

Elizabeth LAMB

Date of Birth (<i>Baptism</i>)	15/08/1830
Place of Birth (<i>From</i>)	Maidenhead
Role on Ship	Steerage Passenger
Journey Outcome	Lost

Notes:

Elizabeth Besden Lamb was born on August 15, 1830, in Maidenhead, Berkshire. She was the youngest daughter of George Lamb, a baker turned missionary, and his first wife, Sarah Brown. Growing up in the Maidenhead and Cookham area, Elizabeth's early years were shaped by her father's dual life of practical trade and spiritual devotion. By the time she reached her twenties, her family dynamic had shifted significantly; her mother had passed away, and her father had remarried Sarah Milward in 1853, following several years of service as a Town Missionary.

By 1856, Elizabeth was 25 years old and living with her father and stepmother in Eton. The family's focus had turned toward the southern hemisphere, specifically Auckland, New Zealand. Her eldest sister, Mary, had already established a life there with her husband, Joseph Brown, a prominent professor of music and conductor. The decision was made for Elizabeth to join her parents in emigrating to reunite the family.

Because the cost of passage for an entire family was significant, Elizabeth's father took the extraordinary step of signing onto the crew of the *Josephine Willis* as the ship's baker. This arrangement allowed Elizabeth and her stepmother to travel as passengers while her father worked his way across the ocean.

On February 2, 1856, Elizabeth boarded the vessel at the St. Katherine Docks in London. The voyage was intended to be the start of a new chapter in a burgeoning colony, but it ended in tragedy less than two days later. On the evening of February 3, while off the coast of Folkestone, the *Josephine Willis* was struck midships by the steamer *Mangerton*. The impact was catastrophic, and the ship sank rapidly in the dark, cold waters of the English Channel.

Elizabeth, along with her father George and her stepmother Sarah, was among those lost in the disaster. While she never reached the shores of New Zealand to see her sister Mary again, her memory was preserved by her surviving siblings—her sister Sarah and her brother William in England, and Mary's family in Auckland. Her life remains a poignant testament to a family's shared hope for a new beginning that was tragically cut short.