

# Happy Birthday, Frances Wright!

Post by "Cassius" of September 7, 2021 at 8:35 AM

## [Quote from Don](#)

She wrote *A Few Days in Athens* while she was still a teenager? Did not know that!

That relates to our brief recent podcast discussion that we should learn Epicurean philosophy when we were children.

I've never been able to find any further leads, but apparently several members of her family were philosophically and/or politically active and presumably led her in the right direction from an early age. We can't wait til we're in advanced age (where's my walking stick?) before we start studying Epicurus! 😊

"*A Few Days In Athens*" shows not only a deep understanding (though not always agreement) with Book Ten

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## Early life and education [\[edit\]](#)

Frances "Fanny" Wright was born at 136 Nethergate in Dundee, Scotland, on September 6, 1795, to Camilla Campbell and her husband James Wright.<sup>[1][2]</sup> Their house was then a newly built house by the town architect, Samuel Bell on the recently widened Nethergate, close to Dundee harbour.<sup>[3]</sup>

Her father was a wealthy linen manufacturer,<sup>[4]</sup> a designer of Dundee trade tokens, and a political radical. He corresponded with Adam Smith and was sympathetic to the American patriots and French republicans,<sup>[5]</sup> including Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, and Thomas Paine. Frances, or "Fanny" as she was called since childhood, was the second eldest of family's three children. Her siblings included an older brother, who died when Frances was still young, and a sister named Camilla.<sup>[6][7][8]</sup> Wright's mother also died young, and her father died in 1798, when Frances was about the age of two. With support from a substantial inheritance, the orphaned Wright sisters were raised in England by members of the Campbell family, who were relatives of their mother.<sup>[2][9]</sup>

A maternal aunt became Wright's guardian and taught her ideas founded on the philosophy of the French materialists.<sup>[10]</sup> In 1813, when Wright was sixteen, she returned to Scotland to live with her great-uncle, James Mylne, a philosophy professor at Glasgow College.<sup>[6]</sup> Wright spent the winter months in study and writing and the summer months visiting the Scottish Highlands.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Wright was interested in the works of Greek philosophers, especially Epicurus, who was the subject of her first book, *A Few Days in Athens* (1822), which she had written by the age of eighteen. Wright also studied history and became interested in the United States' democratic form of government.<sup>[2]</sup>

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## First visits to the United States and France [\[edit\]](#)