

## 8. 'In the moon' (1877-1881)

Photography took a long step forward in the 1870s, but it took it rather hesitantly. For two decades the wet collodion process had been the best available, but it was a messy and hurried business, with much to be done before the chemicals dried and the glass plate lost its photosensitivity. Then, in 1871, Richard Leach Maddox showed that an emulsion of silver bromide in gelatine, coated on glass and allowed to dry, remained light-sensitive. This meant that photographic plates could be prepared in advance, sold ready-made, used indoors or out, and developed in the darkroom later at the photographer's convenience. It meant, too, that the photographer could work in the field with a minimum of fuss, visiting customers without lugging along a portable darkroom and bottles of chemicals.

The first pre-prepared plates went on the market in 1873, but it took a series of improvements over the next few years to make them a convincing proposition. At last, however, in 1878, reliable mass-marketed dry plates were available, and once they caught on, they caught on quickly.

The convenience of these new plates probably lay behind the first Lynn press announcement in eleven years by William McLean, the Hunstanton photographer. In April 1879 he drew the public's attention to a recent out-of-studio venture that dry plates would have made so much simpler.

Opening of the Hunstanton Convalescent Home, by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales. A series of instantaneous Photographs, comprising front view of the Home, end and front ditto, flags flying, and three of the grounds, during the ceremony. Mounted on 10in. by 12in. mounts, at 2/6 each; unmounted, 2/ each. Also Cabinet size of the Home and decorations, on card, 1/6; unmounted, 1/.<sup>1</sup>

Lynn customers had no need to visit Hunstanton, being assured that 'any of the above will be forwarded on receipt of stamps to the amount'. Should they, however, choose to make the journey, they might be mindful of McLean's assertion that 'Spring is the best time of the year for portraiture'.

McLean's reference to instantaneous photographs is strong evidence that he had used the new mass-produced plates. (It has, though, to be acknowledged that from the early 1850s onward the word 'instantaneous' was used – with more or less justification – to describe a number of process improvements.) This latest advance does not, however, seem to have been uppermost in the minds of some Lynn photographers during the late 1870s. They had more parochial matters to concern them.

Edwin Bullock, in particular, was less than happy, for in February 1877 he found himself back in court. He was being sued for £4.3s by Reeves and Hoare, a London company supplying photographic equipment and accessories.

The circumstances of the case were peculiar, and are these: – The plaintiffs had in their employ a traveller named Ramm, who called on the defendant soliciting orders. The defendant, believing that the complainant solicited orders for himself only, gave him an order for goods amounting to something like £5 on the condition that the traveller bought something of him. The traveller bought a hundred views of Sandringham.<sup>2</sup>

So when, later, Bullock received a bill from Reeves and Hoare (whose names Ramm had not mentioned at the time of the transaction), he deducted the value of the photographs – £4.3s – and sent the balance of £1.7s.6d. Reeves and Hoare, who no longer employed Ramm, were now seeking the full sum due to them. But Bullock had by now paid the full sum, even though most of it had been paid to a third party and paid in kind. His lawyer argued that ‘inasmuch as Ramm made no disclosure of his principals in his transaction with the defendant, the plaintiffs could not now turn round and sue for a claim which in point of fact had been settled.’<sup>3</sup> But the judge ruled ‘that the plaintiffs were in nowise bound to recognise a payment made to Ramm by the defendant if it was effected in a way which they never authorised, which a supply of photographs to him in his own account clearly was.’

Once again, the unfortunate Bullock was denied the satisfaction of a good day in court. He had lost his right-of-way case in 1866 and his case against W. H. Smith in 1868. He had won his case against William Seaman in 1870, but had been awarded merely a fraction of the money he believed due to him. Only in his 1867 action against the belligerent ostler had he not lost money, and now he was to be defeated again. The judge sympathised with Bullock’s predicament, acknowledging that ‘there could be no doubt that Ramm had acted most dishonestly towards the defendant’, but he concluded that ‘the right of the plaintiffs to recover from the defendant was irresistible, and therefore there would be judgement in their favour with costs.’

On this occasion, a photographer was the victim, but in a case that came to court a few weeks later, it was photographers who practised to deceive. William Lee and Joseph Bellenger were charged with obtaining money by false pretences from Harry Witt, landlord of the Dock Hotel.<sup>4</sup> They had persuaded him to commission a picture of his premises, shown him a negative, taken an order for half a dozen copies and charged him four shillings in advance. They claimed to represent ‘a large firm doing business in London and Ramsgate’, and their receipt, furnished with a printed heading and taken from an official-looking receipt book, dispelled any uncertainty Witt may have felt. He was even persuaded to part with a further 17 shillings for copies of a family portrait. The prints were promised for the following Wednesday or Thursday.

No prints arrived. Lee and Bellenger had moved on to Peterborough, where they were found and arrested. The police visited the London and Ramsgate addresses of their supposed business and found two private dwellings, at each of which had accumulated a number of letters querying the non-delivery of photographs. At the London house an anxious telegram from Witt had also been delivered. It was established that Bellenger had

once lodged briefly at the London address and that Lee had been a similarly brief visitor in Ramsgate, but that their residence had not been recent and that there was no photographic equipment at either place.

The defence claimed that bad weather had prevented the accused from printing up the negatives and that 'there was not the slightest evidence to sustain the charge'. (It was, incidentally, quite usual to expose printing frames in the open air, but three weeks was still rather longer than needed, however clouded the sky.) The magistrates found it necessary to confer at some length before reaching the perhaps surprising conclusion that the case had not been proved. The Mayor, in his role as chairman of the bench, 'cautioned them to be careful as to their dealings in future', and the prisoners were discharged.

Meanwhile, the town's newest photographers, Wallis and Manders, had launched themselves on the market with some panache. They took over the Woodhouse studio from Manders' uncle on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1877, and they used that week's issue of the *Lynn Advertiser* to promote their 'King's Lynn Photographic Rooms, 7, Blackfriars Street, King's Lynn'.

This was not a change of address. Woodhouse and Prout had consistently identified the business as being in Blackfriars Road, and here were their successors claiming to be in Blackfriars Street – but the studio had not moved. Blackfriars Street had come into being in 1867, when North Cough Lane was widened and officially renamed,<sup>5</sup> and it had swallowed up the western end of Blackfriars Road. Trade directories had reflected the change in the mid-1860s,<sup>6</sup> but local usage had been slow to catch up, and Woodhouse had persisted in using Road rather than Street in advertisements and on carte mounts. Wallis and Manders, naturally enough, adopted the new form of address.

In the body of their first advertisement, the new proprietors set out their stall:

Wallis and Manders, Photographers, have much pleasure in announcing that they have opened the above studio (for many years successfully carried on by Mr. Woodhouse) for the production of Portraits in any style, and at prices consistent with good work. In every instance a satisfactory portrait is guaranteed to all who may favour them with a sitting.<sup>7</sup>

They planned to continue the Woodhouse speciality of stippling, and they were less coy than he in describing just what the technique could achieve.

All negatives will be retouched, thus securing the beautiful softness so much admired in the Vienna Photographs. By their process of Stippling, all wrinkles, freckles, scars, &c., may be evaded.

They also had something new to offer the market in the form of collotype portraits, which, 'for the first time introduced into Lynn, are quite a novelty'. The claim to novelty was reasonable enough, but the usefulness of the collotype for everyday subjects in a

portrait studio might perhaps be questioned. It was an early photomechanical process and could sustain good-quality reproductions over lengthy print runs. Its sharpness of detail and subtlety of tone were attractive, but few portrait customers can have needed the several hundred copies the process could offer.

The advertisement went on to promote photographs with fancy borders and with enamelled finishing for permanence of image, and the public was reminded that the substantial Woodhouse negative stock had been retained and could still be printed from. Then one final point was made, and it sounded a rather combative note.

Please note: – *The only Photographic Artists and Colourists in the town who execute all work on the premises.*

The italics were theirs, and this was the opening shot in a skirmish in which Lynn photographers sought to distinguish themselves from the competition. The assertion produced no immediate reaction, so it may be that the town's other professionals did put some work out for finishing. But Wallis and Manders were already looking for other ways to increase custom and, in the following month, the two young men announced a new idea to celebrate the Mart.

Martage Presents. Quite a Novelty and News for All. All Persons Patronizing Wallis and Manders, (Late Woodhouse), Photographers, 7, Blackfriars Street, King's Lynn, during the Mart, will receive a Martage of 7 to the half-dozen, and 15 to the dozen of our celebrated enamelled collo-type and fancy border portraits. We are the only Photographers who work these processes in Lynn, and invite an inspection. In all sittings we undertake to give satisfaction, and guarantee our portraits will never fade. Cheapest and best house in town.<sup>8</sup>

By now the Dexters were ready to counter the Wallis and Manders campaign with their own claims to distinction. They still maintained a degree of diversification, continuing to keep a stock of bags and other fancy goods after Mrs Bayes had moved out.<sup>9</sup> But they could certainly refer to their main business with pride. After all, they were offering photographic expertise that had been honed over a quarter-century.

Lynn Mart. Persons wanting a really good Likeness, should ask for and see Mrs. Dexter, of twenty-five years' practical experience in Photography, who personally attends upon all Photography, no assistants being allowed in the gallery. Strangers should ask for the Athenaeum, as the Photographic Rooms are directly opposite.<sup>10</sup>

It will be noted that 'a really good Likeness' is ambiguous. Depending on how it is read, it can sound simply enthusiastic, or it can suggest that other claims to quality are questionable. It will also be noted that Sarah Dexter herself was, as ever, considered the studio's unique selling point.

Clearly, the Dexters considered this announcement a suitable riposte to the attention-seeking Wallis and Manders, for, having removed the reference to the Mart, they ran a revised version of it with some frequency well into the next year.

The newcomers were soon ready to place their next advertisement, for which they ceased to call their studio the King's Lynn Photographic Rooms and referred to it more snappily as 'Camera House'. The main text was a mixture of old and new copy. They begged 'to inform the inhabitants of Lynn and county generally that their studio is now open for the production of portraits in all styles, at lowest possible prices consistent with good work.'<sup>11</sup> They reminded the public that 'We are the only Photographers in Lynn who work the collo-type and fancy border processes, and as we enamel, guarantee our portraits will never fade.' They claimed to 'make portraits of children a study, and work an almost instantaneous process, thereby securing successful results', and they mentioned the Woodhouse archive, their habit of retouching, and their copying, enlarging and colouring services. They concluded, '*Please note, we are the cheapest and best in the town.*'

Two months later, in a new advertisement that also repeated a selection of their earlier themes, they ventured the notion that they were now a settled and respected part of the photographic scene.

This Establishment is now well and favourably known, not only in Lynn, but throughout the entire county, for the excellence of the work produced. An inspection of portraits in every style and consisting entirely of visitors and residents of Lynn, respectfully solicited.<sup>12</sup>

They wound up the notice by insisting that 'Our portraits are the best, and our prices the lowest', and by giving their business hours as from nine in the morning until seven at night. (Evidently, they were making full use of the lengthening May evenings.)

The Dexters had already made their response to the flurry of Wallis and Manders advertising. Robert Wright, predictably, sought no more press publicity than he ever had. But Edwin Bullock, probably the most irascible of the town's photographers, had also maintained an uncharacteristic silence. It may be that he was still smarting from his latest disappointment in court. By June, however, he was ready to enter the fray with improved facilities and reduced fees.

First-Class Photography. Great Reduction in Price. E. Bullock, Photographer and Photographic Publisher, 4, London Road, Lynn, having made extensive alterations in his printing plant, is now enabled to make a considerable reduction in prices, still maintaining the superior quality for which his Photographs have long been noted throughout West Norfolk. Reduced Prices (for cash only): Cartes de Visite, 4/6 per Dozen. Other sizes in proportion.<sup>13</sup>

The mention of 'superior quality' was wholly consistent with the image of himself that Bullock had always sought to project, but specific price details were new. He had

previously been no more precise in print than ‘Prices will be strictly moderate’. It is therefore not clear just how severely he had cut his prices, but they were still much more expensive than the two shillings per half dozen being charged by Woodhouse and Wright in the early years of the decade.

Like the Dexters, Bullock also chose to emphasise his experience, arguing that ‘The work from Bullock’s Establishment is well known, and has stood the test of years.’ He did, however, add three questionable years with the claim ‘Established 1862’. (Perhaps this should be viewed charitably as referring to the photographer rather than the studio: whilst he did not open his Lynn premises until 1865, he had been operating in the Manchester area for a while before that.) The most dramatic part of this advertisement – set in the italics that were favoured for aggressive statements – was a direct attack on Wallis and Manders.

*E.B. would caution the public against being duped by ignorant pretenders who endeavour to make up for lack of ability by the most impudent and mendacious assertions.*

This was not the first time that Bullock had been stung into adopting an insulting tone. Back in 1869, when Woodhouse was cutting prices, he declined ‘to enter into a reckless competition with inferior artists’. But ‘inferior’ was almost mild when compared with ‘ignorant’, ‘impudent’ and ‘mendacious’.

The next issue of the *Lynn Advertiser* carried his competitors’ response, and they judged it well. They didn’t snap or snarl, but they needled very effectively. Describing themselves as ‘The only artists in Lynn brought up to the profession’, they went on:

The immense quantity of portraits taken, and numerous testimonials received, prove that we are most successful in pleasing. Our portraits are of such a superior quality and such a high finish, that they are unequalled in the town. Our speciality will be: pleasing work, best quality, and most delicate finish, combined with prices considerably lower than advertised by others. Note. – Wallis and Manders for the best and cheapest portraits.<sup>14</sup>

There was matter enough here at which Bullock could take offence, including the claim to be the only local photographers ‘brought up to the profession’. It was a debatable point. Both the Dexters’ sons had grown up in the business, but William had branched out as a poulterer, and Walter was currently running a studio in Northamptonshire. Their daughter, Alice, had also worked in the trade when she was young, but she was now married and out of the family home.<sup>15</sup> Robert Wright’s son, Jasper, would eventually succeed his father and may already have been gaining some experience in the studio. But he was still only fifteen and some way from being a photographer in his own right. As for Edwin Bullock, he may have helped his much older brother, Henry, when he was practising in Lynn back in the early 1850s. He was in his late teens at the time, and his engagement with photography may have begun then. He might therefore have considered

himself no less brought up to the trade than Victor Manders or Christopher Wallis. As it turned out though, what most angered Bullock was the heading of the new advertisement:

Wallis and Manders, Photographers, Camera House, 7, Blackfriars Street, King's Lynn. (Branch studio, 13, St Thomas Street, Weymouth.)

It was the reference to a branch studio that caused such offence. It conjured up a picture of the two young men building an empire, and Bullock found that disturbing. In fact, he didn't believe it. His next advertisement made no mention of his suspicions. Indeed, it seemed almost bland.

First-Class Photography. Photographs by Bullock are now offered at prices no higher than those ordinarily charged for the commonest description of work. Cartes-de-Visites 4/6 per Dozen (For Cash Only.) Bullock's photographs are well known throughout West Norfolk, and need no further recommendation.<sup>16</sup>

There was, admittedly, the hint of a sneer in 'the commonest description of work', but 'need no further recommendation' suggests a refusal to engage in combat. Bullock was biding his time. Perhaps he was investigating the alleged branch studio, to check whether it really did exist. If so, it is difficult in retrospect to know what he would have discovered. There would eventually be a photographic studio at 13 St Thomas Street, Weymouth, but the first trade directory evidence of it dates from the very end of the 1880s, when it was in the hands of Billingham and Dovey. Later, in the mid-90s and on into the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was run by W. J. Dovey alone.<sup>17</sup> Evidence of earlier photographic use of the address has not been found. In 1875, however, there was a studio run by Thomas Samuel Wallis at 65 St Thomas Street. Thomas was the father of Christopher, and he was certainly taking photographs in the vicinity of the alleged branch studio at around the right time. Yet it is hard to believe that the two young men, who had only just embarked upon a career thanks to the interest of Victor's uncle, could claim Christopher's father's business as their rather distant subsidiary. Bullock's enquiries, at any rate, led him to the conclusion that his rivals were indulging delusions of grandeur.

So, five weeks after the mention of the Weymouth premises, he made his views known. His advertisement was a simple re-run of his previous notice, except for one very brief addition. At the bottom, after 'no further recommendation', he appended five words.

Branch studio – *'In the Moon.'*<sup>18</sup>

The italics dripped scorn. Nevertheless, just in case readers failed to understand the satire, he returned to the attack in the following issue. Once again, the main body of his announcement was the same as before, but this time, he ended with a conundrum:

"Con. Why is our branch studio not a hit? – Because it is a myth. – This conundrum is of such a superior quality, and such a high finish, that it is not to be equalled in Lynn."<sup>19</sup>

A few attentive readers of the *Lynn Advertiser* may have recognised in the last sentence a mocking parody of the self-praise in Wallis and Manders's most recent advertisement. Rather more will have understood that Bullock was accusing the pair of dishonestly inflating their own importance.

Then, it seemed, everything went quiet. Photographers continued to publicise themselves, but the animosity had apparently evaporated. Bullock reverted to the original version of his current advert, dropping all reference to branch studios, and continued to pay for its appearance with some regularity through August and September. The Dexters ran repeats of their 'really good likeness' advertisement well into the autumn (and, in due course, on into 1878). Wallis and Manders had already dropped the reference to a Weymouth branch in their latest notice, which, though bursting with self-confidence, was – by the standards of the moment – scarcely contentious.

The Old Established Photographic Studio, 7 Blackfriars Street, Lynn. Wallis and Manders continue to give universal satisfaction in the production of portraits, as is evinced by the increasing patronage bestowed upon them. They are especially successful, not only with adults, but with children's portraits, obtaining by their process the most natural and charming results, and solicit a trial from those who may not yet have visited them. Large orders now on hand, and only the best materials are used.<sup>20</sup>

They could not, though, quite refrain from making comparisons and, raising themselves to county-wide status, labelled their business 'The cheapest and best Photographic Studio in Norfolk'.

This advertisement, too, continued into the autumn. Then, towards the end of November, came a bombshell.

Photography. E. Bullock, in retiring from the profession, begs to return his sincere thanks to his numerous friends and patrons for the liberal support he has received during the many years he has practised in Lynn, and to solicit a continuance of the same for his successors, Messrs. Wallis and Manders, whom he has great pleasure in recommending as artists well qualified to maintain the reputation of the establishment for really first-class work.<sup>21</sup>

Less than six months earlier Wallis and Manders had been 'ignorant pretenders' who were given to making 'impudent and mendacious assertions'. Now they were recommended with 'great pleasure' as 'artists well qualified' to produce 'really first-class work'. Somehow, they had contrived to silence Bullock's criticisms and buy out his business. Now, in an announcement placed below his, they really could boast of a branch studio:

Wallis and Manders, No. 4, London Road, and No. 7, Blackfriars Street, Lynn, having purchased the whole of Mr. Bullock's valuable apparatus, negatives, working formulae, &c., will now be in a position to add to their business

landscape and architectural work, also the higher branches of portraiture, in all of which it will be their constant endeavour to supply the best class of work upon the lowest remunerative terms. The publishing department will be carried on as hitherto at No. 4, London Road, the whole of Mr. Bullock's negatives having been secured. Portraits also from Mr. Bullock's back negatives, for five years past, can be had to order.<sup>22</sup>

Beneath that was printed a further and more routine advertisement, which was to be repeated with some regularity over the following year. It was given over in part to a recapitulation of earlier themes: children's portraits, 'natural and charming' results, and solicitation of a trial. But the opening struck a self-congratulatory note which, given the venom of recent competition, was perhaps understandable.

Wallis and Manders, whilst thanking the inhabitants of Lynn and county for the liberal patronage bestowed upon them, beg to say that the remarkable success of their studio, and the wide-spread celebrity of their photographs, furnish a sufficient guarantee for the excellence of the work produced.<sup>23</sup>

Bullock's reason for selling out to Wallis and Manders is unknown. The *Lynn Advertiser* commented on his departure in the same issue, but it shed no light on the reason, referring merely to 'Mr. Bullock, who retires', and informing readers that Wallis and Manders would henceforth carry on their business at both studios.<sup>24</sup>

Bullock can hardly have been happy about this development. His earlier contempt for the young photographers had sounded real enough, and it is hard to believe he now took any pleasure in singing their praises. Whatever his feelings, however, his adversaries were suddenly in possession of the London Road studio. Possible melodramatic explanations of this changed state of affairs come readily to mind, ranging from threatened legal proceedings to more informal kinds of intimidation. The litigious Bullock was not normally one to give up without a fight, but something had happened that forced him to retire and to make public expression of approval for two men he had previously scorned.

There was, however, a further complication. In the same eventful edition of the *Lynn Advertiser* that carried news of the studio takeover there also appeared a notice by Charles Barrett, grocer of 97 Norfolk Street, that 'he has purchased the stock-in-trade of Mr. F. Bullock, 100 High Street, where he will commence on Tuesday the 20<sup>th</sup> of this November, 1877.'<sup>25</sup> The suddenness of this transfer of business may be judged by the fact that Barrett had begun trading in the High Street shop four days before the newspaper appeared.

Frederick Bullock was Edwin's brother, who had taken on their father's grocery business by 1861, and whose bankruptcy in 1862 had required the intervention of the oldest brother, photographer Henry Bullock. Now, it seems, he was in further difficulties. On the face of it, his business had been running well enough, and his recent advertisements for 'Salmon, Lobster, Cove Oysters and Sardines, ... anchovy paste, potted meats and soups, of every description, ... Australian Beef, Mutton, Kangaroo' had been confident in

tone, assuring customers that these ‘and many other articles ... too numerous to enumerate are now being offered at moderate prices.’<sup>26</sup> He had, admittedly, expressed some anxiety about the effect that the proposed repeal of the Norfolk Estuary Bill would have on trade, but so, too, had many of the town’s leading businessmen.<sup>27</sup> On a more personal level, no evidence has been found of ill-feeling between Frederick Bullock and Charles Barrett. Nevertheless, something had gone wrong, Frederick lost little time in leaving the town, and before long there appeared this small ad in the *Lynn Advertiser*.

F. Bullock tenders his thanks to his numerous customers for the liberal patronage bestowed upon him during the many years of his residence in Lynn. He being anxious to collect his accounts as quickly as possible, will be obliged by Cheques or Post Office orders, directed to F. Bullock, Swavesey, Cambridgeshire.<sup>28</sup>

The impression is of one anxious to call in debts but not anxious to stay in Lynn to do so. For both brothers to cease trading in the same week seems rather remarkable, and some kind of causal connection seems likely. Perhaps Frederick’s affairs had now involved another of his brothers, and had done so to the detriment of that brother’s own business. No record, however, of a second bankruptcy appears, as would be routine, in the *London Gazette*. It may even be that Frederick was, in some way, caught up in Edwin’s downfall, rather than vice versa. All that can be said for certain, whatever parts Frederick or Wallis and Manders played in events, is that Edwin Bullock lost his studio and left Lynn in what cannot have been happy circumstances.

But talk of retirement was premature. Edwin Bullock was still only in his mid-forties, and he went on to rebuild his career.

By September 1880 he had moved to Luton in Bedfordshire, taken over the manufacturing premises of a Mr Stratford, ‘erected a commodious Studio’ on the site, and was ‘prepared to take first-class Photographs in every branch of the Art, and trusts by offering the highest class of work at the lowest possible prices to merit a share of public patronage and support’.<sup>29</sup> His advertisements featured the Prince of Wales’ feathers over the words ‘By Appointment’, and he was promoting ‘Bullock’s New Instantaneous Process’, which allowed portraits to be taken in one twentieth of the usual time’. (This indicates that he was now using the new pre-prepared dry photographic plates, which reduced exposure times to about one second.) Most striking, however, was a heading added to an advertisement he placed in December: ‘Photography for the Million!!!’.<sup>30</sup> Clearly, he had decided emulate the approach of his old rival, William Woodhouse, though his new-found role as man-of-the-people didn’t deter him from asking sixpence a dozen more for his cartes than he had charged in his later days in Lynn.

Though still in Luton for the 1881 census,<sup>31</sup> by the summer of 1883 he had left to work in the Bedford and Leighton Buzzard branches of the Alexandra Photographic Company.<sup>32</sup> The Leighton Buzzard business was sold off the following year,<sup>33</sup> but Bullock continued as principal of the Bedford studio, advertising for ‘a Respectable Youth as Apprentice’ in 1887,<sup>34</sup> and making his last appearance in a Bedford trade directory in 1890. In 1891, however, he had a studio in Leamington, Warwickshire, where his son, Thomas Brame

Bullock, was assisting him,<sup>35</sup> and he was still listed there in 1896.<sup>36</sup> Thomas continued in the business and, by 1901, was operating in King's Norton, Worcestershire,<sup>37</sup> but Edwin had by then retired to Brighton, Sussex, (where one of his daughters, Emily, played her part in the family tradition by working as a photographer).<sup>38</sup> His final move was to Lowestoft in Suffolk, where he was recorded by the 1911 census,<sup>39</sup> and where he died in 1913.<sup>40</sup>

Wallis and Manders, meanwhile, were left in Lynn to make the most of their triumph. They set about trying to secure Bullock's share of the market as well as his premises, and the key to this was a rebranding of the London Road studio. Their own names had hitherto been associated with low prices and they had inherited William Woodhouse's tradition of 'Cartes for the million'. Operating as Wallis and Manders in Blackfriars Street, they maintained that policy. But Bullock had aimed at a higher sector of the market: he had attracted customers who were willing to pay a little more, and had derived further income from taking and publishing local views. So Wallis and Manders renamed his studio the King's Lynn Photographic Company and sought to follow in his footsteps. They had already mentioned their intention of moving into 'landscape and architectural work, also the higher branches of portraiture' and of using the London Road premises as their publishing base. In the summer of 1878, they publicised their new venture.

The King's Lynn Photographic Company, 4, London Road, Lynn, are furnishing the best Portraits ever seen in Lynn, without extra charge. None but thorough artists employed.<sup>41</sup>

They particularly recommended 'the "superexcellence" Carte de Visites, now sold at Five Shillings per Dozen. These are unequalled for quality and style, and give the utmost satisfaction.' (It appears that 'without extra charge' applied to a line other than the 'superexcellence cartes', which cost sixpence a dozen more than Bullock had been charging.) Much was made, too, of the out-of-studio work, with the promise of 'Carriages always ready to proceed to any part of town or country to photograph Groups, Landscapes, Architecture, &c.' This was a side of the business that the new dry plates would make much easier to tackle.

From this point on, the two studios were marketed separately, with each advertising along now established lines and each targeting its own market segment. It is known that Christopher Wallis took over the management of the London Road studio,<sup>42</sup> so it seems probable that Victor Manders devoted his attention mainly to Blackfriars Street. As the King's Lynn Photographic Company, they grandly advertised for trainees and, even more grandly, expected the trainees to pay for the privilege:

The King's Lynn Photographic Company requires forthwith two pupils to learn the profession in all its branches. A premium required.<sup>43</sup>

In their old studio, as Wallis and Manders, they resumed the practice of making special offers with a revival of their 'martage presents': '7 to the Half-dozen and 15 to the Dozen

to all who favour them with sittings or extra copies from back negatives. All orders executed within a week.’<sup>44</sup>

(It was, incidentally, a lively Mart for photographers that year. When the excited crush of people damaged their canvas studio, ripping the fabric and breaking four support poles, Frederick Tyler and William Gothard lashed out to protect their property and ended up in court charged with assault.)<sup>45</sup>

On the limited evidence of surviving photographs by Wallis and Manders, it is difficult to see any marked difference between the outputs of the two studios, and there is little suggestion of new investment. The former Woodhouse studio looks much as before, though there may be a new or re-upholstered chair. Glimpses of Bullock’s familiar furniture – a table and a heavily padded chair – are to be seen in photographs from the King’s Lynn Photographic Company. At some point, the Woodhouse plinth, with its satyr’s-head embellishment, was carried round the corner and across the road to the newly acquired branch.

Wallis and Manders now had control of the facilities, the goodwill and the negative archives of both William Woodhouse and Edwin Bullock, but their strong market position did not last very long. Both men were young and perhaps restless; it is possible, too, that expansion had overstretched their resources. For whatever reason, in August 1879 advertisements for the two studios stopped appearing in the Lynn press. Victor Manders was the first to leave. He was still in the town for his 1879 marriage to Charlotte Gent, but the couple had moved to Walthamstow, Essex, by the time their first child was born early in 1881.<sup>46</sup> Manders ran a studio there, in Hoe Street, for at least a decade.<sup>47</sup> In later years, though, he gave up his photographic business and returned to Lynn to become Secretary of the YMCA.<sup>48</sup> He eventually retired to Wereham<sup>49</sup> and lived to the age of 84.<sup>50</sup>

Christopher Wallis continued to run the King’s Lynn Photographic Company for a little longer. He, too, married while he was in Lynn (to Ellen Jane Winkfield in 1880), and he was still in the town in 1881. His first child was born there early in the year; the census of April 23<sup>rd</sup> recorded him at 4 London Road,<sup>51</sup> and a small ad in the *British Journal of Photography* identified him as a Lynn photographer seeking to exchange some equipment. He was looking to trade ‘a Grubb’s C patent lens, 3 inches diameter, for views and groups’, a pair of stereo lenses and a portrait lens for ‘backgrounds and accessories’.<sup>52</sup> This suggests a photographer who is trying to increase the variety of his studio furnishings and not, therefore, a photographer who is thinking of moving on in the immediate future. But he had given up the studio by the summer of 1881,<sup>53</sup> and he and Ellen were soon to be found in Newport, Monmouthshire, where a series of children were born to them between 1883 and 1890.<sup>54</sup> In fact, a part of this period was spent running a studio in partnership with his mother, ‘trading as C. and M. Wallis, Clarence Place, Newport’, and the business eventually passed entirely into his hands in 1888, on his mother’s retirement.<sup>55</sup> A series of studios followed in the coming years: in 1891 he was operating in Porth, East Glamorgan;<sup>56</sup> then, in 1892, he opened a studio in Market

Harborough;<sup>57</sup> he ran a business in Belgrave Gate, Leicester, at the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century;<sup>58</sup> and by 1911 he was in Aston, Warwickshire.<sup>59</sup>

The young men had launched themselves on the Lynn scene with a blaze of energy and had seen off one of the town's well-established photographers. But the blaze was not sustained, and just when it showed the first sign of turning to embers, a new photographer appeared in the town. His name was John Smith, and, despite the problems he was to encounter, his fire would burn more steadily and for much longer.

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- 1 *Lynn Advertiser*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1879.
  - 2 *British Journal of Photography*, 1877, p108.
  - 3 *Lynn Advertiser*, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1877.
  - 4 Details and subsequent quotations from *Lynn Advertiser*, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1877.
  - 5 David Higgins, *The Remaking of King's Lynn*, p46, (Phoenix Publications, 2008).
  - 6 w.e.f. Harrod's *Directory of Norfolk*, 1868. (Last use of 'Road': Kelly's *Directory of Norfolk*, 1864.
  - 7 *Lynn Advertiser*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1877.
  - 8 *Lynn Advertiser*, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1877.
  - 9 *Lynn Advertiser*, 26<sup>th</sup> May 1877.
  - 10 *Lynn Advertiser*, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1877.
  - 11 *Lynn Advertiser*, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1877.
  - 12 *Lynn Advertiser*, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1877.
  - 13 *Lynn Advertiser*, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1877.
  - 14 *Lynn Advertiser*, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1877.
  - 15 Civil Registration index of marriages, December 1872, King's Lynn, volume 4b, page 955.
  - 16 *Lynn Advertiser*, 16<sup>th</sup> June 1877.
  - 17 Michael Hallett, *Victorian and Edwardian Professional Photographers in Dorset*, (Royal Photographic Society, 1987).
  - 18 *Lynn Advertiser*, 14<sup>th</sup> July 1877.
  - 19 *Lynn Advertiser*, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1877.
  - 20 *Lynn Advertiser*, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1877.
  - 21 *Lynn Advertiser*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1877.
  - 22 Ibid.
  - 23 Ibid.
  - 24 Ibid.
  - 25 Ibid.
  - 26 E.g. *Lynn Advertiser*, 9<sup>th</sup> September 1876.
  - 27 *Lynn Advertiser*, 10<sup>th</sup> March 1877.
  - 28 *Lynn Advertiser*, 19<sup>th</sup> January 1878.
  - 29 *Luton Times and Advertiser*, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1880.
  - 30 *Luton Times and Advertiser*, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1880.
  - 31 1881 census: RG11, piece 1651, folio 57, page 19.
  - 32 *Leighton Buzzard Observer*, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1883.
  - 33 *Leighton Buzzard Observer*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1884.
  - 34 *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1887.
  - 35 1891 census: RG12, piece 2471, folio 69, page 3.
  - 36 Kelly, *Directory of Warwickshire*, 1896.
  - 37 1901 census: RG13, piece 2805, folio 134, page 9.
  - 38 1901 census; RG13, piece 929, folio 69, page 4.
  - 39 1911 census; RG14, reg. district 218, enumerator 16, piece 11051, schedule 316.
  - 40 UK & Ireland Find a Grave Index.
  - 41 *Lynn Advertiser*, 6<sup>th</sup> July 1878.
  - 42 Kelly, *Directory of Norfolk*, 1879.

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- 43 *Lynn Advertiser*, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1878.  
44 *Lynn Advertiser*, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1879.  
45 *Lynn Advertiser*, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1879.  
46 1881 census: RG11, piece 1730, folio 75, page 38.  
47 1891 census: RG12, piece 1355, folio 4, page 1.  
48 1901 census: RG13, piece 1890, folio 90, page 16.  
49 1911 census: RG14, piece 11682, reg. district 237, enumerator 3, schedule 23.  
50 Civil Registration index of deaths: Downham, March 1940, volume 4b, page 1147.  
51 1881 census: RG11, piece 2000, folio 16, page 25.  
52 *British Journal of Photography*, 1881, page 24.  
53 *Lynn Advertiser*, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1881.  
54 1891 census: RG12, piece 4412, folio 127, page 36.  
55 *Birmingham Daily Post*, 4<sup>th</sup> July 1888.  
56 1891 census: RG12, piece 4412, folio 127, page 36.  
57 Pam Aucott and Steph Mastoris, *Harborough in Camera*, (Alan Sutton, 1992).  
58 1901 census: RG13, piece 2989, folio 105, page 14, and Bernard & Pauline Heathcote, *Leicester Photographic Studios in Victorian and Edwardian Times*, (Royal Photographic Society, 1982).  
59 1911 census: RG14, piece 18221, reg. district 385, enumerator 32, schedule 25.