

Denby, Elizabeth 1894 - 1965



Elizabeth Denby was born Elizabeth Marion Denby in Bradford, Yorkshire, England on 20 May 1894 and studied social science and administration at the London School of Economics in 1916-17. She then worked at the Ministry of Labour from 1917 to 1921 and in co-ordinating volunteer work in Kensington, London from 1923 to 1925. Between 1925 and 1933 she was employed as organizing secretary of the Kensington Housing Association, where she was involved in various urban renewal schemes.

In 1933 she was awarded a Leverhulme fellowship grant to study rehousing schemes in eight European countries. This led to the publication of her book *Europe Rehoused* (1933). In the early 1930s she teamed up with the architect [Edwin Maxwell Fry](#) (1899-1987) in the design of affordable flats including Sassoon House in Peckham, London (1934), and Kensal House in Ladbroke Grove, London (1938).

Denby also collaborated with Noel Carrington (1895-1989) in organising the exhibition 'Living in Houses' held in London in May 1942 and on 27 March 1943 gave a talk entitled 'The Homes We Want' at the National Gallery in London.

In 1936 she founded the shop House Furnishing Ltd, in London, which supplied furnishing fabrics and fittings for the home. She died in Hythe, Kent on 3 November 1965

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

'The All-Europe house'. RIBA Journal 26 June 1939 p. 813 [Report on a house designed by Elizabeth Denby for a high-density area. The house was exhibited at the Ideal Home Exhibition in London in 1939]

Carullo, Valeria. 'Parting shot. Kensal House, London, 1937'. RIBA Journal ol. 126, no. 4, April 2019 p. 98 [Discusses a social housing project was designed by a team led by Maxwell Fry and reformer Elizabeth Denby]

Darling, Elizabeth. 'Elizabeth Denby or Maxwell Fry: a matter of attribution' in *Women's Places: Architecture and Design 1860-1960*. Edited by Brenda Martin and Penny Sparke. London: Routledge, 2003 pp. 149-170

Darling, Elizabeth. "'Enriching and enlarging the whole sphere of human activities": the work of the voluntary housing sector in housing reform in inter-war Britain', in *Regenerating England: science, medicine and culture in inter-war Britain*. Edited by Christopher Lawrence and Anna-K. Mayer. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2016 pp. 149-178

Darling, Elizabeth. 'Kensal House: the Housing Consultant and the Housed' in *British Architecture and Design in the 1930s*. Edited Suannah Charlton, Elain Harwood and Alan Powers. *The Journal of the Twentieth Century Society*, no. 8, 2007 pp.106-116

Darling, Elizabeth. 'Overcrowding and oversprawl'. *Architectural Review* vol. 236, no. 1410, August 2014 p. pp. 96-97. [Elizabeth Denby's work as a housing consultant is discussed]

Darling, Elizabeth. "'The star in the profession she invented for herself': a brief biography of Elizabeth Denby, housing consultant.' *Planning Perspectives* vol. 20, issue 3, 2005 pp. 271-300

Darling, Elizabeth Ann. *Elizabeth Denby, housing consultant: social reform and cultural politics in the inter-war period*. Ph.D. thesis, Barlett School of Architecture, University College London, 1999

Denby, Elizabeth. *Europe re-housed*. London : Allen & Unwin, 1938.

Denby, Elizabeth. *Green and pleasant land: aims and needs in replanning rural England*. Part 7. *The women's needs.* *Country Life* 7 November 1941 pp. 870-871

Denby, Elizabeth. 'Housing problems in Britain.' *Arkitekt* nos. 7-8, 1944 pp. 169-172 [Discusses developments in housing in Sweden, Holland, Germany, Vienna,

Italy and France]

Denby, Elizabeth. 'Planning future cities'. Design for Today vol. 2, no. 12, April 1934 pp. 121-127.

Denby, Elizabeth, 'Using space to advantage: second lecture in "Post-war home" series and discussion'. Royal Society of Arts. Journal 9 January 1942 pp. 103-112

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 209, 12 Nov 1965, p. 1056

Women and the Making of Built Space in England, 1870–1950. Edited by Elizabeth Darling and Lesley Whitworth. London: Routledge, 2019

Woodham, Jonathan. 'Women, Design and the State in the Interwar Years: a Case Study of Elizabeth Denby and the Council for Art and Industry' in Women designing : redefining design in Britain between the wars. Edited by Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden. Brighton : University of Brighton, 1994 pp. 41-45

Links

- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Denby
- Architectuul <https://architectuul.com/architect/elizabeth-denby>
- Lynne Walker. Golden Age or False Dawn? Women Architects in the Early 20th century [PDF] <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/women-architects-early-20th-century-pdf>
- Darling, Elizabeth Ann. Elizabeth Denby, housing consultant: social reform and cultural politics in the inter-war period. Ph.D. thesis, Barlett School of Architecture, University College London, 1999 [PDF Open access version] <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10066631/>
- Lynne Walker. Elizabeth Marion Denby. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [Subscription service] <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/63130>