

Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association

Overview

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was formed in London in 1841. (For a history of this association, see 'History and Heritage', on the [YMCA](#) website.)

There is a discrepancy in the records as to the start date of the Glasgow branch of the YMCA. According to the 1877 'Constitution' of the Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association (GYMCA), the group was founded in 1841. Alternatively, according to the *History of the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations* (1955), the Glasgow branch was founded in 1848, when the Glasgow Young Men's Institute (evidently a separate organisation from the earlier Glasgow Young Men's Society for Religious Improvement) adopted the name of the Young Men's Christian Association (see '[YMCA Scotland. Scotland - National Council of YMCAs](#)' on the [World YMCA](#) website.)

There is a consensus, however, as to the events that followed: in 1877, the GYMCA amalgamated with the Glasgow Young Men's Society for Religious Improvement (instituted 1824), to become the Glasgow United Young Men's Christian Association.

This was a large and well-organised group that had branches spread across all parts of the city. Its central meeting rooms were on 280 George Street, in the heart of the city. The Annual Report for 1866 includes the group's 'Constitution and Rules', which sets out the object of the group as being the provision of facilities to bring about young men's improvement in various areas (typically, this included a rather standard list that included intellectual, moral and religious improvement).

The yearly subscription charge was 2s 6d, which was the average for these societies during this period. However, it seems that this fee was subject to negotiation, perhaps being dependent upon personal financial circumstances.

Upon the amalgamation of the Glasgow Young Men's Society for Religious Improvement, and the Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association, the newly formed Glasgow United Young Men's Christian Association was formed in 1877. Its object was also for young men's improvement.

It was reported that as of 31 December 1877, there was a total of 176 branches of the Glasgow United Young Men's Christian Association, with 149 in the city and suburbs, and 27 Country Branches.

Date of Existence

1841-1877

Source of Information

1. *Annual Report of the Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association. For 1865-66* (Glasgow: Aird & Coghill, 1866)(Note: the 1867 and 1877 Annual Reports are also bound in this publication, while the 1868-1876 reports are not) (MLSC, GC267.3941443 GLA);

2. *Lecture on Revealed Religion, by Professors and Ministers of Various Denominations. Delivered Under the Auspices of the Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association, 1872-73. With Preface by the Rev. Robt. Jamieson, D.D., Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* (Glasgow: Geo. Bogie, 463 Paisley Road; Thos. Murray & Son; George Gallie & Son. Edinburgh and Glasgow: John Menzies & Co., [1873]) (ML, Mitchell (GC) 231.74 97614)

3. (Various published lectures given to association, see [Mitchell online catalogue](#));

4. M'Dowall, John K., *The People's History of Glasgow. An Encyclopedic Record of the City From the Prehistoric Period to the Present Day* (Glasgow: Hay Nisbet and Co. Ltd., 1899), p. 63 (ML, GC 941. 443 McDo);

5. Binfield, Clyde, *George Williams and the Y.M.C.A.: A Study in Victorian Social Attitudes* (London : Heinemann, 1973) (ML, Mitchell (SS) 267.3924 BIN);

6. Youde, Kate, 'Brand Report: YMCA Glasgow Becomes Y People', *Third Sector* (8 February 2011)

<<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/brand-report-ymca-glasgow-becomes-y-people/communications/article/1053222>> [accessed 23/03/15];

Repository

Mitchell Library (ML)

Mitchell Library Special Collections (MLSC)

Reference Number

(See Source of Information)

Additional Notes

See also [Glasgow Young Men's Society for Religious Improvement](#) and [Glasgow United Young Men's Christian Association](#).

See also [Young Women's Christian Association \(aka Glasgow Young Women's Christian Association\)](#).