



REMEMBRANCE PARKS
CENTRAL VICTORIA

Bendigo Remembrance Park - Notable Graves Tour

24. LADY JANE LAMSEY

Born: c1853 Ireland

Died: 4 June 1903 Bendigo, Victoria, Australia

Buried: 7 June 1903

Arrived in Geelong c.1860

Married Chinese Dr. James Lamsey 林四 with the Chinese equivalent of a Knighthood named Fifth Mandarin Rank (Crystal Button).

Located in Section H3

Grave number 16682

Interment number 17496



Jane and James Lamsey in mandarin dress. (AP0005 - Collection Bendigo Chinese Association)

Jane Lamsey had been born Jane Boyd in Ireland, and spent her early years in Geelong. Shifting to Bendigo she worked as a housekeeper to Chinese born doctor James Lamsey 林四 in the 1880s. Lamsey, a prominent leader of the Chinese community in Bendigo, came from a distinguished Cantonese family. A friend of one of the Chinese Imperial Commissioners who toured Australia in 1887, and whose Bendigo visit he helped host, he was awarded a fifth mandarin rank (also known as the order of the crystal button) from the Qing Imperial Government. This was roughly equivalent in Chinese terms to receiving a knighthood. As with a British knighthood, a mandarin's wife took on the rank and title of her husband – hence Lady Jane after Miss Boyd married Lamsey in 1889.

In the *Jubilee History of Victoria and Melbourne*, published in 1888, Lamsey's biographical entry



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states that he 'married in 1869, a Scotch lady, and has one son living, aged 14 years.'⁹ When James Lamsey married Jane Boyd at All Saints Anglican Cathedral in 1889, he declared on the marriage certificate that his first wife had died in 1873, and that his child was by that time deceased.¹⁰ Lamsey and his new wife lived in Lamsey's McCrae Street Home 'Jubilee Villa', a short walk from his herbalist's practice in Howard Place where the business's painted shop sign is still visible on the building's south wall.

Though they had no children of their own together, the Lamseys had an adopted daughter Kitty Boyd/Lamsey (born Catherine Morgan) who lived with them until their deaths. Jane Lamsey predeceased her husband in 1903 and was buried with members of her family in Bendigo Cemetery's Catholic section. James Lamsey died on May 5th, 1912. On the day of his funeral, in which he was to be buried beside his wife, a cousin from Melbourne intervened and put the body on a train to Melbourne in a sealed coffin as a first step to sending Lamsey's remains back to China. According to James Lamsey's death certificate he was buried one month later at the Eastern Gate Cemetery in Canton.¹¹ How close he came to being buried with his wife beneath the impressive monument in the Bendigo Cemetery can be seen by the fact that a record for his burial in that grave can today be found in the Bendigo cemetery register.



The grave of Lady Jane Lamsey
(Image from RPCV records)

Three others are also buried in this double grave:

Elizabeth BOYD, died 1901 aged 45.

Elizabeth HOWARD, died 1903 aged 68. The headstone notes her as the mother of Elizabeth Boyd but no death Index reference could be found for her.

Catherine (Kitty) Margaret BOYD, died 1915 aged 44.
She is not named on the headstone.

Kitty was an adopted daughter to Jane & James Lamsey.

Kitty lived with her step father James Lamsey after her mother's death and was with James when he died.

⁹ Leavitt, Thad. W. H. and Lilburn, W.D. *The Jubilee history of Victoria and Melbourne, illustrated / T.W.H. Leavitt, editor; W.D. Lilburn, ... historian* Duffus Bros., Printers, Melbourne : 1888, p.

¹⁰ The likely birth date of the child (1873/1874) from the information in the *Jubilee History* approximately matches that of the first wife's death on the Lamsey/Boyd marriage certificate (1873), suggesting that she may have died in childbirth. I am not aware of any BDM records relating to Lamsey's first family. Information in the *Cyclopedia of Victoria* entry suggests that the first wife's name may have been Jane Morrison – no distinction is made there between a woman of that name and Jane Boyd.

¹¹ See Lamsey's death certificate