

Faed

Thomas

1825 - 1900

His Life

Thomas Faed was born at Barlay Mill, Gatehouse on 8th June 1826. He was the fourth son of James Faed, millwright and engineer, and his wife Mary McGeoch.

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

Tom, as he was known, like his brothers and sister, was educated at Girthon Parish school in Gatehouse.

From an early age he loved to paint and would join his older brother John, 6 years his senior, in their 'studio' in the corner of the mill.

He is said to have painted his first oil painting, aged twelve, using his mothers' old apron as a canvas and with tools and pigments that he had made himself (*ex 'The Faeds' by Mary McKerrow*). This painting 'Interior with Figures' now hangs in Glasgow Art Gallery.

Around Gatehouse he found plenty of inspiration from the scenery such as nearby Fleuchlarg Glen to the 'bonnie Gatehouse lassies' such as Nancy Carney.

Aged sixteen, his father sent him to Castle Douglas to train as an apprentice draper as he feared Tom was going to follow his brother John's footsteps into the art world. Tom spent much of his time at the drapers shop sketching the customers on scraps of paper, rather than selling them goods.

After his father's death in 1843, he was overjoyed to accept an invitation from his big brother John in Edinburgh, who was having great success painting miniatures and needed help. Before long John recognised his brother's talent at oil painting and encouraged him to attend lessons at the Trustees Academy.

Tom was a very successful student winning many prizes for his work, such as his 'Portrait of John Mongo' in 1847. The Royal Scottish Academy exhibited a watercolour 'The Old English Baron' when Tom was just eighteen.

Tom enjoyed living in Edinburgh. He was a tall handsome man with a charming manner and was a good raconteur. He was much in demand at dinners and parties in the capital.

He enjoyed reading and was fond of Burns' poems and Walter Scott novels. He painted several pictures depicting scenes from these books. A favourite was 'Highland Mary' which he painted several times and later on, in 1860, 'His Only Pair' based on 'Cotter's Saturday Night' by Burns. About 1848 he painted 'Sir Walter Scott and his friends at Abbotsford' which included many of his literary heroes.

By 1851 Tom's paintings were selling well and he moved to his own house in Edinburgh. On census night his sister Susan (a housekeeper) and older brother William were with him.

He also painted poor Scottish families leaving their homes to seek employment overseas. 'The Last of the Clans' which depicts the Highland Clearances is probably his most famous painting. Leaving Scotland was something Tom found hard to understand - he much preferred home soil especially shooting or fishing in Galloway. However before long he decided to join other Scottish artists in London. At a function he met his future wife Frances Mary Rand (Fanny) from Bath. The couple were married in Lincolnshire in November 1852.

His 1854 picture of 'Evangeline', depicting a character from a Henry Longfellow poem, brought him great success. The picture was engraved by his brother James and the book in which it was published, both here and in North America, achieved a huge circulation.

In 1855 the 'Mitherless Bairn' was named as the picture of the season. (It sold in 1886 for £945 - much less than expected as at the time there were false claims that it was a fake. It was bought by the Government of Australia and is still in the National Gallery in Melbourne).

Many of his paintings showed typical scenes of rural life in Scotland, and they were much in demand, so Tom was now firmly established as a master at these paintings. It was becoming a good investment to buy a Thomas Faed picture.

Over a number of years, Tom also painted a trilogy of pictures depicting life in Canada. It is thought that the inspiration may have come from letters from his McGeoch relatives from Girthon Kirk, who had emigrated there around 1850.

Tom and Mary continued to live in London for the rest of his life as it was convenient for the exhibitions and sales of his paintings but he would visit Scotland and in particular Galloway whenever he could. His fame continued to grow as did the number of honours bestowed on him.

He and Mary had a happy marriage and enjoyed a busy social life. They had a daughter Mary Frances Ann Faed (born 1853) and a son (John Francis, born 1862 who became a painter of seascapes). In 1860 they had had another son Thomas George William Faed who is with the family in the 1861 census, but who sadly died in 1863.

Tom's wife Fanny died in 1870 in London and from then on he led a much quieter life. In the 1871 census he is staying at a hotel in Brighton with his son John Francis and his sister Susan.

In 1892 he retired from the Royal Academy because his eyesight was beginning to fail and although he still had many ideas for paintings he had to give up portrait painting professionally and decided to try landscape painting. Despite his failing health he was still bright and alert so his death on 17th August 1900 came as a surprise to many of his family.

Thomas Faed died a wealthy man leaving over £56,000 in his will.

After his death there were many tributes paid to him.

The Dumfries Standard said 'Galloway has lost one of her geniuses and Scotland a famous artist'

The magazine of Art said 'Mr Faed is a poet who uses a brush instead of a pen'

The author Thomas Newbigging, another Gatehouse lad, who, as a youngster, had been reprimanded by Tom for poaching fish from the River Fleet, also commented on his kindness and friendship.

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.

[Wikipedia](#)

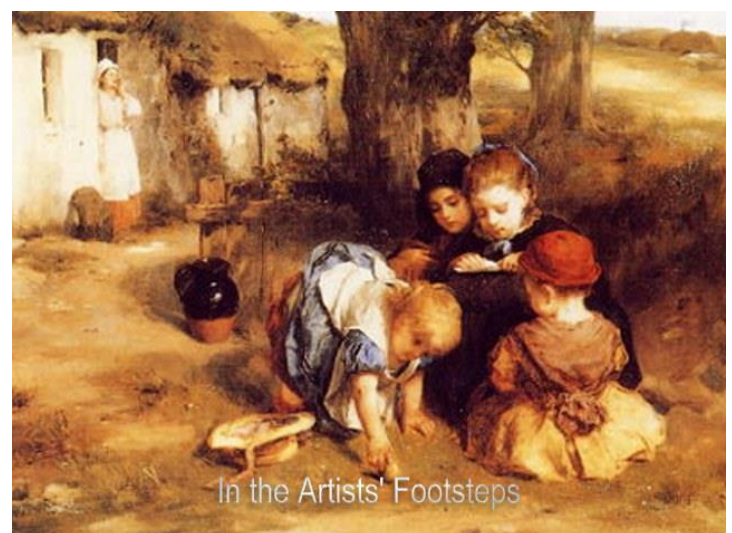
[In the Artist's Footsteps](#)

[ArtUK](#)

[National Galleries of Scotland](#)



Interior with Figures (painted at age 12)
Source : Glasgow Museums



Happy as the Day is Long



Last of the Clan (Source : Glasgow Museums)



The First Break in the Family



Burns and Highland Mary



A Life Study of John Mongo (The Punka-walla)
Source : National Galleries of Scotland



Visit to the Village School
Source : Dundee Art Galleries and Museum

Faed family – artists & engravers



Barlay Mill & Miln of Barlay, Laurieston Road, Gatehouse

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

1. Barbara **Faed** (b.1737 Kirkmahoe d.???)
2. William **Faed** (b.1739 Kirkmahoe d.1816?)
3. Samuel **Faed** (b.1740 Kirkmahoe d.???)
4. James **Faed** (b.1743 Kirkmahoe d.???)
5. Margaret **Faed** (b.1747 Kirkmahoe d.???)
6. John **Faed** (b.1751? d.1804?)
7. Robert **Faed** (b.1754 Kirkmahoe d.1821?)
8. Simon **Faed** (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 **Faed**, probably pronounced 'Fæde'. The children were all called **Faed** 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 **Faed** (b.1780? d.1841?)
 - Samuel **Faed** (b.1782? d.1849?)
 - Barbara **Faed** (b.?? d.???)
 - William **Faed** (b.1787? d.1850?)

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

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