

“GRIMES” OF WHITECHAPEL, LONDON

This pewtering family appear to have worked from 1817 to about 1911. Those who search the car boot sales, the charity shops, the smaller auction houses and the alleged antique shops are quite likely to find surviving pewter mugs made by this family.

A distinguishing feature is often the simple use of the name in the inside centre of the base.- (although there are other marks which will be mentioned later) -



This image is taken from a mug likely made in the period 1850 to 1870. Quite which Grimes used this mark cannot be established by the information this writer has seen.

Usual preamble –

(The purpose of such articles as this , is not to give a conclusive account, but to put together snippets of known information so that those interested might pursue their own knowledge of the named pewterers more easily. Whilst every care is taken to publish only what is understood by the contributors or from sources believed to be good, it would still be valid to keep an open mind about all the information given. This website welcomes any updated information and would hope to make any necessary corrections at the following website review, usually occurring in spring or autumn.)

Name of pewterer or business	Working dates	Working address	Related to	Worked with or as
Robert Grimes	1817-1838	3 Osborn Street Whitechapel London	A son Benjamin and perhaps John Grimes	Apprenticed to a founder Joseph Roper in 1780? In 1787 to Thomas Charles Lee a
Trading at these dates as	He may have died in 1838			
Robert Grimes & Son				

				brass Founder
Benjamin Charles Grimes	1817– 1850 Christened in 1791 He died in 1850	Osborn Street	Brother to John Grimes married to Sarah Frayling at Calne Wilts together having 11 children	B & J Grimes Benjamin & John Grimes Ben & J Grimes
John Grimes	1826-1851 Born in 1801 Died 1851	Osborn Street This son named John is mentioned as a pewterer at 33, Whitechapel Road in 1881	Brother to above, two children Matilda and John	Partner as above
Sarah Grimes	1850-1857 Died 1857	Osborn Street	Wife of Benjamin Charles Has a son name of James and another Robert Green Grimes	Continued business as Brass Founder, beer Engine Maker and Pewterer
James Grimes	1850 - 1883	Osborn Street 8 Osborn Street in 1871 census	See above	Lived with elder brother George in 1851 and a cousin in 1861
George Frayling Grimes	A pewterer in 1841 a licencee in 1851 clearly son of Sarah died in 1858	unrecorded	See second column	unrecorded
George Grimes	1860-1885	33 Whitechapel Road	See above	Likely John son of John above was the principal of the firm
Robert Green Grimes	Circa 1881	Whitechapel – Plumbers Place	A son of Sarah likely	A licencee
Benjamin Joshua Grimes	1875 – 1893 perhaps	1875-1885 at 11 Charlotte Street 1876 – 1893 at 91 Cambridge Road and or 170 Mile End Road perhaps	Has a son Charles (Alfred?)	B J Grimes Later B J Grimes & Son (son was a Charles Alfred)
Charles Alfred Grimes	1893 - 1911	153 Cambridge Road & (later?) Cannon Place Whitechapel Road Bow Road and Wall Street are also mentioned	As above	As above

Thus it can be seen that records even only 100 years old can be very confusing, and very difficult to sort. But these are people who did not leave a large mark on life but nevertheless produced a good pewter item whose quality means that it is good enough still to be found in fair condition today. Clearly this Grimes family passed its skills down for close on 94 years.

Those seeking better detail are advised to join the UK Pewter Society and access their data base. These pewterers especially of the late 1800s were a little near in time for H H Cotterell to collect much information about.

Some example of pewter mugs and beakers bearing the maker's name GRIMES

Pewter Pint by Grimes of London about 1850

Cartouche/inscription for J Lee, Black Bull, Rainsford End, Cheltenham engraved to the front, the pot touch of Grimes in the base, to the left of the handle an impressive Pint label and to the right verifications for VR over 176 for Essex County and remains of a London City verification as well. Well made, very solid weighs 1 lb 3 ozs stands 4 3/8" tall with a footrim of about 3 7/8"



Style of engraving used 1850-1880(?)



Publican's initial on the thumbrest



A pair of good Pewter pint pots by Grimes – well engraved c 1885

Nice engraving to the front of each says 'J Overs Green Man Toothill Ongar' Grimes struck to centre inside base. Distinct O on top of thumbrest (for Overs?) perhaps about 1880
Verified crowned VR over 183 for Essex County. Unusually verified for Middlesex by being stamped from the inside so that the outer mark appears strange but in the mug appears correctly. Each stands 4 ½” tall with a footrim just under 4” and weighs 13 ½ ozs or 375 gms. One only shown here.



Matching pint mug & half-pint beaker by Robert Grimes & Son, London c1830-40

(OP2025) their 'GRIMES' pot touch in base. Both have identical marks and engraving, and formed part of a suite of bar wares from the 'Victory Eton', which is engraved under each base. Two verification marks for Buckingham County, the early 'chained swan', and VR117. Ownership initials to mid body. In used condition with minor blemishes. The bodies have lighter areas where the metal shows through the medium-grey original surface patina. 5" and 3¾" high.



Half pint 'bucket & ridge' style of mug by Robert & Benjamin Charles Grimes, London c1817-38 (OP2025) whose straight line pot touch 'GRIMES' is in the base. Early hand engraved capacity mark '½ pint' to left of handle. Ownership letters 'EO' engraved to front of drum, with 'Kings Head Romford' under the base. In excellent condition, with light-medium grey original surface patina. 3⁷/₈" high, with 2³/₄" mouth and 2³/₈" base diameters.



Other Marks –

This website does not have consent to reproduce here the images or drawings on the UK Pewter Society data base so an attempt will be made here to describe other marks that have been seen.

Generally a Grimes mark always has the word GRIMES prominently in it.

- 1) A mark is recorded as B J over GRIMES – it resembles a coat hanger with a double top containing the B. J (1876-1911)
- 2) there is a mark within a circle with Osborn St at the top of the circle GRIMES across the middle and Whitechapel around the bottom of the circle (1850-1883...maybe)
- 3) There is a mark with B J Grimes around the top of an oval – Charlotte St across the middle and Whitechapel around the base of the Oval. (1876-1911)
- 4) There is a mark with JAS Grimes around the top of a circle – Osborn (over) St (over Whitechapel to the centre – and PEWTERER & C around the bottom of the circle. 1850-1883)
- 5) There is a mark with Osborn Street around the in side top of a circle – Jas Grimes across the middle and Whitechapel around the base. (James 1850-1883)
- 6) The mark illustrated here with the examples was found on a piece verified with a WR which points to the end years of the earliest Grimes 1817 – 1838...but the style of the mug and engraving on them suggest this may well have been continued to be used over the years.

What confusion!!!! – Good workmanship though even as the trade closed down about them.

This writer has based this short article on his reading of information gathered by Alan Collins of the UK Pewter Society and in Carl Ricketts book – Pewterers of London 1600 – 1900. With thanks for photographs to a private collector and to www.pewtersellers.com – who request their name to accompany this website's use of their photographs, and which this website is pleased so to do.