Adèle Bernhard

Barnard History: 1889 Trustees

Sources: Biographical Directory of the State of New York and Archives

**Joseph Choate**: His wife, Caroline D. Choate was a Barnard trustee. Choate served as Ambassador of England for six years, born Salem Mass, NY since 1856, Harvard/Harvard Law, New England societies, Harvard city union league, Alpha Delta Phi, firm w/name, St. Jame’s club England.

His father was country doctor. After passing the bar in both Massachusetts and New York, he moved to New York City. Professionally, he quickly rose up through the ranks.  During his career, he defended the Metropolitan and the Natural History Museum. He was also famous for ending the Boss Tweed Ring and the Tammany scandals. He was close with his daughter Mabel and in their 26-room mansion Naumkeag were two individual charcoal portraits side by side of the two. Out of the five children, Mabel inherited Naumkeag.  During their time spent at Naumkeag, Choate would help out around the 49-acre estate, while Mrs. Choate, known for her talents as an artist, gave art lessons to neighbors. The couple threw many social events, such as dances, picnics, soirées, and theatricals. His brother, William Choate, founded the boarding school Choate. Even though Choate was a member of high society, he had a reputation for being modest and generous.

His wife, Caroline D. Sterling was an art student and 24 years old when she met Choate. They had a close-knit family and were happily married for 56 years. In regards to her role as a Barnard Trustee, the record of the trustee minute in 1929, that remembered her after her death, states, “Mrs. Choate was interested in the cause of women’s education as far back as 1883, when she was one of the leading spirits in presenting the petition which asked the trustees of Columbia College to admit women to the same educational advantages as men in that institution”. She also played a large role in the founding of the Brearley School for Girls, also located in Manhattan. The two examples of advocacy for women’s education made her a desirable candidate for the Barnard Trustees. In the document, it is also noted that amongst her accomplishments she made for the school, “her position in the community gave it prestige and created confidence in its usefulness and its stability”.

**George Hoadly:** From New Haven, he attended a private school Cleveland and then went on to graduate from Western Reserve College. He also went to Harvard Law School. Mary B. Perry, his wife, was from Cincinnati. During his career he was governor of Ohio from ’83-85 and NY since ’87. He was a member of Democratic clubs and Ohioan societies. Similarly to other Barnard lawyer trustees, the firm he was apart of bared his name.

**Frederic Coudert** was born NYC. Before graduating from Columbia College, he attended private schools.   He also received degrees from Seton Hall College, Fordham (LL.D), and Columbia (J.U.D). He was a trustee for St. Patrick’s Cathedral and a member of Patria clubs, a democratic club, Patria clubs, and the American Geographical society.  pg. 86

**Silas Brownell** was a lawyer from Knox NY. He attended Union College and like Hoadly, he was a part of a law firm that held his name. He was not only a Barnard Trustee, but also a Trustee for Union college. He served as the director for Princeton's theological seminary. Socially speaking, he was a member of century club, a Presbyterian, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and a member of various New England Societies.

**Noah Davis**: West 56th, Haverhill NH, NY supreme court ’57-68 and ’72-87, Congressman ’69-70, Union League, Patria club

**Francis Stetson**: Williams, firm w/name, Tuxedo, democrat, Alpha Delta Phi, Williamsburg Athletic and Church clubs

**James Talcott:** Republican, Patria and riding clubs, New England Societies

**Hamilton Mabie**: Cold Spring NY, Williams College, Columbia law, Williams trustee, Alpha Delta Phi

**James Stranahan**: Brooklyn Polytechnic Inst. and NYU, trustee long island Baptist, Delta Phi, Republican, Sons of Rev and society colonial wars

**George Arthur Plimpton** was from Walpole, Massachusetts and born July 13th 1855. His ancestor, John Plimpton, settled in Dedham, Massachusetts in 1636. He attended the boarding school Phillips Exeter Academy and then graduated from Amherst College. After which, he attended Harvard Law School for a year. In regards to his career, he became a salesman for a publishing house and became head of the firm in 1914.  Plimpton served as both a trustee and treasurer to Barnard College. In a New York Times article commemorating the financial improvements he made for the school, the author notes, “President Neilson of Smith College remarked a few years ago that even when women made bequests they too frequently gave to colleges of their fathers, husbands, or sons, rather than of their daughters. But Mr. Plimpton has been no less helpful to Barnard than his own alma mater, Amherst, thereby assisting mightily in establishing educational party in higher education for men and women…”. At a time when women’s education was not as highly regarded as men’s education, in the early years of Barnard, Plimpton dedicated himself to personally approached members of New York’s elite for donations. When Plimpton first started helping the college, Barnard had a deficit of $30,000 and after 41 years as treasurer, Plimpton aided in raising that number to over $9,000,000. In terms of why he supported Barnard, an article from the Columbia University Quarterly published in 1910 stated,” Mr. Plimpton in his early reports repeatedly called attention…to the fact that New York City was far less well provided…with suitable means for the higher education of women than several other American cities”. Plimpton focused on women’s education in both New York City and what was Constantinople.  Besides serving as a trustee for Barnard College, Plimpton was a trustee for Exeter (1903-1935) and an Alumni Trustee for Amherst College (1890-1895). He was also a founder and treasurer of the Academy of Political Science, a member of the board of trustees of the World Peace Union, the Church Peace Union, the Constantinople College for Women, and the Union Theological Seminary. He was a member of the American Antiquarian Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, the Medieval Academy of America. He was also known for his extensive portrait collection of English writers and his book and manuscript collection, which contained about 5,000 titles. In addition to Barnard, he supported Wellesley College, where his wife graduated, by making creating a substantial library of rare Italian books and manuscripts from the 14th and 15th century.

In a note to Plimpton from John Rockefeller about a donation to Barnard College in May 1901, Rockefeller writes “Understanding that Barnard College exists primarily to provide an education for the many young women in New York and the immediate vicinity who cannot afford to go away from home to the various women’s colleges throughout the East, and understanding that the special need of Barnard College at the present time is for added endowment, if…you inform me that you have succeeded in raising $200,000 for Barnard, my Father will duplicate this amount”.

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| **Social/Educational Group** | **Trustees** |
| Fraternity Member | Choate\*, Stetson, Mabie, Stranahan, Brownell |
| New England Societies | Choate\*, Brownell, Talcott\* |
| Patria Club\*\* | Coudert, Davis, Talcott\* |
| Trustee of Alma Mater | Plimpton, Brownell, Mabie |
| Member Democrat Club | Hoadly, Coudert, Stetson |
| Member Republican Club | Talcott\*, Stetson |

\*Spouse of Trustee

\*\* Patria Club: Shared “interest in patriotic administration of public affairs”. The club was both men and women and allowed women on the Executive Board

**Barnard Applicant Requirements Inflicted by the Trustees**

(From the Minutes of the Executive Committee)

*April 19th 1895*: Resolved, that in and after 1896 candidates for admission as special students in the departments of Botany and Chemistry shall be required, save where in special cases the Executive Committee shall order other-wise, to pass the full entrance examinations, with the privilege of substituting for Greek either advance mathematics, or a combination of elementary science with French and German.

*March 19th 1897*: With the exception of students in the school of Political Science, and those in the Department of Music, all students entering Barnard College, whether as a candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts or as special students, be required to pass the regular examination for entrance.