

REPLY ISSUED JOHN BARNELL ON MONUMENT

Columbus Group Criticizes Former Financial Secretary

The Columbus Monument association issued a statement yesterday in which its actions and expenditures were defended and John W. Barnell, former financial secretary, was taken to task for criticizing the present committee arranging for the statue in St. Mary's circle.

The association was informed yesterday by cable, according to the statement, that the monument, weighing 143 tons, was placed on the ship Isarco at Genoa, Italy, and will reach Syracuse about November 6.

Because of the depreciation of the dollar the association suffered a loss of about \$8,000, according to the statement. Corrado Armieri, Italian consul in Syracuse, presented this phase of the case to the Italian government and as a result the stone is being shipped with a saving on half the cost of transportation.

Association's Statement

The association's statement in part follows: "The drive for funds was started five years ago, and not last year as Mr. Barnell says. Mr. Barnell was financial secretary at the time and approximately \$16,000 in cash and \$5,000 in pledges were realized. Mr. Barnell, who also was recording secretary did not release a financial statement.

"Several months ago an auditing committee headed by Joseph Colasurdo was appointed to ascertain the financial status of the association and the committee submitted a complete report on September 28 which was accepted and approved.

"It will be recalled by those interested in the movement that Mr. Barnell, without the sanction of the association called a congress of sculptors in 1931 and selected a model which the association refused to accept.

"This caused a lawsuit which the association found itself obliged to defend and altho the association was victorious it suffered a loss of nearly \$1,000. Of this sum \$203.92 was paid Mr. Barnell as defense counsel in association with George O'Brien.

Refers to "Beautiful Gesture"

"Mr. Barnell made reference in his published statement when he personally broke ground for the monument on the selected site. He said the beautiful gesture of civic pride that was made is gone forever.

"The truth of the matter is, and our version defies contradiction, that Mr. Barnell himself made this beautiful gesture and the association was made the goat. He acted without the approval of the committee, incurred exorbitant expenditures and debts, some of which still remain unpaid. The debtors, one of them the Veterans of Foreign Wars, found they had no redress from the association as a result of misrepresentations on the part of Mr. Barnell, and immediately dropped their demands for payment.

"Mr. Barnell was advised against this premature and elaborate celebration because the association was handicapped for funds, but still he incurred those unnecessary expenses. He said he directed the fund campaign which realized the money and pledges and that he gave his services for nothing, still the records show he received different sums of money in connection with the celebration and paid out \$50, which he said was due his stenographer and others who helped him in his plans.

Records Open to Public

"The committee wishes to state that its records are open to the public at all times. The following are a few items: May 24, \$3,617.45 to our sculptor, and on July 17 we paid \$11,400 for which we hold receipts at local banks. In addition to this \$2,000 was paid to the Mondo Construction company.

Mr. Barnell never resigned from any committee. The heads of the association had become disgusted with his tactics of rule or ruin and decided against his re-appointment on the committee. He involved us in court litigation and otherwise inconvenienced us by his extravagant and costly methods.

"In Mr. Barnell's statement to the press he is quoted as having said: 'We are all dejected, disappointed and discouraged.' It is our humble opinion that he should be."