

~DIGITAL COLLAGE BEGINNERS GUIDE~

A BEGINNERS LOOK AT DIGITAL COLLAGE BASICS

USING PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS

BY JILL MCCALL



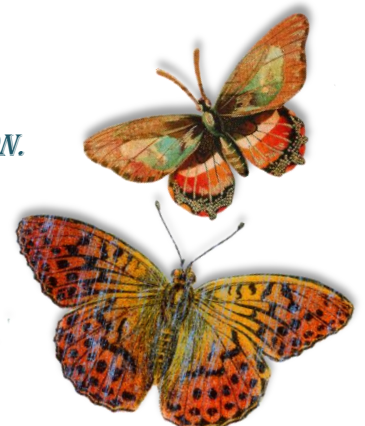
~NOBLE DEEDS~

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~THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING~



~1~

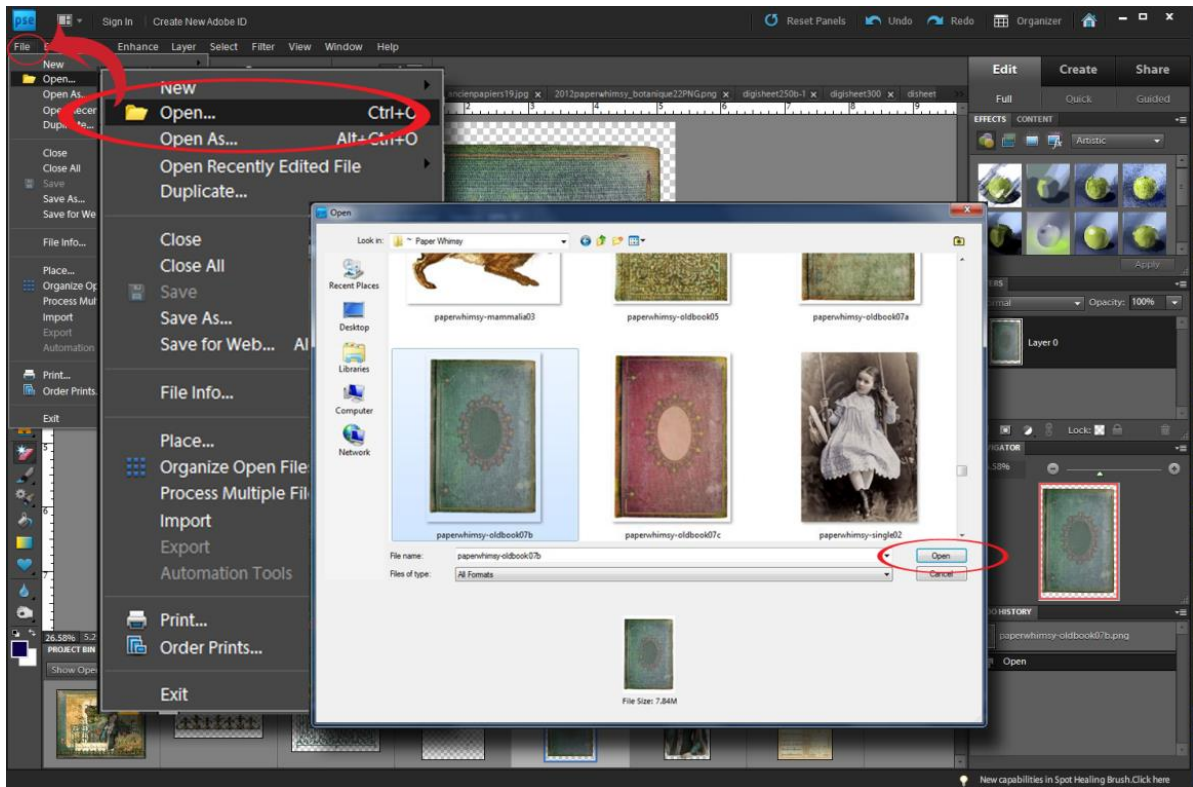
~ *A Note for You* ~

~ First, I would like to say that I consider myself a Student and I am still continuing to learn what Photoshop Elements has to offer. There are many ways to do the same skills I will be demonstrating here. This is only the way I learned how to accomplish these results. I Hope to teach you some of the very basics. These are ALL questions I had but were afraid to ask so NO question is Silly. All that you will need is a willingness to Play and to have some fun.

~Jill~



~ Opening a File ~



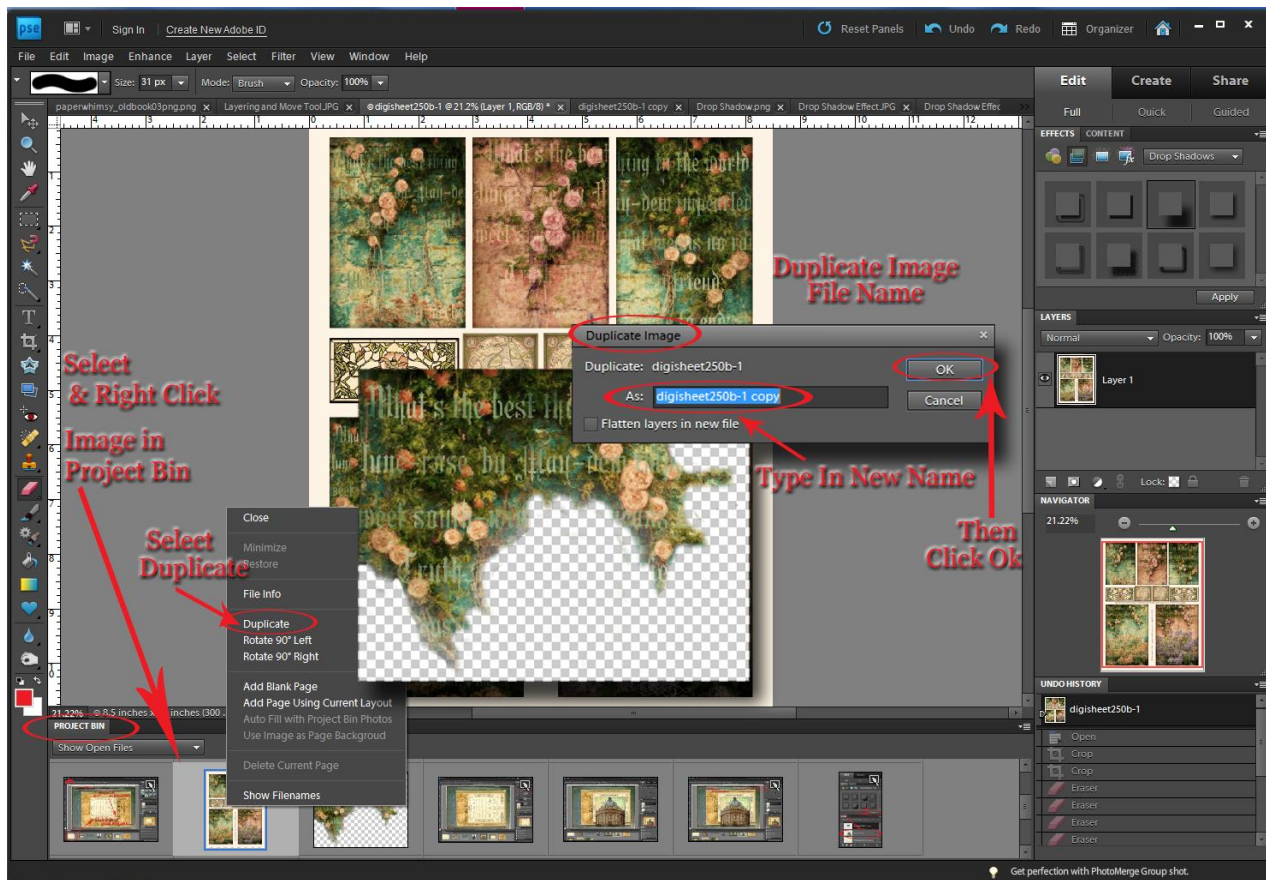
Open Photoshop Elements to the Editing Workspace.

1. Click on **File**. A Drop Down Menu will appear
2. Click **Open**. A Window will open and you will need to navigate to the Folder containing the image you would like to use.
3. Select Image and Click **Open**. I selected *paperwhimsy-oldbook07b*. Your Image will open in the Editing Workspace and will now be in your Project Bin at the Bottom.
4. Continue Opening Selected Images for your Collage. They will all appear in you Project Bin at the Bottom.

I Used Paper Whimsy images Old Book 03, Old Book 07, Ancien Papiers 19, Digi Sheet 300, Wrought Iron 01c, Wrought Iron 02, Beautiful Faces Sheet 205, Digi Sheet 185-D, Butterfly Spray 04-C

~That was Easy! Right?

~ Making Duplicate Copies of Originals ~



It is Important to always take Precautions to Save Protect your Original Images. Here I will Show you How to make Duplicate Copies to Edit with to Protect your Originals. A Good Practice to start is after Making your Duplicated Image, Close your Original Image File out of Photoshop Elements just as a Safe Guard. No Mistakes or “Oops!” We will Want to Remember this Particularly when we Erase Backgrounds on Images Later in this Project.

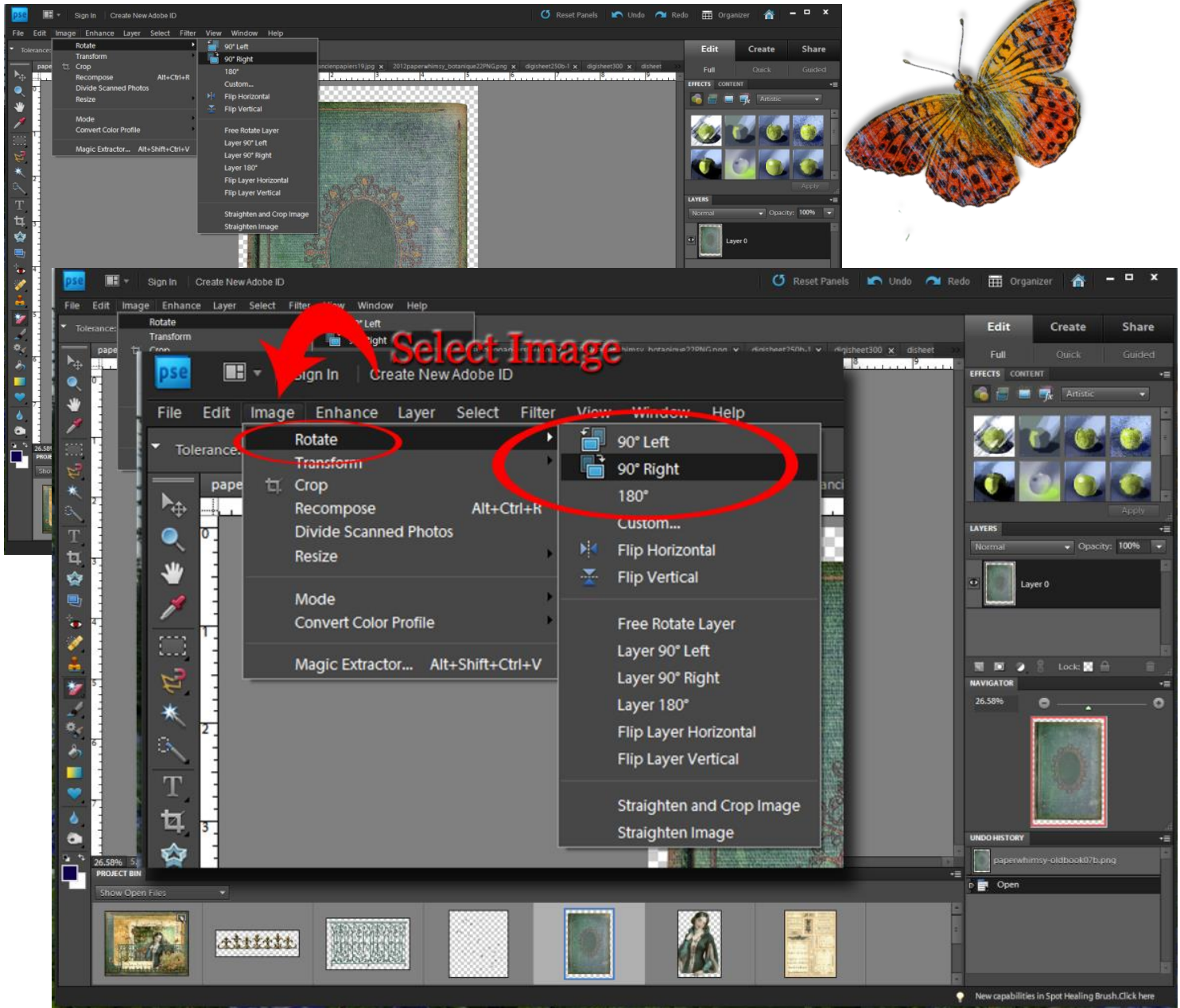
1. **Select and Right Click** on Image to Be Duplicated in **Project Bin**. A Drop Down Menu will appear.
2. Select **Duplicate**. You will see a Duplicate Image appear in your Project Bin and a Duplicate Image Window will Open.
3. Type in New File Name and Click **Ok**.
4. **Close Original File Images** out of Photoshop Elements. (See Below)



~Closing an Original Image File~

1. **Double Click** on File Image in **Project Bin** you would like to Close. It will appear in your Editing Workspace. If you are not Sure which image is your Original, Hover your Cursor over the Image and it will Open a Tiny Window with the Files Name.
2. Click **File** (Top Left Toolbar. Same Place where we Opened a File.)
3. Click **Close**. A window will Appear asking if you want to Save Changes.
4. Click **No** (We Click NO here only to protect our Original Image.)

~Rotating an Image~



Our Paper Whimsy Old Book Image is going to be our Background Image for our Collage. Here is how we will Rotate this Image.

1. Click on **Image**. A Drop Menu will Appear
2. Click **Rotate**.
3. Click on **90 Degrees Right**. This is for our Purposes anyway with our Book.

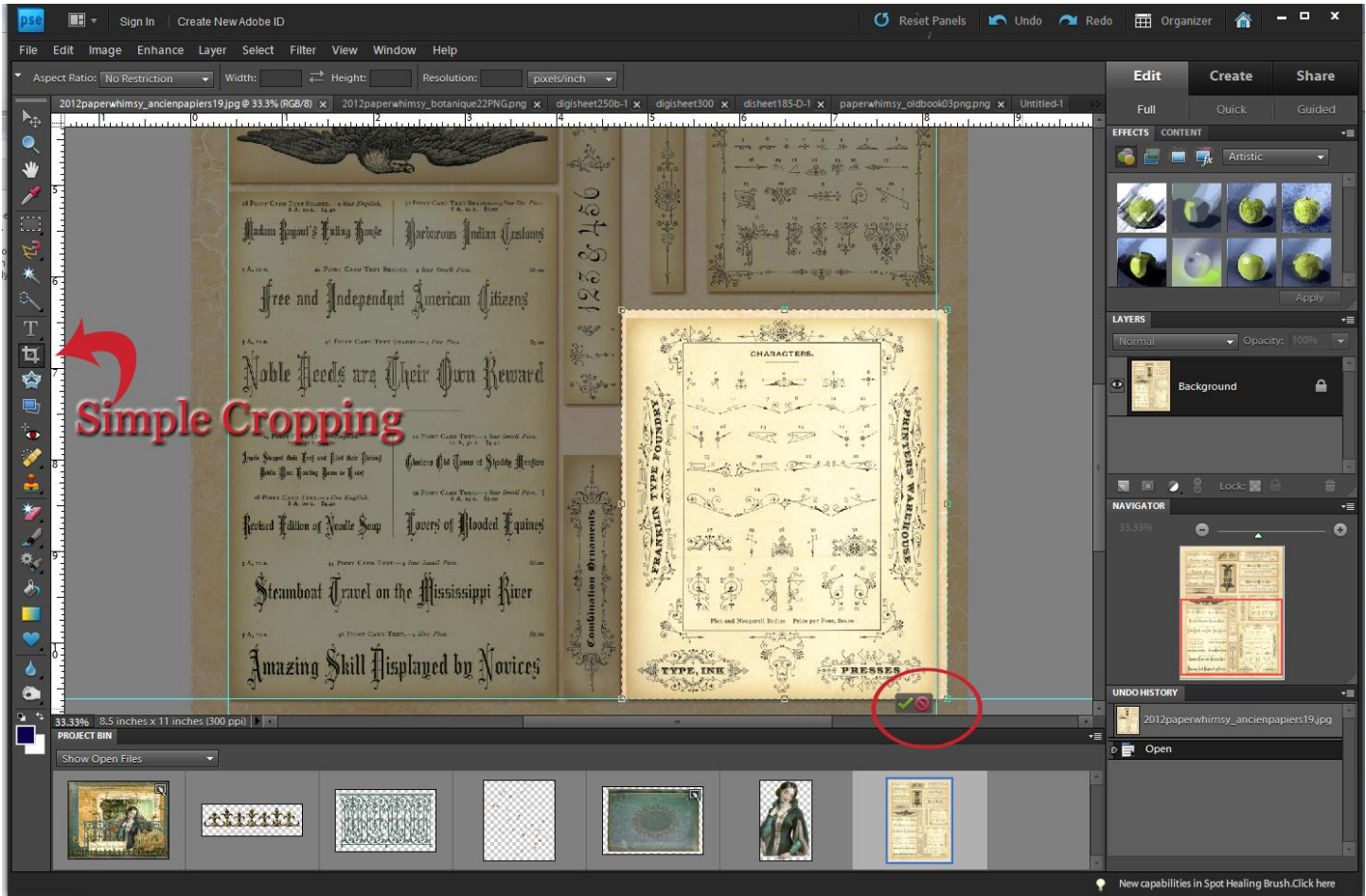
~Not so Bad Right?!



~4~



~A Lesson in Simple Cropping~



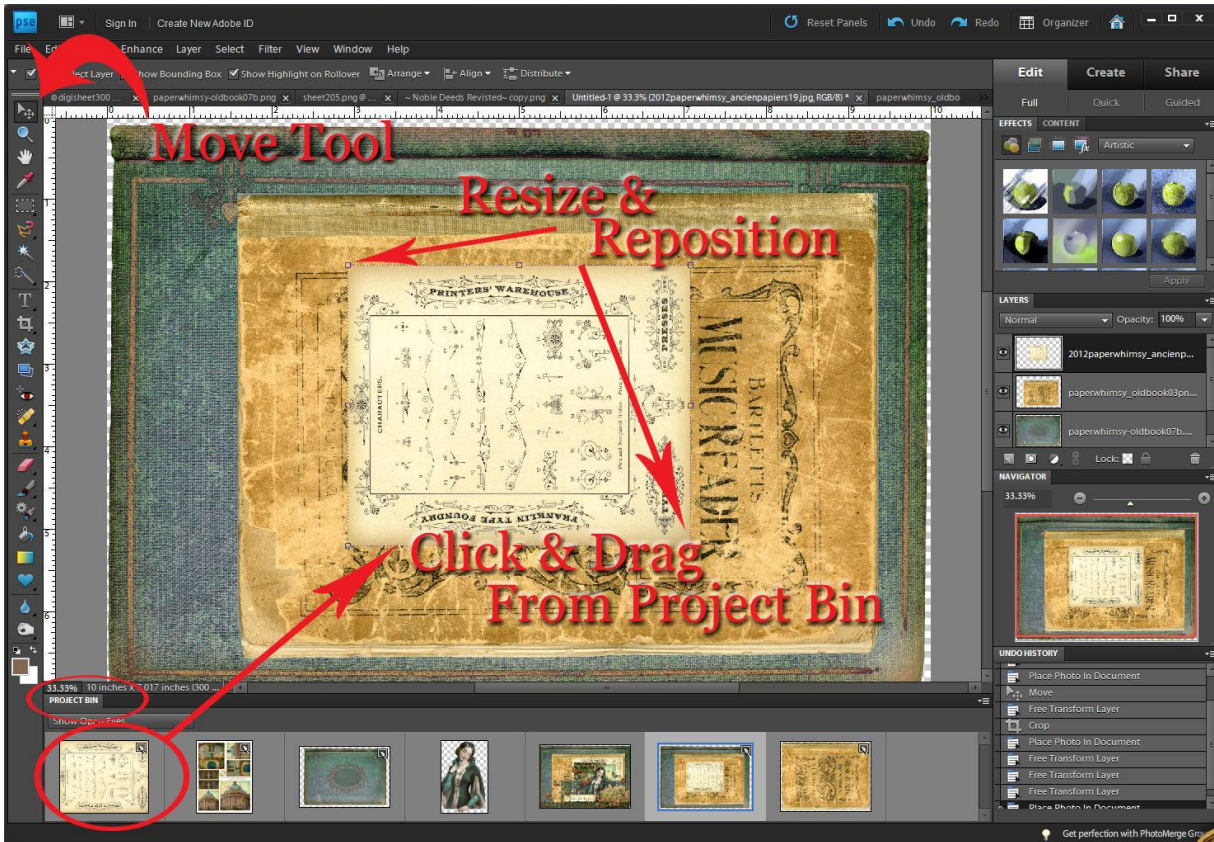
With Just some Simple Cropping we can get the image we need here. I used Paper Whimsy Ancien Papiers 19. Using the same Cropping Technique, Crop Paper Whimsy Digi Sheet 300 as well.

1. Click on **Crop Tool** (Simple Cropping) in Toolbox Task Bar on left
2. Click and Drag to **Select the area** you want to **Crop** as shown above. A Box appears and the Area you want to keep becomes highlighted.
3. Click and Drag the **Side and Corner Handles** (The Little Boxes) to adjust the Size of the Cropping Boundaries.
4. Click the **Green Check Mark** to Crop Image

~**For More Detailed Cropping**~ Click on the Magnifying Glass in the Toolbox Task Bar on the left. You can enlarge your image so you can do a more Detailed Crop. Then follow the same cropping direction as above.

~Remember that at any time you can Click **UNDO** on the very Top Right to make Corrections. **UNDO** is our Friend!

~ A Lesson in Layers ~



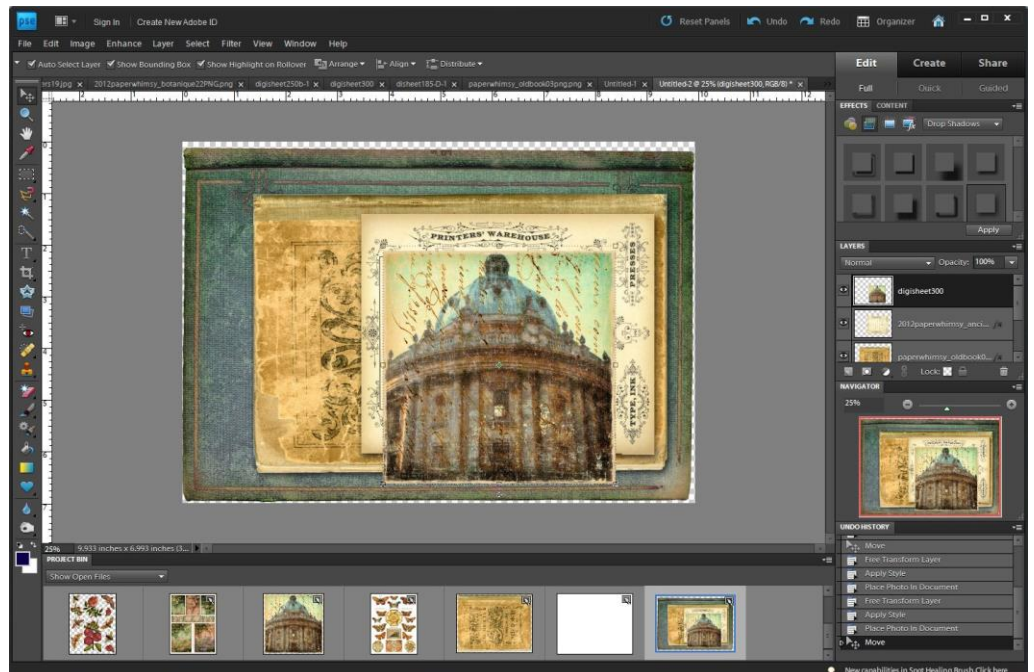
1. Click and Drag Image from **Project Bin** to Editing Workspace.
2. Using the **Move Tool** you can reposition the Image by Clicking and Dragging it into position
3. A **Box of Marching Ants** will Appear around your Image. It will also Have Side and Corner Handles (The Little Boxes)
4. Click and Drag the **Side and Corner Handles** to adjust and resize your image

I used here:

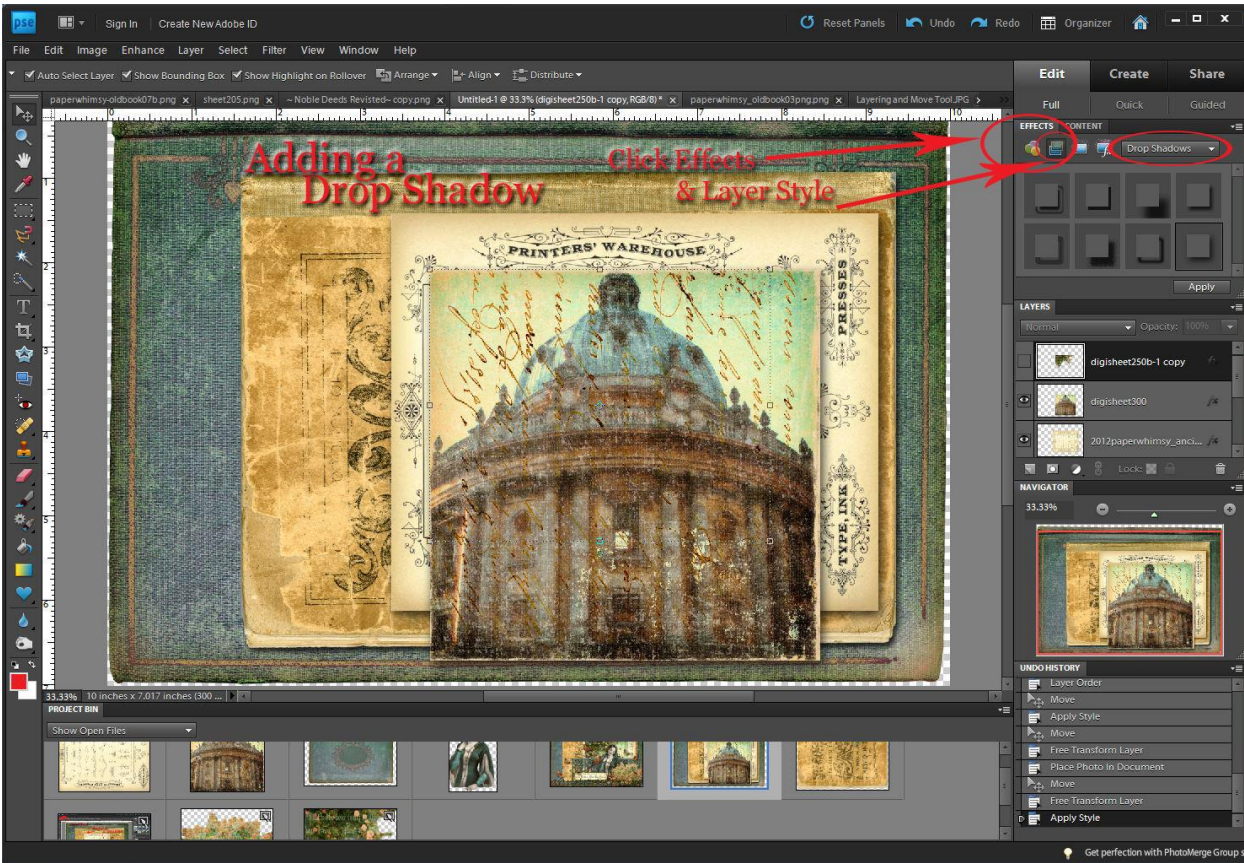
Paper Whimsy Images

- Old Book 03
- Old Book 07
- Ancien Papiers 19
- Digi Sheet 300

~Looking Good!



~ Adding a Drop Shadow ~



Here I will show you how easy it is to add a Drop Shadow to your Images. I like the Depth that it Adds to your Work.

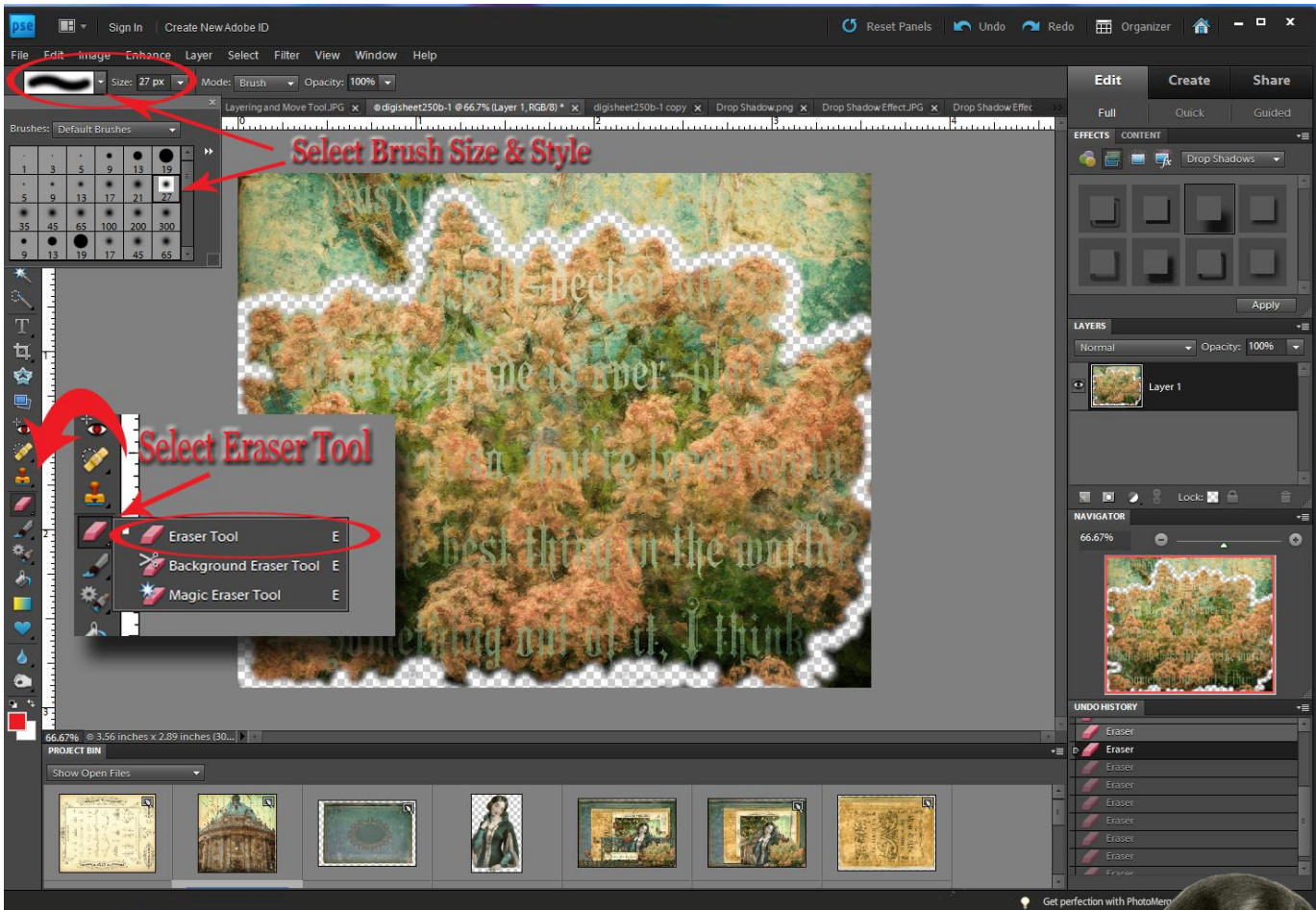
1. Click on **Effects**. You will see it on the right side under the Edit Tab
2. Click on the **Layer Styles** Button
3. Click on the **Layer** you want to Add a Drop Shadow
4. Click the Arrow, a drop Down Menu will appear, then Click **Drop Shadow**
5. Choose a Drop Shadow Style
6. Click **Apply**
7. Repeat on other layers if you so choose



~Remember you can Click Undo as Many Times as You want until you find the Look that you Like. I choose Soft Edge for all of my Layers



~ Erasing a Background ~



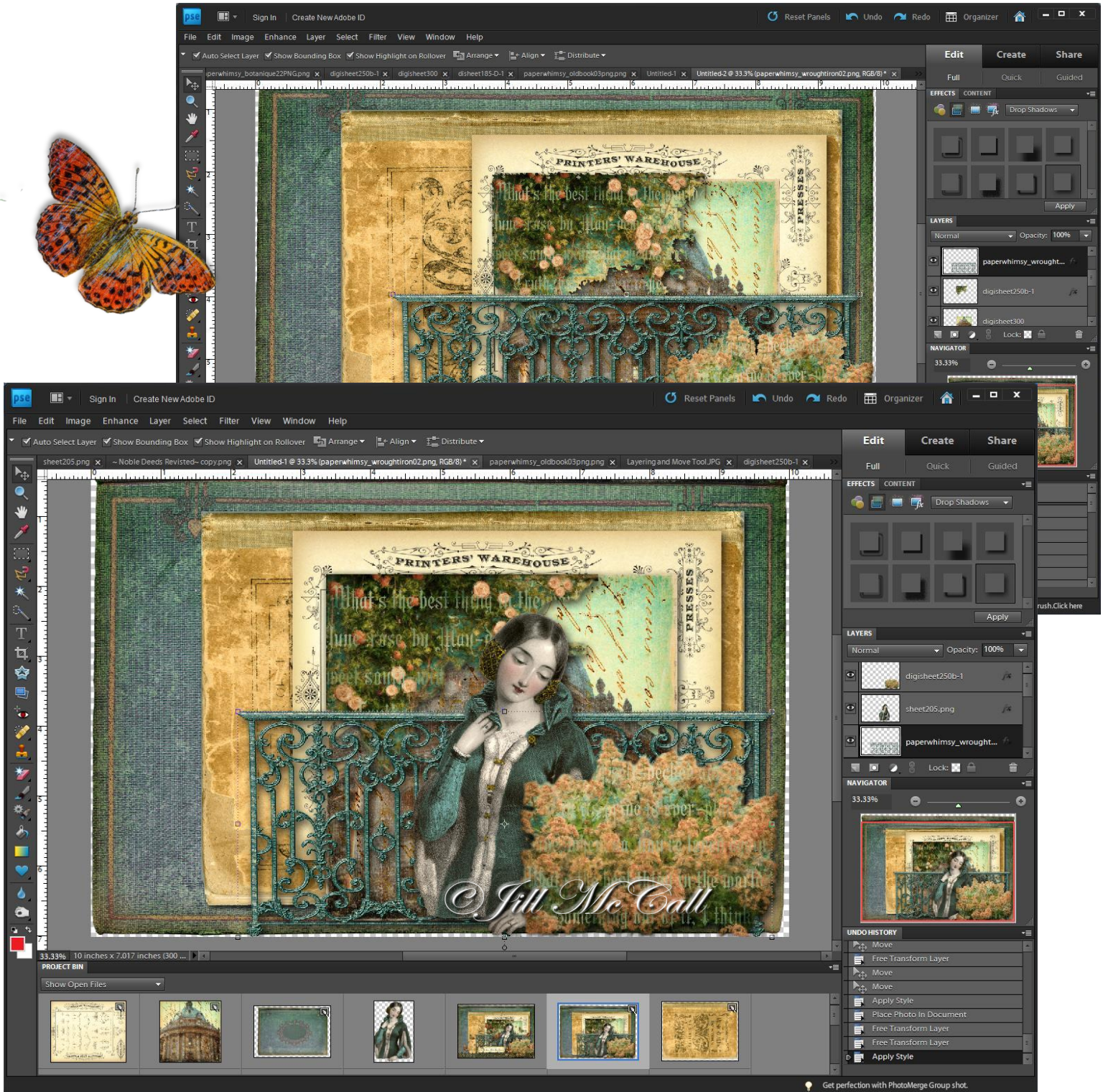
The Eraser Tool is a Great Tool and Fun to Play with. For Detailed Erasing I used a Smaller Brush Size with a Soft Edge. For Larger Areas increase the Brush size to cover more area faster.

1. Click on the **Eraser Tool** in the Tool Box Task Bar on Left.
2. Select **Eraser Tool**
3. Click **Brush Arrow** to choose Type.
4. Click **Size Arrow** to choose size. A Slider will appear and you can adjust size of Brush.

~I used Soft Round 21-27 pixel for Detailed Areas. For Larger areas I used Hard Round 19 then adjusted the Slider to adjust size of Brush as Needed. I did this for my Floral details from Digi Sheet 205b and my Beautiful Face Sheet 205



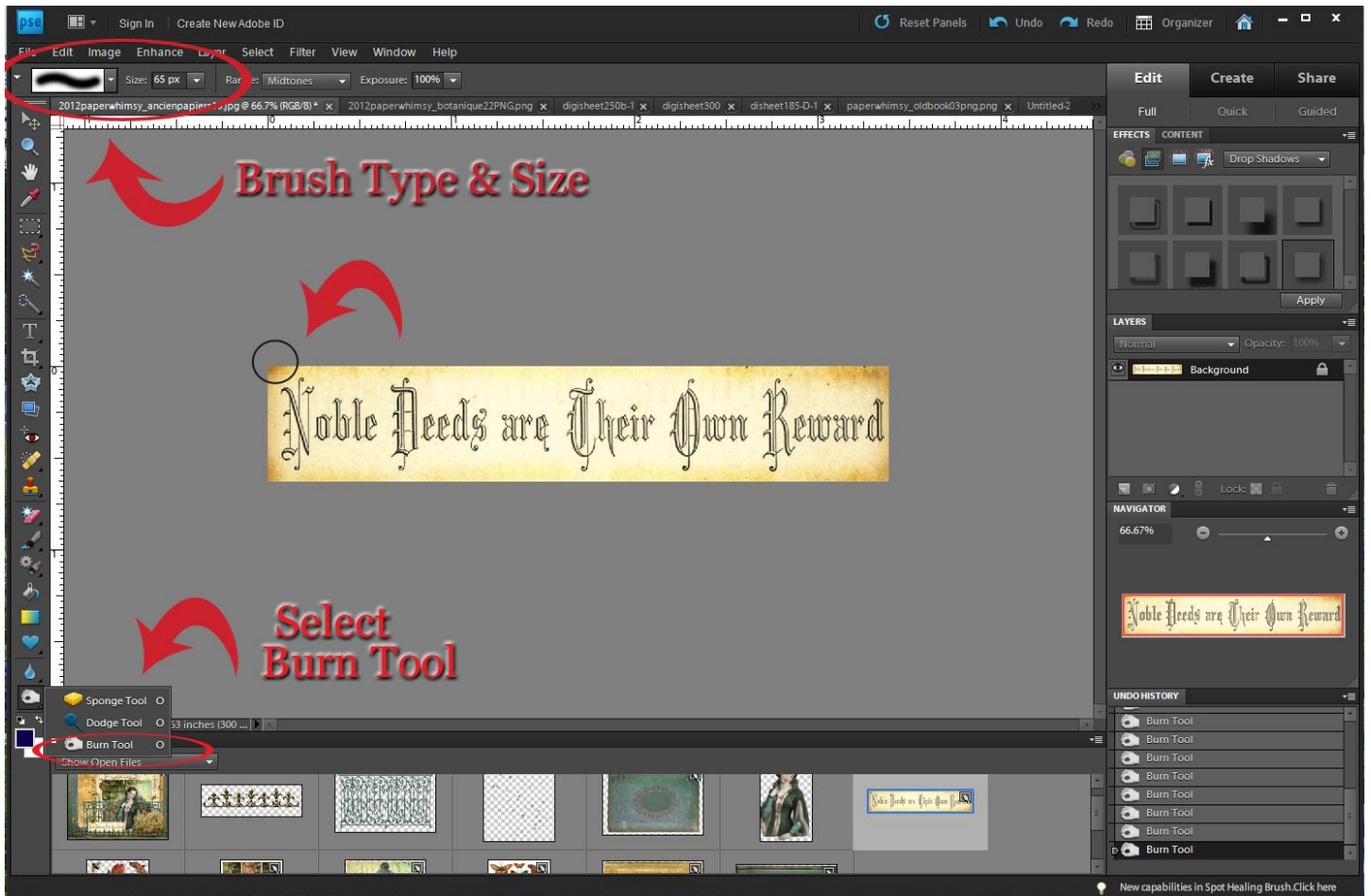
~ Continue to Add Layers ~



~Here is just a Look at more Layering. Each Layer I added a Drop Shadow. It Creates Depth for each Layer I think. Just take your time to Play with Size and Positioning.



~ Antiquing with the Burn Tool ~



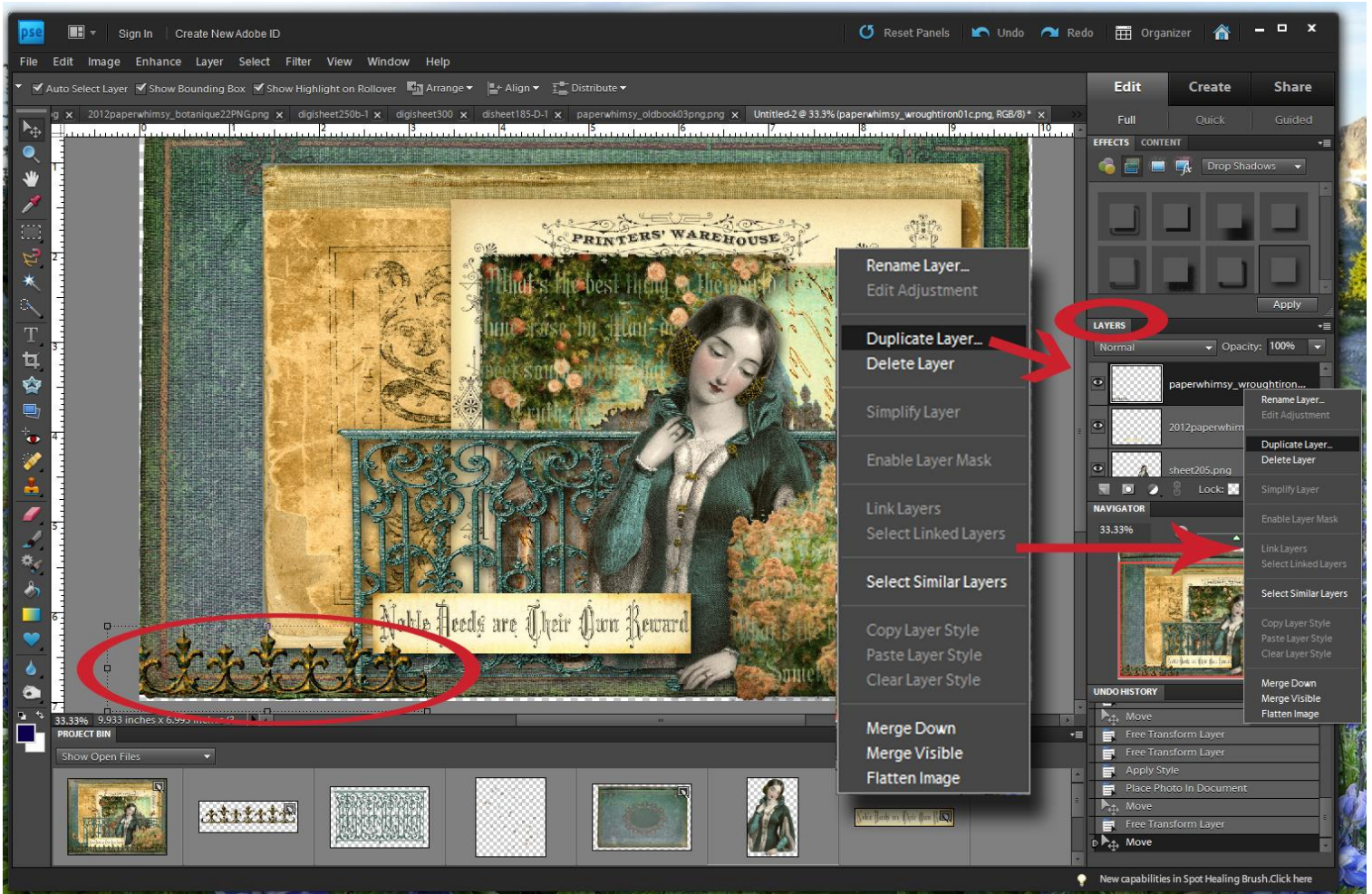
The Burn Tool is an Easy way to give an Image an Antiqued Look Like in Paper Collage.

1. Click on **Burn Tool** in the Tool Box Task Bar on Left. (The Sponge Tool, Dodge Tool & Burn Tool are Grouped together. Click on the Arrow and all Tools will appear in a Drop Down Menu.)
2. Click on the **Arrows** on top right to select **Brush Type & Size**. (Just Like when We were Using the Eraser Tool)
3. **Click & Drag Brush** over the Area you want to **Antique Image**. The More Passes you make over an Area the Darker it becomes.

~Remember you can Click Undo as Many Times as You want until you find the Look that you Like. I choose a Soft Round Brush and Started with 65px size.



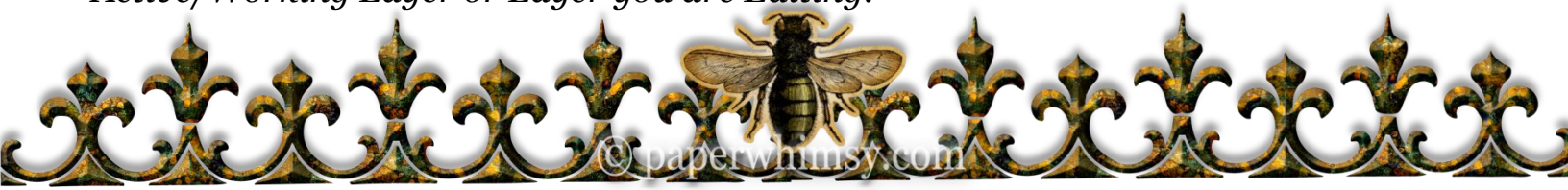
~Duplicating Layers ~



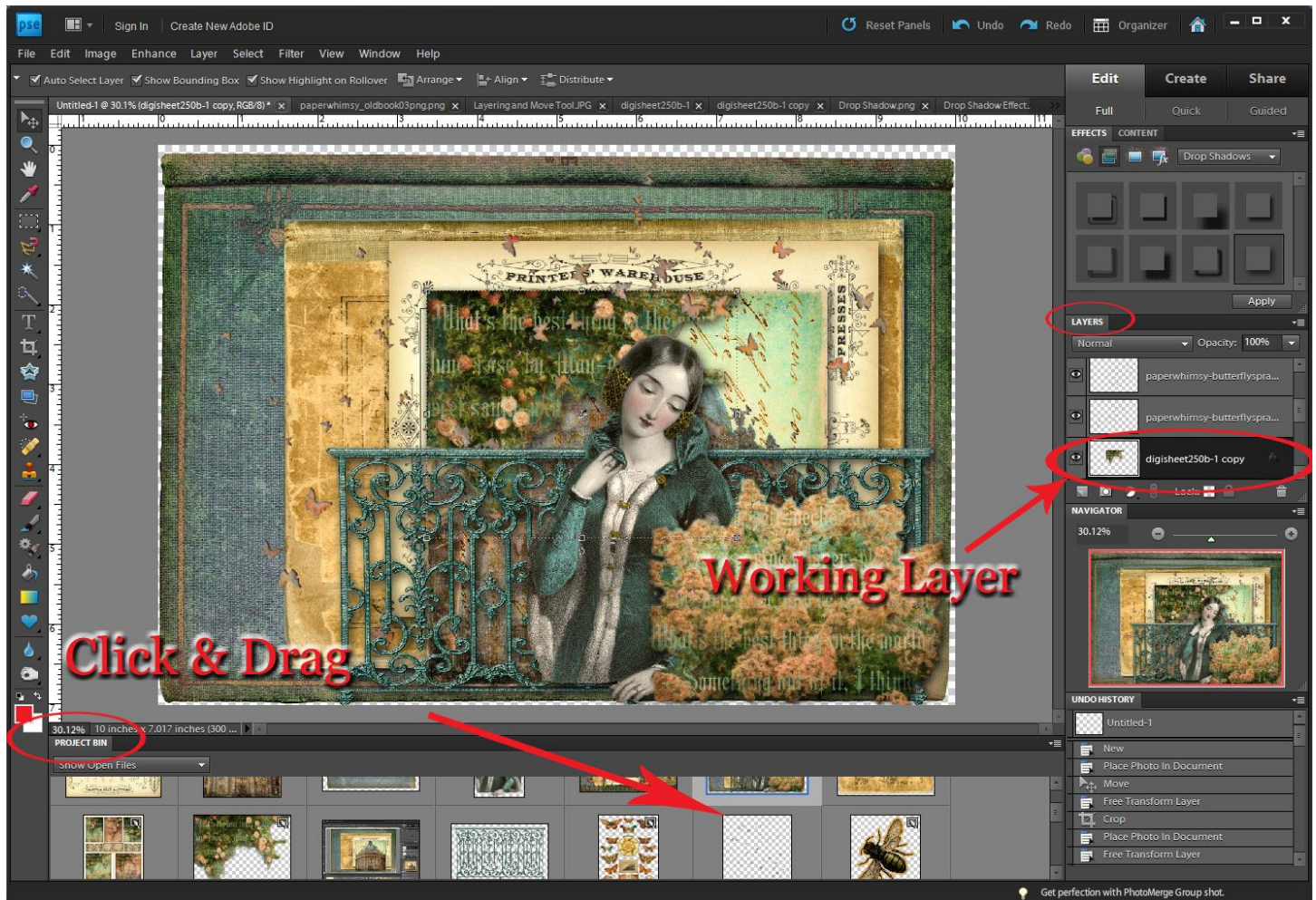
I discovered how to do this by Accident but have found it to be Very Useful in Duplicating Images that you want to be the Exact same Size. For Example the Wrought Iron Image Here, once I positioned and Sized my First Image I can Simply Duplicate It eliminating the need to resize each time. This is So Much Easier!

1. **Click** on Layer you wish to Duplicate in the **Layers Panel** on the Right. It should Become Highlighted or in this case it becomes Darker. Here it is the Wrought Iron Image.
2. **Right Click on Layer.** A Window will Open.
3. Click on **Duplicate Layer.** A Duplicate image will Appear in the Layers Panel and a Window will open.
4. You **Rename** your Layer. (Just Like Renaming you File) I Just add a Letter or Number.
5. The **Duplicate Image** will be placed directly on top of the image you duplicated - click and drag the duplicate where you want to place it. Repeat steps if you want to duplicate, again

~ Remember that whatever Layer is Highlighted In Your Layers Panel is the Active/Working Layer or Layer you are Editing.*



~ Layers of Butterflies & the Active/Working Layer ~

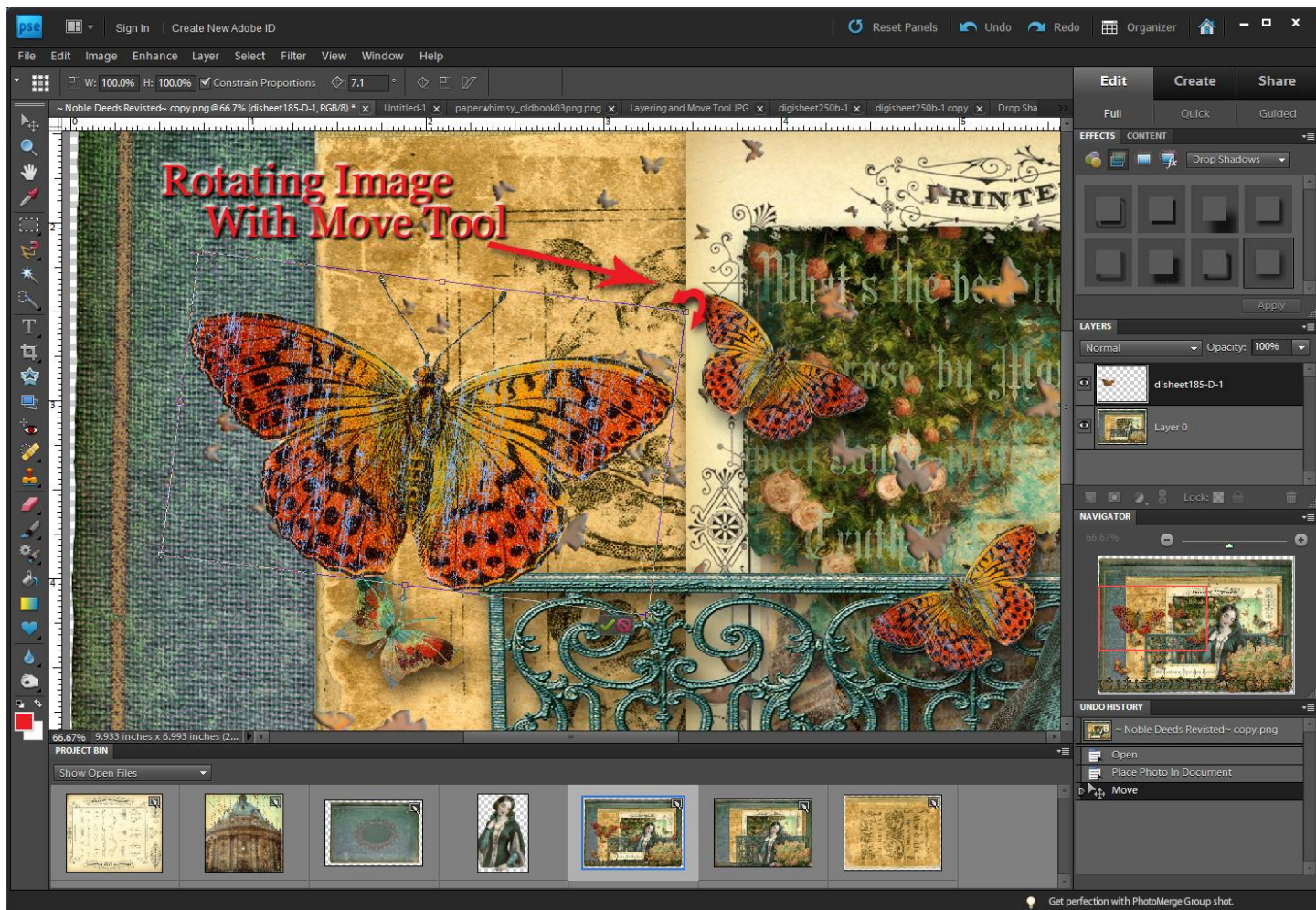


This is the fun part, Adding the Embellishments. I have a Thing for Birds, Bees and Butterflies. Here I will show you how to Slip a layer between other layers. Above I wanted my Butterfly Spray Layer to be in Front of my Trailing Roses but behind my Genteel Lady and Wrought Iron Fence. An Easy Concept to Learn that Opens Up so Many Possibilities.

1. In **Layers Panel Click** on the **Active/Working Layer** you wish to slip another Layer on Top of. It should Become Highlighted or in this case it becomes Darker.
2. **Click and Drag Image** from the **Project Bin**. When you Drag the Butterfly Spray from the Project Bin to the Active/Working Layer it will be Placed above the Layer you Highlighted in your Layers Panel.
3. Using the **Move Tool** Reposition and Resize Butterflies until you get the look you want.



~ Rotating an Image with the Move Tool ~



The Move Tool has many Different Uses. It is not only Good Tool for Positioning and Resizing an Image it also can Rotate an Image Side to side or Completely upside down in the Editing Workspace. Here we are going to learn how to use it for Rotating some Butterflies and Bees.

1. Select **MOVE TOOL** then Click & Drag Image from the Project Bin. (For our Purposes the Butterflies.) Position and Resize Your Image
2. **Hover your Cursor over a Corner Handle** (The Little Boxes) A Round Arrow will appear that Points Both Way. Above I Duplicated the Arrow in Red for Demonstration Purposes. I will be Smaller & Black in Photoshop Elements
3. Click and Drag the **CORNER HANDLES** to adjust your Image in Place. You can Spin the Image Completely Upside Down.
4. When You Find the Position You Like **Click Ok (Green Check)**



~ Final Details ~

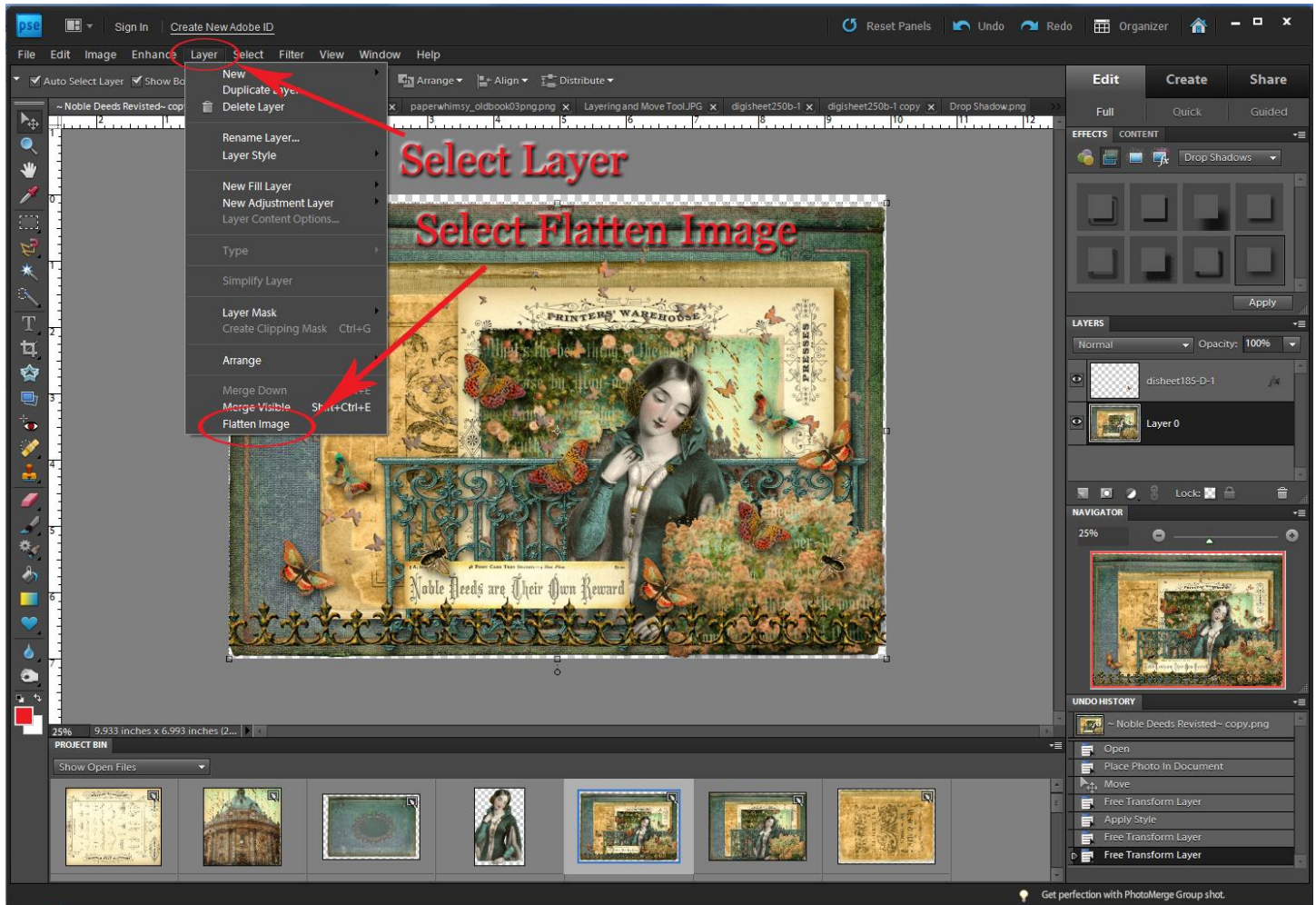


So here we are with the Final Details, adding Butterflies and Bees. I added a Drop Shadow to each of them. Also we can Slip our Word Art in here between the Layers Like we learned earlier. Here is a Listing of All the Paper Whimsy Images I Used to make ~Noble Deeds~.



- 2012paperwhimsy_botanique22PNG
- 2012paperwhimsy_ancienpapiers19
- digisheet250b
- disheet185-D
- digisheet300
- paperwhimsy_oldbooko3png
- paperwhimsy-oldbooko7b
- paperwhimsy-starspray04
- paperwhimsy_wroughtiron01c
- paperwhimsy_wroughtiron02
- Genteel Lady sheet205

~ To Flatten or to Not Flatten your Work ~

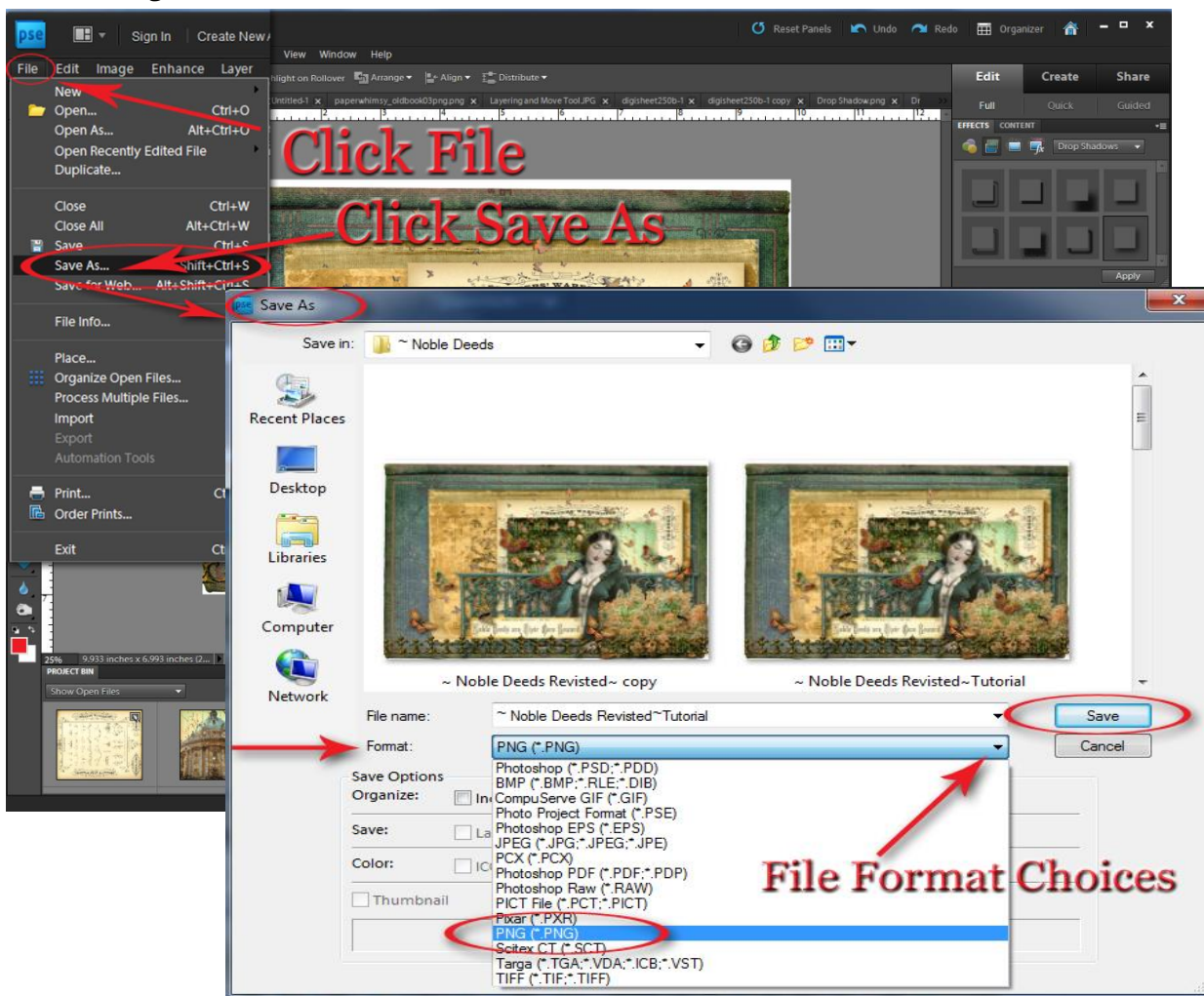


A Case Can be Made either way for Flattening or Not Flattening Your Work. Why Do we Flatten our Work You Ask? The Best Explanation I have Read so Far without getting too technical is that if We Choose to Make Prints of our Work it makes that easier to do so. Also a Thing to Remember when Flattening your Image is That it is a Permanent Operation. You Cannot Edit or Change you Work after doing this. So in other words make sure you are satisfied with your Work. Personally I Do Not Flatten My Work. I Like Leaving My Options Open. The Reason for Demonstrating it here is for those of you Interested in making Prints. You can Always Save a Non-flattened Copy as well as a Flattened Copy. Just Make a Notation in the File Name when You Save it.

1. Select **Layer** in Task Bar at the Top. A Drop Down Menu will Appear
2. Select **Flatten Image**. That's it.



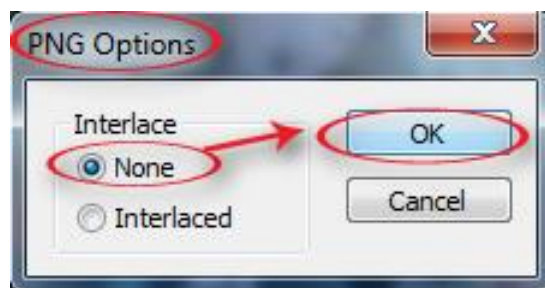
~ Saving Your Work



There are Many Different Formats for Saving your Work. Here I am Showing you how to Save your Work in a PNG File Format. They save Images in a Higher Resolution helping preserve Clarity. They also support Transparencies like many of the Paper Whimsy Images we work with. You can also save your Work as a JPEG. JPEG's are More Common File Format but he tend to Lose their Clarity after being Reopened and Edited Repeatedly. I have used Both but Personally Prefer PNG to save my Images.

1. Select **File** in the Task Bar at the Top. A Drop Down Menu will Appear
2. Select **Save As** and a Window will appear.
3. Select **File Format** and a Drop Menu will appear with your File Format Choices.
4. Select **PNG**
5. Click **Save**. A Small Window will appear.
6. Select **None** from PNG Options. *
7. Click **OK**.

*Selecting **None** on The PNG Option Window is about how an Image Loads on the Web without getting too Technical.



My Hope is that I have given you a Basic Understanding of Photoshop Elements and Digital Collage and taken away some of its Mysteries. Like My Friend Gale said to me with just a 'Thimble Full of Knowledge' you can get started. Sometimes it's just a Matter of Jumping in.

I am so Happy to be able to share what I have Learned with You and Look forward to Continuing that in the Future.

~Jill~



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~Thank You for Your Understanding~



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