

# Jane Disney, John Barlow and their children

by Anne van Weerden, January 2021

Updates for [p. 130 of Catherine Disney : a biographical sketch](#)

Neither for Jane Disney nor for John Barlow a birth record was found.

Jane Disney and John Barlow married on [19 October 1813](#). They were [married](#) by Brabazon Disney, most likely Jane's uncle who was [rector of Slane](#).

Jane died in 1865; her [burial record](#) giving her age at death as 56 is clearly an error, she would have been four when she married. Her [civil death record](#) gives her age as 72. (To open it click the link, solve the captcha, then choose Barlow, Dublin North, 1865-1865.) Jane thus was born in 1792/1793.

John died in 1876; his [burial record](#) gives his age as 84, he thus was born in 1791 or 1792. It will be shown [hereafter](#) that he was born in 1791. Directly below John's record is that of his youngest brother Arthur, who lived in their parental home at 4 North Great George's Street. John (and probably Jane) is [interred](#) in the [Barlow Vault, No 5 in St.-Werburgh](#), bought by his father James. John and Arthur were brothers of William Barlow, who married Catherine Disney, a younger sister of Jane.

Jane and John lived the largest part of their lives at [Sybil Hill](#) (instead of Sybil Hill, as the road is now called) in Clontarf. The house can be seen on [this map](#), made between 1847 and 1864 for Griffith's valuation; it therefore was made when John and Jane lived there. On the lower map it can be seen that this [enormous](#) house still exists.

It is not completely certain how many children Jane and John had, searching in the [baptism records](#) for Barlow, Dublin Church of Ireland (Col), 1813-1865, eleven children were found. Their son John's baptism record is not online, but in the newspaper article announcing his second [marriage](#) he was called the "second son of John Barlow, Esq., J.P. (Justice of the Peace), Sybil Hill, Dublin." That leaves no doubt that this indeed a son of the John Barlow discussed here.

Hererafter in red what is changed compared to what I had given in [Catherine Disney's biographical sketch](#).

## Children (12) of Jane Disney (1792/1793-1865) and John Barlow (1791-1876), m 1813

**James Barlow (1815-1816)**

Anne Eliza Barlow (1816- ..)

Elizabeth Barlow (1817- ..)

Jane Barlow (1819-1872)

Caroline Barlow (1820- ..)

James Thomas Barlow (1822- ..), m. 1851 Maria Dorathea Bushe (1831-1904)

Margaret Izabella Barlow (1824- ..)

Catherine Maria Barlow (1826-1828)

**John Barlow (1827-1885), m. 1857 Eliza Susanna ... (1833-1866), m. 1871 Agnes Florence Smythe (.. - ..)**

Mary Louisa Barlow (1832-1894), m. 1853 James William Barlow (1826-1913)

Louisa Barlow (1834-1835)

William Ruxton Barlow (1835-1921), m. 1867 Mary Evelyn Wrench (1846-1938)

### **James Barlow (1815-1816)**

I made an unfortunate error. There was a James Barlow who seemed to meet all requirements, but although he married with a [Dublin address](#), in a later search I found this [advertisement](#) which shows that he was from Roscommon.

The very early death of Jane and John's eldest son James is known from a plaque at the [Barlow Vault](#). The inscription about Jane and John's eldest son reads: "James Barlow his grandson died the 26th day of July 1816 aged one year and 5 months."

James Barlow was born on [28 February 1815](#), and was buried [28 July 1816](#). At the time of their son's burial Jane and John did not yet live at Sibyl Hill; the record mentions South Great George's Street.

### **John Barlow (1827-1885)**

John Barlow was the [second](#) son of John and Jane. Because I did not know that James Barlow had died so young, I had listed him therefore before his brother James Thomas, in 1818 or 1821, the only years no other child was born. But sons who died so young did not 'count', and John thus was younger than James Thomas. The [civil records](#) give two John Barlows who died in 1885, but having been born after 1822, he must be the John Barlow from Dublin, who died with 58, and had been "Vice Chairman of Prisons Board Ireland (retired)." That is in accord with the [newspaper article](#) announcing his marriage to Agnes Florence Smythe, in which it is mentioned that he was Director of Government Prisons. If he died with 58, he was born in 1826 or 1827. His sister Catherine having been born in September 1826, John thus was born in 1827.

I made a typo in **James William Barlow**'s birth year; his parents were married in May 1825, he was born in October 1826.

For the death year of **Mary Evelyn Wrench** see [below](#).

**Hereafter I have commented on quotations from Hugh Disney's book [Disneys of Stabannon](#). The numbers between parentheses refer to Hugh Disney's family tree. My comments are italicized.**

### **Jane Disney/Barlow 217**

Born about 1793 - Date of death unknown

Jane Disney was the second child and eldest daughter of Thomas Disney of Rock Lodge, near Trim, Co. Meath by his wife Anne Purdon. Her exact date of birth is not known but from snippets of information about each of her 14 brothers and sisters it is possible to place them fairly accurately in order of birth. Their poor mother!

*Thomas and Anne Disney seem to have bought Rock Lodge [around 1830](#). Jane was their eldest child, Brabazon was their eldest son. When Brabazon died in 1833 he was [38](#), he therefore was born in 1794 or 1795. But according to Hugh Disney, Brabazon's sister Patience was born and died in 1795, so he was born in 1794. His sister Jane (217) died on [Friday 3 February 1865](#), and she was [72](#) years of age. She thus was born in 1793 or more likely 1792, and was the eldest child.*

*Hugh Disney's empathic remark "Their poor mother!" would have held for many Victorian women. Jane herself had twelve children, and Mrs Bayly, the mother of Helen Bayly who married William Rowan Hamilton, even seems to have had [23 children](#).*

One of the few facts known about Jane is that on 16th October 1813, at the age of about 20, she married John Barlow (218), the second son of James Barlow, an able and successful lawyer of 4 North Great George's Street, Dublin, and Elizabeth daughter of Surgeon General Ruxton.

*John Barlow was the first son. He was [84](#) when he died in 1876, he thus was born in 1791 or 1792. Because William Barlow, who would marry Catherine Disney, was born on 29 February [1792](#), John must have been born in 1791. John was therefore the first son, William was indeed the [second son](#), and James, who died in 1828, was the [third son](#).*

At about the same time as they were married John's father took an interest in Sybil Hill, Clontarf, Dublin and installed them there. Jane's father (204), and doubtless Jane herself, had lived in Furry Park House, a mansion quite close by before they moved to Rock Lodge, Trim, Co. Meath. A recent chronicler commented, 'Looking through the pages of the Griffith Valuation I read with some surprise that Mr Bushe held the house, offices and 40 acres of Furry Park on lease from Mr John Barlow of Sybil Hill. Evidently when Mr Barlow married the daughter of Mr Disney of Furry Park, he had not neglected to make a good marriage settlement.'

*I was greatly surprised reading about Furry Park House, I had never encountered the house in the searches for my biographical sketch about Catherine Disney. I therefore did some [research](#) of my own and found that Thomas Disney had indeed lived at Furry Park House, yet he did not own it. He may have lived in the house as the agent of the owner, just as around 1824 he lived with his family in Summerhill House, then being [agent](#) to Langford. I also found that it is most likely that John Barlow rented both townlands, Sibyl Hill and Furry Park, from John E.V. [Vernon](#), and then subletted the townland Furry Park with its House to Thomas Bushe.*

Sybil Hill was a Georgian style house and was built about 1750; it was variously described as 'showing splendid if restrained taste' - 'of excellent workmanship' - 'that gracious and charming house' and 'the dining room was close on 40 feet long'.

John was admitted to Kings Inns for training in the Law in 1807 when he was 16, so would have been about 23 when they were married. The family came to Ireland originally some 40 years before Cromwell. John's elder brother, William (228), married Jane's younger sister, Catherine (227), some 12 years later, in 1825.

*John and Jane married in October 1813 when John, born in [1791](#), was 22 indeed. William was his [younger](#) brother.*

Jane's husband was not called to the Bar so did not become a barrister, but distinguished himself by being a Director of the Bank of Ireland for 36 of the 40 years from 1835-1875. During that time he was the Governor from 1850-1852, when, according to the Bank records, 'he set himself strongly against the issue of long-term loans for speculative railway construction.' The same chronicler again, 'The now faded tradition in Raheny is that the Barlows were "high gentry". Mr Barlow was also a Government-appointed Commissioner of the Loan Fund of Ireland and a Superintendent of Prisons in the County of Dublin. The old courthouse in Raheny knew Mr Barlow well. For forty years he sat there on alternate Wednesdays as one of the Justices of the Peace.'

'In 1834 a government commission was appointed to enquire into and report on the state of the poor in Ireland. Mr Barlow was one of those who gave evidence on the conditions existing in Clontarf, Killester and Raheny.' It may be of interest to note that it was generally agreed that the normal diet of an able bodied labourer was potatoes, milk and coarse wheaten bread which would cost him about £15 to £20 a year.

The Barlows were an accomplished family. John had three brothers. Maurice was a General, Peter was a Q.C. [[Queen's Counsel](#)], and Arthur had two sons who were, respectively, a Brigadier and an Admiral.

*John was the eldest son in a family of nine children; he had two older sisters, one younger sister, and five younger brothers. While writing the [overview](#) of the family of James Barlow and Elizabeth Ruxton I thought they had eight children. I did not yet know about the Barlow Vault, and therefore I also did not know that James and Elizabeth had had another daughter, [Elizabeth](#). According to the plaque she was the third and youngest daughter; she "died on the morning of the 15th September 1829 aged 26 years." She thus had been born in 1802 or 1803.*

Jane and John had a small family for those times and their first child, James Thomas (283), was not born until 3rd February 1822, some nine years after they married. Moreover their second son, William Ruxton (286) was not born for another 13 years, on 5th June 1835. They also had a daughter, Maria Louisa (285), who married her first cousin, James William Barlow, the eldest son of Jane's sister Catherine (227) and John's brother William (228).

*Hugh Disney's conclusion that John and Jane only had three children will have been due to the fact that usually only sons were mentioned, and daughters when they married important men, yet of the daughters in this family only Mary Louisa married. It is fortunate that her sisters' baptism records now have been scanned and placed online. James Thomas was their eldest living son and sixth child, John the [second](#) son and ninth child, William Ruxton the third son and twelfth and youngest child. Because Mary Louisa and James William were in fact double first cousins their children, amongst whom the author and poet Jane Barlow, had only four great-grandparents instead of eight.*

James Thomas (283) went up to Christ Church, Oxford in January 1841 but only obtained a Pass Degree when he sat his finals in December 1843. He was then admitted to Kings Inns in Dublin and to the Inner Temple, London, but although he was not called to the Bar he may have practised as a solicitor in Dublin for he spent most of his life at Sybil Hill, Clontarf, Dublin. From his [Will](#) we know that by 1887, when he would have been aged 65, he had moved to 22 Upper Berkeley Street, London and that he was living at 12 Health Terrace, Leamington, Warwickshire when he died in 1897. Also that he married Maria Dorothea, of unknown surname and had two sons by her. The elder, John, was a clergyman and bachelor who died in 1920 at The Grange, Harley Swan, Worcestershire; the younger, Charles, was in the Army living at The Old Abbey, Exeter, Devon.

*James Thomas [married 30 April 1851](#) Maria Doratheia Bushe (with [an 'a' indeed](#)), daughter of Thomas Bushe who lived in Furry Park House [from 1835-1874](#). Maria and James Thomas thus had been neighbours; Maria had come to live there when she was three or four, James Thomas had been twelve or thirteen.*

Very little is known about Jane and John's younger son, William Ruxton (286) other than that he spent his life in the Royal Artillery. Joining in 1855, he was promoted Lieutenant Colonel in 1882 and at the same time was appointed Assistant Superintendent at the Royal Laboratory to the Ordnance Factories. During the following ten years he was recorded as promoted to full Colonel, placed on retired pay and promoted to Superintendent of the Laboratory.

*I made a **mistake** in the [description](#) of **William Ruxton Barlow** (1855-1922), the [eldest son](#) of James William and Mary Louisa Barlow and nephew of William Ruxton, son of Jane and John. I had followed the [suggestions](#) that William Ruxton had been in the Royal Artillery which seemed plausible, quite some members of these families were in the army. But reading Hugh Disney's description of his uncle William*

Ruxton, I now realize that having been born in 1855 he will hardly have been an expert on ammunition in 1874, or could have published the [Treatise on Ammunition](#) as I claimed. The expert on ammunition must have been his uncle William Ruxton. It does mean that now hardly anything is known about the eldest son of James William and Mary Louisa Barlow.

**William Ruxton**, third son of Jane and John, moved at some time to England, where he [married](#) on [3 October](#) 1867 Mary Evelyn Wrench (1846-1938), only daughter of Rev. Frederick Wrench, rector of Stouting. At that time William Ruxton was Captain in the Royal Artillery. From various newspaper articles it can be seen that he became Major in [1874](#), and as Hugh Disney writes Lieutenant Colonel in [1882](#). William and Mary had a child in [July 1868](#), which is in accord with the data given for their daughter [Jane](#), and they had six more children. The second name of the eldest son, Charles Coote (1874 - 1962) would make sense; his great-great-grandmother was Jane Coote (1742- ..). They lived in Wellington House, Woolwich, London, doubtlessly a part of the [Royal Military Academy](#). William Ruxton died [in 1921](#) in Kensington, London, 85 years old.

**John Barlow**, second son of John and Jane, went into the army. In 1848 he became [Ensign](#) in the Buckinghamshire 14th regiment of foot, where [his uncle](#) Maurice Barlow, brother of his father John, was Lieutenant Colonel. John became Lieutenant in 1851, and at some time he became [Captain](#). He left the army before his marriage, in [1857](#) to [Eliza Susanna](#) ... (1833-1866). He married in [1871](#) Agnes Florence Smythe; they were [married](#) by [James Disney](#), then rector of Killyman, a [younger brother](#) of Jane and Catherine Disney. John became as "Captain Barlow" inspector of convict prisons, and [director](#) in [1867](#).

The "Governor Disney" mentioned in the latter article was John's cousin Lambert Disney. When in December 1881 he came, [accompanied](#) by his wife and new baby, to Omagh Prison as the new governor, he died within six weeks from typhoid fever, attributed to the very bad sewerage; the doctor had warned, but no one had listened. Lambert John Robert Disney (1842-1882) had been a son of [Lambert Disney](#), one of the [brothers](#) of Catherine, Jane and the Rev James Disney who had married John Barlow and Agnes Smythe. The Barlow and Disney families were indeed very closely connected.

John died on 5th January 1876 at Sybil Hill, a man of considerable means and standing in Dublin. It is not known for how long Jane survived him.

Jane had died in [1865](#), eleven years before her husband died.