



**THE
RIVERINA
SEPARATION
MOVEMENT
1858—1867**

J. S. CRAIG

**Thesis submitted as a part
requirement for The
Honours Degree of
Bachelor of Arts, University
of Adelaide, 1963.**



C O N T E N T S

	Page
Preface	v
Chapter I The Roots of Conservatism	1
II The Politics of Fear	20
III The Riverine Association	34
IV The Achievement of Security	60
Conclusion 	81
Bibliography 	87
Appendices 	91
Map of N S W. to accompany	
minute upon the petition for the	
Separation of Western Portion of the Colony	

ILLUSTRATIONS

Map showing Approximate Stationary Boundaries, about 1860.	Frontispiece Following page
Augustus Morris	4
Hopwood's Ferry, Echuca	8
The "Adelaide".	8
Cobb & Co. Coaches	13
The Highlander Inn	15
Taylor's Royal Hotel	15
Salt bush country, Nap Nap	32
Deniliquin in the 1860's	32
George P. Desailly, President of the Riverine Association	54
Thomas Robertson, Solicitor	54
Robert Landale, M.L.A. for Murray	63
Joseph J. Phelps, M.L.A. for Balranald	63
George Hall Peppin	70
William Lang, brother of G.S. Lang	70
Residence of one of Four Conditional Purchases on Mr. O'Shanassy's Moira Run	71

ABBREVIATIONS

Votes & Proceedings of the L.A. of N.S.W.	V. & P.
Votes & Proceedings of the L.A. of Vic.	Vic. V. & P.
N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates	P.D.
Sydney Morning Herald	S.M.H.
Pastoral Times	P.T.
Legislative Assembly	L.A.
Legislative Council.	L.C.
Mitchell Library	ML
Historical Studies of Australia and New Zealand	H.S.A.N.Z.
Royal Australian Historical Society	R.A.H.S.

PREFACE.

In the early 1860's there was a separation movement in the Riverina, centred on Deniliquin. Ostensibly its supporters were objecting to being poorly governed from Sydney, and to a capital with which they had almost no commercial or cultural connection. Ostensibly, too, it was a movement of the whole district, with one ultimate aim - Separation, whether by Independence or Annexation to Victoria, so long as certain specified grievances were redressed. On the surface, therefore the causes of the movement seemed simple, and very similar to the alleged causes of other separation movements.

In actual fact, though, it was primarily a movement of squatters concerned with the security of their political and economic position under the Electoral Reform Act of 1858. Separation of itself did not interest them, provided their interests were secure. Other classes in the Deniliquin district, who did want certain grievances redressed, gave their support until they realized theirs and the squatters' interests were not the same. From the beginning, then, the Riverina Association was not united in its aims, for it tried to combine the different interests of the classes; not only were there divisions between the classes, but even amongst the squatters.

The movement, founded on the aspirations of a class, died when that class achieved its aims. Contrary to expectations, under the Robertson Land Acts, passed by a democratically elected Parliament in 1861, the squatters achieved the security they had hoped to gain by separation. The movement was one of conservatism - a propertied class trying to retain

its economic, political and social position, and it was abandoned when that class found security.

I have attempted to show how the squatters' background in England, with its attendant feeling of insecurity, and their attitude to economic interests, ultimately determined their political actions. My chief sources of reference have been the Pastoral Times, established in Deniliquin in 1859, N.S.W. Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings of the period, and primary and secondary material, much of which was found in the Mitchell Library in Sydney.

I acknowledge the help of the librarians of the Mitchell Library; Mr. Bushby of the Pastoral Times for making the files available to me; and Mrs. Silk, librarian of the Deniliquin Historical Society, for helping with research.