
Finding aid to Franciscan Missions of California Photographs by Watkins, circa 1876-1882

Processed by Chris McDonald.

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Collection number: BANC PIC 1972.008--ffALB

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Finding Aid Author(s):
Processed by Chris McDonald.
Finding Aid Encoded By:
GenX

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: Franciscan Missions of California Photographs

Date (inclusive): circa 1876-1882

Collection Number: BANC PIC 1972.008--ffALB

Creator: Watkins, C. E.

Extent: 1 album of 35 albumen photographic prints; images measure 8 1/2 x 12 in., mounted to 13 1/4 x 18 1/4 in. 35 digital objects

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Languages Represented: Collection materials are in English

Access

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Franciscan Missions of California Photographs by Watkins, BANC PIC 1972.008--ffALB, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Digital Representations Available

Digital representations of selected original pictorial materials are available in the list of materials below. Digital image files were prepared from selected Library originals by the Library Photographic Service. Library originals were copied onto 35mm color transparency film; the film was scanned and transferred to Kodak Photo CD (by Custom Process); and the Photo CD files were color-corrected and saved in JFIF (JPEG) format for use as viewing files.

Related Material

The Bancroft Library has a large collection of work by Carleton E. Watkins. Search the pictorial file under Watkins for additional listings.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 1905.17175--PIC :

Title: Hearst Mining collection of views by C.E. Watkins.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 19xx.197--PIC :

Title: Photographic views of the Golden Feather and Golden Gate Mining Claims by Carleton E. Watkins.

Some of the photographs in this series are also included in the Hearst Mining collection of views.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 19xx.194--PIC :

Title: Photographs of the Mariposa Estate and Environs by Carleton E. Watkins.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 1974.019--PIC :

Title: Photographic Views of El Verano and vicinity, Sonoma Valley, California. Photographed by Carleton E. Watkins.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 19xx.198--PIC :

Title: California Scenes [1860's - 70's] by Carleton E. Watkins.

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 19xx.199--PIC :

Title: Photographs of Yosemite and Oregon by Carleton E. Watkins.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog
Watkins, Carleton E., 1829-1916.

California Heritage Project. CU-BANC

Online Archive of California.

Spanish mission buildings -- California -- Photographs.

Watkins' new series.

Albumen prints.

Photograph albums.

Acquisition Information

The Franciscan Missions of California collection was purchased in 1972.

Biography

Carleton E. Watkins was born in Oneonta, Oswego county, New York, on November 11, 1829. He was the youngest of five children of a Scottish innkeeper. During his youth he became acquainted with Collis P. Huntington, who frequented his father's hotel. Soon after the discovery of gold, both young men went to California, where Huntington later became one of the Big Four who built the Central Pacific Railroad.

In 1854, while working as a clerk in a store on Montgomery Street, Watkins met R. H. Vance, the daguerreotypist who had studios in San Francisco, San Jose and Sacramento. The employee at Vance's San Jose studio had suddenly quit and Vance asked Watkins if he would fill in until a permanent replacement could be found. Although he knew nothing of photographic processes, Watkins agreed. For the first few days he was simply the care-taker of the studio, but when Vance could not find a new operator, he instructed Watkins in coating the daguerreotype plates and making exposures. With only the briefest instructions, Watkins was able to make portraits and completely operated the gallery for a short period. In 1857 or 1858 Watkins returned to San Francisco where he established his own photographic studio for portraits and view photography. Watkins usually spent a large portion of the summer traveling throughout California, leaving his gallery and studio in the hands of an assistant. In 1858 or 1859 he visited the Mariposa Grove and was the first person to photograph the Grizzly Giant. In 1861, Watkins visited the Yosemite Valley and made the first 18" x 22" landscape photographs in California (and possibly the world). He made many more trips to Yosemite during the 1860's and 1870's.

In 1868 Watkins made his first trip to Oregon, where he made the first photographic reproductions of the Columbia River. Five years later, Watkins went to Utah with his wagon, team and photographic equipment on railroad cars. Thanks to his friend Collis P. Huntington, he traveled free. He was accompanied on this trip by close friend and artist William Keith, who

made extensive use of Watkins' photographs for many of his oil paintings.

During the winter of 1871-72, Watkins expanded his San Francisco gallery (the Yosemite Gallery), which put an extra strain on his finances. When the Bank of California went under in 1874, Watkins lost his Yosemite Art Galley to competitors J.J. Cook and I.W. Taber. Not only did his competitors take over his Gallery, they took all of his negatives as well. Watkins then began the task of rebuilding his collection, which meant rephotographing many of the sites he had visited earlier in his career. Watkins' New Series of views replaced those lost in the foreclosure. Watkins did become reassociated with the Yosemite Gallery, first as a photographer, and later as manager, but never as the owner.

Watkins went to the Comstock Lode, near Virginia City, Nevada, in 1876. Here he made many of the photographs that comprise the Hearst Collection. It was probably during this trip that he met Frances Sneed, who later managed his Montgomery Street studio and became his wife on November 11, 1880 (Watkins' fiftieth birthday). They had two children : a daughter, Julia and a son, Collis.

In 1880, Watkins went to Southern California for the first time and traveled along the line of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Later he went to the End of the Track and as far as Tombstone Arizona. The photographs taken by Watkins on this trip represent some of the earliest views of San Bernardino, San Gabriel, Pasadena, Los Angeles and San Diego. On the way back to San Francisco, he followed the old overland stage road, traveling the greater part of the way in his wagon and photographing most of the Franciscan missions. These pictures constitute the earliest photographic collection of California Missions.

On a second trip to the Northwest in 1890, Watkins made a series of stereoscopic views in Victoria, B. C. He extended this trip into Montana where he made 18" x 22" views of the Anaconda copper mines and other properties. His last large commercial job and long country trip was to photograph the development work of the Kern County Land Company near Bakersfield. He made seven hundred views using 8" x 10" dry plate negatives. In the late 1890's, Watkins began to photograph the Hearst Hacienda near Pleasanton for Phoebe Apperson Hearst, but ill health prevented him from completing the assignment.

Watkins was in the process of negotiating with Stanford University for the sale of his plates, photographs, etc. when the 1906 earthquake struck San Francisco. By this time, Watkins was partially blind, in poor health and experiencing financial difficulties. He had been living with his family in his studio on the top floor of a building on the southeast corner of Ninth and Market Streets. Immediately following the quake, Watkins' wife and daughter went to the refugee camp at the Presidio. Watkins was lead by his son to the home of his old friend, C. B. Turrill, who had assisted Watkins financially in the past. Watkins' entire collection was destroyed in the fire which followed the quake. He was shocked by the loss of his life's work and shortly thereafter retired to his small ranch near Capay in Yolo County. The ranch had been deeded to Watkins through the offices of Collis P. Huntington of the Southern Pacific Railroad for his faithful, but unpaid, service to the railroad.

Watkins never recovered from the shock of losing his entire collection in the San Francisco fire. He managed to live at the ranch with his family until it became necessary to have him committed to the Napa State Hospital at Imola, California in 1910. He died on June 23, 1916 at the age of eighty-seven and was buried on the hospital grounds.

From *The Early Pacific Coast Photographs of Carleton E. Watkins*, by J. W. Johnson, Professor of Hydraulic Engineering, University of California Berkeley; and *The Life and Photography of Carleton E. Watkins*, by Peter E. Palmquist.

Scope and Content

The Franciscan Missions of California album contains 35 albumen prints taken by Carleton E. Watkins circa 1876-1882. Watkins probably began photographing the missions while returning from a trip to Southern California in 1876, during which he also photographed scenes along the newly constructed Southern Pacific Railroad line. The album is believed to be the earliest general photographic collection produced of the California Missions, and includes photographs of most of the missions found in the state.

The captions include the name of the mission pictured, its location, the date of its establishment, as well as the series name--Watkins' New Series--and the photograph number within the series.


Mission, San Diego. San Diego County, California, established July 16th, 1769.

BANC PIC 1972.008:01--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf409nb6m7>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1201

Mission, San Diego. San Diego County, California, established July 16th, 1769. From the rear, looking down the valley. BANC PIC 1972.008:02--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf067nb3nc>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1202

Mission, San Diego. San Diego County, California, established July 16th, 1769. From the east side. BANC PIC 1972.008:03--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf167nb4pp>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1203

Olive and Palm Orchard. San Diego Mission. BANC PIC 1972.008:04--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0489p09s>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1204

Mission, San Louis Rey de Francia. San Diego County, California, established June 13th, 1798. BANC PIC 1972.008:05--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf1m3nb47k>

Additional Note

No. 1205

Mission, San Louis Rey de Francia. San Diego County, California, established June 13th, 1798. BANC PIC 1972.008:06--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf5g5011gg>

Additional Note

No. 1206

Mission, San Louis Rey de Francia. San Diego County, California, established June 13th, 1798. BANC PIC 1972.008:07--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf8489p5sx>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1207

Mission, San Louis Rey de Francia. San Diego County, California, established June 13th, 1798. From the north. BANC PIC 1972.008:08--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf6g5010pd>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1208

Mission, San Juan Capistrano. Los Angeles County, California, established Nov. 1st, 1776. BANC PIC 1972.008:09--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf967nc0gk>


Additional Note

No. 1209

Mission, San Juan Capistrano. Los Angeles County, California, established Nov. 1st, 1776. BANC PIC 1972.008:10--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0k4007cg>

Additional Note

No. 1210

Mission, San Juan Capistrano. Los Angeles County, California, established Nov. 1st, 1776. View from the west. BANC PIC 1972.008:11--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0h4nb3vf>


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1211

Mission, San Gabriel. Los Angeles County, California, established September 8th, 1771. BANC PIC 1972.008:12--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0q2nb3w8>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1212

Mission, San Gabriel. Los Angeles County, California, established September 8th, 1771. From residence of Mr. Howard, with date palm. BANC PIC 1972.008:13--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf8n39p6d0>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1213

Mission, San Fernando Rey. Los Angeles County, California, established Sept. 8th, 1797. BANC PIC 1972.008:14--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf8t1nb9fk>


Additional Note

No. 1214

Mission, San Fernando Rey. Los Angeles County, California, established Sept. 8th, 1797. BANC PIC 1972.008:15--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf367nb62z>

Additional Note

No. 1215

Mission, San Fernando Rey. Los Angeles County, California, established September 8th, 1797. General view from the east. BANC PIC 1972.008:16--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf6t1nb8dz>


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1216

Mission, San Buenaventura. Ventura County, California, established March 31st, 1782. BANC PIC 1972.008:17--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf7s2011z9>


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1217

Mission, San Buenaventura. Ventura County, California, established March 31st, 1782. View from the west. BANC PIC 1972.008:18--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf9q2nb9wz>


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1218

Mission, San Buenaventura. Ventura County, California, established March 31st, 1782. General view from the rear. BANC PIC 1972.008:19--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf3k4009jz>


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1219

Mission, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara County, California, established December 4, 1786. BANC PIC 1972.008:20--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf7n39p5hr](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf7n39p5hr)


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1221

Mission, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara County, California, established December 4, 1786. View from olive orchard, looking north. BANC PIC 1972.008:21--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf9x0nc07j](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf9x0nc07j)


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1222

Mission, Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara County, California, established December 4, 1786. View looking west. BANC PIC 1972.008:22--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf709nb8nn](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf709nb8nn)


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1223

Mission, Santa Ynez. Santa Barbara County, California, established September 17th, 1804. BANC PIC 1972.008:23--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf95801373](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf95801373)

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1224

Mission, Santa Ynez. Santa Barbara County, California, established September 17th, 1804. BANC PIC 1972.008:24--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf0r29p0g9](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf0r29p0g9)

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1225

Mission, San Luis Obispo. San Luis Obispo County, California, established September 1st, 1772. BANC PIC 1972.008:25--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf5c6010s0](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf5c6010s0)


Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1226

Mission, San Luis Obispo. San Luis Obispo County, California, established Sept. 1st, 1772. General view, looking north. BANC PIC 1972.008:26--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf7g50123w](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf7g50123w)

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1227

Mission, San Miguel. San Luis Obispo County, California, established July 25th, 1797. General view, looking north. BANC PIC 1972.008:27--ffALB  [ark:/13030/tf5r29p3wh](https://nnparks.ark:/13030/tf5r29p3wh)

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series
No. 1228

Mission, San Miguel. San Luis Obispo County, California, established July 25th, 1797.


BANC PIC 1972.008:28--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf3j49p299>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1229


Mission, San Antonio de Padua. Monterey County, California, established July 14th,

1771. BANC PIC 1972.008:29--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0c6007n9>

Additional Note

No. 1230

Mission, San Antonio de Padua. Monterey County, California, established July 14th,

1771. BANC PIC 1972.008:30--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0m3nb478>

Additional Note

No. 1231

Mission, San Carlos del Carmelo. Monterey County, California, established June 3d,

1770. View looking west, with glimpse of Carmel Bay. BANC PIC 1972.008:31--ffALB 

<ark:/13030/tf858012m0>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1233.

Mission, San Juan Bautista. San Benito County, established June 24th, 1797.

BANC PIC 1972.008:32--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf5v19p43r>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1234

Mission, Santa Clara. Santa Clara County, California, established Jan. 18th, 1777.


BANC PIC 1972.008:33--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf2p300812>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1235

Mission, San Francisco de Asis. San Francisco County, California, established Oct. 14th,

1776. BANC PIC 1972.008:34--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf5v19p448>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1236

Mission, San Jose. Alameda County, California, established June 11th, 1797.

BANC PIC 1972.008:35--ffALB  <ark:/13030/tf0w1007sn>

Additional Note

Watkins' New Series

No. 1237