

## Champions of Resistance

### Emma Hart Willard

Born: February 23, 1787 in Berlin, Connecticut

Died: April 15, 1870

Married: Dr. John Willard

Children: One son, John Willard Jr.

An American educator, who lectured and counseled on public and female education. She was born Emma Hart in Berlin, Connecticut, and was largely self-educated. She entered the teaching profession in 1803 and was principal of the Female Academy, Middlebury, Vermont, from 1807 to 1809.

Emma established a boarding school for girls in Middlebury, Connecticut in 1814. Rejecting contemporary theory on education for women, she included in her curriculum a number of subjects, such as mathematics and history, previously offered only in schools for men. Her *Plan for Improving Female Education* (1818), which proposed additional innovations, won the approval of the governor of New York, DeWitt Clinton, and in 1819 she opened a girls' seminary in Waterford, New York, the first school in the United States to offer a college-level education for women. In 1821 she founded the Troy Female Seminary (now the Emma Willard School) in Troy, New York; she managed the school until 1838.

In later years, Emma traveled extensively, lecturing and counseling on public and female education. Besides a number of textbooks, she wrote *The Fulfillment of a Promise* (1831), a volume of verse remembered chiefly for the poem "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."