



## Frances E. Willard

Given by Illinois to the National Statuary Hall Collection

A PIONEER IN THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT, Frances Elizabeth Caroline Willard is also remembered for her contributions to women's higher education and suffrage. Born on September 28, 1839, in Churchville, New York, she spent her childhood in Oberlin, Ohio, and later in Janesville, Wisconsin, where her father had purchased a large farm. She attended the Milwaukee Female College for one year and finished her college degree at North Western Female College in Evanston, Illinois.

She taught at Genesee Wesleyan Seminary in 1866–1867 and toured Europe and the Middle East from 1868 to 1870. She became president of the Evanston College for Women in 1871 and served until 1873. She was the first woman college president to confer degrees, and when the college merged with Northwestern University in 1873, she became the first Dean of Women.

Willard gained a reputation as an effective orator and social reformer. She became associated in the evangelist movement with Dwight Moody and was elected second president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1879. Her zeal sustained her fight for prohibition, and she expanded the organization's focus to include women's rights issues, such as suffrage. In 1888, she was one of the founders of the National Council of Women and became its first president. In 1891, she became president of the World's WCTU, an extension of the national organization.

Willard's health declined in the 1890s, affected by pernicious anemia. She died on February 17, 1898. Her statue was the first honoring a woman to be chosen for the National Statuary Hall Collection.



Marble by Helen Farnsworth Mears  
Given in 1905; located in National Statuary Hall.