



Robert Hawcridge was an early professional illustrator in New Zealand.

He was born on 21 January 1866, the son of Thomas Hawcridge, an engineer, and his wife Mary Ann Sykes. He was educated in Bradford, England, and after training as a commercial artist, he joined Alfred Cooke & Sons in Leeds, becoming the company's principal show card designer.

He followed his wife-to-be, Jeanette Haigh, to Dunedin in the late 1880s. They married and he secured employment with the NZ Tablet Printing Co as a lithographer. In October 1889, he transferred to J. Wilkie & Co Ltd, and was responsible for illustrating brochures relating to the visit of the Irish delegation for the 1889-90 NZ and South Seas Exhibition.

A panorama, Dunedin, *New Zealand, panorama of city and harbour* was lithographed from a painting of his in 1894. He illustrated Edith Howes' *Maoriland Fairy Tales*, 1906, and his works were published in the literary magazines *Triad* and *Red Funnel*. But he was not only an illustrator, he took himself seriously as an artist, joining the Otago Art

Society soon after establishing himself in Dunedin and becoming a working and later Council member from 1890 until his death.

His 1905 oil painting *Enemy at the Gate* shows a pre-Raphaelite influence produced by his vocational training.

After 20 years with Wilkie & Co, Hawcridge became the principal of the Dunedin Art School, then managed by the Education Board and emphasizing vocational education.

The 1914-18 war seriously reduced the number of apprentices and pupil-teachers enrolling, and when Hawcridge died in office, the roll was so depleted that the school's continuance was uncertain.

Hawcridge died on 7 January 1920, survived by his wife, one son, and two daughters, and is buried in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery.