Memorial Resolutions of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee
On the Death of Clinton M. Barr

Clinton M. Barr, highly respected member of the Milwaukee State Teachers College Faculty, who retired in 1942, died at his home in Pasadena, California, on March 27, 1961, at the age of eighty-nine. He is survived by his wife, Inez, and three children--Harriet, Howard, and Roger.

Mr. Barr was born in 1871 on a farm in Illinois. While still a boy, he moved with his family in a covered wagon to a homestead in Nebraska. After attending the University of Nebraska, he began his teaching career in 1890 in a one-room school near his home. He alternately taught school and attended the University of Nebraska until he received his bachelor and master's degrees, the latter in 1896. He continued teaching and administration in various Nebraska communities, in due time rising to the position of superintendent of schools at Hastings, Nebraska.

In 1915 Carroll G. Pearse, president of the Milwaukee Normal School, invited him to take charge of the rural education program here. With the exception of two years, 1924-26, when he was visiting professor of education at the University of Southern California, Mr. Barr held this position until his retirement.

He was a staunch advocate of educational progress and diligently sought to improve the standards of the teaching profession. He worked to increase the years of training required for elementary and rural teachers. When Mr. Barr came to Milwaukee, the training for rural teachers consisted of one year; when he retired, most students preparing for rural as well as other kinds of teaching were taking the four-year course. He worked for the consolidation of rural schools wherever population density made it practicable. He believed in teaching his own students to think for themselves, and taught them to teach their pupils to do the same. He was opposed to authoritarianism in any form anywhere, including school instruction and administration.

He early saw the artificiality of separating rural education from elementary education in general. In 1937 at his own suggestion the Division of Rural Education, of which he was the head, was combined with the Division of Elementary Education at Milwaukee. Initiating the merger of these two divisions proved his interest in educational progress rather than in vested personal interests and ambitions.

After only five years in Wisconsin, Mr. Barr's vigor and insight had made his leadership ability so evident that the Wisconsin Education Association (then called the Wisconsin Teachers Association) called upon him to be its president for 1920-21.

His keen intelligence, great breadth of information combined with subtle wit, friendly humor, and penetrating observations and questions made him a brilliant conversationalist and provocative teacher. One of the teachers who cooperated with Milwaukee's student teaching program for years by supervising Mr. Barr's students as practice teachers in her classroom said: "I learned more about children and education from Mr. Barr than from any course I ever took. He was way ahead of his times." She and scores of devoted students look back to him as their "great teacher."

Mr. Barr did not seek fame, but his challenging and wholesome influence will live on in the work of his students, their pupils, and their pupils' pupils for generations.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:
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