

53 **FRANCES HODGKINS**

1869 - 1947

River Tone, Somerset, c. 1934

Pencil, watercolour and bodycolour on paper 36 x 52.5

Signed

38,000 - 48,000

Provenance:

Wolseley Fine Arts, London

Private Collection, London

In 1934 Frances Hodgkins was living in Taunton, Somerset at The Croft – a cottage which patrons Nancy and Geoffrey Gorer had given her the use of. During this time the landscapes of Cornwall and Somerset provided subject matter as seen in *River Tone, Somerset*. Duncan MacDonald of the Leferve Gallery, St James had agreed to pay Hodgkins an annual income of £200.00. This involved the payment of £10.00 for an oil painting and £5.00 for a watercolour until the sum of £200.00 was attained. Whilst financial depression swept the world, this arrangement was vital in allowing Hodgkins to continue her painting.

When one studies the composition of this watercolour, Hodgkins' recurring symbolism is revealed. Forms such as the abstracted white house in the distance, the pond yacht in the foreground and the tree stump and craggy tree in the central ground are used to great effect. These elements combine to give both a sense of tranquillity (sailing pond yachts) and tension (tree trunk dissecting the peaceful landscape). Hodgkins always looked for a composition which would challenge her eye whilst conveying something of the surrounding landscape. *River Tone, Somerset* is a fine example of the artist's attitude and work of this period.

