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MABLEY, JACKIE "MOMS" (LORETTA MAY AIKEN; 1894–1975)

American black comedienne. Born to poverty in North Carolina, Mabley ran away at the age of 14 to join a minstrel show. After many difficult years, she gained renown and worldly success through her frank portrayals of race and sex before all-black audiences. Mabley was a favorite at Harlem's legendary Cotton Club and at the Club Harlem in Atlantic City, where she performed with such headliners as Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Cab Calloway. In her last years, she was able to achieve a "cross-over" to general audiences, appearing on television with Merv Griffin, Johnny Carson, Flip Wilson, and Bill Cosby.

Although one of her best-known personas was of a man-crazy older black woman, Mabley regarded herself as a lesbian. Her performances made fun of older men, satirizing the way they wielded authority over women as well as the fading of their sexual powers. In 1986–87, the black actress Clarice Taylor commemorated her life and work in an Off Broadway play with music entitled *Moms*, employing texts by Alice Childress and Ben Caldwell.

While she may be compared with such blues singers as Bessie Smith and Billie Holliday, Mabley's pioneering role in stand-up comedy was unique, and clearly linked to the difference in her sexual orientation.

MACDONALD, HECTOR, SIR (1853–1903)

British general. Born the son of a poor Scottish crofter (tenant farmer) on the Black Isle, Macdonald made a career in the

British Army, choosing to live abroad where social barriers and conventions mattered far less and a meager officer's wages went farther than they did at home. In 1870, lying about his age, he joined the 92nd, or Gordon, Highlanders, and as the purchase of officers' commissions had been abolished, it was possible for a mere private to rise through the ranks and even become a general—which he did. He served in India and accompanied his regiment during a British incursion into Afghanistan. Sent to fight against the rebellious Transvaal colony, he was captured by the Boers in the signal defeat of the British at Majuba Hill in June 1881.

In the spring of 1884 Macdonald married in the old Scots style by pledging his troth to his bride with only heaven as their witness. The common law marriage remained a secret even to the War Office, and to the world Macdonald was a stern, somewhat forbidding figure. A son was born to the couple in 1887—an only child. The reason for the concealment was that married officers were discouraged in Victorian times; it was believed both that they were less than efficient and that it was unfair to expose them to the constant perils of disease and death on the remote periphery of the Empire. In 1884 also, Macdonald transferred to the first battalion in order to see active service in Egypt. In Cairo he met Horatio Herbert Kitchener, a young officer of the Royal Engineers, under whom he commanded the Egyptian brigade in the Nile campaign against the Dervishes. Here his bravery and resourcefulness earned him the thanks of Parliament and the appointment of aide-de-camp to Victoria, an honor continued by Edward VII. His valor on the battlefield

won him the nickname of "Fighting Mac." During the Boer War of 1899–1901 he commanded the Highland Brigade and was wounded in action.

In 1902 he was appointed commander of the troops in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). However, "grave suspicions" had begun to form about him, inspired in part by the offence he had given to the closeknit society of British planters on the island. Accused of a "habitual crime of misbehavior with several schoolboys," he requested leave to return home to discuss the matter with the War Office, which directed a court of inquiry to be held in Ceylon. Macdonald set off in the hope that a session "behind closed doors" might settle the matter without embarrassment, but in Paris, on learning from the European edition of the *New York Herald* that the story had been broken to the press, he returned to his hotel room and shot himself in the head. Thus his outstanding military career ended tragically because the homosexual side of his character had been disclosed to an intolerant society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Trevor Royle, *Death Before Dishonour: The True Story of Fighting Mac*, Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Company, 1982.

Warren Johansson

MACHO

The term *macho* is simply the Spanish word for "male," but in the context of the American gay subculture it designates the male whose virility is ostentatious and often emphasized by conventional symbols—in a word, the tough guy as opposed to the feminine or even effeminate type of homosexual. There is a subtlety in the use of the term in English, because the Latin American norm of heterosexual manhood strikes the Anglo-Saxon as exaggerated and inappropriate. The Hemingway image, with its ambivalent and often overstated masculinity, played a role in the adoption of the Hispanic term.

The contrast between the "super-male" and the sensitive androgynous type has recurred at various times and places. The split within the early German homosexual rights movement stemmed in large part from the unwillingness of the virile man-lovers to identify with the effeminate "inverts." Benedict Friedlaender and Karl Franz von Leexow focused on this virile type, as did (in part) Edward Carpenter in England. They cited in evidence the long line of homosexual or bisexual military leaders, from Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar in antiquity to Prince Eugene of Savoy and Charles XII of Sweden in the eighteenth century, not to mention many figures in the medieval Islamic and Japanese annals of warfare. This phase of the pre-1933 movement was all but forgotten by the 1950s, and the homophile movement of that decade stressed the effeminate model who could pursue "real men," but would never think of becoming one. This style of behavior was almost normative in the gay subculture of that era.

In the 1960s, however, gay circles saw the emergence of a new style of manliness, influenced in part by a trend toward proletarianization in the counterculture: blue jeans and casual clothing, rock music, the surliness known as "attitude," beer instead of cocktails. The leather cult emerged as a distinctive minority style, making inroads even into the mainstream of the gay subculture. The emphasis on the masculine culminated in the clone look, with its emphasis on rugged, though neat clothing (the Hollywood/television fantasy of how men dressed in the American West of the late nineteenth century), and a body kept in good shape by regular exercise in the gymnasium.

Some observers claim that the macho aspect of the homosexual subculture is strongly conditioned by the inner anxieties that many gay men harbor on the subject of their own maleness, which is not an absolute and unalterable given but a matter of physical culture and personal