

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person

**Entry ID:** AWE0654

## Miller, Emma

(1839 - 1917)

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**Born** 26 June, 1839, Chesterfield Derbyshire England

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**Died** 22 January, 1917, Toowoomba Queensland Australia

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**Occupation** Suffragist, Union organiser, Women's rights activist

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### Summary

Emma Miller was foundation president of the Woman's Equal Franchise Association between 1894 and 1905. The vote for women in Queensland State elections was finally won in 1905; women had had the right to vote in Federal elections since Federation, and voted for the first time in the 1903 Federal election. On 2 February 1912, known as Black Friday, at the height of a general strike, Miller led a contingent of women to Parliament House, avoiding police with fixed bayonets. The women were charged by baton swinging police on their return from Parliament House. Miller reputedly stuck her hatpin into a horse ridden by the Police Commissioner, Patrick Cahill. Cahill fell from his horse and claimed to have been permanently injured. Direct political action was not Miller's only cause. She was anti-militarist and opposed conscription in World War I. She believed that 'those who make the quarrel should be the only ones to fight'. As vice-president of the Women's Peace Army, Miller attended the Peace Alliance Conference in Melbourne in 1916. She also fought hard for free speech and civil liberties. During the First World War, Miller preached equal pay to those fearing that women would take the jobs of men away at the war.

## Events

### **1970 - 1970**

Married Jabez Mycroft Silcock (dec.), they had four children

### **1970 - 1970**

Married William Calderwood (dec. 1880)

### **1970 - 1970**

Migrated to Brisbane

### **1970 - 1970**

Married Andrew Miller (dec. 1897)

### **1970 - 1970**

Helped to form a female workers' union

### **1970 - 1970**

Gave evidence to the Royal Commission into Shops, Factories and Workshops

### **1970 - 1970**

Marched with shearers' strike prisoners when released

### **1970 - 1905**

Foundation president of the Woman's Equal Franchise Association

### **2012 - 2012**

Led a contingent of women to Parliament House on 'Black Friday'

### **1903 - 1903**

President of the Women Workers' Political Union

### **1908 - 1908**

Delegate to the Commonwealth Labor conference

### **2017 - 2017**

The flag at Brisbane's Trade Hall flew at half mast when Emma Miller died

### **2022 - 2022**

A publicly funded marble bust was unveiled in the Trades Hall

### **1916 - 1916**

Delegate to the Australian Peace Alliance conference

### **1916 - 1917**

Campaigned against the conscription referendums

## Published resources

### Resource Section

Miller, Emma (1839-1917), Young, Pam, 2006,  
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A100497b.htm>

Women in Australia's Working History, 2003,  
[http://www.australianworkersheritagecentre.com.au/07\\_education/working\\_women.htm](http://www.australianworkersheritagecentre.com.au/07_education/working_women.htm)

Miller, Emma (1839 - 1917), Elford, Ross G., 2002,  
<http://www.atua.org.au/biogs/ALE1200b.htm>

Family rediscovers grandma suffragette, Jones, Chris, 2001,  
<http://www.thecouriermail.com.au/extras/federation/CMFedMiller.htm>

### Book

Proud to be a rebel : the life and times of Emma Miller, Young, Pam, 1926-, 1991

Votes for women : the Australian story, Lees, Kirsten., 1995

### Book Section

Emma Miller, Young, Pam, 1988

### Edited Book

Australian Feminism: A Companion, Caine, Barbara, Gatens, Moira et al., 1998

200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988

### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Worth Fighting For!, Fryer Library with research by Yorick Smaal, 2005,  
[https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20050708180233/http://www.library.uq.edu.au/fryer/worth\\_fighting/](https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20050708180233/http://www.library.uq.edu.au/fryer/worth_fighting/)

### Site Exhibition

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia

[Biographical cuttings on Emma Miller, suffragette, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

### John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection

[OM64-13 Workers Educational Association of Queensland Records 1913-1932](#)

### Author Details

Anne Heywood

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