

Dreams of Trip to England Come True for 'Lady Jane'

Miss Jane Macon

By SIGMUND KAUFMANN
BRUNSWICK, Ga., Nov. 11.—(AP).
A retired high school English teacher will soon lay yet longing eyes on the homeland of the literary giants who inspired her through 51 years of teaching. Miss Jane Macon will visit the land of Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton at the insistence of her pupils of a half century. She agreed to accept their gift of some \$2,500 and fulfill a lifelong dream of a pilgrimage to England.

The money represents the contributions of students now scattered around the world but unforgetful of the privilege, as they put it, of having studied English literature under her.

MISS BACON, 70, a tall, big-framed woman belieing her age, weeps as she recalls abandoning hope of making the trip three years ago when she seemed "at the end of the trail."

"Lady Jane"—a title of affection bestowed by students—retired last June and left Glynn Academy, the Brunswick high school, against her will, having reached the mandatory retirement age.

An idea that many a student had broached—a purse to enable a voyage to the homeland of her beloved men of English literature—came alive. Letters were dispatched to 2,000 graduates of the school, all for whom addresses could be obtained.

REPLIES POURED in, many from other continents. An industry executive sent \$25 and wrote typically, "If you need more let me know. If it hadn't been for her, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Miss Macon's retirement was not announced by the Board of Education because she was adamant against any demonstra-



MISS JANE MACON
Gets Coveted Trip—AP Photo

tion. A pupil wrote from California that the news of the retire-

ment was more of a shock than an earthquake that day.

A host of stories are remembered about Miss Macon, such as the day she came to the class when World War II was declared, tears in her eyes, bearing a list of her boys who did not return from World War I.

For years Miss Macon required girls to wear hose and boys ties when they entered her classroom. She eventually relented and allowed the girls to wear anklets. She herself wore cotton stockings.

THERE WAS a question whether she would agree to the trip. But she was prepared to carry out the wishes of the students when the check was presented.

On occasions she recalled coming to Brunswick from her native Clarke County, Ga., in 1903. As the high school grew 10-fold from an enrollment of 90 she narrowed her instruction to her real love, English and English literature.

"Since a youngster I have dreamed of going to England," Miss Macon said. "Three years ago I saw I was at the end of the trail and I gave up the dream.

"I appreciate the gift with all my heart.

"Providence has been good to me."

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Athenian, "Lady Jane", Takes *Cur-Athenian* Pilgrimage As Gift Of Students *People*

The Brunswick News carried the following article about Miss Jane Macon, who is a native of Clarke County and a niece of the late Judge Henry C. Tuck. Miss Macon received her master's degree from the University of Georgia and has many friends in this section.

"Miss Jane Macon is going to visit the land of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton. Her pupils of half-a-century of teaching insisted she make the pilgrimage and Miss Macon agreed on Sunday, November 2, to take their gift of nearly \$2,400 and fulfil her lifelong dream.

At a reception honoring her 49 years of teaching in Brunswick, Miss Macon accepted a check representing donations from students now scattered around the world but unforgetful of the privilege, as they called it, of having studied English under her.

Miss Macon wept and said she she had abandoned hope of making the trip three years ago, when she seemed "at the end of the trial."

"Lady Jane," as the students affectionately referred to her, retired last June and left Glynn Academy against her will, having reached the mandatory retirement age.

An idea that many a student had broached — a purse to enable a voyage to the homeland of her beloved men of English literature—came alive, and under sponsorship of the Urbana Garden Club, letters were dispatched to 2,000 graduates of the academy, all for whom addresses could be found.

Only one letter was sent to each graduate, and it was signed only "The Jane Macon Appreciation Committee." But replies poured in, many from other continents. It was learned that a sprinkling of graduates, in addition to those serving in the armed forces, were living in virtually every part of the world.

An Air Force colonel sent \$25 and wrote typically, "If you need more let me know. If it hadn't been for her I would not be where I am today."

No Demonstration

Miss Macon's retirement was not announced by the Board of Education because she did not want any demonstration. One letter received by the garden club came from California, the writer commenting that the news was more of a jolt than an earthquake that day.

John Gilbert made a brief talk during the reception. He observed that as a former student he was disappointed that his two daughters would not be able to study under Miss Macon. "She is", he

said, "the person who means more to the city of Brunswick than probably any other person in the community."

Paraphrasing Daniel Webster's remarks before the Supreme Court, Mr. Gilbert said the check was "after all a small token—but there are those of us who love you."

The check was presented by Mrs. Ardell Nation, president of the garden club and a former student, as a group of some 200 persons applauded. Among the audience were students who remembered a host of stories about their teacher — such as how she came to class after World War II began with names of her boys who never returned from World War I. She had tears in her eyes.

Apparel Rules

For years Miss Macon required girls to wear hose and boys ties when they came to her classes. She finally relented and allowed the girls to wear anklets. Miss Macon herself preferred cotton hose.

There was a question about whether Miss Macon would agree to the trip. She was not supposed to know of the fund. But, unknown to the audience, she had leaned of their intentions and was prepared to carry out their wishes.

Reviewing how she came to Brunswick from her native Clarke County and two years previous teaching, Miss Macon recalled she first was at the new Purvis School, in the days when Norwick Street was East Street. She moved to the high school in 1911 and, as the classes became larger, narrowed her instruction to her real love, English and English literature.

"Since a youngster I have dreamed of going to England," Miss Macon said. She told how her savings plans went awry repeatedly over the years and the trip was postponed. "Three years ago I saw I was at the end of the

trail." Her eyes moistened and her voice broke.

Then, wiping her eyes Miss Macon continued, "I appreciate your gift with all my heart. Providence has been good to me."

Miss Macon

1964

MISS JANE MACON
"THE PERCH"
SCREAMER RIDGE
CLAYTON, GEORGIA

Dear John Bonner,-

Here is another book for you to include in your list of Georgia publications of 1964. It is priced at \$10⁰⁰.

When you finish with it, please turn it over to the library for its genealogical collection.

I had hoped to see you at Frederica before I left. Ruby Berrie heard that you have been ill. I hope you have recovered.

It is too bad that I had to

leave all that work for Ruby
to do. Maybe there will be
something for me to do upon
my return.

All good wishes to you!

Cordially

Jane Macon

13 May 1964