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## Finding Aid to the Atkinson Family and Atkinson Construction Company Photograph Collection, circa 1865-circa 1975, bulk 1890-1940

**Collection Number: BANC PIC 2007.007--PIC**

The Bancroft Library

University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, California

Finding Aid Written By:

James Eason, August 2007

Date Completed:

September 2007

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### Collection Summary

**Collection Title:** Atkinson family and Atkinson Construction Company photograph collection

**Date (inclusive):** circa 1865-circa 1975,

**Date (bulk):** bulk 1890-1940

**Collection Number:** BANC PIC 2007.007--PIC

**Creators :** Atkinson family

**Extent:** Number of containers: 2 cartons, 2 boxes, 3 oversized boxes (circa 900 photographic prints, 6 negatives, and 1 watercolor).

**Repository:** The Bancroft Library

University of California, Berkeley Berkeley, California, 94720-6000 Phone: (510) 642-6481 Fax: (510) 642-7589 Email: [bancref@library.berkeley.edu](mailto:bancref@library.berkeley.edu) URL: <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/>

**Abstract:** Chiefly family portraits and snapshots of the Atkinson family (of Colorado Springs and Los Angeles), with some views related to their construction business. Construction photographs are chiefly related to the Pardee Dam and Coolidge Dam projects.

**Languages Represented:** Collection materials are in English

**Physical Location:** Many of the Bancroft Library collections are stored offsite and advance notice may be required for use. For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

### Access

Collection is open for research, with the following exceptions: glass negatives are RESTRICTED. Inquiries regarding these negatives should be directed, in writing, to the Head of Public Services, The Bancroft Library.

### Publication Rights

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<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/reference/permissions.html> .

### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Atkinson Family and Atkinson Construction Company Photograph Collection, BANC PIC 2007.007--PIC, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

### Alternate Forms Available

There are no alternate forms of this collection.

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**Separated Material**

Manuscripts and ephemera have been transferred to the Manuscripts Collections of The Bancroft Library and cataloged as the Atkinson family and Atkinson Construction Company records (BANC MSS 2007/204).

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Atkinson family--Archives.  
Atkinson family--Pictorial works.  
Blackman family--Pictorial works  
Marks family--Pictorial works  
Atkinson, George W., 1836-1905--Family--Portraits  
Atkinson, Lynn Samuel, 1864-1923--Family--Portraits  
Atkinson, Walter W., 1871-1917--Family--Portraits  
Atkinson, Guy F., 1875-1968--Portraits  
Atkinson Construction Company--Pictorial works  
Guy F. Atkinson Company of California--Pictorial works  
Pioneers--Colorado--Portraits  
Architecture, Domestic--California--Photographs  
Architecture, Domestic--Colorado--Photographs  
Interiors.  
Construction industry--West (U.S.)--Photographs  
Dams--Design and construction--Photographs  
Pardee Dam (Calif.)--Pictorial works  
Coolidge Dam (Ariz. : Dam)--Pictorial works  
Cave Creek Dam (Ariz.)--Pictorial works  
Colorado Springs (Colo.)--Pictorial works  
Photographs.  
Portraits.  
Photograph albums.

**Acquisition Information**

The Atkinson family and Atkinson Construction Company Photograph Collection was purchased by The Bancroft Library in November, 2006.

**Accruals**

No additions are expected.

**System of Arrangement**

Arranged to the folder level.

**Processing Information**

Preliminary processing by Bancroft Library staff in 2007.

**Biographical Information**

Lynn S. Atkinson, Walter W. Atkinson, and Guy F. Atkinson were three of at least ten children of stone mason George W. Atkinson (1836-1905) and Nancy J. Wilson Atkinson. All three brothers were involved in the construction industry, and Lynn and Walter relocated from Colorado to Southern California early in the 20th century. Guy Atkinson founded Guy F. Atkinson Construction in the 1920s, specializing in dam projects and other major infrastructure projects in the West. Lynn S. Atkinson was responsible for construction of numerous schools and

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public buildings in Colorado Springs and the Los Angeles area and, later, dams and public works. Lynn S. Atkinson, Jr., eldest son of Lynn Atkinson, became head of the Atkinson Construction Co., based in Los Angeles.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The collection consists chiefly of portraits, snapshots and photograph albums of the Atkinson family (of Colorado Springs and Los Angeles), with some views related to their construction business. Atkinson Construction views include single images of several Colorado Springs buildings constructed in the 19th century, and several dozen professional views of major 20th century projects. Pardee Dam, Coolidge Dam, and Cave Creek Dam (Arizona) construction are most notable, with between six and several dozen views of each. A few dam-related public event photographs picturing Atkinsons with Roy Rogers, Calvin Coolidge, and Franklin D. Roosevelt are present.

Family photographs include several hundred studio portraits (chiefly taken in Colorado Springs, Denver, and Los Angeles, 1885-1935), primarily of the Walter W. Atkinson and the Lynn Samuel Atkinson families. Guy F. Atkinson and family are also represented by a few portraits. Some relations from the Marks, Shirk, and Warner families (of Indiana, Illinois, and Colorado) and the Blackman family (of Louisiana) are pictured. Of note are numerous professional photographs of Atkinson family homes in Colorado Springs and Los Angeles, with exteriors and interiors pictured. Family gatherings and celebrations, outings and other activities are also well represented.

Series 1 **Atkinson Construction Company photographs circa 1898-circa 1940, bulk 1920-1935**

**Physical Description:** Approximately 80 photographic prints.

PIC Box 1, Folder 1 **Dam projects circa 1920-1940**

**Physical Description:** circa 40 photographic prints.

**Scope and Content Note**

Professionally produced 8x10 inch photographs of dam construction sites and official visits or opening dedication ceremonies. Pardee Dam and Coolidge Dam are documented, with some images of Cave Creek Dam (Arizona). Group portraits or event photographs include several Atkinson family members as well as Roy Rogers, Pres. Calvin Coolidge, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Guy F. Atkinson and sons are pictured, as well as Lynn S. Atkinson, Jr. and daughters. Snapshots and other photographs of other works projects (some unidentified, some represented by a single image) are also present.

PIC Box 1, Folder 2 **Dam project albums circa 1925-1935**

**Physical Description:** 2 albums (circa 30 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Two albums of photographs of the Pardee Dam spillway and Atkinson equipment and machinery, apparently on the Pardee Dam project.

AX Box 1, Folders  
1-3 **Granite quarry circa 1900-1910**

**Physical Description:** 3 photographic prints.

**Scope and Content Note**

Three mounted photographs of a stone quarry, captioned as Lynn S. Atkinson's granite quarry.

C Box **Colorado Springs City Hall circa 1907**

**Physical Description:** 2 photographic prints.

**Scope and Content Note**

Two photographs (mounted on 1 sheet) of the construction of Colorado Springs City Hall, circa 1907.

Carton 1, v. 1 **Lynn Atkinson, Jr snapshot album circa 1898-1912**

**Physical Description:** 1 album.

**Scope and Content Note**

Personal snapshot album of Lynn Atkinson, Jr., with spine title "Lynn Vol. II". Includes several annotated snapshots of Colorado Springs buildings built by Lynn S. Atkinson, Sr. (or perhaps his father George W. Atkinson) in the 1890s and 1900s. Includes the City Hall, Washington School, the Alamo Hotel addition, the De Graff Building, the Alta Vista Hotel, the Rouse Block, several residences, and ruins of the Antlers Hotel, 1898. Also present are snapshots of Long Beach Polytechnic High School and Ramona High School (in Alhambra, Calif.) under construction. Each building mentioned is generally represented by a single snapshot. (Note: this album also listed under Family Photographs, below.)

Series 2 **Atkinson family photographs circa 1865-circa 1975, bulk 1890-1940**

**Physical Description:** Approximately 800 photographic prints, 6 glass negatives, and 1 watercolor.

- Carton 1, v. 1      **Lynn Atkinson, Jr. snapshot album circa 1898-1912**
- Physical Description:** 1 album.
- Scope and Content Note**
- Personal snapshot album of Lynn Atkinson, Jr., with spine title "Lynn Vol. II". Includes some Colorado Springs buildings built by or lived in by Atkinson and Marks relatives, but chiefly snapshots of family members and friends at informal gatherings or outings, and home and bedroom interiors during Lynn's boyhood. "One of Dad's gold mines" is also pictured. Well-captioned. (Also listed under Construction Co. photographs, above.)
- Carton 1, v. 2-3      **Snapshot albums circa 1900-1920**
- Physical Description:** 2 albums.
- Scope and Content Note**
- Two small Atkinson family snapshot albums, chiefly of family members, homes, outings, leisure activities, etc. One belonged to Thelma Atkinson, daughter of Lynn S. Atkinson, Sr. (and sister of Lynn, Jr.)
- Carton 1, v. 4      **Walter & Ellen Atkinson album circa 1900-1912**
- Physical Description:** 1 album.
- Scope and Content Note**
- Snapshot album of Walter Atkinson (Sr. and Jr.) and Ellen ("Nell") Blackman Atkinson, with many childhood photographs of Walter, Jr. Also includes many sights from travels in California, Colorado, Louisiana, Hawaii, and other North American locations. Includes some Blackman family relations in Louisiana. Most well-captioned.
- Carton 1, v. 5      **Unidentified snapshot album circa 1915-1940**
- Physical Description:** 1 album.
- Scope and Content Note**
- Snapshot album with many photographs of Nell (Mrs. Walter Atkinson?) and other women and girls.
- AX Box 1, Folders  
4-9      **Atkinson homes circa 1890-1910, bulk 1904-1910**
- Physical Description:** 6 folders (circa 30 photographic prints).
- Scope and Content Note**
- Professional larger-format photographs of Atkinson homes, chiefly in Colorado Springs. Includes group portraits of the family at the 50th wedding anniversary of George W. and Nancy J. (Wilson) Atkinson at their home on Nevada Avenue, circa 1904. Most views are of the Lynn S. Atkinson home at 1629 N. Weber. A noteworthy series of interiors includes bedrooms as well as parlors and other social rooms. Other homes pictured are an earlier family home in Pennsylvania, Walter W. Atkinson's home and "Uncle Doc's" home on Nevada Ave., both in Colorado Springs. Many views are photographed by [A.J.?] Harlan, with one by H.S. Poley.

AX Box 1, Folders 10-12 **Home exteriors and outdoor group portraits circa 1900-1960, bulk 1900-1910**

**Physical Description:** 3 folders (circa 5 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Miscellaneous larger-format photographs, chiefly of family members in carriages or automobiles or in front of residences. Also several horse-related images and one of a very young Walter Atkinson, Jr. in a donkey-drawn miniature covered wagon in front of the Plaza Hotel.

AX Box 1, Folder 13 **Watercolor undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 painting on paper.

**Scope and Content Note**

Floral watercolor: roses.

PIC Box 1, Folder 3 **Home exteriors circa 1885-circa 1915**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder (5 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Atkinson (and one Marks family) homes (exteriors) in Los Angeles & Colorado Springs. Includes exterior of 609 S. St. Andrews St., Los Angeles. Also, one view of a home in Kansas (circa 1885?).

PIC Box 1, Folder 4 **Home interiors circa 1920?**

**Physical Description:** 5 photographic prints.

**Scope and Content Note**

Home interiors in Los Angeles, with arts and crafts or art nouveau furnishings. Four of home of Lynn Atkinson, Jr (on St. Andrews St.), and one of home of Walter W. Atkinson (on Oxford St.)

PIC Box 1, Folders 5-9 **Family snapshots & outdoor group portraits circa 1890-circa 1925**

**Physical Description:** 5 folders (circa 30 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Informal family photographs, chiefly taken outdoors. Includes mounted snapshots (circa 1890-1910) of family members in California, Colorado, and a few in Iowa. Includes some home exteriors with people posed, a horse-drawn trap, and an electric automobile. Chiefly pictured is the Lynn Atkinson family, with some of Walter Atkinson family. Some unidentified posed outdoor group portraits (8x10 in.) at a cabin and in the desert (circa 1925?).

Carton 2, Folders 1-30 **Studio portraits and family snapshots 1865-1970, bulk 1900-1930**

**Physical Description:** 30 folders (circa 325 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Studio portraits of Atkinson and Marks family members, dating from an 1864-1866 carte de visite of "mother" (Atkinson? or Marks?) to a color portrait of a girl, circa 1970. Most are of the Lynn S. Atkinson and Mary ("Pet") Marks Atkinson family or the Walter W. Atkinson and Ellen ("Nell") Blackman Atkinson family, although many cousins and siblings are represented. The great majority date from about 1900 to 1930, and are in studio portfolios from Los Angeles or Colorado photographers. About two dozen cabinet cards of the late 1880s, (many by Colorado, Illinois, or Indiana studios), are also present. Most photographs are identified, and many are present in multiple copies with variant captioning indicating they were once distributed among cousins and later reunited. (For example, "Uncle Lynn" or "Father" used to identify copies of the same portrait.) Many portraits are of excellent quality. A few snapshots are also present (in Folders 1 & 28). Portraits have been rough-sorted by library staff and arranged somewhat chronologically, but also grouped by family or individual.

Carton 2, Folder 31 **Miscellaneous photographs circa 1930-1960?**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder (circa 20 photographic prints).

**Scope and Content Note**

Photographs of a medal, furniture and art works.

Carton 2, Folder 32 **Doris Atkinson wedding album 1942**

**Physical Description:** 1 album (circa 12 photographic prints + typescript pages).

**Scope and Content Note**

Wedding album of (daughter of Lynn S. Atkinson, Jr.) Doris Marie Atkinson and John Emil Kettler, June 19, 1942. Includes wedding portraits, photographs of gifts, and typescripts of detailed accounting of wedding expenses. Also includes wedding portrait of grandparents Lynn Atkinson and Mary ("Pet") Marks Atkinson, whose dress was altered to make Doris's dress.

AX Box 2 **Studio portraits circa 1890-1960**

**Physical Description:** circa 50 photographic prints.

**Scope and Content Note**

Oversized studio portraits of Atkinson family members. Most are of the Lynn S. Atkinson or the Walter W. Atkinson family. The earliest are a group portrait of five of the six Atkinson brothers as young men (circa 1890), and the Marks sisters (Mary "Pet" Marks Atkinson and sisters). Most are 20th century studio portraits of the next two generations, or this older generation later in life.

C Box **Studio portraits circa 1890-circa 1950**

**Physical Description:** circa 12 photographs.

**Scope and Content Note**

Oversized studio portraits and group portraits, chiefly duplicates of those in AX Box 2, with one or two exceptions. One crayon enlargement (retouched photograph) portrait.

NEG Box **Glass negatives circa 1910-1920?**

**Physical Description:** 6 negatives.

**Scope and Content Note**

Glass plate negatives (4x5 in.) of family members, informally posed. Some negatives broken. Some duplicates or near duplicates, to total approximately four different images.