

# Jane Elizabeth Flowerday

Jane Elizabeth Flowerday was born at Hohi on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1819. She was baptised by Rev John Butler on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1820.

Jane became the second daughter to wed a mariner when she married Charles Flowerday on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1838. The service was conducted by Rev Henry Williams. Both Charles and Jane signed the register, and one witness was T. Hansen.

Charles was a ship's butcher. His task on board was to look after the livestock carried, and provide a supply of fresh meat when required. He was on the *Harriet* when it was wrecked on the Taranaki coast in 1834. Ngāti Ruanui, perhaps aggrieved at the lack of booty from the wreck, attacked the party, and in the ensuing struggle, 12 of the *Harriet's* crew were killed. Authorities in Australia sent two ships and soldiers to rescue the survivors. One of the ships was the *Isabella*, which had just returned to Sydney from Norfolk Island with Captain Hansen in command of his last voyage.

After arriving at the Bay of Islands, Charles continued to work as a butcher. He was described as a first class butcher, and was employed by the authorities in charge of the British troops stationed at Te Wahapu.

The Flowerdays set up home in Kororareka. However, Jane and her three children were forced to evacuate the town on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1845 when it was attacked and destroyed during the Battle of Kororareka. After a short stay in Auckland, the family returned to Kororareka, known today as Russell. Two more children were added after the family's return.

They lived in a house on York Street which is reputed to have been the first two storey house built in Russell. Jane kept a wonderful garden and was well known for her "green fingers".

The Flowerday house has long disappeared, and today, a block of shops stands on the site of their old home. A magnolia tree planted by Jane in the front garden of the house has survived, although a re-survey of York Street in 1890 has left the tree on the road frontage of the shops.

Charles Flowerday, who was 20 years older than Jane, died aged 75 on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1874. The cause of death was disease of stomach and exhaustion.

Jane Flowerday lived all her life at Russell apart from the short break in Auckland during the Northern War. As such, the Flowerday family can claim to be one of the founding families of modern day Russell.

One of Jane's granddaughters was told how Jane used to sit by the fire smoking an old black pipe. According to one of her great-nieces, Jane had become addicted to it through lighting her husband's pipes for him while he was alive. She often had to sneak away whenever she felt the need for a quiet puff as only Māori women smoked pipes in those days.

Aged 71, Jane collapsed suddenly while at home in Russell on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1891. Jane is thought to be buried in the Russell cemetery, but there is not a headstone to identify her grave. Sadly, her grave may be one of the unidentified plots and there is no record to prove where she was buried, only that she died in Russell.

*Researched by Kath Hansen. Written by Eric Hansen*

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