

fying features of his trees. After looking through a series of Swainson drawings one can look at growing trees and see them just as they stand in his sketches.

Atmospheric effects in these pencil sketches are sparingly applied. In the seascapes one can see a grey day with the air full of spray, and in the bush scenes the clearings are occasionally touched with sunshine. Therefore it is easy to discount the age of the sketches and the softness of the pencil and see in the scenes of the Petone foreshore the murky spray-laden look of a Southerly even when the flax bushes stand quietly and the thatch scarcely stirs on the huts.

The more austere sketches, like those ones of Petone, have a look which we recognize, but the foliated scenes are finished in a convention which gives them a slightly woolly effect. It may be that the sketches bring to mind steel engravings from nineteenth century illustrations and by analogy seem old-fashioned and English looking, so that in spite of the towering trees and crouching huts the human figures focussing the compositions look like the Englishmen they were, but on their native heath.

Some of William Swainson's drawings are sharply finished, others are rough sketches in soft pencil. Actual pairs of preliminary sketches and corresponding finished drawings are rare, but if the hundreds of drawings in New Zealand were assembled some inferences could be made about Swainson's working methods. What would be even more obvious than now is how often he returned to a subject and drew again and again the giant rata on Baron Alzdorf's property, a punga fern, or the gorges in the road through the Hutt Valley. It is doubtful if William Swainson's movements could be accurately traced from the dates on his pictures should a representative collection be assembled. There are indications, for instance in the Dandenong series, that the pictures were dated when finished, which could have been after the artist had left the district.

The thirtyseven New Zealand and Australian sketches recently bought by the Library are representative of William Swainson's drawings. Probably when the estate was distributed William John Swainson divided them fairly amongst the beneficiaries, choosing finished drawings and rough sketches and some from each period. He may also have devised the captions on the mounts, and as he was the eldest of the family and the earliest to know the country his titles have authority. The drawings include four studies of rata clinging to a totara, three views of gorges on the road to the Hutt, two stormy seascapes, and views of Petone Beach, stockades at Taita and Porirua and drawings of houses in the Hutt. One drawing, in red conté, shows an unusual cabbage tree in Nelson: dated 1854, it is thus a souvenir of the trip home from Hobart Town, via Nelson, in the schooner *Munford*, in June. There are six Australian sketches, representing New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. Only one subject, the coast from Wollongong towards Sydney, 18 June