

Margaret McMurray Barnard: Pushing the Barnards' Line-Crossing Ladder to Power

In 1899, a series of names now preserved across Columbia University campus buildings were carved into a bookcase in Low Library, including Schermerhorn, Low, and Barnard.¹

Alongside the last name, Frederick A. P. Barnard, was “Margaret McMurray Barnard, his wife.”

Frederick A. P. Barnard lived from 1809 to 1889, growing up in Massachusetts with a father — a lawyer and colonel — and going on to study natural sciences at Yale.² The tenth president of Columbia University from 1864 to 1889, Frederick Barnard saw the school through the tense final months of the Civil War and Reconstruction and a changing New York City. Importantly, his path to Columbia was varied. One biography credits Frederick Barnard's trajectory as first a professor of mathematics and natural philosophy at the University of Alabama then chancellor at the University of Mississippi before returning to the North.³ He also attended and taught at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in New York, which would eventually become the site of Columbia's campus.⁴ In his definitive history *Stand, Columbia*, McCaughey notes that Frederick Barnard's status as an outsider — as a scientist, non-New-Yorker, and longtime absent from the prevailing Northeast academic culture: “[m]ost of his professional career posse in the provinces in the old Southwest trying to stay connected with the scientific community in the Northeast.”⁵

¹ “Beneficiaries of the Library.” *Columbia Spectator Archive*, 4 Jan. 1899, <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs18990104-01.2.21&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN-%22Margaret+McMurray+Barnard+barnard%22----->.

² Fulton, John. *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York*. Macmillan and Company, 1896.

³ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee! The First Career of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Educator, Scientist, Idealist*. Kennikat Press, 1978, 3.

⁴ Hosford, Stacilee Ford. *Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard: Reconsidering a Life*. Teachers College, Columbia University. *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/303941588/abstract/B65450A4C3A4948PQ/1>. Accessed 3 Dec. 2022, 79-81.

⁵ McCaughey, Robert. *Stand, Columbia: A History of Columbia University*. Columbia University Press, 2003. *EBSCOhost*, <https://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ebscohost.com%2flogin.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26AuthType%3dip%26db%3de025xna%26AN%3d107181%26site%3dehost-live%26scope%3dsite>, 151.

Frederick Barnard's life intersected with Margaret McMurray Barnard's in 1847 Alabama, when he married the visiting cousin of a merchant friend in Tuscaloosa while teaching at (and clashing with) the University of Alabama. Her name in their history remains obscured, and to a large degree her influence and agency is left in the dark by archives and writings never centered around her. But Margaret McMurray Barnard's influence on Frederick Barnard's career — itself predicated on building political capital based on the shifting politics of the North or South, including support for slavery during his years in Alabama and Mississippi — holds in the margins of Frederick Barnard's widely covered history. Once examining the societal importance of University presidents in Frederick Barnard's age, this paper will explore the spaces in the history of Frederick Barnard's ascension to that paper in which Margaret McMurray Barnard currently breathes in Frederick Barnard's histories. Finally, by examining Columbia University's Frederick A.P. Barnard Papers collection, this paper will review notes of condolences sent to Margaret McMurray Barnard when her husband died. At the end of his 25-year tenure at Columbia, those letters reveal an extensive, lasting web of social and political connections the Barnards cultivated and maintained, both in the North and South, before and after the Civil War.

Past Research

Other research into Frederick Barnard's place in Columbia University's history—and role in American slavery—acknowledges the influence social and political connections had on his varied career. Speaking to Frederick Barnard's tenures at prominent Southern universities, Loepere writes that “[Frederick] Barnard's abundant political connections were valuable to [Frederick] Barnard in securing his position and authority while facing strife as an outsider to the

South.”⁶ In fact, Frederick Barnard’s ability to enter the educational bastion of the slavery-entrenched South hinged on him rebuffing his Northern connections and enslaving people while he was in Mississippi. Loepere emphasizes that “[Frederick] 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.”⁷

Yet the degree to which he clung to such pro-slavery values or social networks following his departure—and the ways in which those networks followed or translated in a changing New York—remains less interrogated. Singer argues that “[Frederick] Barnard never lost his affinity for and connection to the South. Out of the necessity of finding employment in the Union, Frederick Barnard’s views on slavery evolved, although he rarely chose to mention the issue once living in the North.”⁸ Eyob delineates flaws in the choice to name Barnard College after Frederick Barnard, whose vague support for coeducation translated into political capital when the University considered the naming after his death, in large part thanks to his close ties to the Episcopal Church. Eyob emphasizes that beyond anachronism, Frederick Barnard’s push for coeducation paled in comparison to the advocate Annie Nathan Meyer—and Frederick Barnard’s ownership of slaves underscored a deeper violence to women and the principles of progressivism.⁹

⁶ Loepere, Heather. “(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*. 2021, 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸ Singer, Sabrina. *Columbia’s Civil War Presidents: How Charles King and Frederick A.P. Barnard’s Views On Slavery Shaped Columbia*. May 2015, 1.

⁹ Eyob, Hannah. *A History of Barnard College; Frederick A.P. Barnard and the Afterlives of Slavery*. 2017.

The University President in the 19th Century

As for the role of a University President in the 19th century, Dennison characterizes the period between 1865 and 1910 as one of “a marvelous flurry of creative energy” with a “middle-class culture that enshrined professionalism.”¹⁰ Included in that shift were the new structures of “modern colleges and universities with their responsive curricula and research agenda,” with Dennison continuing to define University Presidents as “giants [that] thrived during the formative period of reinvention and development because of the fortunate conjuncture of their extraordinary but very special talents and attitudes and the societal needs of the time.”¹¹ In New England specifically, Allmendinger notes (while excluding information on Columbia specifically) growth away from agriculturally-based, lower-class conceptions of college education and towards both generally larger student bodies as well as higher average student ages and higher-class families. Allmendinger credits the rise in profile of the New England college with the general growth of the New England population along with the Second Great Awakening pushing more young men towards seeking divinity education.¹²

In *The American College in the Nineteenth Century*, Geiger notes that the Civil War came at a turning point for American higher education. Before the war, college graduates amounted to only one percent or less of the American male workforce — after the war, that number climbed to varying regional degrees, with college becoming professionally tracked and opened.¹³ Geiger notes that in much literature surrounding the history of American academic organization and curriculum, “completely obscured is the fact that the war bisected a dynamic

¹⁰ Dennison, George M. “Small Men on Campus: Modern University Presidents.” *Innovative Higher Education*, vol. 25, no. 4, June 2001, pp. 269–84. *Springer Link*, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011046623887>, 272.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 272.

¹² Allmendinger, David F. *Paupers and Scholars: The Transformation of Student Life in Nineteenth-Century New England*. St. Martin’s Press, 1975, 1-5, 9.

¹³ Geiger, Roger L., editor. *The American College in the Nineteenth Century*. 1st ed, Vanderbilt University Press, 2000.

period of experiment and change” including “land-grant colleges, institutes of technology, [and] coeducation.”¹⁴ Importantly, while many colleges trended towards forming political classes from more socially mixed student bodies at the beginning of the century, as Allemendinger also notes, Geiger points out that “Harvard and South Carolina are among the few colleges—perhaps Columbia and the University of Virginia fit here as well—whose students were drawn heavily social elites.”¹⁵ Amid a national landscape turning towards collegiate elitism, Columbia uniquely started with a student body already separated from the lower class, with social power and sway factoring into its very organization.

Frederick Barnard was also entering a unique period of New York history, with Beckert’s bourgeois in the emerging “monied metropolis” seeing new, professionally earned money defining social and economic order in the latter half of the 19th century. In that new world, intellectuals were among professionals and experts as a “group with a complicated relationship.”¹⁶ While some academics had capital or land ownership, “some also found access to bourgeois networks and bourgeois institutions solely based on the educational capital they controlled.”¹⁷ As references, McCaughey notes that Frederick Barnard was an outsider facing an uphill battle — entering a ring of social and political connections in academia where a network of allies was pivotal for pushing for his prominence among his own University and obtaining the title of a University president.

¹⁴Ibid., 24.

¹⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶ Beckert. *The Monied Metropolis : New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. EBSCOhost, <https://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?qurl=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ebscohost.com%2flogin.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26AuthType%3dip%26db%3de025xna%26AN%3d800943%26site%3dehost-live%26scope%3dsite>, 7.

¹⁷ Ibid., 7.

Margaret McMurray Barnard in the Margins

Yet for the reciprocal social and political role Frederick Barnard played, there is strikingly little research into the source of such status and impact of Frederick Barnard as a social leader. Also absent in scholarship of Frederick Barnard's social power is Margaret McMurray Barnard — for example, Loepere references Margaret McMurray Barnard within a source once, otherwise referring to her as “his wife” and simply mentioned as the addressee of Frederick Barnard's letters describing the South when she was away.¹⁸ Research does not center Margaret McMurray Barnard in her own capacity as a President's wife and force within their marriage. She demonstrated an ability to both sway his own public-facing views and an interest in furthering his professional career alongside her established social connections at the time of their marriage, casting nuance into Frederick Barnard's positioning in the South.

Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray was born in 1818 in Wigton, England.¹⁹ From there, her family moved to and raised her in Ohio, but it was not until she was in Alabama visiting “her cousin, Thomas Maxwell, a successful merchant and social friend of [Frederick] Barnard's” that she would meet her eventual husband.²⁰ In letters Maxwell wrote to his own children in 1859 following his wife's death, Maxwell described his Scottish family's history, including their varied economic successes and ultimate hardships alongside their move to England and his later move to The United States to seek financial opportunity.²¹ Maxwell emphasized his lack of education, having been pulled from school at 10 years old to work for the

¹⁸ Loepere, Heather. “(Un)Sound on the Slavery Question,” 42.

¹⁹ “England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975”, database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NYV2-832> : 21 March 2020), Margaret McMurray Barnard Mc. Murray, 1818.

²⁰ *AU Archives -- Guide to the Thomas Maxwell Papers, RG 35.* <https://www.lib.auburn.edu/archive/find-aid/035.htm>; Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee! The First Career of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Educator, Scientist, Idealist.* Kennikat Press, 1978.

²¹ Maxwell, Thomas. *Thomas Maxwell Papers; 1835-1859; Frederick A. P. Barnard Papers; Auburn University Special Collection and Archives, Auburn University Libraries.*

family's textile manufacturing business. Related through his mother — Mary McMurray, who had unreliable promises of inheritance but no significant family wealth — Maxwell sketched Margaret McMurray's English family as one of limited and undependable means.

Maxwell described his fortune in pre-war Alabama as varied, largely facing unemployment in Mobile before being sent on a trading trip to Tsucaloosa, launching his eventual success with a firm “importing largely a great variety of goods from the manufacturers in England and, direct through Mobile, being in fact the first house in the interior of Alabama who gave a practical shape to direct Southern imports.”²² He earned enough to send money home, eventually funding other family members' moves to America. As for race and politics, Maxwell remained fairly oblique. At one point he referred to a “servant, a large Woman black as the Ace of Spades” shortly after his arrival in Alabama, yet slavery itself is not mentioned in the letters' 118 typed pages.²³ At another point, following his trade taking off, he described his refusal to stoop below his class and perform crew work to a “little Yankee lady” on a cargo ship, indicating a developed sense of Southern identity.²⁴ Maxwell was clear about attending church more often than he did in England, seeing the Anglican denomination as a “political machine,” yet in American Episopocpalian service he “heard all the people join in the public worship and give all the responses, for the first time in my life I recognized its solemnity and its beauty.”²⁵ Overall, Maxwell was a self-made, somewhat successful merchant, and Margaret McMurray arrived to a man on the financial and social upswing, not explicitly concerned with public politics or slavery.

²² Ibid., 70.

²³ Ibid., 89.

²⁴ Ibid., 106.

²⁵ Ibid., 95.

When Margaret McMurray did arrive in Alabama, several sources, including Frederick Barnard's memoirs and Chute's biography *Damn Yankee!*, describe a professor prone to "backsliding" into drunkenness, dabbling in literature from his profession in the sciences — generally showing promise without direction. The same sources describe Margaret McMurray Barnard as a strong hand inclined to (and good at) serving Frederick Barnard's career: "what [Frederick] Barnard needed most was the stabilizing hand and the love of a devoted wife. He won that when he married Miss Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray on December 30, 1847."²⁶ Notably, characterization of Margaret McMurray Barnard's relationship to the South remains mixed. Hosford continued to posit that Margaret McMurray Barnard "did not like the South and when her health was poor, she convalesced in the North."²⁷ In contrast, Chute describes a Margaret McMurray Barnard who "had fallen in love with the South and the not-so-young professor."²⁸

In McCaughey's comprehensive *Stand Columbia*, he writes that their "forty-two-year marriage... seems to have been a happy one," also linking the end of Frederick Barnard's previously career-inhibiting "persistent problem" with drinking to his marriage.²⁹ McCaughey characterizes Frederick Barnard as a public-facing figure, with the Alabama State Observatory opening in large part to Frederick Barnard's lobbying. McCaughey also points to a tense relationship between Frederick Barnard and University of Alabama President Basil Manly, with the Baptist southern nationalist conflicting with the Episcopal Whig.³⁰ Chute's biography of Frederick Barnard says his marriage to Margaret McMurray was performed by the same Manly,³¹

²⁶ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁸ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*.

²⁹ McCaughey, Robert. *Stand, Columbia*, 148.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 149.

³¹ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*, 98.

later an official Confederate chaplain.³² Their marriage ceremony's denominational crossroads would have been a leaning into the Southern Baptist world Barnard was struggling against, performing political work from its start.

Barnard's biography describes the marriage as a "love match" that was "certainly not a prudent marriage, as the world counts prudence, for neither Barnard nor his bride was rich; in fact, they were both poor, and what was worse, Barnard was in debt... Mrs. Barnard soon brought order to his confused affairs."³³ Chute continued to describe Margaret McMurray Barnard correcting his personal issues with drinking directly, saying she "made Barnard join the Sons of Temperance," with public pro-temperance appearing in the years to come.³⁴

Beyond logistically tracking expenses, largely mitigating Barnard's extreme spending on scientific instruments, Hosford further describes their personal relationship:

She led him to temperance reform, encouraged his participation in the Episcopal Church, and forced him to confront his financial irresponsibility. Because of her no-nonsense style, the two had a relation-ship that was warm, honest, and reciprocal. Margaret Barnard was a strong wom[a]n who was devoted to her somewhat moody husband. She took great interest in his career.³⁵

Margaret McMurray Barnard's influence was in the domestic sphere (notably, the Banrards would never have children, allowing a redirection of Margaret McMurray Barnard's energies), and it was strong. Margaret McMurray Barnard did not come from wealth or destitution — she

³² "Basil Manly." *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/ARTICLE/h-1182>. Accessed 21 Dec. 2022.

³³ Fulton, John. *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York*. Macmillan and Company, 1896, 105.

³⁴ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*.

³⁵ Hosford, Stacilee Ford. *Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard: Reconsidering a Life*. Teachers College, Columbia University. *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/303941588/abstract/B65450A4C3A4948PO/1>, 18.

did come from a background of work ethic focused on personal careers, a perspective she brought to her husband's work.

Condolences to Mrs. Barnard

While Frederick Barnard faced scrutiny for not being “unsound on the slavery question” in the South, even to the point of being called for a hearing to the University of Mississippi Board of Trustees in 1860.³⁶ While Frederick Barnard emphasized a consistent pro-unionist position, he bent to the wills of the institution and was allowed to stay after emphasizing his commitment to slavery. When he aimed to return to the North following the start of the Civil War — following the University of Mississippi plummeting into disarray and family, like Frederick's Union general brother, in the North — the Barnards make personal visit to Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, who tries to convince Frederick Barnard to continue working in the South, the academic hearing also been on prominent national science organizations in the past years as representation for the South.³⁷ In a letter in the *New York Times*, the year he was elected Columbia University president Frederick Barnard described refusing the position Davis offered him, eventually obtaining permission to travel North — Chute notes the end of Frederick Barnard's ‘southern career was cushioned by influence from high places in the North.’³⁸ In that 1864 letter to the editor, Frederick Barnard explicitly stated: “In the protracted struggle between the North and the South, which had agitated the country for years previously to the last Presidential election, my convictions and feelings had been with the section in which I lived.”³⁹

³⁶ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*, 168.

³⁷ Chute, William J. *Damn Yankee!*, 186-187.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 188.

³⁹ “President Barnard His Position and Opinions.” *The New York Times*, 1 Sept. 1864. *NYTimes.com*, <https://www.nytimes.com/1864/09/01/archives/president-barnard-his-position-and-opinions.html>.

In the two years following Frederick Barnard's death on April 27, 1889, the Frederick A.P. Barnard archived papers include 42 dated letters from friends, colleagues, and family — ranging from Southern academics to General William Tecumseh Sherman — to the new widow. The scope of these letters and their senders exemplifies the nuanced and wide web of standing the Barnards relied upon.



Figure 1: All letter sending points in order of receipt, created with Open Street Maps

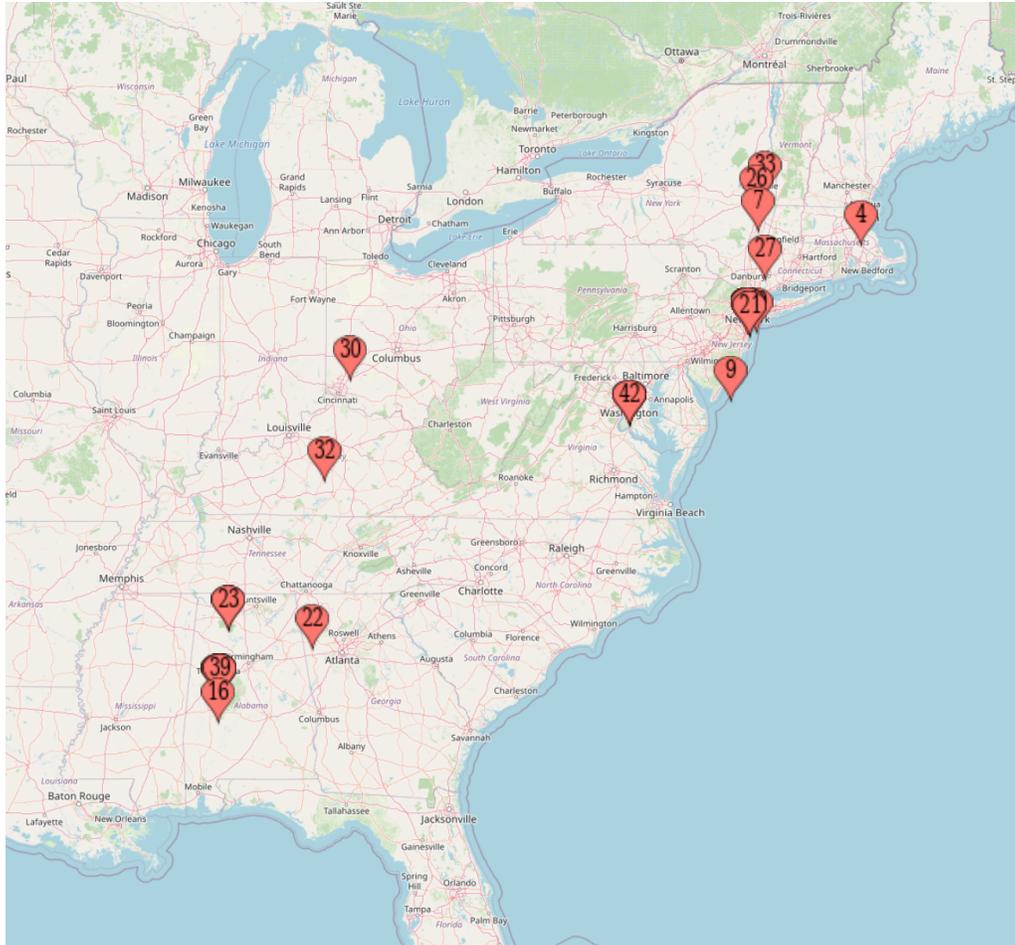


Figure 2: Eastern United States sending points in order of receipt, created with Open Street Maps

Thomas Maxwell

One of the more personal letters was from her cousin — Maxwell still living in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, noting much of his correspondence with Margaret McMurray Barnard had been lost in a recent move — assuring Margaret McMurray Barnard of Frederick Barnard’s lasting Southern connections: “trust his southern friends had never ceased their kindly regards in the midst of all the turmoil [and] strife of the Civil War.”⁴⁰ Even after leading a Northeastern university through the end of the war and Reconstruction, the Banrards maintained their personal and political connections in Alabama, their stature superseding sectional tension.

⁴⁰ Eugene Woldemar Hilgard to Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray Barnard; June 6, 1889; Frederick A. P. Barnard Papers; University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

Benjamin F. Meek

Meek was an English lecturer at the University of Alabama.⁴¹ During his time as a faculty member at the University of Alabama, Frederick Barnard became an enslaver, with an unknown number of enslaved people in the Barnard household.⁴² While in Tuscaloosa, Frederick Barnard maintained a public presence both promoting scientific education (he hung a giant pendulum at the state capital to reenact Foucault's experiment⁴³) alongside a line of pro-union, pro-slavery politics. In an 1851 speech to Tuscaloosa citizens, he alluded to "soreness of feeling...produced in the Southern mind by the infringement of undeniable rights and the interference with strictly private affairs...seized upon by agitators as the most available means of accomplishing their ulterior designs."⁴⁴ Meek's letter upon Frederick Barnard's death demonstrated no irreparable strain caused by Barnard returning across regional lines, having made political, academic connections even beyond his field of science.

R. H. Cobbs

The Hale County Episcopal minister, describing the recently passed Frederick Barnard's as "the Teacher Friend of my youth," wrote from the state where the academic Frederick Barnard also got his Episcopal ordination.⁴⁵ McCaughey describes Frederick Barnard's ordination in 1856 as a safeguard against academic job insecurity, with his denomination later playing in his favor at the originally Epsipopalian Columbia with Frederick Barnard's tenure intersecting with those

⁴¹ Meek, Benjamin Franklin. "Lectures in English Literature, B.F. Meek, University of Alabama, 1872-1873, Benjamin Franklin Meek Lecture Notebook." *The Univeristy of Alabama Libraries Special Collections*, https://cdm17336.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/u0003_0000974/id/102/rec/1. Accessed 21 Dec. 2022.

⁴² Loepere, Heather. "(Un)Sound on the Slavery Question," 9.

⁴³ McCaughey, Robert. *Stand, Columbia*.

⁴⁴ Barnard, Frederick A. P. *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*. Printed by J.W. & J.F. Warren, "Observer Office," 1851.

⁴⁵ R. H. Cobbs to Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray Barnard; May 7, 1889; Frederick A. P. Barnard Papers; University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

such as the famous Episcopalian priest and thinker Morgan Dix, a trustee who similarly supported Frederick Barnard's 1870's push for coeducation.⁴⁶

Eugene Woldemar Hilgard

The Bavarian-born chemist worked at both University of California and Frederick Barnard's former workplace, the University of Mississippi. In this response to Margaret McMurray Barnard's request for biographical materials for Frederick Barnard — she would later begin the process of assembling Frederick Barnard's memoirs — Hilgard writes he assembles his retrospective such that it would "be acceptable to both North and South, after the passions of the war have had time to subside."⁴⁷

Melvil Dewey

Director of the State Library (and former Columbia College librarian) at the time of Frederick Barnard's death, Dewey wrote that "[w]hen the true story is written, [Frederick Barnard's] name will be as eminent in his field as is Washington's in his," Dewey referencing his 15-year-long acquaintance with Frederick Barnard. Prominent in the field of information science.⁴⁸ Dewey held academic sway and a personal connection to Frederick Barnard, who rallied outsider and scientific support amongst a hostile Columbia Board of Trustees — while his own personal history, including racist exclusion from his private club, has withstood increasing scrutiny.⁴⁹ Dewey stands as a regional example of the academic circles Frederick Barnard built while at Columbia, despite the racialized politics of the post-war North hinging on policies of exclusion and personal social spheres of racism.

⁴⁶ *Coeducation: Rev. Morgan Dix*, Columbia University Libraries. <https://library.columbia.edu/libraries/cuarchives/resources/coeducation/morgandix.html>. Accessed 21 Dec. 2022.

⁴⁷ Melvil Dewey to Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray Barnard; Sept. 8, 1889; Frederick A. P. Barnard Papers; University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

⁴⁸ Melvil Dewey to Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray Barnard; April 29, 1889; Frederick A. P. Barnard Papers; University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries.

⁴⁹ *LibGuides: Dewey Decimal System: We Need to Talk About Melvil Dewey*, Pratt University, <https://libguides.pratt.edu/dewey-decimal-system/melvil-dewey>. Accessed 21 Dec. 2022.

Daniel Henry Chamberlain

Massachusetts-born and a Yale graduate, and eventual Reconstruction-era Republican Governor of South Carolina, Chamberlain mirrored Frederick Barnard's varied loci of power. In his letter to Margaret McMurray Barnard, at the time having returned to the North as a Cornell law professor, he references "the country [Frederick Barnard] has served so long and well." The varied career of Chamberlain explores how the Barnards largely fit into an upper social class rather than any particular party of allegiance, Much like Chamberlain, Frederick Barnard was able to return to the academia of the Northeast following changing Southern politics (for Frederick Barnard, secession; for Chamberlain, the end of military Reconstruction). Academic power paralleled social power, both of which superseding any public or personal lines between long-standing beliefs in racial equity or progress.

Memoir Writing

Following his death, Margaret McMurray Barnard began assembling Barnard's biography. As its preface describes:

The material for these Memoirs was collected by the late Mrs. Margaret McMurray Barnard McMurray Barnard, and has been arranged and edited in accordance with her wishes. Her sudden death, when no more than two chapters had been written, left the editor under a double disadvantage, since many interesting letters and other documents of which she had frequently spoke could not be found.⁵⁰

Notably, Jefferson Davis' wife Varina Davis also compiled her husband's life after his death — her own biographer noting before her death at eighty "Davis drafted an autobiographical sketch

⁵⁰ Fulton, John. *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York*. Macmillan and Company, 1896.

and published a memoir of her husband and a number of articles.”⁵¹ However, Margaret McMurray Barnard did not leave behind any assembly information on her own life, her husband’s memoirs being described as “the last and dearest wish of the loyal and devoted woman by whose desire they have been compiled.”⁵²

The book’s introduction continued to explain, with the new editor and writer John Fulton, himself a trained scientist,⁵³ “Mrs. Barnard’s wish was that her husband’s career as a great educator should be illustrated as largely as possible from his own writings.”⁵⁴ Fulton would ultimately condense many such writings, although primary texts from Barnard’s speeches to sonnets would pepper the pages, but the book remained true to such a mission, with Margaret McMurray Barnard herself only mentioned briefly around their marriage. And yet again, the direction of the project appears centered on the characterization of Barnard himself, Margaret McMurray Barnard seeking to further his career even after death: “It was no part of Mrs. Barnard’s desire or design that these Memoirs should include a history of Columbia College under Dr. Barnard’s administration, but only that her husband’s views and efforts during that most important period of his life should be adequately set forth.”⁵⁵

Conclusion

Frederick Barnard led a varied academic, social, and political life, straddling a changing academic landscape and national political landscape while climbing his ladder of power to Columbia University President. Margaret McMurray Barnard stepped alongside him as he toed

⁵¹ Cashin, Joan E. *First Lady of the Confederacy: Varina Davis’s Civil War*. Harvard University Press, 2009, 7.

⁵² Fulton, John. *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York*. Macmillan and Company, 1896, vi.

⁵³ Le Fanu, William. “John Fulton’s Historical and Bibliographical Work.” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1962, pp. 38–50.

⁵⁴ Fulton, John. *Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, Tenth President of Columbia College in the City of New York*. Macmillan and Company, 1896, v.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, vi.

the lines of swaying with political winds, focused on his career and at the center of their social webs. Further research in local Southern archives would better illuminate how the Barnard household functioned both in the South and North, and specific biographical research into Margaret McMurray Barnard herself would further clarify the implication of her role as a white woman and wife in Barnard's varied legacy. However, she was undeniably a centripetal force of his success, and the efforts around and following his death in shaping his, if not her own, story merit criticism.

Appendix*Letters Addressed to Margaret McMurray Barnard in the Frederick A.P. Barnard Papers**Collection in Columbia's Rare Books and Manuscripts Library*

Name of Sender	Date	Location of Sender
Torrey, Margaret	August 14, 1871	n.p.
Hunt, T. Sterry	February 22, 1873	Berlin, Germany
Torrey, Margaret	May 1, 1874	New York, NY
Torrey, Margaret	May 1, 1878	New York, NY
Purrington, William Archer	January 30, 1883	New York, NY
Purrington, William Archer	February 24, 1883	New York, NY
Purrington, William Archer	February 26, 1883	New York, NY
Purrington, William Archer	February 27, 1883	New York, NY
Rood, Mathilde Prunner	May 21, 1888	New York, NY
Chamberlain, Daniel Henry	April 26, 1889	Morris Dock, NY
Burgess, John William	April 28, 1889	New York, NY
Carpenter, William H.	April 28, 1889	New York, NY
Coan, Titus Munson	April 28, 1889	New York, NY
Cohn, Adolphe	April 28, 1889	Cambridge, MA

Perrin, Raymond	April 28, 1889	New York, NY
Stevens, Walter Le Conte	April 28, 1889	(Brooklyn) New York, NY
Dewer, Melvil	April 29, 1889	Albany, NY
Newcomb, Simon	April 29, 1889	Washington, D.C.
Thompson, Daniel G.	April 29, 1889	Atlantic City, NJ
Eaton, Arthur W. H.	April 30, 1889	New York, NY
diCesnola, Mary	May 1, 1889	New York, NY
Purrington, William Archer	May 1, 1889	New York, NY
Hilgard, Eugene Woldemar	May 2, 1889	Berkeley, CA
Huntington, William Reed	May 3, 1889	New York, NY
Huntington, Daniel	May 5, 1889	New York, NY
Cobbs, R. H.	May 7, 1889	Greensboro, AL
Saunders, James E.	May 7, 1889	Courtland, AL
Smith, Munroe	May 8, 1889	New York, NY
Grant, Ida Honoré	May 11, 1889	Vienna, Austria
McCormick, R.C.	May 11, 1889	Jamaica, New York, NY
Low, Seth	May 17, 1889	(Brooklyn) New York, NY
Postell, Kate H.	May 17, 1889	Rome, GA

Saunders, James E.	May 31, 1889	Courtland, AL
Hilgard, Eugene Woldemar	June 6, 1889	Berkeley, CA
Dawson, N. H. R.	June 20, 1889	Tuscaloosa, AL
Potter, Horatio	June 25, 1889	Saratoga Springs, NY
Lossing, Benson	August 3, 1889	Dover Plains, NY
Maxwell, James R.	September 8, 1889	Tuscaloosa, AL
Benjamin, Marcus	September 23, 1889	New York, NY
Houk, David S.	January 22, 1890	Dayton, OH
Sherman, William Tecumseh and Elizabeth (daughter)	January 25, 1890	New York, NY
Stafford, M. B. B.	March 12, 1890	Harrodsburg, KY
Edwards, Amelia B.	March 21, 1890	Chelsea Square, New York, NY
Coan, Titus Munson	November 11, 1890	New York, NY
Postell, Kate H.	December 29, 1890	New York, NY
Meek, Benjamin F.	December 30, 1890	University of Alabama
Meek, Benjamin F.	January 27, 1891	University of Alabama
Edwards, Amelia B.	February 8, 1891	Bristol, England
Meek, Benjamin F.	April 1, 1891	University Alabama
McCulloch, Hugh	April 6, 1891	Washington, D.C.
Dix, Morgan	April 8, 1891	New York, NY

McCulloch, Hugh	April 11, 1891	Washington, D.C.
Dix, Morgan	June 21, n.d.	n.p.
Torrey, Maragret	March 17, n.d.	New York, NY
Torrey, Margaret	March 9, n.d.	New York, NY
Pellew, Augusta J.	May 29, n.d.	New York, NY
Butler, Charles	n.d.	New York, NY