

# FEMALE TEACHERS IN QUEENSLAND STATE SCHOOLS A HISTORY 1860-1983

Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Issues in Queensland Education No. 3

Eddie Clarke

Policy and Information Services Branch,  
Division of Planning and Special Programs,  
Department of Education, Queensland  
June 1985

#### Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Issues in Queensland Education

This series of reports provides historical perspectives which will contribute towards an objective understanding of present problems of contemporary education in Queensland. The analysis and interpretation in each study are the responsibility of the author, and do not necessarily reflect views of the Department of Education.

Titles published:

*Corporal Punishment in Queensland State Schools* (No. 1, 1980).

*Sex Education in Queensland: A History of the Debate 1900-1980* (No. 2, 1980).

Titles in preparation:

A History of Assessment in Queensland Secondary Schools 1964-1983. A

History of Education Regions in Queensland, 1949-1986.

Monographs on the History of Education in Queensland is a series also published by the Department of Education. This series examines significant aspects of Queensland's educational history. Titles published:

*A Centenary History of Home Economics Education in Queensland 1881-1981* (No. 1, 1981). *State*

*Education in Queensland: A Brief History* (No. 2, 1984).

Further information on either series may be obtained from the Educational History Unit, Policy and Information Services Branch, Department of Education, PO Box 33 North Quay, Q 4000, (tel.: (07) 224 7834 or 224 6546).

---

National Library of Australia  
Cataloguing - in- Publication Data

CLARKE, Eddie, 1931

Female teachers in Queensland State schools.

Bibliography.

ISBN 0 7242 1605 7.

1. Women teachers - Queensland - History. 2. Womenteachers - Queensland - Employment - History. 3. Public schools - Queensland - History. I. Queensland. Dept. of Education. Policy and Information Services Branch. II. Title.

331.4'8137'09943

---



PUBLISHING SERVICES

Production and Publishing Services Branch

Department of Education, Queensland

Brisbane 1985

Editor: Susan Francis

Supervising Designer: Susan Wackwitz

---

# CONTENTS

---

Preface	V		
Introduction	1	Social factors	24
1860-1902	5	Economic factors	26
Statistical analysis	5	Political factors	26
Factors influencing employment	5	Training	27
Training	6	Provisional school teachers (unclassified teachers)	28
Provisional school teachers (unclassified teachers)	8	Classified teachers	28
Classified teachers	9	Teachers in primary schools	28
Teachers in girls and infants schools	9	Teachers in secondary schools	29
Teachers in larger mixed schools and boys schools	10	Promotion	29
Promotion	10	Classified teachers	29
Classified teachers	10	Head teachers	30
Head teachers	11	Attitudes to females as head teachers	30
Mixed schools	11	Mixed schools	30
Girls and infants schools	13	Girls and infants schools	31
Married women	14	Inspectors	33
Salaries	15	Salaries	33
Pattern of salaries	15	Salary trends	33
Attitudes of various groups	15	Equal pay	33
Official attitudes	15	Allowances	35
The press	15	Leaving the service and returning	35
Parliamentarians	15		
Trade unions	15	1940-1983	39
Teachers	15	Overall trends	39
Leaving the service	19	Factors influencing employment	39
		Political factors	39
1902-1940	23	Demographic and economic factors	40
Statistical analysis	23	Social factors	41
Factors influencing employment	23	Training	42
Regulations 72 and 61	23	Qualifications	43
Demographic factors	24	Employment of married females	43
		Employment of female teachers in various types of schools	43
		Primary schools	43
		Preschools	43
		Special schools	43

Secondary schools	43	Table 7 Unclassified teachers, 1909-1946	69
Promotion	43		
General developments	43	Table 8 Classified teachers, 1860-1946	71
Position of principal	44	Table 9 Employment in high schools, 1912-1983	74
An overall analysis	44		
Primary schools	44	Table 10 Female graduates employed in high schools, 1912-1932	76
Special schools	44		
Senior mistresses	44	Table 11 Percentages of female teachers in primary schools, 1950-1970	76
Infant mistresses	45		
Inspectors	45	Table 12 Teachers with higher qualifications, 1861 -1980	77
Classified positions	45		
Decline in the promotion of females	45	Table 13 Principals (all schools), 1860-1983	78
Salaries	45		
Equal pay	45	Table 14 Principals with a staff of one or more teachers, 1860-1950	79
Married women's salaries	46		
Superannuation	46	Table .5 Principals, 1967	80
Zone allowances	47	Table 16 Teachers in classified positions, 1970-1983	80
Leaving the service and returning	47		
Conclusion	49	Table 17 Teachers leaving the service, 1877-1982	81
<b>References</b>			
<b>Appendix: Statistical Tables</b>	57	Table 18 Teachers readmitted to the service, 1903-1969	86
Table 1 School population, 1860--1983	57	Table 19 Married female teachers, 1893-1979	88
Table 2 Employment of teachers: all categories, 1860-1983	59	Table 20 War service leave, 1940-1946	88
Table 3 Employment of pupil teachers, 1860-1935	62	Table 21 General employment trends, 1911-1933	88
Table 4 Students with Departmental scholarships at teachers colleges, 1921- 1983	65	Table 22 Salaries, 1860-1960	89
Table 5 Examinations, 1880-1939	67	Table 23 Salaries, 1927-1928	92
Table 6 Provisional school teachers, 1873-1908	68	Table 24 Distribution of full-time teachers in State schools, July 1983	93

---

# PREFACE

---

There have been two significant events in the history of women's employment in State education. The first was the introduction, in 1902, of a regulation requiring women to resign when they married. This consolidated an existing social practice which prevented many women from undertaking teaching as a life long career. The second major event was the re-employment of married women on a temporary basis in 1940 which culminated in a provision for the permanent employment of such women in 1969. Hence this study treats the period 1860-1983 in three separate sections (1860-1902; 1902-1940; 1940-1983) divided by these two events.

To discuss the employment of females it is necessary to look at male employment and therefore much of this history is a comparative study. Because of this, much has been revealed about general employment patterns.

The reader is urged to make full use of the statistics in this report.

While specific references to employment of females in technical education have been omitted, parts of this history are of general relevance to this employment. Of the small percentage of females employed in technical education, most worked in the area of home economics. For a history of home economics see G. Logan, *A Centenary History of Home Economics Education in Queensland, 1881-1981* (Monographs on the History of Education No. 1), Information and Publications Branch, Department of Education, Queensland 1981.

Finally, while this study traces major developments of the past into the present, it does not deal with the present in detail.

---

# INTRODUCTION

---

In the United Kingdom in 1851, of the total 9.4 million persons employed, 2.8 million (30 per cent) were females. For most females, employment meant working in factories, or entering domestic service. To many girls and women aspiring to more satisfying employment, the picture before mid-century was bleak. A minority conducted dame schools or private venture schools, or became governesses, this latter occupation being one of very few respectable employments available to educated middle-class women<sup>1</sup>. But it was the pupil-teacher system, an innovation of the 1840s, that was to have relatively rapid and far-reaching effects on the employment of females, and present opportunities for intelligent women of all social classes.

In 1846, James Shuttleworth launched the pupil-teacher system that replaced monitorial arrangements and soon supplied the elementary school with almost all of its teachers. Under the English pupil-teacher system, boys and girls of ability were chosen at 13 years to undertake a five-year

apprenticeship. In return for a low salary, pupil-teachers were required to undertake certain teaching responsibilities, and to pass annual examinations. Those who were successful in all examinations were eligible to attend a teachers training college, and some successful candidates were awarded scholarships to do so. Once at college, the pupil-teacher began a course of one, two or three years' duration. By 1860, there were more females than males entering the pupil-teacher system in England<sup>2</sup>.

It was to be expected that colonial Australia would follow the English example. The Colony of New South Wales, following the English pattern of teacher-recruitment, introduced the pupil-teacher system in 1851. On Separation in 1859, the Colony of Queensland established an administrative Board of General Education and continued the New South Wales practice of employing female teachers and female pupil-teachers.

