

James Bronnley Shaving Cream

Written by Mike Sandoval
Wednesday, September 29, 2010

While most wet shavers are familiar with the popular British brands, such as Geo. F. Trumper and D.R. Harris, there is a lesser known brand on the playing field. H.Bronnley & Co. Ltd was founded in 1884 by James Bronnley, an English soap maker with a quest to create the perfect soap. Today Bronnley offers a range of traditional soaps and toiletries, including its signature line of men's shaving products. James Bronnley Shaving Cream bears a Royal Warrant, so I figured if it was good enough for Her Majesty, The Queen, it was good enough for me.



The James Bronnley men's line of products is only offered in its signature scent, a classic citrus scent described as a blend of Seville Oranges and Bergamot with a base of herbs, spices, cedar, and oak moss. The fragrance is very consistent among the other products in the men's line and a welcome departure from the usual lime, sandalwood, rose, etc. offerings from other shaving manufacturers. The fragrance of the shaving cream is well balanced and I found it to be very pleasant.

James Bronnley Shaving Cream comes packaged in a 150g clear plastic tub with a silver screw-on lid. The packaging is simple in design, an attractive orange cardboard box bearing the Bronnley name and its Royal Warrant. Upon opening the tub, I was surprised that the cream itself is quite different in texture from other traditional shaving creams. James Bronnley Shaving Cream is softer in texture, more of a marshmallow cream consistency, and appears oilier in the tub rather than the dry paste-like appearance of many other creams. I initially thought that maybe the cream had settled during shipping; however, after thoroughly stirring it, the consistency seemed to be uniform throughout the entire tub.

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The formula of the shaving cream is based on ingredients such as Arnica and Chamomile to provide a soothing and moisturizing shaving experience. My initial impressions of the presentation and fragrance of the cream were all very positive so I was excited to finally lather it up and see how the shave would go. Unfortunately this is where James Bronnley fell short.

Using the normal dime- to nickel-size amount of cream with a medium shaving brush, this cream absolutely refused to build into a suitable lather for shaving. I tried several different approaches, including lathering in a bowl, directly on my face, as well as my [Load/Hydrate Technique](#) that works so well for difficult-to-lather shaving soaps and creams. When I did finally get some mediocre-looking lather, it lacked the rich and cushioning consistency that I usually get from my shaving creams. The lather provided only a minimal amount of protection on my face and the razor blade felt rough against my skin. By the time I applied my second round of lather from the brush, the cream had already started to dry down. I had to add a bit more cream and water to the brush to build up enough lather to complete the final passes of the shave.

The shaving cream's ingredients are good quality and I enjoyed the fragrance; however, its overall performance was not up to par for a high-end shaving product. It retails for around \$25 for a 150g tub, so it is in the same tier with high-quality, well-performing brands. With its reputation and at this price point, I expected the shaving cream to provide a more suitable lather. I used this shaving cream on four different occasions, and sadly it never lived up to my expectations. My apologies to Her Majesty, but the James Bronnley Shaving Cream will not be issued a Shaving 101 Not-So-Royal Warrant.

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