



# Haverford Township Historical Society



## JOHN ATKINSON (1850-1915)

Compiled by Richard D. Kerr

*[The following is excerpted and adapted from A History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania and Its People, John W. Jordan, editor, published by Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York in 1914.]*

**JOHN ATKINSON**, youngest child of George Washington Atkinson and Anna (King) Atkinson, was born on the home farm in Springfield township, Burlington county, New Jersey, March 12, 1850. He attended the public schools of Springfield township, the well known Charles Aaron school at Mount Holly, and for one year a school conducted under the auspices of the Presbyterian denomination at Hightstown. After completing his education he learned the mason's trade in Philadelphia and in 1872 established in independent building operations, confining himself strictly to mason work, in which he has since continued. He is now one of the oldest established mason contractors in the city and has performed work on such structures as the Broad street station of the Pennsylvania railroad in Philadelphia, the Bourse building, Drexel Hall at the German Hospital, and many other edifices housing Philadelphia's banks, mercantile establishments, and industrial plants. He is a member of the Masons and Builders Association of Philadelphia, the Bricklayers Company of Philadelphia, which he served as president, and is a charter member of the West Jersey Society of Pennsylvania, also of the Builders Exchange of Philadelphia, of which he was an organizer. A Democrat in national politics, Mr. Atkinson acts independently in all local matters and in 1911 was elected a commissioner of Haverford township on the Republican ticket, an office for which he has refused to be a candidate for re-election. He is a member of the Llanerch Citizens' Association and was one of the organizers and its first president. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is the only fraternity in which he holds membership, belonging to Lodge No. 223. Like his family for the past seven generations, Mr. Atkinson has been an adherent of the tenets of the Society of Friends and belongs to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of the Hicksite branch of the Society of Friends at Fifteenth and Race streets, Philadelphia.

He married, October 5, 1881, Anne H. Welding, daughter of Watson Welding, of Brooklyn, New York; children, all born in Philadelphia:

1. William Atkinson, born July, 1882, died February, 1910.
2. Roger Atkinson, born May 12, 1884, a builder of Philadelphia.
3. Edith Atkinson, born March 11, 1889, married Robert R. Blank, of Philadelphia, and resides in Llanerch. They have one son, Robert R. Jr.
4. Dorothy Stackhouse, born November 11, 1893.
5. Richard, born February 5, 1897.

Since 1894, Mr. Atkinson has resided in Llanerch, the demands of business previously necessitating his residence in Philadelphia. The founder of a flourishing and lucrative business who has prospered in his chosen calling, he holds high rank among his fellow townsmen, holding besides their respect for his achievements, their liking and regard.

*[Additional notes from the Historical Resources Survey for Haverford Township by the Delaware County (Pennsylvania) Planning Department, 1994, under resource survey code 045-HA-072.]*

The house at 29 E. Park Road in Llanerch, “one of the more impressive houses in the Llanerch subdivision,” was built for John Atkinson about 1900.

*[Excerpted from “Rock Products and Building Materials,” Volume XV Number 12, April 22, 1915, page 24, by Francis Publishing Co., Chicago, <https://books.google.com/books?id=Jh1KAQAAMAAJ>, accessed August 16, 2016.]*

John Atkinson, formerly president of the Philadelphia Builders' Exchange, with which he has been connected for 25 years, died recently at his home in Llanerch, Pa. He had been ill for many months. Mr. Atkinson was one of the organizers of the Master Builders' Association 18 years ago. During his career as a master bricklayer he assisted in the building of the Bourse, Drexel Institute, Reading Terminal and the Mary J. Drexel Home. He was 65 years of age and is survived by a widow and four children. He has been a member of the Manufacturers' Club for many years.

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