

# Illustrations from the Wellcome Institute Library

## The Hodgkin Family Papers

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### Outline of the Collection and the Persons documented

In 1989, through the generosity of the Hodgkin family, the Wellcome Institute Western Manuscripts Department received one of its largest collections of material to date. The material presented spans 250 years and documents the professional and the more personal concerns of several generations of the Hodgkin and Howard families: at its core are the papers of Thomas Hodgkin MD (1798–1866), pathologist, first describer of what is now known as Hodgkin's Disease, philanthropist and campaigner for the rights of the oppressed.<sup>1</sup> At a time when inflated prices for manuscript material have led to the breaking up of many such family archives in the auction room and the disappearance of the fragments into private collections, the Hodgkin family's donation of such a fine collection intact is a noteworthy event. A few other Hodgkin items, totalling perhaps some 600 letters plus assorted other material, reached the Institute through different routes (see the Provenance section below) and have been incorporated with the main archive. (In order to avoid confusion a small group of manuscripts relating to Thomas Hodgkin MD, already in the Department's catalogue as MSS 5680–5686 at the time of the main archive's presentation, has been left there rather than reintegrated with the family papers—the finished catalogue to the latter makes cross-references as necessary). The collection was sorted and listed over a two-year period and completed in summer 1995, the final adjustments to the catalogue taking place in the last quarter of 1995.

A brief outline of the history of the family will help to explain the structure of the collection. The Hodgkin family were for many generations resident in Warwickshire; since the mid seventeenth century they had been Quakers. A handful of documents from the early eighteenth century represent this phase. The first individual about whom there is substantial documentation is John Hodgkin of Pentonville (1766–1845), the father of the pathologist, who left Warwickshire for London and set up as a tutor.<sup>2</sup> He and his wife Elizabeth (1768–1833) (née Rickman; some papers of this Sussex Quaker family are also in the collection), had four sons of whom the first two died in infancy. The third son,

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dictionary of national biography (DNB)*, eds Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, London, Smith, Elder, 1908, vol. 9, pp. 957–8; A M Kass and E H

Kass, *Perfecting the world: the life and times of Thomas Hodgkin 1798–1866*, Boston, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988; Michael Rose, *Curator of the dead: Thomas Hodgkin (1798–1866)*, London, Peter Owen, 1981; Louis Rosenfeld, *Thomas Hodgkin: morbid anatomist and social activist*, Lanham, Maryland, Madison Books, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> *DNB*, vol. 9, pp. 956–7.

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Thomas Hodgkin MD (1798–1866), or “Uncle Doctor” as he was known to succeeding generations, has already been mentioned. Trained as a doctor in Edinburgh and Paris, from 1825 he was employed at Guy’s Hospital as Inspector of the Dead and Curator of the Museum, conducting autopsies and creating a collection of specimens illustrative of a system of pathology. His observation of morbid growths in the lymphatic system led to the first description of what Sir Samuel Wilks was later to name Hodgkin’s Disease in his honour. However, a clash with the hospital’s autocratic Treasurer, Benjamin Harrison, resulted in his being passed over for promotion and he resigned in 1837.

Although he subsequently spent a few years at St Thomas’s, increasingly he gave his energy to the philanthropic causes that had always occupied his spare time, interests centring on investigation of the cultures of conquered peoples and advocacy of their rights, within Britain’s empire and beyond it. With Sir Moses Montefiore he travelled to the Holy Land and Morocco to plead for better treatment for Jews in those areas; it was on a journey to the former that he died in 1866, and he is buried in Jaffa.

Thomas Hodgkin MD married relatively late and left no children: it is from his younger brother, John Hodgkin junior (1800–1875),<sup>3</sup> that the contemporary Hodgkin family descends. The latter practised law into his early forties but then, like his brother, devoted himself to philanthropic activity, becoming a Quaker minister, mobilizing relief efforts during the Irish famine, and campaigning for religious tolerance at home and abroad. He married three times and left children by each marriage. His first wife, Elizabeth Howard Hodgkin (1803–1836), was the daughter of the meteorologist and chemist Luke Howard (1772–1864),<sup>4</sup> perhaps best known for his system of describing clouds which, with a few modifications, is that which is used today. The bulk of the Howard family papers are deposited elsewhere, chiefly in the Greater London Record Office (an appendix to the catalogue directs users of the archive to related material in other repositories), but the family is well represented in this collection: in addition to Elizabeth Howard’s papers there is material relating to her father and her sister Rachel (1804–1837). The wife of her brother Robert, Rachel Howard (née Lloyd) (1803–1892), who was known in the family as Rachel Robert Howard to avoid confusion, is also represented, as is her sister, Sarah Fox (née Lloyd) (1804–1890).

Elizabeth Howard Hodgkin died in childbirth in 1835, her fifth child surviving only a few days. Her four other children all lived to marry and have descendants of their own. John Eliot Hodgkin (1829–1912) became an engineer and a collector of books and manuscripts; Thomas Hodgkin junior (1831–1913)<sup>5</sup> founded a bank (later merged with Lloyds) and had a parallel career as a historian; Mariabella Hodgkin (1833–1930) married the lawyer, Edward Fry (her children included Roger Fry the art critic) and Elizabeth Hodgkin (1834–1918) married the architect Alfred Waterhouse. The descendants of all four are represented in the collection but it is the children of Thomas Hodgkin junior who are most prominent, since it was he who had custody of the family papers and his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who administered the collection until its presentation to the Wellcome Institute.

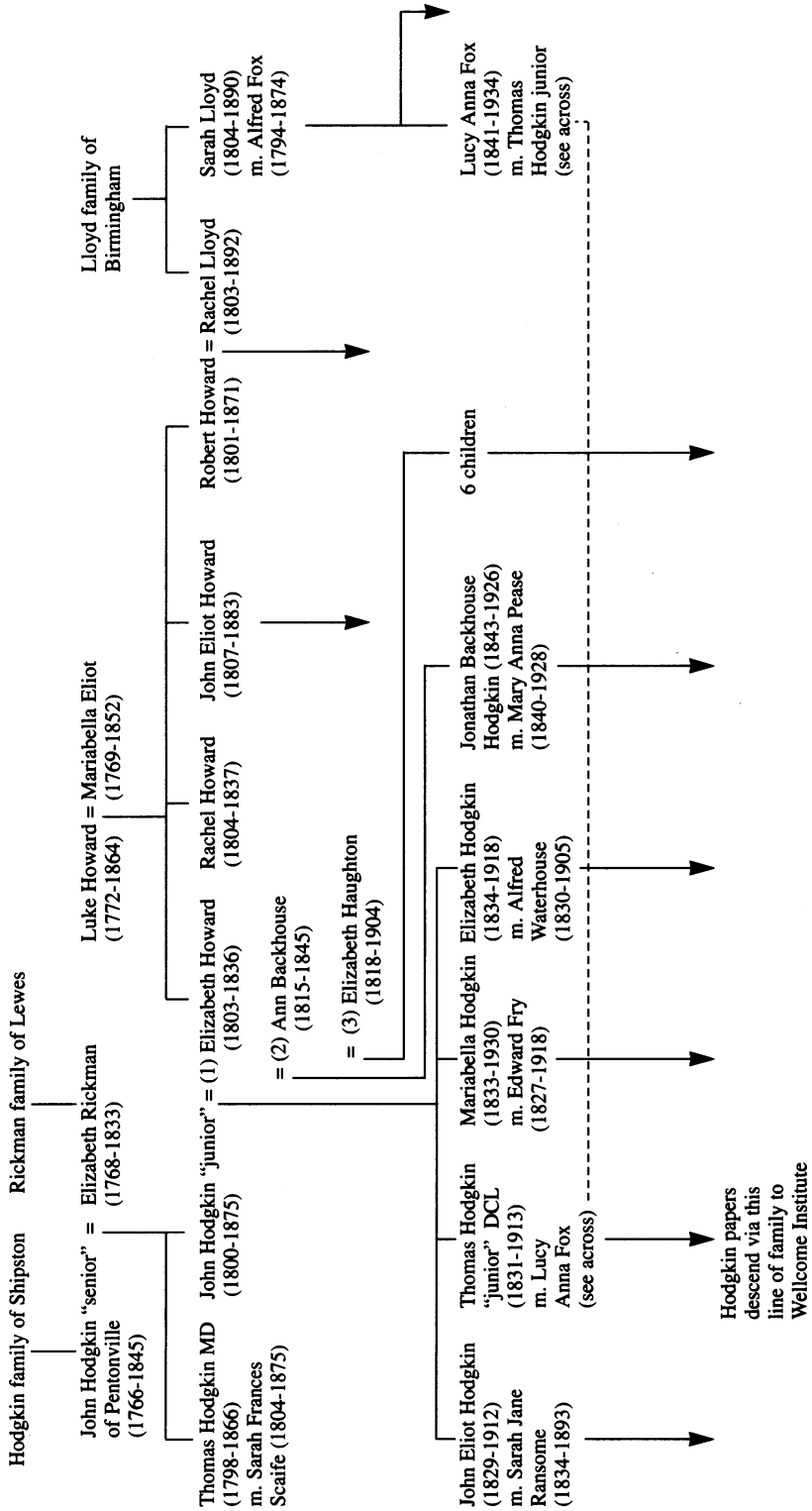
<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 957.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 10, pp. 51–2.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary of national biography 1912–1921*, eds H W C Davis and J R H Weaver, London,

Oxford University Press, 1927, pp. 259–60; Louise Creighton, *Life and letters of Thomas Hodgkin*, London, Longmans, Green, 1917.

**HODGKIN / HOWARD FAMILY TREE (SIMPLIFIED)**



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John Hodgkin junior's second marriage, to Ann Backhouse (1815–1845) (who belonged to a prominent Quaker banking family, based in Darlington), lasted only a few years before her death of Bright's Disease. The one child of this marriage, Jonathan Backhouse Hodgkin (1843–1926), appears in this collection chiefly as a small boy; his later career, in which he married into the Pease family (another North Eastern Quaker business dynasty) and became Mayor of Darlington, is documented in papers deposited in Durham County Record Office. Likewise, the six children of John Hodgkin's third marriage, to the Irish Quaker Elizabeth Haughton Hodgkin (1818–1904), are on the whole thinly represented here and better documented in the Durham collection.

### **Provenance**

The main body of the archive, as mentioned above, passed by direct descent from Thomas Hodgkin junior until its presentation to the Institute. At various points, however, other papers passed out of the family. At the death of Thomas Hodgkin MD, his widow kept a portion of his papers. The close-knit nature of the nineteenth-century Quaker community resulted in much interrelationship which prevented the straying of documents very far from the main stem of a family: for example, the papers of Sarah Lloyd Fox (see above) found their way into this collection (next to papers of the Howard family into whom her sister married) because her daughter Lucy Anna Fox (1841–1934) married Thomas Hodgkin junior, son of Elizabeth Howard Hodgkin and thus the nephew of Rachel "Robert" Howard. Sarah Frances Scaife (*née* Callow) (1804–1875), on the other hand, was not a Quaker until she married Thomas Hodgkin MD; she did not stem from this close-knit society and seems never fully to have been absorbed into it. After her death Hodgkin's papers passed not to the family but to her children by her first marriage. It was some of these that the Institute purchased in 1989, following the death of Professor Christopher Scaife, and catalogued as MSS 5680–5686; seven letters to Thomas Hodgkin MD, purchased the following year (acc. 348317) and now reintegrated, may have come from the same source. Other material purchased by the Institute had left the family at a later stage, early in the twentieth century: the generation of Thomas Hodgkin junior preserved the previous generations' papers consciously as a family archive, but their own documents were not invariably added to this stock. Some are only now reintegrated after several decades in which they passed, presumably, from one manuscript dealer and one collector to another. Four hundred or so letters of Thomas Hodgkin junior (and other very miscellaneous documents) appear to have entered circulation after his death and were purchased from a manuscript dealer in 1992 (acc. 348941). Two letters to his wife from Josephine Butler were purchased in 1992 (acc. 349085). A group of letters to Thomas Hodgkin MD was presented by Mr Edward Hodgkin in 1990 (acc. 348317). Some letters to Thomas Hodgkin MD or other family members had been purchased earlier this century by the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, as it then was, and inserted into the Western Manuscripts Department's Autograph Letters Sequence. These various little accessions have been reintegrated silently with the main archive, since it was felt that it would simply confuse matters if the arrangement of the archive attempted to reflect their slightly different provenance; pencilled accession numbers on the items concerned make it possible to identify them if necessary.

### **Arrangement of the Archive**

Previous practice in the Western Manuscripts Department has been simply to give newly-acquired items the next in a running series of manuscript numbers, giving sub-numbers to items consisting of a number of smaller pieces and giving adjacent manuscript numbers to a series of linked documents. This system is practicable for most of the material handled by the Department, which tends to consist of free-standing items or groups of a few interlinked objects. This particular archive, however, represented a new level of complexity for the Department.

Accumulations of documents relate to a large number of individuals; each of these groups of papers then contains numerous different types of document, some falling into distinct series and others grouped together only loosely, by format or by theme. As a result, it was decided that this collection, and any subsequent similar accessions, should be catalogued using a style similar to that in use in the Institute's Contemporary Medical Archives Centre—and in other repositories where such large and complex collections of family papers are more the rule—in which items are given a reference that is hierarchical in style: which, as well as providing a unique code for reference purposes, describes the various divisions and sub-divisions of the collection and gives the item's position in that structure. A sample unique reference might run "PP/HO/D/A171" (in this case a letter of 1822 to Thomas Hodgkin MD from his parents, copying to him a letter from the zoologist Cuvier to the Quaker chemist William Allen): the first two elements refer to the archive as a whole (Personal Papers: Hodgkin Collection), the third the person in whose papers the item occurs (there are 15 such divisions, lettered A to O), and the fourth element places the document within a broad division of that person's papers by format (here A, as is usually the case, is assigned to correspondence) and gives a unique reference number in that particular series of documents. Within series of documents grouped by format, there is further arrangement by theme: for example, in the notes and papers of Thomas Hodgkin MD medical material forms a distinct bloc (PP/HO/D/D1–D80), as do documents relating to conquered peoples and ethnographic concerns (PP/HO/D/D81–D237), and so forth.

The arrangement of documents thus performs to a large extent the work of a subject index, guiding the researcher to the areas of the archive required. A personal names index, however, will be necessary, to ensure that researchers are able to make best use of the huge number of letters in the collection (over 7,500): it needs to be possible for the reader to bring together, intellectually, all the letters written by a given individual or all the letters to that individual. In a few cases the index will also cover third parties—for example, the names of persons concerning whom a letter gives a diagnosis or post-mortem report—but clearly it would not be possible, without delaying the appearance of a catalogue unreasonably, to index every person mentioned in every letter.

### **The Material in the Collection**

Consideration of the arrangement of the different parts of the collection leads naturally to a more detailed description of types of material represented.

The papers of Thomas Hodgkin MD are of course of greatest interest to the medical historian. As is the case with almost all the individuals' documents, his correspondence

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forms the largest part of the papers, letters to or from his immediate family being kept in a separate series. The letters testify to a wide range of scientific interests, beginning with early letters to his brother in which, apprenticed to the apothecaries Glaisyer and Kemp in Hove, he discusses the geology of the area. His subsequent medical career is well documented in a mass of papers that range from published material to the roughest of notes. The twin strands of his career—medical research, and the organization of medical education and of the profession as a whole—are both well-represented. Of interest in the former category would be, for example, Hodgkin's notes on the constitution of blood made using Joseph Jackson Lister's improved microscope (PP/HO/D/D10–D11), or his paper 'On mediate auscultation, or the use of Laennec's cylinder commonly called stethoscope . . .' (in notebook PP/HO/D/D1), read to the Guy's Hospital Medical Society in 1823, Hodgkin being one of the first persons in the United Kingdom to make use of the stethoscope. The administrative wrangles that led eventually to his departure from Guy's Hospital are also well documented (PP/HO/D/B53–B74). Hodgkin's own health, and that of his family, is a recurring theme: all the individuals documented in the archive noted symptoms with characteristically nineteenth-century thoroughness, "Uncle Doctor" often being called upon to advise.

Hodgkin's scientific interests stretched far beyond his immediate medical career and his correspondence reflects that. As well as exchanges with well-known medical men it includes letters to and from correspondents around the world, on a wide range of subjects; many of these correspondents doubtless met on his travels as a young man. For example, in 1823 he journeyed to Italy as a combined travelling companion and medical adviser to the wealthy Abraham Montefiore—meeting in the process Abraham's older brother Moses, his close friend in later life—and, following a clash of personalities with his employer, remained in Italy, travelling on to Sicily. There he made the acquaintance of Mario Gemmellaro, with whom he exchanged letters for several years. Among Gemmellaro's letters to Hodgkin is one dating from 1833 giving a detailed description of an eruption of Mount Etna in the previous year:

. . . a little after the higher eruption, a second broke out on the Western Side . . . whence, through five apertures it threw up flames, cinders, scoriae and lapilli, and finally a stream of lava, which flew in three branches through the forests . . . threatening the town of Bronte itself, to such a degree that it was evacuated by the greatest number of families, and the movable goods carried away . . . a very violent earthquake shook the town of Niccolosi, where it levelled many houses with the ground, and left many more in a ruinous state . . . This earthquake was accompanied with a noise . . . like the firing of large muskets, or like those clattering peals of thunder which usually follow upon a flash of lightning. [PP/HO/D/A1460]

Another acquaintance dating from this period of Hodgkin's life, the young Russian astronomer Charles Knorre, wrote in 1832 about a cholera epidemic in present day Moldova:

Last summer I spent 8 months at Kichineff, the chief town of Bessarabia—an abominable place—in an affair still more abominable, caused by the sudden death of my father-in-law, who died there by the cholera. He had engaged himself by a contract with our Government to build in that place a cathedral church, which was left half-finished when death surprised him. In England, as far as I can judge from the newspapers, the ravages of the cholera, relatively to the whole amount of the



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On Mediate Auscultation, or the  
use of Laennec's Cylinder commonly called  
Stethoscope, as the means of ascertaining the  
changes which disease produces in the organs  
of Respiration and circulation &c.  
Read before the Physical Society of Lincolns Hosp<sup>l</sup> at  
the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Meetings of the Session of 1822-23.  
The extreme frequency as well as the  
fatality of diseases of the Lungs of which one  
alone, viz<sup>t</sup> Phthisis would seem according to  
the statements collected by Dr Young to be  
the cause of death to more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the  
human race & the obscurity of affections  
of the Heart which Corvisart represents as  
existing to an extent which is quite terrific  
will I hope be considered a sufficient ground  
to warrant my choice of the subject of  
the Essay which according to the regulations  
of the Society I now lay before you.

Figure 1: The opening of Thomas Hodgkin MD's paper *On mediate auscultation*, from his notebook (PP/HO/D/D1 (f.54)).

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population, are nothing when compared to the devastations it produced at Kichineff and other unwholesome places of our country. You will therefore hardly be able to imagine the disorder and dissolution of all human institutions, that reigned for some time at those places. As soon as my father-in-law was no more the officers whom the Government had appointed to superintend the building, fell like wolves on the materials that were scattered around the church and everybody took as much as he could. The watchmen were lying in the hospital; the Architect and many of the workmen died about the same time; in fact there was nobody to stop these robberies . . . [PP/HO/D/A1435]

Hodgkin's philanthropic concerns, and general interest in the peoples of the areas at that time being colonized by the European nations, are also a dominant strand. Correspondence and other papers document his involvement in the struggle against slavery. As a teenager he worked briefly for the pharmacist William Allen (1770–1843),<sup>6</sup> whose Plough Court premises were a centre for abolitionist activity; here he met the veteran campaigner Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846),<sup>7</sup> with whom he corresponded until the latter's death. However, from the first there were differences in opinion between Clarkson and Hodgkin, centring on treatments of indigenous peoples by European explorers or colonists. The older man and his associates assumed the centrality of Christian missionary work to any humanitarian activity amongst indigenous peoples, whilst the young Hodgkin, in an 'Essay on the promotion of civilization' now available in the family archive (PP/HO/D/D99), argued that such activity had proved at best useless, the message confused by sectarian differences amongst missionaries or discredited by their association with a culture that simultaneously forced the "natives" into economic dependence. The early difference of opinion is significant in several ways. Firstly, it is an indication of the stress that Hodgkin laid upon the material well-being of indigenous peoples, as enabling them to co-exist with European colonists without erosion of their culture. Such considerations doubtless contributed to his support for the colonization projects in which freed American slaves travelled to Africa, setting up colonies such as Liberia to act as a points from which more "advanced" economic practices would spread across the continent. One theory behind such enterprises was that increased economic prosperity in West Africa would strangle the slave trade by providing alternative income for those African kingdoms involved in it; they were, none the less, seen as a betrayal of the cause by abolitionists, as tinkering with the evil of slavery rather than destroying it. Here too Hodgkin's early difference with Clarkson is significant, as an indication of how it was possible for persons pursuing the same objectives to end up in opposite camps over the means of that pursuit. Thus Hodgkin's associate, the abolitionist Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton,<sup>8</sup> first president of the Aborigines Protection Society (founded in 1837 largely as a result of Hodgkin's efforts, and into which Hodgkin was to put much time and money over the rest of his life), was in the 1840s to oppose strongly colonization initiatives with which Hodgkin was involved, as an extension of European domination in Africa.<sup>9</sup> Hodgkin's correspondence and notes illuminate the complicated relations between the various societies and individuals engaged in this debate; particularly well-represented is Elliott Cresson, the Philadelphia Quaker and agent of the American Colonization Society,

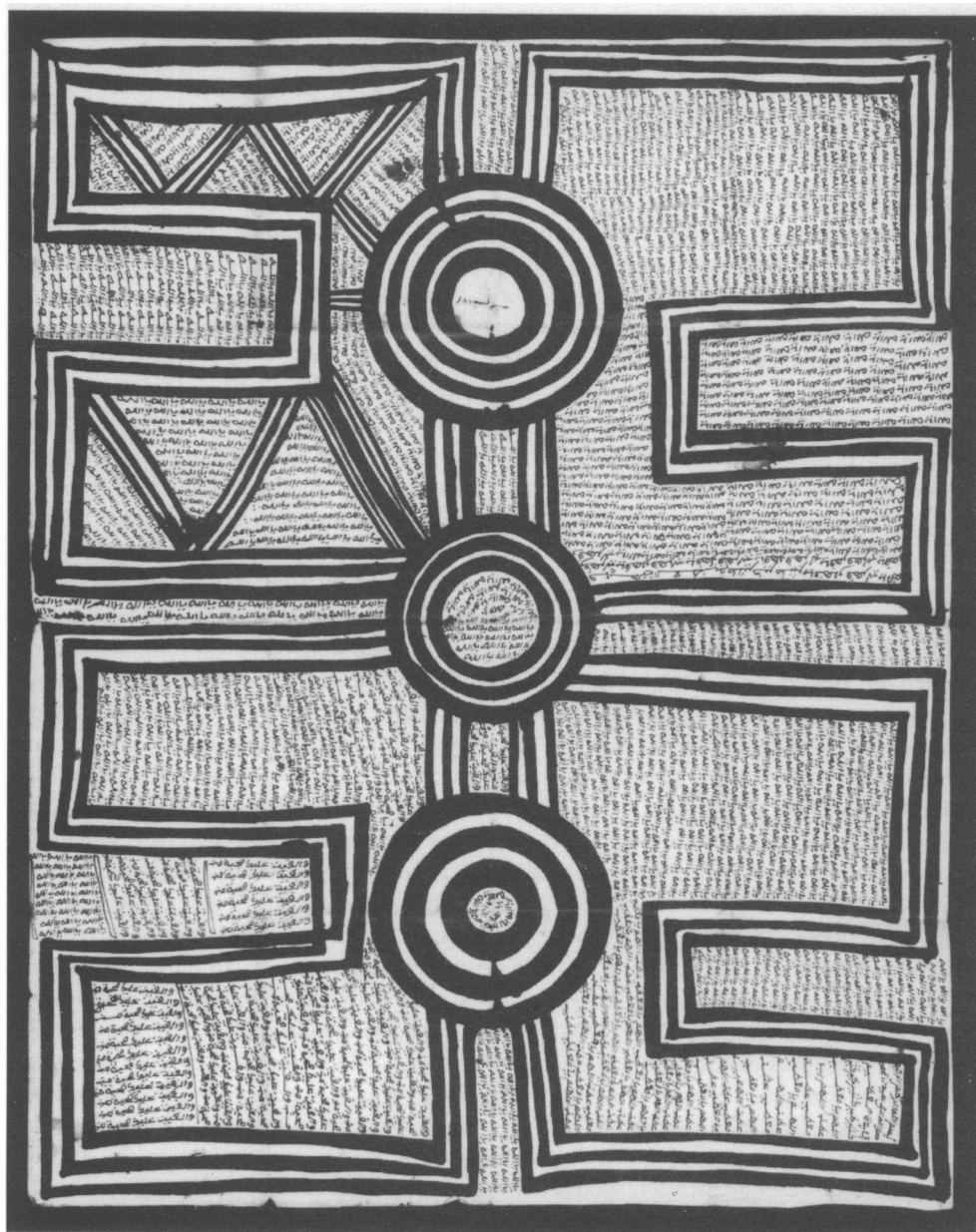
<sup>6</sup> *DNB*, vol. 1, pp. 322–3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 454–7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 559–61.

<sup>9</sup> Kass and Kass, *op. cit.*, note 1 above, pp. 401–26, particularly p. 408.





**Figure 2:** Mandingo prayer sheet, distributed in Liberia by a Muslim missionary in 1843 and presented to Thomas Hodgkin MD in 1848 by J J Roberts, first President of Liberia (PP/HO/D/A2057.2).

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who persuaded Hodgkin of the merits of the Liberia scheme. In a rather sad coda, a group of papers generated by Hodgkin's executors (PP/HO/D/B291–B327) documents the discovery of irregularities in the accounts of William Coppinger, the Secretary of the American Colonization Society, to whom Hodgkin had delegated the management of his American investments, including a legacy from Cresson; Coppinger eventually confessing to "borrowing" money to tide him over a domestic crisis. Alternatively, a researcher might choose to follow up Hodgkin's interests in other parts of the world: he received letters from all areas of the globe, amassing information on the state of indigenous peoples.

There is, of course, more to Thomas Hodgkin's papers than his public activities, and indeed more to the archive than his papers alone. Taken as a whole the collection presents a fascinating picture of life within the tightly-knit Quaker community of the early nineteenth century. Thomas Hodgkin MD and his brother corresponded frequently with each other and with their parents, the various parties discussing their health and visits paid or received, attendance at Friends' meetings and so forth. The impression gained is of a hothouse atmosphere, in which every minute was to be gainfully employed. Later correspondence between John Hodgkin junior and his children conveys a rather similar impression. To the benefit of future researchers, at various times John Hodgkin junior was required to spend lengthy periods away from his family, during which his children wrote regularly to describe their activities. His daughters often stayed at the house of their maternal grandfather Luke Howard at Ackworth, near Pontefract, or at Polam, the family home of Hodgkin's deceased second wife, in Darlington. In 1847 Elizabeth ("Bessie") Hodgkin, aged nearly 13 and just recovering from chickenpox, travelled north for the summer with her 14-year-old sister and 3-year-old half-brother: a few extracts from her letters over the summer will indicate the mingling of improving and more playful activities, and the way in which the letters contain little details of contemporary life such as her accounts of early rail travel.

Past Leicester, 9th [April 1847]

Well here we are at last on our way to Darlington. My spots are not gone away yet but I am quite well. Johnny is very well and good, and is very much amused with the lambs which are much smaller here than at Tottenham. Aunt Rachel came in Uncle's chaise to the station to see us off and we came in Grandfather Howard's carriage.

I cannot write very well, the carriage shakes so but I hope thou wilt excuse this. It is a very fine day, but the wind whistles in by the side of the window. Johnny is sitting upon the arm of the carriage between Mariabella and me. [PP/HO/E/A214]

Seven years later and now aged 20, Elizabeth Hodgkin was to recount a journey along the same route:

Past Knottingly, 4 o'clock [11.8.1854]

... I am glad to be able to tell thee in sober prose of our own successful journey thus far, though the dust which has entered every pore of our skins, & partially blocked up our eyes, noses & mouths would I think have been rather trying even to the patience of the most enduring of patriarchs.

We accomplished something pretty satisfactory in the dinner line at Peterborough & I am looking forward with my usual old-womanish craving for a hasty cup of the beverage w<sup>h</sup> burns but does not inebriate.

I don't feel particularly tired as yet though it certainly seems rather a tedious journey.





Figure 3: Letter from Elizabeth Hodgkin to her father John Hodgkin junior, 1854, written in the course of a train journey north (PP/HO/E/A471).

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Bella pores over her book with most studious diligence wh makes her not so interesting a companion as she would otherwise be. Telle est la vie.

Thy very loving child,  
Bessie [PP/HO/E/A471]

The letters of 1847 continue at perhaps weekly intervals throughout the summer:

Ackworth, 14.5.47

My dear Papa,

We arrived here safely this morning at about 1/2 past 1 after a very pleasant journey. We received thy letter yesterday for which we are much obliged. . . . The trees &c seem much forwarder here, than at Darlington, and it is very warm and pleasant here. We have been feeding the donkey, riding him in the field without bridle or saddle, &c; he is as sociable as ever. . . . On 7[th] day Mariabella and I gathered some cowslips, which we have picked, and they are now in the process of being made in to [sic] wine . . . We have been blueing, folding and ironing a little this week as it was washing week. [PP/HO/E/A240]

In the same letter, Elizabeth notes that “Johnny is making engines, trains &c with stools”: the game of making a train out of lined-up chairs is clearly as old as rail travel itself (without this explanation John Hodgkin junior would have found a reference in a note from his young son rather cryptic: “I ride on the donkey sometimes and I walk in the grounds. . . . I have stools for the train . . .” [PP/HO/E/A247]).

Ackworth Villa 28.5.47

Yesterday we saw a swarm of bees shaken into the hive, it was very amusing to see the swarm clinging in a lump on the bough. . . . we attended a lecture on astronomy, which we liked very well on the whole, though it was a little dry. . . . A few days ago we went to see the foundations of the normal school or (as the people here call it) “the college”. They dig the stone for building on the spot, and they have found several fossils in so doing, some of which, Grandfather [Luke Howard] bought. (2[nd] day) Yesterday we went to the second astronomical lecture which was much more interesting than the first . . . [PP/HO/E/A250]

A printed transcript, of course, cannot convey the children’s handwriting, which evolves from a rather wobbly copperplate in the earliest letters, clearly based on the calligraphy of their writing-master grandfather, John Hodgkin senior, to a more individual adult hand. As the children’s painstaking attempts at calligraphy show, high standards of intellectual labour and precision were set. At one point in the summer of 1847 Elizabeth mentions that their brother Thomas Hodgkin junior is visiting: “We are now sitting in the little library (before breakfast) with Thommy who is writing his translations”; later that morning he is said to be teaching Euclid to Mariabella. “He seems very diligent”, comments Elizabeth (PP/HO/E/A282). His own letters to his father during this period give weekly reports on his studies. That these high standards could grate is evident in the occasional irritation in letters between John Hodgkin junior and John Eliot Hodgkin, his eldest son, when the latter—apprenticed to an engineer in Ipswich—sometimes failed to show the business-like promptitude in replying to letters that his father expected of him.

Through the thousands of letters in the collection the detail of this close-knit community emerges. It is slightly withdrawn from the society around it. Friends’

difference is emphasized in a hundred small ways. For example, letters are dated using numbers rather than “pagan” names for days and months (the point at which Luke Howard and others of his family leave the Society of Friends is signalled by the appearance of names such as “Monday” or “April” rather than “2nd day” or “4th month”); Thomas Hodgkin MD, a medical student in Edinburgh lodging in St Patrick’s Square, dates all his letters from “Patrick Square”, “Saint” being in the eyes of the Friends an empty title; his younger brother, entering Lincoln’s Inn, has scruples over the few pennies of his rent that might go to the upkeep of the chapel and thus of the established Church, and cannot enrol until the issue is resolved with the Inn’s administration. Simultaneously, however, the community is engaged in a wide range of interests and activities, in touch with similarly-minded individuals across the world. As an illustration of one of the non-conformist milieus that energized so much of Britain’s eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social and industrial progress, the Hodgkin archive is a source of considerable richness.

### The Collection in Context

Earlier in this article, during description of the collection’s provenance and of the individuals involved in its assembly, reference was made to related material in other repositories. It is necessary to return briefly to this point in order to set the collection in context; having summarized what the collection contains, to give a brief description of what it does not.

The papers of Thomas Hodgkin MD, although voluminous (over one-third of the entire collection),<sup>10</sup> are not complete. As was mentioned earlier, his widow received some of his papers which were subsequently lost to the family archive (a few items returning via manuscript dealers). This presumably explains a certain patchiness, particularly in documentation of his medical career. Medical papers are here in quantity but significant lacunae appear: in particular, there is very little that relates obviously to the observations of the lymph nodes that were to lead to the description of Hodgkin’s Disease, although a wide variety of notes, drafts and more finished writings on medical topics, including morbid anatomy. Other papers relating to Hodgkin are scattered in various repositories—correspondence with Sir J F W Herschel at the Royal Society and with his nephew John Eliot Hodgkin in the British Library manuscript collection (Add. MS. 42502a), his activities for the Royal Geographical Society in the archives of that body, and so forth.

The Howard family, although well represented, are much more fully documented elsewhere (chiefly in the Greater London Record Office; Accessions 1017, 1037 and 1270), and holdings here would appear chiefly to provide biographical footnotes. However, the archive does make significant additions to the publicly-available material on Luke Howard, in the form of his correspondence with the science writer John Gough (1757–1825)<sup>11</sup> and the meteorological journal kept by the latter (PP/HO/K/A1–A23).

Also represented only patchily are the generations following that of Thomas Hodgkin MD and John Hodgkin junior. As mentioned above, the children of the latter’s second and

<sup>10</sup> Some readers will be familiar with the standard-sized archive boxes used by the Wellcome Institute for some Western Manuscripts (and most CMAC material). The Hodgkin collection comprises 54 such

boxes, (plus a few outsize items), of which the papers of Thomas Hodgkin MD fill 19.

<sup>11</sup> *DNB*, vol. 8, pp. 277–8.



### *The Hodgkin Family Papers*

third marriages are represented more fully in the Hodgkin/Pease papers at Durham County Record Office (D/HO). The children of John Hodgkin junior's first marriage, to Elizabeth Howard, appear frequently when young but on leaving the parental home tend, with the exception of Thomas Hodgkin junior, to be much more thinly documented. This comparative lack of documentation comes in a sense from the same cause as the fullness of the earlier papers: by the time of that generation's adulthood, the papers here described were seen consciously as an archive of the family's history, which resulted in their careful preservation but also erected something of a barrier about them and prevented the organic accretion of material from later generations. Indeed, many of those papers that were added by later generations are directly related to the earlier material: notes on family history or correspondence regarding the interpretation and preservation of the family archive. As a case in point, the branch of the family descending from Thomas Hodgkin junior has, this century, included two Nobel laureates, Sir Alan Lloyd Hodgkin (b.1914, grandson of Thomas Hodgkin junior) and Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin (1910–1994, wife of another grandson of Thomas Hodgkin junior, Thomas Lionel Hodgkin), neither of whom appears in the collection. This later material will therefore be of more use as background information to researchers working on the earlier generations of the family, than to students of its later history.

The conscious retention of these papers as a family archive has involved a degree of selection. Thomas Hodgkin junior's move from Newcastle to Bamburgh Castle in 1894 apparently triggered a sorting of the papers and discarding of items seen as irrelevant, whilst his own death in 1913 led to discussion once again as to what should be retained. Of what was discarded there is no record; however, what remains is so full that it seems likely that what was destroyed was only a small percentage, perhaps chiefly ephemera. One cannot state definitively the extent to which material may have failed to survive because of deliberate suppression; some topics may well have been thought too personal for the scrutiny of later generations. A M and E H Kass surmise that discretion on the part of later family members accounts for the lack of material on the relationship of Thomas Hodgkin MD and his cousin Sarah Rickman (née Godlee).<sup>12</sup> There is evidence of family members at least contemplating suppressing actions seen as discreditable: one note, detached from the item it once described, calls for that item's destruction on the grounds that it documented a foolish action resented by the family (PP/HO/J/D28). On the other hand, that such suggestions were not necessarily acted upon is indicated by a note by Elizabeth Waterhouse (née Hodgkin), which states (à propos of her father's letters) that "The ringworm letter [dating from 1823 and giving details of his gradual recovery from that condition, *inter alia*] should in filial piety be burnt" but remains attached to that very letter, its instructions not acted upon (PP/HO/E/A535). There is evidence that the primary motivation for the selection of documents was to compress the archive rather than to sanitise it: for example, the label to the group of papers relating to the executorship of Thomas Hodgkin MD's estate (PP/HO/D/B291–B327) explicitly stated that the bulk of them had been destroyed, but the papers remain informative on the embezzlement of funds by William Coppinger, an incident that one would judge a candidate for censorship had that been a priority. It is also fair to note at this point that where issues remain

<sup>12</sup> Kass and Kass, *op. cit.*, note 1 above, pp. 318–19.

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undocumented for all the various collections of relevant material in different record repositories, it may be because material has failed to survive simply through chance rather than because of deliberate suppression.

None of these caveats should be allowed to obscure the richness of the collection. For research into the individuals documented (chiefly of course, Thomas Hodgkin MD, but to a lesser extent other significant figures such as Luke Howard), into the medical or wider scientific milieus of the early nineteenth century or into the Quaker community of that time, the collection is a major source and a significant addition to the Institute's holdings. The archive has occasionally been used as a source before<sup>13</sup> but much presumably remains to be brought to light by the researcher. It is the Institute's good fortune to be able to present these papers for study.

<sup>13</sup> Access to the collection has been granted to biographers of Thomas Hodgkin MD. Drs A M and E H Kass also organized the microfilming of portions of the archive; copies of the film have been made

available in various repositories, including the Wellcome Institute (Western Manuscripts Department: WMS/MF/3).