

JESSIE DE WOLF HIGGINSON  
an inventory of her papers  
in the  
CHILLIWACK ARCHIVES

compiled by

JIM BOWMAN

1986-1987

Jessie De Wolf was born in Quebec City in 1876. Other than a sister who died in infancy, she was the only child of William Henry De Wolf and Fanny Elizabeth Tilley. Her father was a broker of lumber and cotton, and the family lived in Quebec in the summers and in New Orleans in the winters. In 1891 Mr. De Wolf retired to Vancouver for health reasons, and in 1892 the family moved to Chilliwack.

Jessie De Wolf became interested in becoming a kindergarten teacher, and in 1897 began correspondence lessons with Jessie C. Lobdell, a noted educator of Ridgebury, Connecticut. Miss Lobdell accepted no payment for the lessons, apparently motivated by religious faith. The correspondence between the two women is interesting for its revelation of the mores of the time.

After completing her course, Miss De Wolf opened what was probably the first kindergarten in Chilliwack. She ceased teaching in 1905 when she married James Higginson of Sardis. She raised three children and was active in the life of St. John's Anglican Church, Sardis, until her death in 1948.

The bulk of the Jessie De Wolf Higginson papers were presented to the Chilliwack Archives by her daughter, Mrs. Edith M. Barr of Sardis, in 1986. Additional papers and a completed questionnaire giving further biographical information were presented by her other daughter, Mrs. Emily Tingle of White Rock, in 1987.

De Wolf, Jessie M. Kindergarten teacher, Chilliwack, B.C.

File no.:

- BOX 1
- 1 Letters from Jessie C. Lobdell, White Birch Farm, Ridgebury, Fairfield County Connecticut, on kindergarten teaching and other subjects, 1897 Dec. 27 to 1900 March 28; lists of kindergarten activities planned (n.d.)
  - 1a Photograph of Jessie C. Lobdell (transferred to photograph collection, #P5328)
  - 2 Assignments from Jessie C. Lobdell, 1897 Dec. 27 to 1899 Mar. 1.
  - 3 Object lessons. Assignments from Jessie C. Lobdell, with plans for kindergarten lessons, 1898 Jan. 7 to 1899 June 26.
  - 4 Book of paper cutting craft samples.
  - 5 Book of paper weaving craft samples.
  - 6 Book of paper folding craft samples.
  - BOX 2 7 Book of embroidery samples.
  - 8 Scrapbook: pictures of various objects.
  - 9 Notebook: list of objects, by color and shape.
  - 10 Song book. Printed book of children's songs (cover and title page missing).  
  
"In the twilight: a reverie" (except from Ladies' Home Journal, October 1904).
  - 11 The kindergarten and the school / by four active workers.--Springfield, Mass.: Milton Bradley Co., c1886. --136 p.
  - 12 Books for kindergarten and primary schools. --New York: J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., (ca. 1900). -- (16)p. -- (Descriptive circular H).

Exercises and games for children under five (excerpt from book - cover and title page missing)

The paradise of childhood: a manual of self-instruction in Friedrich Froebel's educational principles: and a practical guide to kindergarten / by Edward Wiebe. -- Springfield, Mass.: Milton Bradley Co., (1887). --Pages missing.

A photograph of Miss De Wolf with her kindergarten class in 1899 is in the photograph collection. #P1026.

Miss De Wolf's teaching certificate is among the memorabilia maintained by Central School in its scrapbook.

Artifacts donated at the same time are accessioned as 986.5

Addendum, 1987

File 13      Biographical information supplied by Mrs. Emily Tingle, 1987.

File 14      Certificate of completion of course (photocopy) signed by Jessie C. Lobdell, 1899.

Accompanying letter from Jessie C. Lobdell, 1899.

Completed lesson which was never mailed because it had been accidentally dropped into the Fraser River, 1899.

*Addendum, 1988*

*File 15*

*wedding announcement, Jessie May De Vlast  
and James Alfred Higginson, 1905 Apr. 4*