

Register of Old Buildings  
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: 451 W. Macon (also listed as 449-451 W. Macon)  
Legal description: South Western Addition  
Lot 3 W67.8' Lot 4 Block 5

Date of original construction: 1866

Name of original owner: Sarah M. Bradley

History:

1. A partial chain of title follows: Source: Office of Macon County recorder of deeds and from the abstract.  
August 30, 1866 Orlando Powers to Sarah M. Bradley (\$250)  
June 27, 1870 Sarah M. Bradley to Samuel S. Jack (\$4000)  
August 31, 1910 Samuel S. Jack estate to Cecil M. Jack  
July 17, 1941 Cecil M. Jack acquired Lot 3 (to the east of Lot 4)  
June 29, 1949 Death of Cecil M. Jack to survivor, Charlotte N. Jack, widow  
June 9, 1964 Charlotte N. Jack to William J. Rothfuss and Cecile Jack Rothfuss. (Cecile is a daughter of Cecil M. and Charlotte N. Jack)
2. Early city directories (many are missing), include the following:  
1871-74 Jack, S. S. teacher, s. e. corner, Macon and College  
(Note: Mr. Jack had not yet sold the west part of his land which was to become 465 W. Macon in 1884)  
1876 Jack, S. S., commission merchant, res. 13 W. Macon  
1877-78 Jack, S. S., state representative, res. 13 W. Macon  
1884 Jack, S. S., publisher Decatur Review (weekly).  
and the Decatur Morning Review (daily), book and job printer, res., 451 W. Macon  
1887 Jack, S. S., postmaster, res. 451 W. Macon  
1895 Jack, S. S. and Catherine, 451 W. Macon  
Jack, Cecil, student  
1901 Jack, S. S. (died 1909) and Katherine R., 451 W. Macon  
1915 Jack, Dr. Cecil M. and Charlotte N.  
1963 Jack, Charlotte N., wid.  
1968 Rothfuss, Wm. J. and Cecile Jack Rothfuss

Present owner's name: William J. and Cecile Jack Rothfuss.

History Cont'd.:

3. The Macon County assessor's office describes the house as follows:

2 stories	steep pitched hip roof
9 rooms	full basement (6 rooms)
front porch	brick fireplace
solid brick walls	partition and exterior
2 bathrooms	1 half bath
  
4. Mrs. Cecile Jack Rothfuss (September, 1974) adds these facts regarding this home which has served four generations of her family: House was built in 1866. Originally one story, brick, with dining room and kitchen in the basement, both with windows above grade. Second floor added by S. S. Jack in the 1880's. Frame addition to rear (sunroom and sleeping porch) added in 1920. There have been several modernizing projects during the years from 1958 to 1970. See copies of pictures attached to see the 1866 house, as well as one showing the 1880's addition.
  
5. See attached material on the first owner of the house, Samuel S. Jack, who, in turn,
  - served as high school teacher and principal (1870) to relieve Mr. E. A. Gastman for full-time work as superintendent of schools.
  - State Representative, 1874-76 and 1876-78.
  - Postmaster, January 31, 1891 - June 5, 1894.
  - Publisher, The Decatur Review (weekly) and the Decatur Morning Review (daily)
  - Book and job printer
  
6. Also see attached copy of the obituary of Dr. Cecil M. Jack, son of Samuel S. Jack. Note his professional contributions in the area of diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis and his avocational and leadership in soil conservation.

451 W. Macon Street



Pictures by Margaret Meyer, April 29, 1974





The above is a copy of a picture owned by Mrs. Barbara Jack Rowe, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Cecil Jack. It is identified by her and her sister, Mrs. Cecile Jack Rothfuss, as the house built at 451 W. Macon in 1866 by Sarah M. Bradley. It was sold to their grandfather, S. S. Jack, for \$4000 on June 27, 1870. Note the above grade windows in the basement where the kitchen and dining room were located. The arched windows on the first floor (front) are the same as those that exist in 1974. Later Mr. Jack replaced the upper half-story with a full second story plus attic.



In the 1880's Mr. Samuel S. Jack enlarged and added a second story to the small 1866 house. To the right of the front door were living room and dining room, now made into one very large living room. To the left of the front door is a smaller sitting room or library with its original fireplace. The rear portion of the hallway is the original. Later additions included a dining room (east, rear), kitchen and rear sunporch.

Houses--Decatur--Macon, W., 451. Home of Samuel S. Jack. It was willed to his son, Dr. Cecil M. Jack, who lived there until his death in 1949. His widow, Charlotte, was still living there in 1954. (inf. from clips) Photo ran Review Jan. 22, 1928.



S. S. Jack.

EDITOR and proprietor of the *Decatur Review*, is of Scotch-Irish descent. He was born in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, October seventeenth, 1836. His ancestors settled in North Carolina at a period previous to the Revolutionary war. John Jack, one of the early members of the family in this country, was president of the celebrated Mecklenburg Convention which met in North Carolina in 1775, and declared that the colonies ought to be independent of Great Britain. Mr. Jack's grandfather, John Jack, was an early resident of the Cumberland valley in Pennsylvania. He moved further west in 1768, settling in Westmoreland county, then the extreme frontier of that state. The same year he received a patent for a piece of land situated forty miles from Pittsburg. This tract of land remained in the family one hundred years, and during that time was in the ownership of only two persons, Mr. Jack's father and grandfather. John Jack was a soldier in the war of the Revolution, and was wounded in a skirmish near Philadelphia. Joseph Jack, father of the subject of this sketch, was born in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, and was one of thirteen children, of whom all grew to maturity and with one exception, married and had families. Joseph Jack married Sarah Nealay Sloan, who was born in Adams county, Pennsylvania, on a farm which subsequently formed part of the battlefield of Gettysburg. He served in the war of the rebellion as colonel of the 168th Pennsylvania regiment.

Samuel Sloan Jack was raised in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania. He attended Elder's Ridge Academy, in Indiana county, and Sewickley Academy in Westmoreland county, and also for a time was a student in Jefferson College. At the age of twenty he took charge of one of the common-schools in his native county, and subsequently was employed as a teacher in the Sewickley Academy. When twenty-three years old he was elected superintendent of schools of Westmoreland county, and at the time of his election was the youngest person in the state who occupied that

position. He had charge of about three hundred schools the office for six years. During the years 1867 and 1868 he was employed in doing county institute work under the direct state school department. In 1868 he was elected professor of English language and literature, in the Keystone Normal School in Berks county, Pennsylvania. Rejecting an offer of the trusteeship of the California Normal School in Washington, Pennsylvania, he came West in 1869, and in 1870 became principal of the Decatur high-school, which was under his care for

For the last ten years he has performed considerable journal work for newspapers in Decatur. In 1876 he purchased material used in the publication of the *Magnet and Tribune*, and established the *Decatur Times*, a daily and weekly journal. In July, 1880, he became the proprietor of the *Decatur Review*, the only Democratic paper published in Macon county, which he conducted in a vigorous and popular manner. His marriage was celebrated in March, 1868, to Josephine McKee, of Fayette county, Pennsylvania. He has four children, all boys.

In his politics he has always been a democrat. He was unwavering and constant in his advocacy of the principles of democracy, and has been of no little service to the democratic organization in Macon county. In 1874 he was elected democrat on a Fusion ticket, to the Twenty-ninth General Assembly, where he discharged his duties as representative, in so satisfactory a manner that in 1876 he was re-elected. The position he occupied in the Thirtieth General Assembly was peculiarly important. He exercised much influence in securing the election of John Davis to the United States Senate, to succeed John A. Logan. He was one of the original six who favored the election of Davis at the commencement of the contest, and had the great satisfaction of witnessing the final selection of his candidate. He was a frequent member of several important committees while serving in the legislature, and was the author of several important bills.

# Dr. Cecil M. Jack, 72, Dies Suddenly

Long Prominent in Civic,  
Medical and Farming  
Circles Here

Dr. Cecil McKee Jack, 72, prominent Decatur physician, a leader in the fight against tuberculosis and an ardent soil conservationist, died suddenly at 10 p. m. yesterday in his home.

Dr. Jack was born Nov. 15, 1876, at 451 West Macon street, where he had lived all of his life.

**HIS FATHER** was Samuel S. Jack who had come to Decatur in 1866 served as principal of Decatur high school, was a state representative from 1874 to 1878, owner and editor of The Review for several years after 1880, and later a Decatur postmaster.

Dr. Jack's mother was Josephine McKee a native of Fayette, Pa.

The youngest of four sons, he attended Wood street school (now Mary W. French), was graduated from Decatur high school in 1895 and received a literary degree at the University of Michigan. He continued his studies there, graduating in medicine in 1902. He later took advanced work in London and Vienna.

After one year as a physician with the Adventure Copper mine at Greenland, Mich., Dr. Jack returned to Decatur, where he formed a partnership with Dr. Everett J. Brown.

In 1909 Dr. Jack and Dr. Brown built the Brown and Jack building at 134 West Prairie avenue, then a model office building for the practise of medicine. Until his death Dr. Jack had maintained offices there.

Following Dr. Brown's death in 1920, Dr. Jack was in practise with Dr. Milton E. Rose and later with Dr. Rose and Dr. Edmund Roos, who later left the partnership because of ill health.

In 1946 the partnership of Dr. Cecil Jack and Dr. M. E. Rose was expanded to take in Dr. Nelson Jack, a son, and Dr. F. Jack Brown, a nephew of Dr. Cecil Jack.

**DR. JACK** was one of the first Decatur physicians to become greatly interested in the causes and cure of tuberculosis. His articles on this subject have appeared in outstanding medical journals and he was one of the leaders in a campaign to build the tuberculosis sanatorium here.

He was one of the original members of the board of directors of the Macon County Tuberculosis sanatorium, serving from 1918 to 1922 and again from 1929 until June, 1947.



DR. CECIL M. JACK

Dr. Jack served for many years as a member of the Macon County Tuberculosis and Visiting Nurse association and was an honorary member of the association's board of directors.

At the time of Dr. Jack's appointment to the sanatorium board, a newspaper editorial stated "Dr. Jack's name is associated with a long and public spirited fight with a disease which gradually is being fought back."

**AT THE TIME** of Dr. Jack's retirement from the Sanatorium board in 1947 Thomas W. Samuels told the Macon County board of supervisors, "We deeply regret Dr. Jack's retirement. He has had a major part in making the Macon County institution one of the finest of its kind in the state."

Dr. Jack, a recognized authority on tuberculosis, had had several articles published in medical journals.

He also served as vice president of the Illinois State Tuberculosis association and president of the State Trudeau organization, an auxiliary of the State Tuberculosis association.

In 1917 Dr. Jack was named a member of the co-operating committee on tuberculosis in Illinois and chairman of the county unit. This committee was formed to provide care for returning soldiers of World War I who had become ill

with tuberculosis and to find new cases among county residents.

**ALTHOUGH** Dr. Jack was primarily interested in medicine and specifically in the causes and cure of tuberculosis, his hobby was farming and he was an ardent conservationist.

On a farm in Mt. Zion township, Dr. Jack put into operation every method of soil conservation needed and turned a non-productive farm into an easily managed and productive one.

Heavily rolling land was planted in pasture or returned to trees. The light rolling land was contour-farmed. The waterways were broadened and planted with heavy grass so that the water would run gently downhill.

Also on the farm Dr. Jack developed a lake which was stocked with fish. In recent years Dr. Jack's farm has been visited by many groups under leadership of government officials who are able to point out the results of good methods of conservation.

**DR. JACK** was one of the first farmers in this area to grow American lespedeza, introduced in this country from Korea by the late Dr. Ralph Mills of Decatur through the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Mills, a missionary in Korea, had seen the sturdy legume grown in the Asiatic country. He sent seeds to the States and it became a favorite of farmers who owned land that would not grow clover.

Dr. Jack also owned farms other than the one in Mt. Zion township and spent much time planning the crops and the soil conservation methods for the land.

**DURING WORLD** War I and World War II Dr. Jack served as a member of the selective service board. He was also a member of the First Presbyterian church, Decatur Club, Masonic lodge, Knights Templar, Friends of the Land, and University club.

Since 1905 he had been a member of the Macon County Medical society, the Illinois State Medical society and the American Medical association.

He also held membership in the Tri-State Medical society, the Mississippi Valley Tuberculosis society, the National Tuberculosis society and was governor of Southern Illinois in the American College of Physicians in 1941, a fellow in the American College of Physicians and a member of the American Board of Internal Medicine.

**DR. JACK** leaves his wife, the former Charlotte Nelson, to whom he was married in Bloomington in 1908.

He leaves three children, Dr. Nelson Jack and Mrs. Cecile J. Rothfuss, Decatur, and Mrs. Barbara Rowe of Denver; one brother, Edgar Jack of Glendale, Ariz., and five grandchildren, Cecile Rothfuss, Susanna and Karen Jack and Nelson and Ronald Rowe.

Funeral services will be held at 4 p. m. Thursday in the Dawson & Wikoff funeral home, where friends may call. Burial will be in the Fairlawn cemetery.