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A BIOGRAPHY OF EDITH BOWEN

by

Donald K. Edvalson

A seminar report submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Elementary Administration

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
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INTRODUCTION

Long ago, Aristotle said, "Those who educate children are more to be honored than they who produce them, for the latter only gave them life and the others the art of living and worthily."

In 1856, a handcart company pushed and pulled its way along the dry and dusty trail over the plains to Salt Lake City. An eighteen year old lad, David Bowen, walked stiffly along, eagerly scanning the west for the "Promised Valley" of the Saints. He had walked a thousand miles for his faith—leaving all behind and not looking back.

Four years later, over the same trail, still marked by a spiraling column of dust, came an ox team company. The wagons were loaded and Annie Shackleton was young, so the nineteen year old girl, London born and bred, walked all the way across the plains.

This same Annie Shackleton and David Bowen later met in Salt Lake City and were subsequently married there on February 16, 1861. After living in Salt Lake City for a short time, the new family moved to Henderson Creek, Idaho, where they lived for about seven years.

There being no school within reach of their farm, and with a family growing up, Annie Bowen did as her mother before her had done—she taught the children herself.

Annie Bowen, in her autobiography, states that she was the ninth and last child of her parents. Her father died during her early childhood,

leaving her mother to raise five children of "her own labor." (Four children died in infancy.) Under these circumstances, it was necessary that the remaining children assist in the support of the family as soon as possible, so school was out of the question. However, her mother taught Annie to read when she was very small. She states, "I can dimly remember standing by her side and spelling out words to her while she was working."¹

So it was a similar situation, as far as schooling was concerned, in which the young Bowen family found themselves at Henderson Creek.

In the winter evenings they had a little school in their home. Mr. Bowen made copies of work sheets for the children, while Mrs. Bowen taught them to read and spell. Mother Bowen stated, "We laid a little foundation for the time when they (children) could do better."²

Albert E. Bowen, a son in the family and later an apostle in the Latter Day Saint Church, always referred to his mother as a student of life---well read in the finest literature of the ages. "She posed and graced the home with dignity and sustaining power."³

¹Bowen, Annie Shackleton, An autobiography, Improvement Era. 55:808-809, November 1952.

²Ibid.

³Quinney, Joseph. Albert E. Bowen of the Council of Twelve. Improvement Era. 40:278, May 1937.

In this family, that reared ten children on a frontier farm, we find a portrait of courage, faith, love, integrity and hard work.

The Bowens sold their home and moved to Samaria, Idaho in 1876, and it was here in Samaria that Edith Vilate Bowen was born on September 29, 1880.

Though living under pioneer conditions, the family drank the culture of the world from books of classic merit and from sacred volumes, they garnered the meaning of life. By service, their faith waxed strong. It was the simple honest life, by which ambition, courage, and strength are begotten.⁴

Young Edith attended elementary school (grades 1-8) in Samaria, which is near Malad, Idaho. At this time, Samaria had a population of between 700-800 people.

Miss Bowen often stated that she experienced the blessings of living with parents who had an unusual heritage in the cultures of the world, and who taught her very early in life to "appreciate the contributions of all people in whatever medium she was able to contact them——through books, lectures, plays, classes, pictures, and personal contacts."⁵

In 1901, Edith left Samaria and traveled to Logan to attend the Brigham Young College. She studied at the BYC for two years. At this time she was urged by the school trustees to accept a teaching

⁴Widstoe, John A. Improvement Era, 40:304, May 1937.

⁵Humphrey, Ellen, Chase, Alice. Biographical Sketch of Edith Bowen.

position in the elementary school in Samaria, which she did for one year (1903-1904). She taught the first, second, and third grades at the school there.

After completing the year of teaching, she returned to the Brigham Young College to complete the "Four Year Normal Course." She received her degree for this in 1906, and when she was graduated, she was chosen valedictorian of the class.

Upon graduation, she had an offer to teach in the Logan City Schools. She taught third grade at the Benson School, which was located on the south-east corner of 1st East and 4th North Street.

The next year, 1907, she again returned to Brigham Young College as a supervising teacher in the training school. She taught the 7th and 8th grades there. Miss Bowen had an impelling urge to further her studies in the field of education, so while she was teaching at the training school, she completed her work for the "Advanced Normal Diploma."

At the end of the year the training school was closed, so she returned to the Logan City Schools, teaching the 7th and 8th grades at the Woodruff Elementary School (located on the south-west corner of 1st South and 1st West Street). While here at the Woodruff School, she taught the 7th and 8th grades on alternating years.

During this time, a Mr. Mullineau was Superintendent of Logan City Schools, and a Mr. Sørensen was principal of the Woodruff School when she began teaching there. Later Mr. George D. Harding became the principal under whom she worked.

Of her experiences at the Woodruff School Miss Bowen says, "I've always had satisfaction in school, but along with it has been worry. Though we had no facilities at the Woodruff, we did have a place to sit, and the children had a desk to sit in. We had paper and pencils and such, but as far as any extra materials or anything of that kind, there was a great need."⁶

Mrs. Ellen Humphrey, a former teacher, recalls an incident that happened to her when she was a student in Miss Bowen's eighth grade.

"I was assigned to report on the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of the Civil War. When I gave my report, I gave it verbatim from the text book. Miss Bowen chastized me because I wasn't getting the feel of it."⁷

Miss Bowen had an innate ability to understand and sense the ability of the individual child. This trait was quickly recognized by Supt. Mullineau and he asked her to serve as a visiting teacher (also called teacher of ungraded students at this time). In this capacity, Miss Bowen states, "I would go to all of the schools in Logan, and see what children were behind in their work and needed help. (The children would be selected by their class-room teachers who were guiding them.) They then would be sent to me, one at a time or in little groups. I tried to fill in their deficiencies in their school subjects."⁸

⁶ Bowen, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, November 1963.

⁷ Humphrey, Ellen. Interview by Don Edvalson, February 21, 1965.

⁸ Bowen, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, November 1963.

About this time, the Brigham Young College Training School was re-opened, and Miss Bowen was invited by President Jensen to be on the teaching staff. She again taught the 7th grade and also supervised the trainees in their various fields of education.

In the spring of 1919, Edith Bowen was offered the position of Primary Supervisor in the Logan City Schools. However, she felt she needed more training before she could accept such a position. She asked for and was granted a leave of absence in order to further her own education and preparation.

In the fall of 1919, she entered Teacher's College, Columbia University, New York. She continued her studies here through the summer session of 1920.

At Columbia the teachings of Dr. Kilpatrick struck a respondent chord for Miss Bowen. She states, "I had a wonderful year! I received corroboration for many things that I believed in, but hadn't been certain whether they were right or not. I sat on the edge of my seat and licked in the truths that he taught us."⁹

Upon returning home to Logan, she assumed the responsibilities of Primary Supervisor for the Logan City Schools. Miss Bowen had many new ideas when she returned from Columbia. "She dared to set out to improve curriculum; to delete old and add new practices; to make school not a thing apart from daily living, but life itself. Thus pioneering modern

⁹Ibid.

education in the state of Utah, she brought into brighter focus the importance of the child as he lives in his home and his community."¹⁰

Miss Bowen never drove a car and so visited all the schools in Logan City by walking. Anyone familiar with the distances involved between schools may well appreciate the many miles she must have covered while serving in this capacity.

Mrs. Ellen Humphrey stated, "I can still see her spry little figure coming over the old canal bridge on her way to the Ellis School."¹¹

While a supervisor in the Logan City Schools, Miss Bowen would spend her summers attending various college summer school sessions. She always had the urge to further her training. She attended summer schools at Utah State Agricultural College, (now Utah State University) University of Chicago, and the University of California.

As a supervisor in the Logan City Schools, she showed great concern for the elementary school child, not only concerning his curriculum, but also his school environment. Miss Bowen always had a great concern for excellence.

If one ever found her frustrated it was because of inadequate buildings or facilities or by inadequate teachers. Because she had great faith in what education could become, she was impatient with shortcomings.

¹⁰ Humphrey, Ellen. Interview by Don Edvalson, November 1963.

¹¹ Ibid.

One of these shortcomings to her was the lack of a kindergarten in Logan City Schools. It was Miss Bowen's belief that you can't begin too early to have children learn the concept of give and take; to expand the child's own ideas; and then to have facilities to do these things.

The story of the establishment of the kindergarten movement in Logan can best be told in Miss Bowen's own words; --

As supervisor of the Logan Schools, I believed in kindergarten. There began to be urgings and feelings to put kindergarten in schools. At the back of the movement, working very hard, were Mary Woodward Fox and Rose Jones. They were the prime-movers, and belonged to an organization which was trying to establish a kindergarten.

They came up and paid me a visit and asked what I thought I could do, and they thought we ought to get at least one kindergarten established in the city.

Well, I was very anxious to do what I could, although I was still with the city. Through the pressure of these women and others, whose names I don't know, the state finally recognized, and made it possible for a kindergarten to be established.

Then we went to work with zeal. I knew that Logan City was poor and that they didn't have many facilities for a kindergarten. It was then I happened to think of Emma Eccles Jones. Now, she's had her Master's Degree in Child Education at Columbia University, and she was living right here in Logan.

I went to see her and asked if she would make a contribution to Logan, her home-town by teaching kindergarten---gratis, if we could provide the other---the where-with to do the rest.

Why, yes, I'd like to, she said.

So now we had a teacher!

I then went to the Board of Education and asked if we could get a teacher for no salary, would they be willing to provide a room, and have a few necessary supplies, such as pencils and paints?

They accepted the idea, and so we set out to see how we could make some money to supply the other needs of the kindergarten.¹²

Miss Bowen and her fellow workers interested quite a few other people of the community in this project and together they began to do all matter of things. The parents were asked to take the school census and then they in turn were paid for doing this work. This money they contributed to the cause.

Mrs. Ellen Eccles held a paid social in her large home on West Center Street in Logan. The Eccles home, being one of the larger and more palatial home in Logan, had never been seen on the inside by many people, and thus was quite an attraction. A program was arranged, tickets sold, and, as Miss Bowen stated, "The place was pretty well jammed."¹³

A large number of Logan citizens contributed to the cause, and soon enough money was obtained and materials purchased and Logan City had its first kindergarten! Location for the class was in the Whittier Elementary School (located on the corner of 4th East and 3rd North Street) and Mrs. Jones began as teacher for the class.

It was decided that parents of the students should pay tuition in order that enough money could be accumulated to keep the class in operation. The tuition was about seven dollar per year per child, as Miss Bowen remembers.

¹²Bowen, Edith. Interview by Eyre Turner, February 12, 1962.

¹³Bowen, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, November, 1963.

Mrs. Jones proved to be a very successful teacher and Miss Bowen had this to say about her activities: "Mrs. Jones proved to be an expert in dealing with children—in knowledge, in refinement, in poise, and in all amenities of life—These were second nature to her. The parents were so delighted with her work that they wouldn't have allowed her to stop. She loved her work and could be spared from home activities to do it, as it was just half-day kindergarten."

Mrs. Jones continued on with the kindergarten, even after the College took over the Whittier School for a training school. However, she felt that she had given her contribution during these years of volunteer service, so at this time she was put on the College pay-roll.

While Miss Bowen was still with the Logan City Schools, Prof. Henry Peterson asked her to teach an early morning class before she began her day's work with Logan City. There were enough people interested in being teachers at this time that Prof. Peterson thought a course in "Principles of Teaching" should be organized.

Miss Bowen further states, "He also wanted the cadet teachers to have some actual experiences in the schools. We arranged with Logan City to use some of their personnel to help these students by having the students actually visit the rooms and letting them see first-hand what was going on. The stipulation was that no teacher would be forced to take a cadet teacher.

Miss Bowen was responsible for choosing the teachers who would cooperate in this program. At first, the cadet teachers chiefly observed,

but later the supervising teachers might give them an assignment to conduct a project or unit. This gave the cadet contact with the children, the school, and the way things were organized in a school.

Miss Bowen served as a supervisor in the Logan City Schools for ten years, and it was after this time that she was asked to fill a position at the Utah State Agricultural College Training School. (The Whittier Elementary School had been secured for this purpose.) Again in her humbleness and sincerity she refused because she felt she lacked training for the position.

In 1930 she returned to Columbia University to continue her studies. She received her B. S. Degree in June of 1931 and then stayed on to complete work for her Master's Degree. She received this degree in June of 1932.

Returning to Columbia with Miss Bowen was her niece, Miss Stella Young. Miss Young stayed there one year, receiving her Master's Degree in June of 1931. After this, the niece obtained a position with the Indian Service of the United States Government. Later the two were again to become "room-mates" when Miss Bowen retired from actual teaching and supervising.

While at Columbia, Miss Bowen met and worked with such noted educators as Dr. Roma Gans, Dr. Jean Betsner, Dr. Hilligus, Dr. Mossman, and Dr. Agnes Burke. Patty Hill and Edwin Reeder were two others that she worked with and admired.

Miss Bowen was to become quite closely associated with Dr. Gans and Dr. Betsner in later years, and was very instrumental in securing them

as visiting professors during summer school sessions at USAC. She also was very impressed with the work of Patty Hill and Dr. Agnes Burke in kindergarten education. Evidence that she admired these two persons greatly is the following statement by Miss Bowen—"We used the training school there at Columbia, the Horace Mann School, as a laboratory school. We didn't take part, unless we were the kind that could see something to do and just get up quietly to do it. But we listened and observed techniques. Miss Burke was so at ease in the school—no apparent worrying, as I had done. It was rather like being in a home where there was a good mother. She doesn't shout at the children or scold them, but leads them by very natural means, which was never talking down to them. Rather talking shoulder to shoulder with the child, just as you would with anyone else, making the situation that came nothing artificial—and then getting the educational value out of it for the children."¹⁴

Of Miss Bowen's stay at Columbia, Dr. Roma Gans had this to say: "My first contact with Logan was at Teacher's College (Columbia) where I met Edith Bowen in a class, and, of course, that was a great eye-opener."¹⁵

Miss Bowen had a pending contract to return to the Logan City Schools, and in the spring of 1931 she received a letter from the superintendent,

¹⁴Bowen, Edith. Interview by Eyre Turner, February 12, 1962.

¹⁵Gans, Roma. Visiting Professor, Interviewed by Eyre Turner, Logan, Utah, October 4, 1961.

stating that because of the depression and the poverty of Logan City Schools they were doing away with her position.

Mrs. Edith Shaw made this comment when interviewed about Miss Bowen, "I feel that while she was away to Columbia, Logan City Schools missed her very much and when they failed to re-employ her, they went backwards."

It was a short time later, after receiving this letter from the city superintendent, that Miss Bowen received a letter from Dr. E. A. Jacobsen, inviting her to come to the college training school at Logan, Utah.

Miss Bowen states, "Since I was without a position, and I'd been in New York two years, and my expenses had been rather high, and so on, I took what I could get. It wasn't much compensation, but anyway I began to try my wings there"

Mr. C. E. McClellan was principal of the Whittier Training School at this time and Mrs. Addie Swapp was the supervisor. However, Mrs. Swapp lacked a degree so Miss Frances Barber, who had her degree and had special training in supervision, took her place.

In the spring of 1932 the president of USAC, Pres. Elmer G. Peterson, suggested to the dean of the school of education, Dr. Jacobsen, that Miss Bowen be contacted for the position of supervisor of the Whittier Training School.

Accordingly, Dr. Jacobsen wrote to C. E. McClellan, who was doing graduate work at Columbia, to see if he would endorse Miss Bowen for the position. Mr. McClellan replied, "Knowing of her work as supervisor of

the city schools of Logan, and getting better acquainted with her as a fellow student in New York, and knowing of her fine ability as a teacher and a supervisor I wrote back and gave my full endorsement to the idea of having her become supervisor of the training school, which she did in the fall of the opening of the school year for 1932."¹⁶

The members of the staff of the Whittier Training School at this time were:

C. E. McClellan	Principal
Edith V. Bowen	Assist. Principal and Supervisor of Student Teachers and Student Teaching
Emma Eccles Jones	Kindergarten
Helen Roberts	First Grade
Addie Swapp	Second Grade
Ellen S. Humphrey	Second Grade (Replaced Mrs. Swapp in mid-term)
Lorene K. Fox	Third Grade
Wanda Robertson	Fourth Grade
Thelma Garf	Fifth Grade
Lenore Lewis (Williams)	Sixth Grade

Edith Bowen very graphically describes the Whittier School of the 1930's thus:

The old, original part consisted of eight rooms; no storage facilities; boys' and girls' lavatories, which were very disjointed (I don't know of a better word--disjointed from the main building) except for an extended roof. It was equipped with three toilets and a wash bowl with cold water. There was one drop light in the lower hall--that being all the lights we had all over the school--you found your way to pull the string.

¹⁶McClellan, C. E. Interview by Eyre Turner, February 6, 1962.

There were fastened down desks... , an old piano, no chairs for teachers to use for group work, old text books, a dirth of materials, a very old sandbox, and old milk safe that some parents had discarded and had given the school, poor blackboards, chalk, and one small teacher's desk in each room. But, we had good floors! Our pride and joy!¹⁷

Miss Bowen further states:

One of the things that cheered us most, was getting all the school room brown paint replaced with ivory. This made such a difference in our out-look. It lifted us, rather than depressed us, as the brown had done.¹⁸

It was with a great deal of effort that building and facilities were improved upon from year to year. Progress in improving the facilities was slow, due to the lack of funds. Projects, such as painting the rooms ivory, were several years in completing. Gradually, cupboards, places for the children to store their things, partitions in the ends of two of the halls to provide facilities for a small consultation room and a storage for kitchen utensils were made.

Finally, lights were placed in the halls upstairs and eventually in each classroom. A wash bowl with running water was placed upstairs also and the existing lavatories were closed in. A library of beautiful books were acquired.

Much of this latter item was done with PTA help, especially with funds from their Halloween Festivals. The play grounds also were in a sorry state

¹⁷ Bowen, Edith. Interview by Eyre Turner, February 6, 1962.

¹⁸ Ibid.

at this time. They were rough and muddy and lacked equipment. Eventually, lawns were planted, along with some ornamental trees. Playground equipment, along with sand boxes, was added.

WHITTIER TRAINING SCHOOL

Edith Bowen, Supervisor

Philosophies and concepts

The Whittier Training School from its inception broke away from the old traditional practices used in many schools. "Miss Frances Barber pioneered what the Whittier School was to become. She is entitled to a great deal of credit for having initiated and pioneered the movement toward a very fine and up-to-date school, with a philosophy such as now characterizes that school."¹⁹

When Edith Bowen took over the reins of the school she had a good beginning, which she built upon, and expanded, and developed to a very great extent, according to many of her co-workers and superiors at the college.

Miss Bowen shared the view of Dr. Kilpatrick: "Education is Life." She believed "nothing of worth comes singly. The Father designed the pattern. It is for man to discover His design."²⁰ Her belief in these principles strongly influenced her educational philosophy and set the pattern upon which she was to base her educational concepts.

¹⁹Jacobsen, Dr. E. A. Interview by Eyre Turner.

²⁰Bowen, Edith. Parent and Child in the LDS Home, Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press. 1949. p. 1.

At the Whittier Miss Bowen encouraged the faculty to use the resources of the community to enlarge and enrich their concepts of the things they are studying. For example, if they are studying dairying, geology, art, music, science, drama, etc., they would ask some of the college faculty to visit the class and help present the material. In some instances the children would be taken to the college campus. They used the auditorium, swimming pool, museums, agricultural buildings and many other facilities of the college.

Compared to the average school of its time, the philosophies of the Whittier School were rather progressive. The faculty did many things together and cooperated on inter-grade projects. They tried many rather new innovations, such as manuscript writing in all grades (leaving cursive writing to be taught in the Junior High School). However, they followed the state guides for instruction quite closely; actually, according to records, the Whittier did considerable work in helping to formulate these guides.

Dr. Wanda Robertson states in referring to the supervisor of the Whittier (Edith Bowen): "Her great concern was for children as people. They weren't just people sitting in a classroom, either. Each one was an individual. We knew our youngsters and knew them well. We had great sensitivity and strong feelings for them. This to me, is one of the things which marked the Whittier School as being a place that was a superior place for youngsters to be."²¹

²¹Robertson, Wanda. Interview by Eyre Turner, April 4, 1962.

When Dr. Roma Gans and Dr. Jean Betsner would speak of Edith Bowen they would use expressions such as, "All wool and a yard wide," and "Where would you find another person like Edith Bowen?"

Miss Bowen not only contributed but also learned from other people as well. "It is a tribute to her that she could reverse her thinking in view of later experiences."²²

Few people knew how to work with a staff of teachers the way Miss Bowen did. She sold herself very emphatically to the core of teachers at the Whittier. She also knew how to draw out the strength of each teacher. They were free to experiment----and she was there to guide, listen, support, and occasionally interject a suggestion, according to her co-workers. She would not force an idea upon a teacher.

Mrs. Alice Chase, former faculty member and wife of current president of Utah State University, one-time Whittier teacher, recalls, "With my own experience in the teaching of long division Miss Bowen invited me to try something else, which I tried and found the value of it myself. She didn't say to me, 'Don't teach long division that way. Do it this way.' She invited me to try another method, so I learned by myself, with her very wise and understanding guidance, what the best way was to do it."²³

From her life we learn she knew how to free teachers just like she knew how to free children. She knew that teachers couldn't free children unless they themselves felt freedom of expression. In this she was great.

²²Shaw, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, February 15, 1965.

²³Chase, Alice. Interview by Eyre Turner, January 3, 1962.

The children of the Whittier School soon accepted this kind of philosophy: freedom of expression and thought, according to the teachers who taught them.

Mrs. Ellen Humphrey stated, "I have heard Miss Bowen say to little groups of children, 'Now you can amount to anything that you set out to be. It takes lots of work and study. Work is hard and study is hard, but they pay dividends. Never be afraid. Don't let anyone break down your faith in yourself and your opportunities.' I think our school offered that."²⁴

Miss Bowen made every effort to make the staff meetings at the Whittier the kind where new ideas, philosophies in education, and so on could be explored. This type of faculty meeting was torture to some of the teachers, as at times some cherished idea or view had to be given up or at least re-evaluated.

During part of the history of the school, there existed such a fine relationship between the teachers, that Miss Bowen had this to say: "We respected each other. We were, as the saying goes, 'as thick as peas in a pod.' The staff worked together--respected each other's ideas, and even criticized objectively, without any offense being taken."²⁵

Miss Bowen wanted her teachers to become self-directive in the program, to discuss their programs, and to work together as a staff. The teachers were encouraged to try things new. An example is some of the things Lorene Fox did in her social studies class. At one time, a log cabin was constructed

²⁴Humphrey, Ellen. Interviewed by Don Edvalson, February 21, 1965.

²⁵Bowen, Edith. Interview by Eyre Turner, February 12, 1962.

in her room. It was large enough for the children to enter and so some play-directed living.

Her students were also studying about Antarctica about the same time Admiral Byrd made his first trip there. The class followed the weekly radio broadcasts from Little America. They found much of the material then written about Antarctica to be totally inaccurate: as a result, they contacted Dr. Larry Gould, second in command of the Expedition, for more material. Later, when it was learned Dr. Gould would be in Logan for summer school sessions at the college the children and Miss Fox met with him.

Miss Bowen reports, "They (the class) became so interested in Dr. Gould and his weekly reports from Little America that when it was announced he would be one of the summer school specialists on campus I heard a big "whoop!" I went in to investigate and found them so excited over his approaching visit. Immediately the children wrote him a letter to ask if he could spare some time to meet with them. He answered very promptly, saying that he would be delighted to do just that, and so he did when he came to Logan."²⁶

Another example of this type of teaching was the art work and puppetry that went on in Miss Thelma Garff's room. Much of it was almost on a professional level. Many other examples could be given from other rooms, as the teachers did excellent work in their teachings.

Under Miss Bowen, the staff worked well with the patrons of the school. Dr. Wanda Robertson states, "The things I remember about the

²⁶Ibid.

parents were not as a PTA but all of the interaction between the parents and the children and the school. It just seemed to me that the parents were in the school all of the time. We were working together and doing things with them, and they in turn were doing things with and for us. This is the way I like to see parents operate."²⁷

Dr. Robertson further states, "The parents soon accepted the same kind of philosophy that we accepted, and it was this: "We all have to work together for youngsters." This is one of the wonderful things I recall about the Whittier Training School."²⁸

This philosophy, as explained by Dr. Robertson, enabled the Whittier School to start some wonderful projects. These included the Halloween Festivals, the Christmas Cantatas and the Spring Festivals. The Halloween Festival was initiated into Logan City by the Whittier School. Some have even said the Whittier was the original initiator of this practice which now is common to school nationwide.

The Christmas Cantata, which became such a tradition at the Whittier School, has been carried on by the Edith Bowen Laboratory School and is an outstanding annual presentation. Miss Bowen was attending school at Columbia when the idea of a Christmas Cantata was born. She sent the dramatization and music to the Whittier and they started it then. "I only had a direct finger

²⁷Robertson, Wanda. Interview by Eyre Turner, April 4, 1962.

²⁸Ibid.

in the pie after I returned and made it an annual affair," said Miss Bowen.²⁹

The Spring Dance Festivals were held out-doors, and attracted large audiences. On occasions, parents came in and worked side by side with their youngsters----sewing costumes, fixing scenery, and so on!

This type of activity was typical of Miss Bowen and the Whittier School. They made use of the patrons and the community; took trips; and to paraphrase the college slogan--"Logan and the College was their Campus." The things that characterized the program at Miss Bowen's school were the functional approach to the learning of skills, the leadership development, stimulations for learning, and perhaps Miss Bowen's intuitive feelings about children.

A unique activity of Miss Bowen's was her concern for the child after he had left the Whittier School. She would follow his program and upon graduation from high school would send each student a short congratulatory message. In these notes, she reveals the very unusual ability of being able to recall the individual's traits and characteristics while he was a student at the Whittier.

Dr. John C. Carlisle commented, "She was practically a one-man alumni association for the Whittier School."³⁰

²⁹Bowen, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, April, 1965.

³⁰Carlisle, John C. Interview by Don Edvalson, March, 1965.

Following are samples of these notes Miss Bowen sent:

(Mrs. Ellen Humphrey ably assisted Miss Bowen with this project.)

Dear John,

You had nothing to do with the bundle of talents that was given you in the beginning----that is humbling.

But you have had alot to do with increasing them, a hundred fold----this is cause for pride.

You have more than justified our faith in you, and our predictions of how you would use your gifts. May your leadership continue on the side of worthy causes.

Hearty congratulations on your fine achievements...

Dear _____,

We would like to send our congratulations by way of a little appraisal as we know you. Have chosen to do so following somewhat the idea of two parables of the Master.

The sower went out to sow. His seeds fell in many different kinds of soil. That which entered into your make-up fell on good ground. You took advantage of your favorable situation---fine parents, a well ordered home, family connections of unusual quality, opportunity, and association with people whose values have led them into intellectual pursuits.

The second parable which follows in logical sequence in that of the talents. Recorded cases are replete with those who have had a favorable, nourishing environment, but have lacked the understanding of their part in utilizing the good ground on which the seed fell. You, in contrast, have known that you, yourself, had a part to play---which good seed and fertile soil could not accomplish without your effort.

First, you chose to make your conduct conform to the way human beings enjoy in living together, say in a school society. You were friendly, courteous, and cheerful; amenable to rules that seemed necessary for the common good; fair in your dealings; attentive to a task; eager to learn; prompt with an assignment; a good listener when occasion demanded; and you had a zest for acquiring scholarship. In short, you returned from the good seed, "an hundred fold." From the five talents given, you brought back ten.

Congratulations! We are glad it fell our lot to know you at Whittier.

Our love,

Miss Edith Bowen

Miss Bowen could remember an individual many years after her school experience with him. On occasion when she had someone in her classes at USU that she had taught as a young child she might say, "The face and everything else is the same, but the name has changed."³¹ This trait even carried over into the second generation of students----While visiting classes at the Edith Bowen Laboratory School, she paused at one desk "Why you're Patty Daines' (a former student at the Whittier) little boy!"³² (This was a child she had never seen before.)

Many people from the staff of the Whittier Training School attended Columbia University, so it was natural that the philosophies of Dewey and Kirkpatrick would be reflected on the staff. Thus, through the leadership of Edith Bowen, a very close working relationship developed between the two schools.

Dr. Roma Gans recalls this as follows:

The people of the staff (Teacher's College, Columbia) referred with such enthusiasm to the work of the Whittier Training School through the leadership of Edith Bowen. Always the comment, whenever I made reference to Logan, Utah, ----'Oh, they're doing a wonderful job there.' When I was asked to come out the first time, in about 1936, I thought---I just must go there and find out what they have.

To me, Logan seemed so far away from everything, and yet I met people who were so up-to-date who were from there. When I arrived

³¹Thornley, Beatrice G. Interview by Don Edvalson, March 19, 1965.

³²Chadwick, Mrs. Duane (Patricia Daines). Interview by Beverly Edvalson, March 19, 1965.

I was impressed with the concern of the staff, the entire staff, and the staff of the college for those teachers who would someday go back to school, to be certain that every kind of help was given to them. . .

I would like to say that there ought to be a history made of how many key figures in education that the Whittier Training School has sent to other lands.

Dr. Gans continues:

Those of us, who had contacts with Logan, borrowed heavily from the things that were going on here.

I think through the leadership of the campus, and through Edith Bowen, the laboratory school developed a creative format. I always felt that it would have been a good thing if the director of training of all the laboratory schools in the country could come here and capture something that was here. You came to think out, to explore, to experiment, and, of course, you always gave a bath to children in books. . . I still consider this as thriving an intellectual spot as we have in the country.³³

³³Gans, Roma. Interview by Eyre Turner, October 4, 1961.

TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

Miss Bowen brought a little different school of thought into the state, regarding the training of teachers. At a time when most colleges were giving only an hour or two in the training school she felt that teachers who came to Logan should be able to see the child through the entire day and on consecutive days. They should not just come in for a few minutes to teach arithmetic, reading, or science, but they should observe the different subjects being taught and the methods used by the teachers; the set-up of the school; and the reasons for the type of philosophy in the school.

"Some of the teacher trainees were horrified," recalls Miss Bowen, "at their first coming. Some of them thought a classroom should be soundless and a pupil should keep his distance from a teacher. This was another kind of experience for them to see how at home the children were and to see how they conferred with each other. They didn't whisper here, they talked out-loud sometimes when they wanted to find out something from someone else."

Miss Bowen would invite the student teachers to criticize any room they visited. Some would say, "Well, I don't see how the children can learn by moving about from place to place, or by going out into the halls to paint." Miss Bowen never laughed at their ideas or what they thought a school room should be, but rather would attempt to explain the goings-on in terms of the philosophies of the school.

It was a great concern of Miss Bowen's to help to get the student teacher over his stage fright--to get confidence--to become natural with children. She deplored talking down to the child or using baby-talk, regardless of age. "You should talk with the child--shoulder to shoulder," was oft repeated phrase made by her.

"I am concerned," said Miss Bowen, "in getting the new teacher prepared to fit into a natural situation in the classroom, especially for the time they will get their own rooms."

"The first thing to do in school is to establish confidence and have the children know that you respect them, that you are an individual who has contributions to give, and that the school is a place where we live together in friendly fashion,"³⁴ so states Miss Bowen.

She was greatly concerned that the trainees should understand the importance of establishing that relationship and confidence in the child as one of the prerequisites of teaching.

Edith Bowen continued her work at the Whittier Training School, both as supervisor of teacher training and as principal, until her retirement in 1947. She also held the title of Assistant Professor in Education at Utah State Agricultural College now Utah State University.

During her years as principal and supervisor, Miss Bowen wanted her staff to become integrated into the social life of the community--to

³⁴Bowen, Edith. Interview by Don Edvalson, November 1963.

become part of it. Her own social life was very successful and in no way hindered her educational career. She was aware of social status both for herself and others. It was her desire that her staff be on strong social footings with the community. She was a member of several community organizations and also served her Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. At one time she served as Cache Stake Junior Sunday School Coordinator, sharing and giving to Church teachers many helps.

RETIREMENT

Tributes and Honors to Edith Bowen

After her retirement, she continued to teach some education classes on the college campus. During this time she also authored a teaching manual, "Parent and Child in the Latter-Day-Saint Home." This manual was written for the Deseret Sunday School Union Board, and was copyrighted in 1949.

In writing this manual, Miss Bowen has drawn greatly upon her years of rich experience in the schools. She has entwined this with her personal philosophy and added to it her deep religious convictions. Her beliefs and the rich religious heritage she received from her parents have played an important role in her life.

Her interest in books and other cultural outlets began in Samaria, Idaho, and were further fostered when she came to Logan and was able to participate in cultural events in the community.

In September of 1951, Miss Bowen suffered a severe heart attack and was bed-ridden for quite some time. On August 1, 1952, she moved to Brigham City, Utah, to there live with her neice, Miss Stella Young. Miss Young, her room-mate from Columbia days, was now, in 1952, a teacher at the United States Government Intermountain Indian School, in Brigham City, Utah.

Also, in 1952 Miss Bowen was honored by the College of Southern Utah. In the spring of that year the Board of Trustees of the Utah State

Agricultural College "deemed it a privilege to present her with the honorary Doctor of Philosophy Degree."³⁵ It is fitting that she should now be known as "Doctor Edith Bowen."³⁶

For years after she moved to Brigham City, she and her niece would drive over to the Logan Canyon and attend the weekly morning lectures. She has stated, "I wouldn't miss the 11 o'clock lecture for anything." Due now to her years she has somewhat restricted this activity.

Miss Young retired from teaching in 1961, and since that time the two of them have done some traveling (this being dependent upon Miss Bowen's health). California and Idaho have been their chief areas of travel.

At this writing (1965) she is still actively engaged in Civic Music, Community Concert Organization, Utah Symphony, American Association of University Women, and Women's League.

Many of her friends and former associates still call on her when they are in the area.

At 85 years of age Miss Bowen's health is quite good, considering her heart condition. She has wisely restricted some of her activities, and by so doing is able to carry on those activities most dear to her.

It was a fitting tribute to Edith Bowen when the Board of Trustees of Utah State University decided to name the new laboratory school, "The Edith Bowen Teacher Education Laboratory School."

³⁵Humphrey and Chase. Biographical sketch of Edith Bowen.

³⁶Ibid.

This new school was dedicated at ceremonies held on the 10th and 11th of August, 1958. It was Miss Bowen's privilege to participate in these ceremonies.

SUMMARY

In Edith Bowen we find one of those rare individuals who has had a great insight into the growth and development of elementary school children. Her belief that education is life permeated her whole educational philosophy.

She was not a text-book teacher and she encouraged her staff to experiment, to try new ideas and concepts, and to find new ways of doing things. Miss Bowen was creative and had the ability to instill this desire for creativity into her staff. In this she could direct, without being autocratic.

In her eyes, teaching is an exhilarating experience. It is one which calls for every ounce of energy, love, patience, and devotion to a cause that an individual can muster. It also is one which provides the greatest possible opportunity for creative expression and intellectual and spiritual growth.

Life is Miss Bowen's school, children are her deep concern, and every facet of their lives very important to her. Through her untiring efforts and her work with others of like mind, kindergartens were launched as a legitimate part of Logan's school system.

"She has worked tirelessly on curriculum committees, on both the state and local levels, in a constant effort to improve instruction."³⁷

³⁷Ibid

Next to people, Miss Bowen loves books. From her parents she early learned to make good books her precious companions. She in turn has inspired scores of children to find intimate friendships within the covers of books.

"Miss Bowen has the ability to inspire young people to read. She always said children and books go hand in hand. She has lived with her students in the world of fantasy, adventure, and realism, with as much relish as the creative child."³⁸

"In my judgement," said Dr. John C. Carlisle, "I've met no one in my life time who has had more insight into the growth and development of elementary school children than she. Furthermore, I think that she not only understands children, but I think she could aid teachers in planning a curriculum for elementary school children with similar deep understanding."³⁹

Edith Bowen pioneered modern education in the State of Utah. She brought into brighter focus the importance of the child as he participates in school and live in his home and community.

Into the field of Teacher Training, she also brought some innovations. It was her belief that the trainee should have actual classroom experience "To get the feel of things," as Miss Bowen would say. She pioneered the assigning of teachers to the schools for certain blocks of time for their training experience.

³⁸
Ibid.

³⁹ Carlisle, John C. Interview by Don Edvalson, March, 1965.

Miss Bowen was open to suggestions and criticisms, and at times even invited it, but at the same time could be quite critical about trivia or shortcomings of education. It wasn't her nature to dictate the plan for the program of the child. She would say, "Here's the goal, but perhaps you have a better way to obtain it."⁴⁰

She showed respect for the rights of children. In his educational experience she wanted the child to discover his own uniqueness and to gain confidence in himself. Her chief concern was for the child, his world, and his parents.

She was as exacting in what she expected of herself as of others. To her thinking was work--hard work. Work is a divine gift. Work was pleasing, a privilege, and hard. Her drive and willingness to work have helped to make her influence felt, as it has.

Dr. Jean Betsner is quoted as saying about her, "Utah has one of the greatest educators in the country--you have no need for us."⁴¹

⁴⁰Humphrey, Ellen. Interview by Don Edvalson, February 21, 1965.

⁴¹Ibid.

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