

stones, although he later became well-known as a lithographer specialising in nautical subjects.

The world of the illustrated magazines, with their profusion of wood-engravings, was another realm into which he was soon initiated. The earliest woodblocks after his drawings which we have located are direct reflections of his Pacific travels, although others—redrawn from sketches supplied by the newspapers' correspondents, or from photographs—suggest that his personal knowledge was called upon, occasionally, when a Pacific subject was required. But here, too, his broad knowledge of matters nautical was put to good use, and his reputation extended far beyond the narrow limits of this present study. These activities, which he pursued until the eve of his death on 31 August 1866, should not let us forget his continued service in the navy, as a surgeon on the *Berceau* stationed in the Indian Ocean in 1844 and 1845, and from 1848 as a draughtsman in the Department of Maps and Charts.

Until the recent discovery of an album of drawings by Le Breton, and further research into illustrations reproduced in nineteenth century French periodicals, his known contribution to New Zealand art history was restricted in published works to 12 lithographs and two engravings after his drawings. These, with the one original watercolour known, broadly capture the period spent on the New Zealand coasts, visiting successively the Auckland Islands, Otago Peninsula and Harbour, Akaroa and the Bay of Islands from 7 March to 4 May 1840.⁴ The album and wood-engravings do not in any way modify the historical record but enrich our knowledge of his vision of New Zealand and allow a reassessment of his art. This article is chiefly concerned with a description of the newly discovered drawings of New Zealand in the album, a complete listing of his works pertaining to that country, whether extant or not, and their relation to other versions.

In 1977 the municipal library of Saint Brieuc in Brittany acquired part of the personal library of a local historian, Ph. T. Salaun, which included an album of drawings by Le Breton dating from the voyage of the *Astrolabe*.⁵ It has suffered greatly with the passage of time, many pages have been cut or torn out, and only four New Zealand subjects can be identified with certainty. They share with most of the other drawings in the album a vivacity and a spontaneity which is lost in the lithographed and engraved interpretations of his work. An unfinished Maori portrait (reproduced) with a close study of the *moko*, displays an unpatronising attitude to the sitter whose nobility recalls the finest Maori portraits of this period. It is an important addition to the corpus of early New Zealand art.