

bought two of Hodges's later Indian landscapes at a Warren Hastings sale in April 1797, a month after Hodges's death:⁴ had he earlier bought the plant sketches too? Joppien asks,

Would Hodges have parted with his drawings? After 1778 Hodges painted no more South Sea subjects and there is strong evidence that he disposed of a number of figure sketches from the South Seas, either before his going out to India in 1778, or after his return in 1782, in any case before 1785. If he disposed of figure drawings, why not of plants as well?⁵

Joppien surmises that the sketches changed hands from Hodges to Walton to Tunstal to T. F. Forster to Gough.

Identification of the plants poses some problems, for botanically the sketches are naive. The identity of a few of the plants can be discerned reasonably easily; others can be guessed at, but many have simply not been identifiable with any degree of confidence. Some clearly are not New Zealand plants, despite the label.

I first saw the booklet while researching early illustrations of New Zealand orchids. Of six orchids depicted, only two are New Zealand natives (album pages 5 and 6, *Microtis unifolia* and *Thelymitra longifolia*). The sketches of these two bear a striking resemblance to the George Forster drawings of them in the British Museum (Natural History), illustrated in plates 1,2 and 3,4. Apart from the botanical accuracy, the similarities are such that one must have been copied from the other; otherwise there should be some difference in the angle of view or the attitude of the specimen, but there is not.

Could it be, then, that the other sketches might be identified by comparing them with the other George Forster drawings? The answer is yes. All but two can be said with reasonable certainty to match Forster drawings in the British Museum collection. A full list of the sketches, with annotations and identification, is given in the Appendix.

Was this a bound sketchbook? Probably not. Several of the sketches are not centred on the page and appear to have been slightly trimmed at the upper or right edge. In two instances the brush strokes continue onto the facing page beneath the stitching, evidence of later binding. There is no sign that the missing first four sketches have been torn out, so that perhaps they were unavailable at the time of binding. There is no sign either, of earlier stitching, to suggest that a field sketchbook has been rebound—indeed, if this has been done then the order of the sketches has been altered: although the first ten follow the timing of the ship's passage from Dusky to Queen Charlotte Sound to Niue to Tahiti, after this the sequence of localities for the sketches in the bound volume bears no