Bartmann jug

Place of origin: Cologne (made)
Date: ca. 1540 (made)
Artist/Maker: Unknown
Materials and Techniques: Salt-glazed stoneware, with applied moulded decoration
Museum number: C.9-2002
Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 58b, case 3

Public access description
Object Type A wide-mouthed stoneware vessel of this type would have been known to its German maker as a Krug, a word that was applied to general-purpose mugs or jugs without any kind of pinched pouring lip. In the 16th century stoneware vessels designed specifically for pouring liquids had tall spouts, like a modern coffee pot. It is therefore safe to assume that this particular pot was used for drinking beer.

Historical Associations
In 1545 Henry VIII was watching the English fleet fighting the French off Portsmouth, Hampshire. His much-loved flagship, Mary Rose, attempted a complicated manoeuvre, keeled over and vanished beneath the waves, taking most of its crew with it. The half of the ship that settled into the silt was preserved with all its contents. It was raised in the 1980s. Modern research has established that the Mary Rose, a veteran warship already some years old, had recently been fitted with additional heavy bronze guns. It is thought that a sudden gust of wind, aggravated by the extra weight of the guns, caused the ship to roll, allowing water to rush in through the open gun ports.

Materials & Making
German salt-glazed stoneware, the toughest ceramic material available, was especially favoured for heavy-duty applications, such as kitchens, rowdy taverns and for sea travel. The barber-surgeon's cabin on the Mary Rose contained several plain stoneware pots with heavy thumbed bases, used as drug jars.

Descriptive line
Bartmann jug with moulded oak-leaf decoration and bearded mask, Cologne, Germany, ca. 1540.

Physical description
Bartmann jug with moulded oak-leaf decoration and bearded mask. Salt-glazed stoneware with applied moulded decoration.

Dimensions
Height: 20 cm, Width: 14.5 cm including handle

Museum number
C.9-2002

Object history note
This example was recovered from near the wreck of the Mary Rose and is almost certainly from the ship. Made in Cologne, Germany

Historical context note
Wide-mouthed vessels of this type, with applied trailing oak-leaf of rose decoration and Bartmann mask, are typical of the Cologne stonewares imported into England in the second quarter of the 16th Century. Serving as either jug or mug, they could be used for many purposes and at almost any social level.

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O65763/bartmann-jug-unknown/