

# Simple Service ends an Era

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A simple, informal service at Box Ridge on Saturday closed an era of Australian history.

Two hymns and an oration made up the funeral service of Mr James Morgan—"the last of the Dyraaba tribe".

There was no pomp or ceremony, generally extended to warriors and great men, and dress was informal. Yet the dignified simplicity of the service and the humility of the mourners would have honoured any man.

Pastor Frank Roberts conducted the service in the tiny chapel at the Aboriginal settlement. Mourners—coloured and white—came from all part of the North Coast, from Tweed to Taree, and some from Sydney.

Many government, local government, church and civic leaders stood beside the local residents at the chapel.

It was impossible to estimate the crowd. Scores, possibly hundreds, remained in cars parked on the reserve or stood in groups under the trees. About forty were inside the chapel.

*People from all walks of life attended the funeral at Box Ridge, Coraki, on Saturday, of Aboriginal leader Mr James Morgan. In this group, from left, are, Cr H. C. Junor (president Kyogle Shire Council), Ald. A. S. Napthali (Mayor of Casino), Pastor Frank Roberts, who conducted the service, Mr J. Henderson (secretary, N.S.W. Aborigines Welfare Board), and Mr R. W. Manyweathers, M.L.C., of Casino*



## Great Advocate

There was little movement or talk from people in cars and outside the chapel. Nearby two baby Aborigine girls swung on a gate, unaware of the solemnity of the occasion.

An old man sat in a chair smoking his pipe, and a dog wandered into the chapel.

After a hymn and prayers, Pastor Roberts described James Morgan as the greatest advocate among the Australian Aborigines. He had fulfilled this office "to the letter". No man had been greater or more fitted to hold the "unique" position on the N.S.W. Aborigines' Board than had James Morgan.

He was a pillar of the Church and a spiritual leader of his people. James Morgan had been a great moral character.

Pastor Roberts described him as "unshakeable, humble, and God-fearing".

## Near Ancestors

He closed by quoting Martin Luther King: "We are not looking back to the sorrows of yesterday, we are looking forward to the promises of tomorrow".

Scores of cars followed the hearse on the short journey to the cemetery. Prayers and a hymn made up the graveside ceremony.

They buried him not far from a tall fig tree, in country, no doubt, often hunted by his ancestors.