



Printed Images in Colonial Australia, 1801-1901

Roger Butler

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This book reveals some of the remarkable colonial works that form the cornerstones of the National Gallery of Australia's collection of Australian prints.

The earliest intaglio prints were produced in New South Wales by a free settler, John Lewin, whose exquisitely hand-colored etchings of moths and birds were published in 1805 and 1808–13. The first views of the colony to be printed locally were published in 1812–14 by an entrepreneurial emancipist and engraved by the convicts assigned to him. From a culture of “making do” in the early decades of the penal settlement, the extent, quality, and scope of print production increased exponentially and kept pace with developments overseas. The backgrounds of the printmakers whose work is discussed varied greatly, with professional trade workers and artists making equally important contributions. By the mid-nineteenth century, printmaking was firmly established in key areas of commercial enterprise, science, architecture, art, advertising, illustrated books, and newspapers. Through the second half of the century printmaking in Australia continued to match developments overseas. One particular high point for wood-engravers was the production of the lavish Picturesque Atlas of Australasia, published between 1886–88, to coincide with the centenary of European settlement. *Printed Images in Colonial Australia* concludes with the photogravure of Tom Roberts's painting commissioned to celebrate the federation of the Australian states in 1901.

The 377 images reproduced here, many of them exceedingly rare or long overlooked, are presented alongside Roger Butler's original research and information not previously assembled to give full weight to the important role of the printed image in Australian art and culture.

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