



Sir James Matthew Barrie was born in Kirriemuir, Angus, Scotland on May 9, 1860. When his older brother David died in an ice skating accident at a young age, his mother was devastated and went into a deep depression. JM would try to comfort her by wearing his brother's clothes. His mother said that her one comfort was knowing that David would be a boy forever and would never grow up. This obviously played a big part in Barrie's life.

Barrie went away to school and became interested in theatre. He would often play "pirates" with the other school kids. He studied at the University of Edinburgh where he wrote drama reviews for a local paper. He moved to London to become a freelance writer and soon turned his attention to playwriting. The first appearance of Peter Pan was in *The Little White Bird* in 1901.

Barrie married actress Mary Ansell in 1891. They met when she was recommended for a part in one of his plays. They married, but had no children. Mary had an affair and refused to end it. JM granted her a divorce.

The inspiration for Peter Pan was said to come from telling stories and playing games with the Llewelyn Davies family. James had met the boys while walking his dog through the park. He later met their mother, Sylvia, at a dinner party & they became friends. James often spent time with the family, more so after the death of the boys' father, Arthur. He became "Uncle Jimmy" to Sylvia's 5 sons. It was seen as somewhat scandalous at the time. Sylvia died a few years later and "Uncle Jimmy" became a guardian to the boys.

His greatest success was *Peter Pan- The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*. The first big stage performance was in December of 1904. The play was so successful that it has been adapted into numerous films, musicals, and more. Live performances of the play have never failed to get the audience clapping to save Tinkerbell's life. Barrie signed over copyright of Peter Pan to the Great Ormond Street Hospital in London in 1929. A statue of Peter Pan "magically" appeared one night in 1912 in Kensington Gardens, where Barrie would spend time with the Llewelyn Davies children.

Barrie died of pneumonia in June 1937. He is buried in Kirriemuir next to his parents. His birthplace is now a museum.