

## NEW ONLINE RESOURCE FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC DATING

Directories of early studios can be of great help when trying to date old photographs, but coverage of Great Britain is patchy. What's more, the directories that exist can be costly or hard to find. So it's something of an event when (like long-awaited buses) three free directories come along together.

A-Z directories of early photographers in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, compiled by Robert Pols, can now be found on his *Early Photographic Studios* website at [www.early-photographers.org.uk](http://www.early-photographers.org.uk). Each covers the period from the earliest known commercial studio to the First World War (1843-1916 in the case of Norfolk and 1844-1916 for Suffolk and Cambridgeshire). Each draws on a wide range of trade directories along with a variety of other sources, including specialist studies and photographic mounts.

Trade directories often contained uncertainties and discrepancies, and additional notes point out where these occur. But, in a departure from the usual practice of photographic directories, sources are recorded for every studio that's listed. This means that, where there seems to be a problem, researchers can consider the compiler's comments but also make their own judgements about the reliability and interpretation of evidence.

In the case of many photographers, extra biographical or background information has also been added to their entry.

A further feature of the *Early Photographic Studios* website is a page of links to other free directories of Victorian and Edwardian photographers. This will enable family, local and photographic historians quickly to identify and access the range of information that's available. It will be added to as more such directories come online.

### Information for Editors:

The compiler, Robert Pols, has been writing about early photography for nearly twenty years. His most recent books are *Family Photographs 1860-1945*, *Dating Nineteenth Century Photographs* and *Dating Twentieth Century Photographs*. His next book, *Dating Old Army Photographs*, is due out later this year. He has written articles for *Ancestors* and *Practical Family History*, and he produces a regular *Photo Detective* feature for *Family History Monthly*. He has also contributed to programmes on Radio 4 and regional and local BBC radio channels. He can be contacted at [robert.pols@early-photographers.org.uk](mailto:robert.pols@early-photographers.org.uk).