

Memorial Tribute to John D. Barnhart

John D. Barnhart was born at Decatur, Illinois, September 22, 1895. After graduating from the local high school he enrolled at Illinois Wesleyan University which awarded him the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1916. Three years later he received the Master of Arts in history from Northwestern University, and in 1930 he was granted the doctorate in history from Harvard University. At Harvard he devoted his major attention to American history. Here he became first a student and then a disciple of the distinguished historian, Frederick Jackson Turner.

From 1921 until his retirement in 1965 Professor Barnhart taught in a number of colleges and universities, including Nebraska Wesleyan University, the University of Nebraska, the University of West Virginia, Louisiana State University, the College of William and Mary, and Indiana University. Professor Barnhart was a member of the history faculty at Indiana University during the academic year 1925-1926, the summer of 1936, and then from 1941 until his retirement to emeritus service in 1965. From 1947 until 1953 he served the department as its chairman, and during the period 1941 to 1955 he edited the *Indiana Magazine of History*.

As a teacher and writer Professor Barnhart's principal interest was the history of the Ohio Valley and the Old Northwest. He was the author of more than two dozen articles and many book reviews which appeared in historical quarterlies throughout the United States. His first published volume was *Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark in the American Revolution in the West* (1951), followed by *Valley of Democracy: The Frontier Versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley* (1953) in which he tested the application of Turner's frontier hypothesis to the Ohio Valley. His next publication was devoted to state and local history: *Indiana: From Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth* (2 vols., 1954), co-authored with Donald F. Carmony. A byproduct of this history was *Indiana: The Hoosier State* (1959; rev. 1963), co-authored with Donald F. Carmony, Opal M. Nichols, and Jack E. Weicker. This book has been used as a junior high school history text in Indiana schools.

As editor of the *Indiana Magazine of History* Professor Barnhart edited perhaps six or seven thousand pages of articles, documents, and book reviews. In his research and writing he reflected the basic views of his mentor, Frederick Jackson Turner, concerning the impact of the American frontier on the development of American life and institutions. Professor Barnhart's work also gave much emphasis to the contributions of southerners to the development of the Ohio Valley and Old Northwest, especially during the period from about 1750 through the Civil War years.

In spite of the enormous amount of time he gave to teaching, research, editing, writing, and administration, Professor Barnhart also gave much time to professional organizations and public service. During World War II he served as chairman of the Indiana War History Commission; he was chairman of the Indiana Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission in 1950; he served as a



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member of the executive committee of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, 1942-1946, as chairman of the program committee for its annual conference in 1948, and as a member of its Board of Editors for the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 1954-1956. During 1947-1948 he was president of the Indiana History Teachers Association; during the three years from 1957 through 1959, he served as president of the Indiana Historical Society, and he was a member of its executive committee from 1949 until his death. For a number of years in the fifties and sixties he was a member of the Advisory Committee on History to the Secretary of the Navy. For many years, and until illness compelled him to withdraw, he was a member of Bloomington Rotary. In these and other ways he contributed significantly and generously to his profession and to public service.

Through the years Professor Barnhart had a devoted interest in his students, undergraduates and graduates alike. Although committed to his own high principles of scholarship and character, he exercised understanding, kindness, generosity, and restraint in his evaluation of colleagues and students. During the long illness which preceded his death on December 25, 1967, he exhibited infinite patience, forbearance, and heroism. Professor Barnhart is survived by his widow, Mrs. Zella Barnhart, whom he married in 1917. Two children, Frank Barnhart, of Bloomington, Indiana, and Mrs. Frances Zorn, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, both graduates of Indiana University, and five grandchildren survive. To all of them the current editor of the *Indiana Magazine of History* extends his deep sympathy and his own abiding sense of personal loss.

The following chronological listing includes all articles indicated by Professor Barnhart in a personal data sheet submitted to the Department of History, Indiana University, in 1964. It is thought to be a complete record of his articles in historical magazines. Because much of what Professor Barnhart wrote was never incorporated into book form, these articles add to both the extent and significance of his writing.

- "Rainfall and the Populist Party in Nebraska," *American Political Science Review*, XIX (1925), 527-40.
- "The Farmers' Alliance," with John D. Hicks, *North Carolina Historical Review*, VI (1929), 254-80.
- "Recent Industrial Growth and Politics in the Southern Appalachian Region," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XVII (1931), 581-94.
- "Reconstruction on the Lower Mississippi, Letters of Captain James A. Payne from Baton Rouge," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXI (1934), 387-96.
- "The Southern Element in the Leadership of the Old Northwest," *Journal of Southern History*, I (1935), 186-97.
- "Sources of the Southern Migration into the Old Northwest," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXII (1936), 49-62.
- "The Southern Influence in the Formation of Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXIII (1937), 261-76.
- "The Southern Influence in the Formation of Ohio," *Journal of Southern History*, III (1937), 28-42.
- "The Southern Influence in the Formation of Illinois," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXXII (1939), 358-78.

- "Southern Contributions to the Social Order of the Old Northwest," *North Carolina Magazine of History*, XVII (1940), 237-48.
- "A Virginia Steamboat Captain on the Sacramento," *The Pacific Historical Review*, IX (1940), 445-59.
- "Frontiersmen and Planters in the Formation of Kentucky," *Journal of Southern History*, VII (1941), 19-36.
- "The Tennessee Constitution of 1796: A Product of the Old West," *Journal of Southern History*, IX (1943), 532-49.
- "Sources of Indiana's First Constitution," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXIX (1943), 55-94.
- "Report of the Committee on American History," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL (1944), 67-72.
- "The Indiana War History Commission," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL (1944), 227-42.
- "A New Letter About the Massacre at Fort Dearborn," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLI (1945), 187-99.
- "Some New Aids for Historians," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLI (1945), 88-92.
- "The Democratization of Indiana Territory," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLIII (1947), 1-22.
- "The Letters of Decius," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLIII (1947), 263-96.
- "The Democratization of the Northwest Ordinance," in *Journals of the General Assembly of Indiana Territory, 1805-1815*, Vol. XXXII (*Indiana Historical Collections*; Indianapolis, 1950), 1-17.
- "The Migration of Kentuckians Across the Ohio River," *Filson Club History Quarterly*, XXV (1951), 24-32.
- "A New Evaluation of Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXXVII (March, 1951).
- "Letters of William H. Harrison to Thomas Worthington, 1799-1813," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLVII (1951), 53-84.
- "Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton's Apologia," *Indiana Magazine of History*, LII (1956), 383-96.
- "A New Diary of Lieutenant-Governor Henry Hamilton," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin*, XII (1955-1956), 10-24.