



Great Pioneer Women of the Outback

Susanna de Vries

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In the 1800s, the first white farmers and graziers making their homes in the outback were joined by their wives, many of whom had no idea what lay in store. Expecting a tropical paradise, these female pioneers encountered instead conditions which would test, and often defeat them; relentless heat and dust, isolation, hostile wildlife, the threat of rape and violence, no medical facilities and neverending, backbreaking work. The outback was, according to the mantra of the day, 'no place for a lady', and yet many women with no previous experience of hardship rose to the challenge, turning their skills to creating homes, nursing, farming, grazing - and recording their endeavours in diaries, which today provide a startling picture of the hurdles they faced. Great Pioneer Women of the Outback profiles Australia's women pioneers, from Jeannie Gunn, author of We of the Never Never, to lesser known figures like Atlanta Bradshaw and Evelyn Maunsell. Building on her knowledge of Australian women's history, Susanna de Vries's book records the extraordinary grit and determination it took to build what many today would consider an ordinary life.



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