

Caroline Chisholm: 'the emigrant's friend'

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Caroline Chisholm features in book 1 of 'Carly Mills, Pioneer Girl': *A New World*. She was known as the 'Emigrant's friend' because she helped to improve the lives of so many emigrants to Australia in the early days of European settlement.

Caroline was born in England in 1808, the youngest daughter of William and Sarah Jones. Caroline's father had married her mother after his first three wives had died. Caroline was William's sixteenth (and youngest) child. Her mother had seven children. They were a wealthy family, but from a very young age, Caroline wanted to help people who were less fortunate. As a young woman she married Captain Archibald Chisholm and went with him India, where their first two sons were born. Caroline spent the time organising education for the officers' children. When her husband fell ill, they moved to Australia for the sake of his health.



Image from the State Library of Victoria

Australia was in the middle of a boom in immigration. People were having a very hard time in the UK and migrating to Australia in the hope of a better life. But often when they arrived, they had trouble finding jobs. Many newcomers found themselves on the street or being abused by dishonest employers. Young women were especially at risk. Caroline knew that farmers out in rural areas were desperate for workers, so she set up a scheme to match new immigrants with honest employers in the bush. She established a home for female immigrants in Sydney, trained them for work, and took them to their new homes. With the help of powerful friends in England, she also worked hard to make the long voyage to Australia safer, and helped to reunite freed convicts with their families.

Caroline was not interested in making money – she only cared about helping people. When her health failed, she eventually returned to England and died in poverty. She is now known as 'The Emigrant's Friend'.



Timeline

- 1808: Caroline Jones is born in Northampton
- 1830: Caroline marries Captain Archibald Chisholm
- 1832: The Chisholms move to Madras, India, where Caroline establishes The Female School of Industry for the Daughters of European Soldiers. Caroline's two sons, Archibald and William, are born in India
- 1838: Caroline moves to Australia
- 1841: establishes the Female Immigrant's Home in Sydney
- 1849: Caroline founds the Family Colonization Loan Society to help people pay their fares of emigration
- 1850s: The Chisholms move to Victoria, where Caroline successfully campaigns to set up shelters along the roads to accommodate people attracted by the gold rush
- 1858: Caroline moves back to Sydney due to ill health
- 1865: Archibald and the younger children returns to England
- 1866: Caroline returns to England with her eldest child
- 1877: Caroline dies March 25, 1877, in Highgate, United Kingdom
- 1994: Caroline is posthumously awarded the Order of Australia.

To learn more about Caroline Chisholm, follow these links:

Links for kids:

[Kiddle's Caroline Chisholm facts for kids](#)

[Caroline Chisholm Education Foundation](#)

A link for teachers:

[Significant individuals - Caroline Chisholm](#)

A quote from Caroline Chisholm

'I never can imagine that Almighty God sent females into the world to be cooks and housemaids all their days' (*Northampton Mercury*, 5 March 1853).

