

# Getting Things Done: Donalda J. Dickie and Leadership Through Practice

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Donalda Dickie's name is synonymous with the development of progressive education in English Canada, yet little has been written about her life and work. This biography reclaims Dickie's life from the scattered sources she left behind, suggesting that her career illustrates how women provided leadership in education in the first half of the twentieth century, when they were largely excluded from positions of formal authority. Through normal school teaching, textbook writing, curriculum and program development, and other strategies, Dickie promulgated her views on learning and teaching to a wide audience to make a significant contribution to Canadian education.

Key words: biography, teacher educators, progressive education, Alberta education

Le nom de Donalda Dickie est synonyme d'enseignement progressif au Canada anglais, mais rares sont les écrits sur sa vie et son œuvre. Cette biographie, qui reconstitue la vie de Mme Dickie à partir de sources éparses, semble indiquer que sa carrière illustre comment les femmes ont fait preuve de leadership en éducation au cours de la première moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, période durant laquelle elles étaient néanmoins exclues des postes d'autorité. À travers son enseignement, les manuels qu'elle a rédigés, les programmes scolaires qu'elle a élaborés et d'autres stratégies, Donalda Dickie a fait connaître sa vision de l'apprentissage et de l'enseignement à un vaste auditoire, apportant ainsi une importante contribution à l'éducation au Canada.

Mots clés : biographie, pédagogues chargés de la formation à l'enseignement, enseignement progressif, éducation en Alberta.

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Donalda James Dickie (1883-1972) was a progressive educator whose career illustrates how women provide leadership in education even as they are excluded from positions of formal authority. A normal school instructor for most of her paid working life, Dickie educated teachers, wrote textbooks for students and teachers, developed programs of study

and curriculum materials, and actively participated in the wider educational and women's communities. She exercised what can be called the power of practice to provide direction to the education of children and teachers across Canada. Indeed, Dickie marshalled a capacity for intellectual work, a deep understanding of the actual nature of classrooms, and an ability to sustain a lifelong commitment to the heavy demands of teaching, research, and writing to become one of Canada's most influential educational leaders during the first half of the twentieth-century.

Although democratic, populist, and feminist impulses have extended the meaning of leadership to include roles well beyond formal positions of authority held by appointment within a hierarchical structure, we know remarkably little about how female educators exercised leadership historically. Dickie's story opens up questions about the nature and form of women's leadership in state systems of schooling, forcing us to consider how women in the past "did leadership" while being denied recognition as leaders. Indeed, so strong was the discursive exclusion of women from notions of public leadership that Dickie probably did not even recognize herself as a leader; rather, like so many women, she would have described herself as a person who "just got things done."<sup>1</sup> Certainly this is how she was described by her colleagues who saw her as a "doer" or, as a younger male contemporary put it, "the little red hen" of Alberta education,<sup>2</sup> a reference simultaneously laudatory and derisive and reminding us of the ambivalence that confronts women of ambition. Dickie, herself, claimed to be "just a teacher."<sup>3</sup> Precisely as a "doer" and a teacher, however, she provided leadership within an increasingly self-conscious teaching profession, a reason why she was so widely recognized in her time as a central player in the progressive education movement.

Dickie was successful because she based the instructional leadership she offered on two important principles. First, she situated herself within the largely female teaching force and respected those with whom she worked. She was continuously involved with a network of teachers who collaborated with her on new textbooks, tested materials she developed, and provided feedback about new programs or curricula. Her links to the field also provided her with the passion and the power

to negotiate from a position of strength within the wider national network of normal school instructors, university professors, education officials, and school trustees. Put another way, she could work “down” with the mostly female teaching force or “up” with the almost wholly male administrative structure. A second hallmark of her leadership was her ability to combine an understanding of a better, more just and peaceful world with usable curriculum content and practical teaching ideas. That is, Dickie had a conscious political philosophy that leaned towards humanism and social reform, and an educational philosophy that valued both subject matter knowledge and child-centred pedagogy. Dickie devoted much time and effort to sharing this perspective with teachers both during initial preparation and through in-service programs. She spoke directly to teachers in professional journal articles, teacher-education textbooks, and various instructional manuals. She embedded her own curriculum design and personal pedagogical approaches within the textbooks she wrote. Over several decades, she developed concrete, child-friendly learning materials along with specific pedagogical strategies, thereby offering classroom teachers practical methods for carrying through on more abstract principles. In these ways, Dickie utilized many commonly recognized leadership strategies including collaboration, networking, and mentoring.

Yet even as she modelled an active agency, she was caught in the contradictions facing women carving out professional careers within the institutions of the state. As a teacher, she was expected to educate the young for citizenship while, by virtue of her sex, she was denied even the right to vote.<sup>4</sup> As a graduate student, she entered Oxford University at a time when she could not supplicate for a degree because she was a woman.<sup>5</sup> She toiled for nearly thirty-five years as a normal school instructor but never held an administrative post or a position of formal authority with her employer, Alberta’s Department of Education. And despite playing a central role in the development of progressive education and writing the recognized teacher-education text in the field, her contributions have been rendered almost invisible in Canadian educational history.<sup>6</sup> Dickie, then, is one of those female educators who stood

hip-deep in cultures saturated with phallogocentric knowledges, in institutional structures ruled epistemologically and procedurally by men and masculinist signifiers, and in a discipline which, despite its historical terrain as “women’s work” . . . remains [in] the theoretical and administrative custody of men.<sup>7</sup>

How she negotiated these circumstances, not of her own choosing, to actively create a realm of influence and some power, and how she used specific strategies to survive and even flourish in a world she could only partially understand because of her location within it, is the subject of this article.

#### EARLY INFLUENCES

Apart from a short autobiographical note written for her family and a collection of clippings and letters, Dickie left no personal papers.<sup>8</sup> Her life must be reconstructed from her published writing, from the scant records left in various archives, and from the recollections of others. In this regard, the difficulties of reclaiming Dickie’s life are not unusual for as Heilbrun points out, women’s biographers have too often been forced “to reinvent the lives their subjects led” from “what evidence they could find.”<sup>9</sup> It remains true that although I was able to find many of the “facts” of Dickie’s existence, her thoughts and feelings about that experience are elusive and her life constantly slips into the shadows. But perhaps, slipping in and out of the shadows is an appropriate metaphor for Dickie who evaded the normative script to live the ambiguous life of a professional woman, claiming a small enclave in the foreign territory of male hegemony.

In common with the rest of us, the circumstances of Dickie’s early years proved crucial to her identity. Her origins in a Scottish Presbyterian family and community with a high regard for reading and learning almost certainly shaped her views about the importance of education in one’s life<sup>10</sup> and her own life modelled the continuous pursuit of knowledge. Born in Hespeler, Ontario, on 5 October 1883, the eldest child of Hannah (Ann) Shepherd Hall Dickie and William Stewart Dickie, a school teacher,<sup>11</sup> Dickie was orphaned at four years of age.<sup>12</sup> She and her two younger brothers fell under the care of their paternal grandmother, Mrs. James Dickie, a widow who likely offered a model of female independence and courage. Although Dickie described her

grandmother as “a clever, interesting and very entertaining woman” and her childhood as “happy and stimulating,” it also appears true that as the eldest of the three orphaned siblings, Dickie came to feel a special responsibility for the care of her brothers and a close attachment to them.<sup>13</sup> She also spent time working in various families in the community, assisting with child care and other household tasks. This, along with the care of her brothers, may have been part of the practical experience that encouraged the rapport with children and understanding of childhood often noted by others reviewing her later work and accomplishments.<sup>14</sup>

Dickie’s sense of Canadian nationalism and connection to place which so shaped her writing on citizenship and country also went back to her early life in south-western Ontario. She had strong ties to the farm where she had spent her first years, claiming that “under those grey roofs people of my blood have lived for generations, out of that earth I sprang.”<sup>15</sup> She went on to observe,

My feeling for that bit of earth is more than love. It has in it something of the sacredness of love for a mother, something of the passion that flares between man and woman, something that is deeper than either. Here are my roots. This is my land.<sup>16</sup>

As an adult she was an anglophile, but she was also a descendant of the Dickies who had come to Canada from Scotland to escape poverty after the Napoleonic Wars and the Land Clearances.<sup>17</sup> The cultural memory of hardship and immigration that passes from one generation to the next must at least partially account for Dickie’s positive rendering of Canada’s multicultural heritage and her support for the development of a social safety net to counter the worst effects of poverty and unemployment.

#### BECOMING A TEACHER

Like many Canadians of the day, Dickie also had the experience of migrating from one region to another. While still in elementary school, she moved to Souris, Manitoba, with her grandmother and then to Moose Jaw, in what is now Saskatchewan, to enter high school.<sup>18</sup> In 1901, taking up one of the few occupational choices open to women, she

attended the Regina Normal School. In its souvenir magazine which she co-edited, Dickie is described as “one of our cleverest junior members both in spheres of literature and teaching.”<sup>19</sup> This evidence provides the earliest indication we have that people were beginning to take note of Dickie’s intelligence, her abilities to master both content and pedagogy, and her willingness to roll up her sleeves and get things done. While at normal school, Dickie made important contacts and at least one of her classmates, H. C. Newland, would go on to join her in playing a leading role in progressive education in Alberta.<sup>20</sup>

When she completed her normal school training, Dickie was eighteen years old and an independent young woman with a Second Class Interim Certificate. She began to teach in a small school at Westview, just outside Moose Jaw, for a salary of \$45 per month, gaining her permanent professional certificate on 30 December 1903.<sup>21</sup> But further education was never far from her mind. When she had saved enough money, she returned to Ontario to take her senior matriculation at Galt Collegiate,<sup>22</sup> and then registered at Queen’s University in 1906. For three academic years (1906-1909) she completed her course work extramurally, but for the 1909-10 term she was in-residence to meet the degree requirements set by Queen’s University.<sup>23</sup> To fund her academic studies, she engaged in a common practice for Ontario university students and went west in the summer to teach.<sup>24</sup> Her school teaching experiences were important for they provided Dickie with an understanding of the difficulties of rural education, a reality she was to keep in mind for the rest of her career. Her identification with the women working alone in one-room schools scattered across the Canadian landscape shaped her approach to pedagogy and made her a strong, though not uncritical, advocate for women teachers when she served on curriculum committees or confronted male academics. Her teaching in southern Saskatchewan may also have been key to the special sensitivity she developed to the situation of Canada’s First Nations, a sensitivity that would later make its way into many of the textbooks that she wrote.

While a student at Queen’s, Dickie excelled academically. In 1909 she won the University Medal for English and in 1910 the University

Medal for History.<sup>25</sup> Arthur G. Dorland, who became a respected Canadian historian, knew Dickie at Queen's and recalled,

I did not get the gold medal [in history]. This was awarded instead to a brilliant woman student, Donalda Dickie, who having won the medal in English extramurally the previous year (the first time—and so far as I am aware the last time—it was ever won by an extramural student) entered Queen's for her final year, and also captured the history medal. This was a very proper recognition of unusual merit. Miss Dickie was not only more mature in her thinking, but she surpassed the rest of the class also in the quality of her writing and in her powers of expression.<sup>26</sup>

In fact, because of her exceptional academic achievements, Dickie was awarded the M. A. degree in humanities in 1910, rather than the baccalaureate.<sup>27</sup>

Queen's was a post-secondary setting that provided "the kind of comfortable and intimate environment that appealed to academically bright students from 'homes of moderate means.'"<sup>28</sup> More importantly it was an institution that encouraged its students to take up lives of public service.<sup>29</sup> Many leading progressive educators of the twentieth century were Queen's graduates, among them John Harold Putnam.<sup>30</sup> William Aberhart, a fellow teacher who graduated the same year as Dickie, went on to become Premier and Minister of Education in Alberta's first Social Credit government in 1935, precisely at the time when the province was introducing a new curriculum co-authored by Dickie.<sup>31</sup> For Dickie, the Queen's connection offered a shared background and contacts with many like-minded educators and others in public service, thus according her a place in what we now call a network of influence.

#### THE EDUCATION OF A NORMAL SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR

Although she probably did not know it, Dickie was poised to exercise leadership in the educational community. Someone in Alberta had recognized her gifts, for immediately upon graduation from Queen's, Dickie was offered a position on the staff of the Practice School affiliated with the Calgary Normal School, and then, in 1912, she was appointed to teach at the new Provincial Normal School in Camrose, Alberta. Her memories of this period were typically upbeat: "For the first year Dr.

James Miller, the principal and I were the only members of staff and each taught half the subjects. It was hectic, but great fun.”<sup>32</sup> In that year she also published her first article in a professional journal, “Dramatization as a Method in Composition,” followed shortly after by two articles on the teaching of Canadian history.<sup>33</sup> The pattern of her professional career was established. She was to teach at all of Alberta’s three normal schools, being transferred from one to another as enrolments and provincial finances dictated, until her retirement in 1944<sup>34</sup> while also producing journal articles, school textbooks, workbooks, and teacher manuals in several subject areas.

Although she now held a job of high status for a woman, Dickie’s desire for academic achievement persisted. Having completed her M.A., she almost immediately began post-graduate work by taking summer classes in history and English at Columbia University.<sup>35</sup> Then, in April, 1916, she entered a B.Litt program at Somerville College at Oxford University.<sup>36</sup> She wrote about this experience revealing the wonder and joy she felt at being in England and, especially, at Oxford. It is as though she could not believe her good luck and her enthusiasm for the rituals of student and college life was unbounded. She spoke of the libraries with awe, calling them “an inspiration” and proclaiming her mornings in the Bodleian “unforgettable.” And she was completely taken with the history and beauty of the university and its surroundings. She was not oblivious to the war raging in Europe, had experienced fear during the crossing of the Atlantic and, while at Oxford, helped with the care of the wounded who were housed in some of the colleges. But despite the material shortages and harsh realities of war, Dickie remained enthralled with the possibilities of the intellectual life she found at Oxford.<sup>37</sup>

While there, she met and became fast friends with Eglantyne Jebb, who went on to become principal of the Froebel Institute at Roehampton, and whose cousin of the same name founded the Save the Children Fund.<sup>38</sup> This lifelong friendship undoubtedly provided an entrée to a rich world of educational debate in England, including the New Education Movement, and positioned Dickie in the wider international discourses of progressive education.<sup>39</sup> It is also reported that Dickie was acquainted with Vera Brittain, Winifred Holtby, Dorothy Sayers, and other prominent women who were students at Somerville College in the



same period<sup>40</sup> and hence we might conclude that Dickie was exposed to what Brittain called “a universal tide flowing so strongly toward feminism.”<sup>41</sup>

On 9 April 1917, Dickie’s youngest brother, Thomas, was killed at Vimy Ridge<sup>42</sup> and in June she left Oxford, forty-two days short of completing her residency.<sup>43</sup> Whether this was because she was required to return to her post at the Camrose Normal School or because she wished to join her fiancé who had been gassed at the front and was in hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where he ultimately died, is unclear.<sup>44</sup> She did return to Somerville College in 1921 to complete her residency and continue work on her thesis. Before she had completed her thesis, her supervisor died and she decided to transfer to the doctoral program at the University of Toronto in 1926 and complete her graduate work there.<sup>45</sup>

During the 1926-27 academic year, Dickie took a leave of absence to complete her residency at the University of Toronto, although it was described inaccurately and a bit dismissively by the (male) principal of the Calgary Normal School as a year “partly of rest and partly of further research work abroad.”<sup>46</sup> It would not have been surprising if Dickie had required some rest at this point because she had just completed a text on teaching composition, compiled a book of poetry for student use, developed an elementary school language arts series called *Learning to Speak and Write*, and prepared a series of eight Canadian history readers.<sup>47</sup> She also was working full-time as a teacher educator, doing research for and writing a dissertation, continuing to supervise extra-curricular activities at the normal school, and speaking at teachers’ conventions. In this context, “just getting things done” was a mind-boggling feat!

In 1929 she successfully defended her dissertation, *John Foxe’s Acts and Monuments of the Church*, and convocated in the spring of 1930, making her one of only six women to earn a University of Toronto Ph.D in history prior to 1960.<sup>48</sup> She also became a member of a very small and select group of educators who held doctorates in Canada. With the Ph.D, Dickie now had an additional credential to enhance her intellectual authority and her academic credibility, an increasingly important consideration in the field of education.<sup>49</sup>

Earning a Ph.D was a remarkable accomplishment, not only because Dickie did so while maintaining a commitment to her teaching and to her publishers, but because, as Mary Kinnear points out, at that time doctorates were rare and university teaching, let alone normal school teaching, did not require an advanced degree.<sup>50</sup> Despite her stellar academic record, nowhere is there a hint that Dickie was ever considered for a post in a history department, a result, no doubt, of the fact that at the time the hiring of new faculty was done informally with department chairs seeking “good men” and senior male professors recommending their male graduate students.<sup>51</sup> As Boutilier and Prentice argue, the professionalization of history by the first half of the twentieth-century meant that the discipline became, by definition, one that “privileged male experience and preserved most permanent academic jobs for university-trained men.”<sup>52</sup> Donald Wright is even more blunt: “Sexism not only protected the status of history as a masculine discipline but protected the academic labour market for men.”<sup>53</sup> It is, of course, possible that Dickie, herself, did not wish to teach at a university and that she did not actively seek work there. But why then did she complete a doctorate in history rather than education? Surely the paucity of female professors in history departments, in general, suggests that more than personal preference was at work here.<sup>54</sup>

In a world of systemic and overt sexism, academic achievement can signify both a woman’s recognition that she must be exceptional and her hope that merit would trump gender. In Dickie’s case, achievement pulled her towards the centre of power, but gender pushed her to the margins, leaving her to lead from the middle as it were, through the strategy of “practical action.”<sup>55</sup> However, this leadership strategy was a two-edged sword. Women were exploited but received neither monetary recognition nor appointment to administrative positions. Yet there was power in practice. Through action or work, often done collectively, women made change and asserted control over their world. Put another way, practical action did not offer extrinsic rewards at the individual level, but paid large social dividends.

## INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH TEXTBOOK WRITING

In her mid-30s, Dickie was ready to embark on what would become one of her major leadership projects. When she returned to Canada from Oxford in 1917 and took up her position at the Camrose Normal School, she was asked to teach history but “found the history text books in use by the children in the Practice School not only uninteresting but literally incomprehensible to most of their young readers.” She concluded “that I probably could not do worse and determined to try my hand.”<sup>56</sup> As a result of this decision, Dickie began a writing and publishing effort that extended into the 1960s. If she were to be denied opportunities to lead from a formal position of authority, she would shape education in another way and promulgate a progressive and meliorist reading of the world along with a child-centred pedagogy through teaching materials.

Textbooks were, and are, the ubiquitous tools of state education. In the first half of the twentieth-century, when teachers had few other resources to rely on, especially in the isolated rural schools, textbooks regularly determined what would be taught and became particularly significant instruments for developing a national identity and Canadian citizenship.<sup>57</sup> Textbooks, and the guides for teachers that came with them, could also shape teaching methods. Furthermore, because the majority of Canadians did not complete high school in the early decades of the twentieth century, what they learned in elementary school can be seen as especially important in shaping political consciousness and notions of citizenship. In this context, Dickie’s textbooks take on particular significance because through them she structured what teachers taught and children learned about their nation and their social responsibilities. Her purpose was clear: “[W]e in Canada have our own traditions, our own ideals and our own history. This is what we want our children to know.”<sup>58</sup> Of course, Dickie was not alone in seeking this goal. In general, school textbooks promoted a distinct kind of Anglo-Canadian nationalism that did not wholly reject but provided some distance from the British connection, while carefully mediating the links between Canada and the United States.<sup>59</sup> The Canadian state also turned to schools to assimilate an immigrant population, extinguish “foreign” languages, erase ethnic identities, and teach the young how “Canadians” lived. As a result, textbooks often contained racist content, downplayed

social conflict, and reinforced traditional patterns of gender relations<sup>60</sup> and Dickie's work was not completely free of these flaws. However, her books were more open to diversity and difference, subtly challenging hegemonic beliefs and leading readers towards tolerance and understanding.

Although she spoke out against hyphenated Canadianism,<sup>61</sup> Dickie also pointed out the advantages of a multicultural population and encouraged teachers to help children appreciate the richness immigrants brought to their new country. She emphasized the hard work and harsh conditions immigrants faced in their desire for a better life. In her portrayal of the peoples of Canada's First Nations, Dickie made a commendable effort to provide accurate and fair information. Her textbooks included Aboriginal stories as well as information about traditional and contemporary life in First Nations communities. She showed Aboriginal children living in loving families with home routines comparable to those of other children. Dickie was very open-minded about the role of medicine men, natural healing processes, and native spirituality. And in a sly turn of the table, through which we can appreciate Dickie's humour, she compared the Chicken Dance Society to other men's service clubs, the Masons and Elks.<sup>62</sup>

Dickie scattered positive comments about Aboriginals throughout her books. In a language arts text, for example, she noted that "Indians were fine speakers" and exhorted students to emulate their model.<sup>63</sup> In her introduction to a story about an Aboriginal man, she asked, "Do you admire clever people? You will find a hero in this tale if you do."<sup>64</sup> Thus she troubled racist stereotypes by naming the man both clever and heroic. In her history texts, Dickie was critical of the treatment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. In contrast to her usually pro-government renderings of events, she recognized that Canada's "actions were not always fair or wise"<sup>65</sup> and that the treaties "did create many difficulties and problems for the Indians, problems which have not yet been met successfully."<sup>66</sup> Indeed, she calls the Canadian government "negligent" in its treatment of the Indians and Métis.<sup>67</sup> Dickie's unique contribution in textbook writing was the preparation of two readers, a pre-primer and a primer, featuring Aboriginal children as protagonists.<sup>68</sup> These two readers are likely the first Canadian examples

of what we would now call inclusive curriculum material. Both readers offer a very positive, albeit somewhat sentimental and anglicized, view of Aboriginal children and their families.

Dickie also challenged the dominant gender discourse of the day, not by hammering home the political history of women's struggle for the right to vote, but by making apparent women's efforts to secure the future of Canada. For example, students learned that mothers and fathers worked equally hard to clear the land and build farms. She informed youngsters about the important work of the nuns in schools, hospitals, and social services and reminded them that "housekeepers spent their lives in crushing toil."<sup>69</sup> Sixth graders read about Madame La Tour who, in the absence of her husband, took command over a group of men to defend an Acadian fort. They also learned about the possibility of male anger when a woman was successful. They could not have missed Dickie's admiration as they read about Marie Maisonat who went from the pranks and fun of girlhood to politics when she "discovered that she loved power, knew how to win it, knew how to use it."<sup>70</sup> Similar woman-positive material can be found in the readers Dickie compiled and they contain clear examples of what we might now call a critical anti-sexist pedagogy. For example, after students read Longfellow's poem, "Stay at Home, My Heart," with its claim that for women "To stay at home is best," they find this question: "Nowadays girls are nurses and teachers and stenographers and doctors. Do the girls of to-day think that staying at home is the best?"<sup>71</sup>

I do not claim that Dickie's texts were overtly feminist or even consistent in their portrayal of girls and women because much of her material is more conservative and traditional. But it is clear that girls using Dickie's texts would find affirming material and all students would be required to think about gender relations. It is also true that because of Dickie's interests in the lives of ordinary people, past and present, young people using her texts were exposed to stories about workers and farmers, about the technologies of work, and the various elements of daily living. Housework was recognized as work and as part of the economy, a rather forward idea for the time. More than other textbook writers of the period, Dickie appeared sensitive to class issues and much in sympathy with hard-working people trying to make ends

meet. She compared possessive individualism unfavourably with co-operative community values and even pointed out to school children the way in which competitive practices in education created adults who cared only for personal success. She explained the systemic nature of poverty and unemployment and warned young people not to blame the victims. By 1950, she was very supportive of the growing welfare state, speaking positively of the family allowance program, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, and other health and welfare initiatives. She retained her cheery optimism about Canada, often emphasizing that although mistakes were made, governments tried to do their best for the people. In this regard, she revealed a progressive conviction about the benevolent state and fostered the Canadian commitment to peace, order, and good government.

It is difficult to assess the influence of Dickie's textbooks on young Canadians because we cannot know with certainty how teachers used the material, nor what students learned from it. Nonetheless, we do know that Dickie's textbooks were commended to use by leading educators. For example, Thornton Mustard of the Toronto Normal School wrote a glowing introduction to Dickie's series, *Junior Language*, which ended with the exuberant claim, "A new day, my masters, in the teaching of English Composition!"<sup>72</sup> Textbooks authored or compiled by Dickie were authorized or approved for use in many provinces and often over several decades. Selections from Dickie's Canadian history readers, chosen and compiled by Helen Palk, a Manitoba teacher and normal school instructor, appeared under the title, *Pages from Canada's Story*. This textbook was used in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec and may have been used in other provinces. It first appeared in 1928, was reprinted at least 25 times by 1961, with revisions in 1936, 1949 and 1951.<sup>73</sup> The title page of the *The Great Adventure* indicates it was authorized for use in Alberta and Newfoundland and approved for use in Ontario. It likely was used elsewhere, as well, because it was favourably reviewed in the popular media and in academic journals and won the Governor-General's Award for the best book of juvenile literature published in 1950. This book sold more than 50,000 copies in its first year and also went through many successive printings after its first appearance. As late as 1977, five years

after Dickie's death, it appeared as a sound recording in Alberta.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, the Canadian Parade reading series, compiled by Dickie and three teachers, went through many reprintings after first appearing in 1947. Authorized for use in Alberta and British Columbia and approved for permissive use in Ontario, this series was supported by teacher manuals and workbooks, additions which further ensured that the textbooks would become the curriculum. Sutherland notes that these readers were used in three provinces for a twenty-year period.<sup>75</sup> Thus the evidence points to a very influential role for Dickie's textbooks for a large part of the twentieth century. It was no accident that the federal government called on her to write the remedial reading program for soldiers during World War II.<sup>76</sup>

Despite Dickie's advanced degrees and obvious competence, taken-for-granted gender norms and masculinist organizational practices denied her opportunities to hold formal leadership positions in the education system. Like other women excluded from the hierarchy of educational administration, she was forced to look for alternative arenas in which to play out her capacities and skills and introduce the reforms she thought necessary. From among her limited options, she chose textbook writing as an important means to provide instructional leadership. Here was a form of power open to her and she fully exercised it even after she retired as a normal school instructor in 1944. Revealing her lively sense of humour she wrote, "Now that I have retired and can write all the time, the only hope I can see for Canada is reforestation."<sup>77</sup> In the 1960s, she was working on a history of the Commonwealth nations when old age caught up with her and robbed her of the mental acuity needed to complete that task.<sup>78</sup>

#### EXERCISING LEADERSHIP THROUGH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

By the time she was 50, Donalda Dickie had gained enough credibility to move closer to the centre of power and become an educational insider. She was highly educated and widely recognized for her textbook writing and her progressive pedagogical approaches which she had championed for many years as part of a larger transnational movement. She worked quietly and persistently for change from within the educational system, but was not seen as a threat to the existing relations of power or

established modes of operation. She got along well with men and was among the few women who were admitted to membership in the Education Society of Edmonton, a group of senior stakeholders in education who met on a regular basis to study new developments and discuss future directions for the province. It is not surprising, then, that Dickie became centrally involved in Alberta's grand experiment with progressive education in the 1930s.

Between 1921 and 1935, Alberta was governed by the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), a political party built on the principles of agrarian populism, group government, and co-operation.<sup>79</sup> Education was a key concern for the party and there was a conscious desire to improve opportunities for rural children and support the teaching of co-operation in the schools. The United Farm Women of Alberta (UFWA), whose local and provincial leaders were often former teachers, played an important role in promoting the school reforms proposed by the progressive education movement in North America and England. The UFWA, for example, supported the Dalton Plan and encouraged its use in Alberta.<sup>80</sup> The convergence between the interests of the governing party and Alberta's educational leaders, several of whom had done graduate work at Teachers College, Columbia, and the University of Chicago where they were influenced by the pantheon of American progressivists, resulted in the decision to bring progressive education to Alberta. An important outcome of this decision was the whole-scale revision of the school curriculum.<sup>81</sup> Designed under a UFA government, the new revisions were implemented with the support of another populist party, Social Credit, after the farmers lost the 1935 election.

According to a colleague in the Edmonton Normal School, Fred McNally, the provincial supervisor of schools, drew Dickie into the curriculum revision process in the early 1930s.<sup>82</sup> McNally, who became Deputy Minister of Education in 1935, had attended Teachers College, Columbia, where he found John Dewey's lectures incomprehensible but enjoyed his course with William Heard Kilpatrick, "one of the greats both as a teacher and a scholar."<sup>83</sup> He liked Kilpatrick's project method and called upon Dickie, whom he had supervised while serving as principal of the Camrose Normal School, to speak to a conference of school inspectors about the methods of progressive education. Well-



received by the inspectors, Dickie was then appointed in 1934 as one of three members of a committee assigned the task of drafting a framework for a new elementary school curriculum that would reflect an activity-oriented and integrated approach. The core committee supervising the work was almost wholly male in membership and the senior administrator assigned to over-see the revision process was Hubert C. Newland, the Chief Inspector of Schools, but the committee named to actually do the work was two-thirds female, with Olive Fisher of the Calgary Normal School joining her friend Dickie, along with William Hay, a school inspector.

In short order, this three-person committee presented a plan for curriculum re-organization to Newland. Central to the plan was the enterprise, the term the committee came up with to describe an interdisciplinary, child-centred, activity method of education. Dickie herself saw the enterprise as “the co-operative achievement of a social purpose that a teacher presents to her class with a view to having them use it as an experience in intelligent social behaviour.”<sup>84</sup> Newland “was well pleased with the vision of the plan” and believed it would provide “an opportunity for learning the ways of democratic living, since pupils and teachers would participate in the planning of the work to be undertaken.”<sup>85</sup> The implementation process began in 1935 when 75 teachers from across the province were brought to a summer school to learn about the new curriculum with the expectation that they would return to the field to proselytize their colleagues.

Over the next few years, Dickie was the most prominent activist in the cause of progressive education. A younger contemporary working in the Department of Education described her leadership in this way:

Dr. Dickie did more than any other single person to make the implementation of the activity movement in Alberta education a reality. She wrote, she spoke, she demonstrated. She published, she edited, she revised, she evaluated. She gathered around her a group of energetic, young, competent teachers. In her classes, both during the academic years and during summer schools, she produced dozens of young enthusiasts who went out singly and in pairs to sell the gospel of the activity program. In a matter of a few short years, the “enterprise method” had reached into every corner of the province; into every teachers’ convention; into every curriculum guide.<sup>86</sup>

Dickie's teacher-education textbook, *The Enterprise in Theory and Practice*, first published in 1940, solidified her leadership in action, as did the many articles she published in a wide range of journals.<sup>87</sup> All told, Dickie's ability to think, write, work with others, and prepare useful teaching materials proved crucial to attempts to implement progressive education reforms in Alberta. She was adroit in argument, able to shift ground easily to draw from the various strands of progressivism to make a case for each particular audience she addressed. She "sold" progressive education to teachers, school trustees, businessmen, and the women's organizations whose membership she enlisted in the cause.<sup>88</sup>

Although Dickie has been labelled variously as a pedagogical, child-centred or child freedom progressive,<sup>89</sup> her own life story and her body of work reveal a woman who was also committed to traditional scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge. She did not see theory and practice as binaries and believed that children could come to learning with joy and pleasure but still master content and skills. Like feminist scholars of the late twentieth century, Dickie was concerned with the interconnectedness of knowledge, with the stories of the silenced in history, and with the making of knowledge and the role of experience in that process. She was interested in using education to promote social improvement and thought this could be done by offering students active, purposeful learning activities designed to prepare them for democratic citizenship.

However, as she neared the end of her employment as a normal school instructor and faced retirement in 1944, Dickie began to appear less than sanguine about the likely success of the progressive experiment in Alberta. A tone of increasing desperation can be discerned in her writing as she resorted to expediency to fight for the curriculum she had worked so hard to develop. Particularly jarring is her turn towards emphasizing the vocational and social control dimensions of progressive education as she tried to mollify critics.<sup>90</sup> Only after retirement did she return to stating what had clearly been her goal all along: "to teach the young where and how to get information for themselves and how to use it to solve their social problems and make a useful contribution to the solution of the problems of the community."<sup>91</sup>

There were real difficulties posed for the smooth implementation of progressive reforms. Access to a variety of learning resources, especially books, was essential, yet many schools lacked such materials. The enterprise method required well-educated and skilled teachers,<sup>92</sup> but classrooms were too often staffed with poorly educated or young and inexperienced teachers, unable to cope with the demands of an integrated curriculum. World War II only exacerbated the problem.<sup>93</sup> Dickie, usually so supportive of teachers, was sharp in her condemnation of those she called “down-at-the-heel” conservatives who “do not, and will not, read.”<sup>94</sup> In many cases, classrooms were filled with activity for activity’s sake and little real learning took place, at least partly because the provisions for the professional development and re-education of teachers were inadequate. And, of course, many teachers resisted progressive education and disagreed with this new approach to schooling.<sup>95</sup>

At the same time, the Social Credit government became increasingly right-wing and more oriented to fundamentalist moralism, and the administration in the Department of Education was changing and becoming more reliant on educational psychology to define educational purpose.<sup>96</sup> Elements of the business community and the media began an attack on progressive education that found support in the universities.<sup>97</sup> Some of the educators who had been strong supporters of progressive education changed sides.<sup>98</sup> Finally, even Dickie herself hinted at some second thoughts about the revised school curriculum. In the foreword to the 1950 history textbook, *The Great Adventure*, she commends the important work being done in social studies but admits that history “appears in bits and patches” and students “lose much of the significance of many social studies topics” and “leave school without ever having read a complete, connected history of their country.”<sup>99</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Dickie’s work in curriculum reform in the 1930s and 40s came closest to modelling leadership as it is commonly understood in the educational literature. More than at any other point in her career, she moved to the centre of formal power in education and had the opportunity to shape the provincial school system as a whole. She worked indefatigably over

a ten-year period for the implementation of the enterprise approach, using the full range of strategies commonly thought necessary to successfully introduce curriculum reform. It is hard to see how she could have done more. It is surprising, then, that in her brief autobiographical notes, Dickie makes no mention whatsoever of the work she did in curriculum revision or the part she played in Alberta's experiment with progressive education. Was she soured on top-down change-making, or did she dislike the political machinations that went on behind the scenes? Did she come to realize that many educational leaders did not understand progressive education and consequently were not deeply committed to curriculum reform? Was she overcome with disappointment when she realized that her vision of change was becoming so watered down that it bore little resemblance to its original conceptualization? Or did Dickie come to realize that the curriculum and pedagogy she proposed were unattainable in the existing bureaucratic educational system? It is impossible to know, but she certainly turned back to textbook writing with a vengeance when she retired in 1944 and said no more about the enterprise. Indeed, in her autobiographical notes, she emphasized textbook writing as her major achievement in life, a fact which should encourage a further reconsideration of the way in which educational leadership is too often read as synonymous with educational administration.<sup>100</sup>

In 1925, Dickie offered the following words of advice to the students graduating from the Calgary Normal School. Almost certainly as a reference to her grammar classes and the use of comparatives and superlatives, she observed, "Play is pleasant; Work is pleasanter; Achievement is pleasantest of all."<sup>101</sup> She might have been speaking of her own life because, although she could play and did so by golfing, hiking, climbing and travelling, she devoted the best part of her years to work. As a result, she achieved recognition as an author, an educator, and as a woman who provided "leadership and inspiration" to teachers.<sup>102</sup> Thus it was that Dickie exercised power. She claimed the right to be heard in the educational discourse, and moved into spaces where action mattered and where getting things done made a difference.

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## NOTES

1 Jill Blackmore, *Troubling Women: Feminism, Leadership and Educational Change* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999); Carol Harris, "Innovative Leadership in Community Context: Elizabeth Murray and the History Plays in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia," in *Women and Leadership in Canadian Education*, eds. Cecilia Reynolds and Beth Young (Calgary: Detselig, 1995), 173-192.

2 J. Oviatt to [P. Oviatt], 7 July 1970. Letter reproduced in R.S. Patterson, comp., *Progressive Education* (Edmonton: Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, n.d.). Original held by R. S. Patterson in his personal files.

3 Elizabeth Donalda Harris, telephone interview with author, December 2001. "Betty Don" Harris is Dickie's niece.

4 As a resident of Alberta, Dickie got the provincial vote in 1916 and, as the sister of someone in the armed forces, the federal franchise in 1917. She was not recognized legally as a "person" in Canada until 1929. See Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women: A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace, 1996).

5 Women gained the right to supplicate for degrees at Oxford in 1920. See Paul Berry and Mark Bostridge, *Vera Brittain: A Life* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1995), 154.

6 Donalda Dickie, *The Enterprise in Theory and Practice* (Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1940). For histories of progressive education in Alberta see, R. S. Patterson, "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1968); R. S. Patterson, "Progressive Education: Impetus to Educational Change in Alberta and Saskatchewan," in *Education in Canada: An Interpretation*, eds. E. Brian Titley and Peter J. Miller (Calgary: Detselig, 1982), 169-192; Nick Kach, "The Emergence of Progressive Education in Alberta," in *Exploring Our Educational Past*, eds. Nick Kach and Kas Mazurek (Calgary: Detselig, 1992), 149-174; Amy von Heyking, "Selling Progressive Education to Albertans, 1935-53," *Historical Studies in Education* 10, nos. 1 and 2 (1998): 67-84. Dickie receives only the briefest of mentions in all these studies of progressive education in Alberta.

7 Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore, "Introduction," in *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy*, eds. Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore (New York: Routledge, 1992), 2.

8 I am grateful to Dickie's niece, Elizabeth Donalda Harris, and her son, Dave Harris, for sharing this material with me. The originals remain in their possession.

9 Carolyn Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York: Ballantine, 1988), 31.

10 Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).

11 Charles G. D. Roberts and Arthur Leonard Tunnell, eds., *The Canadian Who's Who*, vol. 2, 1936-37 (Toronto: Murray Printing, 1936); University of Toronto Archives (UTA), School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Acc. No. A84-0011/026, Dickie, Donalda file, Application for Admission, 17 March 1926.

12 City of Cambridge Archives, Transcript of Dickie Family Grave Marker, New Hope Cemetery. The Harris interview indicated that new information has come to light recently which suggests that Dickie's father did not die in Australia in 1889, as his family concluded when he failed to return from a trip to that country. Rather, it appears he failed to inform his Canadian family that he was staying in Australia, where he re-married and started a second family.

13 Donalda Dickie, autobiographical notes, unpublished typescript in possession of Harris family, n.d. Harris interview revealed that Dickie spent most of her vacations with her brother and his family, and that she provided financial support to the family during the Depression.

14 For comments on Dickie's understanding of children see, for example, "Who's Who Among Educationists," *Edmonton Bulletin*, 8 July 1936 and book reviews in UTA, Acc. No. A-73-0026/083 (94), Clipping File, Dickie, Donalda James. Information about working out comes from Harris interview. See, also, Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty* about the practice of children working in the homes of others in the Galt, Ontario region where Dickie was born.

15 Donalda Dickie, "Can We Teach Love of Country?" *Chatelaine*, April 1945, 57.

16 Ibid.

17 Laraine Sole. *Waverley: The Early Families* (Wanganui, NZ: H & A Print, 1996).

18 Harris interview; Dickie, autobiographical notes.

19 Saskatchewan Archives Board, Regina (SAB,R), Collection R-E 238, Regina Normal School Magazine: Souvenir Number, 1901, 17.

20 Patricia E. Oviatt, "The Educational Contributions of H. C. Newland" (M.Ed thesis, University of Alberta, 1970).

21 SAB,R, Collection R-177.11, File 5: Certificates Granted by Dept. of Education, NWT, 1903-1905; File 20: Inspector's Reports, 1899-1904; File 11: Index of Teachers, 1908-1927; School Officials' Registers, Westview S.D. No. 256.

22 Dickie, autobiographical notes.

23 Queen's University Archives (QUA), Office of the University Registrar *fonds*, Student Registers series, Locator #1161, Vol. 10.

24 Dickie, autobiographical notes; SAB,R, Collection R-177.11, File 11: Index of Teachers, 1908-1927 and School Officials' Registers, Clarilaw S. D. No. 685. On university students going

west each summer to teach see Rosalind Rowan, "The Eastern Student as the Western Teacher," *The School* 5, no. 2 (1916): 97-101.

25 QUA, Office of Advancement, Advancement Business Office *fonds*, Deceased Alumni series, Locator #3599, Box 6.1, Donalda James Dickie.

26 Arthur G. Dorland, *Former Days and Quaker Ways: A Canadian Retrospect* (Picton: Picton Gazette Publishing Co., 1965), 175-76. I am grateful to Paul Banfield at the Queen's University Archives for drawing this quote to my attention.

27 QUA, Queen's University Printed Collection, "Calendar of Queen's College and University, Kingston, Canada, For the Year 1909-1910."

28 P. T. Rooke and R. L. Schnell, *No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton, A Feminist on the Right* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), 10.

29 A. B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979).

30 B. Anne Wood, *Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1985).

31 John Irving, *The Social Credit Movement in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), 10. R.D. Gidney first pointed out this university connection between Aberhart and Dickie.

32 Dickie, autobiographical notes.

33 D. J. Dickie, "Dramatization as a Method in Composition," *The School* 1, no. 3 (1912): 185-188; "Teaching Canadian History," *The School* 3, no. 1 (1914): 37-41; "Methods of Teaching Canadian History," *The School* 3, no. 5 (1915): 337-340.

34 Alberta Department of Education Annual Reports trace the re-location of normal school instructors. Dickie was at the Calgary Practice School in 1910, then employed at the Camrose Normal School in 1912, transferred to the Edmonton Normal School in 1920, Calgary Normal School in 1923, back to Edmonton in 1928, Camrose in 1933, Edmonton in 1935.



35 Dickie, autobiographical notes.

36 Pauline Adams, e-mail to author, 5 October 2001, conveying information about Dickie contained in the Somerville College Register.

37 D. J. Dickie, "Life at an English University," Part 1, *The School* 6, no. 3 (1917): 213-217; Part 2, *The School* 6, no. 4 (1917): 274-277; Part 3, *The School* 6, no. 5 (1918): 346-349.

38 Harris interview; Francesca M. Wilson, *Rebel Daughter of a Country House: The Life of Eglantyne Jebb, Founder of the Save the Children Fund* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967).

39 Celia Jenkins, "New Education and Its Emancipatory Interests (1920-1950)," *History of Education* 29, no. 2 (2000): 139-151; Peter Cunningham, "Innovators, Networks and Structures: Towards a Prosopography of Progressivism," *History of Education* 30, no. 5 (2001): 433-451.

40 "Who's Who Among Educationists."

41 Vera Brittain quoted in Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life*, 105.

42 The exact date of death is recorded on the dedication page of Donalda Dickie, *The Great Adventure: An Illustrated History of Canada for Young Canadians* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1950).

43 Adams, e-mail.

44 Harris interview.

45 UTA, SGS, Acc. No. A84-0011/026, Dickie file.

46 Alberta Department of Education, *Annual Report, 1926* (Edmonton: King's Printer, 1927), 22.

47 Donalda J. Dickie, *Modern Practice in the Teaching of Composition* (Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1923); Donalda J. Dickie, comp., *The Canadian Poetry Book: A Book of Modern Verse* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1922); Donalda J. Dickie, *Learning to Speak and Write: Book 1, Grades I, II, III, and IV*

and *Book II, Grades V, VI, VII, and VIII* (Toronto: Educational Book Company, 1924); Donalda J. Dickie, *Dent's Canadian History Readers*, 8 vols. (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1924-26).

48 Donald Wright, "Gender and the Professionalization of History in English Canada Before 1960," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 1 (2000): 29-66.

49 See, for example, R. S. Patterson, "Hubert C. Newland: Theorist of Progressive Education," in *Profiles of Canadian Educators*, eds. Robert S. Patterson, John W. Chalmers and John Friesen (n.p.: D.C. Heath, 1974), 289-290; H. T. Coutts and B. E. Walker, recorders, *G. Fred: The Story of G. Fred McNally* (Don Mills, Ontario: J. M. Dent, 1964). Newland went to the University of Chicago and earned a doctorate in 1932. McNally notes he was sent to Teachers College, Columbia on full salary but never completed his degree. There is no evidence to suggest that Dickie received any support from her employer to attend a doctoral program.

50 Mary Kinnear, *In Subordination: Professional Women, 1870-1970* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1995), 33.

51 Wright, "Gender and the Professionalization of History."

52 Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice, "Introduction: Locating Women in the Work of History," in *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women and the Work of History*, eds. Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 4.

53 Wright, "Gender and the Professionalization of History": 31. Wright notes the specific sexism of two professors who were involved in supervising Dickie's work.

54 See, Wright, "Gender and the Professionalization of History" and Alison Prentice, "Laying Siege to the History Professoriate," in *Creating Historical Memory*, 197-232.

55 Randi R. Warne, *Literature as Pulpit: The Christian Social Activism of Nellie L. McClung* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1993), 186.

56 Dickie, autobiographical notes.

57 B. Anne Wood, "Canadian Citizenship for a Progressive State," in *Canada and Citizenship Education*, ed. Keith A. Macleod (Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1989), 19-26; Ken

Osborne, "Public Schooling and Citizenship Education in Canada," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 32, no. 1 (2000): 8-37; Penney Irene Clark, "'Take It Away Youth!': Visions of Canadian Identity in British Columbia Social Studies Textbooks, 1925-1989" (Ph.D. diss., University of British Columbia, 1995).

58 Elizabeth Bailey Price, "Calgary Has Four Women Authors," *Canadian Bookman* 8, no. 3 (1926), 94.

59 Ken Osborne, "'Our History Syllabus Has Us Gasping': History in Canadian Schools—Past, Present, and Future," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (2000): 404-435; George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1986).

60 See, for example, Osborne, "Public Schooling and Citizenship Education;" Kenneth W. Osborne, *'Hard-working, Temperate and Peacable'—The Portrayal of Workers in Canadian History Textbooks* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1980); Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Clark, "'Take It Away Youth!'"

61 Donalda Dickie, "The Anglo-Canadian Problem," *Canadians All* 3, no. 4 (1945), 13, 68-69.

62 The most sustained discussion can be found in Donalda Dickie, *All About Indians*, Book 2, Dent's Canadian History Readers (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1925).

63 Donalda Dickie and Frederick S. Cooper, *We Talk and Write of What We Do* (Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1955), 95.

64 Donalda Dickie, comp., *Ships of Araby*, The Fifth Reader in the Far Horizons series (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1936), 301.

65 Donalda Dickie, *The Great Golden Plain: A History of the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1962), 194.

66 *Ibid.*, 215.

67 *Ibid.*

68 Donalda J. Dickie and George Dill, *Two Little Indians* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1933); D.J. Dickie, *Joe and Ruth Go To School* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1940).

69 Donalda Dickie, *When Canada Was Young*, Book 5, Dent's Canadian History Readers (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1925), 211.

70 Donalda Dickie, *In Pioneer Days*, Book 6, Dent's Canadian History Readers, rev. ed. (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1927), 59.

71 Dickie, *Ships of Araby*, 103.

72 Thornton Mustard, introduction to *Junior Language, Book A*, by Donalda Dickie (1938; reprint Toronto: Gage, 1944), iii.

73 Donalda J. Dickie and Helen Palk, *Pages from Canada's Story* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1928). It is difficult to tell how many printings this book went through but I have been able to confirm the following publication history. Reprinting occurred in 1931, 1932 (twice), 1933, 1935. A slightly revised edition appeared in 1936 and was reprinted each year from 1937 to 1943. The book was "reset and electrotyped" and issued in 1947, revised and issued in 1949 and 1951, and then reprinted each year from 1952 to 1959 and again in 1961.

74 Donalda Dickie, *The Great Adventure: An Illustrated History of Canada for Young Canadians* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1950; reprinted 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958); sound recording (Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1977). The book may also have had further reprintings. Dickie's publisher also contacted the J. Arthur Rank Company to explore making a film of the book for use in Commonwealth countries. See [signature indecipherable], J. M. Dent and Sons (Canada) to Dr. Donalda Dickie, 30 Oct. 1951. On circulation numbers see letter from J. M. Dent and Sons (Canada) to Dr. Donalda Dickie, 23 Oct. 1951. Originals of both letters in possession of Harris family. For reviews of this book, see, for example, UTA, A-73-0026/083 (94), Clipping File, Dickie, Donalda James; J.E.P., "Review of *The Great Adventure*," *Saturday Night* 66 (5 December 1950): 45; n.a., "La Grande Aventure," *La revue de l'université Laval* VII, no. 2 (1952): 187-189. On the Governor-General's Award see, Canadian Cultural Information Centre, *The Canadian Literary Awards, Part 1: Governor General's Literary Awards* (Ottawa: Author, 1966).

75 Donalda Dickie, Belle Ricker, Clara Tyner and T. W. Woodhead, comps., *Young Explorers; Gay Adventurers; Proud Procession*; Canadian Parade Readers (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1947; reprinted 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1957) with teacher guides and workbooks; Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up*, 217.

76 "Dr. D. Dickie Retiring from Normal School; Widely Feted," *Edmonton Bulletin*, 5 June 1944. Glenbow Archives and Library, Library Clipping File, "Donalda Dickie."

77 "Notes About Authors," *Chatelaine*, April 1945, 2.

78 Harris interview.

79 See, for example, Leroy John Wilson, "Perren Baker and the United Farmers of Alberta—Educational Principles and Policies of an Agrarian Government" (M.Ed. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1970); James Rennie Bradford, *The Rise of Agrarian Democracy: The United Farmers and Farm Women of Alberta, 1909-1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Tom Monto, *The United Farmers of Alberta: A Movement, A Government* (Edmonton: Crang Pub., 1989).

80 L. J. Wilson, "Educational Role of the United Farm Women of Alberta," in *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*, eds. David C. Jones, Nancy M. Sheehan and Robert M. Stamp (Calgary: Detselig, 1979), 124-135.

81 See, Patterson, "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta"; von Heyking, "Selling Progressive Education."

82 University of Alberta Archives (UAA), Acc. No. 69-29, Series 1, Box 4, Item 3/1, File 1, Interview transcript, W. D. McDougall.

83 Coutts and Walker, *G. Fred*, 41.

84 Dickie, *The Enterprise*, 125.

85 UAA, Acc. No. 69-29, W. D. McDougall Collection, Box 4, 3/1, File 5, Donalda Dickie and Olive Fisher, "Some Events Leading to the Re-Organization of the Curriculum of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta in 1933." Unpublished typescript, n.d.

86 Oviatt to [Oviatt].

87 Dickie, *The Enterprise*; see, also, articles by Dickie in a wide range of journals, including “New Lamp for Old,” *Alberta School Trustee*, December 1939: 13-15; “Education via the Enterprise,” *The School* 21, no. 9 (1940): 3-6; “Enterprise Education in Alberta,” *Understanding the Child*, April 1940: 7-11; “Democracy and the Enterprise,” *The School* 31, no. 6 (1943): 464-469; “Enterprise Education—Part 1,” *The B. C. Teacher*, September 1940: 18-20 and Part 2, October 1940: 75-77; “A Comment on the New Course of Study for Elementary Schools,” *The ATA Magazine*, November 1936: 35-36.

88 Shelley Anne Marie Bosetti-Piche, “The Interest of Edmonton Club Women in Education, Health and Welfare, 1919-1939 (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1990).

89 See, Patterson, “The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta”; von Heyking, “Selling Progressive Education”; University of Calgary Archives (UCA), UARC 86.034, A. L. Doucette *fonds*, Box 17, File 17.11, “Attitude Towards The Enterprise Curriculum.” This document is an undated, anonymous assessment of the position on the enterprise taken by each of the normal school instructors. Here Dickie is put in the “child freedom group.”

90 See, for example, Dickie, “Democracy and the Enterprise”.

91 Donalda Dickie, “Improving Techniques in Social Studies,” *The School* 33, no. 8 (April 1945): 673.

92 Alberta Department of Education, *Annual Report*, 1935 (Edmonton: King’s Printer, 1936), 19.

93 Robert S. Patterson, “History of Teacher Education in Alberta,” in *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*, eds. David C. Jones, Nancy M. Sheehan and Robert M. Stamp (Calgary: Detselig, 1979), 192-207.

94 Dickie, *The Enterprise*, 435.

95 Patterson, “Progressive Education: Impetus to Educational Change;” R. S. Patterson, “Voices from the Past: The Personal and Professional Struggles of Rural School Teachers,” in

*Schools in the West*, eds. Nancy M. Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig, 1986), 99-111.

96 Patterson, "Hubert C. Newland"; Oviatt to [Oviatt].

97 The attack most often cited is Hilda Neatby, *So Little for the Mind: An Indictment of Canadian Education* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1953). See, also, W. G. Hardy, *Education in Alberta* (Calgary: Calgary Herald, n.d.). For a thorough discussion of the opposition, see Campbell A. Ross, "The Neatby Debate and Conservative Thought in Canada" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 1989).

98 UCA, UARC 86.034, A. L. Doucette *fonds*, Box 1, File 1.5, General Correspondence. Material in this file indicates that Doucette, an instructor at the Calgary Normal School, had actively supported progressive education reforms, but later recanted.

99 Dickie, *The Great Adventure*, vii.

100 Blackmore, *Troubling Women*.

101 UCA, UARC 0.2, Calgary Normal School Yearbooks, Box 1, File 1924-25, "The Comet," 9.

102 UTA, Office of the President, Acc. No. A68-0007, Citation for Donalda James Dickie, 6 June 1952.