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### Barnes, Tirza Lydia

Maude Barnes Gantz

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## Tirza Lydia Barnes

It was a balmy evening in April, 1861 but no one thought of the lovely springtime in the town of Cambridge, Ohio. The church bells were ringing; every window held a lighted lamp, and the streets were a throng with happy, shouting people. The word had just come that Richmond had fallen! The war between the North and South would soon be over and the husbands and fathers and sweethearts would be home again. Tirza, the small daughter of Col. and Mrs. Milton Barnes was taken by her mother and grandmother to see and hear the celebration - her earliest memory.

Her elementary school days were spent in Cambridge, the county seat of Guernsey County, where her father had resumed his law practice at the close of the war.

In 1877 Col. Barnes was elected Secretary of State of Ohio and the family moved to Columbus. Three brothers and one sister, all younger, made up the busy, happy family.

The four years in Columbus saw Tirza going to high school in the winter and back in Cambridge for the vacation with the gay group of teenagers she had left.

In the spring of 1881 the family moved out to Westerville. When Col. Barnes had made campaign speeches and about which he reported to his daughter that it was a nice little town with a little college too! But after four years in Columbus and in governmental circles the thought of a little town and a little college didn't meet with much enthusiasm. In after years she often laughed about it in the light of the forty-three years of devoted and loyal service she gave to the college - Otterbein University as it was called then.

She matriculated in the fall of 1881 and was graduated in June, 1885 with a B.L. degree.

With the help of Mr. L. D. Wishard, General Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, a Young Women's Christian Association was organized in Otterbein in 1882 with eighteen or twenty members. The following February an invitation was extended by the Y.M.C.A. to their state convention in Mt. Vernon and three of the young women attended: Fannie Beal '84, later Mrs. L. B. Bonebrake, Tirza Barnes, and one other whose name is not known, for unfortunately no records were kept. Greetings were sent to the girls of other colleges hoping to get them interested in the Y.W.C.A. This was presented in a speech by Fannie Beal in which she said, 'No one could reach the heart of a girl like another girl'. The boys applauded but did not altogether believe and it became one of the traditional sayings of the college.

A number of Associations were started in the Ohio colleges and in order to form a state organization, a meeting was called in Dayton with Mr. Wishard directing. Delegates were present from Otterbein and Wooster only but they went ahead and formed a state organization with Belle Bevier of Wooster as president and Tirza Barnes of Otterbein as secretary. A call was sent out to all the colleges and

seminaries of the State telling of the organization and announcing a convention to be held in Otterbein the next February. So the first State Convention of the Young Women's Christian Association was held in Westerville, February 12 and 13, 1885 with six associations and ten colleges represented by fourteen delegates. After her graduation in 1886, Nellie Knox (later, Mrs. F. E. Miller) was made first State Secretary of College Young Women's Christian Associations.

Tirza was a member of the Philalethean Literary Society and gave much credit throughout her life to the training she received in its halls. Several years after her graduation she represented Philalethea on the program during Commencement Week called "Anniversary of the Societies".

Her first teaching experience was in a private school, The Sommerville, in St. Clair, Michigan. The faculty was made up mostly of Eastern teachers; delightful, cultured and clever. One of them, however, expressed great surprise that Thanksgiving Day should be celebrated so far west. At the end of the year the school was closed for lack of funds. Like many another young graduate she had only experience and happy memories for her year's work.

In the fall of 1887 she was called to a position on the faculty of Westfield College in Westfield, Illinois. She taught English and Latin there and was Lady Principal with rooms in the dormitory for girls. Her letters home were filled with new experiences such as getting up at five o'clock to build her own fire and be ready for breakfast at six. She always held in high regard the two presidents under whom she worked. Dr. I. L. Kephart and Dr. Klinefelter. She also met there and formed a life-long friendship for Miss Teresa Maxwell who later came to Otterbein as Business Instructor, and still later when a widow, Mrs. Milton Carey, as Dean of Women. Teaching music there at the same time was another Otterbein graduate, Miss Azalia Scott '87 who later married Dr. John F. Detwiler '88.

At the Board Meeting in June, 1890, Tirza was elected to a place on the faculty of her Alma Mater with the added duties of Lady Principal with headquarters in ~~South~~ <sup>South</sup> Town Hall. This was the beginning of many long years of devoted and loyal service to the College - through the lean years when the students were scarce and funds even more so, when the thought of removal to Dayton hung over the Westerville friends like the sword of Damocles, on to the days of better things for the college, more students, more funds, more friends and new buildings. A new day had come to the institution which was now called, more appropriately, Otterbein College, instead of University.

For several years she assisted Dr. Scott in the College library in addition to her other work. The library was then housed in the Administration Building on the second floor and was badly crowded and most inadequate. In 1908 the College was given money for a library building and a \$20,000 endowment by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. Miss Barnes was then elected librarian, a position she held for 36 years. The new building was erected on the south-east corner of College Avenue and Grove Street, the site of the home of the first president, Dr. Lewis Davis.

Miss Barnes spent two summers at Chautauqua taking a course in library instruction under the Melville Dewey System and later catalogued the library in accordance with that system used by most librarians in this country and many in Europe.

For some years the four literary societies each had its own library of books and magazines but gradually that plan was abandoned and all were under the one library. At the time the new building was occupied there were 10,335 books. In 1934 at the close of Miss Barnes' service there were 35,000 and the once new building was already inadequate. It was a fond dream of hers that a larger building would someday take the place of the smaller one - a building the college could point to with pride. When the campaign was put on some years after her retirement, to solicit gifts of \$1000 each for that project, her pledge from California and Dr. Sanders' from Westerville, arrived on the same day to lead the movement.

When Miss Dell Lafever '92 was made Assistant Librarian, the two attended many of the Annual American Library Association meetings and in that connection visited places of interest such as, Toronto and the St. Lawrence country, Minneapolis, Seattle, the parks of the north-west - Yellowstone, Glacier and Jasper. One year after attending the meeting of the A.L.A. in Seattle they were joined by Mrs. Carey and Mrs. Alice Dickey (formerly Alice Bender ~~ex~~ '89) both living in California and went on the conducted tour of Alaska.

In the summer of 1928 the two joined Miss Barnes' brother, J. Allison Barnes '94, in France where he had been living for some time and toured the country in his car, later going to the British Isles before returning home. Each trip they made brought new interest to their work in the library and to the college which it served.

After the death of her parents, Col. and Mrs. Milton Barnes, Miss Barnes spent various summer vacations in Colorado with her brother, Walter L. Barnes '98, who was librarian for the University of Colorado in Boulder; or in Detroit, Michigan with her sister, Maude B. Gantz '98 and her husband Dr. William B. Gantz '95, where Dr. Gantz served the Westminster Presbyterian Church. In 1934, her retirement, over-due by three years, she convinced the authorities that she must really leave. She joined her sister, Mrs. Gantz, now a widow, on a Mediterranean Cruise of seven weeks, tarrying afterward for a month in Paris where they found, by accident, the soloist in the vesper service of the American Cathedral was Dan Harris '23 and enjoyed an Otterbein visit with him. They spent some time in Holland during the Spring Festival of Flowers and in visiting the famous Art Galleries. Then crossing to England, were just in time for the 25th Anniversary of King George. Nine weeks were spent in the British Isles before turning their faces homeward.

In 1938 Miss Barnes moved to Pasadena, California to share with Mrs. Gantz the home they bought together after the death of Dr. Gantz. It was quite a break to leave the quiet town with its college atmosphere and associations grown dear with the years, to enter into the California setting at the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains. But never losing her loyalty to her Alma Mater and the work to which she had given the best years of her life she quietly adapted herself to the new surroundings and became an enthusiastic Californian.

Having been a member of the United Brethren Church during all the years of her connection with the college she took her membership into the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Pasadena, the denomination into which she was born, and quietly enjoyed the Bible Class and Sunday services there.

Having been a patient for several years of Dr. Perley Kilbourne '02 in Dayton, Ohio she followed his advice and contacted Dr. William Boyce in Los Angeles, who later operated on her eyes both for cataract and glaucoma. After that, while her eyesight was fair, she had to depend on someone else for the reading which had always meant so much to her.

In October of 1948 she fell and broke her hip and for five months was confined to her bed slipping peacefully away on March 29, 1949, five months before her eighty-ninth birthday. Her sister brought her body back to Westerville for burial and laid her in the family lot in Otterbein Cemetery near her parents and her two brothers and the close friends of both town and college.

Miss Barnes lived a long and useful life, her varied interests centering more particularly on educational projects. She was considered a fine teacher in her early life and Dr. George Scott wrote highly of the thorough preparation she gave the Preparatory students who later came into his Latin classes.

For many years she had a class of young women in the Church Bible School and near the end of her life in Westerville, was the substitute for Dr. Clippinger in his Adult Bible Class.

One of the projects which was very dear to her heart was the New Century Club. The original idea of it was to bind together in a common interest the women of the town and of the college. She was one of the charter members with Mrs. Weinland, Mrs. L. H. McFadden, Mrs. <sup>one year</sup> Tuck and a number of others. She served as president and as secretary and was almost always on the program committee for the new year, delighting in the work of the Club and of the pleasant fellowship.

She was much interested always in the individual students and their problems from college work and finances to love affairs and character building. Many times she helped students financially who went to advanced schools for their additional degrees winning lasting appreciation for her help.

Quietly she lived and conscientiously she worked getting a rich reward as she saw class after class go out into the world stronger and richer for the influence of the years in Otterbein.

Maude Barnes Gantz '98.