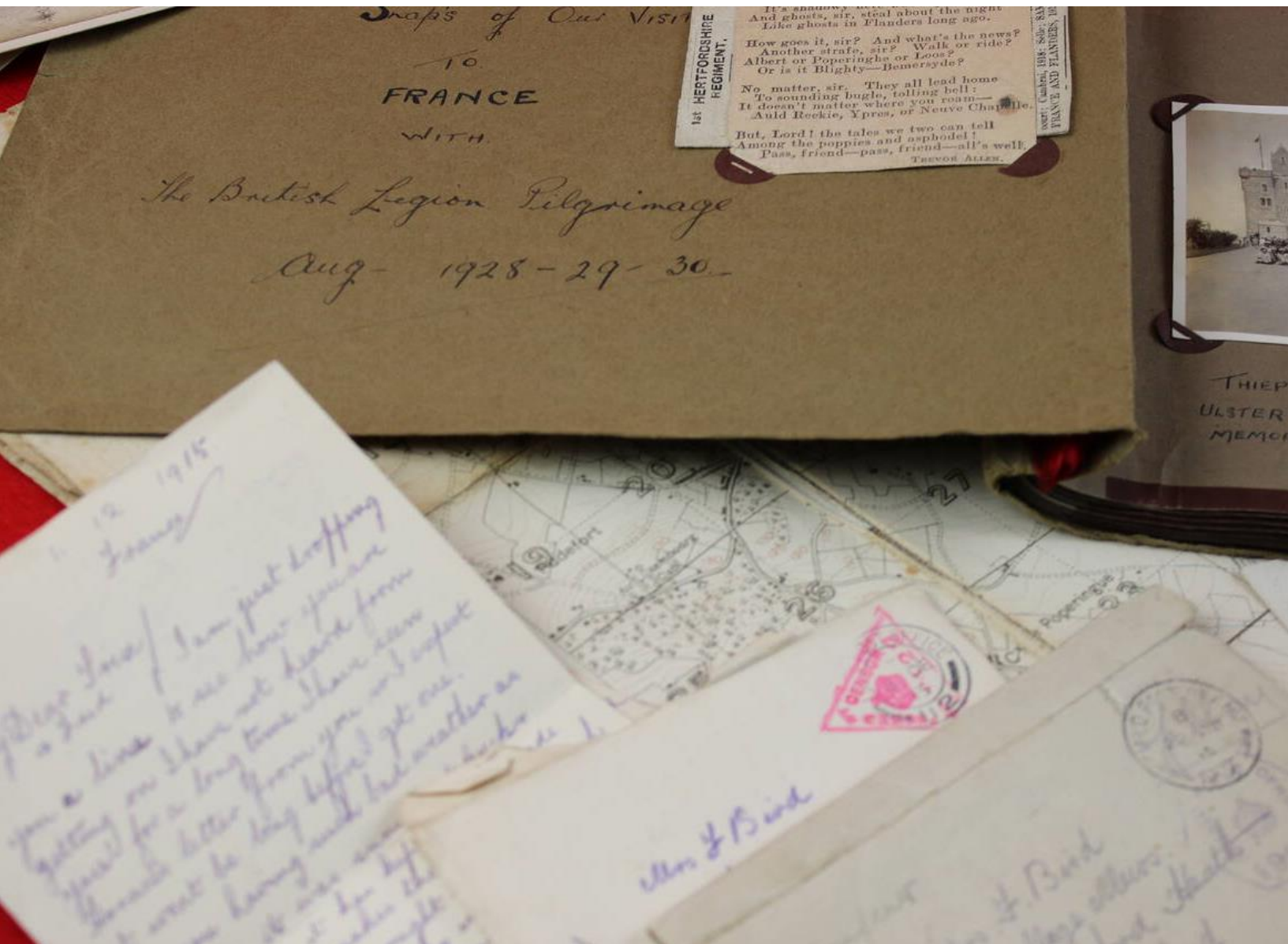


TELLING OUR STORY

A GUIDE TO DIGITISING YOUR FINDINGS



LIVE ON





ABOUT TELLING OUR STORY

As we approach 2021, and the Legion's centenary year, we will be *Telling Our Story* by asking members to collect and share the materials and stories that chart the history of the charity. Through printed materials, letters, Legion records, photos, and personal recollections we can tell the human story of the Legion over the past century. While demonstrating our record of togetherness, Remembrance, and caring for the Armed Forces community we will signpost our role in the future.

Our Membership are truly representative of the care and compassion shown to those who served and sacrificed, and hold the torch of Remembrance to those who did not return. Our ambition is to inspire our Membership Community to delve into their memories, cupboards and attics, and share the best of the Legion to enable the organisation to both tell and preserve that history.

This booklet offers guidance on how our members can take part as we embark on *Telling Our Story*, from identifying key findings to following our simple step-by-step instruction to digitising your items and stories.

Topics in this Document

Key Themes

Digitising Documents and Artefacts

- Digitising Your Materials
- Equipment and Set-Up
- Handling Archive Material – Good Practice
- Digitising Documents
- Digitising Books
- Digitising Photographs
- Digitising Object

Upload an Access Your Materials

My Legion Story – Personal Testimony



OUR THEMES

We have identified key themes that reflect the roles our Membership play in Telling Our Story - past and present. When looking for content to share you may wish to consider whether it fits in with one of the themes:



People and the Legion

In Britain from the late teens and early nineteen twenties up to today. Focussing on the major national figures to the stalwarts of branches and communities. They have shaped the Legion's character and history.



Poppies in production

How poppies are produced today and how that has grown from small beginnings in the early 1920s. The history of the poppy and the campaigns the Legion has used to encourage people to donate for their poppy.



Remembrance Day Service

Beginning with the story of the Cenotaph and the burial of the Unknown Warrior, a focus on the history and act of commemoration at the national and local level.



The Legion on the Move

Focussing on the practical way the Legion has helped men to find work and develop skills and the disabled men who found work in the poppy factories.



The Legion and its world-wide community

An opportunity to show how world-wide the Legion's reach is and how relevant the Legion can be in today's society, reaching across cultural and age boundaries and showing how involved it is in community projects.



Trauma and Rehabilitation

At the heart of membership is assisting veterans in their community.



Conclusion and the future

Showing how the Legion looks forward to the next twenty-five, fifty, one hundred years and how it has to react and change to stay relevant to the times.



DIGITISING DOCUMENTS AND ARTEFACTS

Now we have identified our key themes for *Telling Our Story*, we can further assist you in taking part by following our simple step-by-step instructions on how to digitise your materials. Read through this section to find the appropriate instructions for your artefact.

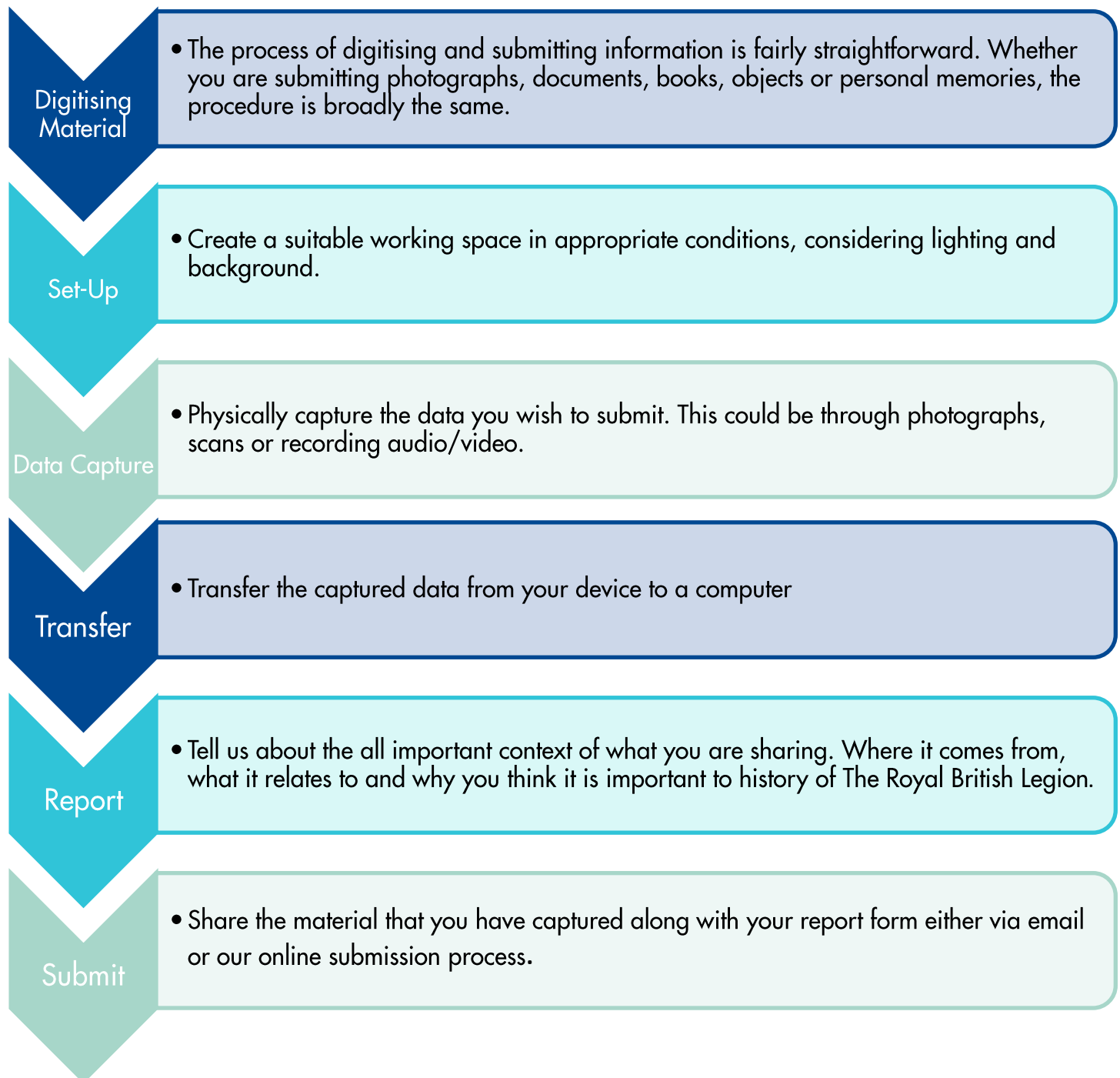
In this Section:

- Digitising your Materials
- Equipment and Setup
- Handling Archive Material
- Digitising Documents
- Digitising Books
- Digitising Photographs
- Digitising Objects
- Upload and Send Images
- FAQs



DIGITISING YOUR MATERIALS

The process of digitising means you are making a digital copy of your findings by taking a photograph on a digital device and sharing that image with us by email. Please see below for a diagram explaining the digitising process.





EQUIPMENT AND SET-UP

The process of digitising objects, documents and artefacts is relatively straightforward. There are of course many ways to achieve digitisation. We are not looking for professional studio quality images but rather consistent and clear images which capture the important information associated to the subject you are photographing.

A perfectly usable image of a reasonable and consistent quality can be created with materials you find around the house and by following a few basic guidelines. To do so you will need the following equipment:

Tip: For further instruction on equipment, set-ups and digitisation, join us for a one-to-one informative session with our Legion historical consultant, Dan Hill. To find out more join the Legion 100 Yammer Group.

- **A clear flat surface** – A kitchen or dining room table would work fine
- **A clean white or light-coloured material** – A tablecloth, bed sheet or any large clean, flat piece of material would work. This will be used as your background.
- **A suitable camera** – This could be any digital camera from a top of the range professional 'DSLR' to a reasonable quality 'smartphone' with inbuilt camera.
- **A source of natural light** – A nearby window offering natural light will help illuminate your working area and mean that you do not need to use a flash. Where possible your working area should not be in direct sunlight.
- **A piece of white card or paper** – This will be used to bounce light across any object you are photographing (particularly important for 3D objects). A piece of A4 paper or card would be suitable.
- **Objects or artefacts** – The items you wish to photograph.
- **A stack of books or a box** – This can be used as a platform for photographing 2D objects steadily and consistently.
- **A computer with internet access** – For the uploading and reporting process

If you have the above items available, you have the makings of a home photographic setup which can easily be used to capture high quality images.

Handling Archive Material – Good Practice

When it comes to dealing with historic material in a museum environment, archivists follow strict handling procedures to preserve items and prevent unnecessary damage during handling. There are a set of basic 'good practice' guidelines which you may wish to employ to avoid unnecessary damage to documents and artefacts, particularly those that are in a fragile condition or which need particular care. You may wish to consider the tips below.



Clean and dry hands – Natural oils contained in our skin can have a particularly adverse effect on old paper and photographs. Simply washing hands with soap and water before handling material will significantly reduce the risk of damage.



Avoid direct sunlight – After a significant period of time out of direct sunlight, a sudden change can have a negative effect on some items, particularly photographs. Wherever possible, try to avoid placing or leaving any material you are working with in direct sunlight.



Only use pencils – If for some reason you find you have to mark any objects (adding names on the back of a photograph for example), please ensure you only use pencil, and do not write on, circle or highlight anything on a main image itself. Pens or permanent markers should never be used.



Avoid excessive handling – Wherever possible, particularly when digitising old or damaged material, minimise the amount of time spent handling the document or artefact. Once you have something in place, try to keep it there with minimal interference.



Keep all material away from food and drink – Another obvious one, but it is important that no food or drink be kept near to any material you are working with.



Keep items in the same order – When digitising material such as multiple individual documents, consider putting them back in the same order. Documents may be in sequence for a good reason, even if this is not immediately clear.



Use flash-less photography – The harsh light emitted by using flash on a digital camera or phone can damage the quality of certain documents and photographs. Please ensure you only use a natural source of indirect sunlight when digitising material.



Keep items on a flat surface – When dealing with documents it is important that whenever possible they are kept on clean, flat surfaces. This will minimise the risk of damage from handling.



Support fragile objects or books – It is a good idea to support old books which haven't been handled for sometime. With books, it could be using a soft pillow to protect the spine or propping items underneath/behind artefacts to avoid damage. Book spines are particularly delicate.



Avoid touching damaged areas - Documents or photographs often degrade at different rates and in different parts. Aim to avoid contact with damaged parts when handling items or turning pages.



Use weights – Quite often, and particularly in the case of books or magazines, it is necessary to use a weight to hold a page open or allow for a clear photograph. When using an item as a weight, it should be soft, clean and dry, and only placed on an undamaged area of a page or document.

TIP: For more information join us for an informative Q&A session with our Legion Historical Consultant, Dan Hill. The webinar schedule will be shared with you via our Legion 100 Yammer group or by [email](#) shortly. In the meantime, if you have any queries regarding this activity, [get in touch](#) and we'll be happy to assist you with further guidance.

Digitising Documents

When it comes to digitising single pages or unbound documents, there are several key aspects we need to consider. The following is a simple guide to help you along the way. Please remember, this is only a guide and your own setup and available material may differ, so it's always worth experimenting a little.

1

Setup your photography area – Place a white sheet over a flat surface such as a table in an area with a source of natural light (but not in direct sunlight).

Assess the document you are photographing – Have a quick look and decide which bits are the important ones to capture. Will it take just one clear photograph per page or do you need to take multiple images? In most cases a single image per page will suffice.



2

Prepare your item - It is also important when handling older documents and books that we do so with clean, dry hands as the natural oils contained in our skin can damage old paper.

3

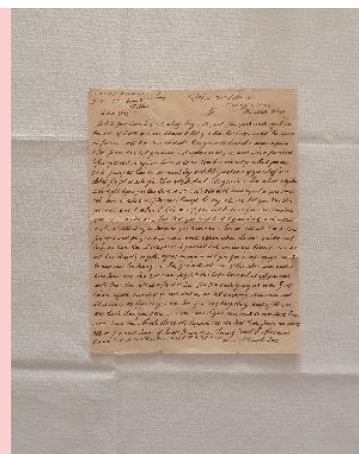
Place the document in your working area – Ideally place it in an area where the available light highlights all parts of the image equally. You can use a white card or piece of paper to prop near to a shaded area and you will see that it reflects additional light very effectively. Alternatively, a darker piece of card or large object can be used to shade areas which are reflecting too much light.



4

Line-up your image – The general rule of thumb is that all books and documents should be photographed from directly above the object, looking straight down. This might require a steady hand, or you can use a stack of books to one side and use a flat smartphone to balance and create a steady platform. If you have a large object, you can use the edge of a table as a platform and place the book on a surface on the floor below.

Make sure that the item you are photographing is squarely 'in frame'. All areas should be in view in your viewfinder, and if possible, squarely in the centre of the area to be photographed.

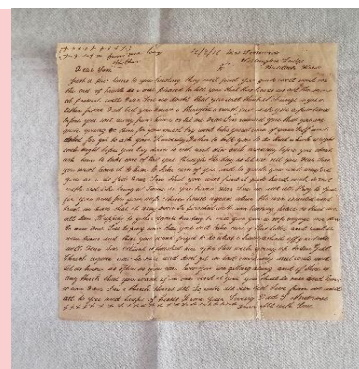


5

Take a test image – Once you are happy with the positioning of the book and the lighting, take a test photograph.

Review the test photograph – Check that all important areas are in focus, that there is sufficient light, that you are not casting a shadow over part of the image (this is sometimes difficult to avoid and takes a little experimentation), in short, make sure you are happy with the set-up.

Once you are satisfied with the above, you are ready to go!



Digitising Books

When it comes to digitising books or multi-page bound documents, there are several key aspects we need to consider. The following is a simple guide to help you along the way. Please remember, this is only a guide and your own setup and available material may differ, so it is always worth experimenting a little.

1

Setup your photography area – Place a white sheet over a flat surface such as a table in an area with a source of natural light (but not in direct sunlight).

Assess the book you are photographing – Have a quick look and decide which bits are the important ones to capture. Will it take just one clear photograph per page or do you need to take multiple images? In most cases a single image per page will suffice.



2

Prepare your item – With some books, particularly older ones, it is important to avoid damage (or further damage). Older books often have delicate spines and so require some support. A pillow or two works well as a support. It is also important when handling older documents and books that we do so with clean, dry hands as the natural oils contained in our skins can damage old paper.



3

Place the document in your working area – Ideally place it in an area where the available light highlights all parts of the image equally. You can use a white card or piece of paper to prop near to a shaded area and you will see that it reflects additional light very effectively. Alternatively, a darker piece of card or large object can be used to shade areas which are reflecting too much light.



4

Line-up your image – The general rule of thumb is that all books and documents should be photographed from directly above the object, looking straight down. This might require a steady hand, or you can use a stack of books to one side and use a flat smartphone to balance and create a steady platform. If you have a large object, you can use the edge of a table as a platform and place the book on a surface on the floor below.



5

Take and review a test image – Check that all important areas are in focus, that there is sufficient light and that words can be read clearly, that you are not casting a shadow over part of the object (this is sometimes difficult to avoid and takes a little experimentation); in short, make sure you are happy with the set-up.

You may want to try photographing two pages at a time, or if detail is important, one page may be better. Ideally, you are looking to capture the important information relevant to your object – so a clear, in focus, well lit, and well centred photograph will usually do the trick.

Once you are satisfied with the above, you are ready to go!



Digitising Photographs

When it comes to digitising photographs, there are several key aspects we need to consider. The following is a simple guide to help you along the way. Please remember, this is only a guide and your own setup and available material may differ, so it is always worth experimenting a little.

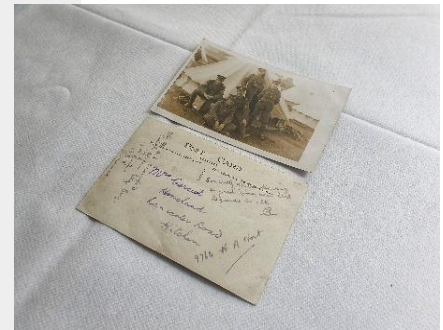
1

Setup your photography area – Place a white sheet over a flat surface such as a table in an area with a source of natural light (but not in direct sunlight).



2

Place the photograph in your working area – Ideally place it in an area where the available light highlights all parts of the image equally. You can use a white card or piece of paper to prop near to a shaded area and you will see that it reflects additional light very effectively. Alternatively, a darker piece of card or large object can be used to shade areas which are reflecting too much light.



3

Line-up your image – The general rule of thumb is that all 2D objects should be photographed from directly above, looking straight down. This might require a steady hand, or you can use a stack of books to one side and use a flat smartphone to balance and create a steady platform.



4

Make sure that the item you are photographing is squarely 'in frame'. All areas should be in view in your viewfinder, and if possible, squarely in the centre of the area to be photographed. With 3D objects it is useful to place your item to one side of your photography area, so that, where possible, the entire background of the image is the same (white material).



5

Take and review a test image – Check that all important areas are in focus, that there is sufficient light, that you are not casting a shadow over part of the image (this is sometimes difficult to avoid and takes a little experimentation); in short, make sure you are happy with the set-up.

Ideally, you are looking to capture the important information relevant to your object – so a clear, in focus, well lit, and well centred photograph will usually do the trick. **Once you are satisfied with the above, you are ready to go!**



Digitising Objects

When it comes to digitising objects, there are several key aspects we need to consider. The following is a simple guide to help you along the way. Please remember, this is only a guide and your own setup and available material may differ, so it is always worth experimenting a little.

1

Setup your photography area – Place a white sheet over a flat surface such as a table in an area with a source of natural light (but not in direct sunlight).

Assess the object you are photographing – Have a quick look and decide which aspects are the important ones to capture. Will it take just one clear photograph, or do you need to capture different sides of the object in separate images? Does the object reflect light?



2

Place the object in your working area – Ideally place it in an area where the available light highlights all parts of the object equally. You can use a white card or piece of paper to prop near to a shaded area and you will see that it reflects additional light very effectively. Alternatively, a darker piece of card or large object can be used to shade areas which are reflecting too much light.



3

Line-up your image – The general rule of thumb is that all 3D objects should be photographed from a 45-degree angle, looking from one side. Of course, this is not always the case, and you may want to experiment as to which angle suits your object best, but ideally all images would be taken from the same spot and you should change the position of the object itself rather than the photography position.



4

Make sure that the item you are photographing is 'in frame'. All areas should be in view in your viewfinder, and if possible, squarely in the centre of the area to be photographed. With 3D objects it is useful to place your item to one side of your photography area, so that where possible, the entire background of the image is the same (white material).



5

Take and review a test image – Check that all important areas are in focus, that there is sufficient light, that you are not casting a shadow over part of the image (this is sometimes difficult to avoid and takes a little experimentation); in short, make sure you are happy with the set-up.

Ideally, you are looking to capture the important information relevant to your object – so a clear, in focus, well lit, and well centred photograph will usually do the trick. **Once you are satisfied with the above, you are ready to go!**



UPLOAD AND ACCESS MATERIALS

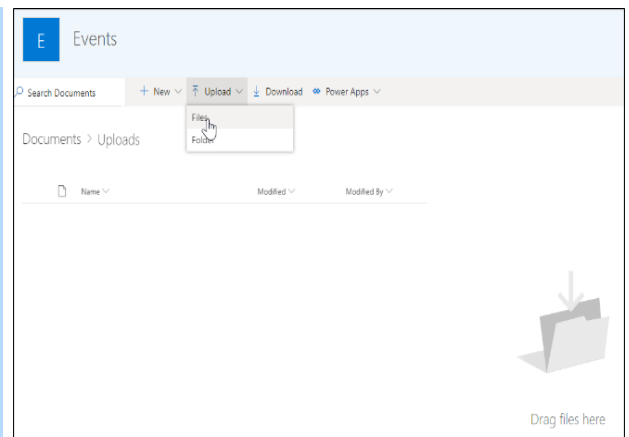
Now you have digitised your artefact, you have reached the last stage of the process and can begin uploading your materials. By following the upload link on the Telling Our Story webpage on the Legion Website, you can upload documents which will be stored on Office 365. Alternatively, you can attach your items and send them via email to tellingourstory@britishlegion.org.uk

Please see below for a step-by-step process to assist you with uploading and naming your digitised images to Office 365

1 Open the provided link in your browser. This will take you to the Uploads folder.

2 In the Uploads folder you will be able to upload your files. Before you do this please make sure your files are correctly named as per the information below. This will ensure that we can identify who you are and which branch you are a member of.

3 To upload your files, click on the **Upload** button on the toolbar and then select the **Files** option as per the screenshot example. This will bring up the file explorer window. Navigate to your files and select one or more of them. To select multiple files please hold down the Ctrl button on your keyboard as you select the individual files. Once you have selected all your files please press the **Open** button. This will upload the selected files to the folder, and you will then see them listed after a few seconds. Alternatively you can drag and drop files from your local computer into this Uploads folder.



4 To exit, please close the browser tab or window.

HOW TO NAME YOUR FILES

It is important to name your files accurately, therefore all of your file names should begin with your Branch Code. This can be found on your Membership card and consists of the letters BR followed by four digits e.g. BR3750. After each code there needs to be an underscore and then your name, ending with the next consecutive number.

Example: BR3750_JohnSmith1.jpg
BR3750_JohnSmith2.jpg

- There should be no spaces in the name.
- Please keep your individual photos to less than 4MBs
- All standard image and document file types are accredited e.g. jpg/jpeg, png, docx, pdf.

MY LEGION STORY – PERSONAL TESTIMONY

We understand that although The Royal British Legion is very much one organisation, it is our individual branches and associated histories which makes us unique. We also understand that the real expert when it comes to the history of those branches, is you.

The idea behind this document is simply to ask you to tell us about the things which are important to you, the parts of your personal and local history which you think are worthy of remembrance in our centenary year.

The following aspects have been chosen to provide you with an opportunity to share those memories, so that we in turn can share them with the public as a whole. The below topics are a guide only, it may be that you have a story which is not within those areas; if so, please do share it with us.



The People

We understand that each and every member of The Royal British Legion has their own individual story and reasons for joining - we would like to hear yours. Can you tell us a little about when, where, how and most importantly why you decided to join the Legion?



Trauma and Rehabilitation

We would love to hear your own personal thoughts on the importance of The Royal British Legion and the positive impact it has had on individual lives. This could be official support and practical help for members and families, or simply providing a place where like minded ex-servicemen could meet in a social setting.



Remembrance

With more than 2000 branches across the globe, the way that you, as branch members, choose to remember and commemorate our military heritage is both similar and unique. It may be that you, or individual branches, have chosen to base Remembrance Day activities around the local fallen, or that you have chosen your own fitting way to remember that reflects the history of your area. We want to hear how you choose to remember.



The Legion on the Move

Many branches over the last 100 years have made a positive impact on individuals and local communities, often taking the lead in new initiatives and key Remembrance activities. We would like to hear about those moments you have witnessed or been involved in, those which make you proud to be a member of the Legion.



The People and the Legion's Worldwide Community

Is there someone within the Legion, past or present, who epitomises all that the Legion stands for? Perhaps someone who has spent decades working tirelessly to support members, who has played a particular key role in your branch, has promoted remembrance in the community or who you feel is deserving of particular recognition? Please tell us about them here.



The Poppy

Today the Poppy is not only known as the key symbol of The Royal British Legion but also an international reminder of the importance of Remembrance. We would like to share that importance with the wider public. What does the Poppy mean to you?



The Future

We as an organisation understand that one of the most important tools when planning the future direction of the Legion, is looking to our past. We would like to know how you have seen, and been involved in major changes over the last decades. How is the Legion of today different to that of the day you joined? How has it changed? And how do you think the Legion should adapt to continue to thrive for years to come?