



# ***Boosting Brisbane***

## **IMPRINTING THE COLONIAL CAPITAL OF QUEENSLAND**

*This book by Rod Fisher provides a treasure-trove of visual delights – those line-drawings, with related relics and tidbits, which appeared before the triumph of photography. Thereby Brisbane was indelibly imprinted as the capital city of the new Colony of Queensland.*

Situated fitfully on the outskirts of Victoria's empire, this gauche little town made its bid for colonial glory when Queensland finally separated from New South Wales on 10 December 1859. Even then, Brisbane was only treated as a capital-port for the time being, while the southern boundary had yet to be fixed. There were still more central contenders such as Maryborough, Rockhampton and even Ipswich.

In favouring Brisbane, a spate of line-drawings depicted its landscapes, buildings, amenities, notables and activities in the 1860s – particularly in illustrated periodicals of other colonies and overseas, pictorial letter-papers sent to family and friends plus occasional prints. To keep pace with new governmental, commercial, societal and individual demands, more images appeared on seals, bills, ads, maps, stamps, coins, medals etc including a flag, a sword and even a necklace. In addition to local newspapers, almanacs, directories and narratives, the first atlas, gardening manual and ornithology appeared.

That was until the economic slump took the wind out of the sails of immigration and investment – also the optimism and expansion engendered by Separation itself.

This book uses those line-drawings and allied sources to make a graphic journey from England to Moreton Bay, Ipswich and the Darling Downs before 1870, while dwelling upon Brisbane in particular. Through examples and artefacts it also shows how the process of publication, from art, photography, writing and engraving on metal, stone and wood to printing, affected their output. Next come those crafty persons involved in growing the local print culture visually, whether artists, engravers, lithographers, printers or stationers, and then the users themselves. Finally, the historical data on some 400 line-drawings and related artefacts in Australia is cross-referenced to the prior images in a detailed inventory.

*If you're into history, literature, fine arts, architecture, geography, media, technology, museology or culture generally – of Australia, Queensland or Brisbane particularly – or, for that matter, just browsing or collecting personally – this timely 300-page tome fits the bill.*

***A sesquicentennial celebration of the Separation of Queensland, the Foundation of Dioceses and the Municipality of Brisbane in 1859.***

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