

Small jug. Abermule Accident - 26 Jan 1921



This small jug was donated to the Museum in 2007. Although not in good condition, it commemorates a major train disaster at Abermule, near Newtown on 26 January 1921, so it has a big story to tell.

17 people died and 36 were injured, some severely, following a head-on collision between two trains. Those killed included a director of the railway, Lord Herbert Vane-Tempest and the driver and fireman of one of the engines.

The Cambrian Railways operated the line across Wales at the time, which contained several single line sections with crossing places, one of which was the Abermule station. A safety system known as Tyer's Electric Train Tablet was in place to prevent two trains running on the same stretch of track, and it had been used for a number of years. One of the departing trains had been given the wrong tablet for the section, which resulted in a collision with an express train coming the other way.

A detailed description of the accident can be found in Wikipedia using the link given below.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abermule_train_collision

Dramatic footage of the aftermath of the collision is also available: www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPeADFqGgO4

The jug itself poses some questions. The initials embedded in the design may provide a clue to the jug's ownership. Was it a small milk jug from the dining car of the express train? Who inscribed the jug with the date and event? Who was SHJ whose initials are on the base of the jug? These are tantalising questions to which, as yet, we do not have answers.