

The John and Lizzie Chapman 'Think of Me' Cup - National Maritime Museum Cornwall



Behind some of the most unassuming objects is often the most powerful stories and this little white cup with its fading gold lettering is no different. When John and Lizzie Chapman lovingly handed the cups, with the words 'Think of Me' on them, as gifts to their family and friends they would never have known what lay ahead. This wonderful cup represents a story of love, loss, and self-sacrifice.

From St. Neot in Cornwall, John and Lizzie Chapman longed to marry. In those days, for a couple to get married, the husband was expected to support his wife financially and so in order to do this John was forced to find a living abroad. For five long years he worked in Canada but finally returned home, and on Boxing Day 1911 John and Lizzie were married in Liskeard.

The couple dreamt of moving to the USA to be closer to Lizzie's brother in Wisconsin and so planned to emigrate, run a farm and start a family. The voyage to America was to be their honeymoon and they excitedly purchased their second-class tickets for £26. The name of the ship they were to travel on was the Titanic.



On the Sunday before they left, John and Lizzie invited their friends and family for a farewell tea. They presented china cups as thank you gifts for the support they received. Lizzie gave this particular cup to the boy that delivered their milk, Hughie Beswetherick.

On 10th April 1912, the Titanic left Southampton with John and Lizzie on board and just before midnight on 14th April, the Titanic hit an iceberg.

As the ship began to sink passengers were placed into lifeboats, including Lizzie, but when she realised that John would not be coming with her, following the custom of women and children first, she turned to her friend Emily Richards and said: "Goodbye Mrs Richards, if John can't go, I won't go either." Tragically the couple both lost their lives.

So this little cup, with its faded gold lettering, is a permanent reminder of the lives lost at sea, the endurance of love and of kindness shared.