

LOST CORNWALL

REPRINT

Reg Watkiss

The wonderful photographs appearing in this book are selected from a veritable treasure trove of images contained in the Reg Watkiss Archive. A photographer and artist who has lived almost half a century in Cornwall, the author began collecting prints and glass-plate negatives when he was young, and over the years he has been given and has sought out literally hundreds of photographs, many of which would otherwise have been lost.

The title of the book was chosen, in part, to reflect the sense of 'rediscovery' the author experienced as he printed up the pictures from ancient negatives, many of which had not revealed their 'hidden secrets' since the images were first captured on camera, in some cases well over a century ago. But the title *Lost Cornwall* also refers to the inevitable sense of nostalgia felt when looking at so much that the passing years have taken away, particularly the essential Cornish character of so many of our towns and villages.

These photographs remind us that not all that is in the past was good, nor that all change is for the best. Poverty, danger to life and limb from mining and at sea, and hard toil for the majority are variously illustrated in these pages. But who could, on looking through this book, not also feel a yearning for the uncomplicated daily life the images reveal, and a sense of gratitude in what might have passed beyond our knowing, except for the camera.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reg Watkiss was born in London in 1933. He first studied painting and photography at Walthamstow School of Art for a National Diploma in Design. Following this he was accepted as a scholarship student into the painting school of The Royal Academy of Arts, London. In 1958, after completing four years there, he moved to the West Penwith area of Cornwall where he married his wife Gill, also a painter, and they have lived and worked there ever since. Around the early 1960s his interest in photography increased and this was developed, along with the need to provide for a growing family, by painting, part-time teaching and carrying out commercial photographic commissions for other artists. In the 1970s film-making was added to his interests and only recently the Tate Gallery took into its archives one of the short films he made at that time. Collecting archive photographs and old movie film remains very much an ongoing enthusiasm.

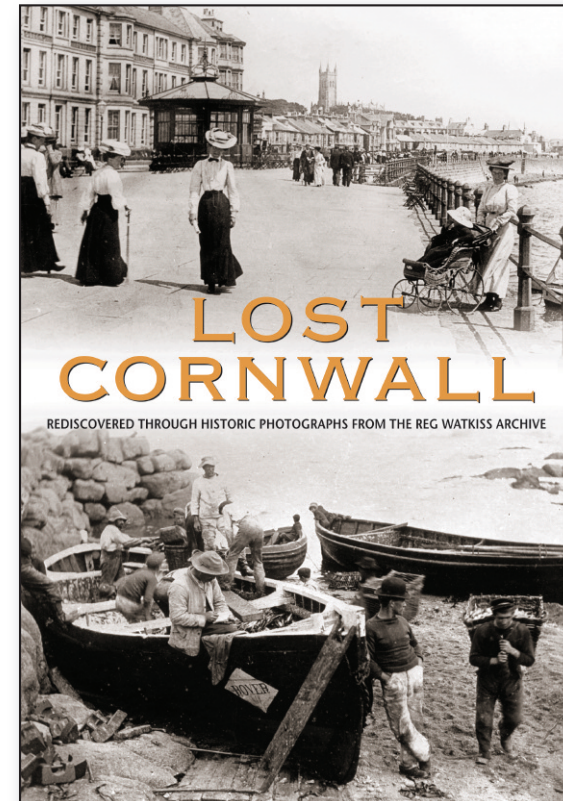
Previous books by him covering the early photography of West Cornwall were published in the 1970s.

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