

Collection #
P 0435

WILLIAM H. POTTER FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS CA. 1880S–1890S

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Processed by

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	3 photographs
COLLECTION DATES:	Ca. 1880s–90s
PROVENANCE:	Gift from Martha Lois Wilson Willis, received in 1950
RESTRICTIONS:	None
COPYRIGHT:	

REPRODUCTION
RIGHTS:

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION 1950.0002
NUMBER:

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Henry Potter was an Indianapolis, Indiana, photographer. Born in Pennsylvania ca. 1841, he appears to have been the second of six sons of Jacob H. Potter, a physician, and his wife, Mary Ann. By the mid-1840s, the family had moved to Ohio. They were living in Pike Township of Knox County by 1850. At the time of the 1860 census, William was a nineteen-year-old student living with his mother and four brothers (all but the youngest) in Hayesville, in Ashland County.

Sometime during the 1860s, William married Pearl. By the 1870 census, he was working as a photographer, and living with Pearl and their first two daughters in Mansfield in Richland County, Ohio. By 1880, the family had moved to North Illinois Street in Indianapolis, and there were four daughters, all born in Ohio: Lillie (born ca. 1867), Annie (born ca. August 1869), Louis (sic [notes on the back of photographs name a "Louie" and a "Lucille"]) (born ca. 1872), and Pearl (born ca. 1875).

William appears to have had a successful career as a photographer in Indianapolis. The William Henry Smith Memorial Library of the Indiana Historical Society has several portraits taken by W.H. Potter in its Indiana Cabinet Card Collection (P 0413), including one of Governor Isaac P. Gray, taken in 1885. The library also has a "Paris Panel" portrait of James Whitcomb Riley taken by W.H. Potter, probably in the early 1890s (P 0411).

Sources:

Items in the collection.

U.S. Census, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 (<http://www.gale.ancestry.com>). Accessed 22 June 2004.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of three portraits taken by photographer W.H. Potter of his family and himself. The self-portrait is a cabinet card taken in 1886. There is a hand-colored mounted photograph of four young women, presumably his daughters. Written on the back of this is a somewhat confusing note: "Pearl Potter & Louie Lillie Potter, Annie, Lillie Potter." Another portrait of a young woman is identified as Lucille Potter.

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William H. Potter – self-portrait cabinet card,
Indianapolis, 1886.

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 1

Four daughters – hand-colored imperial card (6 7/8” x 9 3/4”) portrait of four young women, with note on back: “Pearl Potter & Louie Lillie Potter, Annie, Lillie Potter.” Indianapolis, n.d.

Photographs, Folder 1

Lucille Potter – oval portrait on 4 3/4” x 5 1/2” mount, Indianapolis, n.d.

Photographs, Folder 1

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0435).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.