

# A great day for Beverley Joy

HOW many of you saw a photo in the paper of a little dark girl named Beverley Joy Noble, who is to present the Queen with a bouquet at Boulder on March 26. I suppose quite a few of you wondered just who this little girl was, where she lived and many other things. Well, I will try to tell you.

Little Beverley Joy is five years of age, three feet two-and-a-half inches tall and has brown hair which is plaited for school but is at other times curled.

She is very tiny in all her features but is generally bubbling over with life, except at the times when she feels a little strange in an unusual environment or when she must sit still, when she generally goes to sleep.

But let me start from the beginning.

Beverley, or Owatta, which is her native name, was born in the bush at Kanowna, approximately 14 miles east of Kalgoorlie. She wandered from place to place with her mother, Bovee, her father, Gidum, and her seven-year-old brother, Gadilgh. She was carried around on her mother's back while Bovee hunted for food such as goanna, rabbit, and bardijs.

She never had nice food like your dear Mummy gives you every day. Poor Beverley just had to eat whatever the bush provided and very often went without any food at all.

This way of life went on for about four-and-half years for Beverley until one day her mother heard that a mission had been opened at Kurrawang, about 10 miles west of Kalgoorlie. Bovee came out several times to see us, bringing with her Beverley and Ronnie.

OUR hearts went out to these two little mites dressed in dirty rags which were several times too big for them. They had no shoes and their little feet were hard and cracked with walking on the hot ground in search of food.

One day their father came and talked about leaving his children with us so we immediately pointed out to him the advantages of doing this. His children would be properly cared for, have decent clothes, proper foods, beds and everything that make a little child's life complete.

We also told him that Beverley and Ron would soon be able to go to the school in Kalgoorlie, as we were close enough for this.

That day was one of the greatest in Beverley's life. Al-

● Sixteen-year-old ESTELLE SHARPE, daughter of the superintendent of the Kurrawang Native Mission, tells this moving story of a little native girl who will present a bouquet to the Queen.



though she did not like leaving her mother and father all the new wonders in life that were to be opened to her and her brother soon wiped away any tears that may have fallen.

Our first job was to get them clean, so into the tub they both went for a good scrub and a thorough hair washing.

I think this was the first bath they ever had but soon we



had them out and were putting on clean clothes such as Bev had never seen before. Some little children take their clothes for granted and think nothing of it when Mummy brings out clean clothes for them to put on after their bath, but Beverley just could not speak for joy.

It was the first time she had ever had a singlet, panties and dress that were just the right size for her and the first time that she had ever had shoes and socks on her hard little feet. Her eyes just filled with tears of joy and pride as she looked in the mirror at the little girl she had never seen before. But she had to come away from the mirror to have tea.

Poor little mite, I don't think she knew just what was going to happen when we sat her at the table but as she saw the food being put on the plate her eyes grew big with astonishment and she nudged her brother alongside and said, "Nungana, Ronnie! Myee bullgarna!" which means, "Look, Ronnie! There is plenty of food!"

After dinner there was another wash and then to bed. Beverley was a little alarmed when we took off her nice clothes but when we gave her a pair of pyjamas and a little night gown and told her they were just to sleep in she was satisfied.

As she climbed into the first bed she had ever slept in we gave her a tiny sleeping doll and this last great joy completed a wonderful and exciting day. I wonder what she dreamed about that night

with so many things having happened to her that day?

Beverley and Ron soon settled into our way of life and then Christmas came.

We took the two youngsters in to town to see Father Christmas and they told him what they wanted. Beverley wanted a doll and Ron, a toy truck. This was their first real Christmas and what a surprise it was, when, on the morning of Christmas Day, Beverley found her wish had come true and there was her dolly waiting for her.

This glorious six months of Beverley's life was fast moving to its climax. Soon she was to learn that in a few months she would be going to school.

School! This was a wonderful thought to Beverley. As small as she was she realised the possibilities that lay behind that word and every spare moment was spent looking in magazines for pictures of children going to school.

One day two men came to the mission to see Daddy and just as they were leaving, Bev was called over to say hullo to them. We all wondered just what was happening. Oh, the joy and excitement when we were told that Beverley had been chosen to present the Queen with a bouquet.

Of course we told Beverley immediately and you should have seen her. She could not say a word but just stood there, the happiness shining out of her big brown eyes. Suddenly she turned and ran away to her playmates and then it all came out. The children came running inside to see if this was really true.

Was Beverley Joy going to give flowers to our lovely Queen of whom they had heard so much and seen so many pictures? Yes, it was true.

IMMEDIATELY pictures were found of little girls in other places giving bouquets to the Queen and all was excitement.

Now every day after Bev comes home from school she has to practise for this great day and never does she complain at the number of times she has to repeat her performance, for she knows and realises the great honour that has been bestowed upon her.

March 26 is going to be a really great and wonderful day for this little girl who six months ago was living in the bush.