

# SHE'S THE FIRST ABORIGINAL CERTIFICATED TEACHER

## *A Credit to Her People*

A 19-year old aboriginal girl, Miss Evelyn Robinson, of Grafton, has made history for her race by becoming the first fully-certified aboriginal schoolteacher.



**Evelyn Robinson.**

A few weeks ago she took up an appointment as assistant teacher to 85 pupils at the primary school on Cabbage Tree Island, a small aboriginal settlement on the North Coast of New South Wales, near Ballina.

The eldest daughter of police tracker Sergeant Bill Robinson—for more than thirty years a member of the Police Force—Miss Robinson was born and educated in Grafton. In her fifth year at Grafton High School, she was awarded a scholarship by the Aborigines Welfare Board for further study.

She passed the Leaving Certificate in English, biology, economics, modern history, geography, and needlework.

At the end of last year, she graduated from the Sydney Teachers' College. The Warden, Miss E. Bannan, said: "Miss Robinson has proved herself to be adaptable and hard working, and I expect she will acquit herself well in her new job."

### **Ambition Realised**

Miss Robinson's appointment has realised for her an almost lifelong ambition to teach, and thereby to share her learning with her own people. She hopes later to go to a mission school directed by the Aborigines Welfare Board.

Although she herself knows scarcely a word of the aboriginal language, she wants, when she goes further inland of the continent where her forefathers lived, to discover all she can about the culture, art, and music of her people.

Thoroughly Australian herself in her speech and mannerisms, Miss Robinson thinks her people can be shown how to take their place in white man's society. She is glad that artists like the Namitjiras, and nurses, doctors, teachers, and others are leading the way.

"It isn't easy to get yourself accepted," she said, "but once you do, the white man and the aboriginal get on well together. The breach between the two is very unfortunate, but since it has already happened, the task is everyone's to repair it now."

The Aborigines Welfare Board is now offering a scholarship at Sydney University, and hopes it will, before long, be taken up by one of a number of brilliant aboriginal scholars attending country High schools.

