Library sources on Elizabeth Fry

Elizabeth Fry, nee Gurney, was born in Norwich in 1780 to a Quaker family. She married Joseph Fry in 1800. They settled in East London and had 11 children. In 1813 Elizabeth Fry became interested in prison conditions and began visiting Newgate Prison. Throughout her life she campaigned for penal reform and the abolition of capital punishment and travelled across Britain and into Europe visiting prisons. She also worked with the homeless and poor and established a training school for nurses. She died in 1845 and was buried in Barking; her headstone has since been moved to Wanstead Quaker Burial Ground.

The collections of the Library of the Society of Friends contain a wide range of resources for the study of Elizabeth Fry. These include printed material, manuscripts and images; selections of these are outlined in this guide.

Dictionary of Quaker biography
A useful starting point for researching the life of Elizabeth Fry is the typescript Dictionary of Quaker biography (DQB). It contains several entries for Elizabeth Fry, together with an extensive bibliography of works about her held within the Library’s collections. The Dictionary of Quaker Biography is located in the Library’s Reading Room.

Printed works by Elizabeth Fry
The following published works by Elizabeth Fry, are held within the Library’s collections and are available for reference:


Elizabeth Fry. *Memoir of the life of Elizabeth Fry with extracts from her journal and letters*. Edited by two of her daughters. 2nd ed. revised and enlarged. London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1848. 2 vols. 092.4 FRY


**Printed works about Elizabeth Fry**

Numerous works have been published about Elizabeth Fry and her work. Below is a selection held within the Library’s printed collections and available for reference:


*An Hour in His Majesty’s gaol of Newgate on Friday 22nd December 1820*. London: Henry Teape, [1820].


Further printed material can be identified through the Library’s online catalogue at [www.quaker.org.uk/cat](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cat)

**Manuscript sources relating to Elizabeth Fry**

The Library holds the following unpublished collections and items relating to Elizabeth Fry, available on request for research in the Library’s Reading Room:

Diaries of Elizabeth Fry 1797-1833; 1837-1845. 47 vols.

Autograph pass to Newgate Prison.

Elizabeth Fry correspondence: letters to her daughter Richenda 1820-1845. 85 letters.

Elizabeth Fry Notabilities: domestic / foreign [a collection of letters received by Elizabeth Fry]. 2 vols.
Correspondence of Elizabeth Fry and her family 1815-1849. 19 items. Holographs.
TEMP MSS 743

Pictures of Elizabeth Fry
The Library's picture collections are a rich resource for the study of Elizabeth Fry. Images of her held in these collections include:

Portrait. Head and shoulders profile silhouette. F60

Portrait. Head and shoulders ca. 1799. Photograph of a pencil sketch by Amelia Opie. F64

Portrait. Half length with bonnet. Photograph of the painting by C.R. Leslie. F68

Portrait. Full length in Quaker dress with bonnet. Colour engraving on postcard of the painting by G. Richmond. F73

Elizabeth Fry reading to the prisoners in Newgate Gaol. Print after a watercolour by R. Dighton (ca. 1820) 88/AXL 58

Elizabeth Fry and Mary Sanderson at Newgate by Henrietta Mary Ada Ward, 1895. Oil on canvas. Reading Room

An hour at Newgate exhibiting Mrs Fry and her friends, 1820’s. Engraving, probably by Thomas Rowlandson. III 40

Further information

Library opening hours
Tuesday- Friday 10.00am - 5.00pm

Please note the Library normally closes for one week in the spring and in the autumn. It is advisable to telephone or email prior to visiting. New readers will need to complete a registration form and show proof of permanent address. The registration form can be downloaded from our website www.quaker.org.uk/library or requested from the Library.

For further information or help in using the Library please contact us by either email to library@quaker.org.uk, or telephone 020 7663 1135 or write to:

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