Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1865-ca. 1880

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Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1865-ca. 1880

Collection number: BANC PIC 19xx.106--STER

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Collection Summary
Collection Title: Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins
Date (inclusive): ca. 1865-ca. 1880
Collection Number: BANC PIC 19xx.106--STER
Photographer: Carleton E. Watkins
Extent: 75 stereographs; 9 x 18 cm.76 digital objects
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Acquisition Information
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 1860s and 1870s.

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 led 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.
Scope and Content
The Stereo Views of the West photograph collection consists of 75 stereographs taken by Carleton E. Watkins from circa 1865 to circa 1880. The photographs are arranged by and numbered with Watkins' series number. The collection includes views from the following series: "Watkins' New Series," "Watkins' Pacific Coast" views and "Watkins Central Pacific Railroad" views. Miscellaneous scenes of California and the West include views of San Francisco, Yosemite, San Mateo, Santa Monica, Mount Shasta and the Farallone Islands.

Printed captions are reprinted in the container listing. Captions in parentheses appear in manuscript on the stereographs. Captions in brackets have been supplied.

[Yosemite Falls, 2630 ft] ["North Bloomfield" on verso] BANC PIC 19xx.106:06--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 6
Photographer's series: [Watkins Yo-Semite]

Long Ravine Bridge from below, 120 feet high. BANC PIC 19xx.106:42--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 42

The foot of the Vernal Fall. BANC PIC 19xx.106:67--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 67
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

The Lake BANC PIC 19xx.106:68--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 68
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

River View below the Vernal Fall. BANC PIC 19xx.106:75--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 75
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Castle Peak from Grant's Butte, Western Summit. BANC PIC 19xx.106:113--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 113
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

At the Hacienda, New Almaden. BANC PIC 19xx.106:127--STER
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 127
Photographer's series: C. E. Watkins, Pacific Coast.
Meadow Lake, 6,800 elevation. Knickerbocker Hill and Old Man Mountain.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:180--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 180  
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

Summits of Sierras, 8,000 to 10,000 feet altitude  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:187--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 187  
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Railroad

Tunnel No. 3, above Cisco.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:218--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 218  
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

Piute Squaws and Children, at Reno.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:282--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 282  
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

Winnemucca Depot, 334 miles from Sacramento.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:319--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 319  
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

Advance of Civilization, Scene on the Humboldt Desert.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:322--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 322  
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Railroad

Shoshone Indians, Ten Mile Canyon  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:342--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 342  
Photographer's series: Central Pacific Railroad

At Mr. Hartshorn's, San Francisco.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:512--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 512  
Photographer's series: C. E. Watkins, Pacific Coast.

[City from Rincon Hill]  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:521--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 521  
Photographer's series: [Watkins San Francisco]
Container Listing

**Fort Point, from Black Point, San Francisco.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:946--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 946
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

**Mirror View, Three Brothers, Yosemite Valley, Mariposa County, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1016--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1016
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Cascade between the Vernal and Nevada Falls, Yosemite Valley, Mariposa County, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1083--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1083
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Tutocanula Pass, Yosemite Valley, Mariposa County, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1091--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1091
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Mount Starr King, Yosemite Valey, Mariposa County, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1116--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1116
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Galen's Hospice, Mariposa Grove, Mariposa County, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1168--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1168
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Pullman's Palace Commissary Car** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1536--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1536
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Railroad

**Mt. Shasta, view from the North-East, Siskiyou Co., Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1539--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1539
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

**Mt. Shasta, view from the North. Siskiyou Co., Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1543--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1543
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

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**Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1865-ca. 1880** BANC PIC 19xx.106--STER

6
Shasta Peak from near the Summit, Siskiyou Co., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1546--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1546
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Shasta Peak from near the Summit, Siskiyou County, Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1546--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1546
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Shasta Peak from near the Summit, Siskiyou Co., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1549--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1549
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Shasta Peak and Glacier, Siskiyou Co., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1550--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1550
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Glacier on Mt. Shasta. Siskiyou County, Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1551--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1551
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Glacier on Mt. Shasta. Siskiyou Co., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1552--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1552
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

Hot Spring on Lassen's Butte Siskiyou County, Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1564--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1564
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

The Geyser Canon, from near the Hotel, Sonoma Co., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:1570--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1570
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast
**Calvary Church, Geary and Powell Sts.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1712--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf7489p35b](ark:/13030/tf7489p35b)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1712
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**The Plaza, Mare Island.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:1873--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf5w1008w7](ark:/13030/tf5w1008w7)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 1873
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Shubric Point, Farallone Islands, Pacific Ocean.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:2034--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf7x0nb7k1](ark:/13030/tf7x0nb7k1)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2034
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Shags on their nests, Farallone Isl's, Pacific Ocean** BANC PIC 19xx.106:2063--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf6p3008r5](ark:/13030/tf6p3008r5)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2063

**Shags on their Nests, Farallone Islands, P. C.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:2064--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf6j49p386](ark:/13030/tf6j49p386)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2064
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast.

**Running the Rookeries, Farallone Islands, Pacific Ocean,** BANC PIC 19xx.106:2068--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf896nb7nf](ark:/13030/tf896nb7nf)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2068
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

**At the Residence of W. C. Ralston, Belmont, San Mateo Co., Cal.**  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:2129--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf6b69p208](ark:/13030/tf6b69p208)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2129
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**At the Residence of Mrs. Eastman, Millbrae, San Mateo Co., Cal.**  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:2183--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf7k4009cm](ark:/13030/tf7k4009cm)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2183
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**At the Residence of Mrs. Eastman, Millbrae, San Mateo Co., Cal.**  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:2185--STER  
[ark:/13030/tf9z09p4rg](ark:/13030/tf9z09p4rg)
Additional Note
Photographer's number: 2185
Photographer's series: Watkins' Pacific Coast

**Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1865-ca. 1880**  
BANC PIC 19xx.106--STER
At the Residence of Mrs. Eastman, Millbrae, San Mateo Co., Cal.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:2189--STER [1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 2189  
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

"Foss" at the Geysers. BANC PIC 19xx.106:2309--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 2309  
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

View of Pluton’s Creek, Geysers. BANC PIC 19xx.106:2313--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 2313  
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

View of Shasta Valley and Mount Shasta, looking South-east.  
BANC PIC 19xx.106:2522--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 2522  
Photographer's series: Watkins Pacific Coast

View from the Grand Central Hotel, Oakland. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3307--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 3307  
Photographer's series: Watkins’ New Series

Palace Hotel, S. F. Interior View. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3553--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 3553  
Photographer's series: Watkins’ New Series

Palace Hotel, S.F. Interior View. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3556--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 3556  
Photographer's series: Watkins’ New Series

Palace Hotel, S. F. Interior View. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3557--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 3557  
Photographer's series: Watkins’ New Series

The Cliff House from the sea, S. F. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3621--STER[1][2][3][4][5]  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 3621  
Photographer's series: Watkins’ New Series
View from the Residence of Chas. Crocker, Esq., S. F. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3638--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 3638
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

View from the grounds of Gov. Stanford, Cal. St., S. F. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3645--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 3645
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Baldwin's Hotel, Market and Powell Sts., S. F. BANC PIC 19xx.106:3696--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 3696
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Cascades at Emerald Bay, Lake Tahoe. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4043--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4043
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Panorama of Virginia City. No.5. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4116--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4116
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Panorama of Virginia City. No.6. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4117--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4117
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Panorama of Virginia City from the North End. No. 3. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4122--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4122
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Panorama of Virginia City from the North End. No. 5. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4124--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4124
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Gold Hill. View down the Canon. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4165--STER

Additional Note
Photographer's number: 4165
Photographer's series: Pacific Coast Views

Stereo Views of the West by Carleton E. Watkins, ca. 1865-ca. 1880
Cape Horn, C. P. R. R., Cal. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4202--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4202  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4309  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Loading the Yucca Pulp, Ravena Station, S. P. R. R. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4310--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4310  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

San Fernando Tunnel, from the north end, S. P. R. R. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4315--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4315  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Pico House, Los Angeles. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4360--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4360  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

The Cathedral, Los Angeles. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4375--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4375  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Santa Monica Hotel and Bathing Houses. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4506--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4506  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Santa Monica Bathing Houses. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4508--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4508  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

Cassiano Indian at San Antonio Mission, 136 years old. BANC PIC 19xx.106:4532--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4532  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series
**Sea Bathing, Santa Monica.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:4753--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4753  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

**Sea Bathing, Santa Monica.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:4754--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4754  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

**Baker Block, Los Angeles.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:4759--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4759  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

**View from Lake Vineyard House, Pasadena.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:4772--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4772  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

**Street in Tombstone, Arizona.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:4914--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 4914  
Photographer's series: Watkins New Series

**Powder Works from the S. P. C. R. R. Santa Cruz, Cal.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:5012--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 5012  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series

**Seattle, Puget Sound (W. T.) View from South Ridge.** BANC PIC 19xx.106:5228--STER  
Additional Note  
Photographer's number: 5228  
Photographer's series: Watkins' New Series