



HER 3-MONTHS VISIT LASTED 22 YEARS

Matron E. A. C. Hiscocks, M.B.E., went to Cootamundra Girls Training Home on three-months duty in 1945, and late last March on her retirement duty 22 years later she was still there. She completed 50 years' service as a teacher/matron and Matron mainly with Aboriginal children in many parts of New South Wales.

Matron is an outstanding woman held in high regard by the people of Cootamundra for her work with the Aboriginal girls of the Welfare Board's training home.

Matron was close to tears while several of "her" girls presented her with bouquets of flowers. In her 22 years at the Home she has been mother to about 250 girls. Many of them, now with families of their own, have returned to see her again, and last birthday she received more than 30 cards from her "old-girls".

A surprise party at the Home on her retirement was attended by church and shire representatives, principals of primary and high schools, and other prominent people of Cootamundra. Also present were Mr J. R. Henderson, secretary of the Aborigines Welfare Board, and Mr J. A. Pettitt, Federal M.P. for Hume, who, like the others, greatly praised Matron for her outstanding service.

She was embarrassed by the just praise, and close to tears as some of "her" girls presented her with bouquets of flowers.

Overcame Difficulties

Matron Hiscocks spoke to *Cootamundra Herald* reporter Darryl Fazzio and said that she had a difficult time when she first came to Cootamundra in getting children from the Home accepted into schools.

She had to teach them herself, but in 1950 she was told by the headmaster of the public school to send all her children to the school.

Now, 16 girls go to the high school and four to the primary; ten girls work in the district and have given good service to their employers.

She paid tribute to the many organizations which had helped the Home. "I only had to mention something I wanted for the girls and the Home, and one or more organizations would help," Matron said.

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Career

Matron Hiscocks began her career as a school-teacher at Burren Junction, and went to Coonamble in 1918. Her next appointment was as teacher/matron of Aboriginal children at Pilliga school in 1922.

She moved to Lismore in 1923, and was appointed teacher/matron of the Aboriginal school at Dunoon.