

“(Un)sound on the Slavery Question”: Frederick A.P. Barnard, Slavery in the Academic World, and the Case for Re- Examining Institutional Legacies at Columbia University

By Heather Loepere

Columbia University & Slavery Course

2021

Standing before the Board of Trustees at the University of Mississippi in late February 1860, Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard sought above all to put to rest rumors that hounded him for months. The accusation? That—despite being a slaveholder himself—he did not sufficiently support enslavement and “Southern institutions.”[1]

The charge was brought after Barnard, then the Chancellor and President of the university, had attempted to expel a student who had broken into his home and brutally assaulted one of the women Barnard enslaved, Jane.[2] Though the student was not convicted of the crime, he did eventually withdraw after Barnard wrote to his guardians. That Barnard had attempted to expel a student on the testimony of an enslaved person, combined with his Northern birth, prompted some of his Southern colleagues (and political and academic rivals) to accuse him of being a “free-soiler” and thus unfit to lead the university.[3] (This scandal would later be termed the “Branham Affair,” named

for the ringleader of the accusations, Henry R. Branham.) To quash the rumors that threatened his standing in the politically tense antebellum South, Barnard called for a public trial of his own character before the trustees to affirm his support of slavery.[4] There, he testified:

“I was born at the North. That I cannot help. I was not consulted in the matter. I am a slaveholder...as to my sentiments on the subject of slavery, my record is clear for my whole life...I am as sound on the slavery question as Dr. Branham, as any man on this Board.”[5]

Though not a Southern native, by the time of the trial Barnard had been working in Southern universities for over two decades, most of his adult life. At his previous position at the University of Alabama, he had an enslaved lab assistant, and enslaved people worked in his home.[6] At Mississippi, Barnard directly enslaved at least two other people besides Jane.[7] In 1861, Barnard wrote to his younger brother that “[s]lavery is a necessity” that “must be protected.”[8] Yet in 1863, three years after claiming to be “sound” on the slavery question and two years after the letter, Barnard’s public position reversed. Amidst the Civil War, Barnard published an open letter to President Lincoln calling slavery a “relic of primeval barbarism” and “cursed of all Christian men and hated of God.”[9] A year later, in 1864, Barnard was invited to join Columbia University as its tenth President.[10] He held this position until the end of his life. His work at Columbia has been seen as his main historical legacy.

Historians have attempted to unravel the complex narrative of Barnard’s attitudes towards enslavement and the extent to which they changed over time. John Fulton, Barnard’s primary biographer who wrote with the aid of Barnard’s wife, explained his protean nature by saying “there is no evidence that he gave any large amount of thought to the slavery question” whether in the South or North.[11] Robert A. McCaughey, author of *Stand, Columbia*, writes that Barnard had an “inclusive and democratic” view of the university, noting “there is little to suggest that he was prepared to seek out [Black students] to attend Columbia, [but] there is equally little to suggest that these flourishes were hypocritical and that he opposed admitting [them.]”[12]

However, such arguments are misguided. They erase Barnard's long-standing tolerance and even ardent support for enslavement in his private and public writing. Moreover, these histories have failed to adequately consider how the policies, culture, and intellectual trajectories of Columbia University were impacted by Barnard's defense of enslavement and past as a slave owner. Indeed, Barnard's private letters reveal reason to believe that Barnard embraced and assimilated to slave society more fully than has been previously documented. Additionally, Barnard consciously constructed his public support for (and later opposition to) slavery to his advantage in the political and academic climates of the antebellum South and Civil War North respectively. Assessing Barnard's legacy calls for a re-examining Columbia's of racially exclusive admissions policies and the construction of a history that sanitized the antebellum South in the form of the Dunning School.

To conduct this analysis, I primarily draw upon letters written to and by Barnard from 1851 to 1873 located in the Barnard Family Papers Collection. I supplement my findings with documents from the F.A.P. Barnard Collection and the College Papers Collections, all of which are housed at the Columbia Rare Book and Manuscript Library. For the sections of this paper that center Barnard's time in the South, I also incorporate documents from the University of Mississippi Antebellum Collection and findings from the University of Mississippi and Slavery Working Group.

First, I analyze Barnard's assimilation to the South and tolerance of enslavement as a faculty member of the University of Alabama and how he rationalized support of enslavement with support of the Union. The following sections explore Barnard's time at Mississippi cataloging his extensive political connections in the South, which were cultivated to bolster his social standing in Southern academia and were built off of shared support of "Southern institutions"—meaning slavery. Here, I examine how Barnard began to telegraph support more vocally for slavery in the wake of the aforementioned Branham Affair and the broader context of the broader secession crisis and anti-Northern hostilities in the South, consciously using this rhetoric to secure his position in the politically fraught landscape in the years before the Civil War. Finally, I assess Barnard's institutional impact sat Columbia in relation to racially-exclusive

admissions and welcoming white supremacist figures like John Burgess and William Archibald Dunning to the university while maintaining relationships to former Confederates—and how this information impacts the legacy of Columbia as a whole.

I. Barnard goes South: defending and participating in slavery at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa (1838-1854)

Born in Sheffield, Massachusetts in 1809, Frederick Barnard came from a family that included a state senator (his father) and a long line of Yale alumni on his mother's side.[13] From an early age, he exhibited academic excellence and ambition, graduating from Yale University at just 19.[14] He spent the next decade working as a teacher at the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut and the New York-based Institute for the Deaf and Dumb. (Barnard, along with the rest of his family, suffered from hereditary deafness.)[15] What Barnard really wanted, according to his biographers, was a professorship at the collegiate level where he could focus on conducting scientific research. However, he had been unable to attain one in the northeast after being rejected by his alma mater. Luckily for Barnard, a chance encounter with Basil Manly, then President of the University of Alabama, in 1837 landed him a position as a professor of mathematics and natural philosophy.[16] Despite only ever knowing Northern culture and education, Barnard's ambition led him to accept the offer readily and immediately. Barnard moved South the following year and began teaching in Tuscaloosa in 1838.[17]

The University of Alabama had been established just six years before Barnard's encounter with Manly, opening its doors to students in 1831.[18] Like other Southern universities (and many Northern ones), the university had been intertwined with enslavement since its founding. In 1828, university trustees bought their first enslaved person, Ben, while the campus was still under construction—Ben laid the bricks and landscaped the grounds for the earliest campus buildings.[19] Over the next several years, the trustees purchased several more enslaved people, though knowledge of the

exact number or names of enslaved people on the campus is incomplete. Those who were enslaved by the university worked in construction, student dining halls, and dormitories[20] In addition, faculty, administrators, and students enslaved people in their homes. Manly himself owned 38 slaves in 1855, as did numerous professors.[21] An estimated 90% of students came from slaveholding families.[22]

The horrors of enslavement on the Tuscaloosa campus were compounded by the physical and sexual abuse suffered by enslaved people. Student assaults on enslaved people were apparently so frequent and pervasive that the university had to issue a proclamation in 1845 prohibiting students from assaulting enslaved people directly, telling them to report to administrators so that they might issue punishment in the form of beatings or whippings.[23] One enslaved person, Moses, was particularly viciously abused by the student body, being stabbed and beaten in by groups of students in several separate instances in the 1840s and 1850s.[24] It was in this unspeakably brutal environment that Barnard began his academic career, became a slaveholder, and defended the institution.

Barnard appears to have readily assimilated to slave culture at Tuscaloosa. In an October 1851 letter to his wife, Barnard reflected on cultural differences between the North and South and adjusting to life at a Southern university. “In permit of civility to strangers and politemen generally, the South is half a century in advance of the North,” he wrote. “After all, there is a kind of house feeling of about the South...which made the sight of negro domestics and laborers and the fervor of the hot sun above not so unpleasant after all.”[25]

Barnard’s language implies that while he may have had initial reservations about living in proximity to Southern enslavement, these were quickly disregarded, demonstrating his assimilation. Further, the culture of “civility” and “politeness” of the South made him prefer the slave South to the industrial North and did not see brutality of enslavement as contrasting with this “civility.” Language painting the South and slaveholders as “civilized,” “gentlemanly,” and paternalistic was a prime rhetorical defense employed by pro-slavery writers and politicians in the antebellum era, one that masked the abject brutalities and countless abuses of the slave trade.[26] Moreover, such language was

also used to argue that slaveholders “civilized” and improved the lives of those they enslaved to paint slavery as a positive good.[27] That Barnard adopted this same attitude and language speaks to his assimilation to elite Southern academic culture and his tolerance—even approval—of slavery, finding this preferable to the North.

Beyond his comfort with enslavement, Barnard chose to become a slaveholder and actively participated in its brutality. It is unknown how many people were enslaved by Barnard or when he became a slaveholder while he was a professor at Alabama, though we know that he had enslaved people working in his household and an enslaved lab assistant named Sam.[28] Manly, who kept an extensive diary during his time as president, recorded the names of a few of those Barnard enslaved including Luna, Tom, and “Little Mary.”[29] The abuses prevalent on campus more broadly were also true for those Barnard owned. In one instance, Sam refused to measure a load of coal, likely at Barnard’s request, and so Manly beat him twice, which he recorded in his diary. Manly also alleged in his diaries that one of Barnard’s slaves, Morgan, “acts as a Pimp to get out Barnard’s women—especially the younger Luna; whom [the students] use in great numbers, nightly.”[30] In the words of Dr. Hillary Green, a professor at the modern University of Alabama, “Luna serves as an ugly reminder that sexual trauma did not escape the antebellum campus’s pristine ivory towers.”[31] That Barnard’s slaves experienced repeated violent abuse casts a dark shadow on Barnard’s later-lauded intellectual achievements that cannot be ignored when considering his legacy.

Importantly, close to none of the names nor even oblique references to those that Barnard directly enslaved at the university survive in his available letters to colleagues and family. However, despite the absence of specific or personal details, references to enslavement itself do exist. It’s possible that the omission of enslaved people, who Barnard encountered every day, stemmed from an unwillingness to discuss enslavement with Northern family members or that Barnard found the presence of enslaved laborers so natural that it would not be worth writing about, or a dastardly combination of the two.

Moreover, Barnard does not appear to have been compassionate towards enslaved people. In one of the few direct mentions of an enslaved person in all his

correspondence, Barnard responded to a request from his wife to send more clothing while she was away by affirming, “I will obtain the things from Harriet and send them.” In a portion of the letter written later in the week, he wrote:

“I did not find Harriet. She told Mrs. Maxwell this morning that she was going to the spring (to wash I suppose) ...She did not go to [town] because, as she said, they wanted somebody to stay at night. I do not know distinctly what she is doing, if anything. She told Mrs. Maxwell she should get work to do at home. Perhaps it's washing. Ben works her in the garden.”[32]

The final line—that Ben (Maxwell) “works” Harriet in his garden and the fact that she does laundry for the Maxwell family and (presumably) Mrs. Barnard—heavily suggests that Harriet was an enslaved woman whose labor was leased to campus families. Barnard discusses Harriet in a casual manner, lacking any care for her outside of the tasks he wants done. He does not seem sympathetic towards Harriet, if anything he is somewhat annoyed and frustrated by the fact that he has not been able to contact her for her services—uncaring of the inhumanity of her enslavement.

Additionally, Barnard made public remarks supporting enslavement, including in an 1851 4th of July address titled “No Just Cause for a Dissolution of the Union...the Union the Only Security for Southern Rights.” Barnard decried both Northern abolitionists and Southern anti-Unionists, claiming that the South should embrace the Union because the Constitution protects the Southern right to slavery. During this speech, Barnard referred to slaves as “Southern property” and said that legislation in line with “political abolitionism ... has justly given offense to the South,”[33] speaking to both his and his audience’s belief in the legality and morality of enslavement. Further, Barnard framed slavery as compatible with the preservation of the Union, foreshadowing future sectional conflict. He concluded the speech with the idea that Southern complaints against the North are “well founded” but “their cause be not attributable to the American Constitution,”[34] claiming that the Union actively ensured “Southern rights” to slavery. Thus, Barnard reconciled pro-Union and pro-slavery ideology at a time when secession was beginning to be seen as politically attractive in the South.

Far from “not giving a lot of thought to the question of slavery,” defending slavery was also political calculus for Barnard. This speech, which was published as a pamphlet in Alabama soon after, gained Barnard some attention and acclaim in the South.[35] Later in his tenure in the early 1850s, Barnard continued to butt heads with President Manly over the structure of the university (particularly after Manly imposed an elective system, which Barnard disliked.) Fearing his position may be on the line, Barnard began inquiring about professorships elsewhere that might take him despite his Northern background. He wrote to a friend, “I believe it would be half the battle to a candidate for a place here, to have been born South of the Potomac.”[36] Publicly and proactively asserting support of slavery, as in his 1851 address, may well have served as a means of gaining the acceptance of other Southern academics who might be prone to criticize him for his outsider status on account of his Northern birth, or to use this critique against him when disagreeing with his other positions. In 1854, Barnard headed to a new professorship in Mississippi. His political maneuvering in support of slavery as a member of Southern academia only increased as he was drawn into further conflict.

II. Southern universities, Southern politics, “Southern institutions:” Barnard at Mississippi (1854-1859)

When Barnard arrived in Oxford, Mississippi, he did so as a chemistry and natural sciences professor. However, two years later in 1856, he was appointed Chancellor and President of the University after the departure of President Augustus Longstreet.[37] Barnard’s ambition and high-ranking position in the university would draw him into the orbits of influential Southern politicians and fraught conflicts where slavery and North-South conflicts were perennially at the fore.

In 1850, six years after being chartered, the university itself owned 55 enslaved people, and, like Alabama, many faculty members, administrators, and students also owned slaves that were present on campus.[38] Enslaved laborers on campus were directed to “sweep the rooms and entries daily, adjust the bedding, carry fuel, make fires, [and]

bring water daily” during the school year.[39] Enslaved laborers also built many of the campus buildings, including the campus observatory, which Barnard designed and saw as one of his crowning achievements.[40] By 1860, the campus directly enslaved 118 people (doubling in a ten year period) and more were enslaved by campus affiliates, including two women owned by Barnard.[41]

During Barnard’s tenure as Chancellor, there were numerous reports of abuses against enslaved people. In one case, a student found guilty of beating an enslaved man was sent for a disciplinary meeting with Barnard. In another complaint from October 16, 1860, a “self-constituted ‘Vigilance Committee of Students’” was accused of “whipping, beating, and other maltreatment of the College negroes,; in an attempt “to apprehend a general ‘negro insurrection’ from the fact that an ounce or two of powder had been found in one of the servants’ rooms.”[42] This latter incident reveals not only violence by white students against enslaved people, but also that this violence against enslaved people was heightened amid tensions building up to the election of Lincoln and the Civil War, as these students appear to have feared a slave uprising on campus. It is not clear what Barnard’s role was (if any) in participating in physical abuse of slaves, though he had regulatory power over students accused of misconduct and these incidents made up the environment of the campus over which he presided.

In addition to coerced labor by enslaved people and vicious records of abuse (and doubtless brutality that has gone unrecorded), Southern universities like the University of Mississippi were also bastions of the intellectual and political defense of slavery. Southern academics produced defenses of enslavement ranging from arguments about the supposed innate social hierarchies (that created an elite class that could pursue education in the first place), economic necessity, and historical precedence. Pro-slavery thought was then taught to students that would become future Southern politicians and judges, themselves slaveholders and members of wealthy slaveholding families.[43] Moreover, many Southern academics also directly served as politicians or judges after their academic tenure, or sometimes while retaining their professorships. Additionally, friendship and familial ties drew together pro-slavery politicians and academics, further intertwining Southern universities with enslavement.[44]

Barnard's letters reveal that he was well-connected with Southern political elites at the time, making him part of the Southern, pro-slavery political world. A prime example comes in his correspondence with L. Q. C. Lamar, one of Barnard's closest friends and a frequent and affectionate correspondent in his letters. Lamar taught mathematics at the university and practiced law in Oxford, Mississippi for a year in 1848 after marrying Virginia Longstreet, the daughter of then-Chancellor Longstreet.[45] (He was also the brother-in-law of Henry Branham, who would later accuse Barnard of being "unsound" in supporting slavery.) Lamar then moved to Georgia and was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives.[46] In 1855, he returned to Mississippi and bought a plantation, where he enslaved 31 people.[47] In 1856 Lamar was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Mississippi and was reelected in 1860, at which point he wrote to Barnard about how exhausting he found the campaign trail.[48]

Lamar and Barnard sent each other dozens of letters during Barnard's chancellorship until Barnard fled from the South in 1862. Lamar mentioned introducing Barnard to many other political connections in the state.[49] Beyond Lamar, other Southern political figures crop up in Barnard's letters, including "Judge Henry" (possibly Joseph Henry Lumpkin of Georgia, an ardent pro-slavery judge and friend of Lamar) and Judge Jacob Thompson, whom Barnard describes writing to and visiting.[50] Both Lamar and Barnard were friendly with Jefferson Davis, the future president of the Confederacy, whom Lamar campaigned with during the 1860 election cycle. In 1860, Davis met Barnard when he visited the university to give a campaign speech and called upon the Barnards personally.[51]

Barnard's abundant political connections were valuable to Barnard in securing his position and authority while facing strife as an outsider to the South. Reflecting on his years in academia, towards the end of his life Barnard wrote, "Professional rank in the world always depends upon the consensus of opinion of the community which sees and judges it." [52] In an academic sphere dominated by political elites and wealthy Southern slaveholding families that were tied by friendship and familial networks, reputation and the opinion of the Southern political community was crucial. At the University of Mississippi, this was even more true than elsewhere, since the university was public

(and beholden to public opinion) and chancellorship was overseen by the governor, further politicizing Barnard's position. Throughout his chancellorship, Barnard faced criticism due to his Northern birth, and criticisms of his policy proposals were tied to broader anti-Northern sentiment. For example, in 1857 Barnard attempted to implement curricular reforms that would emphasize research and science-based education, which one critic claimed would turn the university into "a hotbed of abolitionism."^[53] (This comment was made even though Barnard himself was an enslaver.) Such comments impeded his standing and political capital, and, in his own view, made it more difficult for Barnard to execute his agenda.

Facing this criticism, Barnard forming connections with Southern politicians and slaveholders professionally and personally was doubtlessly conscious political maneuvering that helped safeguard Barnard's position at the university as sectional tensions arose in the 1850s. As such, Barnard aligning himself with pro-slavery politicians and furthering their aims was a conscious effort to bolster his standing in academia. But as the Civil War loomed and Barnard found himself at the center of abolitionist-sympathizer accusations, it was an attempt at bolstering sympathy that would not last.

III. Twin Crises: the Branham Affair and Secession (1859-1861)

On May 11, 1859, two University of Mississippi students, J. P. Furnis and Samuel Humphreys broke into Barnard's home on campus while he and his wife were out of town.^[54] Two of the women that Barnard enslaved, Jane and a woman whose name is unknown, were the only ones home. After breaking in, Humphreys sexually assaulted and beat Jane so severely that the bruises were visible for days afterward.^[55] Jane relayed what had happened to Mrs. Barnard when the couple returned days later, who then told her husband. Barnard then confronted Humphreys and attempted to have him expelled.

The ensuing conflict drew Barnard into “the slavery question” more overtly than ever before. Simultaneously, North-South conflict over the expansion of slavery came to a boiling point in the years right before the outbreak of war. This section revisits the Branham Affair, briefly mentioned in the introduction, in the context of the secession crisis and Barnard’s political maneuverings regarding slavery and Southern politics. It was during and directly after this event that Barnard publicly and privately articulated his most vocal defenses of slavery and sought the support of pro-slavery Southern politicians to safeguard his reputation, even as he began to doubt the trajectory of Southern politics.

In focusing on the fallout of the assault and how this speaks to Barnard’s political maneuverings, I in no way wish to gloss over the assault itself. As we have seen, insidious and overt acts of violence against enslaved people, particularly enslaved women, were horrifically common on Southern college campuses, including the two where Barnard lived. Though Barnard sought to punish Humphreys for his actions, the assault on Jane marks yet another instance where students, faculty, and administrators violated and abused enslaved people on campus with little to no serious consequence. Moreover, there is no record to indicate that Barnard sought any punishment for Furnis, the other student present during the rape. We know next to nothing about what happened to Jane after the assault, other than that she was “incapacitated for labor” for the remainder of the school year, a description of the extent of the injuries she suffered that perniciously emphasizes her capacity to work above all else.[56] Jane’s name never appears once in any of Barnard’s letters. Her name is likely only known because of the record of her assault, a “register of her encounter with power” in the archival catalog of violence against the enslaved.[57] It’s possible that Jane found companionship and support in the other woman enslaved by the Barnards, but that information, or any information about her interiority outside of encounters with Barnard is erased from the archives.

In a faculty meeting on May 23, 1859, Barnard brought two formal charges against Humphreys: that he had broken into the Chancellor’s home “while it was occupied by defenceless female servants, with shameful designs upon one of the said servants” and

that he had “committed a violent assault and battery upon the servant.”[58] Barnard recommended that Humphries be expelled. The faculty rejected the resolution 3-5, along North-South lines, with Barnard and two other Northern professors in the minority.[59] The division was not so much over whether Humphreys was guilty of the assault, but rather the evidence used to convict him. Specifically, the Southern-born members of the faculty believed that they could not convict Humphreys on Jane’s account, as “negro testimony” was not valid evidence in the court system.[60] (Though this principle had long existed in the South, it had been affirmed three years before by the Supreme Court in the infamous *Dred Scott v. Sumpter* decision, which ruled that Black Americans had no standing to bring cases or testify against whites.) Barnard subsequently requested Humphrey’s guardian to withdraw him from school, which he did.

Shortly after Humphreys’ trial, Barnard was offered a professorship at Yale, which he ultimately refused. Barnard’s considerations about taking the position reveal his fears about anti-Union and pro-slavery sentiment reaching a boiling point just before the war and his ultimate resolve to remain in his position of academic power. In a letter sent to his brother on June 5, 1859, scarcely two weeks since Humphreys’ trial, Barnard mulled over his options: leave the South and return to his alma mater, or remain in his higher-level but politically fraught position as university president. He wrote:

“I have repeatedly told you (I think) of the horror with which I contemplate [the] drift of people’s opinion ... on Slavery and the Slave Trade. I have always been a conservative (in the northern sense of the word as applied to this subject.) But I cannot belong to a retrograde party, particularly when the retrogradation is not merely in inviting action and reprisement, but worse than that, in morality and common humanity.”[61]

Coming on the heels of the assault, Barnard’s statement could represent sympathy for enslaved people, if he means to imply that they are the victims of Southerners “retrogradation...in morality.” If so, this is one of the only examples of compassion for enslaved people and hesitancy about supporting enslavement in his entire body of letters, though it comes with the caveat that he was more pro-slavery than the average Northerner.

Yet it is also possible that his reference to "morality and common humanity" reflects concern about political hostility to pro-Unionists rather than concern about the horrors inflicted on enslaved people. Though historians have debated Barnard's views on slavery, all agree, as did his contemporaries, that he was ardently pro-Union. (Indeed, his 1851 speech discussed above described his view that slavery was compatible with the Union as both were enshrined by the U.S. Constitution.) The past several years had seen increasing sentiment among Southern Democrats that secession would be preferable to remaining in the Union to protect the right to slavery against "free soil" policies. The latter half of the decade had also seen a breakdown in "civil" political dialogue over slavery with political bloodshed over the incorporation of Kansas and the caning of Charles Sumner on the House floor—this might be to the "retrogradation... in morality and common humanity" to which Barnard alluded. If true, Barnard—politically moderate, pro-slavery but also pro-Union—may have felt especially troubled by this shift in public opinion among Southern democrats against the Union, which was driven by debates over the slave trade, as opposed to being troubled by the slave trade itself.

Barnard added that he had "sometimes meditated a retreat" from the South "even though I should have no position to fall back upon... [M]uch more willingly I want to be disposed to withdraw now, when retreat is honor and promotion." [62] Here, Barnard acknowledges that the possibility of losing his prestigious position kept him from abandoning the South, despite political strife. As Yale offered a chance to retreat honorably, he was inclined to take it. Yet he ultimately concluded "I don't think it becomes me to be active, or to manifest any visible intent in ... the [slavery] question." [63] In the end, Barnard refused the position that would have offered him "honor and promotion," for reasons unknown, even as he faced continued hostility as a Northerner and one of his slaves had been attacked. Indeed, his choice to remain silent on his reservations on the "slavery question" shifted from silence accompanied by subtle political maneuvering with pro-slavery politician to an outright public commendation of slavery in the wake of the Branham Affair.

A few months after the Humphreys trial, Henry Branham, another professor at the university who had been at political and ideological odds with Barnard since he became

Chancellor, accused Barnard of being “not sufficiently in support of Southern institutions.” Further, he alleged, Barnard was a “free-soiler”—someone who believed that slavery should not expand to newly incorporated territories. His three cited reasons for the accusation were that Barnard had considered the position at Yale, that he had university publications printed in New York (and not the South) and, most troublingly to Branham, that Barnard had used the testimony of an enslaved person against a student.[64] Though Branham based his critiques of Barnard on these three incidents, the accusation was a culmination of years of brewing anti-Northern sentiment and discontent with Barnard’s policies as Chancellor. Branham whipped up a rumor campaign attempting to malign Barnard and get him ousted from his position, which caused Barnard a great deal of distress over the following months, as reflected in his letters. Barnard feared that even visiting the North could be injurious to his reputation and social and political standing—something Barnard coveted and was now in danger of losing.[65]

The affair put a strain on Barnard’s political and academic relationships, including his friendship with Lamar. This conflict speaks to how Branham’s allegations that Barnard could be anything less than ardently pro-Southern and pro-slave would be so deleterious to his reputation. Lamar, though a native Southerner and Branham’s brother-in-law, initially stood by Barnard when the scandal began. He wrote to Barnard, “I know no man in the world for whom I would change you as President.”[66] However, they had a tense argument in February 1860 as the conflict reached a fever pitch. A faculty member had told Barnard that Lamar had spoken against him behind his back. Barnard responded by showing that faculty member a letter where Lamar expressed support for Barnard. He then told Lamar all of this. Angrily, Lamar wrote back that the allegation was false, and that Barnard should not have brought his name into the scandal. “When you were elected President of the University, I was your friend. I defended you against the calamities of your enemies, stood by you in all your trials, when you had but few friends in the State. No man in the state was more active in your behalf,” he said, referencing their long-standing friendship amid the tense climate of the University. “It grieves me to think that you have connected me with this unhappy affair.”[67]

Barnard then wrote to his wife days later that Lamar had “written [him] somewhat unkindly,” which had disturbed and disheartened him at the potential of losing one of his closest friends and political allies against the accusations.[68] After the two met in Washington the next week, their friendship seems to have been repaired, as Lamar then told Barnard, “no man had any reason to suppose that use of my name against you was...acceptable to me.” Further, though Branham had been “like a brother” to Lamar, coming after Barnard’s reputation was so unacceptable to Lamar that he wrote “I wish all intercourse between us [himself and Branham] as terminated and he will treat me hereafter (as I shall him) as an entire stranger,” quite a dramatic reversal.[69]

Though convoluted and dramatic, this exchange highlights just how important reputation, rumor, and allegations were to Barnard and his contemporaries in Southern academia. As discussed previously, relationships between Southern academic and university administrators and Southern politicians were a staple of the university. For Barnard, who faced heightened criticism as an outsider to this world because he had been born in the North, these relationships provided him added security and political capital with which to execute his vision for the university. They allowed him to weather accusations that he would turn the university into an “abolitionist hotbed” when he proposed apolitical curricular changes, for example. Combined with the preexisting, mounting anti-Northern hostilities in Southern academia and politics, the potential to lose support and necessary connections due to Branham’s accusation would have been serious enough to prompt Barnard to respond. Shrewdly, he did so with his most overt public defense of slavery before or after to assure these relationships remained intact.

Seeking to clear his name, Barnard wrote to Mississippi Governor John J. Pettus, who was also the chairman of the Board of Trustees, asking for an investigation into “injurious charges persistently uttered against myself,” claiming this would be needed to ensure “prosperity of the University.”[70] He then asked Pettus and the board for a trial before the Board of Trustees at the end of February/early March 1860, the results of which Barnard aimed to publicly circulate.[71] That Barnard himself called for the investigation and trial is noteworthy. Rather than pressing for an investigation of Humphreys and his offenses against Jane, this new trial would be about Barnard’s own

character. Barnard made himself the defendant so that he had a stage on which to publicly affirm, once and for all, that despite his Northern background he was as in support of “Southern institutions”—this meaning slavery—as any Southern elite politician or academic who sought to lead the university.

On the day of the trial, Barnard and Branham testified before their fellow faculty members and the Board, which included influential figures like Gov. Pettus as well as several judges, politicians, and businessmen. As recorded in the Board of Trustees meeting transcripts, Branham alleged that Barnard was “unsound upon the slavery question,” because he used testimony from an enslaved person against Humphreys and sought to expel him on this evidence. Barnard responded to the allegation by making his most overt public statement in support of slavery. He rhetorically redefined the conflict by painting himself as a paternalistic, Christian master doing his duty to “protect” the woman he enslaved by expelling her attacker and claiming that any of the other men present, nearly all slaveholders, would have done the same. He concluded his remarks by arguing:

“I was but doing my duty as a Christian master, to protect my servant from outrage; and that I am sustained in this view by the highest authorities...I was born at the North. That I cannot help. I was not consulted in the matter. I am a slaveholder, and, if I know myself, I am ‘sound on the slavery question.’ As to my sentiments on the subject of slavery, my record is clear for my whole life...I am as sound on the slavery question as Dr. Branham, as any man on this Board.”[72]

Several faculty members were called in by both sides as witnesses for and against Barnard. For example, William F. Stearns, a law professor, testified that Barnard had gone to one of his lectures where he defended slavery and had allegedly agreed with it.[73] Other faculty members still maintained that they would not use the word of a slave against a student or that they had not heard Barnard speak on slavery often. However, Barnard’s framing of the situation won the day by appealing to a common value amongst the men present—that they were all slaveholders who believed in the sanctity of the institution. At the conclusion of the trial, Judge Jacob Thompson, a member of the Board of Trustees, Secretary of the Interior under the Buchanan administration and

future Confederate leader, came to Barnard's defense. In his statement, he echoed much of the same paternalistic language as Barnard of "Christian" slaveholding. A slaveholder himself, he claimed that accusing Barnard of being a free-soiler would be as hyperbolic and ridiculous as any slaveholder at the university having abolitionist sentiments:

"Your [Barnard's] fault is that you received information, from your servant girl, which implicated a student, and you acted on that information...this is set down as showing your free-soil proclivities. If this be so, I am the worst free soiler in the State: I am a downright abolitionist. No man strikes my negro that I do not hear his story...Before God and man I believe this to be my duty...[H]e who would not do the same would be despised by every man in Oxford." [74] With that, the board affirmed Barnard's claim that he was "sound" in his support of slavery, and Barnard did in fact have the trial proceedings published to silence remaining critics.

Barnard's political maneuvering and painting himself as clearly pro-slavery appears to have been effective at maintaining his position at the university and in safeguarding his coveted network of Southern relationships and political connections. In early summer 1860, Jefferson Davis met Barnard when he visited the university to give a campaign speech. Referencing the trial, which had occurred earlier that spring, Barnard noted in a letter to a friend that "[Davis'] visit occurred just after the investigation." [75] He happily recalled that—amid a crowd of other professors and administrators, including the Southern-born and well-connected Branham himself—Davis shook his hand before anyone else, "a trifling...incident" which "to the company there assembled had a profound significance." [76] That Davis would shake the hand of a northerner over the Southern men present, so soon after Barnard was accused of insufficiently supporting Southern institutions indicated his acceptance into this social and political world. Even if Davis himself was not making such political calculus, the fact that Barnard believed he did so is significant because it demonstrates that Barnard saw articulating a firm, pro-slavery stance during the trial essential to maintaining (or even growing) relationships to influential Southern figures like Davis. When Davis shook his hand over Branham's,

Barnard (and his colleagues) believed that he had successfully navigated a thorny attack to his reputation and come out stronger for it.

Beyond Davis, Barnard maintained and even strengthened political relationships with pro-slavery, future Confederate leaders after the Branham Affair. In fall 1860, weeks after Davis' visit, Lamar wrote to Barnard that "several very ardent Southern men" had told him they desired to meet with Barnard. Lamar added that Barnard should feel secure despite "what is unpleasant in your present position" because of "the strong hold which you [Barnard] are fast acquiring upon the confidence and admiration of the people of this State."^[77] By the next year, Barnard would be making good on this prediction, visiting with Jefferson Davis and other officials in the Confederacy, where they seemed to hold him in high regard despite his pro-Union views. By advertising support of enslavement, he was able to retain his position and remain close to Southern politicians into the Civil War.

The significance of the Branham affair and its impact on Barnard's public endorsement of slavery is threefold. First, the accusations and threats to Barnard's reputation pushed him to publicize ardent pro-slavery statements. Second, Barnard made these arguments despite previously expressing reservations about the trajectory of Southern politics — that it was potentially becoming too anti-Union for his tastes, with slavery being the driving wedge. Finally, these pro-slavery statements were critical to Barnard maintaining his position in Southern academia and winning the favor of Southern politicians, continuing and strengthening earlier political bonds - demonstrating how Barnard was willing to defend slavery to maintain his position within the University of Mississippi.

IV. Switching Sides: Barnard, Slavery, and the Union, North and South (1861-1863)

The secession of eleven Southern states from the Union in 1860 and early 1861 following the election of President Lincoln deeply troubled Barnard, an ardent Unionist. In 1861, he presented his resignation to the University of Mississippi trustees, citing his

pro-Union politics. There was not much of a university for him to run anyway. The school shut down amid the war as students enlisted, and the campus served as a Confederate hospital for the next four years.[78]

Most of Barnard's friends in academia and Southern politics joined the confederacy. Jefferson Davis, of course, became the president of the Confederate States of America. L.C.Q. Lamar withdrew from the House of Representatives and helped draft Mississippi's ordinance of secession.[79] Judge Jacob Thompson also served as an official in the Confederate army. More broadly, many Southern academics were given job offers to work in the Confederate military bureaucracy.[80]

Barnard himself reportedly refused a position in the Confederate military that was offered to him by Davis. However, Barnard remained extremely friendly with Confederates, evidenced by a fall 1861 trip he took to Richmond, Virginia (the capital of the Confederacy) where he "called this evening at Mr. Davis' house, but did not see him, as he was engaged with "the cabinet" (of the confederacy)."[81] The two later had dinner together days later, where Barnard described Davis as "courteous and kind in mannered"; Davis even apparently lamented that Barnard was leaving Richmond so soon.[82] This meeting with Confederate elites is emblematic of how Barnard's political maneuvering and friendships continued even into the Civil War, despite his public support of the Union.

Seemingly in conflict with his relationships to Davis and other Confederate leaders, Barnard wrote extensively about his apprehension and frustration with secessionists, often calling them "traitors," in letters to his brother, John G. Barnard. A career military official who had served in the Mexican American War, the younger Barnard brother became a general in the Union army and served as an engineering officer under William T. Sherman and Ulysses S. Grant for most of the conflict. John kept his brother updated about his whereabouts during the conflict, before and after Barnard went north. Like his brother, John was a Unionist. Unlike Frederick Barnard, John had lived nearly all his life in the North and appears to have had more abolitionist sympathies than his brother.

Barnard disavowed the Confederacy and secessionists. But he aimed to defend the South—particularly Southern slavery—to his brother in their correspondence. One particularly long and incendiary letter, written on September 13, 1861, is a prime example. This marks the most overt commentary on slavery in any of Barnard’s letters I encountered. Describing his political inclinations on “the slavery question,” Barnard wrote:

“Now as a question ‘slavery’ is in my mind known — what a familiarity — we had always talked together — I presume I never showed myself to be a “Republican”—much less a black one — ... the probable factor of my most beloved friends and acquaintances among Southerners, I have always on the new abolitionist question of slavery — shown myself a Southern champion — if I have anything to defend myself it is that in the last 4 years’ ambitions I have shed my eyes to the makeup of the Southern Constitutional argument... I rather think I have [ambitions] a little more to the Southern note than yourself [owning] to my 15 years Southern. You have not seen Southern life as we have seen it. We [Barnard and his wife Margaret] can show yourself any favorable image.”[83]

Slavery was indeed a familiarity to Barnard having spent two decades in the South. Here, Barnard’s reference to a “black Republican” is not referring to race (as in Republicans who were Black people) but as a derisive term used by slaveholders towards Republicans that they saw as having abolitionist sympathies (one popular pamphlet pegged Lincoln as a “Black Republican President,” for example.)[84] Significantly, though, he adopts the same language as pro-slavery rhetoricians of the day. He described himself as a “Southern champion” but someone sympathetic to the “constitutional argument”—perhaps referencing the Constitutional Union party. The Constitutional Union Party were active during the contentious 1860 election and consisted of mostly Southern ex-Whigs who wanted to avoid secession over enslavement and refused the positions of both Republicans and Democrats.[85] This would align with Barnard’s pro-slavery, anti-secession philosophy.[86] Finally, he defended Southern slavery, saying that his Northern brother had not experienced all of the South, which is to say, he had not experienced the purported “benefits” or “civility” of

slavery as Barnard had. He then added that the South is not “a state of barbarism,” an expression he attributes to “your men” (Northerners.)[87]

He then went on to defend the constitutionality and morality of enslavement, only finding fault in that it limits the South economically:

“Slavery is a necessity as the slave and slave holder must be protected [as] item Constitution — taking all its aspects — as rightful and perhaps ... as happy as any in the world. But even in the happiest aspect, perhaps most to be seen in the happiest aspects—it is rather a damper to energy, enterprise, and advancement. As I have seen, the slave community is ... in duty where ... every article of clothing and food is handmade, even for the weaving of the wool) there is not the slightest chance for an outside which means to live.”[88]

Barnard saw slavery as protected by the constitution in the same way that the framers did—thus, he had no issues reconciling his dual support for the Union and slavery. He also disregards moral arguments against slavery, stating that the system is “as happy as any in the world,” calling back to his earlier claim that his brother had not truly “seen” the South. Yet the faults he saw within slavery, at least in this passage, is that it is so ingrained in the Southern economy that there would be no alternative—ie. industrialization and “advancement.”

Yet Barnard was equally defensive of enslavement in the South and critical of exporting “universal slave law” to areas that did not desire it, seeing this—along with conflict sparked by territorial acquisition, such as the annexation of Texas—as the cause of the current conflict. He argued that the framers did not anticipate the extent to which slavery would grow in the United States, “whatever be the value of the Dred Scott decision the principle is certainly a new discovery which the makers and executors of the Constitution were not aware of.” Not coming down wholly against Dred Scott (he supported “the right of capture,” likely a reference to the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law), he remarked that “They [Southerners] find themselves in the wrong ... in their perverting the constitution to make slavery the universal law of the land. They have armed their northern opposition which has, finally, in the shape of Republicanism, elected Mr.

Lincoln. The controversy has been a political one — and nothing more.”[89] Though he appeared more than willing to tolerate and defend slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law in the interest in preserving the Union, Barnard saw the South as having superseded the Constitution in trying to export slavery to all of the Union, which in his mind caused the conflict.

In many respects, he saw “both sides” as equally culpable, writing “the South needed further guarantees against further disturbances — the North needed to establish the principle that that Constitution should not be wielded in the sole interests of slavery — that slavery should not be the law of the land.”[90] However, he spends the latter portion of the letter stringently criticizing secession and those who supported it. For example, he denigrates “that scoundrel Floyd (traitor would be too dignified a name),” a reference to John B. Floyd, U.S. Secretary of War under the Buchanan administration and later Confederate general who was a leading secessionist even before Lincoln’s election. He referred to secessionists as “a set of fools and lame-brained schemers” who “lay their foolish hands upon the ark of the Union and take it to pieces and hold it together again with a universal slave law,”[91] again criticizing secessionists and the expansion of slavery to the whole of the country as this came at the expense of the Union, which he likened to a holy object or reliquary.

After Barnard resigned from the University, he spent about a year consulting for various military colleges in the Confederacy, reporting on their organization and efficiency, though he refused Davis’ offer for a permanent position in the Confederate government.[92] Barnard ultimately desired a position in academia—but with nearly all Southern schools closed, his options were limited to the North. In 1862, Barnard and his wife were in Norfolk, Virginia, while he inspected the city’s military college. The city was captured by Union troops during their stay, and so Barnard and his wife took the opportunity to cross the border into Washington, D.C., where they reunited with Barnard’s brother John. When the Barnards left the South, they left behind the people they enslaved. It is unknown what happened to them. However, the “slavery question” remained with Barnard.

On January 21, 1863, after being inspired by an open letter from another academic, Barnard wrote and published an open letter to Lincoln titled “Letter to the President of the United States by a Refugee.” Barnard argued in favor of the Union, and that the majority of Southerners supported the Union as well. He described himself as “ruined” by “the great rebellion” having lost “a highly honorable position, in the quiet pursuit of a favorite and useful profession [and]...a wide circle of influential friends” and “reduced...to a homeless wanderer.”[93] He attacked the Confederacy and its leaders—men whom he was dining with a little over a year prior—for breaking up the Union. Then he completely disavowed slavery as a moral evil:

“To fasten upon a great and free people the ineffable, indelible, and damning disgrace of deliberately and intentionally engrafting upon their political institutions that relic of primeval barbarism, that loathsome monument of the brutality and ferocity of the ages of darkness, that monster injustice — cursed of all Christian men and hated of God — domestic slavery. ... To inherit the burthen and the curse, and to perpetuate it when relief seemed hopeless, was certainly not a crime; but deliberately to choose it, to introduce it, to welcome it where it had no existence before, surely this is " the sum of all villainies.”[94]

When speaking to his brother a little over a year prior, Barnard had all but scoffed at the comparison of Southern slavery to “barbarism”—now, he invoked that very language. Just three years prior, Barnard called himself a “Christian master” during the Branham affair, affirming that his pro-slavery record had been clear for his entire life. Now, he called slavery cursed, monstrous, and hated by God. Barnard had long supported the Union and previously cautioned against expanding slavery. But this language decrying Southern slavery itself does not appear anywhere in his private letters or public records before this moment. Barnard also differentiates between perpetuating slavery (excusing the continuation of slavery in the South) and exporting it to new territories, a free-soil position, coming down more strongly on the latter. The final line quoting John Wesley, English Methodist clergyman who urged followers to embrace abolition of the slave trade, perhaps imbuing religious authority into his argument. Yet Barnard, coming to the South, assimilating to slave culture despite his initial apprehensions, choosing to

become a slaveholder and vocally defending slavery in service to his political/academic career, made a “deliberat[e]” choice to “welcome [slavery] where it had no existence before.” Thus, he did in his own life exactly what he says here to be “the sum of all villainies.” Barnard does not ever acknowledge that he was a slaveowner in this pamphlet; So why would Barnard reverse his position? Additionally, why do so publicly? It is possible that Barnard genuinely grew to personally regard slavery as a moral evil. However, it is more likely that as the Civil War waged on Barnard saw a need to align his pro-Union views and his views on slavery to that of the Republican party—that there could be no future Union without the defeat of the South, including the end of slavery (the Emancipation Proclamation had been published three weeks prior.) If he thought there was a chance that the war would end swiftly with the country reunited when he consorted with Jefferson Davis and his cabinet in 1861, that idea was likely gone by 1863. As Barnard’s biography notes, “[f]rom the time of the publication of this letter, Dr. Barnard was a marked man. His appointment to some permanent position of honor and usefulness at the North was assured.”[95]

In other words, by writing this letter announcing his opposition to slavery and the Confederacy to the acclaim of the North, Barnard bolstered his candidacy for a new academic job in the North, something he wrote that he sorely desired. Realigned to the party of Lincoln (though still not a radical), Barnard received some acclaim for his open letter and prepared to enter Northern academia for the first time in over twenty years, at Columbia University.

V. Barnard, Columbia, and Institutional legacy

Barnard was officially inaugurated by Columbia as its tenth university president on June 29, 1864. He had been scouted for the position as early as November 1863. Columbia affiliates do not seem to have been largely concerned with Barnard’s slaveholding past, despite the transition occurring at the height of the Civil War. William F. Stearns, law professor at the University of Mississippi and friend of Barnard who testified for him in the Branham trial, wrote Barnard a letter of recommendation to Charles King, then

university president, and the University Board. In the letter, he qualified Barnard's experience in Mississippi by writing "there was no college in any part of the country, whether South or North, with an equal number of students ... more orderly, and gentlemanly" than those Barnard presided over.[96] (Barnard's deafness was one of the more acute reservations.)

The lack of scrutiny to Barnard's slaveholding past is especially surprising given that King was a prominent anti-slavery advocate. For example, while university president, King had also been president of the Kansas Emigration League of New York in 1854, which aimed to admit Kansas into the Union as a free state and thus advocated for anti-slavery New Yorkers to emigrate there.[97] In early 1864, after the anti-Black and anti-elite New York City Draft Riots the previous summer, King gave a supportive speech to Black Union troops.[98] Thus, the transition of the university presidency to anti-slavery activist to former slaveholder appears striking. Still, it's possible that Barnard's open letter and public alignment with Republican politics aided Barnard in gaining a position as King's successor. As Columbia was largely Republican, but not radical in its support for abolition, Barnard may well have found political acceptance there.

In an 1864 letter sent shortly after Barnard formally joined Columbia, Stearns applauded Barnard's "warm reception" and commented that he had much more freedom to execute his academic vision in the North than he did at Mississippi, where he was constantly feuding with the board.[99] (In reality, the next twenty-five years would draw Barnard into plenty of strife with the Columbia Board of Trustees, though nothing compared to the Branham Affair.[100])

Barnard transformed the university during his twenty-five-year tenure as university president. He founded new schools within the university, including the School of Mines, an engineering college, and the Columbia School of Political Science, which would later become the School for Engineering and Applied Sciences and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, respectively.[101] These new colleges were part of a vision that Barnard had been unable to execute at Mississippi—a university with an emphasis on practical scientific education and research. In part due to the founding of these new schools, Columbia's enrollment increased dramatically.[102] Barnard was also

responsible for moving the university uptown to its current location in Morningside Heights/Harlem and the construction of new university buildings, which he hoped would add to the institution's austerity. His effects were profound. In the words of Robert A. McCaughey, "Barnard inherited a small, potentially wealthy, and nationally negligible college (and law school) and twenty-five years later turned over to his successor an institution within a decade of being one of America's two or three world-class universities." [103]

In line with his aims to expand admission to the University, Barnard is perhaps most well-known for advocating the admission of women to Columbia College, a feat in which he was ultimately unsuccessful. (Barnard College, an annex of Columbia specifically for women, was founded in 1889 and named for Barnard; however, Barnard himself did not play any role in designing the college and did not particularly endorse a separate undergraduate college for women. [104] Rather, the founding of the college was sparked by Annie Nathan Meyer, a Jewish civil rights activist. Allegedly, the college was named for Barnard to secure funds from Columbia trustees and because the name "Barnard" epitomized the "Episcopalian character" the trustees wanted to advertise. [105])

In 1882, Barnard wrote a pamphlet endorsing women's education, in which he urged colleges to "ope[n] their doors to all earnest seeker after knowledge, without regard to race or sex or social condition." [106] However, despite his statement and his notable attempts to expand university enrollment, even by encouraging the admission of women, Barnard does not appear to have made any tangible steps towards admitting Black students to Columbia's undergraduate colleges. Columbia's peer institutions, Harvard and Yale, both admitted Black students during Reconstruction, Yale even before the Civil War. Yale graduated a Black undergraduate student in 1857 and 1874; Harvard graduated its first Black undergraduate student in 1870. [107] Other than the comment referenced above, Barnard never spoke or wrote publicly about slavery or opening Columbia to Black students. The Columbia Daily Spectator, Columbia's undergraduate student newspaper, repeatedly reported on the presence of students of color at other universities (particularly Yale and Harvard) throughout the late 1870s and 1880s. While most of this coverage is tonally neutral (noting the number of Black

students at a given university or that a Black student was named commencement speaker, for example), these reports appeared pages away from racist, anti-Black jokes and skits.[108] The combination could well indicate how these white undergraduates policed the boundaries of who was accepted in the university community, just as they did in denigrating the idea of admitting (white) women to Columbia.[109] As such, Barnard did not advocate for the Columbia community to embrace the political or educational equality of Black people nor did the student body embrace the notion, and the college's lagging progress in admitting Black students is a piece of Barnard's legacy that impacted the university for decades to come.

While Barnard was not advocating for racially inclusive admissions, I encountered no records indicating that Barnard himself espoused statements endorsing scientific racism during his time at Columbia, though future research on his letters is warranted. However, Barnard did welcome Burgess, a law professor who scholars have documented as a white supremacist, to the University. During his time at Columbia, Burgess wrote that "black skin means membership in a race of men which has never of itself succeeded in subjecting passion to reason...[or] created any civilization of any kind." [110] In *Stand, Columbia*, Robert McCaughey presents Barnard and Burgess as opposing figures: Barnard believing in equity in the university and Burgess endorsing racial discrimination and white supremacy.[111] As we have seen, Barnard was far from an advocate of universal equality. He and Burgess also appear to have been personally close to Barnard. In a letter written to Burgess after he was offered a professorship at Columbia, Barnard wrote, "I congratulate myself and the college on your acquisition, which I have for sometimes been ambitious to secure," noting his eagerness for Burgess to join the faculty.[112] Moreover, in a later letter, Barnard asked Burgess to sign for him for a bank loan. That Barnard wrote to Burgess so affectionately and was close enough to ask him for a bank loan suggests the intimacy of their relationship—that they may have been more ideologically alike than different—or even if they did hold differing views, that Barnard was tolerant of Burgess' racist philosophy.

Barnard also kept up correspondences with former Confederates and was interested in sanitizing the South's role in histories of the Civil War and slave past. After fleeing to the

North, he appears to have lost contact with his friend L. Q. C. Lamar, who had remained a Confederate leader. However, Barnard attempted to rekindle their friendship in 1873, and Lamar reciprocated. Barnard evidently asked Lamar's help in some sort of project to record the Southern point of view on the Civil War. Lamar responded warmly but regretfully replied that he appreciated the project but would be unable: "I put the deepest interest in your great enterprise — your wish and determination that the Southern view of the great sectional conflict and secession shall appear fairly with that of the Northern is simply in keeping with your noble sense of justice and courage." [113]

That Barnard aimed for the South to appear "fairly" in a representation of the war and thus reached out to a former Confederate speaks to a desire to redeem or sanitize the reputation of the South and enslavement before the Civil war, during 1870s Reconstruction, an era where the South was undergoing profound disruption to the hegemonic rule of white slave owners. A similar sanitization of the role of the South is reflected in Barnard's biography, which was written by a contemporary and with the help of Barnard's wife, who argue that radical northern abolitionists were just as bad as secessionists in that they both damaged the Union. [114] As Reconstruction was abandoned, this sanitization extended to the reputation of Confederate figures themselves. Indeed, in 1888, Lamar was appointed to be a Supreme Court Justice despite willfully supporting secession years before. [115]

The idea—evidently endorsed by Barnard—of sanitizing the role of the South in the Civil War intellectually underpins later historical work that sought to disparage Reconstruction as corrupt and argue against political equality for Black people. That scholarship was spearheaded by the Dunning School, led by William Archibald Dunning, who attended Columbia during Barnard's tenure and was granted a professorship a year before Barnard's retirement and death. [116] Dunning and his school of followers, many of whom were also educated at Columbia, argued that Black suffrage had been an error and that Republican-led Southern governments in the years after the Civil war had been corrupt and oppressive to white Southerners. [117] Thus, in both his own attempts to defend the actions of the South and the Confederacy and in welcoming Dunning, Barnard's legacy is tied to a rehabilitative image of the slave

South, and arguably Jim Crow as well. Analysis of letters between Dunning and Barnard, as well as examining Dunning's time at Columbia, and his relationship with Barnard and with Burgess could be ripe areas for future scholarship. Further analysis could add to existing scholarship on the Dunning School and shed light on the academic culture of Columbia and its ties to slavery and white supremacy.

VI. Conclusion: Legacy, Erasure, and Institutional History

After he died in 1889, Barnard was remembered fondly. At a statement given at a law school faculty meeting on May 10, 1889, Professor George Chase described Barnard saying his "views were broad, enlightened, and comprehensive" and that he "possessed that tolerance and catholicity of spirit which should characterize the head of a great University." In a letter to Nicholas Murray Butler, Seth Low, university president after Barnard, wrote, "I was especially glad, also, that you traced the seed of the new life to its planting by President Barnard. I always feel that, in the largest sense, I am only watering, in most cases, the seed which he had the sagacity to plant." Not only was Barnard venerated—Columbia's leaders who came after him tried to continue the projects he began.

Barnard's own biography often tried to sanitize and erase his connections to slavery, commenting at length about the difficulty of Barnard's position as a Northerner in the South. Still, we must not allow the sanitized narrative of Barnard's life—that he secretly always opposed slavery or that he was the lesser evil of someone like Burgess—bleed into historical truth. Barnard manipulated his public stance toward support and opposition to slavery to suit his audience in Southern and then Northern academia and politics, which drew him into circles of political power, especially in the South. In his private life, he was tolerant to slavery's brutalities and himself a participant in the slave system. In his private writing, he defended Southern slavery, only finding issue with the institution when it threatened the Union. Barnard was a shrewd political actor, not someone who was only circumstantially involved in enslavement. In assessing Barnard's legacy at Columbia, which resulted in a fundamentally altered University, it is

incumbent upon us to remain cognizant of the extent to which Barnard's pro-slavery and slaveholding past has a bearing on the institution. Considering Barnard's legacy means considering how Barnard did not strive for racial inclusivity in college admissions, welcomed white supremacists like Burgess and Dunning, and remained sympathetic to the South and the Confederacy after the war.

Considering Barnard and his legacy is significant not only in so far as he was a transformative figure at Columbia, but what he indicates about Columbia University and its relationship with enslavement more broadly. In her 2020 paper for the Columbia University and Slavery Project on Columbia's James Kent, Isabel von Stauffenberg identifies Kent as a "duplicitous abolitionist." Kent was a member of an abolitionist society, but owned slaves and defended slavery; his support for abolition was less out of a belief in the causes and more out of a desire to get close to prominent Federalists, some of whom were also in the society.[118] In other words, Kent manipulated (ingenuine) public opposition to enslavement for his own ends. Seventy years later, Barnard did the reverse—manipulating public support for slavery for political capital, only to reverse his public position as he sought employment in the North. That at least two prominent Columbia affiliates were some form of "duplicitous abolitionists" raises questions about how many and in what ways Columbia affiliates and the institution as a whole perpetuated (or continue to perpetuate) systems of racial oppression when outwardly purporting to oppose them.

Reassessing Barnard's legacy also asks modern Columbia University and Barnard College affiliates to assess who is valorized in our institution's history, at whose expense. Indeed, Barnard's name is emblazoned on a school he had no real part in creating, Barnard College where he is often (incorrectly) identified as its founder. (Likewise, Barnard Hall was funded by a donor whose name did not appear on the building because trustees allegedly worried it sounded "too Jewish." [119]) Barnard College's History webpage only identifies Barnard as an educator, mathematician, and Columbia President," with no mention given to enslavement. Barnard's legacy is embodied in the structure of Columbia's undergraduate colleges, production of knowledge, and in the physical grounds of campus itself, yet nowhere do we

acknowledge his ties to slavery. Particularly, though Barnard College advertises itself as a bastion of feminist thought and learning, nowhere do we acknowledge the women that were dehumanized and abused while enslaved by Barnard. To continue to erase the ugly truth of Barnard's history is to continue to turn a blind eye to injustice. Columbia University and Barnard College must contend with this history to understand how their architects and institutional practices are entangled in systems of white supremacist oppression, exploitation, and discrimination and how these practices manifest today.

Endnotes

[1] H. R. Branham, quoted in Record of the Testimony and Proceedings, in the Matter of the Investigation, by the Trustees of the University of Mississippi, on the 1st and 2nd of March, 1860, of the Charges Made by H.R. Branham, against the Chancellor of the University (Jackson, Miss.: the Mississippian, 1860), <http://archive.org/details/recordoftestimon00univ>, 4.

[2] Ibid, 13.

[3] Ibid, 7-8.

[4] Ibid, 1.

[5] Ibid, 27.

[6] James Benson Sellers, History of the University of Alabama (University, Ala: University of Alabama Press, 1953), 70.

[7] University of Mississippi Slavery and the University Working Group, "UM Slavery and the University Working Group: 2-Year Report and Proposal for Future Projects" (University of Mississippi, October 15, 2015), 18; Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Eugene Woldemar Hilgard, January 18, 1860, Box 2, F. A. P. Barnard Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[8] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John G. Barnard, September 13, 1861, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[9] Frederick A. P. Barnard, Letter to the President of the United States From a Refugee (New York, C. S. Westcott, 1863), <http://archive.org/details/lettertoprez00barnard>, 23.

[10] Robert A. McCaughey, Stand, Columbia: A History of Columbia University in the City of New York, 1754-2004, electronic resource (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/cul/resolve?clio14179368>, 150.

[11] John Fulton and Margaret (McMurray) Barnard, *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard ... Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York* (New York and London: Macmillan and co., 1896), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001451718>, 251.

[12] Robert A. McCaughey, *Stand, Columbia*, 164.

[13] John Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York* (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1896), 1.

[14] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 33.

[15] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 76.

[16] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 84.

[17] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 87.

[18] James Benson Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama* (University, Ala: University of Alabama Press, 1953.)

[19] *Ibid*, 38.

[20] *Ibid*, 38.

[21] "Report to the Trustees of the University of Alabama, 1839" in *Manly Diary 2*, Basil Manly Sr., 1839, *Manly Family Papers*, W. S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.

[22] Royal C Dumas, "My Son and My Money Go to the University of Alabama? The Students at the University of Alabama in 1845 and the Families That Sent Them," *The Alabama Civil Rights & Civil Liberties Law Review* 1 (March 22, 2011): 22. 78

[23] Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama*, 38, 235.

[24] *Ibid*, 235.

[25] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Margaret Barnard, October 1, 1851, Box 1, *Barnard Family Papers*, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[26] See generally Lacy K. Ford, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Slavery Question in the Old South* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[27] *Ibid*, for an example see John C. Calhoun, "Speech on the Reception of Abolition Petitions, Delivered in the Senate, February 6th, 1837," in Richard R. Cralle, ed., *Speeches of John C. Calhoun, Delivered in the House of Representatives and in the Senate of the United States* (New D. Appleton, 1853), 625-33

[28] Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama*, 38.

[29] Sellers, *History of the University of Alabama*, 39-40; "Report to the Trustees of the University of Alabama, 1839" in *Manly Diary 2*, Basil Manly Sr., 1839, Manly Family Papers, W. S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama.

[30] Basil Manly Diary, 1848-55, Hoole Special Collection, June 22, 1850, at 85; 236; Alfred L. Brophy has urged caution on interpreting this evidence, suggesting that this accusation was an attempt by Manly to malign Barnard, who frequently battled with over the structure of the university later into Barnard's tenure and became his primary detractor on campus. However, given research on sexual assault of enslavement women on college campuses including the aforementioned story of Jane, that Luna was assaulted with Barnard's knowledge is possible.

[31] Hillary Green, "The Burden of the University of Alabama's Hallowed Grounds," *The Public Historian* 42, no. 4 (November 2020): 28—40, <https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2020.42.4.28>, 34.

[32] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Margaret Barnard, 1851 [no date/month listed], Box 33, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

[33] Frederick A. P. Barnard, *No Just Cause for a Dissolution of the Union in Any Thing Which Has Hitherto Happened, but the Union the Only Security for Southern Rights. An Oration Delivered before the Citizens of Tuscaloosa, Ala., July 4th, 1851* (Tuscaloosa: Printed by J. W. & J. F. Warren, "Observer Office," 1851), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/10073411>. 9-10.

[34] Ibid, 12.

[35] Fulton, Memoirs, 110-111.

[36] Letter, F.A.P. Barnard to Edward Claudius Herrick, May 17, 1854, Box 1, Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

[37] Fulton, Memoirs, 208.

[38] "UM Slavery and the University Working Group: 2-Year Report," 16.

[39] Ibid, 19.

[40] Ibid, 19.

[41] Ibid, 18.

[42] Ibid, 20.

[43] For more on Southern universities and intellectual defenses of slavery, see Alfred L. Brophy, *University, Court, and Slave: Proslavery Academic Thought and Southern Jurisprudence, 1831—1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199964239.003.0001>.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Joseph Angelillo, "The 'Unrepentant Secessionist': The Nomination of L.Q.C. Lamar and the Retreat from Reconstruction," *Journal of Supreme Court History* 46, no. 1 (2021): 42—61, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsch.12256>.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.; Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, July 16, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

- [49] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, February 10, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [50] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, July 16, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [51] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 259.
- [52] F. A. P. Barnard, "How I was educated," *The Forum*, May 1886, 218.
- [53] Brophy, *University, Court, and Slave*, 150.
- [54] *Ibid*, 150.
- [55] *Record of the Testimony and Proceedings*, 18.
- [56] *Ibid*, 18.
- [57] Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe* 2, no. 2 (June 2008): 2.
- [58] *Ibid*, 13.
- [59] *Ibid*, 18.
- [60] *Ibid*, 14.
- [61] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John G. Barnard, June 5, 1859, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [62] *Ibid*.
- [63] *Ibid*.
- [64] *Record of the Testimony and Proceedings*, 7.
- [65] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John G. Barnard, Aug 17, 1859, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [66] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, January 15, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

- [67] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, February 10, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [68] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Margaret Barnard, February 14, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [69] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, February 15, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [70] Record of the Testimony and Proceedings, 1.
- [71] Ibid, 1.
- [72] Ibid, 5.
- [73] Ibid, 12.
- [74] Ibid, 28.
- [75] Futon, Memoirs, 259.
- [76] Ibid, 259.
- [77] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, 1860, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University. Though undated, this letter references the speech Davis gave at the university but was before the 1860 election, placing it somewhere in October or November 1860.
- [78] Fulton, Memoirs, 278.
- [79] Angelillo, "The 'Unrepentant Secessionist.'"
- [80] Brophy, University, Court, and Slave: Proslavery Academic Thought and Southern Jurisprudence, 1831—1861.
- [81] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Margaret Barnard, Undated 1861, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University. Sometimes shortly before October 30, 1861.

[82] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to Margaret Barnard, October 30, 1861, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[83] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John G. Barnard, September 13, 1861, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[84] “» The 1860 Campaign and the ‘Black Republican President,’” The Shelf (blog), October 6, 2012, <https://blogs.harvard.edu/preserving/2012/10/06/the-1860-campaign-and-the-black-republican-president/>.

[85] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, First Ballantine Books edition (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989).

[86] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, First Ballantine Books edition (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989).

[87] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John G. Barnard, September 13, 1861

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 284-7.

[92] Ibid, 289.

[93] Frederick A. P. Barnard, *Letter to the President of the United States From a Refugee* (New York, C. S. Westcott, 1863), <http://archive.org/details/lettertoprez00barnard>, 1.

[94] Ibid, 23-25.

[95] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 298.

[96] Letter, William F. Stearns to Charles King, November 18, 1863, College Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

- [97] The Weekly Portage Sentinel. (Ravenna, Ohio), Aug. 24, 1854. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.
- [98] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," The Liberator, March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.
- [99] Letter, William F. Stearns to F.A.P. Barnard, June 18, 1864, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.
- [100] For more see McCaughey, Stand, Columbia, 174.
- [101] McCaughey, Stand, Columbia, 167.
- [102] McCaughey, Stand, Columbia, 154.
- [103] Ibid, 164.
- [104] Gordon, Lynn D. "Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College: Mission and Identity in Women's Higher Education, 1889—1950." History of Education Quarterly 26 (Winter 1986): 503—522.
- [105] Ibid.
- [106] Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard, Should American Colleges Be Open to Women as Well as to Men? (Weed, Parson, printers, 1882).
- [107] "Who Was the First African American Student at Yale?," June 2014, <https://yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/3876-who-was-the-first-african-american-student-at-yale>; "Who Was the First African American to Graduate from Harvard? - Ask a Librarian," accessed December 21, 2021, <https://ask.library.harvard.edu/faq/82388>.
- [108] "The College World," Columbia Spectator, February 13, 1885, Volume XIV, Number 1, <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18850213-01.2.26>; "The College World," Columbia Spectator, June 18, 1884, Volume II, Number 10 edition, <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18840618-01.2.24>; "The College World," Columbia Spectator, February 29, 1884, Volume XIV, Number 1 edition, <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18840229-01.2.31>; for

examples of racist jokes, see “Shavings,” *Columbia Spectator*, February 15, 1878, Volume II, Number 10 edition,
<https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18780215-01.2.11>

[109] “Co-Education at Columbia,” *Columbia Spectator Publishing Co.*, May 5, 1882,
<https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18820505-01.2.19>

[110] John William Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution, 1866-1876* (Scribner’s, 1903), 133.

[111] McCaughey Stand, *Columbia*, 163-164.

[112] Letter, F. A. P. Barnard to John William Burgess, May 3, 1876, Box 1, John William Burgess papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University.

[113] Letter, L. Q. C. Lamar to F. A. P. Barnard, September 27th, 1873, Box 1, Barnard Family Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Columbia University

[114] Fulton, *Memoirs*, 280—81.

[115] Angelillo, Joseph (2021). "The "Unrepentant Secessionist": The Nomination of L.Q.C. Lamar and the Retreat from Reconstruction". *Journal of Supreme Court History*. 46 (1): 42—61. doi:10.1111/jsch.12256

[116] For more on the Dunning School, see generally John David Smith and J. Vincent Lowery, *The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction* (University Press of Kentucky, 2013), Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, (New York: History Book Club, 2005).

[117] William Archibald Dunning, *Reconstruction Political and Economic* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1907): 213.

[118] Isabel von Stauffenberg, “The Duplicitous Abolitionist: Re-Examining Columbia’s James Kent,” *Columbia University and Slavery*, accessed December 22, 2021,
<https://columbiaandslavery.columbia.edu/content/duplicitous-abolitionist-re-examining-columbias-james-kent>.

[119] Gordon. "Annie Nathan Meyer and Barnard College.