

PhotoTree.com Background

The first web pages of PhotoTree.com went live in August of 2000. These images were a collection of 19th century photographs, and the first published research by Gary Clark on the process of establishing dates of unknown photographs. PhotoTree.com is a pioneer in bringing new information and tools to genealogists in their quest for answers to their many photograph questions.

PhotoTree.com provides products, services, and research tools to genealogists, photograph collectors, and historians that guide them through the process of dating 19th century photographs. The company is publishing a series of books in 2011 that help genealogists identify and date 19th century family photographs. Research tools include a web-based online gallery of more than 1,000 dated images in over 50 categories to compare with a researcher's undated photos. This website also includes an extensive history and description of 19th century photographs and is freely available to the public

Gary began his ancestral pursuits in 1992 searching for his own family history; tracking his Clark lineage through arrival in America in 1722 from Northern Ireland and back to Scotland in 1605. Any further discoveries will probably take a trip to the homeland – which is planned. Part of the research included identifying family pictures that contained no documentation.

The quest to develop a system to date 19th century photographs was born out of the lack of succinct and focused information for the task. Many academic works were available, and some simple books were found that only showed a bunch of pictures. It seemed to take a dozen books to research a few pictures. After many years of research, and by organizing and cataloging photographs with techniques ranging from push-pinned photograph copies to walls, to a structured database to help find similarities and patterns, Gary discovered underlying information and created a methodology to easily date old photographs.

The PhotoTree.com collection has grown to over 3,000 high quality images. In addition, a library of 19th century newspapers, photographic manuals, supplier catalogs, advertisements, and other documents were accumulated for research purposes. These provided additional validation of identification methodologies.

Phototree.com is a publishing company for books, tablet applications, and web-based information services. Phototree.com also provides a stock photo service, offering photo reproduction rights to design agencies and others. Restoration services are also available, restoring digital versions of damaged or photographs, creating high quality reproductions.

With over 30 years experience as a professional photographer, graphics designer, and web developer, Gary brings a deep understanding of photography and underlying technologies to his research. This range of experience contributes to current projects such as book and app development for the new media vehicles available to the genealogist.

Headquartered in Carlsbad, California, Gary is frequently found on the genealogy conference circuit giving fun, illustrated presentations on dating 19th century photographs.