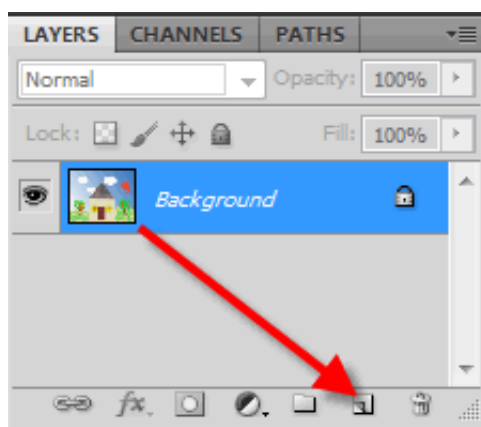# Creating a Watercolor Painting From a Photo

Open the photo you want to appear to be a watercolor painting. I am using the photo below:
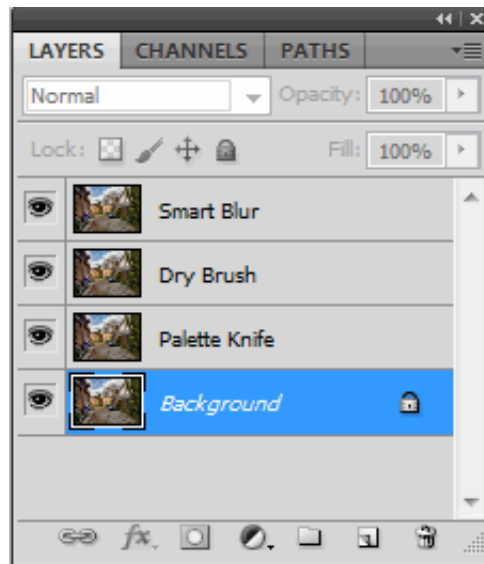

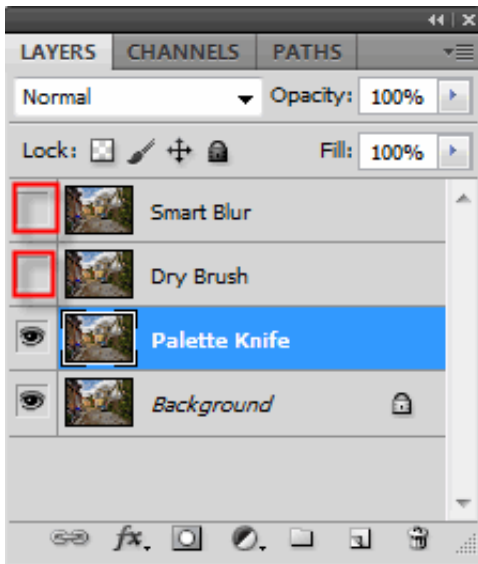Make any adjustments as needed like cropping the photo before preceding with the activity.

In the Layers palette you'll need to copy the Background 3 times by dragging it over the 'Create A New Layer' icon, shown below:
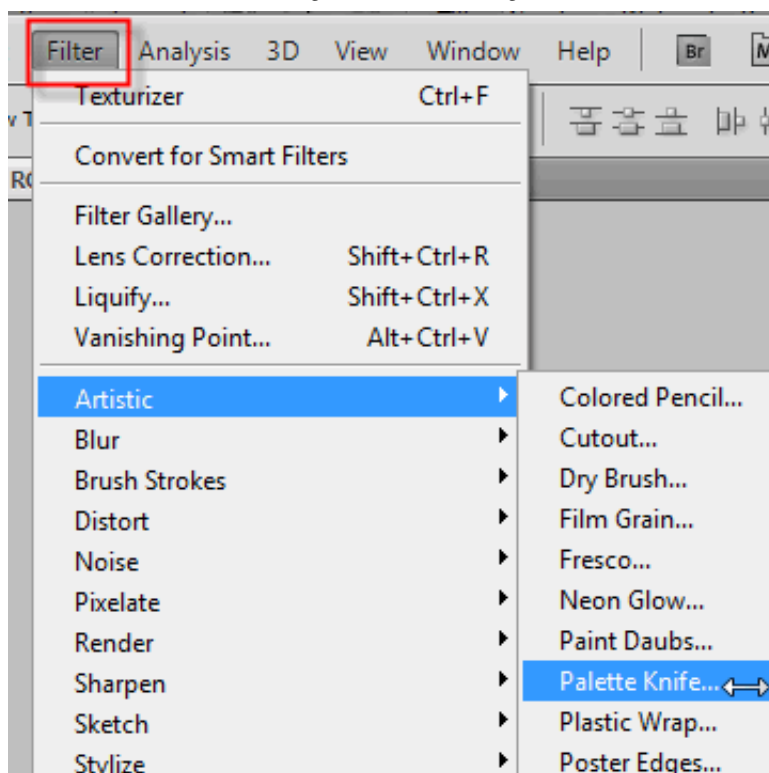

We need to name the layers next. Look at the graphic below and name your layers accordingly. To rename the layer simply click the text "Background copy" and then type in the new layer name:
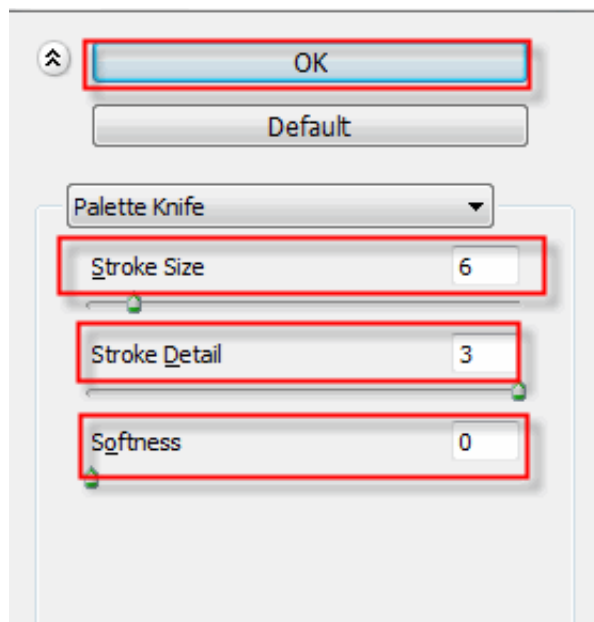
Turn off the top two layers by clicking on the eye icon 👁.

Now start working on the first new layer - the Palette Knife layer. Click on the Palette Knife layer in the layers palette to select it (it will appear blue as shown above). From the Filter > Artistic menu select Palette Knife:
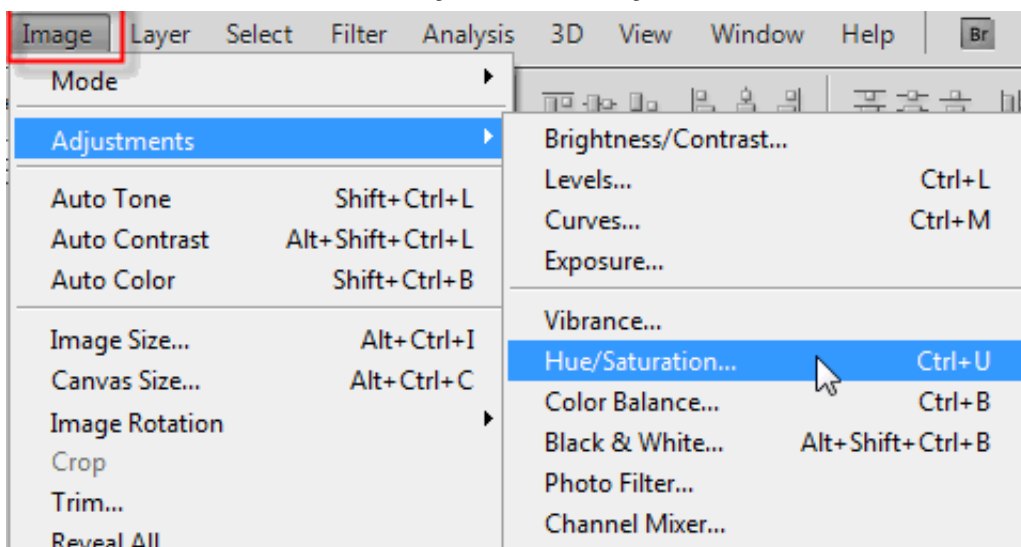
Set the Stroke Size to around 6 and Stroke Detail at 3 and click OK. Experiment with these settings to see the different results. Click OK to apply these settings.
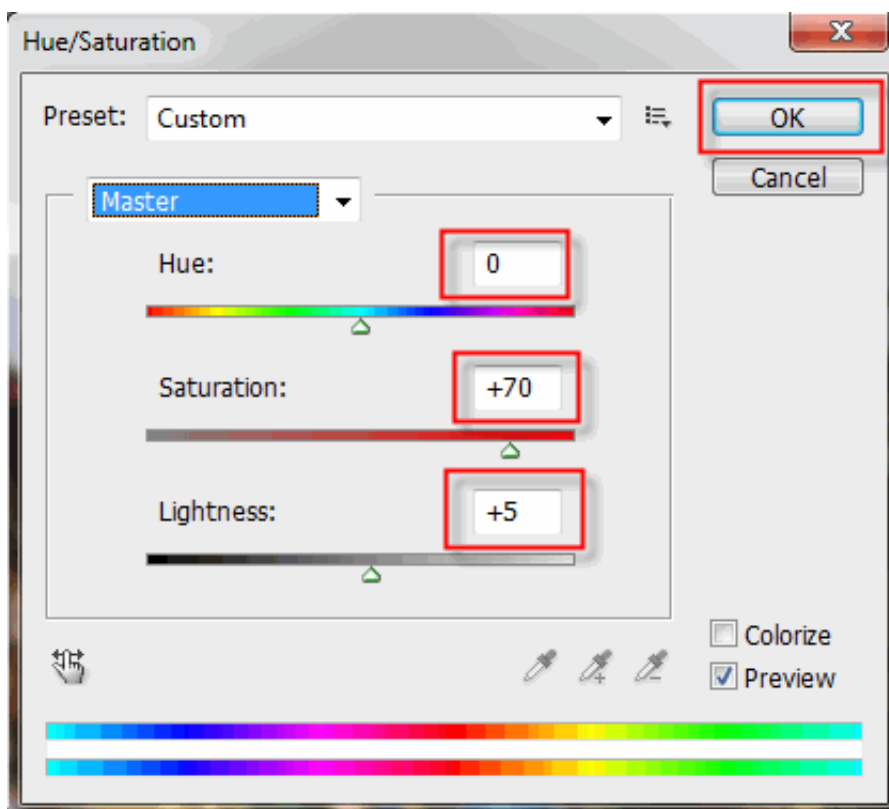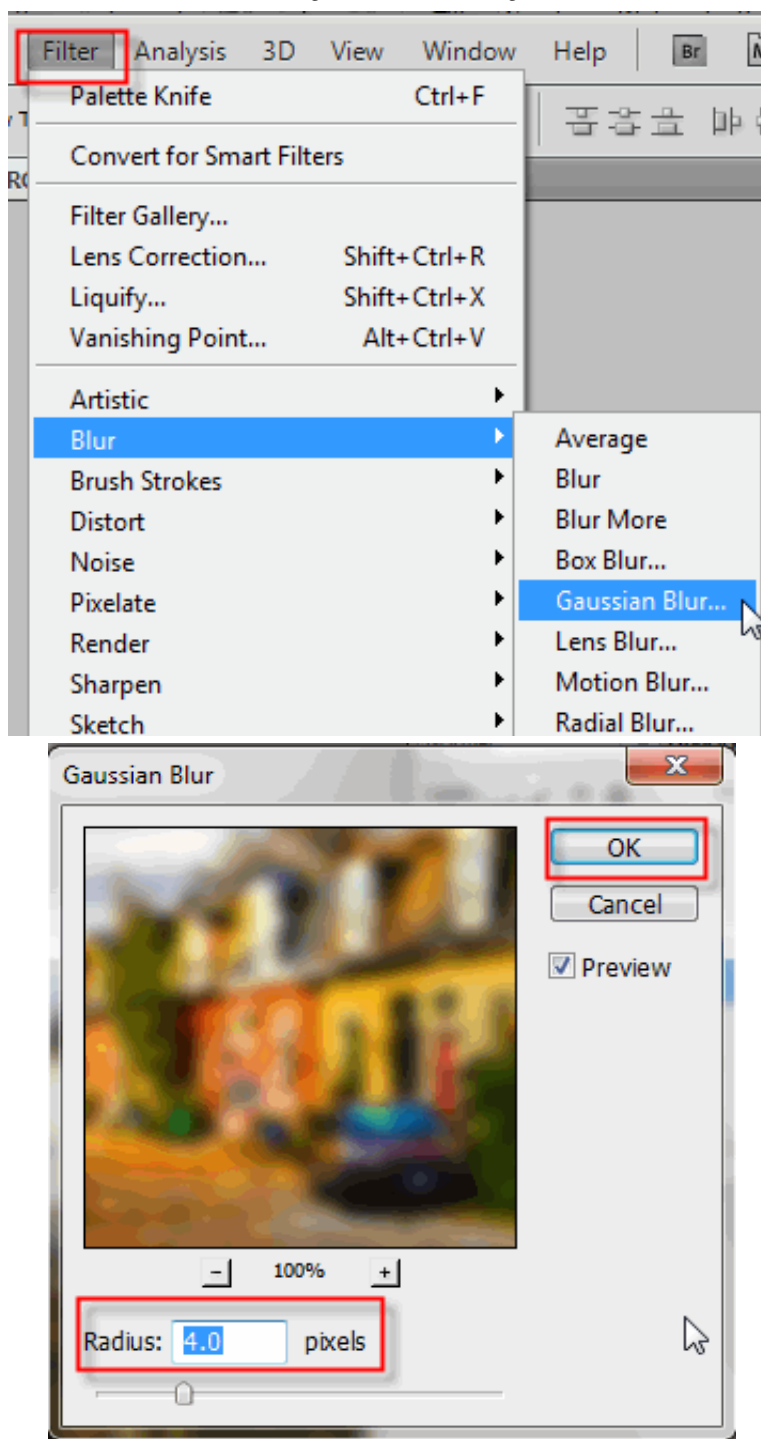

Palette Knife Layer:

Still working on the first layer renamed 'Palette Knife', from the Image > Adjustments > Hue/Saturation:

Increase the Saturation to around +70 and increase the Lightness slightly as well, shown below. Click OK to apply these settings to the photo.
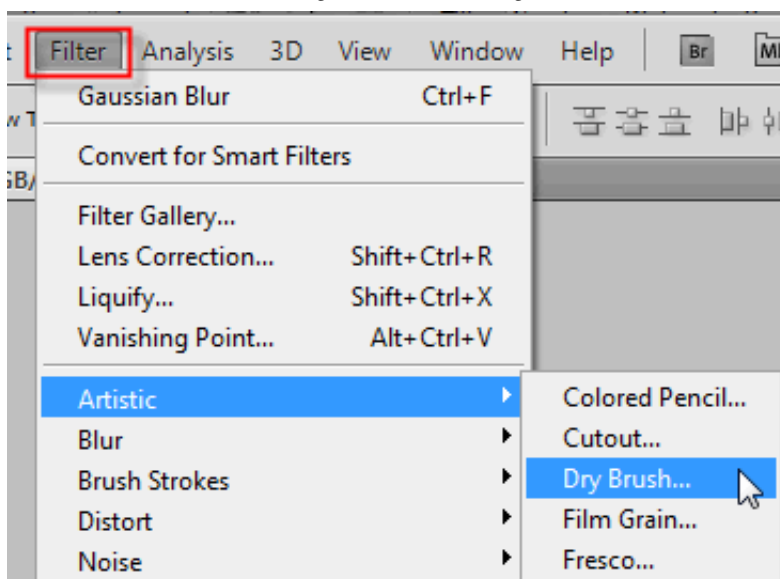
To allow the colors to blend a little easier with the effect try using the Gaussian Blur with a Radius of 4.0 (Filter > Blur >Gaussian Blur).
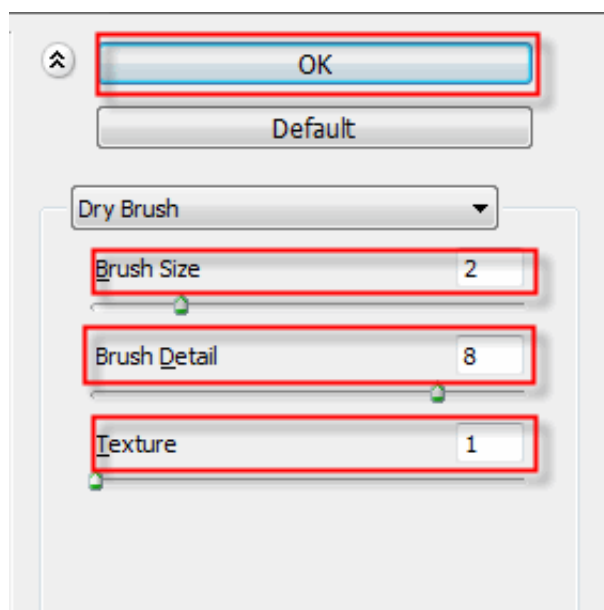
Dry Brush Layer:

Click on to the second new layer renamed 'Dry Brush' and click on the blank eye icon to turn the layer's visibility on. You should now see the eye icon 👁 appear. Apply the Dry Brush Filter (**Filter > Artistic > Dry Brush):**
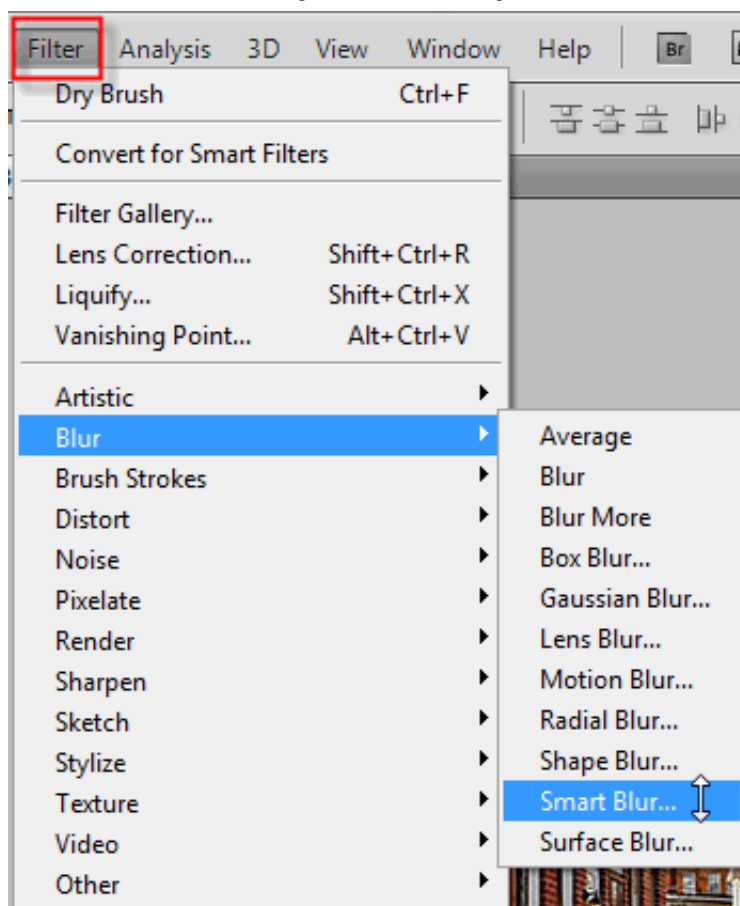
Adjust the setting by moving the slider. Clicking inside the preview window will allow you to see the effect being applied. The settings I used are shown below:
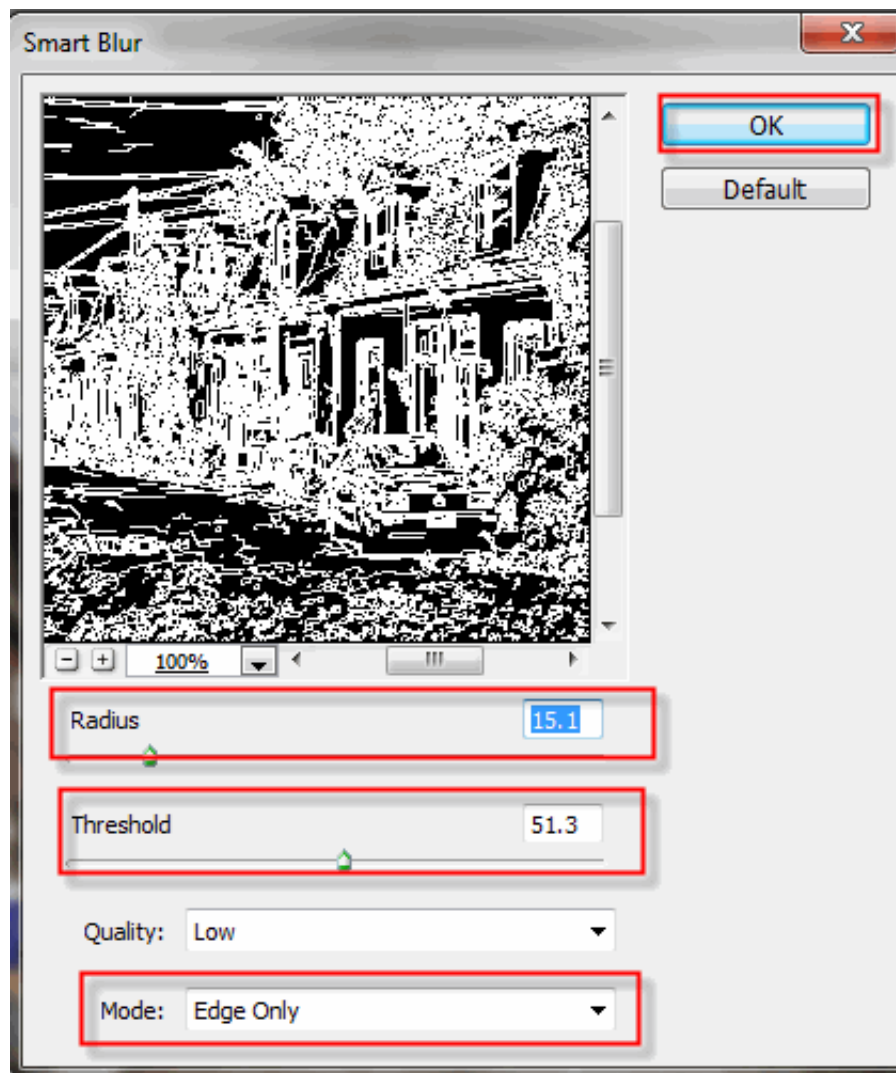

Smart Blur Layer:

Now click on the Smart Blur layer and turn the visibility on by clicking on the eye icon. From the Filter menu select **Blur > Smart Blur:**
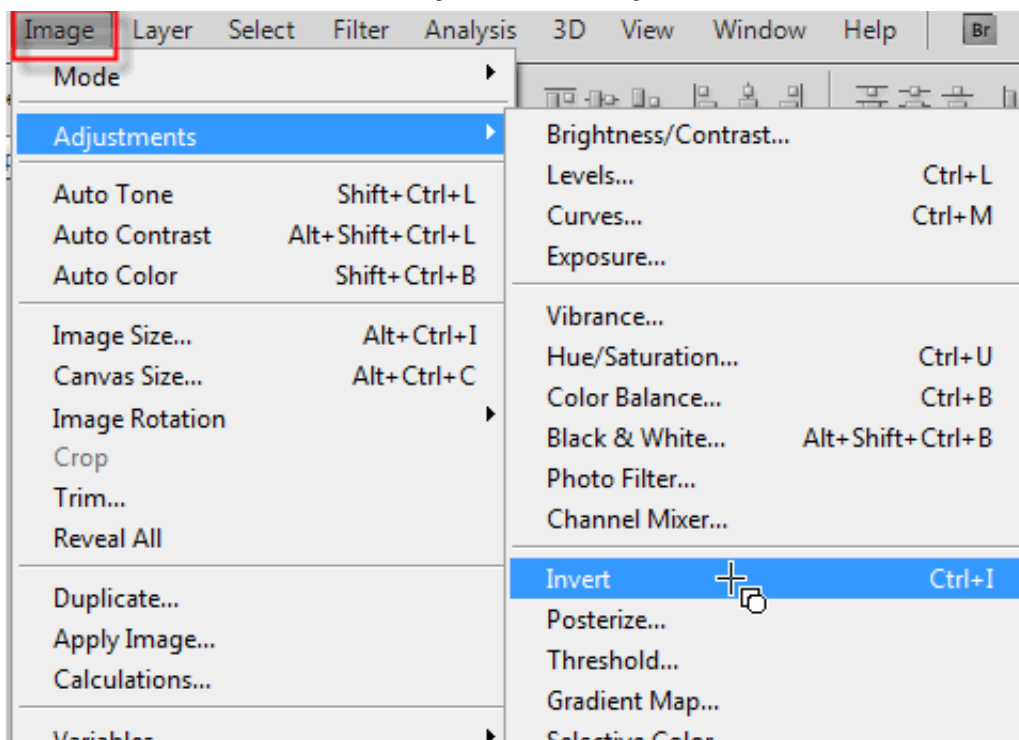
From the dropdown menu under **Mode** select **Edge Only**. You can also adjust the Quality but for this image it was left at low. Try experimenting with both the **Radius** and **Threshold** setting but values around 15 for the Radius and a Threshold of 52 were selected. The settings I used are shown below:
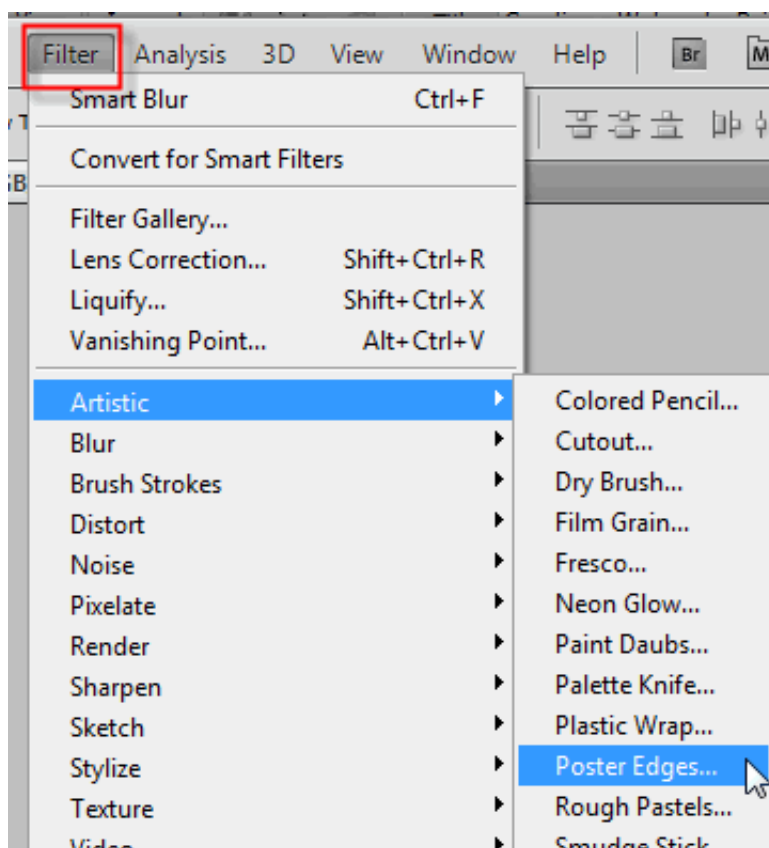
When the **Smart Blur** is applied it appears with white lines on a black background, but here's a neat trick to inverse this. Press Image > Adjustments > Invert) (**Ctrl I shortcut)** to Invert the filter and now you have black lines on a white background.
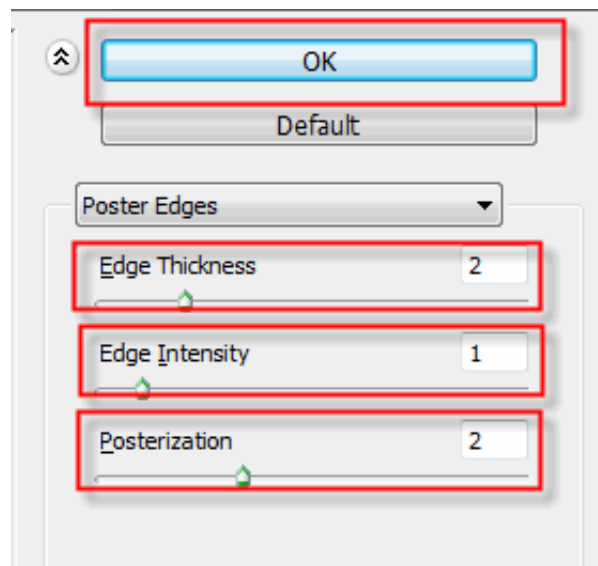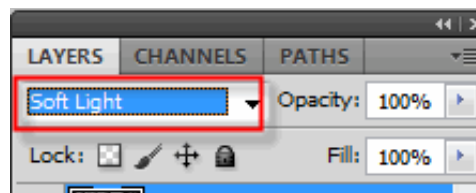
If you feel the drawing effect needs to be a little bit stronger try adding **Poster Edges Filter > Artistic >Poster Edges:**
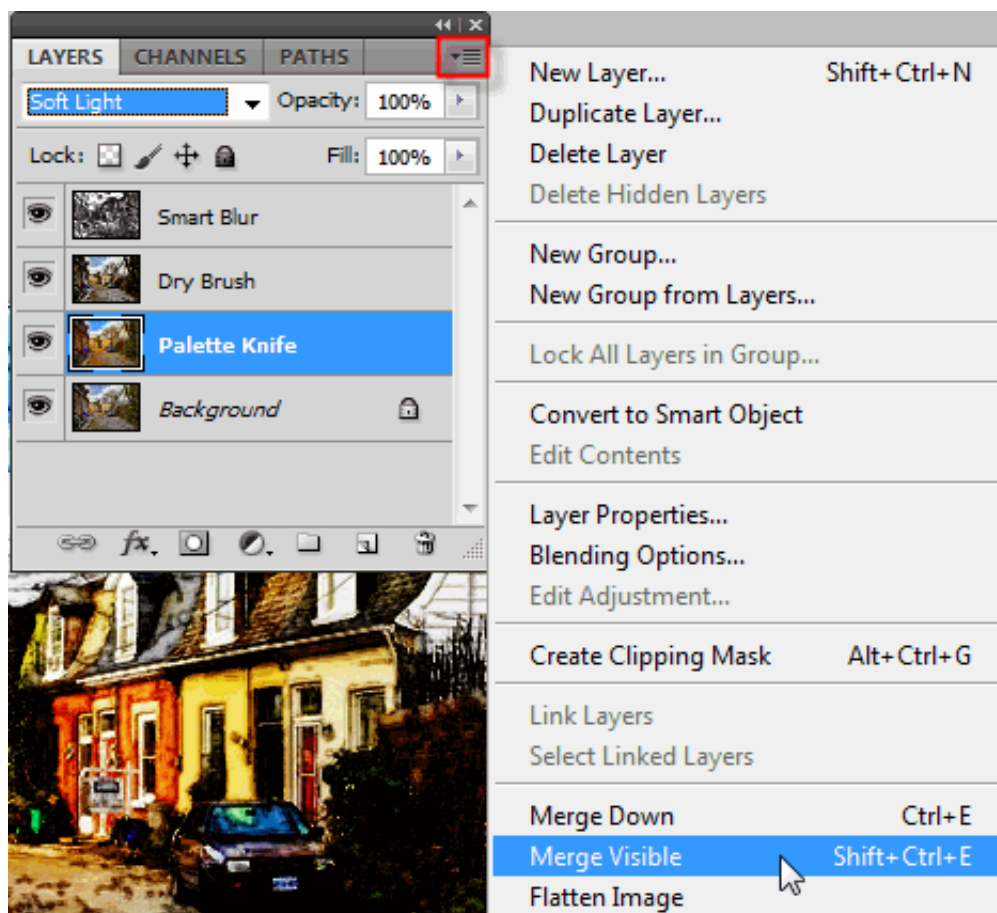

The poster edge settings I used are shown below:

Now we need to Blend all the Layer together. Using the Layers palette under the **Blend Mode** select **Soft Light** and apply it to all three layers :
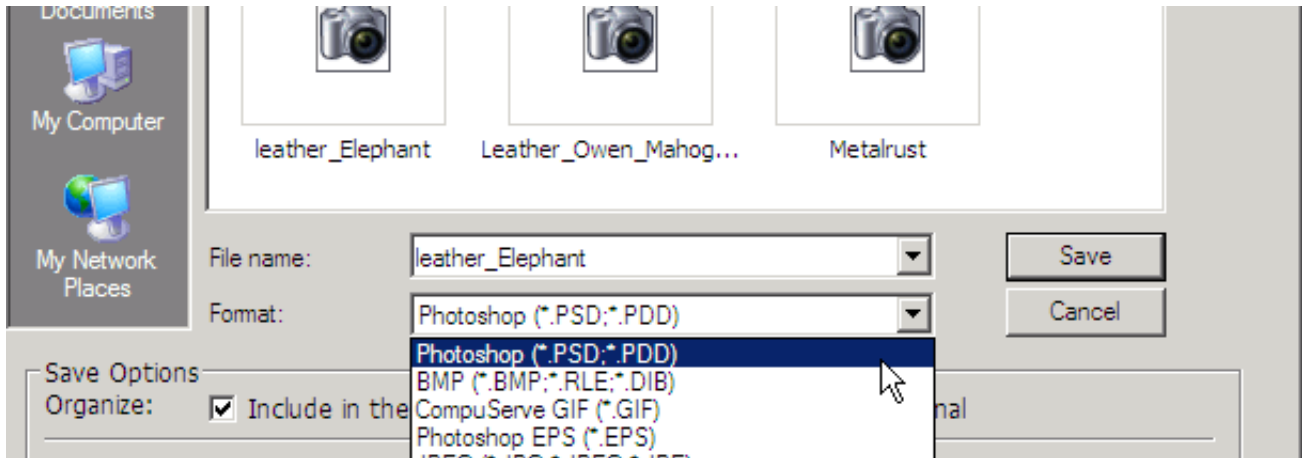

Now we need to merge all the layers together. Click the Move button on the layers palette and select Merge Visible.
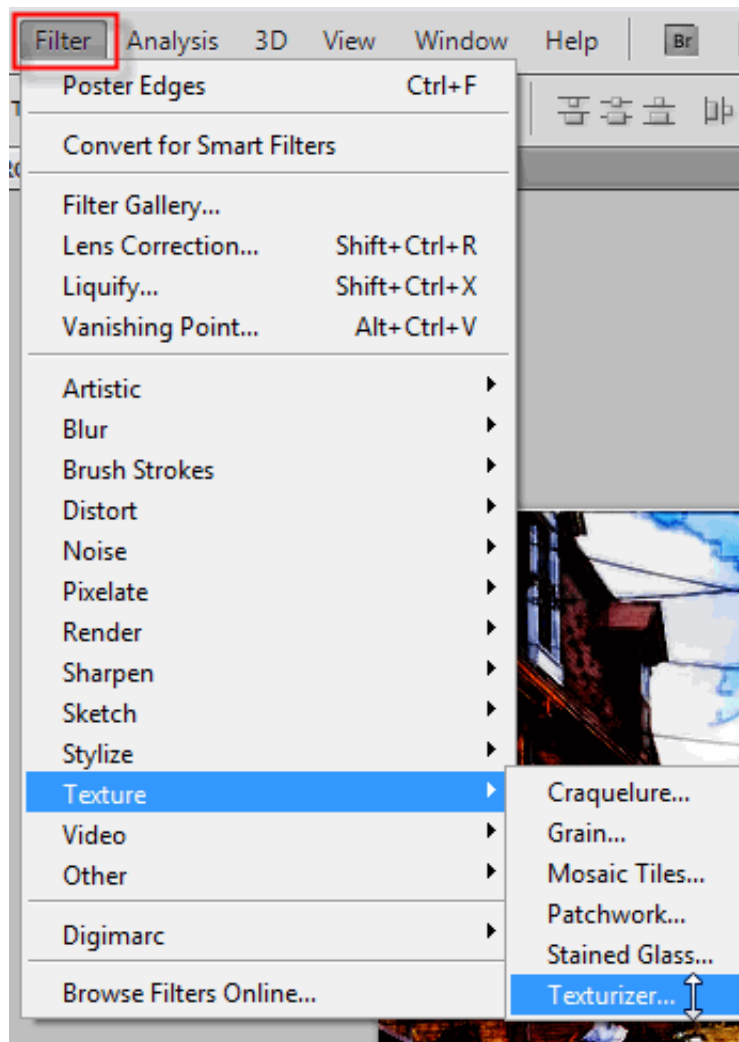
Adding texture to your image is a great way to enhance the effects. You will first save a texture somewhere on your hard drive and then open it into Elements. Click on the link below to open the photo. Once the picture loads on the page right click on the picture and save it anywhere on your hard drive. Just remember where you saved it.

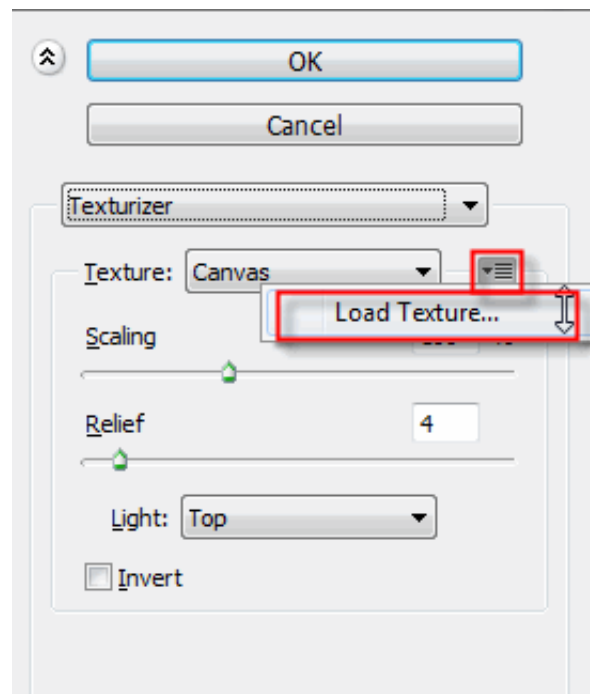<p align="center">**Elephant Leather Texture**</p>

Open the photo in Photoshop and select File > Save As and choose Photoshop Elements format from the drop down list:
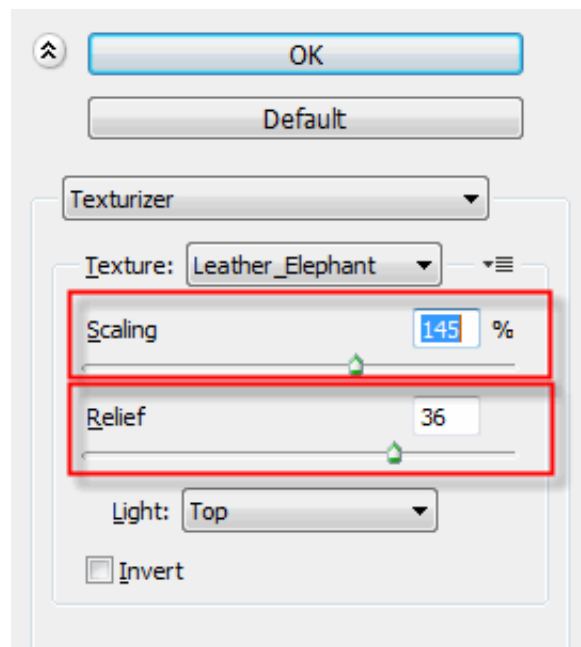

Return to your photo in Photoshop. Select **Filter > Texture > Texturizer:**

At the texturizer dialog box click the arrow to select load texture:

Navigate to the folder where you saved your Leather_Elephant.psd file. Below are the setting I used.

Here is my finished watercolor painting: