

GRACE HARRIET MACURDY

1866 - 1946

The Faculty of Vassar College records with sorrow the death on October 23, 1946, of Professor Emeritus Grace Harriet Macurdy, teacher, scholar, humanist and humanitarian. Miss Macurdy served Vassar well for forty-four years as a teacher of Greek.

On her retirement in 1937 President MacCracken wrote of her: "No description in words can fittingly portray the service which Miss Macurdy has rendered to the life of Vassar. Her humor, her gayety and her eloquence have combined with her rare learning to bring a distinction to the Classical studies that has made graduates of Vassar desired in every graduate school. The spirit of youth is still hers and her outlook has grown with the years."

The long list of her published works bears testimony to her distinguished scholarship, which won her recognition and acclaim both at home and abroad. The humane quality of her writings brought many tributes and was appreciated by an American Army officer just returned from the war in these words: "Of all the work done by American scholars in the field of Classics I had rather been the author of The Quality of Mercy than of any other book I know. What impressed me most was the fact that pursuit of the gentler virtues in Classical literature had breathed into your pages their spirit."

Miss Macurdy's human interests were universal, and she brought to all of her associations a unique charm and dignity which raised them above the level of the commonplace. Her life centered in Vassar College and in her devotion to friends in Great Britain, Italy and Greece. Her warm sympathy and generous aid to the stricken in those countries brought her in July 1946 the high honor of a British decoration, the King's Medal "for service in the cause of freedom". Both her spirit and her work bore the quality of eternity, and, strangely, the very essence of them both was voiced in a poem of her own found in her desk after her death. Her stanza on the painter of GRACE HARRIET MACURDY (Continued)

a black-figured Attic vase might well serve as her own epitaph:

His work shall perish, but the artist's soul,
Imaging beauty changing endlessly,
Shapes still new visions of the Eternal Whole,
And finds for beauty immortality.

Evalyn A. Clark

Polyxenie Kambouropoulou

Mary Landon Sague
Theodore H. Erck
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