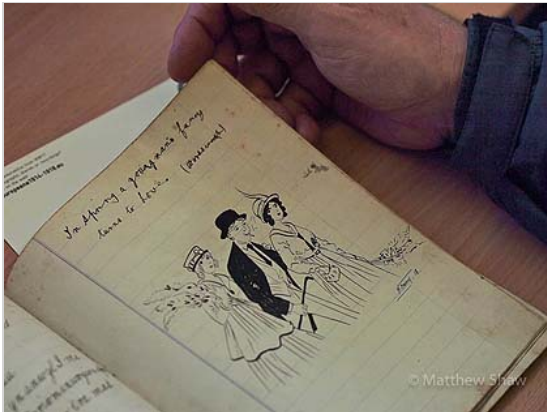


## First World War digitisation project launches in UK as crowds flock to museum roadshow

By Culture24 Reporter | 13 March 2012

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News



A German exercise book with Prisoner of War sketches and diary entries

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The British leg of a European-wide initiative aimed at digitising First World War family histories and artefacts got off to a flying start this weekend as crowds flocked to a history roadshow at the Museum of Lancashire.

More than 200 people travelled from as far as Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool and Warrington to have their precious items digitised for the virtual archive [www.europeana1914-1918.eu](http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu) - a pan-European account of WWI commemorating the centenary of the outbreak of the war in 1914.

Objects ranging from medals, cap badges and diaries to locks of hair, letters and photographs were recorded, scanned and explained by a team of experts.

Thomas Langdale brought in a German school exercise book filled with diary entries and drawings made by Allied prisoners of war. Others brought medals, trench art made by soldiers from spent shell cases and other precious family ephemera passed down through the generations.



A member of the public brings in her family WWI medals and cap badges

"We had one woman who brought in a notebook relating to her grandfather, which included a lock of hair from her mother as a little girl in 1918," said Alun Edwards, project manager at Oxford University, which has been involved in running 17 similar roadshows across Europe.

"Her grandfather had kept this link to his daughter during his time away from the family. While this was not a unique story from the war, the artefact had been saved and it was memorable to those of us who were given the opportunity to photograph it.

"These events are a fantastic way of engaging people with

history through the internet."

Jon Purday, senior communications advisor at Europeana1914-1918, described the Preston event as "our best so far".

"It just goes to show the extraordinary level of interest in World War I and how much importance people attach to having their personal histories recorded in time for the 100th anniversary of the war."

Europeana is the European digital archive. The Europeana1914-1918

project brings together a partnership of libraries, museums, academic and cultural institutions. In the UK the partners are the British Library, Oxford University, JISC and Lancashire County Council.

The roadshow is now moving to Dublin on March 21, followed by Slovenia, Denmark and Banbury, Oxfordshire, in the coming weeks.

Anyone who can't make the events but would like to find out more or add their family memories can do so by uploading their images via the website [www.europeana1914-1918.eu](http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu)