

Abstract

Reid, J. and Martin, S. 2003 "Speak softly, be tactful, and assist cheerfully": Women beginning teaching in 1930s NSW' in *Change: Transformations in Education*, Vol.6., No. 1., May 2003, pp.48-69.

In New South Wales many young women completing their pupil-teacher training were drafted off to the hinterland to take charge of small bush schools on a salary of about £70. This appears substantial, but it should be noted that bush teachers had no residence provided and were required to board with a local family. The experiences of the governess teaching up country in Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* are typical to a degree, although young women in the bush schools of the Department of Public Instruction were subjected to greater privations as they battled with unruly bush children, loneliness, isolation, low salary, lack of promotion opportunities, and often quite unsuitable accommodation (Kyle 1992: 475).