earlier time.

The third jack (on the left of the group in Plate 19) is in worse preservation than the others, but not necessarily more ancient. Such vessels have often been spoiled by the servants in past times placing them near the fire to warm the beer, and the inserting of metal taps is also a source of danger. The handle of this jack is of more rounded shape, and on the bottom is the date 1728 in white paint. The Compton crest and a coronet are also painted on the jack, but they are greatly superior in colour and execution to the others, and considerably older. The coronet is that of an earl, and the marquissate dates from the beginning of the 18th century. There is a strong chain fastened through the leather near the top edge, to which a horn cup was formerly attached.



Fig. 36

Crest and Initials of the Lechmeres' from Jack at Severn End.

Mr. E. G. Wheler-Galton has at Claverdon Leys, Warwickshire, four old black jacks which it is customary to use for beer when the hounds meet there. The largest, which is 15 inches high and holds five quarts, is evidently of great age from its shape and the condition of the leather. It has, however, no arms, date, or marks. The other three are of less ancient appearance, and have in gilt letters the words "Edstone Hall" and the letters "M.P." They are also ornamented with a pattern of vines and grapes in the same golden colour. The inscriptions, however, have been put on within the memory of the late owner, Darwin Galton, Esq., and indicate a former home, and the initials of his first wife, from whose family the jacks came. These three are respectively 14 inches, 13 and 10 inches in height. They were all four inherited from the Vernons of Hanbury (whose arms appear in a piece of tapestry at the back of the sketch of the more ancient jack, Plate 24), and came with others now worn out and lost from Hanbury Hall, Worcestershire.

Until the end of the 18th century, three large jacks of leather were used in the servant's hall at Rushmore, near Salisbury (till recent times), the home of the well-known antiquary, General Pitt-Rivers. They are now in the dining-room and have the arms of the first Lord Rivers, who died in 1803, painted on the fronts in gold and colours, and also the letter R. The largest is 18 inches in height and 10 across the base, the other two are equal in size, nearly 14 inches high and 8½ across the base. These hold about six quarts each, and the largest thirteen quarts. Judging by their shape they were made in the 17th century.

Cotheridge Court, near Worcester, a mansion of considerable antiquity hidden behind an 18th century Classic facade, and approached by a magnificent double avenue of limes, possesses a very fine old jack of later character than the foregoing examples, as its design shows it to belong to the reign of Queen Anne or one of the Georges. An old inventory and some books of ancient housekeeping

accounts are preserved at Cotheridge, but they contain no references to leathern vessels and this jack is the only one remaining. The present lord of the manor however, (R. M. Berkely, Esq.) can remember its being in daily use up to the time of the death of his grandfather in 1870.

In the hall at Bramhill Park, Hampshire, the magnificent old pile, erected by Lord Zouche in the time of James I., and now the home of Sir Anthony Cope, Bart., are two early 18th century black jacks with roundish handles, and in excellent condition, and there are several others about the house which were in use there in past times.

In the disastrous fire which in 1896 destroyed a considerable part of the picturesque old timber and plaster mansion of the Lechmere's, Severn End, near Hanley Castle, Worcestershire, two fine black jacks were unfortunately consumed. Not many months before, Sir Edmund Lechmere had kindly taken photographs of them for this work, from one of which (Plate 13) is reproduced. It will be seen that they were of the more usual shape of Stuart period jacks, but were not of great size. The larger was 14 inches high and held upwards of a gallon, and the smaller 9 inches. On the front of each the crest of the Lechmeres,—a pelican proper with wings extended vulning itself, issuing out of an earl's coronet—was emblazoned. Under the crest on each vessel was a monogram of late design. (Fig. 36.) They are probably the initials of the Rev. Berwick Lechmere, great uncle to the present Baronet, and formerly Vicar of Hanley Castle, who for some years lived at Severn End, and in whose time the jacks were no doubt in use. Their destruction is all the more to be regretted as they were in perfect preservation.

At Spring Hill, near Broadway, Worcestershire, the old home of the Lygons, there were less than forty years ago three large black jacks holding respectively three, two, and one gallons. They were bought at a sale there by an Oxford dealer, but had until then been regularly used for serving beer to the hunt when the hounds met at Spring Hill. All of them were painted with the Lygon crest.

At the London Museum at Lancaster House are three jacks, lent by Mr. Kennerly Rumford, who cannot trace their history beyond the dealer of whom he bought them. But as they each bear the Lygon crest and in other respect correspond, it seems practically certain that they are the jacks from Spring Hill. At the bottom of the back seam of each is a loop made in continuation of the seam, like one at Madresfield.

The village baker at Eckington in Worcestershire remembered that when delivering bread at Woolas Hall, a most interesting Elizabethan house, romantically placed, high up the side of Bredon Hill, he had often been refreshed with beer, which was poured from a leathern jug and drunk from a horn cup. This was within the last thirty years, but a search has failed to reveal any trace of it.

At Wombledon, in the parish of Nawton, Yorkshire, a local collection, that of Mr. J. Parker, contains a pair of black jacks said to have come from Helmsley Castle. In the muniments of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir are inventories which mention black jacks as being at the Castle at Helmsley, which came into the Rutland family by the marriage of a Manners with Eleanor Ros.

These instances of black jacks having remained in use in old manor-houses until recent times, or of their still remaining in use, are not very numerous, but it is extremely probable that others survive the march of modern progress. It

may also be said that these instances are mostly from the Midland districts, with which I am more intimately acquainted, and that there is no apparent reason for these counties being exceptionally rich in such survivals of the past.



Fig. 37

Lord Sackville's Jacks at Knole, Kent.

DISUSED JACKS.

In addition to the above there are a considerable number of these old vessels which, though disused before the range of living memory, are still preserved in the ancient quarters which were their original home. In addition to the following examples it is practically certain that there are others (probably many others) of considerable interest that have escaped my notice, and I should be grateful to any one who will inform me of them.

At Lord Sackville's celebrated mansion, Knole House, in Kent, three black jacks have survived. They are now grouped with a number of other quaint old drinking vessels in an old tapestried room called the "Organ Chamber," having been rescued by the present Lady Sackville from one of the cellars. (See Fig. 37.)

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, the seat of the Marquis of Hertford, contains three very fine old jacks which are all that remain of those once used in the house. One is of great size, being $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and eleven across the bottom. By its shape it should belong to the late Stuart period. A smaller jack is very wide for its height and rather clumsy in build, being nearly twelve inches across and 18 inches high. It is older than the first and less shapely. The third is later than the other two, and probably belongs to the 18th century. It is a very interesting pot of curious shape, with a remarkable handle curved in outline but very wide and flat, and having at the base a curl or ring of leather growing out of it, resembling very much one of the Beauchamp jacks at Madresfield, but having more the character of a perforated ornamental finish to the handle and less that of a ring of leather; by means of it the pot could be suspended upside down in order to drain it.

In the dining-room, at Clandon Park, Surrey, the old mansion of the Earl of Onslow, are two fine black jacks which were the property of Richard Onslow, Knight of the Shire for Surrey in several parliaments from the year 1627, and a son of the Speaker of Elizabeth's day. They have the crest of the family (an eagle sable preying upon a partridge or) between the letters R.O. and the date 1623 painted on each. They are both alike, stand $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and are 9 inches across the base. Sketches of these beautiful jacks are given at Figs. 38 and 39.



Fig. 38

Jack with crest and date in the possession of the Earl of Onslow.

At Helmingham Hall in Suffolk, the old moated quadrangular house of Mary Lady Tollemache were in ancient times a number of black jacks. Four of them of great size, with the triangular-shaped handle which generally indicates a 17th century date at latest, are now in the dining room. They are 22 inches in height, 36 round the bulge of the body, and 22 round the neck. They are without arms or dates, but two of them may be those mentioned in a 1597 inventory preserved in the hall, which gives "ij great black Jackes" and "v lesser black Jacks" in the buttery (see bottom of Plate 4). Three silver-mounted jacks, formerly at Helmingham, of which an account is given in Chapter V., are now at Peckforton Castle in Cheshire, the chief seat of Lord Tollemache.

A friend who was born near Stoke Poges in Bucks, told me that fifty years ago, at the old manor house, there were several black jacks under a table in the kitchen, and in an account of the house, printed in 1876, "Some curious black leather 'jacks,' quite perfect, bearing the crown and date 1646, are seen in the domestic offices, where there is a kitchen 'capacious enough for the hospitality of an attorney-general, who had a queen for his guest,' the wide fireplace with heraldic sculptures still remaining." This house is a portion of the old hall which is the scene of the poet Gray's "Long Story," as the churchyard is well known to be of the exquisitely beautiful "Elegy." He spent much of his youth at Stoke Poges, and is buried in the churchyard.

In April, 1893, there was a great sale lasting six days, at Lambourne Place in Berkshire, which was owned for centuries by the Hippingsleys, and among other ancient relics six black jacks were sold and five leather bottles. One of the jacks had the unusual height of two feet, three were 22 inches high, and the two smallest 15 inches. They were all bought by dealers from London.

A LATE EXAMPLE.

The leathern jug in one of its most modern phases is seen in an example at Rushmore in General Pitt-Rivers' collection. There is very little of the characteristic shape or treatment of a jack about it, and it is evidently modelled upon the design of ancient Classic ware. It has a large curved spout, high sweeping handle, and thin neck gradually expanding into the body, which after swelling

1 Old English Homes, by S. Thompson, 1876, p. 188.

midway into an urn shape again diminishes to a very slender circumference above the broad and nearly flat foot. The latter has a strong rim of silver with a scalloped edge round it, which rim is also enriched by a moulded beading in high relief. Round the widest swell of the body is a scroll pattern, painted in red, and there is a deep border of silver round the mouth of the jug, fastened on with eight studs of the same metal. The upper edge of this silver rim has a small beaded moulding round it and the lower edge is cut into semi-circular vandykes. The total height of the jug with handle is 13 inches, and it holds two quarts.

A very similar jug was in the collection of Mr. R. Drane of Cardiff. It has the same unusual Classic shape, the same silver mounting of the foot and deep silver rim to the lip, but the projecting discs at each side of the latter are slightly oval instead of round. Round the widest part of the body there is an elaborate pattern painted in red in a conventional Classic design, and in front under the spout is a well-executed painting of an ox's head surrounded by long wreath-like painted patterns. The foot is of wood covered with leather above, and greatly strengthened below by the returning under it of the silver mount. Engraved round the silver rim is the following couplet :

" The Hide of this Ox we to leather will turn ;
Of that Leather make Jacks, and make cups of the Horn."

The cups, which are photographed with the jacks, were bought with it, and are supposed to have been made from the horns of the same animal whose hide served for the leather of the jug. These horn cups are four-and-a-half inches high, and are incised with hunting scenes. The pewter lining makes these jugs very heavy, and is an important element in their construction, but a very small one of the same date has no lining and is extremely light. It is now in the Guildhall Museum, London, and is eight inches high and eleven-and-threequarters round the widest part. It is of the same design as the two just described, and belongs to the same period, the latter half of the 18th century, as also does a similar tiny jack shown in the group from the collection of Mr. H. H. Edmondson, second in the front row on Plate 16.

EARLY REPRESENTATIONS OF JACKS.

The shape and appearance of mediæval leather pots must be gathered chiefly from a study of those existing examples which appear to be the most ancient, for early representations of them are excessively rare. In some books on the miserere carvings of ancient church stalls, certain of the vessels there represented are described as black jacks, but all of them appear to me to be such as might be intended to represent almost any kind of large flagon.

There is, however, under one of the seats of the choir stalls at Malvern Priory a pot represented, which seems to be intended for a leather jack. The carving shows a group of figures in the pointed caps and tippets of the 14th century, and one of them has the pot in his left hand and a goblet in his right. (See Fig. 41.) A very much finer example—though of later date, being of the end of 15th century—is a carving of a black jack on one of the spandrels of the buttery-hatch at New College, Oxford. (Fig. 40.) The wall is covered with oak panelling, and the arch is appropriately decorated with carvings of servers with mugs, flagons, black jacks, bread basket and cheese. The treatment of the groups is dictated by the

shape of the spandrils that they fill, so that the size of the jack is exaggerated in comparison to the size of the figure, but the larger scale has enabled the artist to depict with extra fidelity the characteristic features which distinguish an early jack from other kinds of pitchers. Not only the general contour but the triangular handle, the hollowed top edge and the bold projecting seam down the back of the pot, and of which the handle is a continuation, are all carefully made out in this interesting and probably unique carving, the discovery of which was almost as exciting as the potent old "audit ale" in the vault below it.

Later representations of leather pots are found on 17th century tokens, but they are not of such importance as those already described because dated jacks of undoubted genuineness still exist which are as old and older. In Chapter IV. is described and illustrated a token of this period which has the image of a black jack on the obverse, and several others which have been described as having black jacks, but really have models of metal flagons. It is probably in consequence of this mistake that carvings of metal flagons in old church stalls have sometimes been described as black jacks.



Fig. 39

Black Jack of the Earl of Onslow at Clandon Park.

EARLY JACKS.

It is extremely probable that some of the older leathern pots now existing may be of mediaeval date. When treated with a very moderate degree of care, leather of such quality would endure for ages, and even when buried does not necessarily decay. Some old jacks in the Guildhall Museum, which were dug up on Tower Hill, may fairly be considered as belonging to the Middle Ages; and

specimens are sometimes met with which bear about them the evidences of so venerable an antiquity that one can hardly ascribe to them a much later date. One in my possession, which was formerly in Rushall Castle, Staffordshire, I think may be a 15th century jack both from its design and the condition of the leather. It was discovered by a friend who rescued it from some rubbish which was being carted away from the castle, and thrown into a disused coal-pit. The smaller and medium-sized jacks being more commonly used would naturally wear out faster, and be more frequently renewed. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that in old mansions where a set of jacks has been handed down from past times it is the largest that are the most ancient. In many instances it is only the largest that have survived the vicissitudes of time.

As far as one can judge from the evidence that remains the proportion of drinking "cans of leather," in ordinary use early in the Middle Ages was not very great compared to those of wood and other materials. In colleges and castles no doubt the number of black jacks required would be considerable, but judging by the inventories of those times, they were not very plentiful in ordinary dwellings. They occur in groups of three or four generally, but get more numerous towards the 15th century.

At the death, in 1423, of Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York, there were nine in the buttery, for which three shillings was received. "*Et de iijs receptis pro ix ollis de corrio nigro.*" There were only sixteen wooden cups with them, which is a smaller proportion than usual, but Archbishop Bowet was a prelate of wealth and had a vast number of cups and flagons of silver and other precious materials.¹ About the same time, 1407, in the buttery of William Duffield, another wealthy ecclesiastic who was Canon Residentiary of York, Southwell and Beverley, there were ten leather pots, "*x ollarum de correo*" worth two and sixpence.²

In later times, especially in the 16th century, they are more frequently met with in large numbers, especially among the wealthy. In the buttery of Dame Agnes Hungerford there were as many as eighteen, "a dossen et di lether poots," in 1523.³

At Woollaton Hall, Notts, about 1550, there were in "the Buttrye" "xi blacke lether iackes" and "Four olde lether bottells."⁴ The use of jacks extended then, and no doubt much earlier, to the industrial and agricultural classes, but naturally their domestic arrangements are less frequently and thoroughly recorded. Towards the end of the same century Thomas Tusser, the author of "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandrie," recommends the use of wooden dishes and, where stone jugs were found not to last, the use of tankards (which then were made of wood) and leather jacks, neither of which would be so easily broken. One of his couplets runs as follows:—

"Treene dishes be homely and yet not to lack
Where stone is no laster take tankard and iack."⁵

For the same reason the Earl of Northumberland, in 1512, ordered leather jacks to be bought instead of stone pots. In his castles of Wresil and Leginfield,

1 "Testamenta Eboracensia," Surtees Soc., Vol. XLV., p. 136.

2 "Ib." Vol. XLV., p. 89.

3 "Archaeologia," Vol. XXXVIII., p. 267.

4 Assoc. Architect. "Reports," Vol. XIX., p. 78.

5 Mavor's Ed., 1812, p. 260.

Yorkshire, certain defaults were found, "in the making of Provision for my Lordis hous of the yere audit at Michaelmas," and they were to be "amendit yerely from hens furth."

One of the items is "Whereas Erthyn Potts be bought, that Ledder Potts be bought for them; for servyng for Lyveries and Mealis in my Lordis hous."

None the less, the latter part of the 16th century saw a decline in their use. By that time, considerable social changes were taking place, and the mode of life in great houses had become less lavish, but at the same time less rude. The author of "The Serving Man's Comfort," written in 1598, describes the hospitality of former days, and draws an animated picture of the scene at meal-times in the great hall. "Oh what great pleasure belonged to Serving men in those dayes! When the great Chamber was served, the Haul's cryer with a 'Hoe yes,' summoned all good fellowes to appeare upon an allarum; at which battayle the boordes end

was euer battered with the Gun shot of Good stomackes, where the chine of Beefe; the hagstocke to these Carpenters, was hewen and squared into diuers parcels, for serurall purposes; and the blacke Jacke, merily lyned with the lyquor of lyfe, moystened and molified the malecontent humors of these merrie mates to their Maisters credite and their owne comfort."

The black jack was in early times the most likely vessel for serving callers, minstrels, jugglers, and other itinerant wayfarers who travelled in groups. We learn from a passage in "The Returne from Pernassus: or the Scourge of Simony, written in 1601 and Publicly acted by the Students in Saint Iohn's Colledge in Cambridge," that the customary entertainment offered to itinerant musicians was a black jack of beer and a pie. One of the characters remarks "Faith fellow Fidlrs, here's no siluer found in this place, no not so much as the vsuall Christmas entertainment of Musitians, a black Iack of Beere and a Christmas Pye."

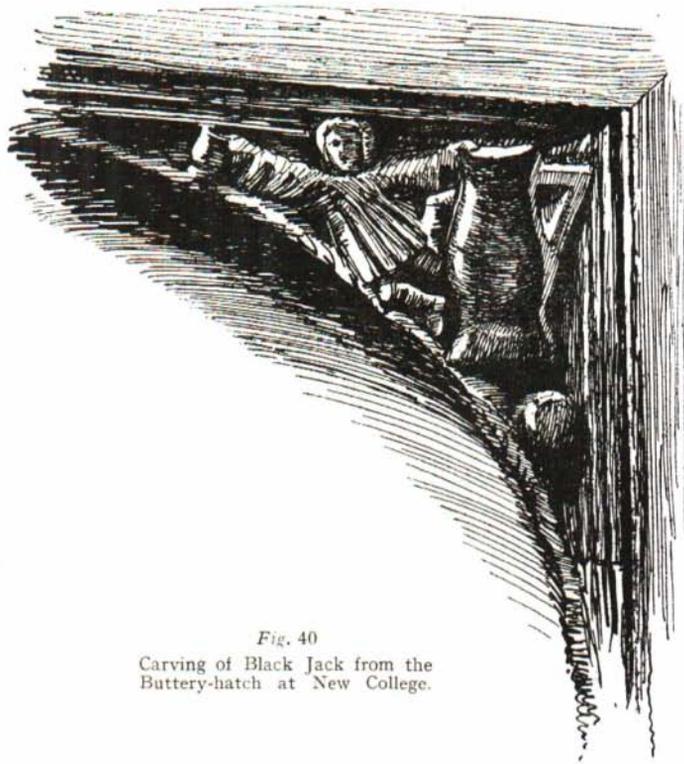


Fig. 40
Carving of Black Jack from the
Buttery-hatch at New College.

1 "The Regulations and Establishment of Household of Henry A. Percy, Earl of Northumberland," printed 1827. MS. in the possession of the Earl of Egremont.

In the early part of the 17th century the change in domestic habits was still more marked, and this was due to a variety of causes. The great increase in sheep-farming in the 15th and 16th century reduced the produce which the landowner had been accustomed to consume on the spot by living with his retinue, at least part of the year, in the manor-house. The household was reduced, the manor-house often shut up, and the lord spent much more of his time at court. The hoards of Henry VII. and quantities of land and treasure for centuries confined to ecclesiastical purposes had been dispersed. Land enclosure and its results had modified the manorial system, and payment of rent by service. The silver brought by Spain from the mines of the New World had flowed through Europe and helped the commercial prosperity of this country, and (as already shown by the statements of Harrison in 1580) a greater degree of comfort became possible, especially among the poorer classes.

The decay of feudalism, too, had produced changes of manners. The swarms of retainers and servants had become fewer, and those that remained were no longer considered so essential to generous house-keeping. The numerous hangers-on to great establishments were less willingly tolerated. Probably the improved circumstances of the lower classes had reduced their numbers and made them less dependent on the indiscriminate hospitality that was being abandoned, and in which the black jack had been a leading feature.

These changes met with the approval of many, and the literature of the time contains some vigorous comments on them. A character in Massinger's "The New Way to pay Old Debts," denounces even the serving-men, speaking of them as

" Slaves

Created only to make legs and cringe,
To carry in a dish or shift a trencher,
That have not souls, only to hope a blessing
Beyond black jacks and flagons. You that were born
Only to consume meat and drink and fatten."

On the other hand there were many complaints against the altered state of things, which, whatever its advantages, certainly led to a great decrease in the use of black jacks. The ballad of the "Old and New Courtier," printed in the Percy Reliques from the black-letter version in the Pepys collection, is one long protest against

" ... the course our new gallants hold,
Which makes that good house keeping is now grown so cold."

In the quaint book already quoted, the "Serving-man's Comfort," hospitality is said to be greatly on the decline, and many establishments no longer practised it in the generous style of "the good old times." It says: "I advise you, goe not fasting to such a house, for there you may as soone breake your necke as your faste. O miserable and strange language, and not so strange as true. Where are the Chines of Stauled Beefe? the great blacke Jackes of doble Beere, the long Haul tables fully furnished with good victuals and the multitude of good fellowes assembling to the houses of Potentates and men of worth. In a worde,

they are all banyshed with the spirit of the Butterie : thay are as rare in this age as common in former tymes."¹

The same author laments in verse the decay of liberal house-keeping, and deploras the substitution of glasses and cups for the old leather jacks which were formerly so much in use.

" When Countrey's causes did require
Each Nobleman to keep his house,
Then Blewcoates had what they desyre,²
Good cheere with many a full carouse
But not now as it wont to be
For dead is Liberalitie.

The Haul boordes-ende is taken vp³
No dogges do differ for the bones,
Blacke-Jacke is left, now Glasse or Cup,
It makes me sigh with many groones
To think what was, now this to be
For dead is Liberalitie."

Martin Parker, in the next reign (James I.), is equally pathetic on the same subject, in the ballad of "Time's Alteration or the old man's rehearsall. What brave days he knew. A great while ago. When his old cap was new."

Blacke-jackes to every man
Were filled with Wine and Beere,
No Pewter Pot nor Kanne
In those days did appeare ;
Good cheere in a Nobleman's house
Was counted a semely shew
We wanted no Brawne nor Sowse
When this old Cap was new.

We tooke not such delight
In Cups of Silver fine ;
None under the degree of a Knight
In Plate drunke Beere or Wine.
Now each Mechanicall man
Hath a Cup-Boorde of Plate for a show,
Which was a rare thing then
When this old Cap was new."

A little later, Donald Lupton waxes eloquent on the decay of Hospitality. Writing in 1632 he says "there are sixe upstart tricks come up in great Houses of late which he (Hospitality) cannot brook. Peeping windowes for the Ladies to

1 "A health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Servingmen: or the Serving-man's Comfort," by W.W. (1598), p. 130. Reprinted by the Roxburghe Club.

2 Retainers and serving men wore generally a blue livery.

3 The tables of the great hall were generally of loose boards and trestles, so that they could be readily taken to pieces and reared against the walls to make more room. An illustration of this occurs in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Capulet calls out "A hall! a hall! give room and foot it girls. More light, ye knaves, and turn the tables up."

view what doings there are in the Hall, a Buttry hatch that's kept lockt, cleane Tables, and a French Cooke in the Kitching, a Porter that lockes the gates in dinner time, the decay of Blacke-jackes in the cellar, and blew coates in the Hall."

John Evelyn, in "*Mundus muliebris*," written in his old age, compares the habits of the Restoration period with the good old ways of his youth, and tells how "the sturdy oaken Bed and Furniture of the House lasted one whole Century; the Shovel-board and other long Tables both in Hall and Parlour were so fix'd as the Freehold; nothing was moveable save the Joynt-stools, the Black Jacks, silver Tankards and Bowls; and though many things fell out between the cup and the lip when Nappy Ale, March Bere, Metheglin, Malmsey, and old Sherry got the ascendant among the blew-coats and Badges, they sung Old Symon and Cheviot Chace and danced Brave Arthur, and were able to draw a bow that made the proud Monsieur tremble at the Gray-Goose Feather: 'Twas then Ancient Hospitality was kept up in Town and Country, the Poor were relieved bountifully, and Charity was as warm as the Kitchen where the Fire was perpetual."

Here then is contemporary evidence showing that at the end of the 16th century and later, the use of leathern pots was declining. It is also noteworthy that this falling off corresponds with the decay of the craft of Bottle-makers who, up till this period, had been the chief makers of them.¹

There is nevertheless no lack of evidence of the continued use of black jacks throughout the 17th century. In inventories they sometimes appear in considerable numbers; for instance, in the chattels of Lettice Countess of Leicester in 1634, "Eight great flagons, 3 lesser flagons and 17 jacks" were in the pantry.² Doubtless they were less used for drinking from and more strictly confined than before to conveying liquor from the buttery to the hall, where it was drunk from smaller and more modern vessels. In the 18th century the greatly improved pottery which had become comparatively cheap and plentiful in consequence of the revival of ceramic art under the Wedgwoods and others, must have almost displaced the black jack in domestic use. It lingered as we have seen, among old colleges and grammar schools, but there were also not a few instances of its use in old-fashioned houses down to the dawn of the 19th century. In the first half of that century black japanned tin jugs were known as "black jacks," and no doubt helped to displace the real ones.



Fig. 41
Carving of a 14th Century Jack
at Malvern.

¹ See pages 23, 25, and 27.

² Inventories privately printed by Halliwell Phillips.



Fig. 42

Jack with wooden lid in the collection of Mr. J. Whitfield.

CHAPTER IV.

IN PRAISE OF THE BLACK JACK.

JACK AND JILL.

THE Black Jack in its palmy days, before it had been displaced from a time-honoured position by more fragile ware, had numerous admirers, and many are the flattering allusions to it in the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries. These allusions abound more especially in plays and songs. Some of them have already been quoted; among others, a ballad in which the habit of drinking out of "blacke-jackes" rather than from silver or pewter is reckoned among the glories of the good old times.

Shakespeare, in "The Taming of the Shrew," makes Grumio ask: "Is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept; the serving-men in their fustian, their white stockings on and every officer his wedding garment on? Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without, the carpets laid and everything in order?" The last sentence, it may be noticed, is only a punning manner of saying: "Are the leather pots quite clean and the maids neat," etc., the word "gill," when spelt with a "g" being the name of a liquid measure, another instance of which occurs in the ancient nursery rhyme "Jack and Gill went up the hill. To fetch a pail of water."

The once popular ballad of Sir John Barleycorn, written about 1650, has:

"Some of them fought in a Blacke Jacke,
Some of them in a Can.
But the chiefest in a Blacke Pot
Like a worthy nobleman."

An old ballad called "Time's Abuses," of about the same time as John Barleycorn, refers to a then well-known individual, nicknamed after his favourite beverage "Mulled Sack." He seems to have looked upon the black jack as an object worthy of absorbed reflection, exclaiming

" They call me fud'ling Mul'd Sacke
When drink I have got none ;
Cannot they think on the blacke-jacke
And let Mul'd Sacke alone."

There are references to the black jack in Nathaniel Field's "Woman is a Weathercock" (about 1630); in "Match me in London," by Dekker (1570?-1641?); and in Ben Jonson's Masque, "Love Restored," 1611. In George Wilkins' "Miseries of Inforced Marriage," 1607, one of the characters, addressing a clown, says: "How now Blue-bottle,¹ are you of the house"? and gets the reply, "I have heard of many black Jacks, Sir, but never a blue Bottle." In "The Witch," by Thos. Middleton (1570?-1627), a fellow is said to "fly to the black jack, and stick to small drink like a water-rat."²

In the Diary of Wm. Whiteway (1618 to 1634) is a drinking song, of which the first verse is

" The black jack, the merry black jack,
As it is tost on high-a
Grows, flows—till at last they fall to blows
And make their noddles cry-a."

In Pasquil's "Palinodia or the Pynte of Poetrie," written in 1619, is the verse :

" Sacke makes a faithfull subject
That doth no treason studdy,
Nor dothe he thinke when he takes his drink
Of plotting murthers bloody,
He loves his King and country,
From whom he never started ;
The great blacke Jack well fill'd with Sack
Doth make the Guard true-hearted."

In "Summers' Last Will and Testament," written by Nashe and published in 1619, the jack appears as the symbol of conviviality; in a Bacchanalian procession Bacchus enters, "riding upon an Asse trapt in Iuie, Himselfe drest in Vine leaues, and a garland of grapes on his head; his companions hauing all Iacks in their hands, and Iuie garlands on their heads."³

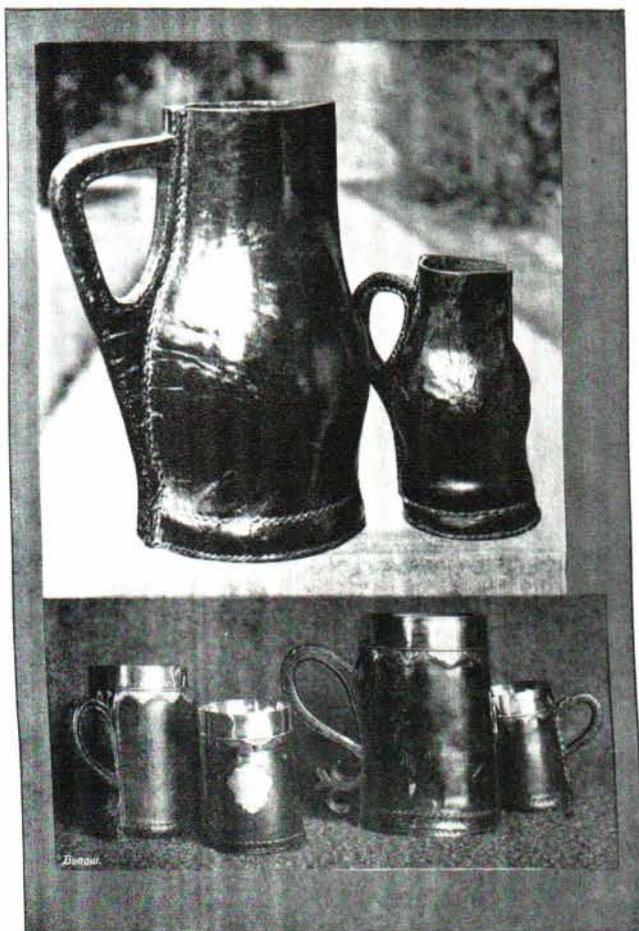
In other works by the same author the blacke "iacke" is rather frequently mentioned.⁴

1 Referring to the usual blue coat of a serving-man.

2 "Middleton's Works," 1885, p. 359.

3 Nashe's "Workes," 1619, Vol. VI., p. 129.

4 *Ib.*, Vol. II., pp. 165, 14 and 41.



Two Jacks burnt at Severn End, Worcestershire, in 1896.
From a photograph by Sir Edmund Lechmere, Bart. (Chap. III.)

Four silver-mounted Jacks at Moreton Jeffreys, Herefordshire.
From a photograph by Mr. Alfred Watkins. (Chap. V.)



Jacks and Bottles in the Dining Room at Austy Manor, Warwickshire. (Chap. V.)

In drinking songs of old times there are many references, chiefly in laudatory terms, but all tributes become insignificant, beside the long-drawn verses to the sole praise of the black jack, which are first heard of in the 17th century.

The popularity of this song, if it ever possessed any, does not seem to have been lasting, for only two versions are known, a short one in the "Westminster Drollery" of 1672, and a much longer in D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy," 1707,¹ and 1719.² As a literary work the black jack song is inferior to the "Leather Bottell," which evidently inspired, or rather suggested it, and fails to give a like insight into the history and surroundings of the vessel which forms its theme. It has none of the archaic simplicity of the "Leather Bottell," and seems to be animated chiefly by the mere love of boozing, having been written, one would think, by some cavalier of a Falstaffian capacity for drinking:

"A jolly old toper who at a pull
 Could drink a postillion's jack-boot full;
 And ask with a laugh when that was done,
 If the fellow had left the other one."³

The version in the Westminster Drollery consists of six verses only and has the same chorus to every verse. It is not (as some have supposed) all that was originally composed, but is evidently an extract from the longer one, perhaps all that the compiler could remember of it. This seems to show that the 1719 version is really older than that printed in 1672.

The latter differs somewhat from the one in "Pills to Purge Melancholy," the spelling is less modern, and it opens with the lines that commence the fourth verse of D'Urfey's version. "Be your liquor small or thick as mudd." D'Urfey's is very much the longer, having eleven verses and a chorus that varies with nearly every verse; as, however, it is entirely devoted to the black jack and leather bottle, and throws some light on their use and abuse in the 17th century, one can hardly do less than quote it in full.

"THE BLACK JACK."

"'Tis a pitiful thing that nowadays, Sirs,
 Our Poets turn *Leathern* Bottle praisers;
 But if a *Leathern* Theam they did lack,
 They might better have chosen the Bonny *Black Jack*:
 For when they are both now well worn and decay'd,
 For the *Jack* than the *Bottle*, much more can be said;
 So I wish his soul much good may partake
 That first devis'd the bonny *Black Jack*."

The author, who was probably a dweller in towns, seems to have been very jealous of the leather bottle, and made his song a kind of counterblast to the one in its praise. The verse quoted is clearly the beginning of the song and the six verses in the Westminster Drollery the middle only.

¹ Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy; being a collection of the best merry Ballads and Songs, old and new. 1719, p. 261.

² *Ib.*, Vol III., p. 249.

³ Longfellow's Golden Legend.

“ And now I will begin to declare
 What the conveniences of the Jack are :
 First, when a gang of good Fellows do meet,
 As oft at a Fair, or a Wake, you shall see't ;
 They resolve to have some merry Carouses,
 And yet to get home in good time to their Houses ;
 Then the Bottle it runs as slow as my Rhime,
 With Jack they might all have been Drunk in good time.
*And I wish his Soul in Peace may dwell
 That first devis'd that speedy Vessel.*”

And therefore leave your twittle-twattle,
 Praise the *Jack*, praise no more the *Leathern Bottle* ;
 For the Man at the *Bottle* may drink till he burst,
 And not handsomely quench his thirst :
 The Master hereat maketh great moan,
 And doubts his bottle hath a spice of the Stone ;
 But if it had been a generous *Jack*,
 He might have had currently what he did lack :
*And I wish his soul in Paradise
 That first found out that happy devise.*”

The coarse buffoonery of this is a great contrast to the quaint unaffected simplicity and practical common sense of the “*Leather Bottell*.” Our poet was evidently a lover of “*Tipsy mirth and jollity*,” and had no fear that

“ Peter and Powl
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
 That there's wrath and despair in the bonny black jack,
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack.”

He goes on—

“ Be your liquor small or thick as Mudd,
 The cheating Bottle cries good, good ;
 Then the Master again begins to storm,
 Because it said more than it could perform :
 But if it had been in an honest *Black Jack*,
 It would have proved better to sight, smell and smack,
*And I wish his soul in heaven may rest
 That added a Jack to Bacchus his Feast.*”

Certainly clearness is not the strong point of this verse and the argument seems rather far fetched. In the next verse the parodying of the “*Leather Bottell*” is very marked.

“ No Flagon, Tankard, Bottle or Jugg
 Is half so fit, or so well can hold tugg ;
 For when a Man and his Wife play at thwacks,
 There's nothing so good as a pair of Black Jacks ;

Thus to it they go, they Swear and they Curse,
 It makes them both better, the Jack's ne'er the worse ;
 For they might have banged both, till their hearts did ake,
 And yet no hurt the *Jacks* could take :
 And I wish his Heirs may have a Pension,
 That first produced that lucky Invention."

Only those who are well acquainted with the enduring qualities of the black jack can appreciate the full force of the above lines. It seems to have been the practice of the 17th century toper to bang the jacks about in the confident belief that they would be "ne'er the worse." Nashe, in "A Prognostication," written in 1591, which was a kind of burlesque of such prophets as the Zadkiels and Old Moores of those days, bears indirect tribute to the power of the black jack to endure ill-usage. He says: "First therefore it is to bee feared that the Danes shall this yeare be greatly given to drinke, and many shall haue more Spruce Beere in their bellies then wit in their heads, wherevpon shall grow Apoplexies and colde palsies in their legges that they shall diuers times not bee able to stande on their feete. Vpon this shall growe great commoditie to the Potters and Glasse makers, for it is like their shall be great ouerthrowe of them, if their be not some act made for drinking in blacke Jackes."

In Heywood's "King Edward IV." (1600), Sir Thomas Sellinger says "Now by this light! Were I but near the Knave with a black jack, I would beat out his brains."²

Instances of the black jack being used as a weapon of offence occur in other 17th century writings, and that it was a formidable one is suggested by a fragment of the same period called "Bacchus' Bountie," printed in the Harleian Miscellany, which, describing a drunken row, says "one makes a buckler of his hat to save himself before, whilst another with a Black Jack, breakes his head behinde."

In the Westminster Drollery version nothing is said about the man and his wife "playing at thwacks," the third and fourth lines being—

"For when they are broke and full of cracks
 Then they must fly to the brave Black Jacks."

The bottle of hay in the next verse must not be confused with the bottle for liquids. It was an old term for a bundle of hay, and meant as much as one man could carry.

"Socrates and Aristotle
 Suck'd no Wit from *A Leather Bottle* ;
 For surely I think a Man as soon may,
 Find a needle in a Bottle of Hay :
 But if the *Black Jack* a Man often toss over
 'Twill make him as Drunk as any Philosopher ;
 When he that makes *Jacks* from a Peck to a Quart,
 Conjures not, though he lives by the Black Art.
 And I wish his Soul, etc.

1 Nashe's "Workes," Vol. II., p. 154.
 2 Act I., Scene I.

Whether our author really knew much about Socrates or Aristotle may be doubted, though it does not follow that because he was a disciple of the black jack he was not a man of some learning. Heywood (who was probably a contemporary writer) in deploring the bibulous habits of the educated classes of that time, says "For there is now profest an eighth liberal Art or Science called *Ars Bibendi*, *i.e.*, the Art of Drinking. The Students or Professors thereof call a greene Garland or painted Hoope hang'd out' a *Colledge*: a signe where there is lodging, man's meate and house-meate; An Inne of Court an Hall or an Hostle; where nothing is sold but Ale and Tobacco, a Grammar Schoole.....The books which they studdy and whose leaves they so often turne over, are for the most part three of the old translation, and three of the new, those of the old translation: First the Tankards, Secondly the Black lacke. Thirdly the Quartpot rib'd or Thorandell. Those of the new be these. First the Iugge. Secondly the Beaker. Thirdly the double or single Can or Black Pot."² The next verse is as follows:

" Besides my good friend, let me tell you, that Fellow
That fram'd the Bottle his Brains were but shallow;
The Case is so clear I nothing need mention,
The Jack is a nearer and deeper Invention;
When the Bottle is cleaned, the Dregs fly about
As if the Guts and the Brains flew out;
But if in a Cannon-bore Jack it had been,
From the top to the bottom all might have been clean,
*And I wish his Soul no Comfort may lack
That first devis'd the bouncing Black Jack.*"

We have to remember in reading the rather repulsive details of this verse, that the beer of those days was not our modern Pale Ale, but a much thicker, more unsophisticated and probably more wholesome beverage, but would be more likely to leave sediment in the bottles.³ As to the superior cleanliness of the jack, another poet of about the same time, but one of very different calibre, *viz.*, John Dryden, seemed to have doubts about it. In his translation of the fifth Satire of Persius, he gives the impression that the jack was sometimes liable to be dirty enough, in the following lines:

" Cubb'd in a Cabbin, on a Mattress laid,
On a brown George, with lowsie swobbers fed,
Dead Wine that stinks of the Borachio sup
From a foul Jack, or greasie Maple Cup."⁴

This is the only instance I have seen of a jack being disparaged or contemned, but one has to remember that the conditions described by Dryden are supposed to be aboard ship, and of a rough description. The Borachio was a Spanish bottle of leather or skin.⁵ Minsheu, in his 1617 edition, mentions the Spanish "borachoe

1 This was the old method of indicating a tavern or wine-shop. In mediaeval times a bush hung from a pole was the usual sign of an inn, hence our proverb "Good wine needs no bush."

2 *Philocothonista*, pp. 56 & 57.

3 One of my old jacks has a good deal of beery deposit clinging to the pitch.

4 Dryden's Works, Scott & Saintsbury ed., Vol. 13, p. 258.

5 See Fig. 2.

or bottle, commonly of a pigges skinne with the hair inward, dressed with razed or pitch to keep the wine or liquor sweet."

The next verse confirms the conclusion already arrived at, that the leather bottle had, in the 17th century, come to be regarded as an agricultural utensil, and was ceasing to be used by other classes.

" Your Leather Bottle is us'd by no Man,
That is a Hair's Breadth above a Plowman ;
Then let us gang to the Hercules Pillars,
And there visit those gallant Jack swillers ;
In these small, strong, sour, mild and stale
They drink Orange, Lemon and Lambeth ale :
The Chief of Heralds there allows,
The Jack to be of an ancients House.
*And may his Successors never want Sack
That first devis'd the long Leather Jack.*"

The " Hercules Pillars " to which the author wished to " gang " was a tavern in Piccadilly. As the Pillars of Hercules at the Straits of Gibraltar were once supposed to be the end of the world, this appellation was considered in the days of the Stuarts to be appropriate to a site where the world of London ended. In this inn Samuel Pepys supped with his wife and some friends soon after the Great Fire. The claim that the jack was of more ancient origin than the leather bottle, if serious, is not supported by any historical evidence readily met with. Certainly *the* leather bottle, of the costrel or keg pattern, of which no doubt the writer was thinking, was more ancient than the black jack under that title, but comparing any form of leather bottle with any kind of leather pot or cup, it would be difficult to say which was the most ancient. There seems to be a little more reason in the argument of the next verse :

" Then for the Bottle you cannot well fill it
Without a Tunnell but that you must spill it ;
'Tis as hard to get in as it is to get out,
'Tis not so with a Jack, for it runs like a Spout :
Then burn your Bottle, what good is in it,
One cannot well fill it nor drink nor clean it,
But if it had been a Jolly Black Jack,
'Twould have come a great pace and hold you good Tack,
And I wish his Soul, etc."

We are reminded by the verse that follows that all these old pots and bottles were literally drinking vessels and not merely receptacles for carrying liquor. " Blacke jacks to every man were filled with wine and beer," says the old song. The leather bottle was raised to the mouth and the black jack was " tost " according to three of the preceding quotations. The author of " Simon the Cellarer " was strictly accurate when he said " How oft the black jack to his lips doth go." In comparatively modern times, no doubt, it was used for carrying and less for drinking from, but this was after the revival of pottery making had

provided other and more handy vessels in large numbers. When the late Warden of Winchester College was a boy at school there, the old leather jacks were used for carrying the beer into the Hall, but it was poured into mugs of pewter before being consumed.

Black Jacks are often described in old documents as "drinking jacks," as in an inventory of the goods at Ludlow Castle, when they were sold by the Cromwellians, two "in the chamber over ye Porter's Lodge" are set down as "two leather drinking jacks." Old Dictionaries and Glossaries too explain the word jack as "a leather can to drink in."

The song continues—

"He that drinks in a Jack looks as fierce as a Spark,
That were just ready cockt to shoot at a Mark ;
When the other thing up to the Mouth it goes,
Makes a Man look with a great Bottle Nose :
All wise men conclude that a Jack New or Old,
Tho' beginning to leak is, however, worth Gold ;
For when a poor man on the way doth trudge it,
His worn-out Jack serves him for a Budget ;
And I wish his Heirs may never lack Sack
That first contrived the Leather Black Jack."

I had not supposed that the second half of this verse was intended to be taken seriously till I saw the chief of the Crowle bell-ringers carrying their black jack (as described at the end of Chap. VII.) slung by a strap over his shoulder and recognised the handy nature of the arrangement. (Plate 8.)

The concluding verse is no doubt justified in the assumption that the jack generally threw the bottle into the shade from its superior size, though it is to be remembered bottles holding as much as three gallons are recorded,¹ and that one (that of Mr. Fieldhouse, illustrated at Plate 15) is still in existence, while jacks were sometimes very small. The term "jack-boots" for the kind that came up to the knee, was no doubt derived from the resemblance between the leg-portion and the leather drinking jack

"When *Bottle* and *Jack* stand together, fie on't,
The *Bottle* looks just like a Dwarf to a Giant ;
Then have we not reason the *Jack* for to choose,
For they can make *Boots* when the *Bottle* mends *Shoes* ;
For add to every *Jack* a *Foot*
And every *Jack* becomes a *Boot* :
Then give me my *Jack*, there's a reason why,
They have kept us wet, they will keep us dry ;
I now shall cease, but as I'm an honest man,
The *Jack* deserves to be called *Sir John* ;
And may they ne'er want for *Belly nor Back*
That keep up the Trade of the bonny *Black Jack*."

¹ History of Ludlow, by T. Wright, 1852, p. 434.

² "Item one lether botell of iij gallons. Item two lether botelles of ij gallons the pece. Item iij lether botelles of a gallon the pece. Item on lether botell of a potell." Household Goods of Sir John Gage, 1556. Sussex Archaeo. Col. XLV., p. 125.

It is not in the least degree probable that the suggested adding of a foot to the jack was seriously made. It is not at all easy, as the fabricators of spurious black jacks find to their cost, to induce old leather to take any other shape than that it was modelled into while new. Yet there is said to have been one case of a jack being made from a boot. In the possession of the late Edward Peacock, Esq., of Bottesford Manor, Lincolnshire, was a very fine black jack, with an scalloped silver rim and an oval silver plate on the front, of which the family tradition states that it was made from the boot worn by an ancestor at the battle of Marston Moor. No evidence is now known to confirm the tradition, but it may be said in favour of it that the jack has been an object of special consideration for nearly 250 years, as shown by the following inscription on the above silver plate, "The Gift of George Barteram to Abigail, 1682." Moreover, it must have had exceptional interest of some sort because a leather jack would not, in Charles II.'s reign, be a suitable souvenir to present to a lady. As it is not very large, being $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and $15\frac{1}{4}$ round the thickest part, there would be plenty of material in one of the cavalier's huge boots of that time to make such a jack; so the tradition is probably founded on fact.

The suggestion in the last verse that the jack should be dubbed "Sir John" recalls the knighting of the Sirloin by Charles II., and the one was perhaps suggested by the other.

The Westminster Drollery version of this song has two final verses that differ almost entirely from those given above.

"And when we have drank out our store
The Jack goes for Barne to brewe us some more:
And when our Stomacks with hunger have bled,
Then it marches for more to make us some bread.
And I wish his heiress may never want Sack
That first devis'd the bonny Black Jack.

"I now will cease to speak of the Jack,
But I hope his assistance I never shall lack.
And I hope that now every honest man,
Instead of Jack, will y'clip him Sir John.
And I wish, etc."

The black jack is also waggishly alluded to by a title not his own in a ballad called "The Good Fellow's Best Beloved," published in 1633.

"John Black's a good fellow
And he allowes me
To make myselfe mellow
With good ipse hee."

Unlike the "Leather Bottell," the song in praise of the black jack does not seem to have gained any hold on the public, either at the age that produced it or later, and it is very rarely quoted. The two versions already given are the only ones known to have been printed, while those of the "Leather Bottell" are innumerable.

THE TUNE OF THE BLACK JACK.

In D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy," 1719, the black jack song is directed to be sung "to the foregoing Tune," that is, to the "Leather Bottell" tune, shown at Plate 6 of the present work. There is, in the seventh edition of "The English Dancing Master," printed in 1686, a tune called the "Black Jack," which may possibly have belonged to the black jack ballad, being nearly as suitable as the one to which, in the D'Urfey collection, it is ordered to be sung. A facsimile of this old tune from page 138 of the 1686 edition of the English Dancing Master is here given. (Plate 6.) It will be noticed that the notes are of the old diamond shape, and that they, as well as the staves, are printed from type, the latter being indicated by a series of dots and dashes. An accurate and practised ear may discover in this black jack tune similarities of phrase to the version of the leather bottell melody given at page 47, but whether they are all derived from the same original it is impossible to say.

This song is in itself sufficient to show that by the middle of the 17th century the black jack had become popular as a drinking pot in city taverns and among the better class of country inns. This is not likely, however, to have been the case in much earlier times. In the earlier mediaeval days the taverner's cruses and tankards were nearly always of wood, and in the 16th century pewter measures were often made compulsory, because other kinds of vessels more readily lent themselves to fraudulent practices. Among the Orders for the Market of Oxford in 1579 were the following regulations for tavern-keepers: "And that they and every of them shall putt their ale and beere to sell, as well in their houses as out of their houses, in no other measures than in pewter pottes, allowed and sealed by the clerkes of this Universitie." In the "Taming of the Shrew" it is said of Christopher Sly that he would rail upon the hostess of the house, and say he would present her at the leet, because she brought "stone jugs and no seal'd quarts."

There must, however, have been numbers of inns in the 16th century where leather pots were in use. In the Diocesan Registry at Lichfield is the will of "Thomas Marshall of birmyningham," who kept an inn "at the syne of ye lyon." An inventory made at his death in 1552 shows that he used a leathern pot in his business as an inn-keeper. It is interesting as showing the stock of a Birmingham inn-keeper in the time of Edward VI., and also because the surroundings prove the "jacke" to have been a leather drinking pot. Though old, it was valued at twelve pence, so that it must have been of fairly large size.

The Taverne.	It—1 tonn off secke	... ..	14	0	0
	It—2 tonn off gascoyne wyne	... ..	4	6	8
	It—a pottell pott, 9 quart potts,				
	12 poynt potts and a peny pot .		16	8	
	It—a old jacke			12d.	
	It—6 ley of weke yarne	... ..		2	

Among the town records of Stratford-on-Avon is an "Inventorye of the goodes and cattels" of Thomas Dixon (who was an inn-keeper) taken and praysed in



Various Jacks, Bombards and Bottles in the Fieldhouse collection. (Chap. IV.)

Plate 15



Some Jacks in the collection of Mr. Hubert H. Edmondson at Preston. (Chaps. III. and IV.)



Early 15th Century carving of a leather Bottle, at Inkberrow Church, Wores. From a photograph by the Author. (Chap. II.)



Letter on the front of Lord Walsingham's Bombard at Merton Hall, Norfolk, showing that the edges of the leather have curled up. (Chap. V.)



the year 1603. He had several leather jacks and bottles. Over the warehouse were "Twoc lether bottells, one jack and a hamer." In the "Kylne chamber, a barrell bottell ijd ob. In the Sellar an old lether jack viijd. a greate wooden bottell viijd. a greate jugg iiijd."

During a restoration in recent times, at the ancient Cock Inn at Eton, a beautiful jack of medium size was discovered, and is now in the possession of Mr. Henry Peech.

THE JACK OF CORRA.

At Calverhall, near Whitchurch, Salop (a village which was anciently called Corra), there was kept at the Old Jack Inn, an ancient black jack, concerning which a quaint old tradition and equally quaint custom lingered for many years and is still well remembered in the district. It is a small leather pot holding a pint, and is no longer kept at the inn, its use having completely lapsed. It is now in the possession of Sir Everard Cayley, Bart., at Brompton Hall, Yorkshire, who inherited it from his grandfather, Sir Digby Cayley, to whom it came with Shropshire property by marriage from the family of Allanson, who had it in the same way from the family of Dod. By the kindness of Sir Everard and Lady Mary Cayley I have been able to photograph the jack, which is of curious interest. Though it has a rim and base of silver it bears no resemblance to the most usual type of silver-mounted jacks, but is about twice as wide from back to front as it is from side to side, and has an irregular bulgy body instead of the customary straight sides. It is five and three quarter inches high and only two and a quarter across the narrow way of the top. The silver rim is about half-an-inch leep on the outside and more than twice that depth on the inside, which is very thickly coated with some light brown resinous substance, to make it water-tight. The top rim is engraved with the words "From time immemorial" and the band on the bottom has the inscription "Jack of Carrow is my Name, don't abuse me hen for Shame." The local tradition says that a wayworn traveller arriving at Corra called at the inn, and being greatly refreshed by a foaming draught of ale, in gratitude charged his estate with a sum to provide a jack of ale gratis to future wayfarers. There was a condition attached, however, which is rather characteristic of such institutions, that if the traveller failed to take off the liquor without stopping for breath, he was to pay for it.

There is an account of the jack in Bagshaw's "History, Gazetteer and Directory of Shropshire" (1851), which says "Jack of Corra is a well-known liquor-vessel composed of leather, which has received the patronage of successive generations in this locality (Calverhall)." By this it would seem that the custom was at that time still in existence. There is another quite similar account in "The Shropshire Word Book." Both these statements say that the wayfarer was entitled to refresh himself from the jack on payment of one penny. If this was so it is probable that it was a modern modification of the custom, as in old times a penny would be more than the value of the privilege. It is much more likely that the local tradition is accurate, that if the traveller was not thirsty enough to empty the

1 This inventory has been printed by Halliwell-Phillips.
2 Page 305.

jack at a draught, he paid for it. The bequest and the tradition smack strongly of mediaeval times, and the jack itself has every appearance of being very old. The handle particularly is very unlike those of late jacks of that size. It is slightly higher than the body, reversing the usual arrangement, and is so small that the aperture between will only admit two fingers at the most. It was probably at least half-an-inch thick originally, but is now worn quite round and thin. After a careful examination of the Jack of Corra, I have come to the conclusion that the leather part is two centuries older than the silver rims, which by their character, and the lettering and spelling of the inscription, were added late in the 18th century. The words "From time immemorial," themselves suggest that it was of considerable age at the time it was engraved. Both rims are in the nature of repairs, but the lower one is now nearly dropping from its place through the leather seam having broken away from the body. (Plate 9.)

MORE TAVERN JACKS.

Various references in the literature of the time show that in the 17th century jacks were in common use in taverns. They were frequently of small size, and had silver rims.¹ The Jack of Corra already described is an instance of this, and another is a charming little leather pot preserved at the Guildhall Museum of the city of London. It has an ornamental silver rim, and a quatrefoil of stamped stars in front. Like most of the silver-mounted ones, it has no bulging of the sides. They slope in slightly at the top, but are perfectly straight. It came from the old Cock Tavern in Bow Lane, where it was used as a wine measure. It is only $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, $11\frac{3}{4}$ in circumference, and holds half-a-pint.

Decker, in his "English Villainies Seven Times Pressed to Death," says: "In some places they have little leather Jacks, tip'd with silver, and hung with small silver bells (these are called Gyngle-Boyes) to ring peales of drunkenesse." Mr. Syer-Cuming, in the "Journal of the Archaeological Association" (Vol. XV.), says: "Occasionally the silver rim of the black jack was parcel gilt, and at times decorated with little bells. It formed a test of sobriety for the person to drink from the vessel without producing a tinkling. Black jacks so accoutred were known as jingle-boxes."

At South Kensington Museum there is among the silver ware a good example of the taverner's jack. It is seven inches high, four across the top and four-and-threequarters at the base, and has a silver rim with a pretty vandyked edge engraved in the manner usual at the end of the 17th century. The hall-mark is too much worn for identification, but an inscription cut in the rim shows it to have belonged to a Westminster tavern. "Guy Lane at ye three Tulips in Orchard Street, Westmr." The leather of this jack is not black but a dull umbery brown, and it has the appearance of having been used up till the time of passing into the hands of the collector.

An instance of jacks in use at an inn down to modern times is the Lygon Arms at Broadway.²

¹ They are mentioned in 1635 by Heywood. See p. 4.

² See end of this Chapter and Fig. 8.

The fact that old inns were named after the black jack is in itself an indication of the use of that vessel in them. In London there was till lately a Black Jack Tavern in Portsmouth Street, Clare Market, believed to have been the favourite haunt of Joe Miller of jest-book fame, also of the notorious Jack Sheppard, who in escaping from Jonathan Wild and his crew, leapt from a window of the inn to the ground, an exploit which is said to have caused the inn to be long known as "The Jump." This tavern was pulled down in 1896, but a sketch of it appeared on January 16th, 1893, in the "Daily Graphic," and in "The Queen" of January 28th, 1893. In Parton's "Hospital and Parish of St. Giles," 1822, is the following: "The Black Jack, a public house, is described in deeds of 1654 and 1680 as standing opposite to a passage called the Alley-gate, meaning the gate leading to Sharper's Alley." It is curious that this tavern, like the Leather Bottle inn at Cobham, is connected with the great name of Charles Dickens, and was, like that hostelry, visited by Mr. Pickwick. It has been shown by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald and others to be the original tavern, from which the "Magpie and Stump," at which Mr. Pickwick joined the convivial circle of Mr. Lowten's friends, was delineated. A similar club to the one described by Dickens continued to meet there down to the 'forties."

Black Jack taverns have also been stated to have flourished in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields; Old Street, St. Luke's; Old Gravel Lane, Wapping, and Red Cross Street, on the strength of tokens issued by them which have been held by Mr. J. H. Burn (in a catalogue of the Beaufoy collection of tokens now in the Guildhall Museum), to bear on each a representation of a black jack. However, on examining the tokens, I find that only one has a black jack, the others being meant for pewter tankards. The Old Street example has on the obverse "AT THE BLACKE GACK" and a model of a leather pot. On the reverse, "IN OVLD STREETE A E S." The Old Gravel Lane token has on the obverse "IOHN ABBOT IN OVLD" and the figure of a tankard. The Red Cross Street token has on the obverse "RED X STREETE: 1657. THO. WHITTLE." On the reverse, "CORNER BEECH LANE," and a representation of a tankard.

There is much excuse for the mistake (which has been followed in several papers and magazine articles), as the tokens are only five-eighths of an inch in diameter, and it is only by close scrutiny that the characteristics of a black jack are seen to be present in the one and absent in the others. In order to make the images clearer, I made plaster casts of the above three tokens, and slightly rubbing them with gas-black, had them photographed considerably larger than the actual. References to these photographs (Plate 4) will show that in the Old Street token, the vessel has a handle with the sharp angle and straight thick sides such as only an old leather pot possesses, while those depicted on the others have thin curly handles obviously of metal, and that they have lids with hinges, and knobs for raising them with the thumb, such as were usual on the pewter tankards of that time.

A Black Jack Tavern is also said to have existed at Rochester, on the evidence of a token in existence with a representation of a black jack and the words "Richard Newbery" on the obverse, and on the reverse "IN ROCHESTER T E P." I have not been able to examine a specimen of this token, so cannot say if the statement that it bears a leather jack is well-founded or not.

As late as the middle of the last century there were several Black Jack Alleys

in London, probably so-called from taverns of that name. They were in East Smithfield, Great Windmill Street and Old Street. There is still a Black Jack Street in the town of Cirencester, named from an inn which has disappeared long ago.

JACKS WITH LIDS.

The jack in its usual sphere did not require a lid, and was seldom made with one. The lid is an addition and not part of the original vessel in the majority of those I have examined. The only instance I have found from old documents occurs in the inventory of Sir John Gage's goods in 1556: "Item iij newe blacke jackes of lether wth cov's, for the hawle. Item iij other old black jackes wth oute covers for the hawle." (*Sussex Archaeo. Coll.*, p. 125.)

Two great jacks at Brome Hall, Suffolk, have lids of brass, but they are fraudulent additions. At the Guildhall Museum is a most interesting jack which has a curious lid of leather, but it is obviously an addition, though made at some remote period of the jug's history. The lid not only covers the top but reaches nearly an inch down the sides; it has a hinge of iron which has a long strap over the lid itself in which is a thumb-piece to enable the person holding the jack to raise the lid with the same hand.

In the *Antiquary* for October, 1884, a letter is printed describing the lid of a black jack which had been found in destroying old houses, but nothing is said as to the material of the lid, or in what part of the country it was found, or why it should have belonged to a black jack rather than to any other vessel.

A very quaint and curious jack in the collection of Mr. James Whitfield of Birmingham, has a wooden lid which, though evidently of considerable age, has been an addition at some time subsequent to the vessel's manufacture. Though the jack is perfect without it, the wooden lid is worm-eaten and old. It is attached to the handle by a leathern strap which forms a hinge, and on the top surface of the attachment of another strap by means of which it could be fastened down to a buckle still existing on the spout. The lid has been carefully shaped and well fitted originally, but has become incrustated with tar and dirt and now projects a little. (Fig. 42). The jack itself is a rather early and good example belonging to the 16th or first part of the 17th century.

In the collection of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse is a very good jack of mug-like shape, with a leather lid hinged to the handle, but it is obviously an addition, and the height of the jack has been reduced to make it fit. (See Plate 7.)

It is not every village which possessed an ale-house, and in some districts the convivially-disposed would have to send some distance for their drink. This may perhaps have led to the furnishing of some jacks with lids, but in some places the difficulty was overcome more efficiently. At Marston St. Laurence a secluded Northamptonshire village, remote from taverns, it was for a long time found necessary to fetch beer from a distance, and a very large leather bottle still remains there which was provided for the use of the village more than two hundred years ago. It appears that Mr. Thomas Pumphrey, steward to Sir John Blencowe, having noticed the inconvenience caused by want of bottles, provided in the year 1684 a large leathern bottle holding four gallons, and gave it for the use of the inhabitants. An inscription on the bottle says, on the one end, "The Gift of

Thomas Pumphrey, Marston St. Laurence, Northamptonshire, MDCLXXXIV,"
and on the other end—

" This bottle is not thine or mine
But for the use of the town
To hang at the Blacksmith's shop
To be lent up and down."

One of the purposes for which this bottle was provided seems to have been to facilitate the fetching of beer for a social club of which Mr. Pumphrey was a leading member. The club continued in existence long after his decease, and possessed another leathern bottle of smaller size which was used with the one given by him, till the expression " Take Pumphrey and the other bottle " became a local bye-word.

A resident at Banbury has an old manuscript containing verses which are to the following effect :

" In vernal toils some progress being made
Libations to the earth might then be paid,
And Pumphrey's hallow'd ghost they now invoke,
Which in the body placed, lov'd ale and smoke ;
Whose silence can persuade with his great bottle,
More than the rhetoric of Aristotle.

" Then said the Priest, who Sharrock's name took up :
Take Pumphrey and that other bottle now to Thrope.
The Magpie ale hath not been good this week.
Nor yet the Oak's : I by experience speak.
Here Jack, come back, have you got all their monies ?
Well boy, be sure go to the Three Conies !

" Being placed around the crackling blaze of wood,
The beer being tasted and pronounced good.
The Priest he takes a copious draught of ale
And drinks to Pumphrey, the Plough, Fleece and Pail,
Then to each layman hands the goblet round,
For ale is his by right that tills the ground."

The same old bottle is referred to in another local effusion of the time of the Scotch rebellion of 1745, in which these lines occur :

" To Arms, my Boys, nor dream of idle sorrow,
Get Pumphrey filled and I'll be back to-morrow."

The " other bottle " has disappeared, but " Pumphrey " still remains at Marston St. Laurence, and on the passing of the Local Government Act of 1894, it was claimed by the newly-created Parish Council, who marked the occasion by giving it a bright coat of paint.

MODERN COLLECTIONS.

Collectors of leathern vessels are few but very enthusiastic. The first I remember was the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bart., who, at the end of the last century, had, at Canons Ashby in Northamptonshire, about a dozen jacks and bottles, some of which were, for a long time, lent to the Northampton Museum. (See Plate 7 and 9.) Since his death they have been dispersed.

The collection of Mr. James Whitfield, of Birmingham, had its origin in an incident that took place in the "nineties." My father and I were staying at Mr. Whitfield's house on the Warwickshire Avon, and were exploring the old village of Bredons Norton. We had turned into a delightfully quaint farm-yard, when I, lingering behind to peer through the chinks in the gray old barns, caught sight of a great "bottell" hanging from the oak beams. Drawing my host away from the others who were filing through a gate into the orchard, I showed him the "find," and urged him to acquire it, saying that as it was covered with the dust of many years it was only unregarded lumber and to be bought for a trifle. He protested that it was mine, by right of discovery; but (as I already possessed one) he eventually purchased it from the delighted farmer for two shillings. The Pickwickians did not more proudly carry off the Cobham stone which had been inscribed with the "mark" of Bill Stumps than did we bear away that bottle to our host's house, where it was exhibited with much enthusiasm. That evening its new owner and I were still engaged in scrubbing it in the bath-room, quite unconscious that the ladies of the party had stolen behind us and were listening with amusement to our rapturous comments, scraps of which were the subject of much "chaff" in after years. The result of interest thus aroused has been a group of vessels which include one grand bombard and a number of rare bottles and jacks, some idea of which can be gathered from these pages. They were acquired with less labour and expense than more recent hoards, in times when there were few who valued such things.

It has been far otherwise with the dazzling finds of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse, whose collecting began when he bought the bottle which (as described in Chapter II.) had remained from former times at the Sign of the Leather Bottle tavern, in the Birmingham street called Deritend. This collection has been bought in the face of much competition. It is now undoubtedly the best in existence, not only in numbers, but as including so many of the finest examples of bombards and jacks and some of the most curious as well as the finest of bottles. It is extraordinarily rich in silver-mounted jacks and gispens, and has quite a number which are, each on its own merits, of unique interest.

At the Lygon Arms (anciently the Whyte Hart) at Broadway, Worcestershire, jacks are known to have been used down to the time of the last occupier, and one of them has in recent times been restored to this very noble old inn, whose grey gables and picturesque groups of chimneys are one of the most striking features of that old-time village. Beyond the entrance-hall, a low-browed doorway leads to the cellar, which, though on the ground-floor level, is all that an inn cellar should be—low, cool and dark, flagged with great stones and lined with well-stored bins and casks. Fig. 43 is a sketch of the doorway, with a few of the jacks which the owner, Mr. S. B. Russell, has collected. The

greater part of his hoard of such things remain at his Snowhill house, higher up on the hills. Among them (besides one or two grand bombards) are some early bottles, a few of which are shown at Fig. 8.

Mr. H. H. Edmondson, of Preston, has a collection which ranks next to that of Mr. Fieldhouse. It was commenced in 1907, and is specially rich in early bottles, though the group on Plate 16 shows that it includes a number of fine jacks and bombards. He has also two remarkably fine "jack-waggons" which were used for wheeling up and down the long hall tables of past times.

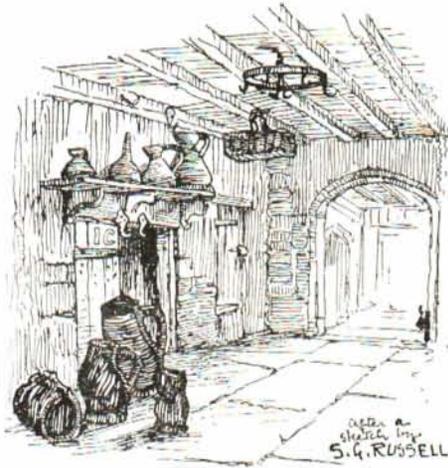


Fig. 43

The Cellar Door at the Lygon Arms,
Broadway.

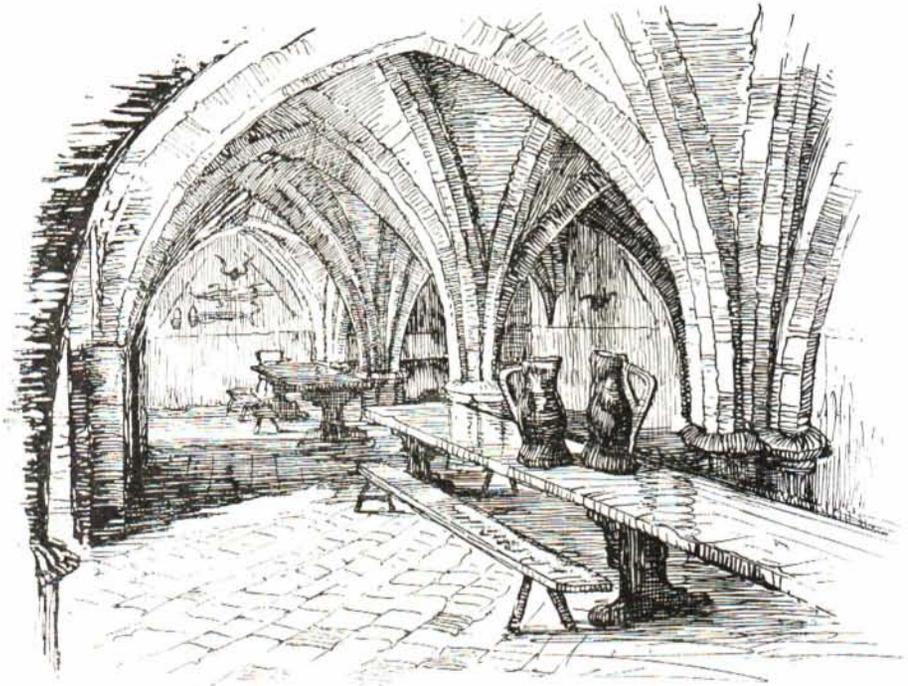


Fig. 44. A Corner of the Under-croft, Warwick Castle.

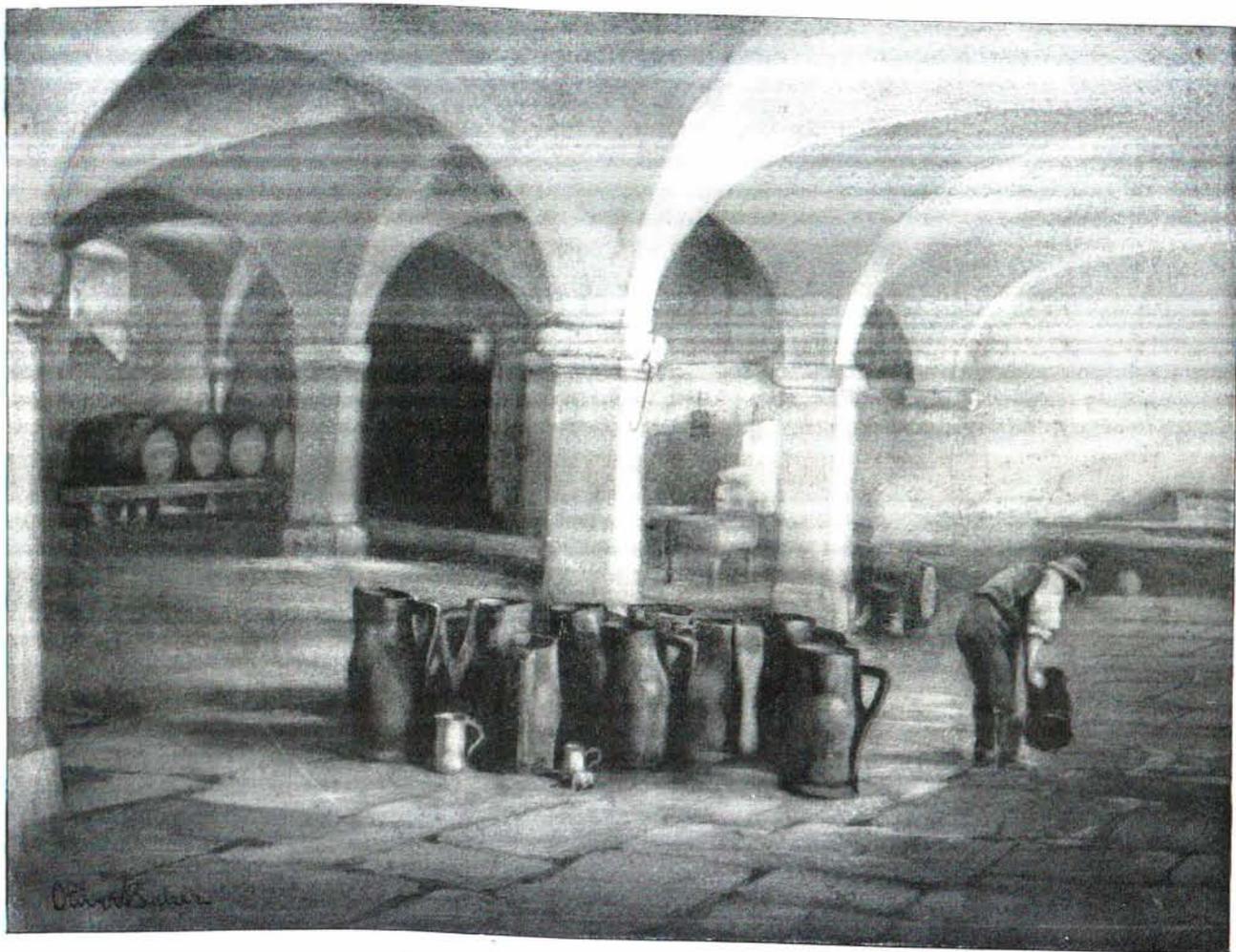
CHAPTER V.

BOMBARDS AND LEATHER MUGS.

THE BOMBARD.

THOUGH the black jack was often of considerable size, there were pots of leather which were still more enormous. The lightness of the material in proportion to its strength was such that they could be made bigger than drinking vessels of any other kind, without becoming too unwieldy. The great weight of earthen or metal pitchers of large size made them very inconvenient even when empty. Lord William Howard of Naworth Castle, in 1615,¹ paid "For two pewter flaggons weighing 25 poundes and a halfe, xxxixs ix d." A great pewter flagon belonging to the late Vincent J. Robinson, F.S.A., which holds two gallons, weighs $23\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. On the other hand the leather pitcher belonging to Sir Maurice Boileau which is described at page 190, though it holds as much as seven gallons and two quarts, weighs only seven pounds and a half. Thus there was an inducement to increase the dimensions of leathern jacks a long way beyond the limits imposed on other pots by the weight of their materials, and this resulted in tankards of leather holding several gallons each—as many as six or eight sometimes—being made for these households or communities that were rich enough and hospitable enough to use them.

¹ Household Book of Lord Wm. Howard of Naworth. Surtees Soc., Vol. 68, p. 265.



Bombards in the cellar of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. (Chap. V.)





Eight of Mr. Fieldhouse's silver-mounted Jacks, from a photograph by Harold Baker. (Chap. V.)

These gigantic leather jugs were known in the 16th and 17th centuries as "Bombards."

The name was probably given them on account of their having some resemblance in general shape to the larger and clumsier cannon of those days, especially to one which was called a bombard. This idea is illustrated by a verse of the song in praise of the black jack in D'Urfey's "Pills to Purge Melancholy," which, comparing the ease with which a jack was cleansed to the difficulty of getting at the inside of a leather bottle, says:

"But if in a cannon-bore Jack it had been
From the top to the bottom all might have been clean."

The weapon known as the bombard was a cannon of considerable size, and chiefly used for the defence of fortresses, but smaller guns, sometimes went by that name. The bombard proper was in shape more like a mortar or howitzer, and to that extent more closely resembled the larger drinking jacks.

The term "black jack," was, after the 16th century, the generic name for all leather pots from mugs upwards, and therefore for the very large sizes the names "bombard" and "black jack" were interchangeable. An instance illustrative of this occurs in the first scene of "A Jovial Crew or the Merry Beggars," comedy by Richard Broome, "presented at the Cock Pit in Drury Lane in the year 1641." In the stage directions is the following: "Enter Randal and three or four servants with a great Kettle and black Jacks and a Baker's Basket all empty." Whereupon, Randal says "We have unloaden the Bread basket, the Beeffe-kettle and the *Beer Bumbards*, there, amongst your guests the Beggars."

The bombard must surely be regarded as the King of old drinking vessels, towering in its magnificent bulk over the heads of all competitors. Small wonder that it was for so long a favourite in the dining-halls of old times, and that both soldiers, retainers, and serving men it was chief among vessels. Though now we grasp with difficulty the immense capacity for ale-quaffing which has characterised this country for the greater part of its history, and though doubtless the larger jacks were useful for carrying supplies of liquor from the cellar to the kitchen and thence to the hall, the bombard, except when used for serving drink to garrisons, must, one would think, have been more valued, like big oxen roasted whole, for its imposing parade of hospitality than for real convenience or advantage. At the monastery at Paddington, the Cellarer was bound to find beer, at the feasts and anniversaries, in "the great tankard of twenty-five quarts." Vessels of ordinary size would do for every day occasions, but at festivals the tankard more than six gallons was to be produced. We have still a distant echo of this custom in the great two-handled mugs, and huge cider cups, which to this day are kept on the side-boards of old-fashioned houses and only used on great occasions.

THE BOMBARD IN OLD LITERATURE.

So overgrown and bloated a vessel was the bombard that the word became most synonymous with inflated swaggering and exaggeration. In this sense Ben Jonson, in his translation, "Horace, his Art of Poetry," uses "their bombard phrase, and foot and half-foot words" to express the "projicit ampullas et

1. This version was published in 1707, but the song was written apparently in the 17th century.

sesquipedalia verba" of Horace.¹ He also makes use of the expression "You braved us with your bombard boasting words," and "such other bombardicall titles," in other parts of his works.² Moreover, in "Howell's Letters" written in 1650, in the passage "He that entitles himself Most Puissant and Highest Monarch of the Turks, with other such bombardicall titles." The leather bombard is also mentioned in Ben Jonson's masque of "Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists," in the passage "I am to deliver the buttery in so many firkins of aurum potable, as it delivers out, bombards of bouge."³ And again in the masque of "Love Restored," by the same author, is the sentence "With that they knock hypocrisie o' the pate and made room for a bombardman that brought bouge for a country lady or two that fainted, he said with fasting."

In another play, Nathaniel Field's "A Woman is a Weather-Cock" (about 1630), Captain Pouts remarks of one of the female characters who was much bigger than the man accompanying her, "She looks like a great black bombard with a pint pot waiting upon it."

A ballad of the middle of the same century, called "Sir John Barleycorne," contains allusions to this vessel, in which puns on the military coat called a jack and the weapon called a bombard, are introduced.

"Some of them fought in a blacke Jacke,
Some of them in a can."

And in another part of the same ballad—

"Some brought Jacks upon their backes
And some with Bombards goe;
And every man his weapon had
Barley Corne to overthrow."

John Taylor, the Water Poet, in his "Travels to Hamburghe" (1617), in describing the bloated figure of the Hamburg hangman, says: "Gogmagog or our English Sir John Falstaff, were but shrimps to this bezzling⁴ Bombard's longitude, latitude, altitude and crassitude, for he passes and surpasses the whole German multitude."⁵

We recall, too, Shakespeare's references to the leather bombard. In the "First Part of King Henry IV.," Prince Henry, reproaching Falstaff, describes him as "that swol'n parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack."⁶ Also, in the "Tempest," Trinculo, in fear of an approaching storm, says "I hear it sing i' the wind: yond' same black cloud, yond' huge one, looks like a foul bombard that would shed his liquor."⁷ Only those who have seen a great bulging, black bombard of leather held horizontally can possibly realise the vividness and force of this simile. Again, in "King Henry VIII.," where the Lord Chamberlain rebukes the palace porters, he says "Ye're lazy knaves; and here ye lie, baiting of bombards, when ye should do service."⁸

1 Ben Jonson's Works, 1860, p. 730.

2 Vol. II., p. 72.

3 Bouge in this connection meant an allowance of meat or drink.

4 "Bezzling" is equivalent to "guzzling."

5 Taylor's Works, 1617, p. 126.

6 Act II., Scene 4.

7 Act II., Scene 2.

8 Act V., Scene 3.

John Taylor speaks of large leather bottles at the Tower of London as bombards. In the "Argument" prefaced to verses written in the reign of James I., which he calls "Taylor's Farewell to the Towre Bottles," he gives the following account of the collection of a curious tax, which was even then ancient. "About three hundred and twenty years since or thereabouts (I thinke in the Raigne of King Richard II.) there was a guift to the Tower or the Lieutenant thereof for the time then and for euer beeing, which guift was two blacke Leather Bottles or Bombards of Wine, from eury Ship that brought Wine into the Riuer Thames : the which hath so continued till this day, but the Merchants finding themselves aggrieved lately, because they thought the Bottles were made bigger than they were formerly wont to bee, did wage Law with the Lieutenant (Sir Geruis Helwis by Name), in which sute the Lieutenant had bene ouerthrowne, but for such witnesses as I found that knew his right for a long time in their owne knowledge. But I having had the gatheringe of these Wines for many yeares was at last Discharged from my place because I would not buy it, which because it was never bought or Sold before I would not, nor durst not, venture upon so dishonest a Novelty, it beeing sold indeed at so high a Rate, that who so bought it must pay thrice the value of it, whereupon I tooke occasion to take leave of the Bottles in this following Poem, in which the Reader must be very melancholy if the reading heerof doth not make him very merry."

The verses themselves are too lengthy to be quoted in full, but they contain a good deal of interesting detail as to the Tower Lieutenant's leather bottles and of the method of levying the toll that was collected in them. He begins :

" By your leave Gentlemen, I'le make some sport,
 Although I venture half a hanging for't :
 But yet I will no peace or manners breake
 For I to none but Leather-bottles speake."

And, after some preliminary beating about the bush, embarks on an account of his connection with the Tower bottles, by which we learn that it was the Water Poet himself who collected the wine, that the two bottles were sufficiently large to hold six gallons, which perhaps accounts for his calling them bombards, and that this impost had been so collected, in his day, for more than three centuries. There is every confirmation of the antiquity of the custom, in a code of Regulations for the Government of the Tower of London framed in the reign of Richard II., which are printed in "Archaeologia" from a manuscript in the Lansdowne Collection. This code shows too that the merchants had good ground for their complaint as to the increased size of the bottles, since they are stated in the document to hold only one gallon each. "Item the said Constable shall have, of every Shippe that cometh with Wynes, too bottells, either of them conteayning a gallon, one before and the other after the maste."

Taylor frankly admits that he used to fill his own skin as well as the bottles, but was always fortunate enough to get back to the Tower without being incapably drunk.

" And now I talke of three just three we are,
 Two false blacke bottles and myself at jarre.
 Yet first I think it fit here downe to set.
 By what means first I with those Bottles met.
 Then stroake your beard my Maister and give eare,
 I was a Water man twice Foure long yeare,
 And liv'd in a Contented happy state,
 Then turn'd the whirling wheele of fickle Fate,
 From Water into Wine Sir *William Wadd*,
 Did freely and for nothing turne my trade.
 Ten yeares almost the place I did Retaine,
 And glean'd great *Bacchus* bloud from *France* and *Spaine*,
 Few Ships my visitation did escape
 That brought the sprightfull liquor of the Grape :
 My Bottles and myself did oft agree,
 Full to the top all merry came *We three*.
 Yet always t'was my chance in *Bacchus* spight
 To come into the Tower unfox'd upright."

With the accession of a new Lieutenant, however, Taylor lost this congenial post, and recalls, in a long harangue addressed to the Lieutenant's leather bottles, the various sorts of wine which, in the pursuit of his occupation of tax collecting on the river, he had so frequently filled them.

" Whilst Pipes and Sackbutts were the instruments
 That I play'd on to fill your full content
 With Bastardt, Sack, with Allegant and Rhenish,
 Your hungry mawes I often did replenish.
 With Malmesie, Maskadell and Corsica,
 With White, Red, Claret and Liatica,
 With Hollocke, Sherant, Malliga, Canara,
 I stuf your sides up with a fursurara,
 That though the world was hard, my care was still,
 To search and labour you might have your fill,
 That when my Master did or sup or dine,
 He had his choyce of fiteene sorts of Wine."

It may be noted, while speaking of the celebrated water-man of Stuart times, that our modern phrase "bum-boat woman" was derived indirectly from the huge leather vessels in which beer was supplied to soldiers. The man who served out provisions was the "bumbard-man," which title when transferred to the provision dealer among sailors became "bum-boat woman." A man who served liquor is spoken of in Peele's *Jests* as the "bumbort." In James Shirley's "Paralysed Soldier," written in the 17th century, occur the lines:

" His boots as wide as black jacks
 Or bumbards toss'd by the King's guards."

In a play by Thomas Heywood, printed in 1639, called "The Troubles of Queene Elizabeth," is the stage direction "Enter three white-cote Souldiers with a Jacke of Beere." In a play by Thomas Middleton (born 1570), one of the characters says—"I would not for the price of all my almanacs, the guard had took him there, they'd ha' beat out his brains with bombards."

Named, as we seen, after a military weapon, the leather bombard became to some extent a military vessel and was much used in serving beer to garrisons and large bodies of men. In connection with some of the larger leather pots which have been acquired by collectors in modern times and are important enough to be entitled to the name of bombard, there is a statement persistently made, that they came from the Tower of London. Although no evidence of this is forthcoming as the result of a search by the custodians, there is probably some foundation for the tradition, which is one of great plausibility. The Tower has been used as military barracks for a great length of time, and it seems quite natural that bombards of leather should have been used there.

The late Mr. Terry of Wardour Street used to say that he had bought such leather pots from a dealer in Government stores who got them from the Tower. One can readily understand that the sale of such disused lumber would not be likely to be entered in detail in the official records, and it is well known that in the "thirties" of the last century many things of great interest were turned out of Government establishments and sold as rubbish. A fine bombard now at Swythambley Park, Staffordshire, was bought about fifty years ago by Mr. Philip L. Brocklehurst, from a dealer, who said he got it from the Tower during a sale of old muskets and what in those days would be considered "lumber." It is nearly 22 inches high, $33\frac{1}{2}$ round the middle, and 12 across the base.

IN ROYAL PALACES.

At Merton Hall, Norfolk, Lord Walsingham has an immense bombard, which seems to have formed a part of Queen Elizabeth's domestic effects, (or perhaps those of King Edward VI.), and which has been preserved there for many years. It has on the middle of the front, a crown incised in the leather, on the left of which is a capital E and on the right an R. The vessel bears evident traces of antiquity, and the crown and letters were undoubtedly made while the leather was new and soft, as the edges of the incisions have curled up slightly, which would not take place if made in old leather. (See Plate 16.) This is certainly one of the most interesting of jacks, not only on account of its magnificent proportions but also because it is one of the oldest with absolutely unquestionable credentials. There are others with old dates, but I know of none that can be regarded as beyond suspicion. Nothing is now known as to how it came to Merton Hall, but as there was a royal residence at Thetford it is conjectured that it may have come from there. This right royal pitcher is 26 inches in height, 10 inches by $7\frac{1}{2}$ at the mouth and 13 in diameter at the bottom. It is in excellent condition and is still occasionally used.

It will be remembered that in 1635, bombards as well as black jacks are mentioned by Heywood as being in use at the Court of King Charles I.² The following passage in a work called "Wits and Fancies," printed in 1614, shows

¹ The Inner Temple Masque Works of Thomas Middleton. 1885. Vol. VII., p. 207.

² See page 15.

that they were also used in the time of Elizabeth, and probably refers to the episode that Heywood was recalling. "When Henry III. of France demanded of Monsieur Daudelot what especial things he had noted in England during the time of his negotiations there, he answered that he had seen but three things remarkable; which were that the people did drinke in bootes, eat raw fish, and strewed all their best rooms with hay; meaning blacke jacks, oysters and rushes." Huge pots of leather are still in existence which are judged by dates and initials incised upon them to have belonged to the household of King Charles. Most of them are stated to have come from Kensington Palace early in the last century, when it is probable that a clearing out took place there, in anticipation of the arrival of the mother of Queen Victoria. However this may have been, there are in different parts of the country, in public and private collections, more than a dozen bombards which have incised on the front, with a large crown, the initials C.R., and the date 1646. One of these is in the British Museum, together with a large leather bottle which is in the same case in the Mediaeval Room. The jack is 21 inches high and twelve across the widest part, and was purchased in 1873, having formerly belonged to the late Mr. J. F. Lucas, of Bentley Hall, Derbyshire.

At the Royal Museum, Peel Park, Salford, there is a similar bombard 21½ inches high, and 11 inches across the bottom, dated, like the foregoing, and having the same crown and initials. At the Salisbury Museum is another, two feet in height, which again has the date 1646 surmounted by a crown. It was presented by the late Rev. W. Blunt.

Mrs. G. Lygon Cocks, of Treverhyn-Vean, Liskeard, has eight of these great leathern pitchers,¹ which were bought by the late Colonel Cox and were said to have come from Hampton Court Palace; but it is not known when or under what circumstances. Such statements are much easier to make than to refute or to authenticate, and I have not been able to find any evidence to support them. Mr. Ernest Law, who has written a learned account of the Palace, knows of no trace of black jacks at Hampton Court; and King Charles was not there in 1646. Undoubtedly jacks were used there, however.

Two fine jacks of the same design, with the same initials, crown and date, are in the collection of Mr. H. D. Brocklehurst at Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire. They are full 22 inches in height, and of grand and imposing appearance.

Another fine example, identical in shape with the British Museum specimen (but two inches shorter), bearing a slightly earlier date 1642, has the same initials and crown. It is in the possession of the Viscount Melville at Cotterstock Hall, Northants. On one side of the jack near to the handle is a capital E, of which no explanation is discoverable.

Another very good example of these remarkable vessels is the property of G. L. Watson, Esq., at Rockingham Castle, Rutland. It is almost the counterpart of the one in the British Museum, and has the same initials, date and crown. Yet another of the same kind is the property of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse of Wootton Waven. Its shape is not quite the same, and in addition to the crown, initials and date, it has a rim of silver with an ornamental indented edge. It is shown in the front of Plate 14. Mr. J. A. Fuller Maitland of Kensington has inherited one of these grand old bombards, which has been in his family about 80 years. Its height is 22 inches, the girth at top 23, at the widest part of the body 33. Upon the front is the same device of the crown, the letters C. and R. and the date.

¹ Five of these are 25 inches high and three 22 inches. All have the same letters, crown and date.

Some large bombards are still in existence which are supposed to have been used in the household of Oliver Cromwell when Lord Protector. Two fine specimens of these are in the collection of Mr. H. Dent Brocklehurst at Sudeley Castle. They are 22 inches in height and have a deep border of silver round the brims, the lower edge of which has an enrichment in the form of acanthus leaves. Engraved round this rim is the inscription "Oliver Cromwell, 1653, the Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland." On a silver embossed plate, on the middle of the front are the arms used by the Commonwealth, quarterly 1st and 4th, a cross gules (for England), 2nd azure a saltire argent (for Scotland), 3rd, argent a harp or (for Ireland), over all on an inescutcheon sable a lion rampant argent (Cromwell). A similar bombard of very fine character is in the possession of the Earl of Powerscourt, a drawing of which is reproduced at Plate 21. It is 23 inches high and differs somewhat in shape from the two at Sudeley Castle in having a more projecting spout and the handle attached nearer to the top.

A pair of great bombards richly mounted in silver and having an embossed silver plate on the front with the arms of the Commonwealth are in the dining room at the delightful Cotswold house of the Earl of Wemyss at Stanway in Gloucestershire. They have the same inscription round the rim and appear to be in all respects similar to those already described. There is no Republican simplicity about these huge pitchers of leather, for they are more ornate than those assigned to the deposed King. It is to be supposed that they were made, or at least garnished, with silver mountings, on the assumption by Cromwell of the title of Lord Protector, as 1653 is the year in which he was so proclaimed.

An exceptionally fine Cromwellian bombard from the Heath House, Salop, is now the property of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse, of Wootton Wawen. This is 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches high and 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ across the base. Engraved on the silver rim is the inscription and date. On an embossed silver plate is a shield bearing the arms of the Commonwealth and the motto "PAX QUÆRITUR BELLO."

A mighty leathern bombard, with silver mounts and the same arms and inscriptions, is the property of Lady Henry Grosvenor, at Quenby Hall, Leicestershire, and was inherited by the late Lord Henry Grosvenor, from the late Duke of Westminster.

A very similar one belonged to Mrs. Hoare at Mickleton Manor, Gloucestershire, but is not quite so large, being 19 inches high and 28 round the middle. It has a similar shield and motto to the foregoing, but the silver rim is rather wider, and more deeply indented. It is stated to be one of those which came out of the Tower of London. In a room called the Cromwell Room at Kimbolton Castle, Huntingdonshire, a seat of the Duke of Manchester, is a similar silver-mounted leather bombard.

The fact that these bombards with Cromwellian and Carolinian dates, etc., are so numerous, suggests that some of them at least may not be what they claim to be, but are instead ancient jacks of plain character which have been "worked up" to make them more valuable as "curios." I have not actually examined all of them, but those I have seen bore no very apparent evidence of having been tampered with. At the same time it would have been quite possible to have added the engraved and embossed silver mounts, which distinguish the Cromwellian

jacks or to incise the big C.R., date and crown of the Carolinian ones in modern times. On none of the latter that I have examined (not even on one in the British Museum) is there the least sign of the leather having curled up at the edges, which would have happened to a greater or less degree if the incisions had been cut when the jacks were made; they are like lines cut in wood. Of course this does not *necessarily* invalidate them, but I cannot help suspecting that most of them may have come in modern times from Chelsea and Greenwich Hospitals.

A large and very handsome old jack at Hinchbrooke, near Huntingdon, has been handed down in the family of the Earl of Sandwich, as a relic of the Protector. There are no arms or inscriptions upon it, but Hinchbrooke was owned for some generations by Oliver Cromwell's ancestors, and the character and appearance of the jack quite support the tradition.

IN OLD HOUSES.

It has already been stated in the present chapter that the terms bombard and black jack were for all the larger pots of leather, practically interchangeable, so that while all are black jacks, those of three gallons and upwards are entitled to the name of "bombard." It therefore follows that many of the large leather pots which have been described in the chapter on the black jack as being found in old castles and mansions would also come under that denomination.

In addition to those examples, I have met with the following instances of great bombards of leather remaining in their old homes. In Warwick Castle, in that part of the vast vaulted undercroft, which has for a number of generations been divided off and used as a servant's hall, there are two bombards of unusual shape, huge size, and considerable age. They are painted with arms and crests, but are somewhat injured by wear and tear. In the illustration at Fig. 44 the jacks are rather dwarfed by the great scale of their surroundings, and their heraldic decoration cannot be distinguished. Being leaky and worn they are no longer used, but generally hang on the wall between two spandrils of the vaulting. The smaller one is 19 inches high. It has been strengthened by a deep band of leather at the top and has a thick brass handle added to enable it to be carried bucket-wise. Emblazoned on the front it has a large shield with a swan argent, ducally gorged or its wings inverted, and a lion rampant, as supporters; the shield is surmounted by a ducal coronet, out of which a demi-swan argent. Above is an earl's coronet. The shield bears Greville (sable on a cross within a bordure engrailed or, five pellets) in pale with a coat that I have not been able to identify. The larger jack is of peculiar shape, tapering from a broad and sloping base to an unusually narrow mouth. It has been repaired by the addition of wide bands of metal apparently pewter, at the top and bottom, attached with rivets. This jack is very tall, being 21 inches high, 32 inches round the base and only 16½ round the mouth. On the front an earl's coronet surmounted by a swan is painted, and on each side is a coronet with the Warwick badge, the bear and ragged staff. The general character of the jacks suggests that they belong to the latter half of the 17th century. The fact that the shorter jack has a handle of brass across the top, on which is engraved the name of the man who placed it there (Spicer 1823, maker), shows that in the 19th century it was still being used. Till sixty years ago large quantities of beer were brewed at the Castle and drawn very freely for all comers.

Not many years ago there were no leather vessels known to remain at Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire, but in the time of the late Lord Vernon's father some alterations were being made to the kitchens of that great Jacobean palace and two bombards were discovered, the larger of which is a fine old specimen not less than 200 years old, judging by its shape, but with no trace of date, ornament or heraldic emblazoning. It stands 17 inches high and has the same contour and general shape of the smaller jack at Stoneleigh Abbey,—a shape by the way, which is peculiar to jacks and could only grow naturally from a vessel constructed of stitched leather. This Sudbury jack is in perfectly good condition, in spite of its age and was evidently not disused on account of decay. Most probably half-a-dozen copper jugs of different shapes, which were found with it, supplanted the leather ones.

Chirk Castle, the massive feudal stronghold of the Myddelton family, contains two grand old bombards of baronial proportions which have remained there from ancient times. They are 22 inches in height and 12 across.

Another pair of "great and huge" bombards have survived the chances and mutations of time in the old hall of Littlecote, near Hungerford. They boast the exceptional proportions of 25 inches in height and 38 inches in circumference at the bottom. They are in good condition, but have no arms or inscriptions and resemble in shape the pair from Chirk Castle, just described.

About thirty years ago, at a sale at Hawkstone, near Shrewsbury, the mansion of Lord Hill, a number of jacks were sold, among them two large bombards which were purchased by Messrs. D. Sherratt of Chester. One of them is as much as $24\frac{1}{4}$ inches high and the other nearly 15 inches.

At Didlington Hall, Norfolk, the seat of Lord Amherst of Hackney, there is a black jack of large size. It stands $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, is $8\frac{1}{4}$ across the base and $23\frac{1}{2}$ round the body.

A big jack at The Hendre, near Monmouth, is traceable in the family of Lord Llangattock for at least three generations. It is 22 inches in height and 8 across the top, beyond which the handle projects another $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It is in good preservation but has no arms or dates. A smaller mug-shaped jack in Lord Llangattock's possession is described towards the end of this chapter.

Montacute House, built between 1580 and 1601 by Sir Edward Phelips, Speaker of the House of Commons, and still inhabited by the same family, is well known as one of the finest of Elizabethan mansions. There are no black jacks there now, but in the adjoining village of East Stoke, in the interesting local collection of Dr. W. W. Walter, was for many years a great old jack nearly 20 inches high and $10\frac{1}{2}$ across the bottom, which had been bought at Montacute House at the death of Mr. John Phelips in 1830. Forty years ago an old woman told Dr. Walter that she well remembered when the jack used to be brought in every morning full of beer for the servants' breakfast. This bombard is now, with the rest of the collection, in the Taunton Castle Museum.

There are two great leather jacks at the seat of the Earl Fitzwilliam, Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire. They are now on the stair-case landing near the Dining-room and are quite plain, having neither arms nor ornament. One of them is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and $24\frac{1}{2}$ round the middle, and the other 21 inches high and 30 inches in circumference. They have not been known to be used for many years, but the fact that they have handles across the top shows that they had not been discarded at the beginning of the last century. The original handles of leather are of the triangular kind which are characteristic of early jacks.

There are at Beauport, the old mansion of Sir Archibald Lamb, Bart., about five miles from Hastings, three bombards, two of which are of the following enormous dimensions: 25 inches high, 25 inches round the top, 38 inches round the middle and 42 inches round the bottom. They are without arms or ornament, and, excepting a short interval, have been known to have been in the house since 1798, but may have been there much longer.

Some years ago, three great leather drinking jacks remained in different parts of Coome Abbey, Warwickshire, having been inherited by the Earl of Craven. They are now placed together in the north cloister, which is part of the Cistercian abbey founded there in the 12th century, but is itself of the 15th century. The largest is a great bombard of several gallons and stands nearly two feet in height. The second is 15 inches high and shows considerable traces of the wear and tear of past centuries. The handle has been repaired with five metal studs. The third is fourteen inches high and is in good order.

In the fine Elizabethan great-hall of Wroxton Abbey, Oxon, Lord North has two black jacks of early character, which are all that now remain. The larger, which is 21 inches high, with a base 11 inches across, holds about five gallons. The other holds two gallons and is 15 inches in height. This smaller one is of unusual shape, as, instead of the ordinary circular base, it is longer from front to back than from side to side, measuring 9 inches by 8. This is very unusual, as jacks are almost invariably circular in plan, the base being round and the top shaped for pouring from, according to the fashion of the period or the taste and fancy of the maker.

At Parham Park, Sussex, among the numerous antiquities of the late Lord Zouche, was a very fine jack standing on the table in the great-hall. It is 18 inches in height, $9\frac{1}{2}$ wide at the bottom, and is of very sturdy and massive build. There was also at Parham an ancient leather bottle of the old keg-shape, seven inches in length, but no other jacks have survived.

During December 1874 there was a sale at Clopton House, near Stratford-on-Avon, the old home of the ancient Clopton family, and now of the Rev. F. H. Hodgson, at which a large leather tankard, capable of holding several gallons, which had stood on the kitchen chimney-piece for more than half-a-century, was bought by Mr. William Downing, of Temple Row, Birmingham, for the late Earl of Bradford. While still in Mr. Downing's possession, it was seen by Mr. Walford, the art dealer of Oxford, and Lord Bradford, who was not collecting such things, allowed him to purchase it. Its present whereabouts is not known, but Mr. Downing describes the jack as having a coat-of-arms and, he believes, a motto.

One of the most striking objects in the great hall at Compton Wynyates, that famous Dower House of the Marquis of Northampton, is a huge bloated-looking bombard. Compton Wynyates is well known as the finest old house in Warwickshire, and dates from the early part of the 16th century, but the jack has the latest authentic date that I have met with. Having been made in the middle of the 18th century it has none of the shapeliness which characterizes the jacks of better periods, but is rather of a clumsy and tub-like build. The body is thickly covered with stamped patterns arranged in diamond-shaped groups, and on the middle of the front, within a stamped border, are the initials T.M. and the date 1742. It is the only jack that has survived at Compton Wynyates,

and with the exception of a piece cut out of the top edge, is in good preservation.

In Chapter III. the leather bombards at the Hospital of St. Cross are described, also the use there (and at the London Charterhouse and at Christ's Hospital), of smaller jacks of leather.

Bombards being military vessels, were used in the Royal Military Hospital at Chelsea, and doubtless at other institutions of similar aim. They were actually in use at Chelsea for carrying beer from cellar to hall till nearly the end of the 19th century, when having become leaky, tin cans were substituted for them.

Nine of these immense pitchers remained, in the month of May, 1896, in the great vaulted cellar of the old mansion which has been occupied so long by the military veterans. Amidst such surroundings they presented with extraordinary realism such a scene as in olden times must have been witnessed in many a collegiate or baronial cellar. This fine group of great bombards, each nearly two feet in height and holding five gallons apiece, standing in dusky grandeur on the time-worn pavement, with a background of ghostly pillars and groined arches, relieved by rows of casks ranged against the walls, and lighted by small casements high up in the whitewashed vault, made a scene vividly suggestive of past days and not to be easily forgotten. (Plate 17.)

I am glad to have had some part in rescuing from neglect and possible loss these grand old jacks, which at the time of my first enquiry had been lost sight of, and were covered with cobwebs. They have since been placed in the Great Hall, with a view to their preservation and exhibition.' At one time they were much more numerous at Chelsea Hospital, but have been gradually discarded with other worn-out lumber, and being picked up by dealers, are now in private hands. One can understand how little such things would be valued by the people accustomed to use them, and how readily (when no longer serviceable) they would get consigned to the limbo of forgotten rubbish. Four such vessels were bought from the family of the late Lord Redesdale.

In examining three great bombards lent to me by the late Sir Francis G. M. Boileau, Bart., of Ketteringham Park, Norfolk, I was struck by the strong resemblance of two of them to those at Chelsea Hospital, and remembering that some of the Chelsea jacks have a large C.H. in white paint on the fronts, I examined the smaller of the bombards and found unmistakable evidences of the two letters having been carefully rubbed off, leaving remains of the white paint in the grain. On the larger also were still more obviously the shapes of the two letters C. and H., roughly scraped on the leather with a knife.

At Brympton Hall, Somerset, a remarkable old house near Yeovil, the late Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, Bart., had in the great hall two large bombards, one 22 inches and the other 22½ inches in height. They were always supposed to have come from Chelsea Hospital, and on the latter I found very distinct traces of the painted C.H. in two different places.

At Greenwich Hospital are no jacks, nor was there any evidence of their use in the past when I made enquiry, but there seemed every probability that when that old palace was crowded with naval pensioners, beer bombards would be used there in considerable numbers, and I have since found direct evidence that this was so.

1 General Robinson, who was then Governor, promised that they should be chained together and padlocked in the Hall, but this does not seem to have been done and some have since disappeared.

A grand old bombard more than two feet in height and measuring twelve inches across, was bought by the late Sir Francis G. M. Boileau, Bart., who had every reason to believe that it came from Greenwich Hospital, when the pensioners were finally removed. This noble old jack is of great interest both from its own intrinsic value and because of its connection with Greenwich Hospital. The following is the account Sir Francis Boileau gave me of the manner in which he acquired the jack: "In the year in which the indoor Establishment for Pensioners at Greenwich Hospital was broken up, I was hastening to the old Shoreditch Station of the G.E.R. when my cab got blocked by the traffic and had to turn off into some by-streets in the neighbourhood of the Barbican. In a shop window of a very humble and dirty character, I caught sight of a black jack, the only article (except a pair or two of boots) which was shown in it. Stopping the cab I accosted the shop-keeper, who was a shoe-maker, and found that he had a few days previously bought the jack at a sale at Greenwich Hospital (out of the Dining Hall), as a curiosity in the leather line which attracted him as a leather worker. He declined to sell, and after some pressing, enquired: 'What on earth I could want with it.' I told him that I should use it to send into the harvest field, filled with good ale and at other times when I entertained cottagers in my old Hall. This statement had a great and instantaneous effect on him, and having up to that point refused to part with the jack, he at once yielded and offered to sell it for thirty shillings. I agreed, and finished my journey to the station with the jack between my knees, arriving only just in time to rush on to the platform and pitch the jack through the window of a carriage, following it *a la Harlequin* myself!" It is interesting to know that this great pitcher, in fulfilment of the promise given to the shoemaker, is wheeled year after year into the harvest field and its contents distributed, and that, at the Christmas dinners to cottagers in the great hall at Ketteringham, it also appears well filled with good ale. This bombard, which is one of the largest in existence, is 25 inches high, 13½ wide, and has a capacity of seven-and-a-half gallons. For a long time this vessel appeared to be the only tangible evidence of drinking jacks at Greenwich Hospital, but enquiries at Messrs. Merryweather's, the well-known Fire Engineers of Greenwich Road, led to the discovery of old accounts which show that large numbers were made by them for the Hospital, more than a hundred years ago. In fact the quantity ordered by the Steward's Office between October, 1799, and October, 1805, is so great that one wonders if they could all have been worn out in legitimate use, or if some of the staff got them as perquisites while still serviceable, in spite of the letters G.H. and an anchor being painted on each. The following entries occur in the oldest ledger that remains:

STEWARD'S OFFICE, GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

1799—	Octr. 9.	To	10 Strong Leather	4 Galln. Jacks.
			24 Do.	Coal Buckets.
				Paintg ye "Anchor G.H." on ea.
	Decr. 24	To	4 Strong 6 Galln. Leather Jacks.	
			6 Do.	5 Do. Do.
1800.	Decr. 8.	To	3 dozen of Strong Leather Coal Buckets and Painting the Anchor with G.H. on each.	
			9 Strong 4 Gallon Leather Jacks.	
1801.	Octr. 16.	To	24 Leather Bucketts painted Compt.	
			24 4 Gallon Leather Jacks.	
			11 6 Galln Do.	
			1 2 Galln. Do.	with a Spout.

	Decr. 24.	To	1 6 Galln.	Do.	
		"	40	Leather Coal Buckets painted compt.	
1802.	Sept. 4—16.	To	6 new 4 Galln.	Leather Jacks.	
		"	12 Do. 6½ Galln.	Do. Do.	
		"	24	Leather Bucketts Painting the Anchor and G.H. on each.	
1804.	Decr. 15.	To	12 4 Galln.	Leather Jacks.	
		"	2 2½ Do.	Do. with Spout.	
1805.	Octr. 30.	To	24	Leather Coal Buckets with the Anchor & G.H. painted on each.	
		"	12 4 Galln.	Leather Jacks.	
		"	6 5 Galln.	Do. Do.	

The last date when black jacks were supplied to the Hospital from Messrs. Merryweather's works was 8th January, 1847, when twelve jacks were bought. The building ceased to be used for Naval Pensioners in 1869. In their Long Acre show rooms Messrs. Merryweather have a large old jack on which are the words Greenwich Hospital, in old paint.

OF LEATHERN MUGS.

In addition to the huge tankards known as bombards and the big jugs called black jacks, ancient leather pots are sometimes met with, which are so small as scarcely to be dignified by either of those names; neither have they their varied contour nor their characteristic build. They are simply "mugs" of leather. Though always included in the term "black jacks," these mugs during the 16th century and later were more frequently called "gispens." Small cups existed however, in much earlier times, as is proved by the pre-historic and Anglo-Saxon examples already described.¹ Unfortunately the majority of leather mugs now in existence are modern frauds, but some few remain which are genuinely ancient, and there is evidence that leather pots of small size existed in the Middle Ages side by side with the larger vessels.

An inventory attached to the will of Thomas Morton, who was Canon Residentiary of York in 1423 and afterwards Master of Brackley Hospital, Northants, includes not only leather pots of two quarts each, "ollis de correo, vocatis pottillers," but also a leather cup, "i olla de correo vocata j pynte."²

It seems unlikely that many of these small mediaeval jacks now exist. There is a leather pot at the Public Library at Hereford which may be as early as that period. It has a thin handle and a tapering body, so that the bottom is much larger than the top, and it has the look of having been long under ground. Only 4½ inches in height, it is considerably decayed. Its history is unknown, but it has been in its present quarters for many years.

In the city museum at Salisbury is a small leathern mug that may be mediaeval. Its height is 5½ inches, width at the top three, and only half-an-inch more across the base.

The term "Gispen," usual in the 16th and 17th centuries for a leathern mug, is so spelt in Halliwell's "Dictionary of Archaic Words," and also in Nare's Glossary. Palsgrave in his "Lesclaircissement de la Lange Francoyse," printed in 1523, calls it "gyspen potte," and translates it "pot de cuir."

There were "xiii lethern Gyspyns" at Westminster Abbey at the Dissolution. They are mentioned in "An Inventory of the Buttereye remaynyng in the Custodye of Gabrell Palley to thuse of the late Abbotte."³

¹ Pages 18 and 19.

² Testa. Ebor., Vol. XLV., Surtees Soc., p. 111.

³ Printed in Transactions of Lon. and Middx. Archæo. Soc., Vol. IV., p. 356.

In an inventory of 1540, now at Belvoir Castle, were among the goods of Lord Sande's "In the Buttery. Item vii. gallon potts of lether, and vii. gypspins, one wt another iiiid."

According to Bishop Kennet the gispin was a leather jack and was in use at Winchester.' In the Computus of the Bursar of Winchester College, jacks holding as much as a gallon are called gispens. The following entry occurs in 1569. "Sol pro iij lagenis de corio vocat ly gypspyns ad usum scholarium et seruentium, iijs iijd."¹

In the Legend of Captain Jones, written by the Rev. D. Lloyd in 1648, is the passage:

" In this great disaster
Raymond the soldier's mariner and master
Lost heart and head to rule; then upstart Jones
Calls for six gispins, drinks them off at once." etc.

In the Roxburghe collection of ballads is one of about 1665 called "The King of Good Fellows or the Merry Toper's Advice," in which the same vessel is alluded to:

" T'was I that lately drunk a Pint pot
Fill'd with Sack unto the brim,
And to my Friend, and he drank his Pot
So merrily went about the Whim;
Two gispins at a draught I poured down my throat,
But hang such trifling things as these!
I laid me all along, put my nose unto the Bung
And drank out a Hogshead-full with ease."²

The "gispins atte the Picher-house" are mentioned in the Ordinances of Charles II., while the purchase by the same King of three gispens, and of a "Gespinn" and some black jacks by Charles I. is mentioned in Chapter VIII. of the present work.

It is certain that in old times, cups and mugs of leather were few in number compared to jacks of larger sizes, if it were only because of the immense number of wooden cups which were in use, till comparatively modern days, "'Ere China's sons, with early art elate, Formed the gay tea pot and the painted plate,"—or at least, ere England's sons were in the habit of buying them, the cups most in vogue here were of wood. They were turned out of the solid as a rule, and had no resemblance to our 20th century cups, the earlier ones being small, shallow bowls, round generally but sometimes oval. The "flowing bowl" was not, as now, only a figure of speech, but was used in various sizes for drinking. Many have been dug up in London and are in Mr. Syer-Cuming's collection. When fairly large (holding a quart and upwards), wooden drinking vessels were made of hooped staves, as already described in connection with the second verse of the "Leather Bottell." They were then called cans or tankards. They occur in great numbers in old inventories of household goods, and figured frequently in the expenses of domestic establishments, great and small.

¹ Lands. MSS., 1033.

² Annals of Winchester College, 1892, p. 227.

³ Roxburghe Ballads, Part XVIII., Vol. VI., p. 502.

Such wooden cups are mentioned in the Wardrobe Book of the Sons of Edward I.,¹ and there are many entries in the various Ordinances and Regulations for the Royal Households from Edward IV. to William III.,² which show that even in the hall of the King's palace cups of wood were very commonly used for drinking from, till quite a late date. In the 15th century it seems that the king himself used them according to the following passage. "The Buttler for the monthe delyverythe nyghtly at the buttery barre, for the Kynge all nyght with ale in new asshen cuppes."³

In Rymer's *Foedera* is a license granted in 1430 for a ship to carry certain commodities for the express use of the King of Scotland, among which are pewter vessels and cups of wood.

As late as the reign of Charles II. cups of ash were used in the King's Court. In Sir W. Dugdale's "*Origines Judicales*," printed in 1680, he says "until the second year of *Q. Eliz.* reign, this Society (that of the Inner Temple) did use to drinke in Cups of Ashen-wood, such as are still used in the King's Court, but then those were laid aside and green earthen pots introduced, which have been ever since continued."⁴ But it seems by a letter in the Loseley MSS. that such earthenware pots were not in common use, as the Society fetched white clay from Farnham Park, by permission of the Bishop of Winchester, and had the green pots specially made for themselves.⁵ One instance will serve to illustrate the use of wooden drinking vessels in mediæval houses. The most numerous entries in the household book of Sir John Howard, of Stoke by Neyland, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, refer to the purchase of such things, and in one group, in the year 1468, there are eighteen different payments for various kinds of wooden vessels to the number of 2091, costing £13 16s. 7d. : all of them are set down together and were bought within a few days.⁶

In the next century, about 1512, the Earl of Northumberland, though possessed of great wealth, hired rough pewter for holiday occasions, and used generally for his family and household (which numbered 166 members) trenchers and other vessels of wood.⁷

A passage from Harrison's *Description of England*, written in 1580, has already been quoted⁸ commenting on the extreme commonness of all sorts of "treene stuff" in times antecedent to that. Harrison says that in his time pewter was greatly supplanting wood. But wooden vessels were still very numerous nearly a century later, when Heywood in 1635 wrote a criticism of the drinking habits of his countrymen. Comparing his own times with those of classic Greece, he says: "Next for variety in Drinking Cups, we need not be said to come neere but to go farre beyond the Grecians, of whose carousing bowles I have before given you a sufficient catalogue; divers and sundry sorts we have; some of Elme, some of Box, some of Maple, some of Holly, etc. Mazers, broad-mouth'd Dishes, Noggins, Whiskins, Piggins, Criseses, Ale-bowles, Wassel-bowles, Court-dishes, Tankards, Kannes, from a pottle to a pint from a pint to a gill."⁹ In this

1 Add. MSS. 32,050, fol. 16.

2 Printed by Soc. of Ant., 1790.

3 *Ib.*

4 Dugdale's *Origines Judicales*, 1680, p. 148.

5 Loseley MSS., printed 1836, p. 311.

6 Expenses of Sir John Howard, Roxburgh Club, 1841, p. 27.

7 Earl of Northumberland's Household Book, Preface.

8 Page 12.

9 *Philocothonista*, 1635, p. 45.

list he evidently enumerates all the varieties of wooden drinking cups. The ordinary kind in every day use were generally of ash or some common wood, and when broken or dirty were discarded, but the more valuable kinds in box, holly, maple, etc., being more enduring, were sometimes elaborately treated and much prized. The "mazer" especially, a large bowl turned out of maple wood and bound with silver, was generally of considerable value.

It will be seen therefore that with wooden cups in such numbers the necessity for leather pots of small size would not be great, and in fact records of them are scarce, partly because in old documents the sizes are rarely given. The reference to a pint cup of leather already mentioned is quite exceptional, for though "pottillers of lether" and "gallons of lether" are often specified and leather tankards are distinguished from leather cans, any smaller than "stopes" are rarely met with.

LATE LEATHER MUGS.

There is in Salisbury Museum a very small jack which is of especial interest as having a date upon it. It is of very unusual shape, especially for a small one, being tubby and globose instead of straight and mug-like. On a panel reaching right across the front are the letters R.S.M., 1658.

A leather cup belonging to the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bart., was lent to the Northampton Museum, with other black jacks, for many years. Its sides are quite upright, and it has a plain round handle, so that its shape is very much the same as an old-fashioned crockery-ware beer mug. It is $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, $3\frac{1}{2}$ across the top, and $3\frac{7}{8}$ across the bottom (See Plate 9). A larger one, of somewhat similar build, but having a heavier handle and the unusual feature of a lip for convenience in pouring, is in the museum at Glastonbury. Its height is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches and its capacity between a pint and a half-pint. This jack is somewhat damaged, and is said to have come from Worksop Manor and to have belonged to the great grandfather of the present Duke of Newcastle.

Sir Francis Boileau had a tiny cup of leather which resembles more the drinking-horn, from which our modern tumbler derives its shape. Barely $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, $2\frac{1}{4}$ across the top and $1\frac{1}{2}$ across the base, it holds a quarter of a pint and is extremely well made from one piece of leather exclusive of the bottom. The leather is of some strength and has a seam which does not project above the surface. Down each side of the seam are rows of stamped circles and at the opposite side a pair of similar rows. It seems too elegantly made to have been used as such leather cups sometimes were, by labourers in the harvest field instead of the more usual horn cup; but was probably carried for use with a leather bottle in hunting or fishing expeditions. Another such cup, in every respect similar except for the rows of stamped circles, was found near Stratford-on-Avon by Mr. T. R. Hodges, who very kindly gave it to the present writer.

Besides the wooden cups which were so numerous in past times, cups of horn, pots of pewter and other metals would all compete with leathern mugs and help to render them unnecessary. Then after the opening years of the 17th century many more vessels of different kinds and materials were used than before, being both made here and introduced from foreign parts. Heywood in the work just quoted, in continuation of those already enumerated, says: "Wee have besides



HERALDIC BOMBARDS
(in the possession of The Marquis of Northampton, at Castle Ashby.)

cups made of horns of beasts, of Cocker nutts, of Gourds, of the shells of divers fishes brought from the *Indies*, and other places, and shining like mother of *Pearle*: Infinite there are of all measures and fashions model'd of earth Cotili and Dycotili single pots and double pots, some plaine, others of many colours: some I have seene made in the forme and figure of beasts, as of Doggs, Catts, Apes, and Horses, others of Fishes, as Dolphins, etc. But the most curious and costly, either of Workmanship or Mettall are brought from China. Of Glasses to quaffe in, the fashions and sizes be almost without number, some transported hither from *Venice* and other places, some made in the Citie by strangers; besides the ordinary sort I have seene some like Shippes under Sayle, accommodated with Mastes, Sayles, Ordnance, Cable, Anchor and saylors to man her: others like boates, Lyons, Ratts, Trumpets, and indeed what not? Come to plate, Every Taverne can afford you flat bowles, French bowles, Prounct Cups, Beare-bowles, Beakers; and private householders in the Citie, when they make a Feast to entertain their friends can furnish their cup-bords with Flagons, Tankards, Beere-cups, Wine bowles, some white, some parcell guilt, some guilt all over."

SILVER-MOUNTED JACKS.

Although leathern mugs do not occupy a specially prominent position in the above array of drinking cups, Heywood does not forget them, but speaks of them as jacks; "small Jacks wee have in many Ale-houses of the Citie and suburbs tipt with silver."

These silver-mounted jacks are now the most numerous of the mug-shaped black jacks that have escaped the ravages of time. To the fact of their greater value and the ornamental treatment and extra beauty of workmanship bestowed upon them, they no doubt owe their preservation. Though not now to be found in ale-houses, some examples known to have been used in inns are preserved, two of which are described in Chapter VII. Some fine specimens remain in Museums and private collections, and a few in the hands of the same families to which they originally belonged.

Silver bound leather cups have been made as early as Anglo-Saxon days, one belonging to that era having been dug up in Derbyshire.¹ But though some silver bound cups which are still extant have been ascribed to the time of Elizabeth and though a few have authentic dates within the duration of her reign, they may be regarded as belonging generally to the 17th and 18th centuries, and I know of no documentary record of their use earlier than the one just quoted in 1635. Another mentioned in Chapter IV. refers to a jack presented to the Oxford Guild of Cordwainers in 1655. The latest actual example I know is one at South Kensington Museum, dated 1755; and the earliest a pair belonging to the Shirleys of Ettington Park, Warwickshire, which have the date 1601.

It is not to be imagined that jacks were rimmed or lined with silver from any astidious dislike to drinking from leather, as jugs and cups of very various materials were habitually so mounted, as for instance, earthenware and wood, and even china, porcelain and vessels of cocoanut and mother-o'-pearl.

A most interesting set of four silver-mounted jacks, which have been handed down for generations in the same family of Kempson, are in the possession of the

¹ See page 19 and Fig. 5.

widow of the late Major Kempson at Moreton Jeffreys, Herefordshire. The illustrations show that they are a most notable group, graduating in size from a fairly large stoup to a small mug (Plate 13). They have the silver rim and silver shield on the front which are features of this class of black jack, and one of them, the largest, has an elaborately foliated handle-termination which is also a characteristic of such jacks. The second largest, too, seems to have originally possessed the same ornament, but through age and much service this portion, which is necessarily somewhat fragile, has been broken off. The two smaller ones have always had plain handles, and they are also rather worn at the bottom. In other respects the whole are in good preservation. All of them have deep rims of silver enriched below with a boldly treated ornamental border, and all are lined with pewter. The silver shields are of 17th century design and have engraved upon them a chamois' head and shoulders couped, the crest of the Warwickshire branch of the Kempsons, which is now extinct. The jacks were in constant use down to the time of the late Major Kempson's grandfather, when they used to stand on the hob to make the ale hot, as a result of which one or two of them were slightly injured. The three smallest are hall-marked (A.P.), but there appears to be no mark on the largest. A wood-engraving of this set of jacks appeared in the "Illustrated London News" about 1851, from a drawing by the late Sir William Fox.

At Ettington Park, near Stratford-on-Avon, an old house almost rebuilt in an ornate French Gothic style somewhat discordant with the ancient park around it, is a set of exceptionally fine and early silver-rimmed jacks which have been there in the possession of the Shirley family for generations. The two largest are a pair ten inches high, extreme width about seven inches, and have a deep silver rim of one-and-a-half inches. They have shields in front with engraved mantlings, and the letters C.P.D. over the date 1601. They are not lined with silver and are the largest and oldest of their kind I have heard of. A smaller pair, lined as well as rimmed with silver, are nearly six inches in height and three-and-a-half in width. They have no shields. Another jack of the set is eight-and-a-half inches high, has no shield, and is not lined but has a silver rim. The sixth is a most diminutive jack, only three inches high, and has a silver rim but no lining. It is the smallest example known to me and was probably made for a child.

Among the finest of mug-shaped jacks is the silver-mounted one in the collection of H. Dent Brocklehurst, Esq., at Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire. It has a very deep silver rim, plain for the most part with a projecting moulding near the bottom edge and below it a multifoiled border. On the front is a silver shield-shaped plate, with an ornamental border, on which in 1860 was engraved the Dent crest. The height of the jack is seven inches. The back seam is cut away at the top to make room for the silver rim, below which the handle starts with a fine sweeping curve, which returns at the base and finishes in an elaborate foliated finial. The sides of the jack slope in slightly, so that the top is smaller than the bottom. It is lined throughout with silver and is hall-marked B.L. under a crown, which is repeated three times on the rim and five times on the lining. The date indicated by this mark is about 1698. (See Plate 21.)

In the London "Gazette" for August 12th, 1680, is an advertisement giving particulars of old plate that had been stolen from a gentleman's house. "The

House of a person of Quality being lately broken, there was lost thence one large Silver Possnet with 3 legs to it, a long Handle, a cover made to go within the same, and will contain 3 or 4 Quarts, having no Arms or Stamps on it more than the Goldsmith's mark. One Sugar Box, a Spoon to it, made with four half round Corners, with a Hasp to fasten it on one side, and will contain in it about one pound of Sugar, a large Silver Ladle with a Fork at the end, one Spoon marked with a P, and two Drinking Jacks of Leather, edged round with Silver."

One wonders if a handsome jack in the possession of Lord Inchiquin at Moor Park, near Ludlow, has passed through some such adventure, as the silver rim has been torn off, no doubt for melting down. It is in other respects remarkably perfect condition, and except that the lining is of pewter, is the counterpart of the one at Sudeley Castle, just described. There is a large black jack also at Moor Park, which is a good example of the late 17th century with its characteristic round handle. A small but interesting jack, inherited by the Rev. Arthur Talbot of Edgmond, Salop, has remained in the Talbot family for many years. It is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, 3 across the bottom and $2\frac{1}{2}$ at the top, and has a deep vandyked and engraved silver rim of unusually bold design. It is lined with silver, but the leathern bottom has gone and only the stitches that once held it remain. That it has no handle, nor even the usual projecting seam, is curious. On its side is a painted shield of arms much worn with age, and another only partly visible behind it. The first bears "Azure, a lion rampant argent, in a chief of the second, a buck's head engrailed or between two roundels of the same." On the other shield the arms appear to be "Argent a bend sable, and the chief gules."

In the "Tudor Exhibition" of 1890 a silver-mounted mug-shaped jack, precisely similar to the Sudeley one, was exhibited by the late Lieut.-General Fraser, V.C., and described in the catalogue as having belonged to Sir Walter Raleigh, and handed down in the family of his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, whose crest it bears. The rim and lining are of silver, but are not hall-marked, or the question of its date might be definitely settled, but there is nothing in the style of the jack to contradict the tradition. It is now with the rest of General Fraser's collection of jacks in the possession of Mr. W. J. Fieldhouse.

The late Sir Francis Boileau, among other ancient jacks already described, possessed at Kettering Park, Norfolk, two leather stoups of very different sizes, bound with silver. The larger of these is a mounted jack unusual in size, being as much as 9 inches in height and $6\frac{3}{4}$ across the bottom. It holds five pints, and instead of being circular as is usual with this kind of jack, the top is modelled into a spout which overhangs the front, and is quite seven inches from handle to spout, while only $4\frac{1}{2}$ across. It has a silver rim with a projecting moulding of two orders, and the lower edge is serrated into a series of shallow ogee curves. There is no metal lining, but a coating of pitch only. The handle has the bold sweeping curve, and the elaborate finial already noticed in the preceding specimens. There are no hall-marks on this one, but it certainly belongs to the 17th century. On the front there is an oval plate of silver engraved with the monogram T.M.A. within an elaborate border of 18th century design. This jack has altogether much more character and distinction than many of its kind; its sides are not straight nor its body cylindrical. It was inherited in 1869 by Lady Boileau from the late Lord Nugent, and came with other old relics from his house in Buckinghamshire, but how he acquired it is not known. (See Plate 24.)'

1 The jacks have been inherited by Sir Maurice C. Boileau, Bart.

At Peckforton Castle, the Cheshire seat of Lord Tollemache, are three silver-mounted jacks, which came from Helmingham Hall, in Suffolk, where they were used by the Tollemache family in past times. The largest of them resembles in build the two last described, but is of greater size. It is in fact one of the largest of this kind I have met with, being 10 inches high, 20 inches round the body and 14 round the neck. The upper edge is shaped into a spout, and has a silver collar one inch broad inside and out. It has also an oval silver plate in the middle of the front engraved with the Tollemache crest. The handle is round. The other two are leather mugs of smaller size, without any trace of spout. They are lined with silver and have silver collars one inch broad round the top of the neck and an oval silver plate two inches long, in the centre of the front, engraved with the Tollemache crest. The handles are plain and of the round shape.

A jack very similar in design to the foregoing, but rather more regular in shape, is the property of Lord Llangattock at the Hendre, Monmouth. It is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, and, like Sir M. Boileau's example, is not round at the top but elongated into a spout or beak for pouring, being 6 inches from the handle side to the spout. The handle is sweeping and loop-shaped, but its ornamental termination is not quite so bold or elaborate as in the larger ones last described. The silver rim has an indented and engraved edge, but there is no silver plate on the front.

Another jack, only a quarter-of-an-inch shorter than Sir M. Boileau's, but in character more nearly resembling Lord Llangattock's, is the property of Dr. Billiald of Kington, Herefordshire. It has a beak-shaped spout and the sides of the body have slight and delicate curves. The handle is loop-shaped, but its ornamental termination below is not so bold as in some mounted jacks or has lost a piece of one of its curves. Otherwise the jack is very similar to the last, but has no silver plate and the silver rim is boldly escalloped. Its height is $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches and diameter at the bottom $5\frac{1}{4}$.

A singularly fine and exquisitely-finished little jack was in the collection of the late Mr. Richard Drane, of Cardiff. It has a silver rim with deeply indented cuspings, a shield of the same metal on the front engraved with the elaborate quarterings of some unknown owner, and the interior of the vessel has a silver lining. Though stamped three times the hall-mark is unfortunately very indistinct. The first letter looks like L., and the second is certainly E. Though evidently of considerable age the leather surface of the jack is quite devoid of wrinkles, is as black as polished ebony, and has the silky smoothness that only time can give. There can be no doubt that the ornate handles of these smaller jacks must have been stitched when their shape was only roughly developed, and that they were cut into shape afterwards. The lines of stitching are outlined with incisions previously made in the leather as a guide, and after being stitched the ornamental contours were cut out with a sharp knife as tracery is cut with a fretsaw, as close to the threads as was consistent with safety.

A very diminutive jack is the property of Sir Maurice Boileau. It is barely five inches high, two-and-a-half across the bottom, and less than two across the mouth. It is probably unique in character, having a globular body, with ewer-shaped neck finishing in a deep silver collar without mouldings. The handle is neither angular nor round, but has a slight return at the bottom. On each side of the body and on the front is a stamp impressed in the leather during the making of the vessel. It consists of a circular sinking with the letters F.D. in relief, and

above it a piece of conventional ornament. It was no doubt the maker's mark, unless the jack was made to order and stamped with the owner's initials as part of its decoration. (Plate 24.) An interesting feature of this curious little jack is that the silver band round its neck is engraved with a quaint and spirited design representing a man in hat, doublet and breeches taking a hawk from her perch and turning, spear in hand, towards a hound which is in full cry after a fox. Conventional foliage and trees are suggested, and above the following quaint but not very lucid inscription, is engraved: "I hoake and hunt Tis all my sport, The fox is here drink out thy bere. Then to thy howse se thou resort." This jack has no date, but in character it belongs to the earlier half of the 17th century. It is traditionally stated to have belonged to Fairfax, Cromwell's celebrated general. Its condition is good except in the handle, which is, in places, eaten away, and has been repaired at the bottom with silver plates.

There is a handsome silver-mounted and pewter-lined jack among the old heirlooms at Elmore Court, near Gloucester, the ancestral home of the Guise family, particulars as to which jack I owe to the courtesy of Sir William Guise, Bart. It was formerly at Rendcombe Park, near Cirencester, and was brought from there on the sale of that estate by the Guise family many years ago. Its height is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, its width 5 inches, and its capacity half-a-gallon. On a silver shield are the arms of Guise, with those of Wytham, Snell, Wright and Cook, surmounted by the Guise crest. There is no date, but the hall-mark is I.P.

In the 15th volume of the "Journal of the Archaeological Association" ten specimens of leathern mugs are described as having been exhibited by Mr. Meyrick. They ranged from $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches to $7\frac{3}{8}$ in height. "The earliest" is stated to be "of the time of Elizabeth or James I. and is a type of great rarity, the body being globose and the neck cylindrical and having a well-formed handle on one side. It has a silver base, rim and cover, graven with roses, strawberries, etc., and its extreme height is about $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

The only other example of this kind of jack known to me is one that was for many years lent by the late Mr. Dunn-Gardner to the Victoria and Albert Museum. It has a globular body and squat neck with spout. There is a silver mount round the neck on which fits a silver hinged lid, which has a silver medal commemorating the death of Oliver Cromwell set in it. On the obverse of this is the inscription "Olivar: D.G.Rp.Ang. Sco. Hiberniae. Protector," and a laureated bust in armour to the left. On the reverse is "Non. defitient. Oliva. Sep. 3. 1658." A young olive-tree growing by the stump of an old one; shepherds tending their flocks. This medal was struck in Holland.¹ Surrounding the medal this inscription is engraved on the lid. "I intended not only to oblige My friends but Mine Enimies. Also exceeding even the desires of those that were factiously discontented if they did but pretend to any modest and sober scence." And on the silver mount: "As the sins of our peace disposed us to this Unhappy War. So let this War prepare us for thy blessed Peace." On the front of the jack is a silver plate bearing the arms of Barrington (Baronetcy, 1611-1833). The height of the jack is $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches and width $6\frac{1}{2}$. This jack was sold with the rest of Mr. J. Dunn-Gardner's collection at Christie's in April, 1902, when it was purchased by Messrs. Charles Davis of New Bond Street, W.

¹ See Hawkin's "Medallic History of Great Britain," p. 435. No. 85.

Of the remainder of those described in the "Archaeological Journal" it is said that "they are all can-formed, mounted with silver rims, five having shields attached to their fronts displaying arms, crests or initials." The writer goes on to express doubt as to these features being safe guides as to the dates or original owners of the jacks, because one of them bears on its rim "Thomas and Mary Gibson, 1710"; whilst the object itself, like its companions, in form is palpably of the 17th century. It is, however, quite certain that jacks of this shape and character were used before, during, and long after the 17th century, and that the above inscription was quite likely to have been an original one.

There are a number of similar jacks to these in Mr. Fieldhouse's collection, some of which are shown at Plate 18.

Mrs. Knight, of Atherstone, possesses a handsome silver-mounted mug of leather of some historic interest. It is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in extreme diameter of base and four inches across the top. The handle is round, but has no return, finishing below in a slight projection from the back seam. The lip of the cup has a deep silver rim with the moulding and multi-foiled lower edge to be found in many examples of the silver-mounted jack. On the front is a quaint silver shield with a falcon engraved upon it, its wings extended and legs belled. On the bottom of the jack is an old paper with the following: "This Black Jack was with the Regt. at the Battle of Minden 1759 and was given to James Forster Knight by Capt. Blair who was present and one of the very few officers of the Regt. who survived that action." The hall-mark on the silver rim is T.H., which seems to show that it was made at Newcastle-on-Tyne, by Thos. Hewitson, about 1698 or 1700. The jack is lined with metal, which has the appearance of pewter.

An unusually good drinking mug of leather belongs to Mr. W. B. Redfern of Cambridge. It is in very perfect condition, and measures seven inches in height and five across the bottom. It has a deep silver rim, with the usual shallow foliations round the lower edge, and on the front an oval silver plate surrounded by a simple moulding. This was evidently intended for the engraving of the owner's crest, but has remained plain. This mug came about 45 years ago from Madingley Hall, Cambridgeshire, the home of the Cotton family, and was bought there at a sale by the late Mr. J. Leonard, of Cambridge. It was sold for £17 at the Leonard collection sale. A smaller and plainer mug of Mr. Redfern's also came from Madingley Hall, and was sold with the Leonard collection for £10. It measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and $3\frac{3}{4}$ across the bottom. The hall mark shows it to belong to the year 1721. Both jacks have a peculiar double swell or moulding in the leather of the base. The first of these jacks has the scroll-like return of the handle, but its foliation is less than usually elaborate. A somewhat similar jack of the same size as the larger of these two, but in more time-worn condition and probably rather older, is in the museum at Glastonbury. It has a deep rim of silver but no metal lining, and the base of the handle has a return curve which is part of the back seam and slopes off into it in an unusual way. It has a ducal coronet and came with a plain jack of similar size already noticed, from Worksop Manor, both being believed to have belonged to the great grandfather of the present Duke of Newcastle.

In the collection made by General Pitt-Rivers at Rushmore near Salisbury, is a small mug-shaped jack, $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches high and $4\frac{1}{4}$ across the top. It has a round handle with a return curve below. Round the top edge is a plain silver rim with the letters I. A. N. L.

In April, 1900, a leather bottle of keg shape mounted with two silver shields, bearing a medallion portrait of Oliver Cromwell and the Royal Arms, was sold at Christies'. It had been for many years at Littlecote Manor, and is now in the possession of Lord Rothschild. Mr. Fieldhouse has a similar silver-mounted bottle from General Frazer's collection, but it has no arms or inscription.

A SILVER-MOUNTED BOOT.

In the spring of 1901 a singular leather drinking cup mounted in silver and shaped like a boot was bought at Christies' by Mr. J. R. Harding of St. James's Square. It is five inches high and six in length, made of strong smooth leather with thick projecting seams. The edge of the cup has a spreading rim of silver incised on the inside with an ornamental border and on the outside with a running scroll of foliage, below which is a Latin inscription and the date 1599, having below it a notched and cusped edge. There is a silver rowel spur attached with silver straps, and the pointed toe which curls up like a shoe of the 14th century has a sharply-pointed silver mount ornamentally treated and terminating in an eagle's head holding a silver bell in its beak. The leg portion only forms the cup and the foot is curled round obviously for a handle. This remarkable cup formerly belonged to the poet, Lord Byron. The inscription is "VT. QVID CVRRENTI CALCAR G:G. 1599"—As a spur is to the runner.

Mr. Fieldhouse has an elegant little boot with a silver rim which is made with surprising skill and exquisite finish, but having no lining, not even one of pitch, it hardly seems likely to have been a jack, though it is a convenient shape for drinking from.



Fig. 45

Large Jack in the Buttery at Queen's College, Oxford,
"with a pint pot waiting upon it."

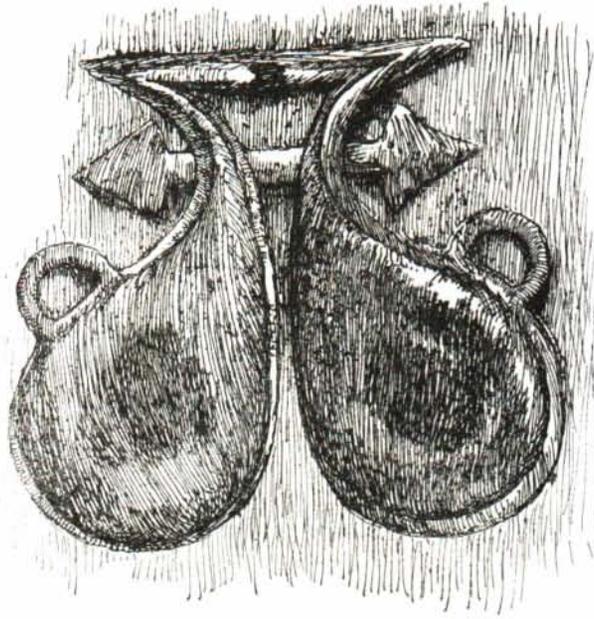


Fig. 46

Carving of Water-bouget from the Shield of a Knight in chain armour in the Temple Church.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WATER-BOUGET.

AS to the water-bouget, the facts to be gleaned about it are meagre and difficult to trace. It passed out of general use so long ago that it is now rarely heard of, having only survived as a charge on the coats-of-arms of a few ancient families. No actual water-bouget or even the remains of one is known to exist. Nothing seems to have been written about it except one or two passages in works on heraldry; and in modern books (even in glossaries for the elucidation of old words) its more unusual names, such as "bouge," "bulge," "bowge," etc., are given as meaning barrels. The mystery that surrounds it has been increased by the manner in which the heraldic charge has degenerated in later days into a conventional, and to most people, unintelligible sign. It is evident that the heraldic artists of the last two centuries had not actually seen a water-bouget and had no clear idea as to what it was like, or they would not have depicted objects such as those marked *b* and *c* in Fig. 47. Of these degenerate bougets, an extreme instance (Plate 8) is from a manuscript at Windsor Castle.'

Mr. J. R. Planché considered that the water-bouget "owed its introduction to English heraldry to the Trusbutts, barons of Watre in Holderness, who bore *Trois bouts d'eau*, three Bouts or Bougets of Water, thereby symbolizing both their

1 Kindly photographed for me by Sir Benjamin Stone.

family name and their baronial estate."¹ But Mr. J. Finlayson, in "Surnames and Sirenames," says that the name of Trusbut was taken from the bearings and not the bearings from the name: he remarks, "By some means unknown to us, the Barony of Watre passed from Roger de Bugey to the Trusbuts. De Bugey's armorial bearings were three water-bougets. These bearings have been considered to have originated in the Trusbut family, because they bore 'Trois Boutz d'eau,' whereas it is but the earliest mode of canting spelling, and points with undoubted certainty to its 'Frenchified' origin. Trusbut is a device name adopted from the feudal Baron's armorials. They assumed the bearings of De Bugey as tenants in feu, which was then customary."²

The late Mr. Lower, in "The Curiosities of Heraldry," says "water-bougets or budgets date from the Crusades, when water had to be conveyed across sandy deserts to a great distance."³ He does not advance any evidence in support of this theory, but it was probably derived from Dallaway's "Enquiries into the Science of Heraldry,"⁴ and has been repeated in other Heraldic works as explaining the origin of our water-bouget. The idea is, I believe, quite erroneous. There is no real occasion for such explanations, as the existence of these vessels in England was quite natural, apart from any importation, borrowing or imitating. The conveying of water in skins or in bags of leather must have been found convenient in very remote ages, and in many countries. Certainly it was in England long before, and long after, the time of the Crusades.

I have found water-bougets in English records as early as the 10th century. They occur in a document giving an account of the trades and industries of that time,⁵ and also in the Lindisfarne Gospels (about 710), and in the Rushworth Gospels in 975.⁶ In the latter the Parable of the Old Wine and New Bottles⁷ is rendered: "Ne menn geotath vin niowe in winbeligas alde, elles tobersteth tha belgas calde ond thaet vin bith agoten, ond tha beligas tolore weorthath;" the word "belge," or "belig," being the Old English form of "bulge" or "Bouget." In Wulcker's edition of T. Wright's book of Vocabularies, "bulga" (the mediaeval Latin equivalent of "bouget") is glossed "baelze odde bylge." In the Lindisfarne version of the Gospels, the *ἀσκός* of the original Greek is rendered by "byttum," another early name for a water-bag or bouget, and the same word is used where the Parable occurs in St. Mark and St. Luke. The Glossary of Alfric, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 10th century, translates "utre" by "byt."⁸

In this parable of the old wine in new bottles, the rendering of the Authorised Version would miss little of the force and clearness of the text, as long as the readers were accustomed to bottles of leather, because, though commentators have differed as to precisely what wine and what vessels were originally intended, it is evident that they were vessels that became weaker with age, which would be true of the water-bouget and the leather bottle. As it is not true of our modern glass and earthen bottles, as long as they will hold liquids at all, the parable, as it stood in the 1611 version was, to the 19th and 20th century reader, puzzling.

1 Pursuivant of Arms, p. 117.

2 Surnames and Sirenames, p. 56.

3 1845; p. 87.

4 Page 414. "Water Bougets, *bulga*—*bulgetta* are contemporary. In the torrid plains of Palestine, the expediency of carrying water in leathern bags readily suggested itself to the crusaders."

5 Colloquy of Alfric, see p. 19 *Supra*.

6 Surtees Soc., Vol. VIII., page 89.

7 Matthew ix., 17.

8 Vocabularies, privately printed by T. Wright, p. 25.

and without its full meaning. This is doubtless the reason that the revisors of the New Testament have substituted the literal translation of the word *ἀσκός*, namely, "skin."

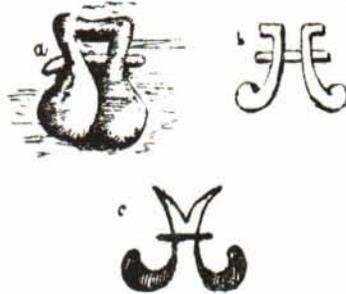


Fig. 47

(a) Fifteenth Century Water-bouget.
(b) and (c) Seventeenth Century ditto.

A MEDIAEVAL VESSEL.

Such leather bags seem to have remained in use in remote parts of Southern Europe longer than in this country, probably because water was scarcer and the wine and oil grown there could be conveniently carried in them over hilly country. Wine was comparatively little grown in England, and when it arrived from abroad could be distributed by means of barges up the chief rivers, remaining in the barrels in which it came.

For oil, bougets would rarely be wanted, but water even in this climate had often to be carried for some distance. Early Household Rolls (those of the Countess of Leicester in 1265,¹ and Bishop Swinfield in 1289, for example) show that the carrying of water was often an item of expense.² In the 14th and 15th centuries the Account Rolls of Durham Abbey show many items for the cost of carrying water, and sometimes for the purchase of bougets, but they were not all water-bougets. In 1300 "duobus Bulgis," and in 1309 "une pare de Boulgys" were bought for carrying horse-shoes. An entry in 1453 recording two bought in York for the Bursar's department³ is specially interesting, because York was, as will be shown later, a centre of the bouget-making craft in those times. In the towns, water was sometimes carried by men who bore huge churn-shaped vessels of wood bound with iron called tankards, but it was also carried on horses or men's backs in water-bouges. Verses by John Lydgate written in the 14th century, refer to this practice.

"By draught of horse fro ryuers and wellis
Bouges be brought to brewars for good ale."⁴

¹ Rotuli Hospitii Comitissae Lecestriae, printed by Roxburgh Club, 1841, pp. 83, 72 & 79.

² Household Roll of Bishop Swinfield, Camden Soc., 1833, p. 64.

³ Account Rolls of Durham, Surtees Soc., Vol. CIII., p. 633. "Et sol pro i pare Bowgez empt apud Ebor. pro officio Bursarii. 16d."

⁴ British Bibliographer, II., p. 151.

The men employed in bringing water are sometimes referred to as "water-bearers," but often, in early documents, they are called "water-leaders," probably because they led horses which carried water in bougets slung over their backs. In 1324 Robert de St. Botolph, "waterberere," was mentioned in an inquest,¹ and in 1336 Geoffrey "le Waterledere" in another inquest,² both in London. In Chester there was a company of "Water-Leaders" who, in the 15th century, combined with the "Drawers in Dee" to produce a pageant representing Noah's Ark. In 1468 they are mentioned in the report of a jury concerning a man who was killed in a "Waterleader's" house. In 1587 the Chester Water-Leaders applied to the Corporation for a charter, but I can hear of no record as to what vessels they used for carrying water. In 1415 the Cooks and Water-Leaders of York, and the Water-Leaders and Bakers showed the "Washing of the Apostles' Feet" and other miracle plays. The first waterleader in the York Roll of Freemen is Roger Devon, in 1344.³

In mediaeval times, when English roads were bad for wheeled traffic and most people travelled on horse-back, their baggage too was carried on horses, packed in "males" or trunks of leather, and budgets or leathern sacks. "We lede clothes-sacks and many a large male," says the horse in John Lydgate's poem.⁴ The budget was slung pannier-wise over the horse's back, and was used for carrying money,⁵ clothing, metal and wooden vessels, armour,⁶ and various kinds of valuables and necessaries. The water-bouge, or budget for liquids was simply a modification of it, and was carried on a pack-saddle, as one would suppose from the heavy nature of the contents. It also seems certain that the saddle must have been specially designed for water carriage, and had girths of special strength. "Itm for a pak saddell to the water bowges iiijs," and "for ij dowbyle gyrthes for the same saddelle xvjd" occurs in a book of accounts of 1536, preserved at Belvoir Castle. Five years later is the entry "Itm paide the same day to Thomas patrike for shoying of the water budge horse when he gaithered the tithe at Barston." The tithe would be paid in kind, and no doubt required a horse to carry it home.

WATER-BOUGETS AT COVENTRY.

In the ancient city of Coventry water-bougets retained through mediaeval times the Old English name of "byt," and the men who carried or "led" water in them were called "bitters." In the Leet Book, which still exists at St. Mary's Hall, and which has been recently translated by Miss M. Dormer Harris, they are first mentioned in 1434. The editor speaks of them as "Water buckets, possibly of leather," but they were certainly water-bougets, details as to the use of which are so extremely rare that these entries are worth quoting in full. At the Easter Leet in 1443 the bitters were ordered to repair the Broadwell, before

1 Cal. City Coroner's Rolls, p. 106.

2 *Ib.*, p. 198.

3 *Surtrees Soc.*, Vol. XLVI., p. 38.

4 *British Bibliographer*, II., p. 151.

5 Hence our modern word "Budget," as used by Government Officials.

6 In a Glossary to the 1894 Vol. of the Camden Society, Miss L. Toulmin Smith explains a "pair of Bowges for legharness" (which were bought by Henry IV. when Earl of Derby) as "protection for the legs, stuffed leather like modern cricketer's leggings," whereas budgets shaped for carrying leg-armour would be quite usual at that time.

the Feast of the Ascension, "so that no water flows into the place where the horses stand, or everyone having a horse standing there, to pay 6s. 8d., and meanwhile no horse to come there under the same penalty." The editor has a footnote to the word *bitters*: "repairers, 'beaters,' from *bete*—O.E. *betan*, to mend, etc." This is certainly a mistake, and the *bitters* were water-leaders who were liable to repair the well because they made a profit out of the use of it, and because their horses had damaged it. In 1454, in the same Leet Book, is an order that "no *bittes* are to be thrown into the Broadwell on pain of forfeiture of the same."¹ One can understand the temptation to save the trouble of bailing water, by throwing the *bouget* into the well and letting it fill itself; but (apart from stirring up the mud) a *bouget* would be greasy on the outside and an unsavoury object to allow in well-water.²

A manuscript at Trinity Church, called "Offesse of *dekyn*" and dated 1462, contains directions to the first and second deacons as to their provision for the church, books, bell-ringing, etc., among which is the following passage: "Also the sayd *dekyn* schall worden a barrell on Schere Thursday, and on est'r evyn, and on wyttson evyn for his p't, agaiyn the byttar bryng water ffor the awturs and the fonte."³ In the instructions to the second deacon is another reference again showing that the water used in the church was brought in water-bougets. "Also he schall p'yvd for a vessell, and hys ffellow a nodur ffor ye byttar wan he schall bryng watyr ffor ye ffonte."⁴

In 1494 an entry in the Leet Book occurs in English which, without the contractions, is as follows: "Also they woll and ordeyn that Joh. Hobyns, Bitter, paye to the reparacion of the Brodewell xxd. Joh. Grene, Bitter, xijd. and Joh. Smyth, Bitter xijd. and the remanent to be gadered in the wardes." Also in 1495, "hit is ordeyned at this present lete.....that the Brodewell be repayred with such money as is ordeyned be lett that the *bitters* shuld pay thereto: and with other such as they shall gader therto: and yf the seid *bitters* refuse to pay them, then to leve of them vjs. viijd....." This shows that the *bitters* were to pay for the repairs, not that they repaired the well themselves.

In 1494 is the ordinance "Also hit is ordyned that no ffysshmonger frohens-furth kepe eny corupt watir in his vessels, but that they avoyde hit furthwyth & cause the Canels there to be wasshen with ij *bittes* with watir be Seturday ij of the Clok at afternoon, Vppon like peyn," etc.

It is interesting to know that in 1549 the inhabitants of the Cross Cheaping Ward were to pay a penny for three *bougets* of water and the other inhabitants two pence for five *bougets*. "Ric. Tanner, bitter shall serue the ffishmongers & other the inhabitaunts of the Croschepyng Ward, after the Rait of thre *bittes* for a peny. And all other to be serued after the rait of V *bittes* for ijd."⁵

1 Qui volunt & ordinant quod lez Bitters emendant le Brodewell quod aqua non emanet in locum vbi equi stant ibi citra festum Ascensionis Domini proximo futurum, sub pena cuiuslibet qui habet equum illuc venientem vjs viijd., & interin nullus equus ibi permittere evenire sub eadem pena. Coventry Leet Book, translated by Miss M. Dormer Harris, p. 201.

2 Item, quod nullus decetero, iactat lez *bittes* in fontem latam, sub pena amissionis & perdicionis dictorum lez *bittez*. *Ib.*, p. 277.

3 Compare page 15, where the butchers of Amiens are shown to have provided grease for the Bishop's *bougets*. In 1502 "a barrell of grease" was bought for "the lycoryng of the Queenes barehydes."—Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, 1830, p. 37.

4 Sharp's Antiquities of Coventry, p. 122.

5 Coventry Leet Book, p. 555. It is noteworthy that there is a village called Bitteswell in the neighbourhood of Coventry.

The water that could be carried on horses' backs in bougets does not, in these times, seem an adequate supply for extinguishing fires, but in a 1467 "Book of Ordinances" in the Worcester Guildhall, is the order "That the Bitters be redy wt. hur horses and bittes to bryng water vnto euery citezen, when he ys required by eny man or child when eny pabelle of fuyre ys wtyn the Cite, in peyne of lesynge of xld."¹ A Henry VII. manuscript (1497), bound in the same volume, does not mention the "bitters," but says under "Bytts, Fyre Hooks, Chymneys": "Also that all persons havynge bytts, be redy with ther horses and bytts to bryng wat blyng to eny citesen when he is required by eny man or child when eny pell of fuyre ys within the citie, in peyn of losing 40d.....and that ther be iiij fyre hooks to drawe at anything where pell of fyre ys in eny parte of the citie."² Professor Joseph Wright's English Dialect Dictionary quotes Thoresby's Letters (1703) as saying: "The leathern bags in which they formerly carried water from the Severn to particular houses in the city of Worcester were called Byttes, and each horse-load of water was termed a bytte of water."³



Fig. 48. Various kinds of Heraldic Water-bougets.

THE WATER-BEARERS OF LONDON.

In London water-bougets were used, but to what extent it is difficult to say, as for some centuries it was the habit there to use large tankards of wood for distributing the river water as well as the purer sort from the conduits. Nevertheless, as early as the 11th century, "bitt-fyelling" was controlled by the public authority of the city. In the Ordinances of the London Frith Guilds in the *Judicia Civitatis Londoniae*, which are part of the *Textus Roffensis* (an Anglo-Saxon manuscript which is in the Library of Rochester Cathedral) occurs the passage: "We have ordained.....that we gather to us once in every month, if we can and have leisure, the hynden men and those who direct the tithings, as with bytt-fyelling," etc. There is a 16th century copy in the British Museum in which these last three words are "swa mid bitt fyelling," above which is written "Sic cum bucellorum impletione." Commentators have been puzzled as to the meaning of this phrase "bytt-fyelling," and Benjamin Thorpe, who printed the Ordinance in 1840,⁴ confesses that he cannot even conjecture what it signified. I think, however, that those who have read the foregoing pages will agree that it referred to the regulation of the trade of the bitters or water-leaders. Bit-filling was controlled by the governing bodies of Worcester and Coventry in the 15th and 16th centuries, and it would be in earlier times even more natural to regulate it.

¹ Printed in "E. E. Gilds," by Toulmin Smith, 1870, p. 382.

² Printed in Green's Hist. of Worcester, Appendix, p. 53.

³ Vol. I. p. 476.

⁴ Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, B. Thorpe, 1840. In the Glossary he has, under "Byt-fyelling,—Buccellorum impletione. This expression occurs only in Ath. V., viii. 1. I am unable to suggest even a conjectural illustration of its meaning."

Wooden tankards, however, were used as early as the 13th century. In 1275 an inquest on the death of Henry Greene, who was a water-carrier (*portitor aque*) and was drowned in June of that year in the Castle Baynard dock, found that he fell out of a boat while getting water in a tankard.¹ In the same year, Osbert de Hakeneye, "water-lader," is mentioned in an inquest on a man found drowned in the city moat near the Tower.² The water-carriers are mentioned in another Guildhall record in 1350, "Regulations as to Wages and Prices in the City." It is in Norman-French and was translated by Riley in "Memorials of London," as follows: "Also.....that the carters called Water-leaders, shall take for the cart from Dowegate to Chepe, in the same manner; and if they pass beyond Chepe they are to take one penny (more); and if they do not come so far as Chepe 1 $\frac{1}{4}$."³ As it was delivered in carts no doubt the water was contained in tankards, but in the same century water-bougets (no longer called "byts") were used. In 1366 in a Commission by the Mayor to levy charges on the traffic to and from the port of Dowegate, the rate "for every horse bringing bouges of water (*quolibet equo portant bouges cum aqua*) from the port" was to be 2d. a week, "for every cart bringing water from the port 3d. a week; and from every man depositing dung or rubbish in the port 2s."⁴

If it were not for these documents one would have thought that the change from the earlier name of water-leaders to that of water-bearers, indicated the change from the use of water-bougets slung over the backs of led horses, to wooden tankards carried in carts or on men's shoulders, and that the tankards, etc., were superseding the bouget in late mediaeval times. This tendency, however, did exist, and at the beginning of the 16th century an attempt was made to check it by forbidding the use of carts for carrying water, in order that there should be more bouge horses available in case of fire. In one of the unpublished Letter Books at the Guildhall is an entry on 27th September, 1509: "Also at the same Comon Counsell yt ys agreed enacted and concluded that frome the Fest of Christmas next comyng there shall no persone nor persones of Thie Citie cause eny Water to be caryed in Cartis wthin the Citie to thentente that there may be moo boge horses occupied what so ever the Citie hath for perell of Fyer upon payn of forfeiture of 40s." etc.⁵ Doubtless water carried on horses would be more quickly at the required spot than in the cumbrous and primitive carts of those days, especially in such narrow and tortuous streets.

In London, as in Chester and Worcester, the water was obtained from the nearest river and was probably not very pure even when the river was not a tidal one. In the 19th year of Edward III. (1345) it was shown by William de Ilford at a conference of the Mayor and corporation, "that the water of the Thames in the dock at Dowegate has become so corrupted by dung and other filth thrown into the same dock, that the carters who carry from the Thames at the said dock to different places in the City are no longer able to serve the commonalty, to the

1 Letter Book B., f. 126.

2 Letter Book B., f. 125b.

3 Page 253. The original is "Item qe charettes appelez waterleders preignent pur le charets de Douuegate tange a Chepe 1d ob Et de Chastel Baynard tange a Chepe en mesme la manere. Et sils ne vigeont tange a Chepe 1d qa."— Letter Book F., f. 181.

4 Letter Book G., f. 174b.

5 Letter Book M., f. 163.

great loss and disparagement of the same."¹ It does not, however, seem to have been used for drinking, but for washing, brewing, fire-extinguishing and in various trades. In another document in 1345, it is shown "that whereas of old a certain Conduit was built in the midst of the City of London, that so rich and middling people therein might there have water for preparing their food and the poor for their drink, the water aforesaid was wasted by brewers and persons keeping brew-houses and making malt," therefore brewers were forbidden to use the water and fishmongers to wash fish therewith.²

The Ordinances of the Fellowship of Water-bearers date from 1496, and are recorded in the Registry of the Commissary of London, but no vessels are mentioned except in the last paragraph, which says: "Also hit is ordeyned that no brother nor syster of the said Fraternyte shal have at the condyte at onys to his owne use above one tankard upon payne of li of wex to the use of the lyght aforesaid to be applied."³

The 10th century document cited above, the document of 1366, and the one of 1509 which records the desire of the Common Council that more bouget horses should be employed, appear to be the only direct evidence as to the use of water-bougets in London, though the latter would seem to infer that they were numerous, or the use of carts would not have been totally prohibited. On the other hand, there are many entries in the records which show that during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, the Water-bearers of London were using wooden tankards, which were the authorized vessels, besides a number of unrecognised ones. In 1529 there was a proclamation with regard to the "tubbes" brought to be filled at the "Conduyte in Graskchurchestrete," that all which, when full, are more than one man's burden, be burnt.⁴ In 1541 a proclamation that no one bring to the Conduits "any clubbes, staves or waxlers, cowles, tubbs or other staunders with which to carry water but only a lawful tankarde therefore ordained or of old time used," except that poor people could bring pots, pails, pitchers, and half-tubs.⁵

In 1553 the "Frayternitie of the waterberers" was dissolved (the Water-bearer's Hall being sold in 1568), but it seems to have been reconstituted for a time, later on.⁶

In the series of records in the City archives known as "Remembrancia," are many letters and other documents from 1580 to 1664 relating to the supply of water to London by means of pipes. In 1580 Peter Morice, a Dutchman, exhibited his invention for raising Thames water high enough to supply the higher parts, and threw a jet of water over the steeple of St. Magnus church, whereupon the City granted him a lease for 500 years of the Thames water and the places where his mills stood and of one of the arches of London bridge. In 1582 he was granted a license for extending the work to Old Fish Street, which would profit the whole City and "be no hindrance to the poor water-bearers, who would still have as much work as they were able to perform, so far as the water of the conduits would satisfy."⁷ In 1632 Donald Lupton, in a description of old London Bridge,

1 Letter Book F., f. 102. Printed in Riley's "Memorials," p. 223.

2 Letter Book F., f. 107.

3 Transactions Lon. and Middx. Archaeo. Soc., Vol IV., p. 55.

4 Letter Book O., f. 174b.

5 Letter Book Q., f. 42.

6 Letter Book R., f. 262.

7 Index to "Remembrancia," 1878, p. 553.

which was covered with houses, says: "it seems to hinder the Water-bearer's profit, for the Inhabitants easily supply their wants by buckets."¹

As late as 1641, Alderman James Cambell, ironmonger, left £5 to his old water-bearer.²

The "water-leader" of mediaeval times, with his "bouge horse" laden with damp and bulging water-bags, his leathern buckets and balers, and his coils of rope, must have been an extraordinarily picturesque person to meet in the narrow, over-hung streets of Coventry or York. It is difficult now to conjure up such a group, but perhaps the nearest to it in modern life would be to meet an Indian "Bhisti" with the appliances of his trade slung over a buffalo's back. (See Fig. 53, sketched at Surat.) Doubtless the English vessel was a much more shapely object than the exotic hide bags shown in the sketch, but it is interesting to observe that the Indian water vessel has at the top two openings for pouring in the water, which are propped open with pieces of stick, as this explains the puzzling objects which are indicated in the mouths of some of the earlier heraldic bougets, for example, one at Fig. 48.



Fig. 49. Norman Font at Hologate, Salop.

REFERENCES IN EARLY LITERATURE.

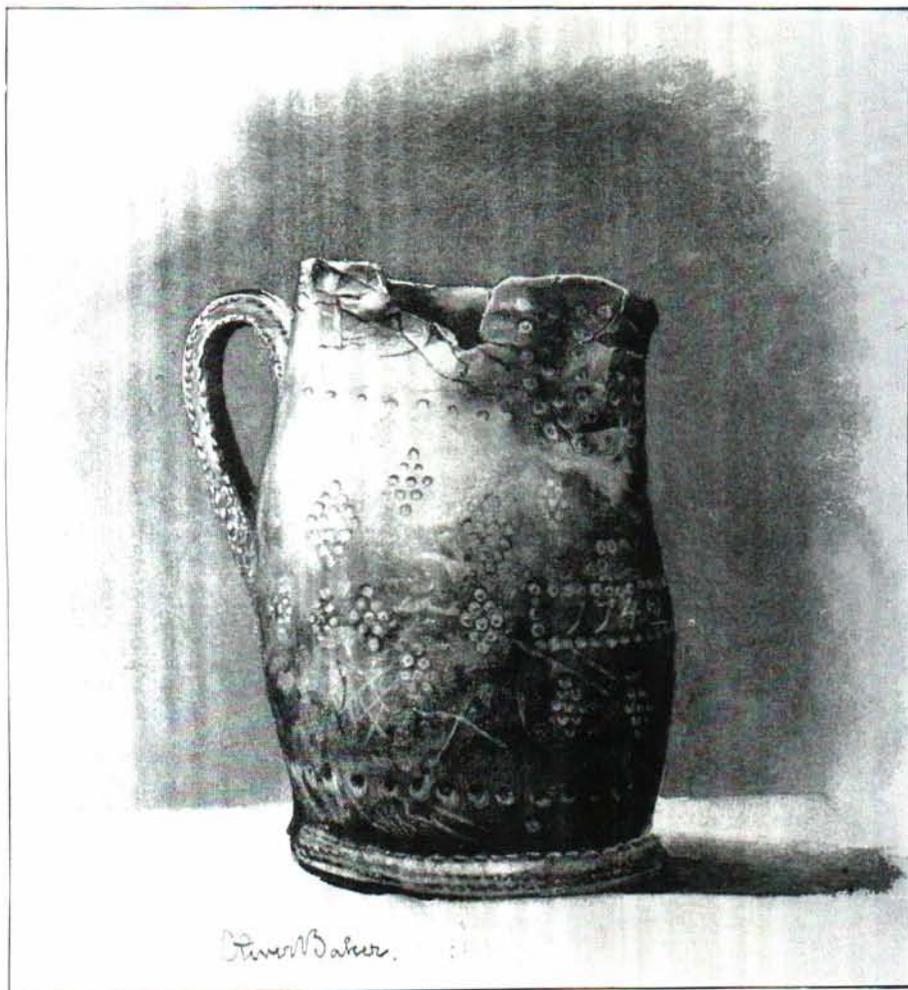
In early mediaeval literature references to bougets are not infrequent, but there seems to be seldom any distinction between the pair of bags used for water and the budget for a traveller's solid "impedimenta," except that the former is more generally spelt without the final "t," and that the latter usually occurs in the singular number, not being so frequently made in pairs. It is therefore difficult in some cases to tell which of the two kinds of bouget is meant. An allusion to the vessel and its swelling shape occurs in a 13th century manuscript in praise of virginity, called "Hali Meidenhad," in which it is spoken of as a "water-bulge,"³ and as to which there can be no doubt that it refers to the water-bouget. An instance in the next century refers just as certainly to budgets for carrying goods. In the "Polychronicon conetyng the Berynges and Dedes of

¹ London and the Country Carbonadoed., 1632, p. 273.

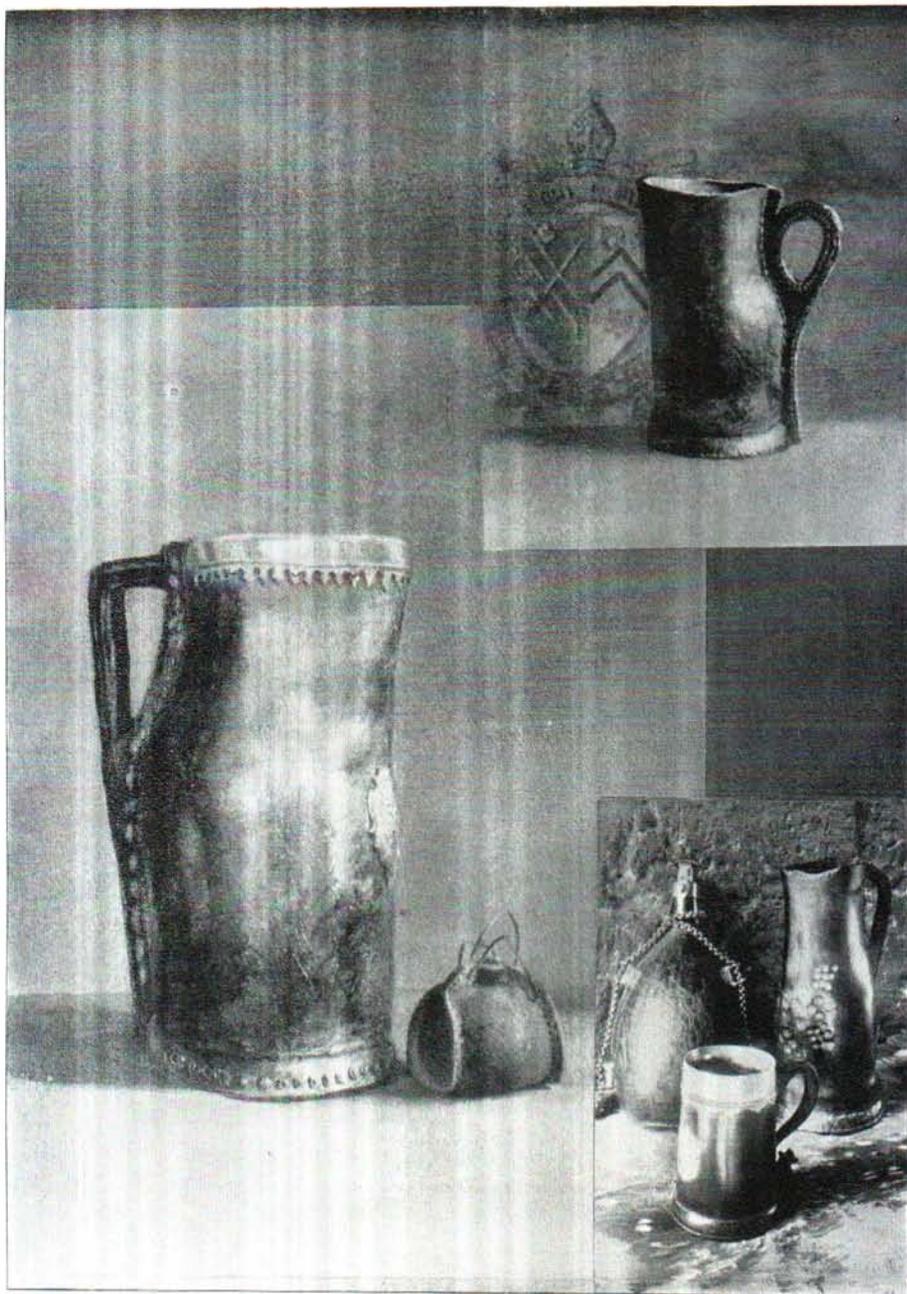
² Nicholl's Hist. of Ironmongers Co., p. 542.

³ Cotton MSS. Titus D., XVIII., f. 112c. Ed. for EE. Text. Soc.

BRITISH MUSEUM



Late Jack at Compton Wynyates, in the possession of the Marquis of Northampton. (Chap. V.)



Silver-mounted Bombard in the possession
of the Viscount Powerscourt. (Chap. V.)

Black Jack at Winchester College.
(Chap. III.)
Two Jacks and a Powder Flask
at Sudeley Castle. (Chap. V.)

many Tymes, in eight Bookes," by Ranulph Higden, written in Latin early in the 14th century and translated into English by John Trevisa, in 1387—a multifarious history of events, without order or connection—the latter, describing the banishment of Archbishop Anselm, says: "In his goyng in an haven in Kent, he was piled and robbed and fare with as it ware a theef, his malys were i-serched, his bouges and his trussing coffres."¹ In the version of the Psalms, translated by Wycliffe in 1388, the seventh verse of Psalm xxxiii. is rendered "He gaderith togidere the wattris of the sea as in a bowge."² One feels certain that the rugged English of this delightful passage rendered the original meaning with more graphic truth than the "as in a heap" of the "Authorised Version," especially to the generation for which it was written. Perhaps the translators of 1611 recognised that bougets for water were no longer familiar objects to their readers. In the Hebrew the word is "ned," which is the same as "nod," a leather bottle or skin. In Boothroyd's "Biblia Hebraica" a note on this verse says Dathe renders the phrase "Congregat tanquam in utres aquas marinas."

During the 15th century this vessel appears to have been frequently known as a "gorge," but in heraldry went by its more ancient name of "water-bouge." Dame Juliana Berners, in "The Boke of St. Albans," printed in 1486, says: "Gorgys be callid in armys water-bulgees." In "The Accedens of Armory" (Gerard Leigh, 1562), the water-bouge charge is called a "gorge." In Percivall's Spanish Dictionary, 1591, "odre" is translated "a water-budget, a bottle."

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WATER-BOUGE.

In the work of Mr. Lower, already quoted, he says with reference to water-bougets: "they are represented in various grotesque forms, so that it is a matter of curiosity to know in what manner they were carried." Light was thrown on this question by Mr. Planché, who discovered on a 12th century font at Hook Norton, in Oxfordshire, a carving representing a man in the act of carrying one. This extremely interesting figure fills the part of Aquarius in a series of carvings round the font, depicting the signs of the Zodiac, and is a most valuable record of the shape and mode of using the water-bouget of Norman times. Unfortunately the slight sketch in Mr. Planché's book, "Heraldry founded on Fact," (which Mr. Jewitt copied in his paper in the Reliquary), gives a wrong impression of the vessel, which it represents as being of the shape of a couple of cannon balls connected by a cord. The photographic facsimile here given, however, (Plate 23) shows that the bouget, being of a very simple type, and represented as full, was drawn perfectly straight by the weight of the water. This Norman water-bearer is carrying the bouget slung across the crooked end of a large stick, which rests on his right shoulder and is held horizontally in his right hand.

On a 12th century font at Holgate Church, Salop, are two bouget-looking objects combined with conventional decoration (Fig. 49). A representative of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, writing on the sculptures of this font to the "Athenaeum,"³ says there are "two objects of the same shape as the so-called

1 The Polychronicon was first printed by Caxton in 1482, and exists in various later editions.

2 The 1382 edition of Wycliffe's Psalms reads "as in a botel."

3 20th August, 1898.

leather water-bottle on the Norman font at Hook Norton." This writer cannot have seen the Hook Norton font or he would scarcely have described the Holgate carvings as being of the same shape as that on the font there. Also the vessel on the Oxfordshire font is carried by a figure that is as certainly the waterbearer as those on either side of it stand for the archer and the lion.

Though this is the only known representation of a water-bouget in use, there are a few heraldic carvings of the 13th and 14th centuries which are very instructive, and numerous examples of later date, which have every appearance of being executed by men to whom the thing itself was well known.

A fine 13th century example is three times repeated on the shield of a beautiful effigy in the Temple Church of a knight in chain mail, (one of the De Ros family), whose ancestor married the heiress of the Trusbuts and so acquired the right to bear their arms.¹ Being at least a century later in date than that on the Norman font, these bougets are more highly elaborated. Their design too is less primitive, and they have a projecting seam down the edge of each bag, which renders them less like shapeless sacks of leather. (See Fig. 46.) They seem to be represented as empty, their sides being flattened and depressed in the middle. The angular arrangement of the neck is that usually adopted by the heraldic artist at that period, to dispose its great length agreeably, and probably was the shape it often took when resting on the pack-saddle of a horse. Projecting from the seams on the outer edge of each pouch is shown a ring of leather, which rings are a feature of the earlier water-bougets and were no doubt designed for attaching cords or thongs to prevent them swinging about too freely when being carried. They are continuous with the leather of which the bags were made, after the manner of somewhat similar rings, which project from the back seams of a few examples of black jacks. In the Rutland MSS. at Belvoir Castle is an item of two pence paid in 1541, "for two halters for the water budgis," which were probably intended for steadying the bougets by passing them through the rings above described and tying them. "Ledder baggs with bracycs for carrying my Lorde's bede-stuffe," occur in an inventory of 1514.²

The early 14th century gate-house of Kirkham Priory, Yorkshire, bears a shield carved with the arms of the second Baron de Ros, Patron of Kirkham, in which the three water-bougets have the same large rings projecting from their edges.

On the carved stone screen which forms the canopy to the tomb of Lord Bouchier in St. Paul's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, are some very interesting examples of the water-bouget; they are realistic models of actual bags such as would then be in common use. Lord Bouchier was standard-bearer to Henry V., so that these carvings give an idea of the water-bouge of the 15th century, as will be seen by Fig. 50.

The heraldic water-bouget generally consists of the two bags with the hooked stick on which they were carried arranged across them at the back; but being a military vessel it was no doubt often carried on a spear. Carvers have sometimes taken advantage of this to put the spear instead of the stick, and for the sake of symmetry have given it a barbed head at each end. On the De Ros effigy, in the Temple Church, this will be noticed, and it occurs also in a number of picturesque

¹ Though the effigies in the Temple Church have been "restored," this one was considerably less so than the others and the bougets were not tampered with, so their authenticity is unimpaired.

² Grose's *Antiquarian Repository*, IV., p. 346.

old shields which decorate the "fretted vault" of a glorious cloister at Canterbury Cathedral, in which they form bosses to the ribs of the vaulting. One of them, on the right of Fig. 51, is the shield of Lord Bouchier, argent a cross engrailed, gules, between four water-bougets sable. Another (in the centre) is that of De Ros, gules three water-bougets, argent, two and one, and this shield is also carved on the great south porch of the cathedral. According to Thomas Willement, "William Lord Ros, who was summoned to Parliament from the 18th of Richard II. to the 1st of Henry V. and died Sept. 1, 1414, was buried in this Cathedral."¹ Another shield shows eight water-bougets on the arms of Sir Hugh Stafford. The vaulting of this cloister, including the shields, was rebuilt by Prior Chillenden on older walls at the end of the 14th century. He was Prior from 1390 to 1414.

The water bouget is also shown on the tomb of Robert Conyner, Rector of Blyborough in Lincolnshire, said to be of the 14th century. The vessel is of much the same kind as in the Temple Church effigy, but has no projecting rings. It is carved on a shield and also on the chasuble in which the figure is vested. It was usual to work heraldic as well as religious symbols on vestments, and an instance of the same charge being so used occurs in an inventory of the 16th century, preserved at Wollaton Hall, Notts. Among the "Chappell stuff" was "a vestment of tawny velvett, with a crosse greene velvett, with the arms of the waterboudge."²

Among the MSS. of the Duke of Rutland is an inventory of the "westimentes, coppes, with all other ornamentes belongyng onto monastery of Wartre," at the dissolution of that Priory. One "sutte of blew sylke" was "callyd the watter bowges." "a cope for the prest, also westimentes for the seid prest, sub decone, decone, and also coppes for the chanteres of the forseid watter bowges."³

The Willoughbys of Wollaton are said to have owed the charge of the water-bouge in their arms to their original name having been Bugge or Booge. It seems to be a fact that wherever a De Ros was lord of a manor, tenants named Boog,

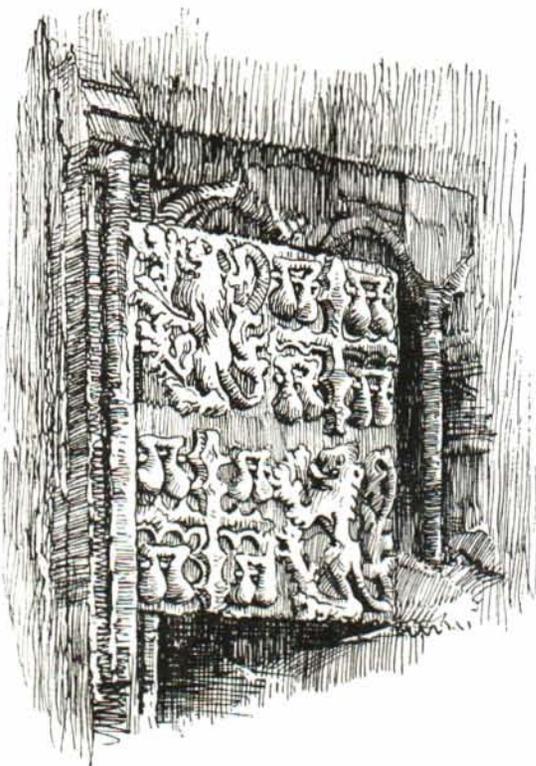


Fig. 50

Carvings of Water-bougets (1431) from the tomb of Lord Bouchier, in St. Paul's Chapel, Westminster Abbey.

¹ Heraldic Notices of Canterbury Cathedral, Thomas Willement, 1827.

² Assoc. Architectural Soc. Reports, Vol. XIX., p. 76.

³ Printed in Appendix to Part IV. of Twelfth Report of Hist. MSS. Com.

Bugg, Boogey, or having similar names are generally numerous,¹ and the presumption is that they are descended from ancestors who wore the water-bouget of the De Ros family. Mr. Planché says "every feudal chief granted or conceded a portion of his own armorial bearings to favoured followers in battle, or holders of land under him."² The Willoughbys not only displayed the water-bouget in the domestic chapel but used it to mark the vessels of the larder, and the sheep and cattle in the fields. The same inventory mentions in the larder-house "Two stamperes of the water-bouge for vessell; a brande of the water-bouge to mark cattell," and also in the armoury "a sheepe brande with the water-bouge."³

I have only met with one instance of water bougets depicted on wall-hangings, which occurs in an inventory at Belvoir Castle, of the goods of Thomas, first Earl of Rutland, which were at Hallywell House in the 20th year of King Henry VIII. (1528), "the Chambre at the Steir hedd ovr Mr. Fraunce lovelle lodgings— Itm the same Chambre is hangid wth V pece of Redde and Greene saye panyd and sett full of garthers wth a border of the same stuff panyd and enbrowdryd wth water bowgis of whit take and lettres." An old cast-iron fire-back lent to the Victoria and Albert Museum has a shield of arms with water-bougets.

Little is to be gleaned from inventories as to the water-bouget itself. Many of them refer to times subsequent to the general use of such vessels. Probably an old pair is referred to in the goods of John Colam in 1490: "De j pari veterum pigionum, Anglice bowges id,"⁴ and at Durham Priory in 1457, "i par del bowges"⁵ may have been for water.

There seems no probability of an actual water-bouget (or even the remains of one) being discovered. They went out of use too long ago; their bulk was too great for chance preservation to be at all likely, and a dis-used bouget would not be kept for any length of time, as the temptation to cut up so much handy material for "clout leather" must have been irresistible.

It is very fortunate therefore that the vessel was represented so frequently on monuments and on ancient buildings as an heraldic charge. Such representations as these are almost the only means remaining by which its various shapes and developments can be known. Mr. Lower, in a passage already quoted from "Curiosities of Heraldry,"⁶ says "they are represented in various grotesque forms." These varieties were probably caused by the bags from which the representations were copied having been made in different localities and at various dates to suit the wants of different people. (See Fig. 48.) As long as these varieties occur and the bouges are realistically treated, we may assume that the actual vessel was not obsolete.

IN LATER TIMES.

It would be interesting to establish a definite time when such vessels went out of common use, but evidence on the subject is scarce. In 1610 Gwillim in his "Display of Heraldry," seems to regard the water budget as then obsolete (at least for military purposes), and refers to it as belonging to ancient times. He

1 Surnames and Sirenames, p. 62.

2 Pursuivant of Arms, p. 66.

3 Assoc. Architectural Soc. Reports, Vol. XIX., p. 76

4 *Ib.*, p. 625.

5 Surtees Soc., Vol. CIII., p. 635.

6 Page 137 *Supra*.

says " To these Martial Armourials we may adde as an Appendix of necessary use in Warlike businesse, the Water-bowgets which in ancient times were used to carry and consume in the camp that usefull element of Water."¹ One of the latest instances that I am acquainted with of one in use occurs in the " Equipage of the Right Honourable Earl of Northumberland at the seige of Turwin," in the 5th year of Henry VIII., printed by Grose from the original manuscript in the possession of the Earl of Egremont. The bouget is included under " Bottylls of lether for my Lord's Kechyne," but was not exactly a bottle, as it is distinguished from its neighbour, " a great bottyl of ledder to carry water in," by being described as

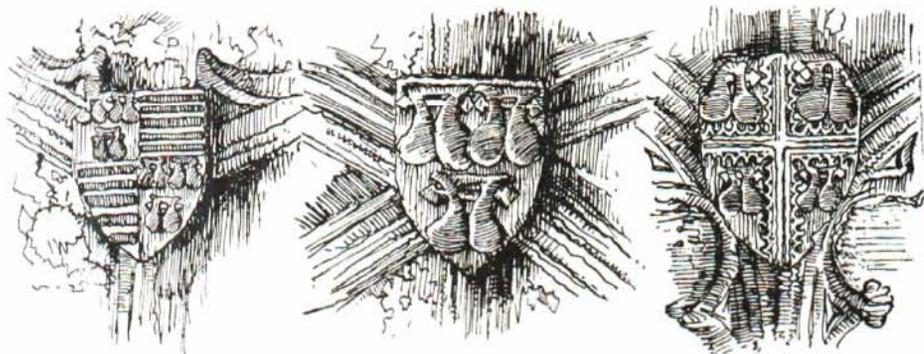


Fig. 51. Shields with Water-bougets, Cloister Vaulting, Canterbury Cathedral.

" a great gouge of leather for carryinge of water."² In another part of the same document provision is shown to have been made for carrying wine in barrels on horses. " Itim iij p'r of barrell ferrys wt chaynes and houkks of iron to carry wyn with my Lord vpon horses." Barrel ferrys are fairly often mentioned in old manuscripts, and no doubt their use enabled the wine, oil, vinegar, ver-juice, honey, fish, etc., which arrived in barrels, to be carried on horses. It seems possible that the increased use of such arrangements was one of the causes of the disuse of leathern budgets. Not being rigid like jacks and bottles, they could not so readily be lined with pitch, and probably injured the flavour of the wine, so that barrels, in spite of their unsuitable shape for conveyance on packhorses, were in this country preferred.³

The state of society which led to the common use of leather bouges for the carriage of water must have been passing away by the end of the 16th century. As the English roads became more available for wheeled waggons in which barrels could be easily carried, and water was brought near to dwellings by means of pipes laid in the ground, the water-bouge, even for military purposes, would cease to be of such importance. Conduits and aqueducts were often used, and as early

1 Ed. 1660, Sec. 4, Ch. 18, p. 349.

2 Grose's Antiquarian Repository, 1808, Vol. IV., p. 369. In the MS. the word was probably either "gorge" or "bouge."

3 In Encyclopédie Méthodique, 1791, is the following:—" Les Montagnards de la Suisse emploient au lieu de boutes, des barils ovales, qu'ils chargent sur les mulets, au moyen d'une espece de bat, qui y les garantit des blessures. Le gout de cuir, que le vin prend aisement dans les boutes en rend l'usage pas commode."

as 1421 the permanent supply of water to Southampton, for instance, was undertaken by the Municipality. Till recent years the water supply of Ludlow still ran in the pipes laid down by Sir Henry Sidney in 1580. The water-bouge must, however, have been more or less known to the people of the later half of the 16th and the earlier half of the 17th century, as is indicated by the allusions to it in the literature of that age.

At the beginning of the present chapter I have said that the heraldic charge became less and less like a real water-bouget in later times. In 1562 the comments of Gerard Legh' on a coat of arms (probably of Delamere), show that he was puzzled by the charges lack of resemblance to a real water-bouget. He says "He bereth sanguine a gorge argent. Though this seme unlikely to be a water-budget, yet hath it long time been so taken and so blazed, and never of any other fashion than ye see in this escocheon." The escutcheon that he gives was undoubtedly intended for a bouget, but is very conventional and practically the same as the one on the extreme right hand in Fig. 48.

It is certain, however, that at that time these vessels had not ceased to exist, and there are references in works of Tudor and Stuart days which show that they were known to the writers. In a play by R. Edwards in 1566 ("Damon and Pithias"), one of the characters, discussing the cut of the breeches of two servants, says: "These are no hose but water-bougets, I tell thee plain; Good for none but such as have no buttocks."

An instance occurs in the 1557 edition of the Jugurtha of Sallust, translated by Alexander Barclay, and revised by Thomas Paynell. The following passage refers to the preparations of Marius in Africa, and the word "utres" is translated "bottels and bowges." "And every day he distributed in his journayes amonge his hoost xlii heed of oxen for vitayle. And in the meane season he charged bottels and bowges to the hydes of the same beaste and of other ledder in gerate number."

"Bouges of lether" are mentioned in Philemon Holland's translation of Livy, edition of 1600 (in which is an account of Hannibal crossing the Rhine), in the sentence: "The Spaniards made no more adoe, but fastning their apparrell to bouges of lether like bladders full of wind, and laying their bucklers thereupon, sat aloft and passed over nimbly." It may be remarked here that the crossing of rivers by floating on inflated wine skins or leathern bags was customary in ancient Assyria, and is still practised on the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as on some of the rivers of India. Several of the Assyrian sculptures in the British Museum show men supporting themselves in the water by means of such inflated bottles (see Plate 22), and on a bas-relief in the Nineveh Gallery of the Museum a man sitting astride a floating wine-skin is hooking a fish.

The 1606 edition of the same writer's (Holland's) "Suetonius" has a passage describing the discontent of the people at Nero's misgovernment, and how they attached opprobrious labels to his statues, and says "To the neck of another

1 The Accedens of Armory, 1562, f. . . 76 verso.

2 Hazlitt's ed. of Dodsley's Old Plays, 1874, IV., p. 72. I am indebted for most of these references to the compilers of the New English Dictionary, and especially to the Editor, the late Sir James A. H. Murray, who kindly sent me the slips for the word Water-bouget, the letter W not having been reached.

3 Page 96.

4 Book XXI. p. 408.

was tyed a lether bagge with this title—' But thou hast deserved a verie lether budge indeed,' " the word rendered " budge " being " culeum," a leathern sack or bag to carry oil or wine in. A Latin-English Dictionary of 1619 has " Culleum a lether sack wherein wine or oyle is carried : a water-budget."

Urquhart's " Rabelais," printed in 1653, in extolling the intellect of Pantagruel, says that he had " an excellent understanding and a notable wit, together with a capacity in memory equal to the measure of twelve oyle budgets or butts of Olives." The 1676 edition of North's " Plutarch " has the following passage : " For the country about Babylon is very hot.....and men in the extremest heat of the summer do sleep there, upon Great Leather budgets filled full of fresh Water."

These extracts, and others before quoted, show that English writers of the 17th century were acquainted with the water-bouget and its uses, and that when they read of the wine-bottles, oil-bags, or water-skins of other countries, it was the water-bouget which came naturally to their minds as the English equivalent. Indeed the sculptured charges of the same period exhibit a knowledge of the vessel which seems to show that if obsolete it had not been so for any great length of time. A fairly realistic representation occurs on the carved oak screen of the Willoughby chantry in Wilne Church, Derbyshire, which screen is dated 1624. It is a late example, but not too late for the carver of it to have known the actual vessel he was depicting, and therefore the indication of the mouth or hole in the neck of the pouches is specially interesting.

A very late record of the existence of a pair of water-bouges is in an inventory taken in April, 1622, of the goods of Sir George Shirley, of Ettington, near Stratford-on-Avon, when the following vessels were in " the Buttery and Wine Sellar " : " Fortie two hogsheds, ix pipes, iij terses, iij Jackes, ij buiges," etc.³ The " Jackes," of course, were leathern pitchers. But the latest trace of them that I have found is in 1659, in the goods of a malster at Knaresborough, who had " In the Steeping House j pair of water-baggs,"⁴ which he had doubtless used for fetching water to steep his barley. By that time their ancient name seems to have fallen into disuse, as it was unknown to the maker of the inventory.

We may conclude, then, that it was in the 17th century that the water-bouget finally became extinct.

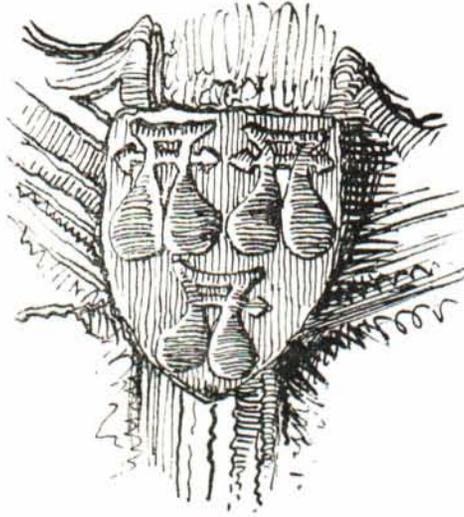


Fig. 52

Arms of de Ros, with three Water-bougets, from the Cloister Vaulting at Canterbury Cathedral.

1 H. viii.

2 Alexander, p. 574.

3 Stemmata Shirleiana, 1873, p. 93.

4 Surtees Soc., Vol. 110, page 245.

THE MAKERS OF THE WATER-BOUGET.

In the list of goods given in Chapter I. as being made by the Shoe-wright in the 10th century are water-bougets (*higdifatū*), and this seems to be the earliest record as to the makers of them.

By the 13th century their manufacture in the southern counties had passed into the hands of the craftsmen who made the travelling bags, saddle bags and budgets, who were variously known as Pouch-makers, Male-makers, Coffers, Pursers, Bouge, Bogge or Boulge makers, etc. The pre-Norman name for the bouget was "baelze" or "belge," and in the corrupt Latin of that time "bulga."

The Roll of Freemen of the City of York begins in 1272, and the first maker of bougets entered is John de Saint Botulph, in 1273, who was a "bougher." In 1309 Robert de Boughes, Pouchemaker, seems to have taken his name from his craft. Till 1360 "boughers" are very numerous in the Roll, but afterwards they are supplanted by "pouchemakers," who are frequent till well into the 15th century. In 1466 John Milne, "boulgemaker," occurs.

In London these craftsmen were still combined with the Cordwainers in 1272, being mentioned under the name of Cistarii (Coffers) in the earliest extant ordinances of the Cordwainers in that year.

In the Wardrobe Book of Edward I. a pair of large budgets or pouches (*uno pari magnarum bulgearum*) for carrying the cooking vessels for the King's lunch were bought from a cofferer of London.¹

The Pouchmakers first appear in the Guildhall records in 1347, which is the date of their earliest Ordinances.² In 1411 the Malemakers appear to have had a fraternity of their own, and in the Ordinances for assaying and proving tanned leather made in that year by the Court of Aldermen, there were to be four Cordwainers, one Malemaker, one Bottle-maker, and one Currier, to test the leather.³

In 1488 the Ordinances of the Pursers of London, now in the old vaulted crypt of the Guildhall, complained that the wardens of the Pouchmakers did "take vppon them to serche almayn bags and powches with the purses belongyng to the same, the which Wardeyns excise oonely the ffete of makyng Sconces Bowgettes patens males and belows, to the grete hurt of yr besechers aforesaid. Wherethrough hathe growen and daily groweth grete discension and debate betwene the crafts aforesaid." Whereupon "to pacify the strife and debate" betwixt the Fellowships of the "Purcers" and "Powchmakers" it was ordained that the "Purcers" shall have the search of all purses not annexed to bags and pouches, and the "Powchmakers" all manner of bags and pouches with purses joined and annexed unto the same.⁴

Both in the Metropolis and in York, the capital of the northern districts, the making of pouches and bottles was closely associated with that of bellows, pattens, bow-cases and quivers. In the municipal records at York, passages occur in several manuscripts which show that the makers of leather jacks, bottles and water-bougets were not only allied in one craft guild but that it was usual for an individual craftsman to be a maker of bows, pattens, bougets and bottles. In

1 *Liber Quotidianus Contravolutoris Garderobae*. Ed. by B. J. Topham, 1787, p. 60.

2 Letter Book F, f. 167.

3 Hist. Leather Sellers. W. H. Black, p. 23.

4 Letter Book I., f. 254.

1498 Robert Daglase is described in the Freeman's Roll as a "bower, patoner, boteller and boggemaker."¹

But shoemakers were not allowed to have anything to do with the making of vessels, and the craftsman who made them were forbidden to work in the same house or chamber with other workers in leather, under severe penalties. The manuscript in the York Guildhall which contains these rules is the Book of Ordinances of 1471 for the crafts of "les Patoners, Botellers et Bowge makers,"



Fig. 53

Buffalo carrying the water-skins, buckets, etc., of an Indian "bhisti."
 Sketched at Surat by Emily W. Baker.

and gives in great detail the restrictions under which the art of leather vessel making could be pursued. It is of great interest, as traces of this long extinct industry are so scarce. The fifth clause is as follows: "Item that ther shall no man of thies craftes make ony boulegeys, boulett, ne bowbages, of sheepe leder, opayn of iijs iijd., to be payed as is afore writen as oftyn tymes as ony man of the same craftes offendend ageynst this ordynance in ony wise etc." And again the eighth clause says: "Item yt ys ordayned and establysshed that yif any maister, servant or apprenitez of ony of the saide craftes frome hensfurth take upon hym to make or shappe any maner of patens, below, bo.....,² ledder-kannez, bowgez, bowgett, bowebage, quyver, cloothsak, trunkes or malez, or any other

¹ Freeman of York, Surtees Soc., Vol XCVI., p. 223.

² This word is partly cut away, but was evidently "bottells." The "Ledder-kannez" were of course black jacks.

maner of stuff aperteynyng to the saide craftes or to any of theyme wt in the howsez or chambrez of any Tanner, Shomaker, Glover, Whitetewer, Corvisour or Girdiller wt in this cite, suburbez or prescnctes of the same withoute licence of his serchiovrs of the saide craftes for the tyme beyng, shall forfeit xxd to the chambre of this cite and to the chargeys of the saidez craftes evenly as often as eny above saide offendcn contrarie to this present ordynance without any maner of pardone."¹

In the fifth clause the "boulgeys" and "boulgetts," which were not to be made of sheep leather, were water-bougets, and the ordinary leather budget or sack which was used for carrying dry goods. The latter is spelt in the singular, as it is also in the "Chaunt of Richard Sheale."

"Sum be robde in ther howsses in places where thei dwell,
And sum hath been robde in ther yns, as I have hard man tell
The Chamberlayne or ostelare when they have a bowgyt spyede
May gyv knowleg to fals knavis which way ther gest wyll ryde."²

The other clauses of the York ordinances were intended to discourage bad and careless workers, and unfair competition, also to secure for the skilful and conscientious an adequate reward. They were extremely stringent, but in 1501 additional rules were authorized which are headed "11 Aug. 16 Henry VII., a bill of divers articlez was put in by the Botellers, Bogge makers and Patoners,"³ but they add nothing of interest to our knowledge of the craft.

In London also the making of pattens and bellows was allied to pouchmaking. Indeed in 1400 the Company of Pouchmakers obtained the oversight of galoches of wood on the ground that they had invented them.⁴ And in the third year of Henry VII. their leaders describe themselves as the good folk of the "Crafte of Powchemakers, Galeggemakers and Patynmakers now enfranchised by the name of Powchemakers." In the year 1517 they combined with the Leather-Sellers and in the Ordinances which authorised the combination, the Pouch-makers are shown to have had power of search, not only over the "belowes, lanternes, sconces, all maner baggys, powches, malys, bougettes, bowe-cases, cloth-sakkes, bare-hides for coveryng of chariettes," but also over "bottelles, pottes, standards, garde-viaunces covered and made of lether and trussying coffers wheresoever such be found."

This would not necessarily have meant that the Pouchmakers actually made drinking vessels, but a 17th century volume of Ordinances among the records of the Worshipful Company of Leathersellers shows that they did make them. It is there stated that in the ninth year of Henry VIII. the Fellowship of Pouch-makers was "annexed and knitt into the Fellowship of Leathersellers of London, which said Powch makers then chiefly used making of bellows, lanthorns, sconces, bags, pouches, malis, bougetts, bow cases, cloath sakkes, bare hides for covering of chariots, bottells, potts, standards, garde viaunces, covered and made of leather

1 Register AY, fols. 163b & 264a, Municipal Records at York Guildhall. This document has now been printed in the 125th Vol. of the Surtees Soc.

2 Brit. Bibliographer, Vol. IV., p. 103.

3 Corporation Minutes, Lib. VIII., fol. 113a.

4 London Livery Co. W. C. Hazlitt, p. 133.



Fig. 55. The Grange of the Prior of Worcester, Crowle Court.
From an old photograph.

CHAPTER VII.

LEATHER VESSELS IN USE.

THE old documents, mediaeval or later, which throw light on the domestic surroundings of our ancestors, refer for the most part to the homes of the well-to-do; and it is in such households that vessels of leather are most readily shown to have been in use. The available information as to the homes of the poorer classes in those times, tends to prove that they did not possess them.

In the Anglo-Saxon house the drinking-vessels were kept in the hall and often hung round the walls, and among them were bottles and flasks of leather but no pots or jacks.

The Norman hall was generally detached in the centre of a fortified court. According to a contemporary description by the celebrated 12th century school master Alexander Neckam, it had a vestibule or screen and was entered through a porch, and it had a courtyard and a kitchen. Inside the hall, he says, there were posts or pillars at regular intervals.¹

After the Conquest the more valuable vessels stood on the dresser or cupboard in the hall, but the leather ones were generally in the buttery.² In this connection it is useful to remember that, in the Middle Ages, the houses of all substantial people, whether yeomen, manorial lords or princes, were on much the same general plan. There was a hall in which the master with his family, and servants if he had any, took their meals; at one end of it there was a larder

¹ Vocabularies, by T. Wright, 1837, p. 107.

² It was from the bottle that the buttery took its name, which of course has nothing to do with butter, but was anciently *botellaria*, from its contents.

or buttery and a kitchen, with usually a solar and a bower or chamber over them. Generally there was no room over the hall, so that the smoke could escape through a louvre or hole.

Of mediaeval houses of the more important type many existing examples will occur to the reader. At Oakham, which is of the 12th century, there are two door-ways at the lower end of the hall, once leading no doubt to the buttery and kitchen which are now destroyed. This great chamber is a striking example of the Norman hall, with the rows of pillars described by Alexander Neckam, represented by pillars of stone with carved capitals and arches enriched with billet moulding. (See Fig. 56.)

Probably the finest existing example of a 13th century great hall is at Stokesay, where (as was not unusual) there were two butteries, one at each end of the hall. In the middle of the lower end, under the minstrel's gallery, a pointed door-way (see Fig. 58) leads down six steps into a large chamber lighted by long slits in the outer walls, and having a well in it. At the other end of the hall a shoulder-headed door in the east corner admits to a passage under the parlour, at the end of which passage is a second buttery, from which a staircase leads to the cellar. (See Fig. 59.) The arrangements of this buttery are intact, but are of later date than the building (which was chiefly built about 1250) and are probably 15th or early 16th century. The buttery door is divided horizontally, after the manner of the old-fashioned tavern bar, into two portions with a shelf at the top of the lower half on which jacks could be placed in handing them out or in. This arrangement was known as the Buttery Bar.

It was a gentleman's buttery bar of this kind that John Taylor, the Water-Poet, was thinking of when he wrote in "Jack o' Lent"

" Nor of Blacke Jacks at gentle Buttery bars,
Whose liquor oftentimes breeds household wars."

For a long time past the term "buttery bar" seems to have been obsolete, all buttery doors or openings for the passing of liquor or food into the hall having been called for more than a century "buttery hatches," the half door with shelf included. It is nevertheless tolerably certain that this last was strictly speaking the "Buttery Bar," and that the buttery hatch proper was a smaller aperture. This was sometimes a small opening in the upper part of the buttery door, or an arched aperture in the wall itself, with a door of its own. In the ancient song of the "Old and New Courtier," the hospitality of the Old Courtier is evidenced by "an old buttery hatch worn quite off the old Hooks,"² doubtless with much passing of black jacks through it.

Under the minstrel's gallery at Haddon three 14th century arches lead respectively to the buttery, kitchen, and pantry. In the upper part of the buttery door is a small hatch of the wicket-like variety 16 inches high and 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ wide only. This buttery has a flight of steps into a large vaulted cellar, and is the only one mentioned in descriptions of Haddon. But there is another still more interesting one at the other end of the great hall in a part to which few visitors penetrate. It is gained by a door in the north wall through a 14th century pointed arch and a

1 "Taylor's Workes," 1630, p. 113.

2 Wit and Mirth, 1719. Vol III., p. 271.

short passage ending in another 14th century arched doorway. In this is, or was, in recent times, the original buttery door striped with heavy oak ledges and studded with nails. The upper part has a small hatch with a shelf on the outer side supported by a stout bracket. That this was the buttery door's original position

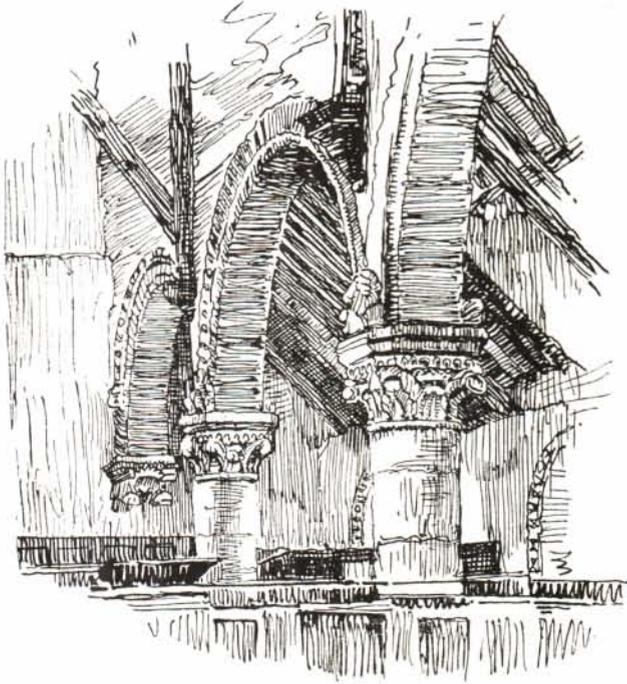


Fig. 56. Corner of the Great Hall, Oakham Castle.

is shown also by the grooves and hinges of a half door or bar, now gone, with bolt holes near the bottom. Moreover the mention of "the strong beere buttry" in some house-keeping accounts for 1668, which remain at Haddon, shows there were two. Some old inventories also exist in the building but no black jacks are mentioned in them. At Belvoir Castle, however, to which the Duke of Rutland's ancestors removed from Haddon at the beginning of the 18th century, are a number of old papers referring to Haddon Hall which show that drinking jacks were in use there down to a late period. As recently as 1735 "a large leather Jack" is mentioned "in Mrs. Bignold's Room." In 1623 there were in the Pantry, "of Leather Jacks great and small, five"; and in 1638, "five Leather Jacks"

in the buttery; in 1641, "In ye Butterie, Leather Iacks, 5," probably the same jugs in each case. Black jacks are also mentioned among the vessels at Belvoir Castle in the 17th century.

The elaborate fastenings of ancient buttery hatches were necessary to keep out undesirable visitors, and to protect the dispensers of liquor from intimidation. This was effected sometimes by making the hatch an aperture in a thick wall, closed by a door of its own, of which kind there were several examples in Oxford, notably an interesting 15th century one at Magdalen College.

Where the buttery-hatch was an opening through the wall the base of the aperture formed a shelf for the placing of black jacks, as at Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire. This aperture opens into the gateway, not into the hall (which would have a buttery of its own), and was probably used for serving liveries of food and drink to the dependents of the castle and for the refreshment of wayfarers. The buttery door at Christ Church, Oxford, is recessed under a pointed enclosing arch, and by the side of it, under the same arch, is a small hatch with a pointed head. In the doorway is a half-door with a ledge at the top, hinged in front of the original door, which fills the whole space.

The beautiful hall of William of Wykeham at New College is an excellent example of the ancient dining hall; and the buttery in "the screens" at the lower end of it admirably illustrates the arrangements for dispensing drink in a 15th century house. Of the three arches beyond the carved oak screen the one to the left is the buttery doorway (Fig. 60). The wall is covered to a considerable height with oak panelling, carved with the "linenfold pattern," and over the buttery door, in the spandrils of the arch, are small figures of servers carrying black jacks and flagons, as described in Chapter III.¹ The door itself is in two distinct halves, but the lower one is evidently an addition, as it is hung to the outer edge of the splay of the doorway and a piece has been cut from the panelling to make room for the projecting shelf; probably the original door had a hatch in the upper part and filled the whole arch. From the buttery a curious stone newel staircase gives access to the vaulted cellar.

Many passages in old plays show that the buttery-hatch of a great house had a strong attraction for very various persons. In Davenant's "Unfortunate Lovers," it is said of a man who was sneaking about in a mysterious manner: "He looks as if he had a black jack under his cloak, and came to beg bouge at the buttery."²

In "Mucedorus," a play once assigned to Shakespeare, and first printed in 1598, "for William Iones dwelling at Holborne conduit, at the sign of the Gunne," a clown when told to go about his business says "I'll go to the buttery-hatch to Thomas the butler for a jack of beer and there for an hour I'll so belabour myself."³

Constant prohibitions seem to have been required to keep men from haunting the buttery, and down to the end of the 17th century there were many rules made by the ancient Law Societies of London for that purpose; for example, to check "the great access in to the buttery by the fellows" of the Inner Temple "at, before and after dinner and supper time," in the year 1622.⁴ The Black Books of Lincoln's Inn also contain many entries recording such rules. In 1606 "no fellow except the benchers shall come within the buttery hatch at any time except when he bringeth a stranger to drink but shall be served with drink at the buttery hatch." In 1679 it was "ordered that the hatch at the buttery door be kept shutt, and that no person but a gentleman of this Societie or a person introduced by such be suffered to come into the buttery."

Ancient buttery bars have a bolt placed at the bottom of the lower half-door, so that it could not be reached by leaning over from outside, and in the one at New College there is a lever arrangement by which the butler could draw the bolt by pressing with his foot when his hands were occupied in carrying jacks of beer.

An incident in "George Silver's Paradoxes of Defence," printed about the middle of the 16th century,⁵ gives a vivid picture of a scene enacted at a buttery door, and shows that a black jack may sometimes become "a jack of defence," describing an altercation between two teachers of fencing, an Italian and an Englishman, the author says "With that word scorne the maister of defence

1 See pages 88 and 89 and Fig. 40 on page 91.

2 Act I., Scene 1.

3 Old English Plays, 1874, p. 218.

4 Inner Temple Records, pp. 40 & 132.

5 The book had become extremely scarce a hundred years ago, and some extracts were re-printed in 1807, in Grose's Antiquarian Repertory.

was verie much moved and up with his greate English fist and stroke maister Vincentio suche a boxe on the eare that he fell over and over, his legges just against a butterie hatch whereon stood a great blacke jacke ; the maister of defence fearing the worst against Vincentio his rising, catcht the blacke jacke into his hand being more than half full of beere. Vincentio lustily start up laying his hand on his dagger, pointed with the other hand, saying, Very well : I will cause to lie in the gaile for this geare, 1, 2, 3, 4 yeares. And well said the maister of defence since you will not drinke no wine, will you pledge me in beere ? I drinke



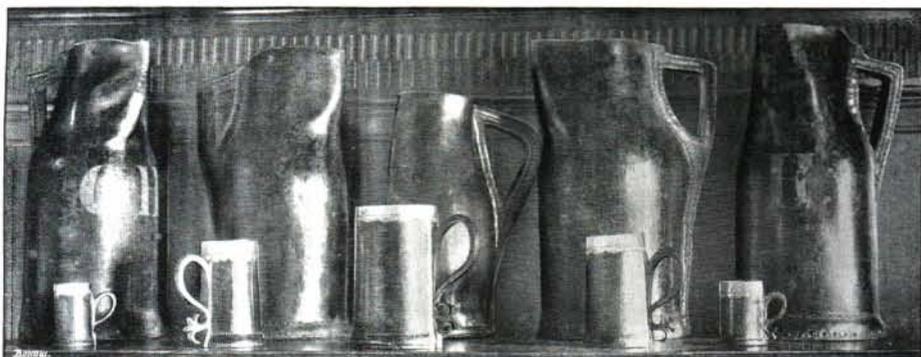
Fig. 57. The Doorway to Hall, Stokesay.

to all the cowardly knaves in England, and I think thee to be the veriest coward of them all : with that he cast all the beere upon him : notwithstanding Vincentio having nothing but his guilt rapier and dagger, and the other for his defence the blacke jacke, would not at that time fight it out."

This (and other passages in old authors) seems to suggest that it was customary to leave one of the larger jacks standing full, or partly full, of liquor, that it might be available at short notice Milton, in "Colasterion," one of his prose pamphlets on Divorce, speaking of an imaginery serving-man says: "hee runs to the black jack, fills his flagon, spreads the table and servs up the dinner."

THE XVI. CENTURY HALL.

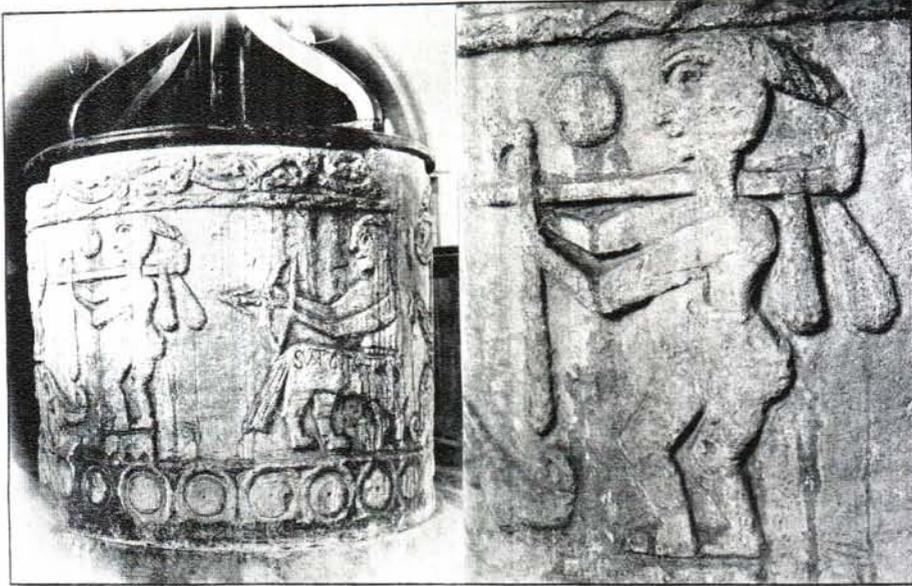
At the beginning of the 16th century leathern vessels were still much used in England. The domestic habits of the people changed slowly as their surroundings improved, and the added comfort of the houses was chiefly in respect of the parlours and chambers. The hall was still used for the chief meals, though it had become of less importance in proportion to the rest of the house, it was the great public apartment as hitherto. The tendency (noted in "Piers Plowman") among



Four Bombards from Chelsea Hospital and some silver-mounted Jacks from the Fieldhouse collection.
(Chap. V.)

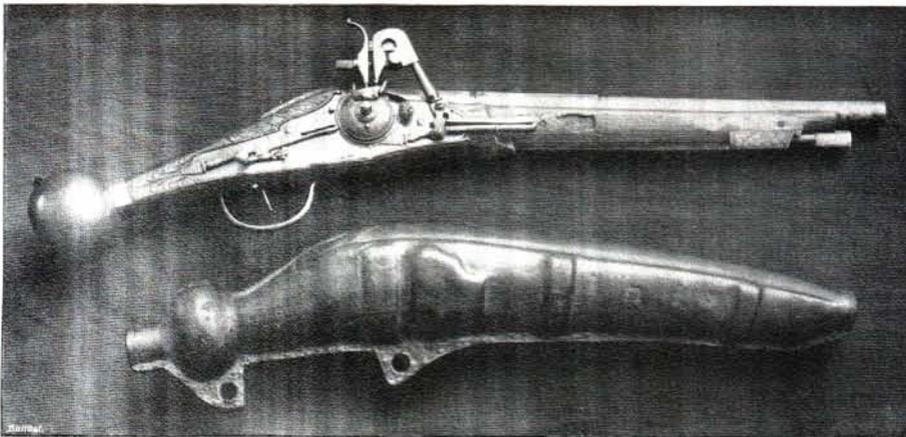


Crossing a river on inflated skins, Assyrian Bas-reliefs,
British Museum. (Chaps. I. and VI.)



Norman Font at Hook Norton, Oxon.
(Chap. VI.)

Aquarius, from the same Font, carrying
a Water-bouget. (Chap. VI.)



Pistol-shaped leather Bottle and early Pistol or Dagg. (Chap. II.)

the aristocracy to take their meals in private, though increasing, was not viewed with favour by royalty, and Henry VIII. absolutely forbade it in his own palaces, as is shown by the Ordinances issued at Eltham in the seventeenth year of his reign, wherein it is set forth "that sundry noblemen, gentlemen and others doe much delight and use to dyne in corners and secret places not repairing to the king's chamber or hall" and orders "dying of noblemen in corners to be left."

The cup board or dresser on which stood the vessels of silver (which were often as much for show as for use)¹ had been one of the few pieces of furniture in the hall, but was now often placed in the parlour, though a passage in "Romeo and Juliet" shows it to be still part of the hall furniture in Shakespeare's time, as when they are clearing the hall at Capulet's house for the dance, one of the servants exclaims "Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate!"²

In the passage which runs beneath the minstrel's gallery, the buttery bar was always placed. Here the butler and his helpers saw that sufficient liquor for the day's consumption was provided, and superintended the dispensing of it at meal times; and here in most cases a row of leather pots awaited the servers who carried the liquor into hall. In the buttery also hung the leather bottles—rarely as many as half-a-dozen, ready to be filled for the hunting party or other excursion.

In early times the buttery was often called the spence, because it was the place to which the liquor was dispensed. Chaucer says of a corpulent monk "Alinolent as botel in the spence." A late instance of the use of the term occurs among the Stratford-on-Avon MSS., in an inventory, dated 1603, of the goods of Richard Boyce, where "iij leather bottles and a warming pan" are stated to be in "The Spence or buttrey."³ When meals were served the jacks were taken down to the cellar by the butler's assistants, for which purpose there was generally a flight of steps from the buttery direct to the cellar, so that when filled, the jacks could be brought up and delivered to the servers over the bar or through the hatch. The author of the "Serving Man's Comfort," written in 1598, speaks of "the blacke Jack letting from haul to butterie from butterie to barrell, from barrell back for the haul's health."⁴ Among the household effects of the Earl of Northumberland, when journeying into France in 1514, were two leather bottles and six black jacks for the buttery.⁵

Compton Wynyates has an excellent example of the 16th century hall, retaining all the earlier arrangements but having throughout its elaborate detail a treatment very characteristic of its own time. A very large but late black jack, already described,⁷ stands on the great hall table. When the long ball-rooms, so sumptuously decorated dining-rooms and parlours so characteristic of what are called "Elizabethan" houses had become fashionable at the beginning of the 17th century, the hall was no longer so important a feature as it had been in the great man's house, but it is probable that black jacks, especially those which

1 Harl. MSS. Printed by Soc. of Ant. 1790, p. 195, cap. 52.

2 See quotation on page 42 from Pepys' Diary.

3 Act 5. Scene 1.

4 Misc. MSS., Vol. VII., No. 53.

5 The Serving-man's Comfort, p. 108.

6 Grose's Ant. Repertory. IV., page 346.

7 See page 122 *supra*.

were mounted in silver, and otherwise elegantly made, were still used at the table of the lord.

In establishments where numbers of people dined together in hall, such as king's palaces, colleges, schools and hospitals, they were still in great favour and the hall retained its ancient importance.



Fig. 58. The Great Hall, Stokesay.

THE SURROUNDINGS OF LEATHER VESSELS.

From some of the inventories attached to early wills a good idea may be obtained of the usual environment of leather vessels in the households of substantial people or communities. One preserved at York with the will of Archbishop Bowet was written in Latin in 1423, when the buttery was probably as it was in the 14th century. The items were neither very numerous nor costly, comprising three pipes (that is, barrels of that size) for beer, old but serviceable, eighteen small barrels for beer, sixteen ordinary wooden cups, two troughs for catching the beer droppings, one tunnel, a tub for washing cups and nine pots of black leather.¹

The inventory of Sir John Falstolfe's household taken in 1459, affords an illustration of the buttery of a 15th century manor-house. "The Bottre. Item

¹ Boter. "Et de ijsviyd receptis pro ij pipes veteribus pro cerevisia inaponenda. Et de iiijd. receptis pro xvi ciphis ligneis usitatis. Et de viis receptis pro ij trowes pro droppying cerevisiae. Et de vjd receptis pro j tonnell, et pro j tubb pro lotione ciphorum. Et de iijs receptis pro ix ollis de corrio nigro. Summa vijsxd." Test. Ebor., XLV. Vol. of Surtees Society, p. 80.

ij Keryng knyvs iij knyves in a schethe, the haftys of every (ivory) with nayles gilt. j payre galon Bottellys of one sorte. iij galon pottis of lether, Item iij pottellers of lether. Item j grete tankard, ij grete and huge Botellis. Item xiiij Candylystycks of laton." Tankards were always of wood and in the 15th century it was not necessary to specify the material of bottles, especially of quart and gallon bottles, and two so great and huge that their capacity is left to the imagination.

Jacob Austin, cordwainer of Birmingham, in 1679, had "In the Buttery, 1 black Jack, 1 mouse trappe, 2 wooden platters and a Iren."

LEATHER VESSELS IN KINGS' PALACES.

It has been pointed out by Professor Thorold Rogers that wine (which we regard as a luxury) "our forefathers five hundred years ago were enabled to use freely and cheaply and procure at low rates in the common inns on the road, at a time when communication and travel were certainly neither so easy nor so frequent as at present, and land and water carriage were far dearer."¹ But ale was nevertheless the national beverage, not only in the sense in which it is so still, but to a far greater degree, without distinction of class, age, or sex. In the king's palace folks drank ale and drank it out of leather.

Such vessels were regularly bought in those times for use in the royal palaces. They occur in the Wardrobe accounts of King Richard II., 1383 to 1386, at the Record Office. In the "Account of Alan de Stokes, three pairs of bottles are mentioned, and in the "Account of John Macclesfield," in 1398, two pairs of bottles and ten pots of boiled leather, *x ollis de correo bullito*.² In the twenty-first year of the same reign, under the account of Simon Bache, Treasurer of the Hostel, the Clerk of the Buttery paid to John Launde, "Botelmaker," of London, five shillings for a pair of gallon bottles and three for a pair of half-gallon bottles.³ Another manuscript of Henry IV., or earlier, shows that a pair of bottles and a pot were bought from "Richard Stanes, Botelmaker," for the use of our lord the King.⁴

In the first year of the same king's reign there were as many as twenty two bottles, twenty of which are specified as being of leather, "*j pari Botellis de coreo*" and "*x pari bottellis de coreo*" mentioned in the account of William Loueney in the Queen's Remembrancer's Wardrobe.⁵

In the year 1390, when Henry IV., then Earl of Derby, was preparing for a journey to Prussia, his Clerk of the Buttery purchased in London before starting two leather pots holding a gallon each and six more holding half-a-gallon each.⁶ Later than this there is evidence that such vessels were in use in the households of our Kings and Queens for more than three centuries. At least as late as the reign of King William III. and Queen Mary II., black jacks and wooden cups were used as part of the furniture of the royal establishment.

1 History of Agriculture and Prices in England, 1866, Vol. I., p. 624.

2 Exchequer Q.R. Wardrobe enrolled Accounts, Roll 5.

3 "ij pari botellis galoners vs; pro j pari bottellis potellers iijjs." Duchy of Lancaster Records, Class XXVIII., Bundle 1, No. 8.

4 "Rico. Stanes Botelmaker pro j pair de Botell, Potellers et j pott Galon 'ab eo empt' ad dci Dni Regis." Exchequer Acc. Q.R., Wardrobe, No. 406.

5 Exchequer Q.R. Wardrobe Accounts, Roll 5.

6 "Clerico buterie super servisia per manus Johannis Attehalle pro ij ollis coreis galoners, et pro vj ollis coreis potellers ab ipso emptis, apud London, xs viijd."—Expenses of the Earl of Derby, edited by Miss L. Toulmin-Smith, for the Camden Soc., 1894, p. 18.

In the year 1790 the Society of Antiquaries printed a series of Ordinances which had been drawn up at various times for the control of the Royal Household,¹ most of them are preserved in the British Museum and a few other places. The third of these Ordinances was called the Black Book of King Edward IV.,² and was drawn up in that reign, for the better management of the King's household. Among the duties ascribed to the Controller of the Household is the following: "By whose supervision the Thesaurere is dyscharged from many partycular accptes of thynges dyspensd in household.....that elles should be expressed in every small partiycularitie, as of every pewter dysshe, cup of tree, pottes of lethyr or ertle, as of other many small and infinite spyces, and othyr thinges." In the same document, under the head "Office of Pycher-house and cup-house," are set forth the duties of "fower honest yomen and diligent. Them ought to fetche the pottes with drinke in the halle at the highe dayes, that Marchalles, Ushers and Aumoners may see the full measures; or elles they make it up, as the controllers and clerks of the buttery and kychyn have marked the pottes. The chief yoman of thys office hathe in charge under the serjeant of sellar, the Kepeinge of all the pottes and cuppes of silver and of leather, tankardes, and earth or ashen cuppes, coffyrs, gardevyaundes, hangers and all other stuffe of this office."³

A document among the Harleian MSS., which consists of a list of furniture in Henry VIII.'s Palaces, and is dated 14 September, 1. Edward VI., mentions two "lether pottes" among the "kechyne stuffe" at Oatlands in Surrey, a palace of that King,⁴ and such vessels are also enumerated in the Royal Ordinances made at Eltham Palace, in the seventeenth year of King Henry VIII.,⁵ under "An Estimate view of such requisite Provisions and other Incydents as be to be had and provided for the expences of the King's Household." They do not seem to have been very numerous judging by the proportion the cost of them bears to the outlay on other vessels. "Asshen cuppes in the yere by estimation," came to £20. "Empty Pipes and Coupridge of Ale" to £26 13s. 4d., but Leather Potts, "by estimation," were only £5. Probably the smallness of the amount was due to the lasting qualities of the jacks. Such pots in the King's palace were used for various purposes. A document printed in Leland's "Collectanea," gives an account of the ceremonial at the birth and christening of a child born to the reigning sovereign. It is headed "Ordinances by Margaret Countesse of Richmond and Derby, as to what preparation is to be made against the Deliveraunce of a Queen, as also for the Christening of the Childe," and is said to have been written in the reign of Henry VII. After a detailed account of the ceremonial to be observed at the christening, which was of a gorgeous character, there is a passage beginning, "As touchinge such Necessaries as belonge unto the Child. First he must have a riche Mantell of Clothe of Golde with a longe Traine, furred throughout with Ermyn." Among these necessaries is "a greate Potte of Lether for Water."⁶

A huge bombard incised with a crown and the initials of Queen Elizabeth, now in the possession of Lord Walsingham, has already been described in Chapter V.

1 Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Royal Household, 1790.

2 Harl. MSS., 1642, ff. 1—196.

3 A Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household, 1790.

4 Harl. MSS., 1419a, f. 278.

5 Harl. MSS., printed by Soc. of Ant., 1790, p. 195.

6 "De rebus Anglicanis Opuscula Varia," printed in Leland's *Collectanea*, 1770, p. 183.

The Accounts of the Annual Expenses of that Queen in the forty-third year of her reign are printed with the same Royal Ordinances already quoted, and have the passage "the Yeomen of the Picher-house hath 100s. yearely and three dishes of meat every meale for him and his three fellows, the two grooms and page, he hath the charge of silver pottes, jackes, and wooden cuppes, which are to be used for service as neede shall require."

In an anonymous article on "Home Life in the Olden Time" in the "Leisure Hour" for 1884, the author says that Queen Elizabeth on one occasion ordered "two leder pots," and James I. later still, two "blacke jackes." No references are given, and I have not been able to verify the statements, but there is every probability of their being correct.

When Heywood, in 1635, wrote of "the great black Jacks and bombards" being used at the King's Court,² it was presumably the courtiers who were drinking from them. If so, black jacks were not despised by a King who has the reputation of being an enlightened patron of the arts. This sovereign, when Prince of Wales, had leathern pots great and small in his home at St. James's Palace, by the evidence of a document in the possession of Mr. Harvey of St. James's Street, a Royal Warrant on vellum, signed at the top "Charles P." which gives orders for the contenting and payment of divers persons for certain furniture and reparations at St. James's House "this haulf yeare last past,..... and foure harde hides off strong oxe-lether, four heathe brushes and one heare brush, large paper bookes bound in lether, two greate blacke Jackes, a gespin, and two brasse candlesticks." "Gespin," as already explained,³ was the name often given in the 16th and 17th centuries to a mug of leather.

In Chapter IV. various large black jacks are commented upon which are incised with the initials of Charles I., and are now in public or private collections and several great leathern pitchers engraved with the name and coat of arms of Oliver Cromwell have already been described in the same chapter. If genuine one must imagine them to have got into private Puritanical custody immediately after the Restoration, or their inscriptions would not be likely to remain.

No large black jacks are mentioned in the Royal Ordinances made by direction of Charles II., though without doubt they were still used. We know by a passage in Dugdale's "Originales Judicales" that wooden cups were still in vogue at the Court in this reign, though abandoned in some great establishments,⁴ and a leather



Fig. 59. The Buttery, Stokesay, Shropshire.

1 See page 225.

2 See page 15 *supra*.

3 See page 125 *supra*.

4 See page 127 *supra*.

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Fig. 59. The Buttery, Stokesay, Shropshire.

1 See page 225. 2 See page 15 *supra*. 3 See page 125 *supra*. 4 See page 127 *supra*.

mug called a "gispen" incidentally occurs in the above Ordinances. Under "The Serving of All night" is a passage in which one of the watch is directed to go "incontinently to the Buttery for the King's ale, there to receive three cupes of ash and ale, and to give them the saie thereof;" one of the said watch ought to fetch a pott and a gespin atte the Picher-house for ale and wyne for the said watch."²

In the days before gas and petroleum had made it possible to "turn night into day," there was less temptation to remain out of bed long after dark, and early retiring was universal. It was therefore found desirable to have solid and liquid refreshment at hand during the long nights. This was much more the case in mediaeval times when meals were earlier than in the reign of Charles II., but even at this time the serving of "All-night" was not neglected. Liveries of food and drink were served to all visitors and members of the family, and in the bedrooms were frequently curious little cupboards, somewhat on the plan of a rabbit-hutch and not much larger, with open fronts of turned bars. These were bed-room livery cupboards, of which two fine examples are preserved at St. Alban's Cathedral, where they are used for doles of bread.

Pots of leather would be very frequently used for liveries of drink served for "all night," as they were considered peculiarly suitable for ale, and in houses where black jacks have been in use in recent times the servants speak highly of their keeping qualities and the way in which the ale left standing in them, even the night through, is fresh and drinkable next morning.

Another Harleian manuscript, called the "Establishment of the Household of King William and Queen Mary" and dated 1689, shows that black jacks and wooden cups were then in use in the royal palaces. Among the incidentals to be allowed in such proportions as the officers of the Green Cloth shall find necessary for "Our Service and for the service of Our Royal Consort," the amount for "black jacks, tubbs, tray-bowles, and white cupps" was not to exceed £36 per annum.

BOTTLE-HORSES.

In most of the royal household regulations, from which many of the above extracts have been taken, are lists of the horses on the permanent establishment, and among them are generally a number of "Bottle-horses." Commentators in archaeological journals have interpreted this word "bottle," as meaning bundle or burden, but there are several reasons against accepting that view. The horses that were reserved for burden carrying had other appellations such as "pack-horse," "sumpter horse," "mail horse," etc., and considerable numbers of them were required to carry the baggage. The number of bottle-horses is generally two or three, a very inadequate number for Royal baggage.³ They must have been horses attached to the Butler's department for carrying liquor for use on the way, as in the cellars of the different royal palaces there would be no lack of wine or beer for the use of the Court when in residence. An incident at the end of

1 That is, to taste of each cup to show that they were not poisoned.

2 Harl. MSS., printed by Soc. of Ant. in 1790.

3 In Henry VIII.'s Ordinances the number of bottle-horses is three and of sumpter or baggage horses seven.

the 16th century, which illustrates the system of supplying Royalty with drink while travelling, is mentioned by Thomas Wright. The ale provided for Queen Elizabeth at one of the houses (Wright says probably Grafton), where she rested on her way to Kenilworth, was too strong. In a letter written by the Earl of Leicester to Lord Burghley, he says: "But we were fayne to London with *bottells*, to Kenelworth, to dyvers other places where ale was, her owen here was such strong as there was no man able to drink it. It did put her very farr out of temper," etc.' The letter is dated June 28th, 1575.

There is every reason for supposing that the bottle-horses carried bottles of leather. As late as the time of James I. there was a Yeoman of the Bottles. "He hath roos. a yeaere and is to carry wine and drinke for the king when his Majesty rideth abroad." He is also to have for his fee "all the drinking towells dampned." Passages in the orders dictating the preparations for the marriage of Henry VIII.'s sister, Mary Tudor, in 1514, seem to settle the question, as a "bottell horse and sadell" are definitely stated to be "for her flagons," while there was a sompter horse "for her trusing bedde and a nother for her cofres," and a "male horse" in addition.²



Fig. 60. Buttery-hatch at New College, showing carvings of black jacks, etc.

MONASTIC VESSELS OF LEATHER.

The period during which monasticism prevailed in this country was the time when vessels of leather were most in vogue, and as we have seen in the case of the black jack, they found, naturally enough, a place in the monastic household.

In the 14th and 15th centuries they were (more especially the bottle) articles of value and used by wealthy people. In 1381 the Abbey of Durham paid 15s. for ten pots of leather and a pair of great bottles for the lord Prior (*10 ollis cor. et 1 pare magne botellorum pro d'no Priore 15s.*)³ They paid to James the Boteler, in 1397, three and threepence for leathern stoups for the chamber of the lord Prior (*pro stoppes corei empt pro camera d'ni Prioris 3s. 3d.*)⁴ In 1411, the Prior of Finchale kept two leather bottles that would hold two gallons of wine

1 Queen Elizabeth and her Times, by Thos. Wright, Vol. II., p. 12.

2 Printed in "Mary Tudor, Queen of France," by Mary Croom Brown, p. 257.

3 Surtees Soc., Vol. CIII., p. 592.

4 *Ib.*, p. 601.

(*ij utres capientes ij lagenas vini*) in his study.¹ Two leather beer vessels which were probably bottles, were bought for Durham Abbey at a cost of 2s. in 1459. They held two gallons and are described as "obbis de corio pro cerevisia."²

Such things varied in value, but as poor material or workmanship was forbidden, the difference would chiefly depend on the plainness or otherwise of their treatment; and on their size. When used by the poorer classes they were generally the property of their employers. In 1517 the Canons of St. Mary's Priory, Huntingdon, gave 3d. for "a botell for the neteherd."³ The Convent of the Augustine Order of St. Bridget at Sion Abbey, Middlesex, purchased two leather bottles for 1s. 3d. each in 1530, and the same entry shows that they were for the use of the carter.⁴ They were, however, still used by the heads of monasteries as well as by their servants. In a journal kept by William Moore, Prior of Worcester, he records that in 1532 he bought in London "two letherne bottells," for 2s. This journal of the last Prior, which is still in the old gate-tower of the Cathedral precincts, is a paper folio, bound in vellum, containing memoranda, and accounts of his personal expenses.⁵

There seems reason to believe that the Prior kept these bottles at one of his granges for his own use. He probably used them in travelling, and in the chase. The leisured classes, including the occupants of monasteries, were extremely fond of hunting, hawking, and fowling.

Of Chaucer's monk, we are told that

" Greyhoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight ;
Of prickyng and of huntynge for the hare,
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare."

In such pursuits a wine bottle of leather, such as those of the Prior of Finchale, capable of holding two gallons of wine, would be more in harmony with the tastes of the times than the modern pocket flask. Nor were their views as to "sport" at all like ours; the numbers of nets, luring bells and other sporting implements are very numerous in Prior Moore's diary and suggest very business-like methods for securing the wild fowl and game which was everywhere so plentiful.

A favourite residence of Prior Moore was his grange at Crowle, which, as may be seen by the sketch at Fig. 55, was a beautiful building. It was till fifty years ago intact with its chapel, great hall, and even the moat, an account of the making of which is recorded in the diary. This old grange, at which the two leather bottles were probably kept, was in 1860 destroyed, for no apparent reason, by the owner, who was killed shortly after. One can only regret that it was not shortly before.

It will be noticed that in later records the bottles are more frequently specified as leathern. In the year 1523 the Priory of Durham paid fourpence for mending one, as the following marginal note occurs in the Bursar's accounts: "pro emendacione unius botellae de corio 4d."⁶ Also at the Monastery on Holy Island, when

¹ Priory of Finchale, Surtees Soc. Vol. VI., p. 156.

² Account Rolls, Surtees Soc. Vol. IX., p. 86.

³ Nichols' Illustrations of Manners and Expenses, 1797, p. 292.

⁴ A History of Agriculture and Prices, (Rogers). Vol. IV., p. 613.

⁵ This MS. has now been printed by the Worc. Historical Society.

⁶ "Liber Bursarii Ecclesiae Dunelmensis," Vol. XVIII., Surtees Soc., p. 293.

"the State of the House as quitted by John Castell, Prior of the same, A.D. 1533," was recorded, there were in the buttery "ij drynkyng crosys, 6 cups, and 2 lether bottelles."¹

At the College of Lingfield in Surrey in 1545 there were two butteries, each containing leather vessels. In "The Botry" were "It'm ij lethern Jacks viijd. It'm A lethern Bottell iijd." Also in "The Botry next the kechyn" there was "A lethern Bottell of a Galon iiijd."² Among the goods of Jane Lawson, last Prioress of Nesham, at the house to which she retired on a pension at the Dissolution, there were at her death in 1557 "A lether bottell and a puder basinge," worth twenty pence in the buttery.³ An inventory taken at the Dissolution of the Priory of Minster in Kent, gives "j lether pot and a woode tankard" in the "Greate Bathe" amongst much pewter.⁴

These examples are not very numerous, but together with those in Chapter III. they will serve to illustrate the use of leather vessels in the domestic departments of these old monastic bodies which four hundred years ago were approaching their end, and of whose halls and refectories there remain but the turf-clad foundations, or bare deserted chambers wherein is now

"No mark of lethern jack or metal can,
No cup, no horn, no hospitable token."

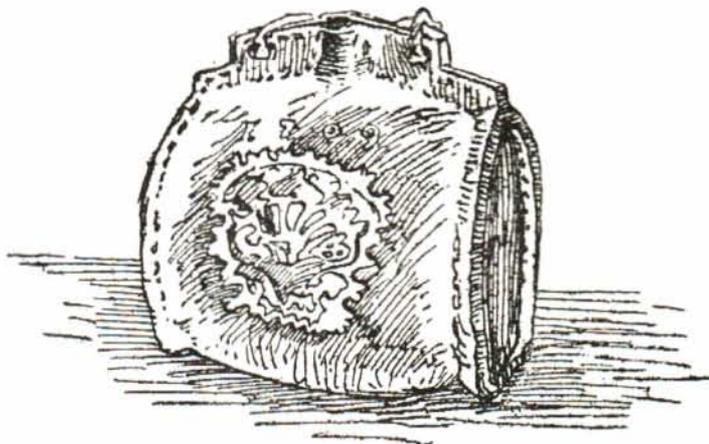


Fig. 61. Leather Bottle in Haxey Church, Yorkshire.

LEATHERN VESSELS IN CHURCHES.

Vessels of leather, being as a rule a part of the domestic outfit of those old communities, were a feature of the refectory rather than the church, but they were also used for more strictly ecclesiastical purposes.

Chalices of a kind of leather are mentioned in Ducange's Glossary, in which he quotes the following from the Edict of the Council of Treves which met in

1 Raine's North Durham.

2 Surrey Archaeological Collections. Vol. VII., p. 236.

3 Wills and Inventories. Vol. II. of Surtees Soc., p. 157.

4 Archaeologia Cantiana. Vol. VII., p. 295.

1310: "We forbid that anyone shall presume any further to celebrate within our province, with a chalice of wood or glass or tin or lead or of Hide or of brass or of electrum or of bronze." It may reasonably be doubted, however, if the reading is correct, for under *peutrem* in the same edition of Ducange the same quotation is given with *peutre* for *pelle*,² a variation which, apart from the context, points to *peltrum*, a word used in mediaeval inventories for pewter.³

Bottles in early times were not often used for the purposes of "bottling" as it is now understood, this having been but little practised till the 16th century,



Fig. 62

Doorway to Church House, Ludlow.

as they were used for the carrying, not the storing, of liquor. Glass bottles were very rare before the 15th century, and for a long time after were only used for things of a precious or very perishable nature. After this time bottles of metal became more common, though they were not usually of large size like the leather ones.

The leather bottle being the ordinary bottle of the country till the 16th century it was not strange that it should find its way into churches, as a receptacle for the sacramental wine. Such vessels were not likely, however, to be described as leather bottles till others were becoming well known. In the Churchwarden's Accounts for the parish of Leverton in Lincolnshire is the entry under the year 1528 "For a wine bottell ijd."⁴ The material is not stated, but there is evidence in another entry occurring immediately after, "for sesening of ye wyne bottel jd.," which satisfied the editor of the accounts that it was made of leather.

Fifty years later the churchwardens of Wing, Buckinghamshire, paid 1s. 6d. "for a tynne wyne bottel for the church,"⁵ which, not being of leather, did not require seasoning. In a volume of accounts in All Saints' Church, Hereford, is an inventory of church goods in which, under the date 1621, is the entry: "It. XII Birtells of leather," which seem to have been botells. As in those days wine was drawn from the wood, these church bottles were no doubt used for carrying it from some neighbouring cellar or more frequently from the nearest town. Items of expense incurred in so carrying it are very frequent in old church accounts, as for instance at Cratfield in 1592, "pd. for iij pyntes of wyne againste Whissone Sunday xviiij. Pd. to James Falle for fetching it from Hollsur iijd."⁶

1 "Interdicimus ne quis eorum cum calice ligneo vel vitreo vel stanneo vel plumbeo vel de Pelle vel de auricalco vel de electro infra nostram provinciam ulterius celebrare presumat."—Ducange, Paris, 1845, Vol. V., p. 183.

2 Vol. 5, p. 183, Col. 2.

3 In the will of Hugh Grantham of York, proved in 1409, "j quart o'la de peltro, j dosan vasibus peltri, iij vasis peltri" occurs. "Testa. Ebor.," Vol. XLV. of Surtees Soc., p. 48.

4 Archaeologia, Vol. XI.I.

5 Archaeologia, Vol. XXXVI.

6 Cratfield Parish Papers, 1895. p. 120.

In the parish church of Haxey in Yorkshire a fine leather bottle of about a gallon was in modern times discovered, with other lumber of ecclesiastical character, at the bottom of a disused cupboard. As will be seen by the sketch at Fig. 61, it is a late development of the keg-shaped bottle and has a rich piece of conventional ornament stamped into the side, over which is the date 1709. There can be little doubt that its purpose was to contain the Communion wine; indeed the local tradition is to that effect, and it has been exhibited at several Church Congresses.

Before the Reformation all churches and most chantry chapels had, in addition to the chalice and paten, with phials and cruets for oil, flagons for carrying wine and water. These in the wealthier minsters were of silver, but in smaller churches of pewter, tin or wood. Occasionally they were of leather. In an inventory at the Public Record Office, of the goods of the chantry at La Mountray College, Wells, in 1545, is the item: "ij potts of lether, valewid at jd."

They were also used in churches in later times. Strypes "Memorials Ecclesiastical," quotes a MS. warrant of November, 1550, to Sir Rafe Sadler, to deliver Robert Bassok, Sergeant of the vestry, various surplices, cloths for the table of the chapel, table-cloths for the body of the chapel, albs, books, etc., a little pot and a guispin and a pair of tin cruets. In Cripps' "Old English Plate," "lether tankards" are mentioned as occurring in a church account in 1567, but the name of the church is not given, nor any reference to the document. On the same page a church inventory is quoted in which was "a penny tanckerd of wood used as a holy water stock."

Leather pots of various sizes were used in the Chapel Royal at Whitehall, in the reign of Charles II., as appears by a Royal warrant still existing, in these terms: "Charles R. We will and command you that immediately upon sight hereof you deliver or cause to be delivered unto our well beloved servant Thomas Haynes, Esq., Sergeant of our Vestry, for the use of our Chapell these parcells following," that is to say, four surplices, etc., the "parcells" specified being chiefly vestments, but Bibles, Communion books, silk points for the "coapes," and "three black jacks, three gispens and one perfuming pan of iron," were included in the list. "The warrant was given under our signett at our Palace of Westminster the 4th day of May in the 15th year of our reigne, 1663," and was addressed to "our Rt. trusty and Rt. wellbeloved cousin and councillor



Fig. 63. Ludlow Church from East, showing the Church House.

Edwarde Earle of Sandwich, Master of our great Wardrobe."¹ The whole of the articles are stated to be "for the use of our Chapell," but it is quite probable that these black jacks and the leather mugs or "gispens" were intended for moistening the throats of the choristers. Not long before that time, in 1640, Eton College gave for "a Black Jack for the choristers" three shillings and fourpence.²

It is likely that the black jacks in churches were, after the 16th century, most generally for the use of the choir-men. Church organs were few, and the singing was frequently accompanied by a band of musicians who performed on the bassoon, the bass-viol, the fiddle, and other instruments. It is proverbial that these minstrels were a very thirsty class, and a black jack in the gallery would have met with strong approval from them, without exciting surprise among the congregation. A "Funerall Bill" of the 17th century in the British Museum shows that there were black jacks at Lincoln Cathedral at that time. It consists of a list of fees for a funeral which took place at the Cathedral and includes charges for the "Quire," workmen, etc. For the use of a "Black Jack" sixpence was charged.³ There is evidence that black jacks were kept in old churches in England for various purposes, but it is unlikely that they were used for the sacramental wine after early times.



Fig. 64

The Porter's Lodge, Ludlow Castle, where two drinking jacks were kept in the 17th century.

In the Middle Ages the church was the common hall and meeting-place of the parish, sometimes the store-house also;⁴ and many churches still bear evidence of having been fortified. Such uses might lead to jacks being kept in them.

In later times moreover a good deal of liquor, chiefly ale, was consumed in connection with churches and sometimes in or about the building itself. Numerous items in the churchwardens' accounts show that this was so in the 17th and 18th centuries, but Harrison in 1580 speaks of the great reduction in the number of "these idle wakes, guilds, fraternities, church-ales, help ales, and soule-ales, called also dirge-ales, with the heathenish rioting at bride-ales, well diminished and laid aside";⁵ but in times subsequent to this, the craft-guilds often met in the church as the religious guilds had done. At Ludlow the last surviving member of the Guild of Hammermen often described to me the meetings of the fraternity, early in his own lifetime. They were called together by the ringing of one of the bells in the church tower and met in the south transept, where pews had been assigned to them for centuries, but they shortly adjourned to the Bull tavern. In the records of the Company which are now in the town Museum, the minutes

¹ Old Cheque-Book of the Chapel Royal, Camden Soc.

² Roger's History of Agriculture and Prices, Vol V., p. 695.

³ Add. MSS. 34, 140, fo. 140.

⁴ Six Centuries of Work and Wages (Rogers), p. 66. Also the Evolution of the English House, (S. O. Addy), 1898, Chap. X.

⁵ Harrison's Description of England, A.D. 1577-1587, in Holinshed. Vol. I., p. 138.

are generally headed: "Then the Hammermen met in the usual place in the parish church," but in 1715 power was given to meet elsewhere, provided the place was stated in the Minute Book. The Fraternity, however, was tenacious of old customs and continued till its dissolution in the 19th century to meet in the church. One of the side chapels called St. John's Chancel was "the usuall place of meetinge" of the ancient company of Stitchmen of Ludlow in 1679, and is so described in their Minute Books, with their records now in Ludlow Museum. Bearing in mind the connection of these old guilds with the building it is interesting to note that this great collegiate church possessed in 1605 as many as twelve jacks, as the following entries in the churchwarden's accounts for November of that year records. "It'm payed for the mending of the letherne Jacks xijd." It is true that leathern jacks which were not drinking vessels might have belonged to the church wardens, as "jacks of defence" were owned and paid for by the various parishes. In the accounts of the wardens of the church of St. Michael in Bedwardine, Worcester, "a Jacke" is mentioned which being grouped with "a byll" probably refers to a stitched jerkin, and the succeeding item "Payed for a nother Jacke to the Tayler at the Knowle end vs. viijd.," is still more likely to have done so. The Ludlow jacks seem to have been pots, however, for the next entry says "It'm payed for the scouring of the xij Jacks vjd," and payment for the scouring of the pewter and other pots in the church are numerous in the accounts.

At the village of Crowle in Worcestershire there was in the old belfry some years ago a leather drinking jack which had been used with another jack and a leather bottle from time immemorial by the bell ringers. The old church was, in the suggestive language of an old parishioner, "taken down to be restored." The jack was saved, however, and is in the custody of the chief bell-ringer. It figures once a year in an ancient custom which is still kept up there. On New Year's Eve the bell-ringers carry the jack round to the farm-houses of the parish, at each of which it is filled with cider for their consumption, a proceeding which is probably a survival of the old Saxon custom of "wassailing." This jack is probably as old as the end of the 17th century, though a later date (1786), which is probably the date of its being given to the church, has been cut in it rather rudely



Fig. 65

Black Jack used by the Crowle Bell Ringers.
Drawn by W. B. Redfern.

¹ Churchwardens' Accounts of Ludlow. These were in part edited by the late Thomas Wright, and printed by the Camden Soc. The above extracts do not occur there, but are from a complete copy transcribed by the late Mr. Llewellyn Jones. The jacks were probably kept in the Church House.

with a knife. Its height is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the width across the base seven inches. It is reputed to hold a gallon, and has a much more shapely and convenient spout than most leather jugs. (Fig. 56 and Plate 8.) A very fine jack used by the ringers at Lincoln has already been described in Chapter III.

In the vestry of the parish church at Stafford is preserved a fine black jack which measures $19\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height and holds two gallons. It has been used for many years by the bell-ringers and has a number of ringers' names cut in the leather, and under them the dates 1750 and 1798. There seems to be no other record of its history, but in the Autumn of 1907 a dispute arose as to its ownership between the Rector and churchwardens (who wished to remove the jack from the belfry for safer keeping in the church), and the ringers, who refused to part with it, and who were eventually dismissed.



Fig. 66. St. Cross, Winchester.

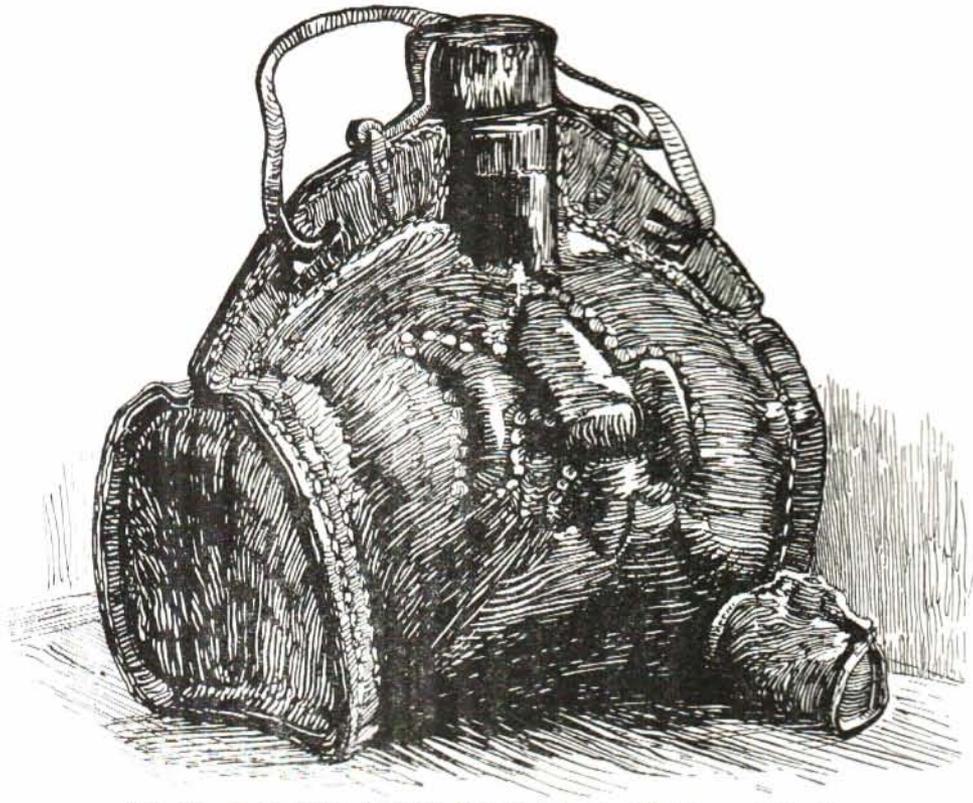


Fig. 67. Remarkable Leather Bottles from the Fieldhouse Collection.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAKING OF LEATHER VESSELS.

“ ’Twas in the time of Noah when the world was drown’d
That the first leather bottle afloat was found.”¹

SO sings the author of one of the numerous editions of the “Leather Bottell” song, and doubtless so simple an elucidation of the first origin of leather vessels is not without its attractions. The true explanation, however, is shadowed forth in the opening lines of a still later version of the same song, which run :

“ God bless the cow and the old cow’s hide
And everything in the world beside.”²

It was from the tanned hides of cattle that English leather vessels were made, and if we would gain any true idea of the England of old times we must picture to ourselves a society in which the use of leather was far more prominent than is generally realised. In addition to the coats, helmets and other armour, the huge boots, gloves, girdles, purses, breeches and other clothing, small pouches, saddle bags, and gycieres formed part of the equipment of travellers. Also,

¹ Old Broad Sheet.

² The Universal Songster : or Museum of Mirth, 1828. Vol. II.

as the greater part of the goods traffic was carried on horses, enormous pouches for water, for clothes, dishes, or food, were slung on their backs, as well as less pliable bottles, mails and coffers, all of which were of leather. Goods carried on carts and waggons were protected by leather coverings called "bare-hides." Within doors, besides numerous articles not now made of leather, there were generally cups, pots, and great pitchers of that material.

IN PRE-HISTORIC TIMES.

The primitive cup already alluded to in Chapter I. as having been dug up in London and now in the H. Syer Cuming collection at Kensington has, from the implements found with it, been ascribed to the Neolithic period, and was probably made by the man who used it. Experts in leather have pronounced it to have undergone some process of tanning or curing, which must have been of a rude description, as it still retains red hair on its outer surface. The cup is four inches high and about the same across the mouth, and would have held nearly a pint of fluid. When found at a great depth below the surface in West Smithfield, it was crushed flat by the weight of superincumbent earth, but was restored to its original shape by soaking. It is a very archaic and curious object, vividly illustrating the rudeness which must have characterized the earliest leather vessels of this country.

It is possible that before the Roman occupation a considerable advance had been made in the fashioning of such vessels by the races then inhabiting Britain, but the little we know of their domestic habits leaves this very much to conjecture.

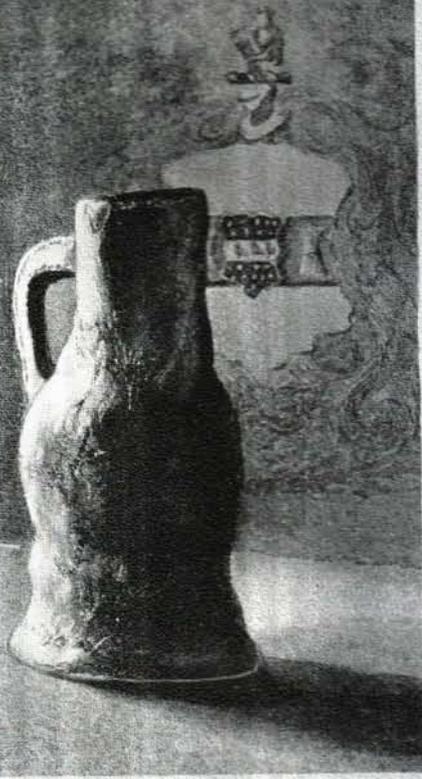
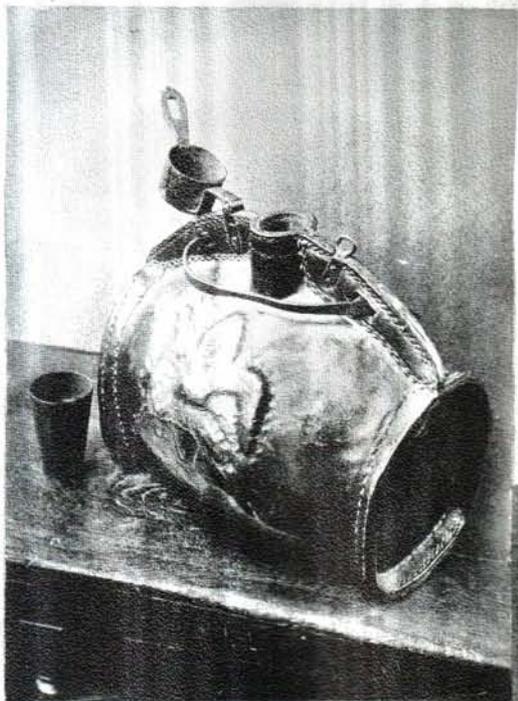
With the advent of the Anglo-Saxon races, the era of well-wrought vessels of leather for general use may be considered to have begun in England. Though they made pottery and glass, they were by tradition and habit, makers of wooden and horn vessels. With them the manufacture of glass and earthenware were arts which steadily declined, while the working of leather into flasks, bottles, bougets and cups, as well as numerous other articles of daily use, was one that continued to increase and flourish with the lapse of time. Much light has been thrown on the industrial arts of the Anglo-Saxons by the results of excavations. The leather cup with silver mountings which is mentioned at page 19 as having been dug up in Derbyshire is stated by the finder, Mr. T. Bateman, to have perished to a very great extent, though the sketch he gives of it and from which Fig. 5 is taken, appears to show that his knowledge of its shape must have been fairly complete. It is uncertain what craftsman would make such a cup as this, which was probably exceptional in its richness, but in later Saxon times leather bottles (as shown by the 10th century manuscript quoted in Chapter I.) were made by the shoe-maker, like most other articles of leather then in use.

IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

It is also shown in the same chapter that early in the Middle Ages workers in leather had split up into separate branches, and for the next two or three centuries leather drinking vessels seem to have been almost exclusively made

¹ See Appendix IV.

BRITISH MUSEUM



Gigantic Leather Bottle with bung-hole and iron cap from the Fieldhouse collection. (Chap. VIII.)

Unusual silver-mounted Jack with modelled spout, also diminutive Jack of cylindrical shape. (Chap. V.)

Mediaeval Earthen Jugs. (Chap. I.)

Large Jack at Claverdon Leys with Arms of the Vernons of Hanbury. (Chap. III.)

the bottle-makers and were not made by the shoemakers (generally called *fwainers*)—at least not in the towns. In remote country places it is possible that they were.

It is shown, incidentally, in the documents already given in Chapter I. that in the reign of Edward IV. the *Horners* "exercised the feat of bottle-making"; it was quite natural that the makers of pouches and bougets should likewise be associated with the making of leather jacks and bottles. In York, as already shown, water-bougets were made by the craftsmen called *bogge-makers* or *bouge-makers*, who were allied to the *botellers*. The first *bouge-maker* in the Roll of *Freemen* is John Milne, who was admitted in the fifth year of Edward IV., 1469, the last was William Myn, "*bogemaker*" in 1500.¹

In London I can find no trace of any craft called *bouge-makers*. Such things were probably continued to be made by the *pouch-makers* or *coffer-makers*. Palsgrave in "*Lesclaircissement de la langue francoyse*," printed in 1530,² translates *yeuseur de bahus* as "a lether coofer-maker or a bouge maker."

In an Act passed in the sixth year of Edward VI., to prevent divers *leather* persons "regrating and engrossing leather" and selling the same again at excessive prices, is this clause: "Provided always.....that all *Sadlers*, *Girdlers*, *fwainers*, and all other artificers such as make *Males*, *Bougets*, *Leather Pots*, *Leather Pards*, *Barhides*, or any other *Wares of Leather* shall or may buy all such *Wares of Leather* as shall be necessary for their *Occupying*."³

THE MAKERS OF LEATHER BOTTLES AND JACKS.

Bottles seem to have been in ancient times, as they are still, the most numerous of leather vessels, and gave to the whole industry the name it bore for so many centuries. The earliest mention of this trade of bottle-making that I am acquainted with is in the *Freemen's Roll of York* in 1331, when Henry de Lincoln, admitted a freeman of the city as a "*botoler*," and the next, in 1334, when John de Schadwell, "*botteler*," occurs in the same list.⁴

As a surname, *Botoler* or *Botiller* is common in the 13th and 14th centuries, but generally proves not to be the name of the owner's calling. In the reign of Richard II. and after, the word was less often used for a leather vessel maker, but supplanted by that of *botelmaker*, probably because it had been confused with the occupation of a *butler*, which was spelt in much the same way.⁵ The word sometimes occurs, however, in the sense of bottle-maker down to the fifth year of Edward IV. in the *Freemen's Roll of York*, when William Myn of York is entered as a "*botteler*." That he was a maker of bottles and not a *butler* is shown by a later entry in which he is described as a "*botelmaker*."⁶ The entries already quoted show conclusively that the *jacks*, *bougets* and *bottles*

¹ *Freemen of York*, *Surtees Soc.* Vol. XCVI., p. 223.

² *Book III.*, fo. 14.

³ *Stat. in Force*, Edward VI., Cap. 15.

⁴ *Butlers* are to be met with in the records of old towns at earlier dates than these, but as they are always taken by the editors of such records to have been *butlers*, I do not, in the absence of positive evidence, claim them as *bottle-makers*, though I have no doubt that is what they generally were.

⁵ *See* page 21 and footnote to page 22. *Boteler* for *butler* endured very much longer, and was derived from the *Buttery* where he presided and which was written in monkish Latin *Botilleria* and the *Butler* *Botillarius*.

⁶ *Freemen of York*. Vol. XCVI., *Surtees Soc.*, pp. 265 and 272.

of the Middle Ages were made by craftsmen devoted almost entirely to that kind of work, but by whom were they made after the 16th century?

It will be apparent from the documentary evidence adduced that at the beginning of the 17th century the art of the bottle-maker as a distinct industry was declining. In London it was dying out in the reign of Elizabeth. In York the last bottle-maker admitted was John Saughell, who took up his freedom in 1588.¹ If they were few in these cities they would be much fewer in smaller places. The York Roll extends to half-way through the 18th century, but there are no more bottle-makers mentioned, except John Bynkes and John Myn, who are only recorded as the fathers respectively of a baker and a tanner admitted, one in 1604 and the other in 1605.²

We know, however, from the numerous references in contemporary literature and from the existence of bottles and jacks bearing authentic dates and other evidence of having been made in the 17th and 18th centuries, that those vessels had not ceased to be used down to modern days. Moreover, bottle-makers, as users of leather, are mentioned as late as Queen Anne, in a Customs Notice in the "London Gazette."³

While the trade of the bottlers was an important one, cordwainers and other leather workers were restrained from encroaching on it, but as the former craft dwindled and its organization decayed, it was only natural that such encroachments should take place. That they did take place we have seen already.⁴

In chapter III. I have shown from the existing records of the ancient Company of Cordwainers at Oxford that during the latter half of the 17th century and the whole of the 18th the black jacks belonging to the fraternity were bought from, or presented by, people whose names also occur as members; that members, moreover, were sometimes paid for repairing the jacks, and that when at the end of the 18th century they were all sold, the purchasers of them were members too.⁵ This makes it tolerably certain that the black jacks of those times were made by the cordwainers craft.⁶ An inventory of a Birmingham cordwainer made in 1679 contains a black jack, but there is no evidence that he had made it, as it is not part of his stock-in-trade. No vessels of any sort were in the "Shopp" and the jack was among trenchers and firkins in the buttery.

In the registers of All Saints', Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1601, John Scott, a "jack-maker," is mentioned,⁷ but he was probably a maker of buff jerkins.

In the 18th century, when manufacturers of leather wares on a more modern scale were springing up at places such as Northampton and Walsall, bottles and probably jacks too, were made for a time in conjunction with other leather goods. Northampton especially has long been famous for its leather wares, but there appear to be no traces among its existing records of the bottle-making trade, and it is not probable that such things were made there to any exceptional extent before the 17th century. In the year 1690 a Northamptonshire squire, in his diary, noted "a leather bottle 6d., bought at Northampton in April."⁸ Encyclo-

1 "Joh. Saughell, bottellmaker. Thomae Saughell, laborer." MS., Roll of Freeman.

2 "Joh. Bynkes baker fil Joh. Bynkes bottellmaker." MS., Roll of Freeman, York.

3 See Chapter II., page 31.

4 See page 24.

5 See page 78, *et seq.*

6 The Bursar of Winchester College tells me that the black jacks used there were towards the last supplied by the College shoe-maker.

7 Brands' Hist. Newcastle-on-Tyne, MDCCLXXXIX., p. 362.

8 The Antiquary, 1872, p. 242.

pedias of the 18th century speak of the bottles which were then made of leather as being made by the "case-makers." These were probably the more modern shaped, flask-like bottles of thin leather, and made in connection with the leather-covered glass bottles which were known as "case bottles."

Probably the latest mention of the making of leather bottles is contained in "A Tour in the Midland Counties of England performed in the Summer of 1772," which says "Northamptonshire has a manufacture of shoes, boots, leather bottles, etc., and a good many people employed in the lace way." This passage occurs in an article by Thomas De Quincey's father in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1774.¹

It is generally taken for granted that leather as a material for drinking from is a thing of the past: and such vessels seem to be severed so completely from the life of to-day that one would hardly dream of finding anybody living at the end of the 19th century who would remember anything about their making. There was, however, in 1897, at the Hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester (see Figs. 66 and 68), an actual eye-witness of the making of leathern jacks. One of the Brethren, who was once connected with the leather trade, remembered to have seen in his youth an order executed for four jacks for Winchester College. That traces of such an old industry should remain so long is perhaps less wonderful in this ancient city than it would be in most places. Here, and at St. Cross, institutions that are hoary with age survive comparatively unchanged, and customs that have elsewhere disappeared long ago. The boys at the College still eat off wooden trenchers and under the old archway of the Hospital a horn of beer and piece of bread are given to every applicant, a custom dating from the days of King Stephen. Seventy years ago such survivals of the past were more numerous, and at Winchester College the custom of serving to each dormitory two leather jacks of beer every night was kept up, any that remained in the morning being claimed as a perquisite by the bed-makers. As each jack would hold about three gallons, it was probably the "attenuated small ale" described by Charles Lamb. Possibly the vested interests of the bed-makers helped to perpetuate the custom. Jacks were also used for carrying beer into Hall, as already described.² Whatever its strength, the allowance of beer at the College was liberal in quantity. In 1709 an attempt was made to ascertain the amount of beer consumed in the College, and a table of the result is entered in the *Liber Actorum*³ of that year. By this we learn that the chaplains were allowed seventy quarts a week each. "By the seventy children and sixteen choristers at the rate of three pints per diem each (which is more than they are observed to drink) 180 hogsheads. Fifteen servants each twenty-one quarts weekly, poor and prisoners five gallons a day." As a result of the investigation 348 hogsheads yearly were found to be brewed, over and above these liberal allowances and not accounted for, and to remedy it a re-arrangement was made in which the children and choristers were allowed what they should call for "within 80 hogsheads a year." It will be seen therefore that if anyone in the school went thirsty, it was his own fault. (Fig. 71.)

The Brother of St. Cross also remembered in Kings-gate Street, not more than two hundred yards from the College, the shoe-maker's shop at a house which

¹ Vol. XLIV., p. 412.

² See page 71.

³ Printed in *Annals of Winchester*, p. 375.

is still standing, where more than sixty years before he saw four leather jacks made. The particulars he gave me of the process have been of considerable interest in supplementing the knowledge obtained from a study of the vessels themselves, as to the manner in which they were made, and I had written for this chapter a long and detailed account of the method pursued. It seems, however, desirable not to print it, as the value of old jacks and bottles having increased, the temptation to make imitation ones has become greater within recent years and I have decided to omit most of the details. Hitherto spurious leather vessels have been easy to detect, being very ignorantly made, but the more knowledge becomes available, the more successful these forgeries are likely to become.

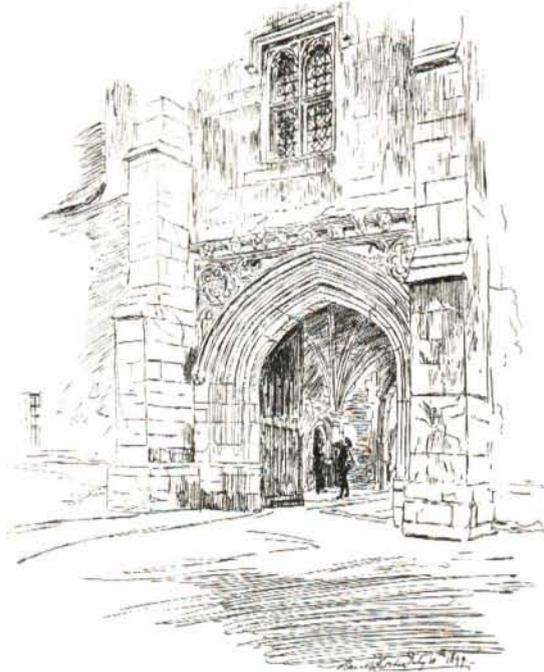


Fig. 68. Buttery door, Hospital of St. Cross, Winchester.

THE FEAT OF BOTTLE-MAKING.

In a document of 1476 at the London Guildhall, the trade of the maker of leathern vessels is spoken of as "the fete of bottle-making." This is a term not seldom used in old documents in connection with the industries of skilled craftsmen, but if it had been intended to distinguish this art and mystery, as one requiring exceptional ability, it would have been aptly used. For no one can examine one of these vessels without being struck with its admirable workmanship, or without wondering that such perfect adaptation to the purposes it had to serve were so simply and directly achieved. Some pages devoted to the subject of their construction will not therefore be thrown away.

Roughly speaking, the mediæval bottle was made from three pieces of leather, the body being moulded from the largest, and two ends from the two smaller, two additional ones being simply narrow slips for thickening the seams and neck. The shape of the three pieces is shown at Fig. 69, the largest being of greater length than would be supposed without actual measurement.

The bottle was made on a wooden mould or block, which had a cylindrical projection on which to model the neck. The latter did not project above the seam, and only slightly bulged on each side. It was closed with a stopple of metal, wood, horn, or leather, in early times. Some stopples were costly, judging by one bought in 1392 for the Earl of Derby, one of which cost two shillings, and two girdles and two stopples, thirty-three shillings was paid.¹ Corks for casks and bottles do not seem to have been used till the 17th century. In old paintings of that time the bottles and phials, in indoor scenes, are generally closed with bunches of rag or paper. The first corks met with by Professor Thorold Rogers were in 1627. In 1692 bottle corks were 13s. a gross, in 1698 2s. 6d.² The end of that century wine bottles of glass were manufactured in England in large quantities. I have seen three leather bottles which had stopples of wood, but they are rare.

A remarkable and enormously large bottle in the collection of Mr. W. J. Aldhouse has a neck so wide that it must have required a large wooden bung and the stopple. It was further secured by an iron cap which is attached to a kind of hasp hinged to the top ridge of the bottle, and which could be brought down over the neck and secured there by a padlock passed through an iron staple. (See Fig. 67, at the head of this chapter.) The peculiar characteristics of this bottle indicate that it was designed for some exceptional service, and I am strongly disposed to believe it to be one of the bottles from the Tower of London which was used in the collection of the ancient wine tax, described in Chapter IV. from the Water-poet's "Farewell to the Tower Bottles." Its capacity, three gallons, coincides with those mentioned by Taylor; moreover, the great size of the neck (unique so far as I know) would be an advantage in catching the wine if it spurted from the holes bored in the casks by the collecting officer. There was no leisurely turning of taps or adjusting of tun-dishes, and the dues demanded were often resented or refused. In addressing the bottles Taylor says:

"I, that for your sakes have given stabs or stripes
To give you sucke from Hogsheads and from Pipes.
I, that with paines and care you long have nurst,
Oft filled you with the best and left the worst,
And to maintaine you full would often pierce
The best of Butts, a Puncheon or a Tierce."

The extraordinary strength of the arrangements for safeguarding the contents of this existing bottle is suggestive of the turbulent scenes in which those Tower bottles must often have had part, and would be valuable in preventing the stopper from accidentally knocked out or deliberately withdrawn. The Water-Poet

¹ "Pro j stopell pro j bote" ijs. Item pro ij sincturis et ij stopell pro botellis domini per manus ejusdem xxxiij s." Derby Accounts, Cam. Soc., ed. by Miss L. Toulmin Smith.

² Hist. Agriculture and Prices, Vol. VI., pp. 698-9.

gives a graphic account of the rough and arduous nature of wine-collecting from the ships in the river Thames :

“ All weathers, faire, foule, Sunshine wet and dry
I travailled still your paunches to supply.
Oft have I fought and swaggered in your Right,
And fill'd you still by eyther sleight or might.

'Tis knowne you have been stab'd thrown in the Thames,
And he that fild you beaten with exclames,
Marchants who have much abused bin,
Which Exigents I never brought you in.
But I with peace and quietnesse got more,
Than any brabling e're could do before,
The Warders knowes, each Bottleman but I,
Had always a crack'd crowne or a black eye,
Oft beaten like a Dog, with a scratched face,
Turned empty, beaten backe with vile disgrace.”

This extraordinary bottle came from Chatham, where it had remained in the family of the owner for more than seventy years. It seems quite probable that if not actually one of the great black bottles of the Tower of London, in which the literary water-man of James I.'s time was wont to exact dues in kind from every wine-laden ship that entered the Thames, it is one of those that succeeded them. One side of it is enriched with fleur de lis raised in relief, and outlined with stamped stars, as shown in the sketch and in Plate 24, from which a faint idea of its size may be gained, by comparing it to the horn cup photographed with it.

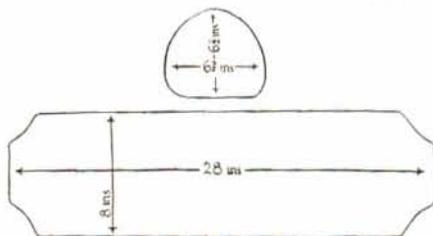


Fig. 69

Shapes of leather before being made into a bottle.

THE MAKING OF A BLACK JACK.

In making the leather pot or black jack only two pieces of leather were cut from the hide, the strips for thickening the seams would, of course, be taken from the scrap. The larger of the two was so cut as to include the handle and the body of the pot in the same piece (as shown at Fig. 70, which are given to scale from actual examples), the shape depending on the design of the jack. A new jack was pitched on the inside and blackened on the outside. This lining of pitch kept the leather from contact with the liquor, and prevented it penetrating and softening the leather.

In the Bursar's accounts at Winchester College in the middle of the 17th century are various entries of payments to an occasional helper named Pudsey, for pitching and blacking the black jacks. In 1645-6, "Sol. Pudsey pro oblinendis cantharis piccis 2s. 6d." In 1649-50 occurs "Sol. Pudsey pro picandis et nigrandis octo cantharis 3s." In 1669-70, "Sol. Pudsey pro picandis et deniggrandis 12 cantharis et reparandis 3 bus 7/."

The jacks which the Brother of St. Cross remembered to have seen made early in the 19th century were blackened by being painted over with ink, and finished with a polish of black sealing-wax dissolved in spirits of wine.

There can be little doubt that jack-making at Winchester in the 19th century was a somewhat exceptional survival, and that it was almost the last trace of that ancient industry. An interesting passage in "School Life at Winchester College" shows that the jacks were to be bought in 1830, and were bought for use in the Midlands as well as locally. "On the way we pass through *Ante-Kitchen*, where is the familiar picture of the 'Trusty Servant.' Here may generally be seen a row of huge leather jugs, about two feet high (jacks), made of hippopotamus hide, and peculiar to Winchester, I believe: at any rate, a relative of mine who lived in one of the Midland Counties, purchased a pair every year, and he used to give me the commission which I had the greatest pleasure in executing, as he always sent me a five-pound note to pay for them with, and could never be induced to take any change." The notion that they were made of hippopotamus hide is, doubtless, a schoolboy's mistake.

It is an interesting fact that at Messrs. Merryweather's factory at Greenwich black jacks continued to be made down to the middle of the 19th century, and till more interesting that the great wooden blocks and rings on which they were modelled are still in existence. In one old corner of what is now a vast establishment for the making of fire-engines and kindred appliances, are a number of odd-looking wooden objects much like big skittles upside down. (Fig. 72.) These cores or blocks appear to be of considerable age, and are certainly more than a century old. As can be seen by the sketch they are not like jacks in shape, because their necks are unduly prolonged and the portion which modelled the vessel's pout is a separate piece of wood. This arrangement enabled the wooden core to be more easily withdrawn after the body of the jack had been worked in a damp condition into the required shape and dried on the block. The bottoms were modelled separately on iron rings (a number of which have been preserved with the blocks) and after drying were stitched into place.

BAD WORK NOT ALLOWED.

Old leather vessels are as strong and durable as they are picturesque. This was no doubt owing to their having shared in the greater thoroughness and honesty of workmanship which characterised mediæval times and the traditions of which lingered into subsequent centuries; still further to the absence of the haste and indifference that mars so much of the work done nowadays. It was also the result of the stringent restrictions by which trade guilds prevented bad and slovenly work. The ordinances of the Bottillars of London in 1373, and those of the

1 MS. Account Books at Winchester College, many extracts from which I owe to the late Bursar, Mr. T. J. Kirby.

2 J. Camden Hotten, 1870. p. 88.

bottellers and bogge-makers of York in 1472, show how carefully the making of their wares was regulated, but the soundness of the raw material was also most strictly looked after. The power of search in most cities was, so far as it concerned leather, vested in the Cordwainers' Companies. The laws of these societies provided for the examination by official searchers of the leather brought to the markets for sale, in the most minute detail; for the sealing of that which was sound and the forfeiture of that which was bad. Apart from the effect of such laws for insuring the use of sound material and the exercise of good workmanship the conditions under which such industries were carried on must have made a great difference to leather wares. They were not in a hurry in those days, and generally spent several years—five or six sometimes—in tanning a piece of leather. Even "the House of Commons did not find too insignificant the decision of how big a piece of leather it might be well in the interests of the shoe-making trade to allow the cobbler to buy for the patching of an old boot."

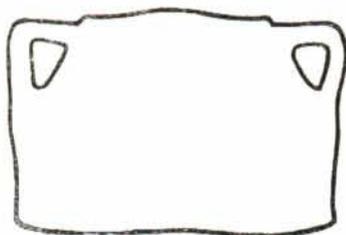


Fig. 70. Shape of leather before being made into a jack.

MAKERS' MARKS.

In the Ordinances of the Botellars of London, drawn up in the 14th century,¹ it is stated that it was ordered by the Mayor and Aldermen that "every botillar should affix his sign to the botells and other vessels by them henceforth to be made of leather, in order that it shall be known whose work it shall be, under penalty," etc. This was no doubt the mark which in those times, clerical knowledge being limited to a few, men used as a sort of sign-manual, placing it on their work, and when necessary, on documents as a signature. Merchants' marks, the mason's marks on the hewn stones of old buildings, and the joiner's and carver's marks on ancient wood work, etc., are instances of this. One occurs in the shape of a sprig or small branch on all the earlier misericords in Ludlow Church. (See Fig. 14.)

On leathern vessels such marks sometimes occur, but are rare, as the bottles, etc., are generally late enough to have the maker's initials instead. Initials are very commonly found on bottles, and not seldom on jacks. When impressed in the leather with a stamp they may be regarded as those of the maker, as it could only be done successfully when the leather was wet and supported by the wooden block inside. Those which are *cut* in, or *branded* with a hot punch of iron, are much more likely to have been the initials of subsequent owners. The letters I.S. three times repeated are often seen on late bottles and must have been the

¹ Town Life in the 15th century," (Mrs. J. R. Green).

² Page 22 *supra*.

mark of an important maker of such things.' These letters when occurring in pairs have been taken to indicate the date 1515, but in those instances that have come under my notice a third pair of initials is traceable midway between them near the neck, which disposes of that theory. I.G. thrice repeated occurs on jacks, impressed in the leather.



Fig. 71. Dormitory, Winchester College, after a sketch by Hanslip Fletcher.

ORNAMENTAL STAMPS.

The most usual method of ornamenting or marking the later pots and bottles was by stamping them with metal punches, while the leather was still soft, and before it was removed from the support of the wooden block. Sometimes these stamps are of various patterns, quatre-foils, stars, rosettes, and fleur de lis, but more frequently an effect is obtained by grouped marks from one punch. An unusually rich instance of this punched ornament is a jack once belonging to the Barber-Surgeons' Company at Oxford, on the front of which five different punches have been used to make the pattern. The permanence of this kind of ornament is also shown in this example, as it has remained uninjured by time, while the painted coats-of-arms, though not so old, are nearly worn away.

Occasionally bottles are found in which the pattern was made by carving it upon the block. Though every vessel made on it would be of the same pattern,

¹ See Fig. 1.

such examples are rare, the most usual being the fleur de lis. A large bottle, holding more than a gallon, which was discovered in Worcestershire by the well-known artist Mr. F. D. Millet, has on one side a large fleur de lis in low relief, and is now the property of Mr. Laurence J. Cadbury. There are other examples in the collection of Mr. Fieldhouse (see Plates 15 & 24), and another in the possession of Mr. W. H. Fenton, of Heston, has a heart similarly raised in relief.

THE VENDORS OF LEATHER VESSELS.

In the few cities in which the trade existed in early times the wares of the bottler would naturally be bought direct from the maker himself. The Englishman of the Middle Ages strove always to buy his goods at first hand. He had a great aversion to "the middle man," and was willing to go out of his way to almost any extent, in order to dispense with him.¹ Buying and selling was not the "go as you please contest" it has since become in England, but was surrounded with numerous and complicated restrictions, all trading enterprise, from the merchant down to the pedlar, being jealously limited and controlled. As a rule, when the place of their purchase is recorded, mediaeval leather vessels are found to have been bought in London. Apart from being the chief city, London was a perpetual fair and market,² and in several respects unique as a trading centre. The fact that the Prior of Worcester and the Bursar of Winchester College found it worth while, at a time when travelling was so slow, to buy bottles and pots of leather in London,³ for use in cities so distant and so important, is a significant fact, and points (as do many other indications) to the industry being to a great extent centralized in London.

York seems to have been the only other place where it was of importance, yet in spite of the existence there of a flourishing craft of bottlers and bougemakers, the monks of Durham in 1495 paid for ten pitchers of leather and the carriage all the way from London.⁴

The account rolls of Durham Abbey for 1397 contain an item of 3s. 3d. paid for leathern stoups for the Prior's Chamber, to "Jacobus Boteler,"⁵ who was probably a local craftsman, and whose name indicates that he was the maker of the vessels, but usually in the provinces they were bought from general dealers who sold a variety of articles.

In the Household Book of Sir John Howard, who lived in Suffolk in 1463, entries recording the purchase of leather drinking vessels are fairly frequent, but they always appear to have been obtained from dealers in the nearest town. All his dealings with cordwainers, which were very numerous, related to "botuyse," "showis," and "the vampeinge thereof." Sir John Howard, though a great man and the heir to a Dukedom, sometimes bought the leather vessels himself, as when in 1463 his steward records, "Item the same day my mastyr payd to Cumberton for a ledder potte xvd," and another time "Item my mastyr payd for ij bottelles iijs viijd," and again when he notes in his own hand-writing, "And the same day afore writen I payd to Komberton..... and I tooke heme

1 Six Centuries of Work and Wages, p. 144.

2 Six Centuries of Work and Wages, p. 111.

3 See pages 168 and 71.

4 "Pro decem amphris corriis empt apud Landon et pro cariagia 8s."—Surtees Soc., Vol. CIII., p. 653.

5 Surtees Soc., Vol. XCIX., p. 184.

the same tyme xijd fore a newe leder pote."¹ Comberton, judging by the variety of the goods bought of him, which are recorded in these accounts, must have been a general dealer and kept a shop.

The more simple industries of old English life were not centralized (as that of bottle-making seems to have been), and the tendency was for even villages to be self-supporting, the food consumed and the articles used being to a great extent raised or made on the spot. Thus the industry of a place supplied it with the necessaries of life, such luxuries as were consistent with the simple habits of the times—and leather vessels were among these—being obtained from the nearest market town or fair.

Such vessels were without doubt often purchased at the great fairs which were one of the most important means for the distribution of goods, more important in the case of some wares even than the markets. To them it was the custom for great numbers of people to converge once a year to make purchases; but they are now of little account where they still exist, having outlived their original purpose.

In the Bursar's Books at Winchester College is entered in 1570 the cost of three jacks of a gallon each bought at Magdalen Fair.² This fair was held on a down called Magdalen Hill, a mile to the east of Winchester, on the 2nd of August.

Perhaps the most important fair in the south of England was the one called Stourbridge Fair, held under the authority of the Corporation of Cambridge. In the year 1575 Lord North of Kirtlinge notes among his household expenses the things bought at "Sturbridg Faier," which include a "Jacke," six pails and a kettle.³

There is a token at the Guildhall Museum, issued in 1664 by "Robert Warde Glasseller in ye Strand," which has on the reverse a model of the leather bottle, which may mean that he sold such things.

OF SPURIOUS JACKS AND BOTTLES.

The collector of old drinking vessels is more fortunate than the student of architecture, for though the objects of his quest have often been degraded to mean purposes, though they bear the scars of rough usage and the evidences of mutilation, they have never been "thoroughly restored" by a "representative committee and a competent architect." Their scars are historic, and even their injuries instructive. He meets, it is true, with shams and imitations, but he has the satisfaction of knowing that genuine work has not been destroyed in making them, and even when a black jack has been "faked up" with spurious metal-work, it is not scraped and gutted out of all semblance to its old self, as old buildings often are. Jacks and bottles are now so much sought after; and when offered for sale realise such high prices that the temptation to manufacture shams is very great.

Fortunately the spurious specimens are as a rule so ignorantly made that hitherto only moderate knowledge has been necessary to detect them. It is indeed

¹ Manners and Household Expenses in England, 1841.

² "lij agenis de corio empt in nundinis de magdalene viijs."

³ Extracts from the Household Book of Lord North, *Archaeologia*, Vol. XIX, p. 295.

not correct to speak of them as imitations, as they rarely betray any sign of having been copied from old vessels, but are such as a cobbler could produce with no more skill than he had acquired in the pursuit of his legitimate occupation. The purchasers of them are too ready to believe that old things are necessarily coarse and clumsy and of rude workmanship. In reality the reverse is the case, and though sometimes rough and dirty with age the execution of genuine jacks and bottles is skilful and highly finished. In the judging of such things, as with old furniture, the power to distinguish the sham from the genuine becomes with experience a kind of instinct, which is almost unfailing, but which depends sometimes on very slight and intangible evidences not easy to put into words. There are, however, certain salient points of difference worth bearing in mind.

Perhaps the form most usually taken by these fraudulent vessels is that of a plain mug of leather. It sells as a black jack, but requires no great amount of time or expense to produce. The varied contour of a real one would require patience and skill to copy, whereas a mug with straight sides is soon turned out. In such false pots the bottom is often flush with the sides, an invariable sign of a sham. The genuine jack had always a deeply-recessed bottom, (the best way to make it water-tight), as the seams projected considerably and the bottom (always being liable to "swag" with the weight of the contents), might bulge, so as to wear through or prevent the pot standing. Another point to remember is that all jacks with handles stitched on are shams. In genuine ones the handles are always a part of the same piece of leather as the body of the vessel and continuous with it. This is practically invariable, but the fact of the handle being continuous is not in itself sufficient to attest the genuineness of a jack, as sham ones are sometimes so made, and also occasionally have the bottoms recessed.

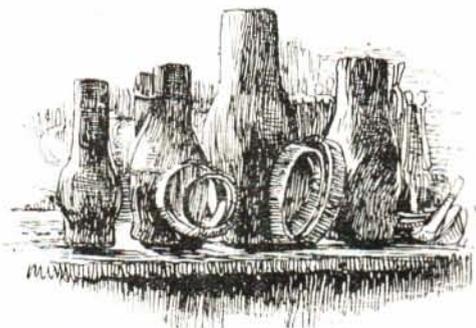


Fig. 72. Wooden moulds and rings for making black jacks at Messrs. Merryweather's, Greenwich.

THE BOTTLING BOOT.

Spurious leather mugs are often made from the instrument used (until the invention of bottling machines) by wine bottlers and called a "boot." This bottling instrument was a large cylindrical cup of leather and usually had the bottom extended beyond the sides in a broad flange. It had a thick strap and buckle by which it was attached to the knee of the operator, and when in use, the bottle to be filled was placed within it, so that when the cork was being driven

in with repeated blows, the wine was saved if the bottle broke. Though still used in old-fashioned houses in the butler's department, the leather "boot" has, since more modern bottling methods became usual, gone out of use in breweries and places where large numbers of bottles are filled. Thus a number of these discarded leather cups have sometimes found their way into the hands of curiosity dealers. They have sometimes been taken for a kind of leathern beaker which had no handle; but more often have had the flange and strap cut away, and a sham handle stitched on. Many spurious jacks have been made in this way, but they are easily recognised by the seams having no projection, by the handle being stuck on instead of being in one piece with the Jack, and by the general air of patchiness and poor workmanship. Nevertheless the unwary are often deceived by them.

The bottling boot is also found among the collections of the curious in its original and "unfaked" condition, though not on the strength of its real and somewhat unromantic history. Its true origin and purpose is perhaps sometimes unknown to the vendors, but romantic yarns of varying degrees of probability are given in explanation of its existence. One was recently sold to a callow collector as "a stirrup-cup to fasten to a saddle, and held upside down to prevent the dust and dirt getting in." Another was described as "a leather mug formerly used by postboys to strap to their arms so as to be able to drink without alighting." One would have thought that the post-boy would have preferred to drink from a jug, rather than carry a leather pot seven or eight inches long fastened to his arm.

Of course some of these bottling boots are of considerable age, and are quite interesting in their way. It is nevertheless to be regretted that absurd fables should be circulated as to their origin, or that they should be sold as black jacks at many times their real value.

TOBY JUGS OF LEATHER.

The old English jugs of pottery (generally Georgian in date), which were made to represent a corpulent old toper seated with a foaming pot of beer in his hand, are perfectly familiar to most people under the name of "Toby jugs." An ingenious fabricator of spurious black jacks has lightened the monotony of his labours by producing small leather jugs, in imitation of the shape of the Toby Philpot jug of the 18th century.

It is astonishing that anyone should be credulous enough to accept them as old ones of any date or period. They are certainly made of old leather, but are put together with nails (machine-made generally) and have a shoddy air about them that ought to arouse suspicion in the most inexperienced collector. A Toby jug of leather is the very acme of imbecility, yet I have known cases of their being purchased for high prices.

A perfectly genuine and interesting old jack or bottle is sometimes faked up with metal work to increase its value, or rather its saleableness. An instance of this is a pair of magnificent old jacks at Broome Hall, Suffolk, the property of Lady Bateman. Nothing is known of their history, but they may have come from one of the old Hospitals or Palaces, and, falling into unscrupulous hands, have been mounted with thin brass artificially darkened. They hold about six gallons each, and one is 23 inches high; the other slightly less. On the front of the largest is a medallion of Henry VIII. in a perforated border, within which is a Latin

inscription and the date 1509. On the front of the other is a head of Queen Elizabeth, surrounded by an inscription and the date 1583. Both jacks have lids of the same thin metal, all of which is stamped work of the early part of the 19th century, and has been attached by small brass pins. Both have been regarded as entirely genuine for the last seventy years, though why either Henry or Elizabeth should have adorned a pair of beer bombardards with their portraits is difficult to understand. This pair is an instance of the faking of ancient jacks with modern mounts, but at the present day it is usually silver that is used for that purpose.

A description of the singular-looking vessels at Plate 12 may serve to warn the inexperienced collector, and show him that the leather pot is not necessarily genuine because it is of weird and strange appearance. The large one in the centre has handles made from old reins plaited, and is stitched together with thin copper wire. This alone should have condemned it apart from its other villanies. The leather of the body is new, and has a lip stuck on which is made of soft chemically-tanned leather, machine-stitched and rather worn. On the upper part, between two bands to which the handles are attached, is a nondescript animal trying to look heraldic; he is painted a dull red and is stitched on over a seam. The whole has been carefully dirtied and smeared with paint.

The object to the right of this grotesque forgery can hardly be described as a vessel. It is simply a piece of new leather folded and the edges fastened together with wire nails. A long slit has been cut to form the semblance of a handle, and a piece of old leather stitched into the bottom of the folded part.

The very small vessel to the left is made from a piece of old and weather-beaten leather. The handle is riveted together with wire nails and the whole has been coated with sticky black varnish and dusted with sand. One of the forger's chief difficulties is that of producing an old appearance in the leather, and for this reason he sometimes makes use of leather that is already old. Spurious jacks are sometimes made from the larger pieces of old cart harness, the flaps and housings or which are often wide enough to afford material for a fairly large pot. Old leather, however, being very stiff and hard cannot be bulged or modelled into a good shape, so that this kind of forgery has, with a surface of cracks and wrinkles suggestive of great age to the inexperienced, a mean and uninteresting contour, and its lines of stitches are level with the surface instead of being sunk into the leather, which has always happened if they are old. Moreover, genuine old jacks and bottles are not often greatly cracked or wrinkled (a condition that comes of much exposure to the weather, such as cart harness has to undergo), but frequently have a silky smoothness and a soft polish that only centuries of moderate wear can produce.



APPENDIX I.

In the year 1612, the " Customs and Valuation of Merchandise " gives the following rates on vessels when imported:—

Bottellis of earth the dozen xxx.s.	
Flagons	of earth covered with wicker the dozen xx.s.
	of glase covered with wicker the dozen iij.li
	of glase with vices covered with leather the dozen xij li ¹
	of glass uncovered the dozen xl.s.
Flasks	of tin the dozen xxij.li ²
	covered with leather the dozen xl.s
	covered with veluett the dozen xvj.li
Glasses called Drinking Glasses	of horne the dozen iij.li
	for drinking of beer the dozen xx.s.
	for drinking of wyne the dozen of comoun sort xx.s.
Potts called	cowp glasses for drinking of wyne the dozen xl.s.
	of earth or stone covered the hundreth viij.li
	of earth or stone uncovered the C. cast conteyning one galloun to every cast whither in ane pott or mo. xv.li ³

APPENDIX II.

In 1689 the rates for imported vessels were as follows:—

Basons of Latyn the pound	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	1.	4.
Bottles	of Earth or Stone the dozen	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	5.	0.
	of Glass covered with wicker the dozen	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.	0.	0.
	of Glass with Vices covered with Leather the dozen	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.	10.	0.
	of Glass uncovered	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	4.	6.
Cruses	of Wood voc. Sucking bottles the groce cont. 12 doz. ⁴	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	10.	0.
	of Stone without covers the C. cont. 5 score	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	10.	0.
	of Stone with covers the C. ⁵	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.	6.	8.
Gally-dishes the dozen ⁶	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	2.	6.
Drinking Glasses Vocat.	Venice drinking glasses the doz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	18.	0.
	Flanders drinking glasses, the hundred glasses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.	5.	0.
	Scotch and French drinking glasses the C. cont. 5 score ⁷	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.	15.	0.
Pots	of earth or Stone covered, the C cont. 5 score	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.	6.	0.
	of earth or Stone uncovered the hundred cast containing a gallon to every cast whether in one pot or more ⁸	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.	10.	0.

¹ Vices in this instance were screw stoppers, from the French visser to screw. In the Household Book of Henry VIII., at the Record Office, one is mentioned: "One Cuppe of glasse with a cover, the fote being of silver and gilt and viced on."

² I do not think the "flagons" could have been any jug-like vessels, but some kinds of bottles.

³ Printed in Chronicles and Memorials of Scotland, page 289.

⁴ Act of Tonnage and Poundage And Book of Rates, 1689, page 27.

⁵ Book of Rates, 1689, page 27.

⁶ *Ib.*, page 46.

⁷ *Ib.*, page 48.

⁸ *Ib.*, page 64.

APPENDIX III.

Even as late as the middle of the 18th century the duties were very high, as the following extract will show:—

“ In commerce bottles of earth or stone pay $11\frac{5}{10}$ d. each dozen, on importation, whereof $10\frac{1}{10}$ d. is repaid on exporting them. Glass bottles covered with wicker, pay 6s. $7\frac{9}{10}$ d. the dozen; whereof 6s. $2\frac{2}{10}$ d. is repaid on exporting them. Glass bottles covered with leather pay 1*l.* 9s. $11\frac{7}{10}$ d. the dozen, whereof 1*l.* 7s. $10\frac{1}{10}$ d. is repaid on exporting them. Glass bottles uncovered, pay 1s. $5\frac{9}{10}$ d. the dozen, 1s. $4\frac{7}{10}$ d. being repaid on exporting them. Bottles made of flint glass pay 8d. for each pound weight; and those of green glass only 2d. for each pound weight. Bottles made of wood called sucking bottles pay by the gross or twelve dozen 1s. $11\frac{1}{10}$ d., whereof 1s. $8\frac{2}{10}$ d. is repaid on exporting them.¹

APPENDIX IV.

	ic	bicge	hyda	and	fell
	Ego	emo	cutes	et	pelles
and	gearkie	hig	mid	cræfte	minon
et	preparo	eas	arte		mea
and	wyrce	of	him	gescy	
et	facio	ex	eis	calciamenta	
	mistlices	cynnes	swyftleras		
	diversi	generis	subtalares		
and	sccos	leher-hosa	and		
et	ficones	coligas	et		
	butericas,	bridel-hwancgas	and		
	utres	frenos	et		
	geraeda	flaxan vel	pinnan	and	
	falera	flascones		et	
	higdifatu	spur lehera	and	haelftra	
	calidilia	calcaria	et	chamos	
pusan	and	faetelsas	and	nan	eower
peras	et	marsupia	et	nemo	vestrum
nele	oferwintran	buton	minon	craft	
vult	hiermare	sine	mea	arte ²	

¹ Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences, 1754, Vol. 1, page 349.

² Archbishop Alfric's Colloquy, printed in Vocabularies. T. Wright, 1857, page 9.

APPENDIX V.

The petition is set forth at length in the following words:—

" Item whereas the fourth daye of marche in the syxtenth yeare of the reygne of the ryght noble prynce Kynge Edwarde the fourthe, the ij seuerall felowshipps of the horners and bottellmakers of this cyte were by reason of thyre especyall sute and labor then made to the lorde mayor and aldremen of this cyte for diu'se resonable causes and consideracons by them the sayde horners and bottell makers, pronounced and declared to the sayde Lorde Mayor and aldremen, vnyted and knytt into one felowshipp by the name of horners and bottle makers and by that name apoynted to be charged and chargeable at all tymes from henceforth as by the ordenance and vynon entred in libro L. fol. 116. more playnely yt dothe apeare. It was this day at and vpon the lyke sute and labor of the p'sones skylfull in the Sayde arte and occupacon of the horn's and vsynge onely the same arte and occupacon made vnto this courte to haue and beare from henceforth onely and solely the name of horners and by that name onely to be at all tymes hereafter charged and chargeable and to all manner of taxes, contribucons and charges to be by them made and borne within this ytye either to the quenes maiesty or ells towards the com'en affayres; and charges of the sayde ytye and not by the name of bottle-makers and horners ordered graunted and agreed by the same courte for diverse very resonable causes and consideracons opened and alledged by the sayde p'sons synge the occupacon of horners and namely for that that all the p'sons of the sayde felowshipp that were skylled in bottlemaking and were wonte to use and exercyse the same arte are nowe utterly decayed and deade, savinge onely one and that the same one p'son is dryven by reason of a certayne article and ordenance made and established among other the ordenances of the sayde felowshipp to the tyme of the makinge of the said ij felowshipps together. The effect of which artycle ys, that the one of the wardyns of the sayde felowshipps of the bottlemakers and horners shuld always be a skylfull p'son in the sayd arte of the bottle makers and the other skylfull in the arte of the horners that all such p'sons that nowe do use and exercyse or that hereafter shall use or exercyse either the arte or occupacon of an horner or the arte or occupacon of a bottle maker within this cyte or the libertyes therof shall styll retayne and be accounted accepted taken and allowed to fulfill intents and purposes as one hole felowship in lyke maner and forme as they from the sayd tyme theyr unyon have bene taken and accepted all poyntes, orders rules and other things savinge only in the manner and order of the eleccion of theyr sayde wardens wherein they shall from henceforth be at theyr libertye to elect yearely and chuse both theyr sayd wardens of whether of the sayde artes or occupacons that they shall thinck most apte and mete for the same, the sayd former article eny thinge therein conteyned to the contrary concernynge the said eleccion in enywise notwithstanding."

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