

Digital Imaging Suggestions for Patrons

(As of: September, 2011)

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From the New York State Military Museum, we want to thank you for your interest in donating images to our collection. The **PRIORITY** of how we would like to see donations are (we realize that your "original photo" may be a copy):

1. Original photo
2. Our scan of your original photo
3. Professional copy of original
4. Your digital copy (scanned or digital camera)

If you would like you can mail us the original, we will scan it and return the original and a copy back to you. However, you **MUST** specify you want the original back.

As many people are opting for number 4. "Your digital copy", here are some *GUIDELINES* for donating digital images. They are not all-encompassing, but they should be helpful.

SCAN RESOLUTION

- *THE RULE OF THUMB:*
 - If original is 5x7 or larger, scan at least at 600dpi
 - If original is smaller than 5x7, scan at least at 800dpi.

FILE FORMAT

- *THE RULE:* The two most popular file formats for digital images are JPG and TIF.
 - The JPG format is called a "lossey" format because the information is compressed so that a smaller file size is achieved. This is good for websites and emails, but if the image is ever expanded in size, the "artifacts" and "pixelizations" due to interpolation will often times become visible, depending on the compression setting when saved (low, medium, high, etc).
 - The TIF format maintains virtually all of the original image information but creates a larger file size. No loss of original detail occurs when expanding the image so this format is good for archiving and maintaining as much of the original photo information as possible as well as for printing out.
- *THE RULE OF THUMB:* Always save your first scan/digital image in TIF format and keep it as your "Master Copy". After that, you can alter or resize the image anyway you like, but save this "processed" image under a different name.
 - This is where you can save the image as a *separate* JPG file if you like.

DONATING A DIGITAL IMAGE

- *THE RULE:* If you donate a JPG image that has been compressed very much (typical), this is a big problem for us and renders your image virtually useless. A TIF image, though much larger in file size, is ideal for your donation.
 - Most people use the JPG file format for scanning by default. The file sizes of JPG images are small enough to share in emails and they look good on your computer screen.
 - A JPG image looks good on your computer screen because the monitor uses the equivalent of 72dpi as a standard and is optimized for such. When you zoom in on your image or print it out, it will likely not look so good.
 - Digital cameras usually default to JPG, so generally use the highest resolution setting possible, or in many newer cameras, there will be a TIF setting.
 - If there is no TIF setting, almost all digital cameras have a RAW setting that preserves everything about the photo and in post-processing you can convert this RAW file to TIF.

- *THE RULE OF THUMB:*

- o **FIRST CHOICE:** Burn your images to a CD and BRING THE CD IN OR MAIL IT to the Research Center
 - If you want your CD back, we will copy the images and return the CD. Give us the highest resolution possible, preferably a copy of your Master Copy TIF.
 - If your images are in JPG format, make them as high in resolution as is reasonable, preferably your original image size
 - Yes, you can save a JPG image to a TIF file—it won't give you better resolution than the original JPG, but it will avoid the loss of even more digital information that occurs every time you "resave" a JPG file, usually after some kind of processing.
 - ALWAYS include identifying information for each image subject. The easiest way is to name the file after the person and then include on the CD a TEXT file that includes names and birth dates and/or death dates. Also include complete donor information—name, address, telephone, and email if possible.
 - NEVER use slide show presentations or other software to enhance or supplement the CD contents. These kinds of programs compress image files to an unusable low resolution. Images and descriptions only, please.
- o **SECOND CHOICE:** If you EMAIL your images, the above still applies, however:
 - There is no need to include the image in the body of the email text. Instead, simply attach the image to the email.
 - There are some email systems that limit the total size of their sending or receiving emails, including attachments, to 5MB (megabytes). A single TIF image can be larger than that, so if your email doesn't go through because it is too big, you would need to shrink the TIF image, possibly to the point of converting it to a JPG.
 - If you have to convert your TIF to a JPG to shrink its size, keep the JPG resolution at the highest practical setting.
 - If your original image is a JPG, KEEP IT AT ITS ORIGINAL JPG RESOLUTION unless it is greater than 5MB (unlikely).
 - If you have more than one image and the sum of their sizes is greater than 5MB, simply send them as separate emails and they should do just fine. You can tell if you are going over the 5MB limit by looking at the Information Bar above the text of your email where the names of attached files are shown. The size of each image being attached will also be reported, typically in KB (kilobytes), e.g. "150KB". Remember that 1000KB equals 1MB, so the practical limit for email attachments is 5000KB, or 5MB.

Thank you for contributing to our collection. In the end, your relatives—past, present, and future—will benefit greatly from your efforts, and that's what we all want.

So, to wrap up:

Please scan your images at at least 600 DPI and save as TIFs.

If the resulting file is under 8MB then you can email to us at: Jim.Gandy1@us.army.mil

If the file is larger than 8MB please write it to a CD and mail.

Mail CDs to:

The New York State Military Museum

Attention: Research Center

61 Lake Avenue

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866