

# Faed

John

1819 - 1902

## His Life

John Faed was born 31st August 1819, the first of six children of James Faed and Mary McGeoch,. Like his siblings he was born at Barlay Mill on the outskirts of Gatehouse.

At the bottom of this file is a Faed family tree which shows where John fits in.

John's father James was a millwright and engineer, who built and installed threshing mills around the area.

He met his wife Mary McGeoch while erecting a mill at Girthon Kirk Farm. The couple married in June 1819.

John enjoyed spending time with his Grandmother McGeoch at Girthon Kirk. She taught him the alphabet and encouraged him to copy letters onto the smooth stone floor slabs at the farmhouse. His uncle William McGeoch was good at drawing and young John enjoyed copying his work in ink.

His formal education, like all the Faed children, was at Girthon Parish School, where there was an emphasis on rote learning and religious teachings. He did not like the headmaster Mr Dun and left school aged eleven. However the beautiful maps that he had drawn while at school were positively commented on by the local examination board.

At home, he drew illustrations for his favourite boys' books using Indian ink on paper. When he wanted colours, he ground up stones to make pigments. He worked in the corner of the meal mill at Barlay and stuck his pictures round the walls.

His father did not understand his eldest son's obsession with art. However James showed his employer, Alexander Murray, Laird of Cally, some of John's drawings. Mr Murray did nothing to encourage young John either. It was some years later before John succeeded in seeing the many beautiful paintings in Cally House.

In 1828 the Campbell family from Edinburgh moved into Roseville in Ann Street, Gatehouse. Their house was also filled with portraits, and John was soon spending hours at the house where he 'received all manner of kindness'. He painted miniatures of the family and enjoyed listening to the daughters play music. He was about nine years old. It was at Roseville he discovered that ivory rather than paper was the best material for small miniatures.

John's drawings came to the attention of Viscount Kenmure, himself an artist. He met young John at the Bay Horse Inn in Ann Street and was so impressed by the quality and speed of his work that he gifted John his paint box. John was delighted - " I had never seen a cake of watercolour in my life before, but to be the possessor of such a number of colours was wealth indeed. I took them to bed with me, so that when daylight came I might examine them one by one. It is needless to say that after that, I deserted my old friend Indian ink"

John's 'little portraits' of people gave him a steady supply of pocket money. He travelled around the villages in Galloway painting the aristocracy and wealthy. Gradually his father began to be reconciled to his eldest son's artistic talents.

When he was about 16 a friend suggested that he should go to London for training but John's father refused to allow him to go. For the next two years John continued painting and selling miniatures including many done while his father was working on a bridge contract in Maryport. His father was soon won over by John's abilities and raised no objections when his son decided to go to Edinburgh to attend art classes. John was also encouraged by Thomas Murray, a Gatehouse native, who had prospered in Edinburgh, and readily provided friendship and support to young Galloway men in the city.

John attended the art classes at the Trustees Academy but in truth spent more time painting miniatures which gave him a steady income. He was eager to try other art work so encouraged his brother Thomas to join him in Edinburgh to help him out. Soon they were joined by brother James, who intended to study engineering, and then their youngest brother George.

In 1849 John married Jane Macdonald, a minister's daughter. The couple had no children and lived in Edinburgh until 1864. In 1852 he painted her portrait - naming it 'Flora'. During his 15 years in Edinburgh John Faed became a popular and successful artist.

He began to paint fewer miniatures and more oil portraits including a series of clerical portraits in the early years of his marriage. He also painted scenes from Shakespearean plays, Robert Burns poems and Sir Walter Scott novels.

By 1851, eleven years after leaving home, the Royal Scottish Academy had exhibited eight-one of John's portraits, twenty-nine of his miniatures and eight other pictures.

In 1857 he took a trip to the Continent and extended it to include Syria and Egypt. He picked up many interesting ideas and props, and painted a number of Biblical and Eastern subjects after he returned home. One of his major pictures was 'The Wappenschaw' (a rifle competition) which included over forty individual portraits. It was exhibited in 1863 at the Royal Scottish Academy. He would later also paint 2 smaller versions of the picture.

In 1864 he illustrated a book, 'Legend of St Swithin - A Rhyme for Rainy Weather' an amusing tale which showed his sense of humour.

John was by now exhibiting regularly at the Royal Academy in London and realised that he needed to move there. His brother Thomas was already living there. John and Jane lived there until 1880. However they wanted a home in Scotland, so in 1867 had a house built by his uncle Mr Hornsby on the outskirts of Gatehouse. The house on The Cut was named Ardmore and John and Jane spent half the year there for about nine years.

John often painted the view over Gatehouse from his house and when the new Town Hall was opened in 1885, he gifted a large oil painting of the view as a backdrop for the stage in the main hall. (Nowadays this painting is in the Mill on the Fleet.) He became much involved the affairs of Gatehouse, serving on the Town Council and involved in projects such as the building of the Town Clock and the Town Hall. He continued to paint and exhibit until he was in his seventies although not always keeping good health. In his later years he provided illustrations for books such as George Sproat's 'Rose of Dalma Linn and other Lays O' Gallowa' and Malcolm Harper's 'The Bards of Galloway.'

His wife Jane died on 27th September 1897. John's sister Susan came to live with him.

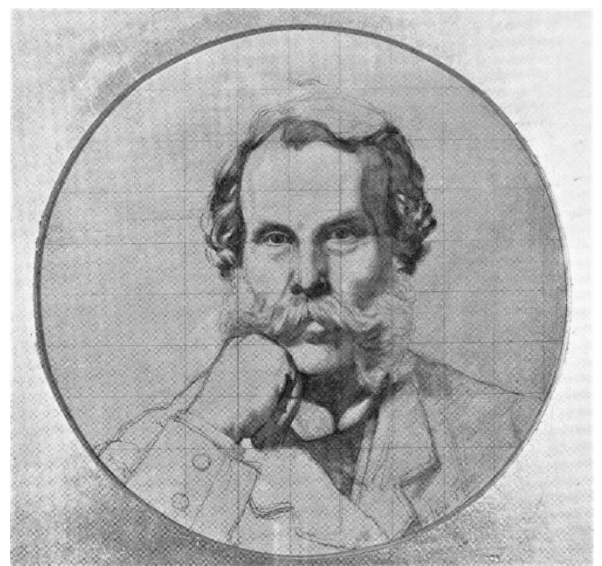
John Faed died on the 22nd October 1902 aged 83, at Ardmore. He and his wife Jane are buried in Girthon Cemetery.



Left : John's portrait of his wife Jane. The drawing was called "Flora".

Right : Self portrait

Both images are taken Mary McKerrow's biography "The Faeds".



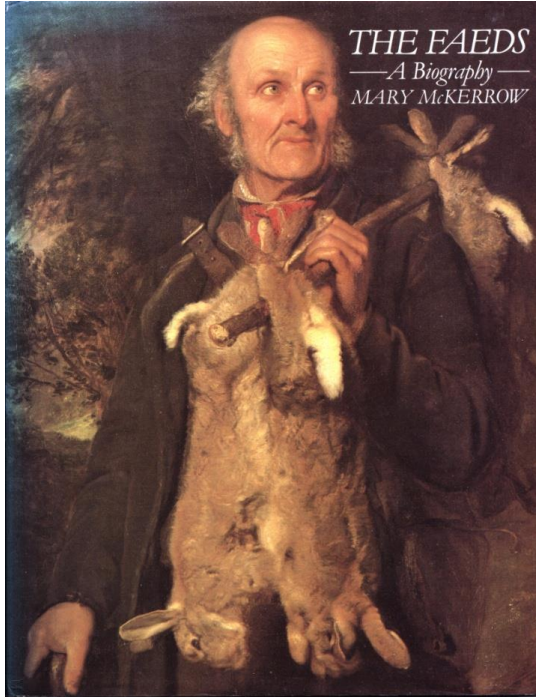
## His Work

Try following the links to find examples of this artist's work.. When you have viewed the contents, remember to use your browser's "back" button to return to this page.

[In the Artists Footsteps](#)

[Art UK](#)

John Faed often used Gatehouse residents as models for his paintings. **Sandy Inglis**, a retired farmworker features in several paintings such as 'Rabbit Catcher' (on the cover of Mary McKerrow's book below). 'The Little Seamstress' is known to be **Elizabeth Pitt** (on the cover of David Steel's book below)



This view of a cottage interior is known to be an engraving of a John Faed painting. We do not know the title, the location of the cottage, or the name of the engraver. The young lady with the child on her knee is **Elizabeth McLellan** (later **Mrs John Nelson**).



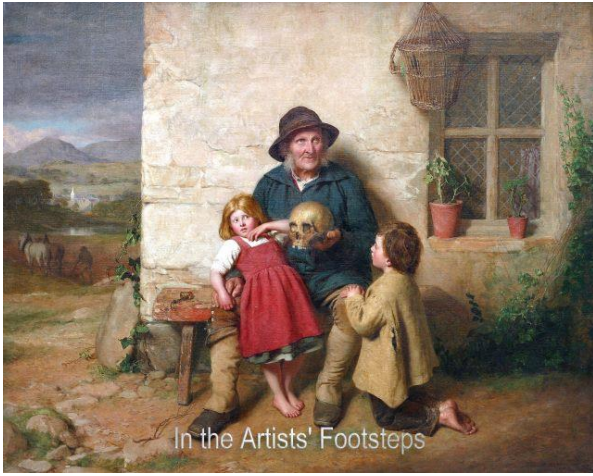
**Helen Houston** (later **Mrs DY Veitch**) and her sisters are also known to have been models for John Faed.

**Nancy Carney** was the model for the "Rose of Dalma Linn".



The Wappenschaw (shooting match)

*Source : National Trust for Scotland (can be seen at Threave House, Kirkcudbright)*



In the Artists' Footsteps

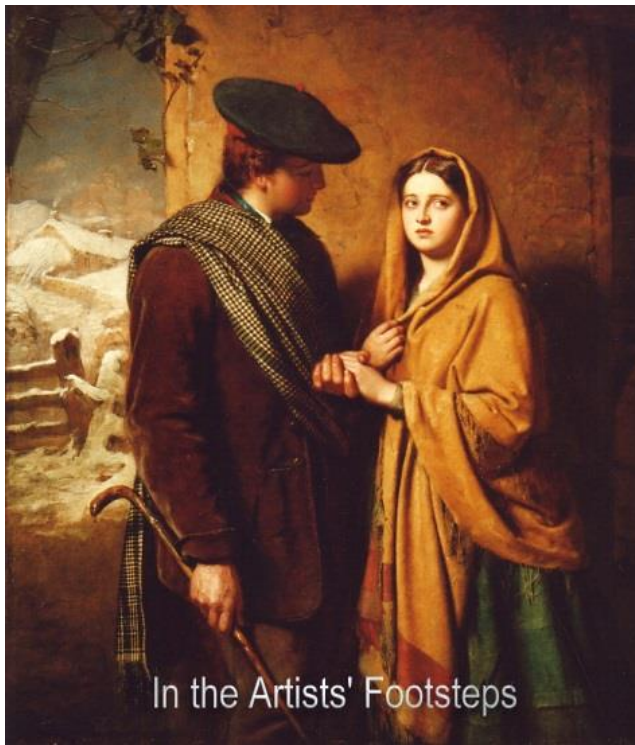
Battle of Blenheim



In the Artists' Footsteps

KIRKCUDBRIGHT GALLERIES

The Trysting Place



In the Artists' Footsteps

Annie's Tryst



View over Gatehouse



In the Artists' Footsteps

The Gentle Critic



In the Artists' Footsteps

KIRKCUDBRIGHT GALLERIES

The Solier's Return

# Faed family – artists & engravers



Barlay Mill & Miln of Barlay, Laurieston Road, Gatehouse

John **Fead** (b.1704? d.1788?) m.1736 Kirkmahoe Mary **Walker** (b.1722? d.1758?)

1. Barbara **Fead** (b.1737 Kirkmahoe d.???)
2. William **Fead** (b.1739 Kirkmahoe d.1816?)
3. Samuel **Fead** (b.1740 Kirkmahoe d.???)
4. James **Fead** (b.1743 Kirkmahoe d.???)
5. Margaret **Fead** (b.1747 Kirkmahoe d.???)
6. John **Fead** (b.1751? d.1804?)
7. Robert **Fead** (b.1754 Kirkmahoe d.1821?)
8. Simon **Fead** (b.17--? d.???)

Agnes **Robson** (b.?? d.???)  
 Janet **Ferguson** (b.?? d.???)  
 Beatrix (Bessie) **Smith** m.1850 Gordon (b.?? d.???)

N.B. The father of this family was born and died with surname Fead, probably pronounced 'Fede'. The children were all called Fead at birth but during their lifetimes the surname was changed to Faed, probably without changing the pronunciation.

- John **Farish** (b.?? d.???)  
 Janc **Chalmers** (b.?? d.???)  
 Janet **Smith** (b.?? d.???)
- John **Fead** (b.1780? d.1841?)
  - Samuel **Fead** (b.1782? d.1849?)
  - Barbara **Fead** (b.?? d.???)
  - William **Fead** (b.1787? d.1850?)

Margaret **Fead** (b.1772? d.1852?)  
 James **Fead** (b.1777 Kirkton d.1843 Girthon) m.1819 Girthon Mary **McGeoch** (b.1790 Girthon d.1866 Anwoth)  
*millier & engineer*

1. John **Fead** (b.1819 Girthon d.1902 Girthon) **artist** m.??? Jane **MacDonald** (b.1820 Gigha d.1897 Girthon) no children
2. James **Fead** (b.1821 Girthon d.1911 Edinburgh) **engraver**
3. William **Fead** (b.1823 Girthon d.1888 Melbourne) **farmer**
4. Thomas **Fead** (b.1825 Girthon d.1900 London) **artist** m.1852 London Frances Mary **Randz** (b.?? d.1895?) 2 children
5. Susan Bell **Fead** (b.1827 Girthon d.1909 Girthon) m.1887 London John **Walthew** (b.1822 Hyde d.1899 Stockport)
6. George **Fead** (b.1829 Girthon d.1852 Edinburgh)

Mary **Cotton** (b.1827 Edinburgh d.1887?) m.1853 Edinburgh

- male stillborn (b.1854?)
1. James J K **Faed** (b.1856 W.Calder d.1920 New Galloway)
  2. William Cotton **Faed** (b.1858 W.Calder d.1937 Jersey)
  3. John **Faed** (b.1860 Edinburgh d.1861?) died 7 mths
  4. Ellenor Merry **Faed** (b.1864 Edinburgh d.1955 Edinburgh)
  5. Francis Grant **Faed** (b.1867 Edinburgh d.1914 Edinburgh)
  6. Stewart **Faed** (b.1869 Edinburgh d.1898 Nice)
  7. Mary Annie **Faed** (b.1871 Edinburgh d.1945?)
  8. Mark George **Faed** (b.1873 Edinburgh d.1951 Edinburgh)

Eleanor Annie **Herdman** (b.1873 Edinburgh d.1951 Edinburgh) m.1897 Corstorphine

- Janet **Armstrong** (b.?? England d.???) 5 sons; lived in Channel Islands m.?? Australia
- 1. James **Brechin** (b.?? d.???)
  - 2. Arthur Edward W **Barclay** (b.?? d.???)
- David **MacMillan** (b.?? d.???) m.1898 Edinburgh
- 1. Margaret Corson **Smith** (b.?? d.???)
  - 2. Frances Helen **Whitwell** (b.?? d.???)

James Ronald Herdman **Faed** (b.1899 London d.1915 Dardanelles)  
 John Alastair **Faed** (b.1905 London d.1981 Zimbabwe) m.1933 South Africa Frances **Herdman** (b.1905 Edinburgh d.1996 Edinburgh) lived in Zimbabwe

Brian Collins (b.?? d.???) m.??? Fiona Joan **Faed** (b.1934?)  
 Martin James Collins (b.1978?)  
 Carline Corsar Wilson **Smith** (b.?? d.???) m.1990 Glasgow Stuart Alastair **Faed** (b.1964?)  
 James Alastair (b.1992) Charles Simon (b.1994) Georgina Frances (b.1999)

Simon James **Faed** (b.1937?) m.??? Philippa **Milne** (b.?? d.???)  
 Janet Frances **Faed** (b.1967?) m.??? Kevin **Foulkes** (b.?? d.???)  
 Sasha Hayley (b.1992) Kathryn Emily (b.1995) Mathew Alastair (b.2003)

Sources of information for this tree include :  
 1. The Faeds – A Biography  
*by Mary McKerrow (1982)*  
 2. James Faed Junior – Celebrating 150 Years  
*by Stuart Faed (2006)*