



*State of New Jersey.*

*Office of Adjutant General.*

*Trenton, May 7, 1900.*

Hon. Foster M. Voorhees,  
Governor of New Jersey,  
Elizabeth, New Jersey.

My dear Sir:-

Many weeks ago you referred to me a letter from the Honorable Albion W. Tourgee, United States Consul at Bordeaux, France, in relation to Isaac Coxe Barnet, once United States Consul at Brest, France.

I have had much more difficulty than I expected to have with regard to this man. I have not found a single reference to him in any of the biographical dictionaries. This much, however, I have obtained:

Isaac Coxe Barnet was the son of a distinguished officer of the New Jersey Continental Line, Surgeon William Messenger Barnet. Dr. Barnet was born in 1725, at Elizabethtown, New Jersey; was made Surgeon of the First Regiment, New Jersey Continental Line, December 8, 1775, and in May, 1778, just before the battle of Monmouth, he became Surgeon in the General Hospital of the Continental Army, served until June, 1782, and died in 1790. His son, Isaac Coxe Barnet, (not Cox as Mr. Tourgee has it) was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and

was made Consul at Brest, France, by President Washington, February 20, 1797. He became Unofficial Agent at Bordeaux, France, January, 1800, and continued as such until May 10, 1800, when he became the Consul at Bordeaux. There is no record in the State Department of when he left the latter Consulate. He was appointed Consul at Paris, France, April 26, 1816, but he appears to have been on duty there from July 11, 1814. He became a member of the New Jersey Society of the Cincinnati by reason of the service of his father in the Revolutionary War, July 4, 1822, and he died March 8, 1833. I find from the Monroe papers that he was at Paris November 24, 1805, and he writes to President Monroe on that day, as follows:

"With regard to myself, if you will permit me the liberty, I have no determined projects nor views-- I however confide in my endeavours to discharge my duties for my own and my family's subsistence-- but this I am not yet realizing and whether I shall be left here-- at Havre or elsewhere, remains to be determined by Mr. Skipwith- the support of my friends and the will of the President and so long as I shall not demerit the countenance and support of the present sages of my County, I shall count upon sufficient resources to bring up my family and to educate my children in the principles of our illustrious patriots- and you Sir- allow me to renew here the sentiments of my former acknowledgments and to repeat the assurance of my high

respect and sincere attachment to yourself and family in which Mrs. Barnet joins me."

From another letter, dated Paris, May 13, 1806, I find that he was called Commercial Agent of the United States District of Havre. In the Madison papers I find that Charles Pinckney wrote to President Madison a private letter, dated May 20, 1802, in which occurs the following reference to Mr. Barnet:

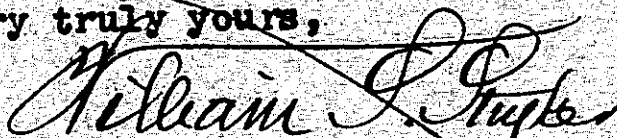
"I cannot persuade this Government (Spain) to consent to a Consul or Agent from the United States residing at New Orleans they seem to lament that they cannot but still steadily to pursue the line they have adopted with respect to other Nations- I have just received a letter from Mr. Isaac Coxe Barnet our Ex-Consul at Bordeaux- his situation I wrote you before- it is really a hard one- Should any vacant consulship in France, in Spain or indeed any part of Europe, occur, I should be very glad and so would all the Americans in Europe to see him have it- his knowledge, good character and filial piety have interested them all in his favor. Mr. Barnet was, I am told, one of the best Consuls we had in Europe."

Also in the Madison papers I find a letter by Benjamin Homans, dated August 10, 1801. Speaking of the unjust removal of Mr. Barnet from the Consulate at Bordeaux, he makes the following remark:

"Isaac Coxe Barnet has filled the office of Consul at Brest by commission from General Washington and was ordered to remove to Bordeaux, with the promise of your predecessor of having the appointment if his conduct should continue to merit it. Many Americans now learn with regret that another person is named to succeed him. In being the friend of Mr. Barnet, I am the friend of his virtues, I am also the intimate friend of Mr. Lee named to succeed him. If active zeal, integrity, firm principles and good judgment are necessary in the execution of duty and the routine of office in which experience has rendered him perfect, I believe no man can offer a fairer claim than Mr. Barnet."

These are all the facts I have been able to gather concerning Mr. Barnet and you may refer my letter to Mr. Tourgee without further delay,

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "William L. Hughes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Adjutant-General.