

William Nichols Barnard

April 24, 1875 — April 3, 1947

William Nichols Barnard died in the Ithaca Memorial Hospital on April 3, 1947. He had retired from active service in 1946 having served on the Faculty of Sibley College for forty-five years. His death removes from the Faculty of Cornell University, one of its oldest and most faithful members. He was born in Canton, Illinois on April 24, 1875, entered Cornell in 1893, and graduated with the degree of Mechanical Engineer in 1897. His attachment to Cornell was quite natural; for his father, William Stebbins Barnard, graduated from Cornell in 1871, studied there for his Ph.D. and was, for some time, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Entomology.

Professor Barnard's interest in his chosen field, steam engineering, was no doubt stimulated by his work under the famous Director of Sibley College, Robert H. Thurston, who was great authority of his day on thermodynamics and kindred subjects, and also by his contacts with John H. Barr, Professor of Machine Design, whose course in steam-engine design was the outstanding senior design course in the college.

Professor Barnard remained at Cornell for two years after graduation as an instructor in Machine Design, assisting Professor Barr in the course of steam engine design. During the years, 1899 to 1903, he worked as a designer with the Russell Engine Company of Massillon, Ohio, returning to Cornell in 1903 as Assistant Professor of Machine Design and Steam Engineering. In 1907, he was promoted to a full professorship in Steam Engineering, a position he held until 1915. In that year, he was made Professor of Heat-Power Engineering, a position he held until his death. Professor Barnard's contribution to the academic life of Sibley College of Mechanical Engineering was noteworthy. From 1907 to 1915, he served as Secretary to the College and from 1938 until his retirement, he was Director of the Sibley School of Mechanical Engineering.

His contribution to our war efforts was also noteworthy. During the First World War, he served with distinction as President of the Academic Board, U. S. Army School of Military Aeronautics at Cornell University, and organized and directed the great ground school for army fliers that was housed in Barton Hall, one of the most successful schools of its kind. During the Second World War, he served again as coordinator of civilian pilot training. Although he spent the greater part of his life in university work, he was no recluse but kept himself well informed on world events.

Professor Barnard was widely known by his writings. In 1907, he published a book on Valve Gears. In 1912, he collaborated with C. F. Hirshfeld in issuing a volume on Heat-Power Engineering. In 1926, he collaborated

with C. F. Hirshfeld and Frank O. Ellenwood in Part I of a volume on Heat-Power Engineering, Parts II and III appearing in 1933. These books are classics in their field. He was a member of a number of scientific and honorary societies, namely, The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, The Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, Cornell Society of Engineers, Sigma Xi, Tau Beta Pi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Atmos. He was also a Registered Professional Engineer in New York State.

Professor Barnard will long be remembered by a host of students and graduates not only as a close friend, but more important as a kindly, helpful, cheerful teacher and administrator. No student went to him for help and advice and came away empty handed. By his colleagues, he will be remembered as a hardworking, scholarly and cheerful man, easy of approach and very companionable. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and particularly by those who worked with him for so many years.

On April 17, 1919, he married Edith Nourse Robinson who survives him.

H. B. Adelman, F. O. Ellenwood, D. S. Kimball