



Cecil Wright Pattillo was the youngest of four sons of James Pattillo, cabinetmaker, and Margaret (nee Bremner) who arrived in Dunedin in 1859 on the ship Sevilla.

Cecil married Mary Ethel Marshall in 1910 and they had a family of two daughters.

Cecil started his photographic career in 1893 at the age of 18, and in his early years was also an accomplished painter in oils. He was a master photographer for many years, at one time employing a staff of fifteen. His reputation as a portrait man extended far beyond Dunedin.

His retirement from photography in the 1940s, many years before his death, was complete; he never took another photograph, and not a clue remained in his home to give a hint of the profession that had occupied him for so long.

His chief recreation in retirement was bowls and a passion for roses which glorified his garden behind his large studio in George Street [now occupied by Oakley, Pinfold, Turvey architects, and with flats being built behind on what was the garden.]

Pattillo served his apprenticeship with John R. Morris, where he worked for nine years. Morris had a chain of studios, but his own office was in the Arcade, later known as Broadway, now demolished for roading between High Street and Maclaggan Street.

After falling out with Morris Pattillo set up in George Street and gradually became the most successful photographer in Dunedin. He was happiest photographing children, and he preferred to take them full length because he felt that the whole body is expressive of the personality. This work required much patience, especially before he had electric light in his in his studio in 1914. [this writer has wonderful photographs of himself as a three-year-old taken by Pattillo in early 1940s]

Cecil Pattillo died on 29 April 1968 at aged 93, and is buried in Dunedin's Andersons bay Cemetery.