

Hannah Grayburn

1855-1946

Hannah Grayburn was born in Ferriby, East Yorkshire. In March 1876 she married Harland Grayburn at the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Laceby, Yorkshire and departed almost immediately, on 4 April, on the "Camperdown" from London. They landed at Nelson on 4 July 1876 and then went on to Marlborough where Harland worked on Flaxbourne Station.

In 1877, after their first child was born, they went to Seafield, near Ashburton. Harland worked on farms at Willowby and Eiffelton as well as at Longbeach Station, before he bought his own farms, first at Winslow and later at Eiffelton, where they lived for 14 years. During this period Hannah bore nine more children, including two sets of twins of whom only one in each pair survived.

Hannah and Harland were staunch members of the Methodist Church - a Wesleyan Church opened in Willowby in 1882. In 1893, eighteen women (including Hannah) from this small rural community signed the suffrage petition. At that time Hannah had seven children at home, including a newborn baby. The Grayburns' religious commitment could well be linked to Hannah's signature on the suffrage petition given the links between the suffrage movement in New Zealand and the temperance movement, which Methodists identified with. (It might also have been a factor behind their migration since members of the temperance society were apparently being recruited as settlers from Laceby by New Zealand migration agents.)

In 1904 the Grayburns shifted to "Thorneycroft" farm, near Orari, where they lived until retiring to Geraldine, to a house on the corner of Hislop Street opposite the Catholic Church. An unmarried daughter lived at home, as did Hannah's brother; both had physical handicaps. Hannah's granddaughter, who lived with them for a time, well remembered Sundays devoted to prayer and biblical study, recalling that Hannah prepared the food for Sundays the previous day.

Hannah died in 1946, aged 91, and is buried in the Geraldine cemetery.



Hannah Grayburn , 1946, with her daughter, grand-daughter and g-grand-daughter