

# Ukranian Interest in a London Pewter Mug

From Correspondence with Gleb Kobzar

This piece is included to show the interest and history that a not too old piece of Pewter might reveal.....



As can be seen this is a type of mug that might easily be found in the UK in antique shops or at car boot sales. It has a truncated cone body style with a central fillet and a pip beneath the thumbrest on the handle. This pip indicates that it was likely made in London.

Our man in the Ukraine tells us that –

*I've spent several days looking for some information about my new old tankard. The reason why I want to date the tankard is to understand if it is safe to use it for drinking. But the main reason of course is that I'm curious to know who made it and whom it belong to. The point is that it was claimed to be pirate's tankard. I doubt it's true but it seems like it was on a ship. I know clearly that the tankard has all the information on it but I really can't find anything enough convincing.*

*My observations for each shot accordingly are:*

*1. J. McPherson Maker Deptford - seems like the maker's name - but nothing on it in the internet (at least I can't find anything)*

*2. Seems like it was cleaned roughly but long time ago*

*3. Thomas E. Storey (or Storey or...) Steward SS Carra (or Ca...) can't read clearly handwritings because English isn't my native language. Maybe it's hard to see on photo but it seems like the tankard was initially covered with some other metal. The bottom persisted best of all other parts so it was probably always standing. Steward - does that mean ship cook do you think?*

*4-5. Interesting handle design*

*6. PINT and Crown over VR over 745 or 746 - see's like both labels were added much later after tankard creation, guess they are of the same age as the round dent below the second ring.*

Edited his photographs were as shown in the photographs detailed above.

A reply to Gleb –

(A few minutes with the Pewter Society database tells us –)

Perhaps the following helps a little, there may be confusions - but then there often are!

J McPherson - is shown as working in Deptford from 1900 - 1910.

Firstly at Jubilee Almshouses 72 Greenwich Road

then from 1901 at 50 Deptford Bridge

then in 1910 he was at 72 Cold Bath Street

(likely working with or related to a Richard McPherson who worked 1900-1905)

Listed also as being Beer Engine makers - this is the beer pump on the bar and the connections to the barrel in the cellar below - and as publican bar fitters.

The marking suggests that either the record is wrong and McPherson worked before 1900 or that this piece was made in 1900 being the last full year of Queen Victoria

I cannot reconcile the numbers you give 745 and 746 with what I see in your photograph or with what the records might indicate -

I read this as 713 (perhaps?) and that would be used by the trading standards - weights and measures - in Surrey in Victorian times. Deptford whilst part of London is in Surrey. Deptford is still today a fairly deprived area. Crown over VR over 713 - would be an expected mark for that.

745 and 746 relate to Kingston Upon Hull but these numbers were used after 1953...

Thomas E Storey - was likely the owner of this Pint for a while, yes likely a ship's Steward and I too cannot make out the name of the ship. But I suspect I see the word Hull beneath the other words.

People worry about lead content of Pewter. However science tells us that a small amount of lead becomes harmless when mixed with tin. (Pewter by the 1900 would be unusual if it had any more than 5% lead in it usually less - and more usually at this time antimony rather than lead. So when it is cleaned (it might be now - I cannot tell) I personally know of no reason why this piece should not be enjoyed for its original purpose).

**A reply from the Ukraine to the above shows how further information can sometimes be found -**

*I'm living in Ukraine and I actually do not collect pewter. If it is interesting to you the funny is the way I bought the tankard. I bought this piece occasionally whilst looking for a thermomug for morning coffee I can't enjoy at home having to take it to the car and enjoying cooling on the way to work. But at alternative to e-bay and very popular in most Slavish countries auction aukro (where I use to buy coins for my coin collection and wanted to buy thermomug) I noticed this tankard instead...*

*And here I am with a dirty pewter tankard which I can't use yet without cleaning, with no thermomug, still having to drink cooling coffee...But I'm happy! Because of this extremely interesting dirty pewter tankard.*

*- Now I know the tankard was made by J McPherson approx. in 1900 (thanks for processing photos). Thus it should not contain any lead (**not sure?**) and so I can clean it (having no idea how to clean this white touch from inside yet keeping McPherson's mark which I do want to keep now) and use for drinking. I am working in the area of fantasy so it will fit my table best of all...that was the main reason for buying...the other that I just like old things with history*

*- You are absolutely right about 713 under crown - I looked carefully at the relief of the mark and it is 713 for sure.*

*- Your transcript of "Hull" which I doubted to be a label at all have given me a clue to the ship's name - I noticed the dot over i written in the same direction as "l" in "Hull" and here we go Steam Ship Caria (SS Caria short) - a ship with rather sad history:*

*"ex- Clematis(1900), cargo only, 1911 purchased from Belgium renamed Caria, 1915 sunk by U-Boat gunfire off Cape Martello"*

*00-07 CLEMATIS S.A. des Produits Résineux, Antwerp Belgium*

*5.2.1904 left Antwerp on ballast for Fernandina (Florida) and encountered heavy seas.*

*21.2.1904 at 20.00 broke propeller shaft. Drifted for 24 days, hence feared as lost.*

*On 25.2 towed by German ss TENEDOS into Fayal (Azores)*

*07-11 CLEMATIS S.A. d'Entreposage et de Transports, Antwerp Belgium*

*11-15 CARIA Cunard SS C°, Liverpool Britain*

*6.11.1915 captured and sunk by GF of U 35 (KL Waldemar Kophamel) 120 m S by E Cape Martello (Crete) in pos. 33°14'N-25°47'E o/v Liverpool-Alexandria on ballast. No loss of life.*

*<http://newspapers.nl.sg/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19151217.2.33.aspx> - Germans' apologies for sinking the Caria and letting the crew to get away (like here they did for the crew of the other ship <http://www.wwlmedals.net/UBOAT%20SSNiew%20Amsterdam.jpg>). The WWI... =)*

*Isn't it interesting that Caria (Clematis) was built in 1900. 1915 sunk, but with no loss of life, which means that Thomas Storey the steward took his pewter tankard from the steamship to be sunk... (and perhaps he left service on the ship before it was sunk)*

.....

It could be suggested that washing the inside of the mug with washing up liquid and hot water might leave the mug able to be used. Certainly some bicarbonate of soda (or a couple of alka seltzers) in hot water might also clean the interior surface without damaging the McPherson mark. (website readers with better ideas for cleaning might like to share their thoughts.)

A reader of a draft of this article emails to add –

- a possible explanation of the slight discrepancy between the Victorian verification mark and the working dates of the pewterer could be that a replacement Edwardian punch was not instantly available.

Not from the reader - above but a further thought -

*(After all business had to go on and how would a pewterer know the day a monarch might die?)*