

The Worst Country in the World: The True Story of an Australian Pioneer Family

Patsy Trench

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"Set against the backdrop of the Australian migrant experience, 'The Worst Country in the World' is not only a great read but a thought-provoking one too, especially for those with links to Australia, which reinvented itself from a convict colony to one of the 'luckiest' countries in the world." Karen Clare, Family Tree magazine.

In 1801 Mary Pitt, a 53-year-old widow and mother of five, left her home in Fiddleford in Dorset to sail across the world to live in a penal colony in a country that was then considered by its recent arrivals to be the worst country in the world. Colonial New South Wales was then barely fourteen years old, an experiment that looked as if it was going to fail. What on earth made her go there?

The Worst Country in the World is a story about the early days of colonial Australia as seen through the eyes of Mary and her family of free settlers. It tells how the country that was originally considered not fit to be lived in struggled to become the 'lucky' country it is now. It is a personal story told by Mary's descendant, an Englishwoman who once lived in Australia and has a deep affection for it, whose own Australian mother reversed the wheel and migrated back to England to reinvent herself as the archetypal Englishwoman. It is about struggle and snobbery, reinvention and revaluation.



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Samantha Smith:

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