The Camera Club

Black & White Negative Scanning.
David Champion January 2011

The digital suite has an excellent Epson flat bed photo scanner that can scan all formats from 135 film up to 10x8 inch.

This one scanner can be used from either workstation via the scan server.

Scanning colour or b&w is fairly straightforward, but there are ways of improving the scan quality that may not be obvious. In this tutorial I will explain a quick easy way of achieving good results from b&w negatives.

Like all digital imaging software, there are many ways you can achieve similar results, and I am sure someone will disagree with my technique, so I hope my notes will convince you that my logic for working this way is reasonable.

Scanners are aimed more at colour scanning, and therefore when scanning b&w they do not automatically give the best results; the results are automatically good, but they can be better.

Useful things to bring with you.

Your negatives (obviously).
Large USB memory stick or a portable hard drive. (The suite has USB2 connection and not Fire Wire.)
Magnifier for studying negatives.
Blower brush for removing dust. A can of compressed air can be a good investment.
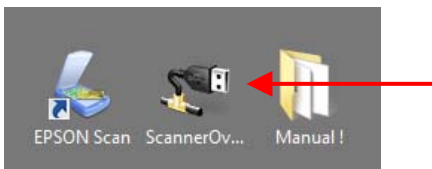
Scanning with the Epson 750 Pro

Getting started.
You will need to collect the appropriate negative carrier from the Steward's Office when you arrive. They are in white boxes in the Steward's Office cupboard.
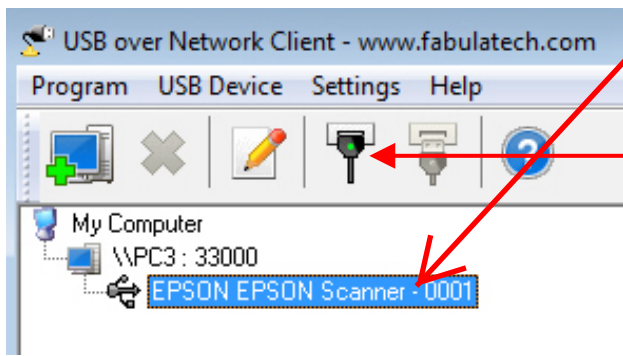Turn on scanner, and turn on the scan server that is next to the scanner.
Now turn on and log into your workstation.
Connect to the scan server. Find the "Scanner Over The Network" icon on the desktop.
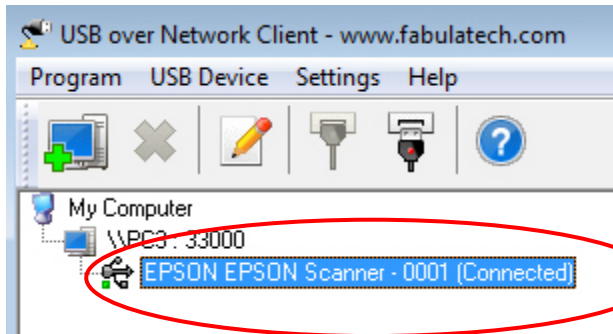

Note: - both workstations *cannot* be logged in to the scanner at the same time.

Clik on Scanner line FIRST

NEXT Click to connect

It tells you when you are connected

Putting Negatives in the Scanner.
Select your first negatives and load into the carrier.
Negatives are loaded "upside down" with the emulsion (matt) side facing up.

Press gently all round the carrier frame to ensure it is fully closed.

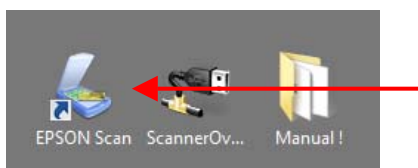Scanning highlights dust or blemishes, so make sure you negatives are clean and dust free.

Remove the reflective mat from the scanner hood.

Make sure there is no dust or finger marks on the two scanner glasses. If you need to clean them you must **only** use lens cleaning fluid and a lens cloth (micro fibre). **DO NOT** use tissue to clean them, as this will cause fine scratching!

Place the carrier on the scanner glass so that it aligns with the top right corner. The white arrows should now be aligned (pointing at each other) and the two locating pins on the right side of the carrier should engage in the holes in the scanner body.
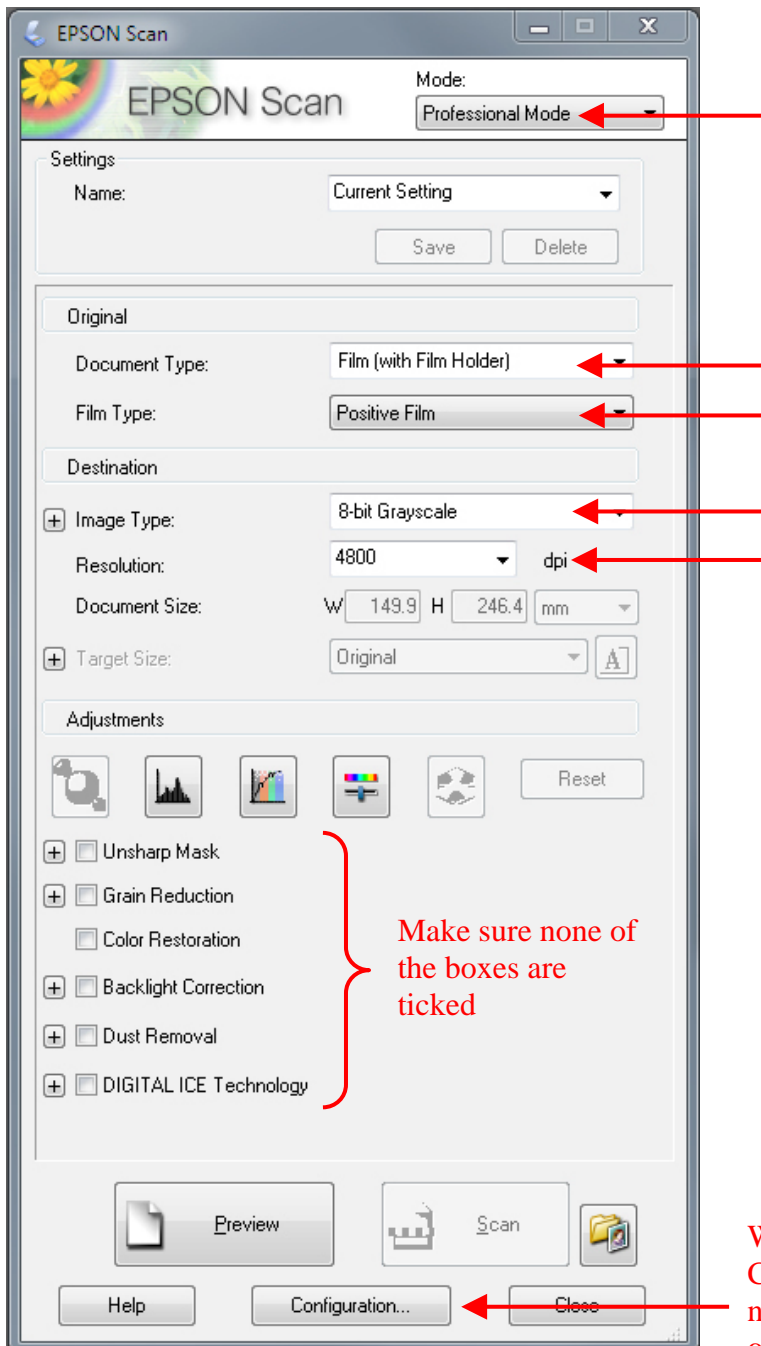Close the lid.

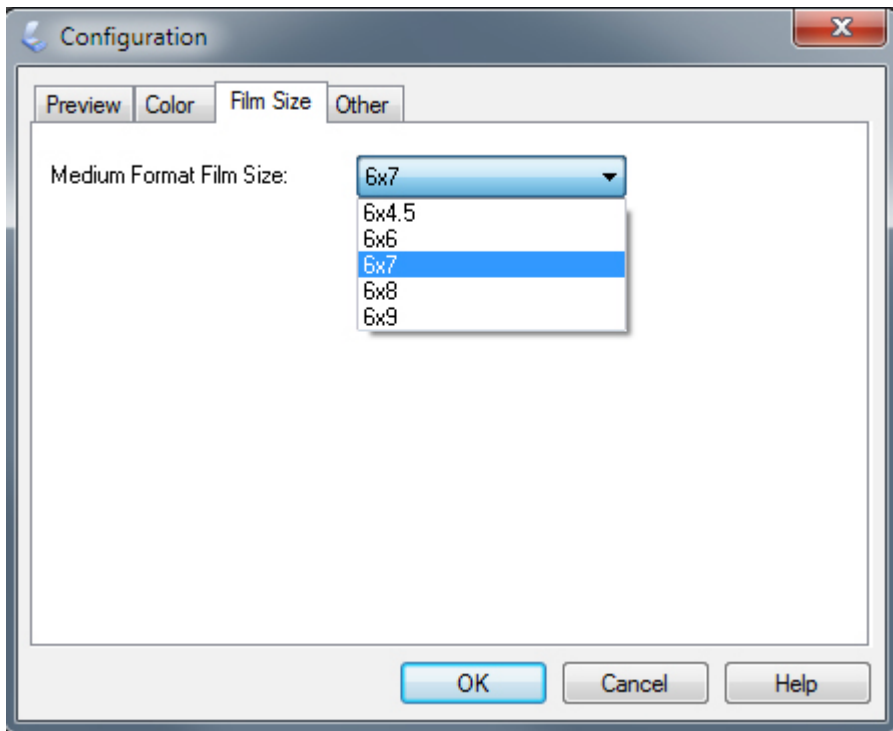Open the Epson Scan program. Find the "Epson Scan" icon on the desktop.

Scanning.

Make sure you have set all the following settings.

When you click Configuration the next window will open,but this is for MEDIUM negative format ONLY.

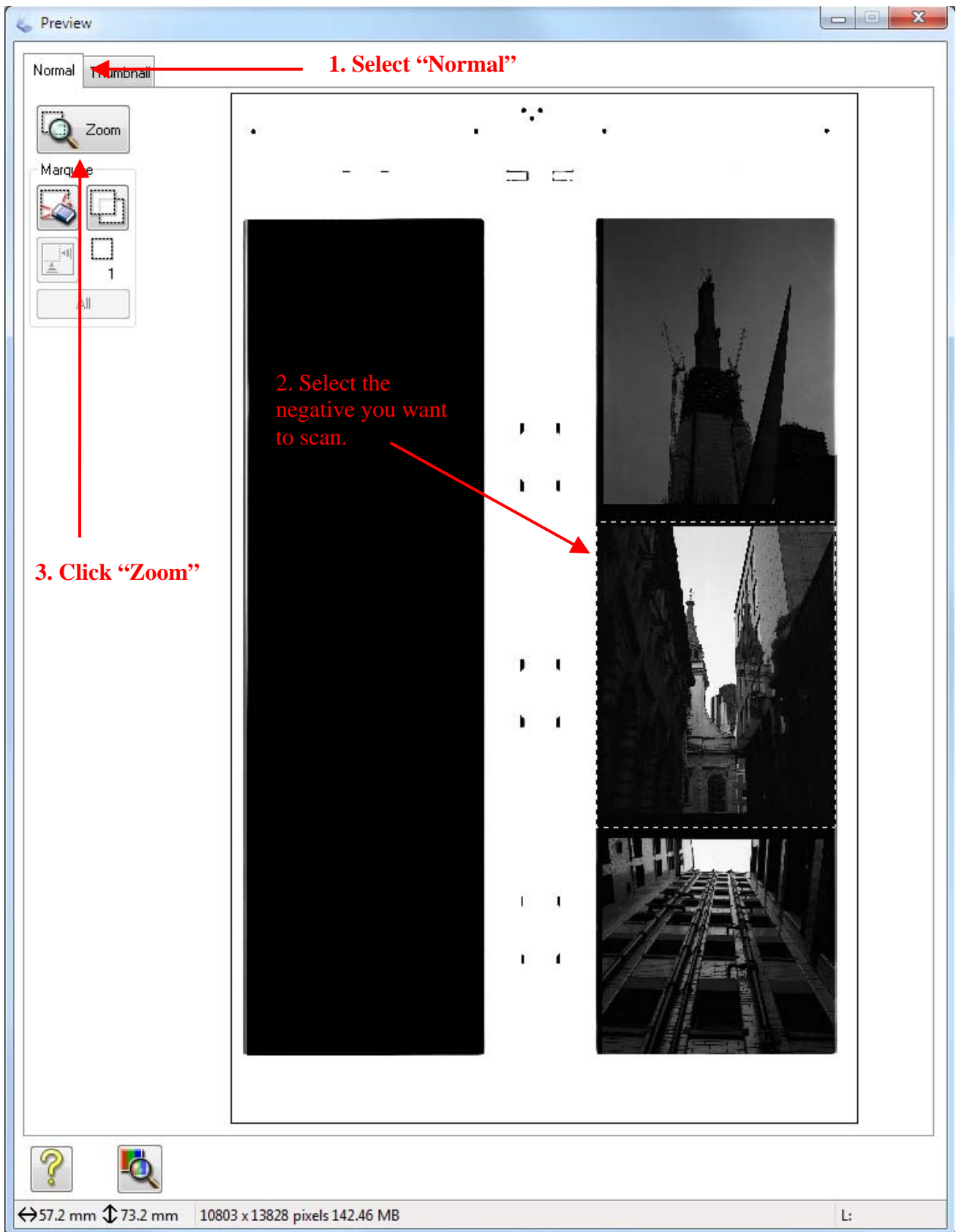Make sure none of the boxes are ticked

Select your negative format. **FOR MEDIUM NEGATIVES ONLY**

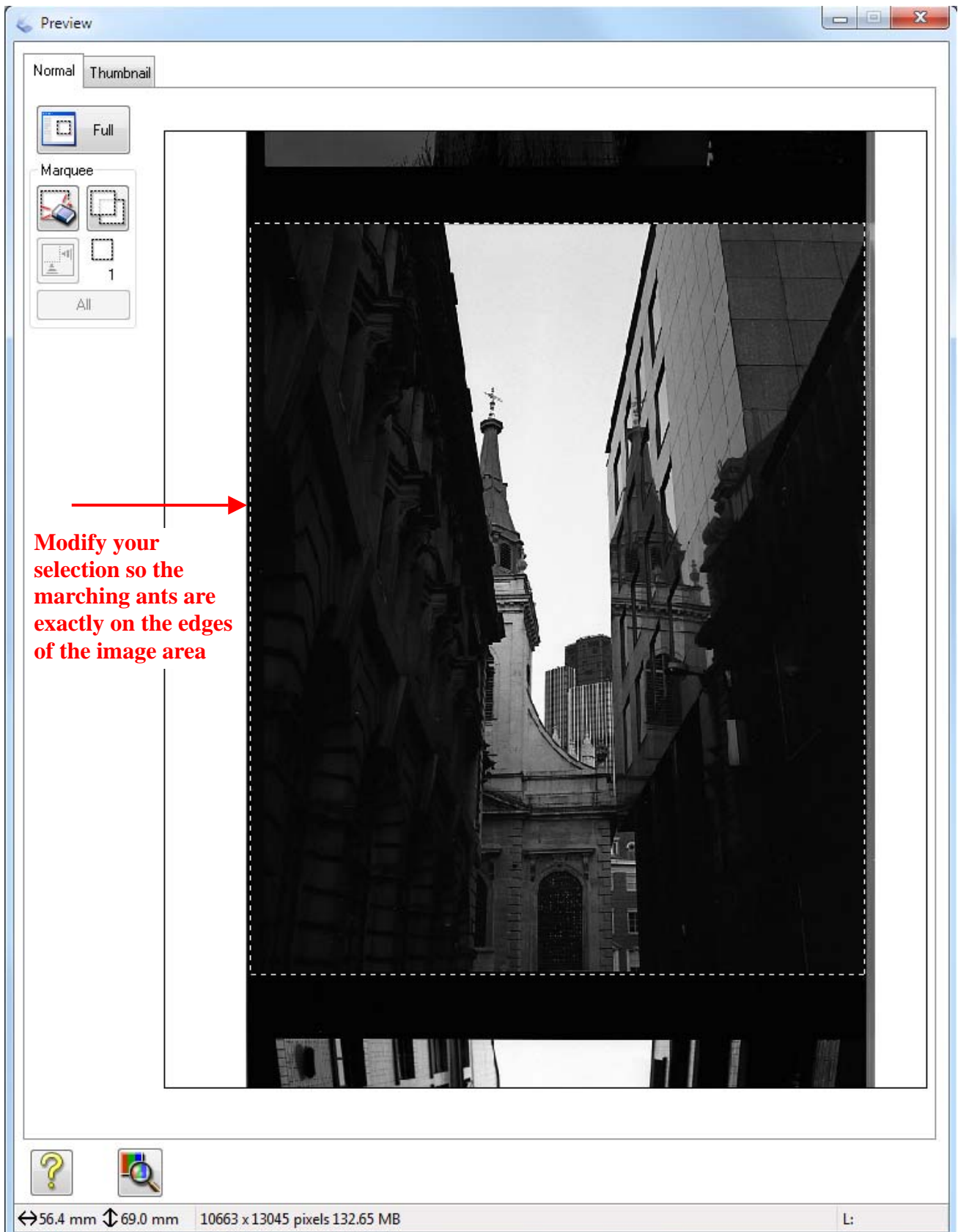For this example I am scanning a medium format 6x7 cm negative.

When you have selected then click "Preview"

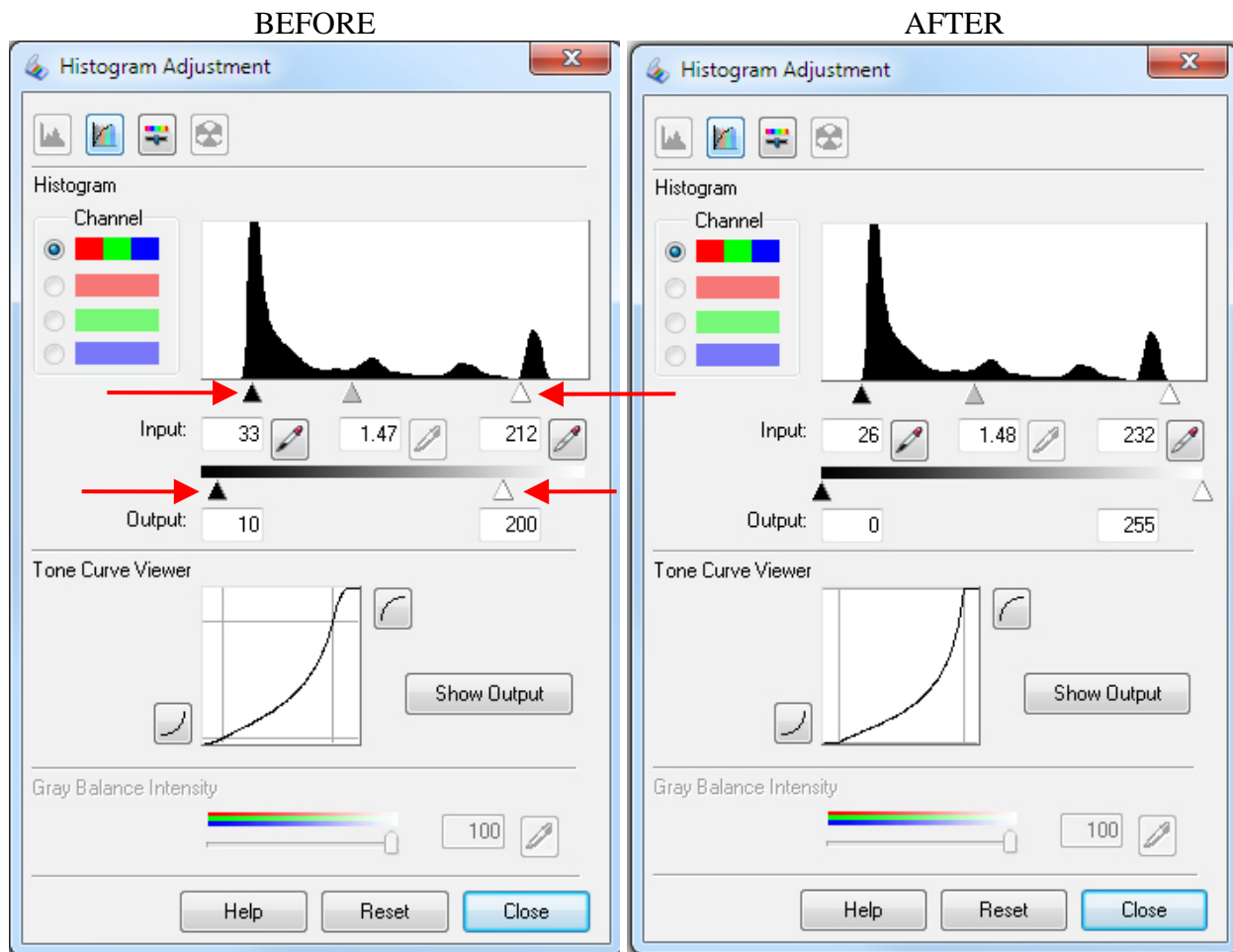After the "Preview in Progress" message you will get the following window.

After the Preview scan in progress message, you will get this next window.

Modify your
selection so the
marching ants are
exactly on the edges
of the image area

Preview

Normal Thumbnail

Full

Marquee

1

All

56.4 mm 69.0 mm   10663 x 13045 pixels 132.65 MB   L:

You must "zoom" the preview to accurately select the edges and also to ensure that the histogram sees all the detail. The histogram can only gain data from what is seen on the screen.

Now go to the original scanning properties window (see page 3) and click on the Histogram icon, which is half way down near the left side, under Adjustments.
The histogram window will open.

Drag the Input sliders to the exact ends of the histogram.
Drag the Output sliders to the ends (0 & 255)

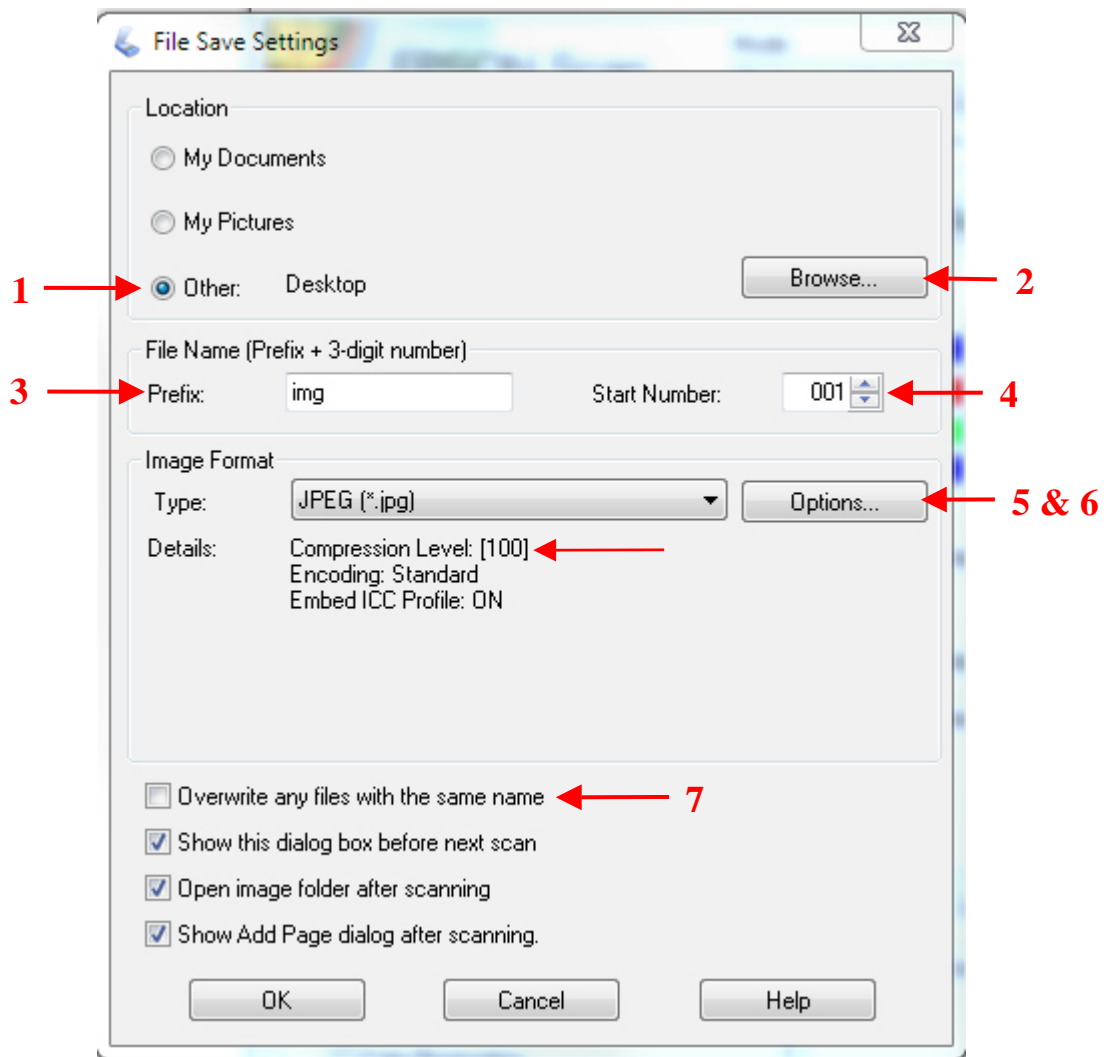BEFORE   AFTER

We do this to ensure that no image information is lost.
You don't need to close this window. Drag it out of the way if it is covering something else you need to see.
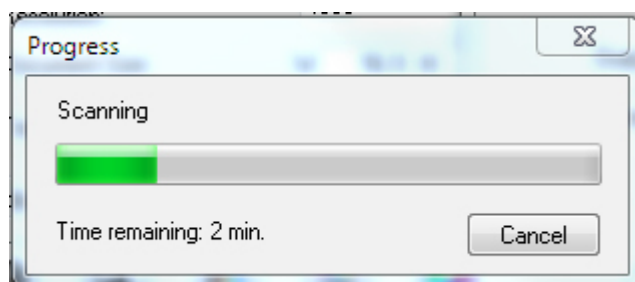
Now click "Scan".

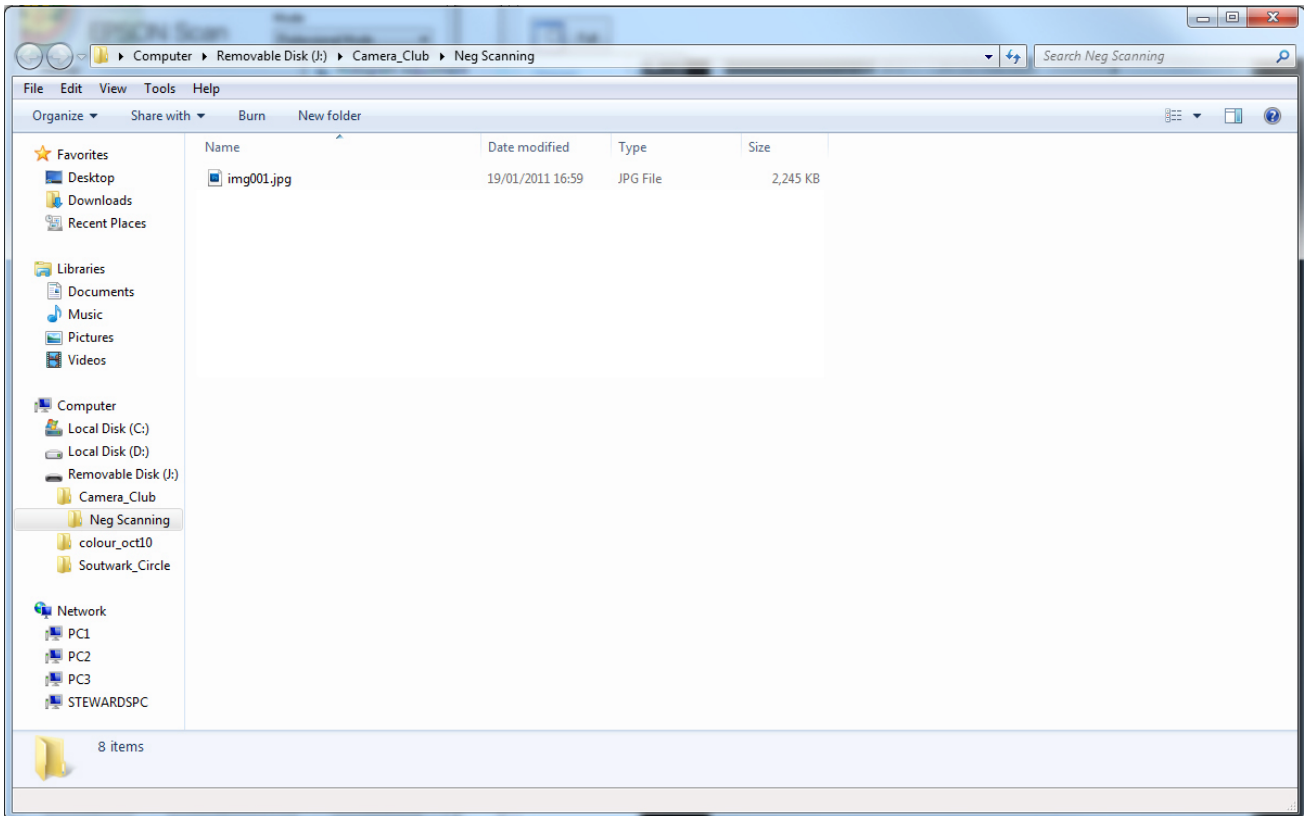The "File Save Settings" window will open.

1. Select 'Other'.
2. Browse to find your memory stick. Remember don't save to the workstation computer!
3. You can type a logical prefix in the box (which is worth doing to help you find it in the future).
4. You may want to change the start number so it will follow on from previous scans you have done.
5. We will save it as a JPEG.
6. 'Options' will let you select the compression level. You <u>must</u> set this to the minimum compression which is moving the slider to the left, then it will show Compression Level: [1] and NOT [100]!!!!
7. Make sure this is not ticked just in case you already have a file with the same name!

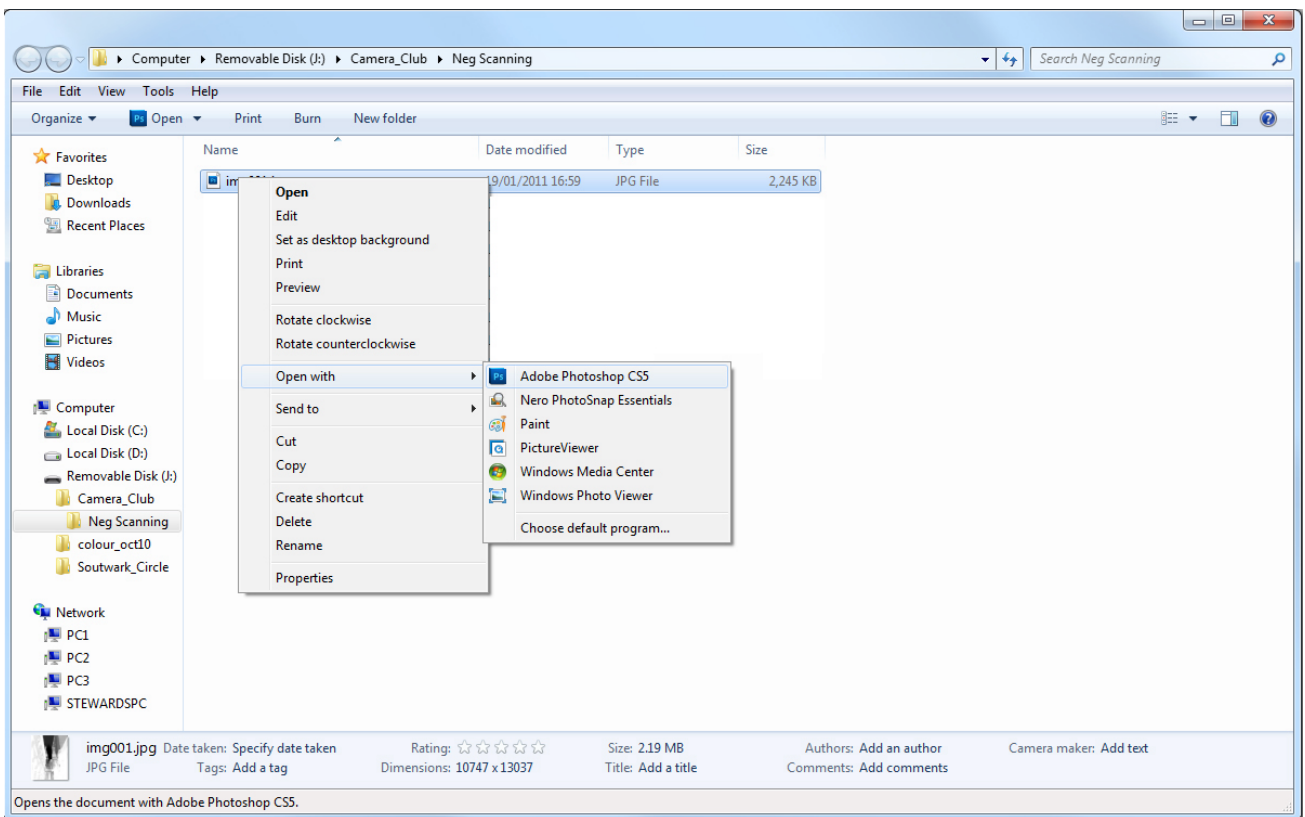When you click "OK" the scan will start, it may take three or four minutes.

When the scan finishes a location window will open to show you where the file was saved to.

You can then select the file and "Open With" to chose Photoshop.

Or if you want to scan more negatives return to the scan preview window and click "Thumbnail" and start the marching ants selection, etc. again.