

Trades House of Glasgow

WILLIAM SEARCY



By

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William Searcy



William Searcy
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William Searcy was born about 1809 in Midlothian, Edinburgh.¹ He appears to have served his apprenticeship as a carpenter before moving to Kent and was there at the 1841 census.² William and Julia Jane Wilke were married in 1838 in Marylebone, London and after only 7 years of marriage, Julia died in 1845 in Kensington, London. The next time we find William in the records he is staying at 179 Trongate, St. Enoch, Glasgow with his wife Elizabeth and 2-year-old daughter Mary A., and at that time he was a vintner and eating house keeper.³ William's second wife Elizabeth Brown who died on 12th August 1880 aged 69 of a disease of the liver. At the time of Elizabeth's death, William was a Master joiner and was listed as a retired Restaurant Keeper.⁴

William became a Burgess of Glasgow on 26th January 1857 as a member of the Incorporation of Wrights⁵. The date that he joined the Incorporation of Bonnetmakers and Dyers is unknown but he became Deacon of that Incorporation in 1874, 1875 and 1878⁶. He was very active in the Trades House and served on the Committees on Lands of Kelvinbank, Hall Buildings, Pensions, Lands of Kelvinbank and Sandyford and Pensioners.⁷

He died at 4am on the 1st December 1882 at the age of 73 from a disease of the stomach. He was then living at 13 Binnie Place, Carlton, Glasgow.⁸ William had amassed a fair amount of money and property during his long life and left generous bequests to his family and friends, and to a number of Glasgow institutions. This is a list of some of his bequests in Glasgow:

The Royal Infirmary, Glasgow	£100
The Western Infirmary, Glasgow	£100
The Lying-in-Hospital	£25
The Old Man's Society	£25
The Asylum for the Blind	£25
The Institution for the Deaf and Dumb	£25
The Aged Woman's Home	£25
The Home for the Relief of Incurables	£25
The Trades House of Glasgow	£500 ⁹

¹ Census Returns of Scotland for William Searcy for the years of 1851, 1861, 1871 and 1881

² Census Returns of England for William Searcy for the years of 1841

³ Census Returns of Scotland for William Searcy for the years of 1851 and 1861

⁴ Scotland's Statutory Register of Deaths, 22nd August 1880

⁵ Trades House of Glasgow Burgess Roll, 26th January 1857

⁶ Trades House of Glasgow, Archives, Bonnetmakers and Dyers Deacons

⁷ Trades House of Glasgow Minutes, Trades House Archives

⁸ Statutory Register Deaths of William Searcy, 1st December 1882

⁹ Scotland, Last Will and Testament of William Searcy, 29th January 1883

The setting up of the Searcy Legacy

After his death in 1882, his Trustees wrote to Collector MacLean, offering the Trades House £500 which William Searcy had left as a legacy in his Trust Disposition and Settlement for the purposes of founding a Bursary to be called the "Searcy Bursary". This Bursary would be open to the sons of members of the fourteen Incorporated Trades of Glasgow to allow them to attend Arts Classes at the University of Glasgow during its three years of tenure.¹⁰

The legacy from William Searcy lay unused by the Trades House for about three years when the subject was raised by the Convener when he indicated that the sum of £450 had increased due to interest to £493 18s 4d. it was proposed that the Bursary should be brought into operation and that the first Bursar should be appointed for the next session and that the amount to be fixed at £18 per session. A sub-committee was formed to frame the rules for the Bursary.¹¹

The Searcy Bursary along with several other bursaries are no longer given as a stand-alone bursary as their value has diminished over the years. They have been amalgamated into the Trades House Education Fund which is used to support and encourage school pupils, College and University students to achieve their maximum.

¹⁰ Trades House Minutes, 23rd February 1883

¹¹ Trades House Education Committee, 4th February 1887