

William Matthew Hodgkins, 1833-1898

JANET PAUL

The art collection of the Library has been enriched by a most generous donation. Mr Peter Field, Mrs Audrey Gabites and Miss Joan Hodgkins, have given a collection of 230 watercolours, pencil and ink drawings, colour notes and sketches done by their grandfather, William Matthew Hodgkins. This augments an original Turnbull purchase of a group of William Hodgkins' watercolours of Akaroa and Banks Peninsula, and adds considerably to previous donations and long term loans of papers, sketchbooks and photographs from the Field and Pharazyn families.

The earlier W. M. Hodgkins collections in the Turnbull Library have been used and often chiefly valued for the light they throw on the early life and aesthetic education of the painter's famous daughter, Frances Mary Hodgkins. This new collection is also closely associated with this daughter. She owned it. The Hodgkins family believe¹ that she had selected a group of her father's work to keep with her in Europe. Whether she took them with her when she first left the country three years after William's death, or whether she chose the work on a return visit—perhaps when the family shifted house in Wellington early in 1905—is not clear.



Lake Te Anau watercolour 10.5 x 43cm Art Coll. A182:97

We do know that these watercolours and drawings were with Frances Hodgkins until her death in 1947 and that the collection remained in England with her trustees, John and Myfanwy Piper, until it was returned to New Zealand in 1977.

This selection throws double light on the technique of both father and daughter. Frances Hodgkins chose material as a painter: she kept studies, ideas to be elaborated, numerous observations, colour notes, experiments with the media, rather than finished work, and paintings most closely associated with their family life. Places around Dunedin: Saddle Hill, Portobello, Port Chalmers, Logan