

**Jane Brown 1845-1896**  
Partner of William Rufus Churchouse and George E. Howard

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From John Howard, Launceston, Tasmania 12 Feb 1882

Sir, Will you please search the marriage record for the whole of New Zealand and let me know if there ever has been a marriage between George E. Howard, painter on the one part and Miss J. Browne or Mrs Jane Churchouse on the other part as it is reported he is married, and I his brother wish to know. I have enclosed you a P.O.O. for 2s 6d as the search fee if there is any more to pay, please send the answer to some person you know here and a letter of advice to me and I will pay the difference on receipt of the same. An immediate answer will oblige.

Address for John Howard: c/o E. Hooper, G.P.O. Launceston, Tasmania  
P.S. the years I wish you to search are from 1874 to 1880.

Annotation dated 28 Feb 1882: Searched 1874 to 1880 under Howard, Browne and Churchouse and no entry. Inform accordingly – as search fee is 5s request that an additional P.O. order for 2s 6d be sent by return of post.

*Archives NZ R15906768 BDM1 1882/193 Inwards Letter to the Registrar General*

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When this letter was written, Jane was the mother of eight surviving children ranging in age from 14 years to eight months via two partners – five children to William Rufus Churchouse<sup>1</sup> and four to George E. Howard. They were all were born in New Zealand. She also had a sister Annie, the wife of John Peck, a gardener residing in Lower Hutt.

On 8 September 1874 Mrs William Churchouse lost a brown leather purse in High Street, Dunedin, containing a £1 note, a half-sovereign, and a pawnticket for a wedding ring.<sup>2</sup> No further marriage evidence has been found for either Churchouse or Howard. Churchouse was recorded in lists of unclaimed letters in the New South Wales Government Gazette in May and October 1873. In March 1876 he sought redress, after being bitten by a dog, in the Rockhampton Police Court, Queensland<sup>3</sup> and in 1880 he married Alice Spurgeon in Victoria Australia.<sup>4</sup>

The birth of the first child associated with George Howard was registered in 1876. Alice May Churchouse was born on 29 May 1876 and the father's name was not recorded.<sup>5</sup> When Alice died on 18 December 1876 her death was registered under the name Alice May Howard.<sup>6</sup> She was buried at Bolton Street Cemetery.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Rufus Churchouse 1841-1916 Enrolled 20 Jan 1864 at Geelong for the Melbourne Contingent of the Taranaki Military Settlers and later became Sergeant Major in the East Coast Expeditionary Force.

<sup>2</sup> Otago Police Gazette 30 Sep 1874

<sup>3</sup> Rockhampton Bulletin 7 Mar 1875 Police Court

<sup>4</sup> Victoria Marriage Index 3798/1880

<sup>5</sup> RGO Birth 1876/16751 Alice May Churchouse – mother Jane; father not recorded

<sup>6</sup> RGO Death 1876/3797 Alice May Howard aged six months

<sup>7</sup> Bolton Street Cemetery <https://boltoncemetery.org.nz/burial-list/detail/3593/>

In September 1876 Howard and Gosling sought tenders to take down the scaffolding of the new Government Buildings.<sup>8</sup> On 25 November the pair arrived at Wellington from Blenheim on the paddle steamer *Lyttelton*.<sup>9</sup> On 12 December G. Howard of Maori Pa advertised a reward of ten shillings for the return of a stray chestnut pony.<sup>10</sup>

In January 1877 Howard and Gosling of Moody's Hotel, Lambton Quay, advertised for a paperhanger and indicated that the highest wages would be paid for a good hand.<sup>11</sup> A second child was born in this year – Georgina May Howard<sup>12</sup>; and George Howard of Courtenay Place had a household qualification in the 1878-1879 Wellington Electoral Roll.

On 25 April 1878 George Howard, painter of the City of Wellington, filed a statement that he was unable to meet his engagements with creditors.<sup>13</sup> William Berry was appointed as Trustee to his estate the following month.<sup>14</sup>

When Jane's eldest son, Sydney Churchouse aged ten years, 5 months, was admitted to Mount Cook Boys School in November 1878 his guardian was G. Howard, painter, Courtenay Place.<sup>15</sup>

At a session of the Wellington Resident Magistrate's Court held on 26 July 1879 George Howard was fined five shillings or in default 24 hours imprisonment on account of drunkenness.<sup>16</sup> Later in the year three of Jane's sons were admitted to Mount Cook Boys School – Sydney (11yrs), Victor (8) and Albert (7). Mrs Churchouse of Haining Street was the guardian. Victor and Albert previously attended school in Christchurch. Sydney was re-admitted to the school on 8 March 1880.<sup>17</sup>

A third child, Lilian Howard, was born on 20 May 1880. The birth index gives no name for the father and the mother's name was Susan.<sup>18</sup> Bert Howard, a fourth child, was born at Wellington on 13 July 1881<sup>19</sup> and does not appear to have been registered.

In early September 1883 Jane asked Police to locate her eldest son, Sydney Churchouse. He returned to Wellington on 6 August after working as a station hand at Riddiford's Station on the East Coast. He spoke of going to sea<sup>20</sup> and was found employed on the steamer *Wakatipu*.<sup>21</sup>

By April 1884 the family were residing in Fraser's Lane.<sup>22</sup> Jane's son, Albert Churchouse, was one of two boys who lit a fire without the permission of the City Council. At the Resident Magistrate's Court one witness described the boys as being "members of a gang of larrikins infesting Thorndon."<sup>23</sup> On 5 April, Sydney Churchouse, was sentenced to seven days labour at Wellington Gaol for larceny.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Evening Post 12 Sep 1876 Advertisement

<sup>9</sup> Evening Post 25 Nov 1876 Shipping Intelligence

<sup>10</sup> New Zealand Times 12 Dec 1876 Advertisement

<sup>11</sup> Evening Post 11 Jan 1877 Wanted Advertisement

<sup>12</sup> NZ Microfiche RGO Birth Index 1877 folio 2245

<sup>13</sup> New Zealand Times 25 Apr 1878 Bankruptcy – see Archives NZ R23212862 Bankruptcy File

<sup>14</sup> Evening Post 10 May 1878 Debtors and Creditors

<sup>15</sup> New Zealand Society of Genealogists Kiwi Index

<sup>16</sup> Evening Post 26 Jul 1879 Resident Magistrate's Court

<sup>17</sup> New Zealand Society of Genealogists Kiwi Index

<sup>18</sup> RGO Birth 1880/5154 for Lilian Howard

<sup>19</sup> Archives NZ R18050216 Bert Howard WW1 24/2224 Army

<sup>20</sup> Police Gazette 5 Sep 1883 page 150 Information requested

<sup>21</sup> Police Gazette 19 Sep 1883 page 157 Missing Friends

<sup>22</sup> The forerunner of today's Aitken Street

<sup>23</sup> Evening Post 20 Apr 1884 Resident Magistrate's Court

<sup>24</sup> Police Gazette 30 Apr 1884 Return of Prisoners reported as discharged

Jane gave birth to her tenth child on 24 May 1884<sup>25</sup> – Claude Hamilton Howard – and again the birth does not appear to be registered. From this point Jane was either known as Mrs Jane Howard or Mrs Mary Howard of Fraser's-lane. In early July 1888, at the Resident Magistrate's Court, she described herself as a widow and a dressmaker and that she lived in a dwelling next to that of her landlady Polly Harper. Jane also had a lodger named William Ellison.<sup>26</sup>

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### **The Howard-Merison Family of Brisbane Street, Launceston**

In February 1882 John Howard states that his brother George E. Howard is a painter. George Howard, partner of Jane Churchouse, worked in New Zealand as a paperhanger, painter and decorator.

The 1881 Tasmanian Directory lists three Howards in Brisbane Street, Launceston – Sarah Howard with a furniture shop; and John and Joseph Howard, painters.

John and Joseph Howard are sons of Sarah Howard. After their father, James Henry Howard, died in 1868, they advertised their thanks to the public for patronage bestowed on the late J. H. Howard for the past 26 years and that they intended to continue the business of plumbing, painting, writing, graining etc., in George Town Road.<sup>27</sup>

James Henry and Sarah also had a son, George. He was born on 21 April 1853 and was registered at Launceston under the name of George Merison, son of James Howard Merison, painter of Margaret Street and Sarah formerly Dobins.<sup>28</sup> George, a painter's child, died of croup at Launceston on 27 January 1858 aged four years nine months.

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### **Benjamin Gosling 1828-1909**

The Gosling family, from Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, were selected by the Emigrant and Colonist Aid Corporation in 1873 and arrived as assisted immigrants at Wellington on the *Ocean Mail* on 2 February 1874. Benjamin was a 44-year-old carpenter, and he was accompanied by his wife Mary (38) and children Benjamin James (16), Charlotte (6), Alice (4) and Ellen (3).<sup>29</sup>

In January 1875 Benjamin advertised himself in the Wanganui Herald as an architect, builder and general decorator with an office in Middle Rangitikei. In early October it was suggested that his signwriting skills could be used to facilitate strangers in finding the District Survey Office and District Engineer's Office in Bulls.<sup>30</sup>

Was George Howard, painter, working with Benjamin from about September 1876 (Government Buildings, Wellington) to January 1877 (based at Moody's Hotel, Lambton Quay)?

On 25 November 1876, the same day that Howard and Gosling arrived in Wellington from Blenheim, Benjamin filed a statement saying that he was unable to pay his creditors.<sup>31</sup> A liquidation notice was published in the Wanganui Herald on 8 December 1876 and bankruptcy was discharged on 25 June 1878.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Archives NZ R18050223 Claude Hamilton Howard WW1 17/88 Army

<sup>26</sup> Evening Post 4 July 1888 Resident Magistrate's Court

<sup>27</sup> The Cornwall Chronicle (Launceston) 15 Aug 1868 Advertisement J. & J. Howard

<sup>28</sup> Libraries Tasmania Name Index Birth record RGD33/1/31 no 426 George Merison

<sup>29</sup> Passenger List for the Ocean Mail 1873-1874 <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FSBL-HYW?lang=en>

<sup>30</sup> Wanganui Herald 8 Oct 1875 Bulls

<sup>31</sup> Evening Post 5 Dec 1876 Benjamin Gosling Bankruptcy – [see Archives NZ R23212659 Bankruptcy File](#)

<sup>32</sup> Evening Post 25 Jun 1876 Benjamin Gosling Bankruptcy Discharge

## Daughters of Daniel Myler 1830-1884 of Hobart

When John Howard wrote his letter on 12 February 1882, he asked that replies be sent to E. Hooper, G. P. O., Launceston.

On 17 June 1882 George Ernest Howard, a 27-year-old bachelor and painter, married Emily Harriet Hooper, a 22-year-old spinster at the home of John Frederick Constantine, Frederick Street, Launceston.<sup>33</sup> George was the eldest son of Mrs Howard of London and Emily was the third daughter of John Elston Hooper of Hobart.<sup>34</sup>

On 25 Mar 1882 John Frederick Constantine, a 26-year-old blacksmith, married Clara Myler, a 21-year-old machinist at the home of Mr E. Constantine, Wellington Street, Launceston.<sup>35</sup> John was the eldest son of the late J. F. Constantine and Clara was the eldest daughter of Daniel Myler of Hobart.<sup>36</sup>

On 22 August 1881 Clara's sister, Maria Myler, married George Edward Howard, a blacksmith at the Independent Church, Launceston.<sup>37</sup>

George Edward Howard 1859-1944 Born Hobart Occupation: Blacksmith  Father: Henry John Howard Mother: Hannah Brain  Married: 1881 Launceston Wife: Maria Myler  Children: Alice Lillian 1883-1954 Percy Vivian 1885-1902 Wilfred John 1889-1957	George E. Howard  Occupation: Painter  Brother: John Howard  Partner: c1876 Wellington Jane Churchouse formerly Brown  Children: Alice Mary 1876-1876 Georgina May 1877-1939 Lilian 1880-1970 Bert 1881-1916	George Ernest Howard 1855-1908  Occupation: Painter  Mother: Mrs Howard of London  Married: 1882 Launceston Wife: Emily Harriet Hooper  Children: Ida Emily 1883-1948 Montague George 1884-1884 Olive Mary 1885-1951 Alice Maud 1890-1964 Ernest Clyde 1892-1965 Roy Elston 1897-1953
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### George Ernest Howard

In 1883 Ida Emily Howard was born at Sandhills, Launceston.<sup>38</sup> When Olive Mary Howard was born in 1885 the family resided at Bathurst Street, Hobart.<sup>39</sup> George advertised himself as a painter and paperhanger based at 36 Montpelier Street, Hobart from March 1889.<sup>40</sup> By December 1891 he had removed to new premises at Hampden Road.<sup>41</sup> In March 1907 the house and shop at 66 Hampden Road was advertised for immediate disposal.<sup>42</sup> On 6 July 1908 George Ernest Howard died suddenly at his late residence 46 Wright-street, East Prahran in his 56<sup>th</sup> year.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Libraries Tasmania Name Index Marriage record RGD37/1/41 no 681 George Ernest Howard

<sup>34</sup> Launceston Examiner 1 Jul 1882 Marriage Notice George Ernest Howard to Emily Harriet Hooper

<sup>35</sup> Libraries Tasmania Name Index Marriage record RGD37/1/41 no 678 John Frederick Constantine

<sup>36</sup> Launceston Examiner 27 Mar 1882 Marriage Notice John Frederick Constantine to Clara Myler

<sup>37</sup> Libraries Tasmania Name Index Marriage record RGD37/1/40 no 571 George Edward Howard to Maria Myler

<sup>38</sup> The Mercury 21 Apr 1883 Birth Notice Ida Emily Howard

<sup>39</sup> Libraries Tasmania Name Index Birth record RGD33/1/14 no 316 Olive Mary Howard

<sup>40</sup> Tasmanian News 28 Mar 1889 Wanted Known

<sup>41</sup> Tasmanian News 12 Dec 1891 Wanted Known

<sup>42</sup> The Mercury 19 Mar 1907 For Immediate Disposal

<sup>43</sup> The Mercury 10 Jul 1908 Death Notice George Ernest Howard

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## The Browne Family: Lock-keepers of Errina Canal, Clonlara, County Clare, Ireland

When Mrs Jane Howard died in 1896, aged 51 years, her death notice in the Evening Post stated that she was the second daughter of the late James Brown, of Erina Lock, Clonlara, County Clare, Ireland, and sister of Mrs John Peck, Blackbridge, Lower Hutt. Toronto (Canada) and County Clare papers please copy. The funeral will leave her late residence, Edward-street, off Herbert-street, for Karori Cemetery.<sup>44</sup>

When her sister, Annie Rebecca Peck, died in 1923, aged 73 years, her obituary stated that she was a girl when she arrived in Wellington.<sup>45</sup> Jane's eldest son was born in 1868<sup>46</sup> and Annie married John Peck on 25 December 1871.<sup>47</sup>

Did the sisters arrive in Auckland on the steamship *Lord Ashley* on 14 October 1858? The list of steerage passengers included Jane and Susan Brown.<sup>48</sup>

In March 1885 the Evening Post announced the death of James Browne, Collector of Customs and lockkeeper, father of Mrs John Peck, Lower Hutt, in his 75<sup>th</sup> year. Sydney papers please copy.<sup>49</sup> His death was registered in the Bridgetown district, Limerick by John Frost, Coroner for the County of Clare. James, a widower, accidentally drowned.

The death of the eldest sister, Elizabeth Harrison, at Toronto on 18 April 1915, was also announced in the Evening Post. This stated that she was the eldest daughter of the late John Brown, of Erina Lock.<sup>50</sup>

The Story of Errina Canal, written by Betty Noonan, a Browne family descendant, says that Thomas Brown was the first lockkeeper and that the family remained as lockkeepers until 1904. During the Griffiths Valuations period (1847-1864) James Brown was the lockkeeper and in the 1901 Census it was John Browne.<sup>51</sup>

Betty's Ancestry Tree suggests that Elizabeth, Jane and Annie had three other siblings:<sup>52</sup>

Mary Browne 1848-1913 m WARREN  
John Browne m Anne JOHNSTON  
James Browne

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<sup>44</sup> Evening Post 1 Aug 1896 Death Notice for Mrs Jane Howard

<sup>45</sup> Dominion 18 Apr 1923 Obituary for Mrs Annie Peck

<sup>46</sup> RGO Birth 1868/17057 Sydney William Rufus Brown

<sup>47</sup> RGO Marriage 1871/8682 Annie Brown to John Peck

<sup>48</sup> Daily Southern Cross 15 Oct 1858 Shipping Intelligence Arrival of the *Lord Ashley*

<sup>49</sup> Evening Post 21 Mar 1885 Death Notice for James Browne

<sup>50</sup> Evening Post 3 Jun 1915 Death Notice for Elizabeth Harris

<sup>51</sup> Clonlara Community Heritage: The Story of the Errina Canal by Betty Noonan (last updated 12 Aug 2024)

<https://clonlara.clareheritage.org/topics/the-story-of-the-errina-canal>

<sup>52</sup> Ancestry Hogg Family Tree (Elizabeth Noonan) – James Browne 1808-1884

<https://www.ancestry.com.au/family-tree/person/tree/178496344/person/262326267905/facts>