Eliza Fall Papers: Finding Aid

Processed by The Huntington Library staff in April 1976; supplementary encoding and revision supplied by Xiuzhi Zhou in October 2000 and Diann Benti in June 2017.

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Overview of the Collection

Title: Eliza Fall Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1851-1856?

Collection Number: mssHM 42764-42816

Creator: Fall, Eliza.

Extent: 53 pieces in 1 red rope case.

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Abstract: This collection consists of 8 manuscript poems and sonnets by English poet Eliza Fall (1821–1881) and 45 letters from Fall to William Henry Harrison (1795?-1878) concerning her efforts to have a volume of poetry published. Fall’s letters discuss her poetry, her nom de plume “Mary Maynard” and her reasons for keeping her identity secret, and John Ruskin (1819-1900) and his work.

Language: English.

Access
Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Eliza Fall Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Purchased from Christie’s, lot 188, April 22, 1959.

Biographical Note
Eliza Fall (1821-1881) published a book of poems in 1851 under the nom de plume Mary Maynard, concealing the fact of her authorship from all but a few. Her brother, Richard Whiteman Fall, was the childhood friend of John Ruskin who read Eliza Fall’s Poems and urged her to publish them. He recommended William Henry Harrison, his editor, and it was Harrison who helped to get a publisher for her.

Scope and Content
Letters from Eliza Fall to William Henry Harrison, the editor, concerning the publication of her volume, Poems, under the pseudonym Mary Maynard. John Ruskin is a frequent subject of discussion in the letters along with several other leading literary figures of their day. The collection includes several manuscript versions of her poems and a translation of a poem by Johann Ludwig Uhland.

Arrangement
Arranged in the following order: Manuscripts, followed by correspondence.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library’s Online Catalog.

Subjects
Fall, Eliza.
Maynard, Mary, 1821-1881.
Ruskin, John, 1819-1900.
Poets, English -- 19th century -- Correspondence.

Forms/Genres
Letters (correspondence) -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Manuscripts -- Great Britain -- 19th century.

**Alternate Authors**


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**Case 1  Manuscripts and correspondence**

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**Manuscripts**

- **A Christmas Carol**: 3 stanza poem HM 42764
- **Invocation to the Gods**: 13 stanza poem HM 42765
- **The Island of the Dead**: 5 stanza poem HM 42766
- **Kind Nature, how are all thy ways with me...**: sonnet HM 42767
- **Mary Magdalen**: sonnet HM 42768
- **Notes: on allusions in her own poetry** HM 42769
- **O gentle maidens that with snowy hands...**: sonnet HM 42770
- **To - with Autumnal Violets**: sonnet HM 42771

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**Letters to William Henry Harrison** HM 42772-42816

44 signed handwritten letters and 1 incomplete handwritten letter to Harrison concerning her efforts to have a volume of her poetry published in the latter part of 1851. Letters after the publication in 1851 of her Poems discuss possible strategies for advertising the volume and the possible publication of some of her translations of the poetry of Johann Ludwig Uhland. In the course of the letters Eliza Fall decides on her nom de plume Mary Maynard and she insists that her real identity be kept a secret, especially from her father, who was apparently incapable of appreciating poetry. John Ruskin and his work are frequently the subject of the letters. See Ruskin's Praeterita for his opinion of Eliza Fall.