



# Looking for Betty MacDonald: The Egg, the Plague, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle, and I

*Paula Becker*

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Betty Bard MacDonald (1907-1958), the best-selling author of *The Egg and I* and the classic *Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle* children's books, burst onto the literary scene shortly after the end of World War II. Readers embraced her memoir of her years as a young bride operating a chicken ranch on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, and *The Egg and I* sold its first million copies in less than a year. The public was drawn to MacDonald's vivacity, her offbeat humor, and her irreverent take on life. In 1947, the book was made into a movie starring Fred MacMurray and Claudette Colbert, and spawned a series of films featuring MacDonald's Ma and Pa Kettle characters.

MacDonald followed up the success of *The Egg and I* with the creation of *Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle*, a magical woman who cures children of their bad habits, and with three additional memoirs: *The Plague and I* (chronicling her time in a tuberculosis sanitarium just outside Seattle), *Anybody Can Do Anything* (recounting her madcap attempts to find work during the Great Depression), and *Onions in the Stew* (about her life raising two teenage daughters on Vashon Island).

Author Paula Becker was granted full access to Betty MacDonald's archives, including materials never before seen by any researcher. *Looking for Betty MacDonald*, the first biography of this endearing Northwest storyteller, reveals the story behind the memoirs and the difference between the real Betty MacDonald and her literary persona.

Watch the book trailer: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Lr6iVK4zWk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lr6iVK4zWk)

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