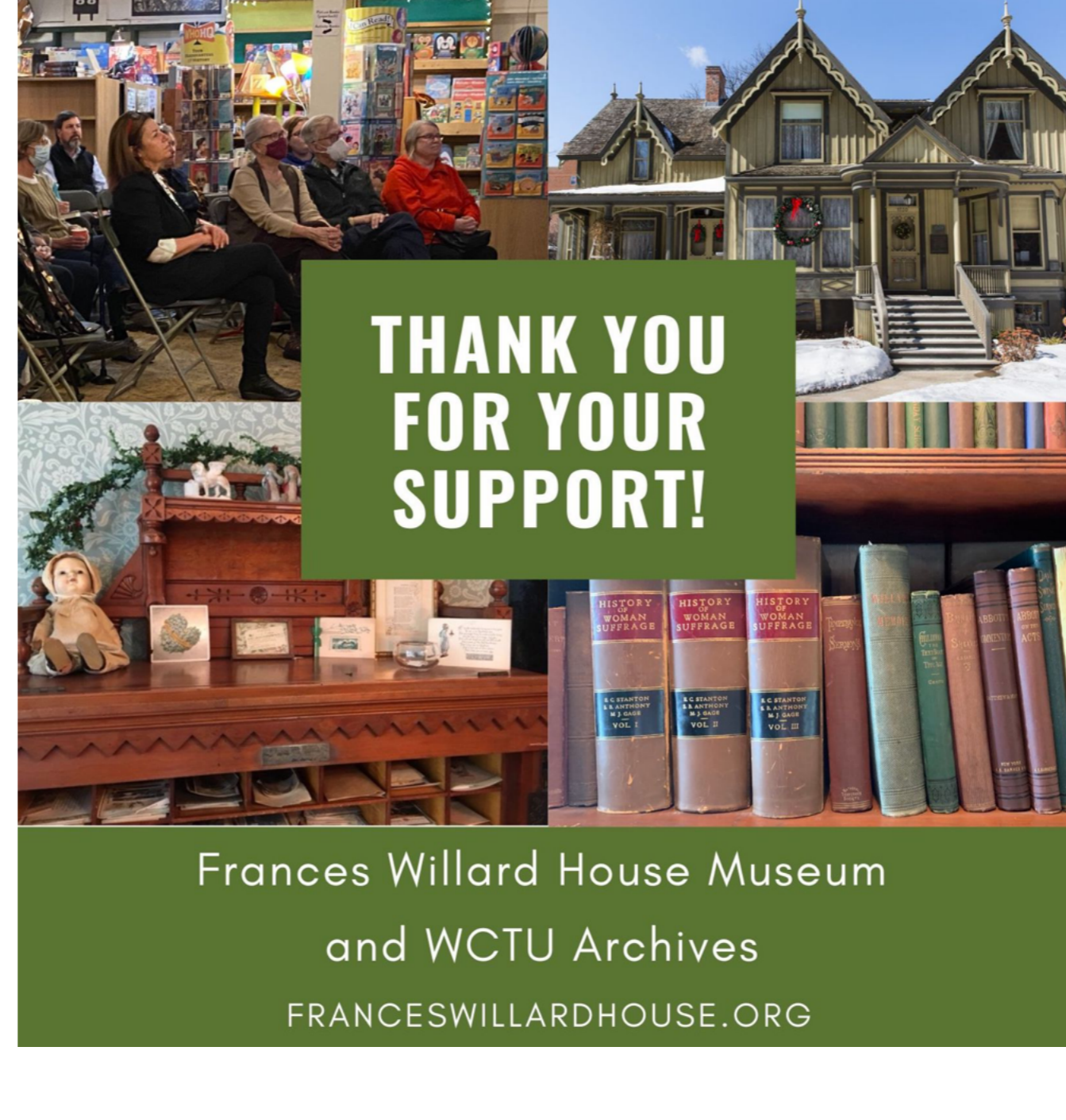




Donate and Support



"She early manifested an exceeding fondness for books." –Mary Thompson Hill Willard about her young daughter Frances

From a young age, Frances Willard showed signs that her interests went far beyond what was common for a girl of her time. She had a voracious appetite for knowledge – and when, as a teenager, she realized that "knowledge is power," her appetite transformed into purpose and drive.

This past year, the Frances Willard House Museum and Archives has explored Willard's early life, her faith, and her desire for education. We've examined why it was so critical for her to gain access to knowledge, and **how she worked to open doors for other women, too.** For Willard, education was about more than just the joy of discovery. It was also about gaining an understanding of her world, and from that understanding, finding ways to make change.

We hope you will add us to your year-end giving list as we continue the work of showing how the past can illuminate our world today. Your donation makes it all possible!

Lori Osborne

Executive Director  
Frances Willard House Museum at the Center for Women's History and Leadership

Donate and Support

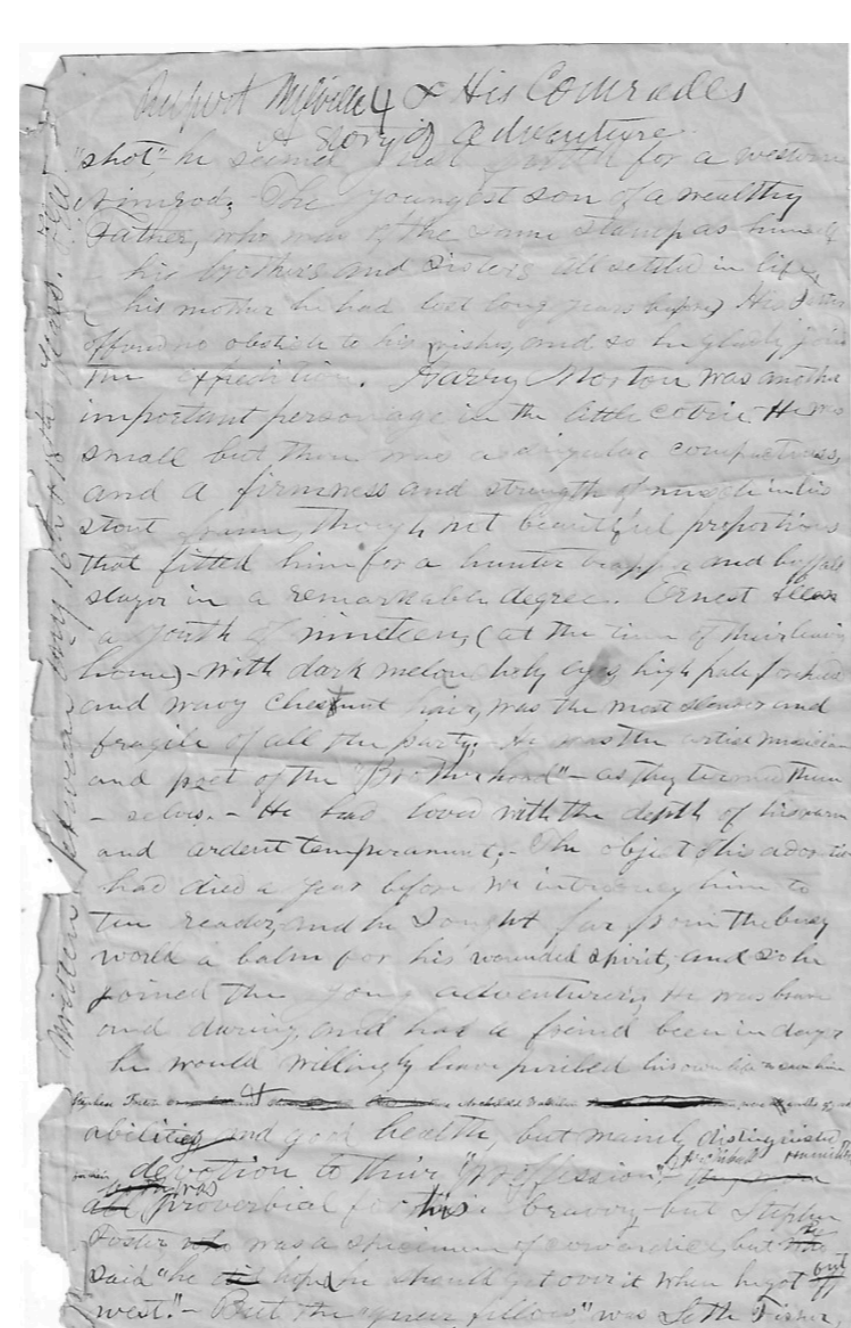


Join us on Sunday, December 11 for a special holiday tour – and our final tour day of 2022! Experience how Frances Willard, her family, and her coworkers celebrated the festive season. **Tours will be held at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm and are available by reservation only.** RSVP by emailing [info@franceswillardhouse.org](mailto:info@franceswillardhouse.org) or calling (847) 328-7500. Admission is \$15 per person and is free for students at all levels. Our regular tour schedule will resume in March 2023 for Women's History Month.



Thank you to everyone who attended our first virtual **Collection Close-Up** on Sunday, November 20! Fiona Maxwell, Director of Museum Operations, shared the story behind *Rupert Melville and His Comrades: A Story of Adventure*, a novel written by Frances Willard as a young girl. You can watch a recording of her presentation [here](#).

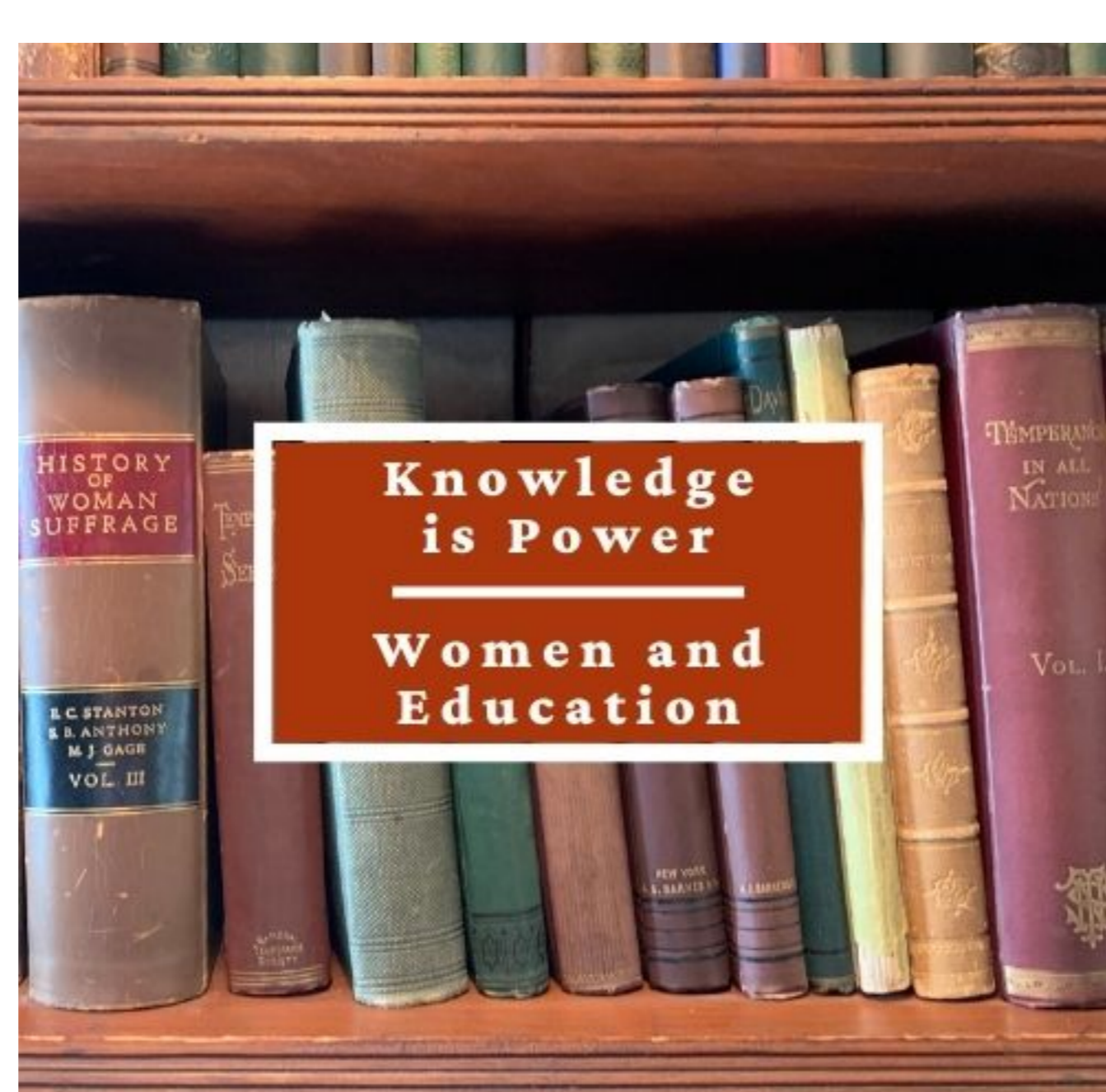
Inspired by story books set on the Western prairies, as a young teen Willard worked on her novel every day and "read each chapter aloud" to her friends and family "as fast as it was written." The enjoyment Willard derived from narrating Rupert's adventures convinced her that "write I could and should and would." The Willard House's Archives houses the 165-page unfinished manuscript.



The first handwritten page of *Rupert Melville*.

**Collection Close-Up** is part of our **Knowledge is Power: Women and Education** program series. In recognition of the 150th anniversary of Frances Willard's role as Dean of Women at Northwestern University (1873-1874), we are exploring the history – and prehistory – of women's higher education in Evanston and the United States. You can learn more about Willard's early growth as a writer on our [blog](#). **Stay tuned for more education-themed virtual programs in 2023!**

Our free public programs are a key component of our storytelling and cannot happen without your support. We hope you will consider making a donation [here](#). Thank you!



For Frances Willard, as for other women of her time, education was a fundamental need, but access was limited. As doors to schoolhouses and colleges slowly began to open, women's lives changed significantly and their options multiplied. This enabled them to take on broader and more influential public roles in their communities and country. But it all started with education – and thus we are returning to the story of women and education to ask questions and learn more.

Lori Osborne sets the stage in a [blogpost](#) situating Evanston's educational experiments in historical context and detailing the establishment of the Northwestern Female College. You can explore Willard's side of the story in a series of blogposts by Fiona Maxwell. [Part one](#) traces how, as a young girl, Willard connected writing and speaking to social reform. [Part two](#) details Willard's formative experiences as a student at the Northwestern Female College.



Students on the lawn of the Northwestern Female College.

Although we will be investigating and sharing our site's connection to women's stories in special detail this year, it has always been a key theme in our storytelling. Check out our existing digital resources below, and stay tuned for more content and programs!

- [Frances Willard's Digital Journals](#): This website provides access to searchable transcriptions of Frances Willard's journals, which contain entries pertaining to her educational experiences starting at the age of 16.
- [Frances Willard Biographical Timeline](#): This timeline uses images and documents to illustrate stages in Willard's life, including her time as a student, schoolteacher, and higher education leader.
- [Frances Willard and Women's Oratory](#): Focusing on Willard's contributions to oratory, this blogpost explores the ways in which she served as a role model for Northwestern students and other women who aspired to make their voices heard in public.
- [Mary Thompson Hill Willard](#): This blogpost highlights the ways in which Mary Willard, Frances Willard's mother, drew on her years of experience working as a schoolteacher to mentor and inspire her daughter.

Donate and Support



Want to change how you receive these emails? You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

