



Charles Blomfield. *White Terrace*. 1897 Oil on canvas, 81.5 x 133cm. Auckland City Art Gallery, presented by D. L. Murdoch, Esq

and Valentine exposed his wonderful series of views.

Early in the stay Blomfield wrote requesting 'five or six of my cards', and 'also a piece of transferring paper, black one side and dark green the other, on my shelf near the hole in the chimney'.¹⁰ Regular groups of tourists encountered him at work painting the terraces, and this is where he received his first orders. The request for transferring paper indicates that he may have begun his production of replicas while still in the Hot Lakes district.

Seven of the 'originals' were hung among the loan works at the April exhibition. The *Star* reviewer wrote: 'The Rotomahana studies demand the first notice . . . These were all painted on the spot, with the object of getting the tints as true to nature as paint could make them. They were mostly rough, and would require to be worked up with care'.¹¹ That Blomfield was indeed working them up with care is revealed by his 'Picture Sales', where he lists the names of the clients throughout the world who were receiving terrace pictures. His greatest coup was the inclusion of fourteen Rotomahana canvases in London's Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886. These were on display when Tarawera erupted, destroying the terraces. The paintings sold for a total of 180 guineas, and resulted in yet more orders for replicas.

Despite occasional critical disparagement of his 'panorama-work', most newspaper commentary of the 1880s was supportive of what was seen as a patriotic activity. Here is the *Herald* commenting on several Rotomahana views on display in a Queen Street shop window in September 1885.