Overview of the Collection

Title: Robert S. Watt Photograph Collection

Dates (inclusive): approximately 1890-1928

Collection Number: photCL 395

Extent: 248 photographs in 4 boxes : prints and glass plate negatives + 2 certificates

Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Photo Archives
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org

Abstract: A collection of photographs approximately 1890-1928 of miner Robert S. Watt and family living in the mountains of Los Angeles County. Assorted views include the Watt Mines Supply Co., Los Angeles; prospecting; hunting; Los Angeles buildings and oil wells; and miscellaneous scenes of Alaska.

Language: English.

Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Robert S. Watt Photograph Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance


Biographical Note

The 1912 Los Angeles City Directory lists Robert S. Watt, president of Watt Mines Supply Co. and Arthur B. Watt, assistant superintendent. In 1914, the company is no longer listed and Robert S. Watt is listed as a mining engineer.

Scope and Content

These photographs document daily activities and places visited by the Watt family and unidentified others in and around Los Angeles. There are various unidentified scenes of people hunting, cabins in the woods, horses, and a few group portraits, with some names. Other views show ships and a harbor, possibly in San Pedro, California; Los Angeles buildings (Plaza Church and County Courthouse) and oil wells; a group portrait (item 113) of Los Angeles County Hospital Nurses in 1905, with names written on back. Mining activities include the Watt Mines Supply Co. building; men at an excavation; stamp mill machinery; a man standing at entrance to mine; mule teams with supplies. There is also a group of photographs of Alaska, showing trappers, roadhouses, scenery, and one miner staking a claim on a river. The collection also includes U.S. citizenship papers for Robert S. Watt (1890), and Alexander Barrie (1901), both emigrants from Scotland. The majority of photographs are unidentified, but some have identifications written on the back, including names of Watt family members and others.

Arrangement

Box 1 contains copy prints made from the glass negatives and other photographic prints of various sizes. Boxes 2-4 contain 91 glass negatives.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Subjects

Citizenship -- United States.
Frontier and pioneer life -- California -- Los Angeles County -- Photographs.
Miners -- California -- San Gabriel Mountains -- Photographs.
Nurses -- Photographs.
Oil fields -- California -- Photographs.
Alaska -- Photographs.
Angeles National Forest (Calif.) -- Photographs.
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Photographs.
San Gabriel Mountains (Calif.) -- Photographs.

**Forms/Genres**
Glass negatives.
Photographs.
Certificates.

**Photographs and certificates**

**Box 1**

**Photographic prints**

**Copy prints of ships and harbor**

Item(s) 1-19
Views of ships, beach, harbor, and pier in the San Pedro area (?), including U.S.S. West Virginia, approximately 1910s

Item 11 is a view of the pier and Ship Café on the Venice Beach Pier.

**Los Angeles views**

Item(s) 20-27
Oil derricks. [See also Item 158]

Item(s) 28, 28a, 28b
Los Angeles Plaza Church with Pacific Electric trolley in front.

Item(s) 29, 29a, 29b
Los Angeles County Courthouse.

Item(s) 30
Eastlake Park.

Item(s) 31
Two-story residence with address number 1637.

**Miscellaneous buildings**

Item(s) 32, 32a
Jeffries' Vernon Arena

Item(s) 33, 33a
Rear of Watt Mines Supply Co. (2418-2430 Santa Fe Avenue, Los Angeles)

Item(s) 34, 34a.
San Pedro Lumber Co.

Item(s) 35-39
Front exterior of Watt Mines Supply Co. building (2418-2430 Santa Fe Avenue, Los Angeles, R. S. Watt, president)

Item(s) 39 variant
Views of front exterior of Watt Mines Supply Co. building with sign "Watt, Mines Supply Co., Mining Machinery Ores Tested, Plants Installed Wet or Dry" (2418-2430 Santa Fe Avenue, Los Angeles)

**Los Angeles area views.**

Item(s) 40, 40a
Point Fermin Lighthouse, San Pedro, as seen from rocky beach.

Item(s) 41, 41a
Woman on rocky shore (Point Fermin, San Pedro)

Item(s) 42, 42a
Mission San Gabriel (See also 92-94)

Item(s) 43, 43a
Mission San Fernando (See also 95)

**Unidentified people.**

Item(s) 44
Two men and dog outside cabin with dog and laundry on line.

Item(s) 45, 45a
Two men at excavation

Item(s) 46
Two men with shovels

Item(s) 47
Man reclining outdoors in forest with dog.

Item(s) 48, 48a
Group portrait of five men, two women, child. One man holding puppy, other men holding rifles, women holding shot rabbits.

Item(s) 49, 49a
Five men outside two cabins with mountains in background.

Item(s) 50, 50a
Portrait of young man

Item(s) 51, 51a
Young man in woods with rifle

Item(s) 52, 52a
Young man in woods

Item(s) 53, 53a, 54, 54a
Group portrait of four men, two women, child seated outdoors

Item(s) 55, 55a
Men and women in informal pose among trees
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56, 56a</td>
<td>Men, women, child on horseback posed in front of water tower and 57, 57a</td>
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<tr>
<td>58, 58a</td>
<td>Group portrait of older men and women in hats in front of house in foothills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>59, 59a</td>
<td>Graveyard [San Gabriel Mission Cemetery?]</td>
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<td>60, 60a</td>
<td>Beehive apiary in foothill mountains</td>
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<td>61, 61a</td>
<td>Cabins in mountainous setting</td>
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<td>62-79</td>
<td>Mountain scenes</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>Tree-lined road</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>Trees by water</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>Two palm trees</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86 and duplicates</td>
<td>Mining machinery (?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-86 and duplicates</td>
<td>Stamp mill parts(?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>87, 87a</td>
<td>Lion in cage</td>
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<td>88, 88a</td>
<td>Deer in enclosure</td>
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<td>89, 89a</td>
<td>Man in field overlooking ocean.</td>
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<td>90, 90a, 91, 91a</td>
<td>Four unidentified [industrial?] objects</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>Photos without negatives</td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>San Gabriel Mission (mounted photo) [photographer imprint: W. N. Spranger]</td>
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<tr>
<td>93a</td>
<td>The bells of San Gabriel Mission (mounted photo) [photographer imprint: W. N. Spranger]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93a</td>
<td>Old choir stairs, San Gabriel Mission (mounted photo) [photographer imprint: W. N. Spranger]</td>
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<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Mission San Fernando</td>
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<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Taken on Watt Ranch, Gold Creek, Little Tujunga. Group photo. Identified on verso: Robert Barrie White, Mrs. Robert S. Watt (mother), Arthur Barrie White. [Located in Angeles National Forest, Los Angeles County]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-97</td>
<td>Watt Ranch (with grazing deer)</td>
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<td>98</td>
<td>Robert Scott Watt [Robert S.] on ranch with rifle and dog (card photo)</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>Ethel D. Watt</td>
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<tr>
<td>100-103</td>
<td>Snapshots in envelope labeled “Watt Family”</td>
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<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Man working at desk (Watt?), cuspidor on floor and sign for &quot;Purcell &amp; Kern Insurance&quot; on desk.</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>Man standing at entrance to mine</td>
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<td>106</td>
<td>Group of Indian women in street</td>
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<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Woman feeding a sheep</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td>Woman standing in front of flock of goats</td>
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<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Young couple (man wearing cowboy hat)</td>
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<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Man and child under torii gate</td>
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<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Nancy Russell and horse with lasso on saddle</td>
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<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Charlie Russell in studio at Great Falls, Nevada</td>
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<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Hospital Nurses picnic group portrait, April 15, 1905. 35 people identified on verso. (Mounted photo.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Ostrich farm</td>
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<td>115</td>
<td>Mule team in mountains</td>
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<td>116</td>
<td>Team of horses, pulling wagon, tractor in desert</td>
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<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Woman, child standing by hopper cars</td>
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<td>118-119</td>
<td>Cabins in rocky landscape</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>Road lined with trees</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>Hillside landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Lily (?) ponds, with tall plants, trees in background</td>
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<td>123</td>
<td>Chutes Park, Los Angeles</td>
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<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Child on beach at Long Beach, California</td>
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<td>125</td>
<td>View of ocean</td>
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<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Alaska

Valdez street. Photo by J. Ironside.
Photographs and certificates

Item(s) 127  Valdez street in snow, April 16, 1928.
Item(s) 128  Community tree, Seward, Christmas 1926.
Item(s) 129  Community tree, Christmas 1926. Photo by Lieut. Homer K. Jones.
Item(s) 130  First fox farm in Alaska. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 131  Owner and roadhouse, Teikhell. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 132  Roadhouse at Paxson. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 133  Roadhouse, Upper Tonsina. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 134  Tanana Store. General merchandise.
Item(s) 135  Hotel Gilder
Item(s) 136  Woman at entrance to Seattle Hotel
Item(s) 137  Restaurant in snowy landscape
Item(s) 138  Group in doorway of Alaska Road Commission, Salcha Station, July 10, 1927.
( People identified on verso.)
Item(s) 139  “Author in A.R.C. camp at Poplar Grove. Note wolf pup and headnet.” Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 140  “Cabin and barn at Willow Creek. Cabin with sod roof and dirt floor and full of books, aluminum utensils, white enamel kitchen cabinet, cream separator, etc.” Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 141, 141a  “Trapper-artist and his cabin and ‘chariot’ at Rapids, Alaska.” Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 142  Trapper’s cabin and cache. “Where the host was absent and the coffee was made in the tea-kettle.” Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 143-149  Photos of various cabins. No information except remark on #143: “Typical.”
Item(s) 150  Horseshoe bend of Gulkana River. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 151  Tanana River at Richardson Roadhouse. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 152  The bay at Seldovia. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 153  Bridge across Tazlina River. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 154  Resurrection Bay from Lost Lake Trail, Seward, Oct. 1926.
Item(s) 155  Richardson Trail. Photo by J. Ironside.
Item(s) 156  Mountainous landscape
Item(s) 157  Dashley’s Thawer. Superior Claim, Inmachuk River, Sep. 23, 1903. Nowell photo. [Man with large piece of equipment at river’s edge. Gold claim(?).]
Oil derricks
Item(s) 158  Line of oil derricks along the horizon (19 x 33 cm) [previously framed]
Certificates of Citizenship, United States of America
MS 1  August 22, 1890. Robert S. Watt, formerly of Scotland.
MS 2  January 5, 1901. Alexander Barrie, formerly of Scotland.

Glass Plate Negatives

Box 2

**Negatives 1-31**

Box contains 13 x 18 (5 x 7 inch) glass negatives, except for Items 13, 20-29, 31, which are 10 x 12.5 cm (4 x 5 inch) glass negatives.

Box 3

**Negatives 32-61**

Box contains 13 x 18 (5 x 7 inch) glass negatives, except for Items 44-47, 50-52, 55-57, which are 10 x 12.5 cm (4 x 5 inch) glass negatives.

Box 4

**Negatives 62-91**

Box contains 13 x 18 (5 x 7 inch) glass negatives, except for Items 70-80, 83, which are 10 x 12.5 cm (4 x 5 inch) glass negatives.