



A Candle Maker's Life Burns Bright

By all accounts, William was a cheerful, red haired Cockney with a fine singing voice, a genuine religious fervour and an enormous capacity for hard work. Before emigrating in 1838 he had been a butcher, then an oil and colour man which included the work of tallow rendering and candle making. By nineteen he was also leading the singing at open air meetings at the Billingsgate Fish Market having joined the renowned Reverend G C Smith, the sailor's missionary. His religious beliefs and difficulties in making a good living for his family in the East End made emigration to South Australia an inviting option.

Arriving with only 1/6d in cash, he started working in a lime kiln, excavated a cellar and then found work painting and glazing for which he was paid £3 a week. Soon he was employing his own workers and bought a plot of town land for £30.

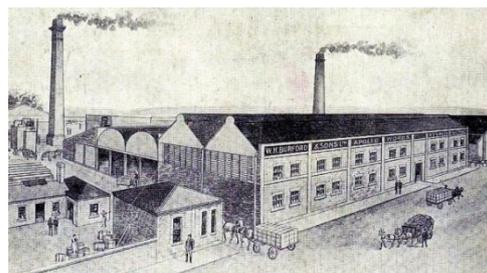
While his outlook had greatly improved by 1839, William went bankrupt during the financial crisis of 1841-2 but then began making candles. He secured contracts with the mines in Moota and Burra, forming a basis for expansion into soap and other products which resulted in the successful firm of W H Burford and Sons, at one time the largest soap and candle manufacturing business in Australia.

In October 1841, he was elected a member of the Common Council of Adelaide making him a founding municipal father. In 1857 he was elected to the new House of Assembly resigning in 1859 after unsuccessfully advocating for land tax on large land-holders. He spoke against state aid for churches and capital punishment and was in favour of women's suffrage and religious equality.

His support of the Real Property Act (Torrens Title) made it possible to be passed into law and the first 1859 copy of Sir Robert Torren's book 'Law Reform' was inscribed by Torrens

"...to my friend W H Burford...testifying my esteem for his steadfastness and integrity of character and my gratitude for the assistance rendered by him in carrying the Real Property Act..."

William was a benefactor and active participant in the Church of Christ. He had strong views but practiced what he preached. He had a saying 'a candle maker of all persons in the world, though he may not be a great luminary, ought to burn with no uncertain light'. He died at 89 years of age.



Burford's Apollo Soap Works, Hindmarsh

**From information provided by Susan Benham Page,
William's great-great granddaughter
March 2014**

William Henville BURFORD [1807-1895]

Married

- [1] Elizabeth MESSENT [1814-1858]
on 16 May 1833 at St George in the East
Church, Borough of Tower Hamlets, Middlesex
&
[2] Mary Ann MESSENT [1815-1879] in 1861
&
[3] Frances SYMONDS [1831-1926] in 1880

Departed June 1838 from London
Arrived 11 October 1838 at Holdfast Bay on the

Pestonjee Bomenjee

Children of William & Elizabeth:

- Elizabeth (1834-1900) m [1] Charles BOWEN
[2] Robert Kettle FINLAYSON
Ann (1835-1852)
Sarah (1837-1838)
Gertrude (1841-1914) m Robert EDDY
Benjamin (1843-1905) m Mary Jane WARE
William (1845-1925) m [1] Mary RICHARDSON
[2] Lilian PRINCE
Samuel (1848-1850)

