

## Transcription formatting

In general, copy the original spelling and punctuation. However, specific formatting rules apply to help create user friendly transcriptions and improve the search functions of the catalogue system:

- Do not use full stops within initials of person/place/company names or official organisations, e.g.

<b>Mr S M Smith</b>	not	Mr. S.M. Smith
<b>St Ives</b>	not	St. Ives or Saint Ives
<b>HMS</b>	not	H.M.S
<b>Green &amp; Co Ltd</b>	not	Green & Co. Ltd.

- If known, expand abbreviated words. **Exceptions:** **St** in place names; **Co/Ltd** in company names; **Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr** in personal titles; where an apostrophe is commonly used instead of letters, e.g. **don't** or **shouldn't**, and the shorthand for **c/o**, **i.e.** and **e.g.**

Mr Th <sup>ms</sup> Smith = <b>Mr Thomas Smith</b>	L <sup>rd</sup> Fred <sup>k</sup> Hubert = <b>Lord Frederick Hubert</b>		
esq = <b>esquire</b>	yeo = <b>yeoman</b>	gent = <b>gentleman</b>	Cpt = <b>Captain</b>
Lpool = <b>Liverpool</b>	Cwall = <b>Cornwall</b>	<b>St Ives</b>	
<b>Green &amp; Co Ltd</b>			
affect = <b>affectionate</b>	yest = <b>yesterday</b>	Dec = <b>December</b>	

- Use the word **and** instead of ampersands/& or the plus symbol/+. **Exception:** official company names may retain the ampersand, e.g. **Green & Co Ltd**.
- Do not include superscript text such as 2<sup>nd</sup> or M<sup>c</sup>Donald or Th<sup>ms</sup> write it out as normal text, e.g. **2nd** or **McDonald** or **Thomas**.
- Do not insert symbols for fractions such as  $\frac{3}{8}$  or  $\frac{7}{8}$ , write it out as normal text, e.g. **3/8** or **7/8**.
- For clarification, standardise how units of measure are written throughout the text:

- The format for time = **10am** or **8.30pm** or **10 o'clock**.

- The common units of %, **m**, **cm**, **£** and **\$** can be written out in shorthand, e.g.

<b>20%</b>	<b>5m</b>	<b>15cm</b>	<b>12cm x 24cm</b>	<b>£20</b>	<b>\$20</b>
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- Uncommon units should be written out in full words, e.g.

L2 6s 4d or 2/6/4 or 2-6-4 = **£2 6 shillings 4 pence**

2" or 4x6" = **2 inches** or **4x6 inches**                      2' or 2ft = **2 feet**

2a 3r 4p = **2 acres 3 roods 4 perches**

2lb = **2 pounds**

2fm = **2 fathoms**

2°N 3"SW = **2 degrees North 3 minutes South-West**

- For quotations use **'text'** or **"text"**, as it appears in the document, e.g. **"Blessed are the dead which..."** or **The journal, 'Time Seekers'**.
- *Italics*, **bold**, underlining and ~~striketrough~~ text cannot be used, do not try to identify or replicate this formatting.

### Editorial notes – use of square brackets

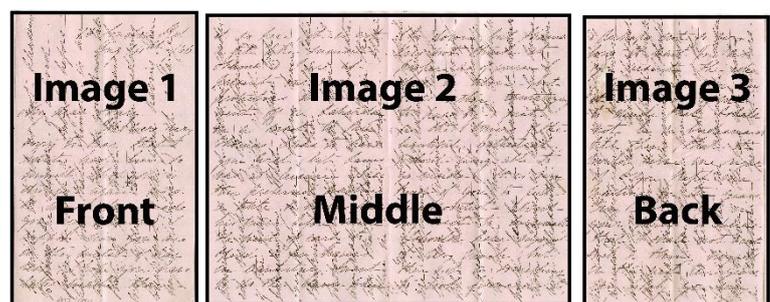
Square brackets [ ] can be used to record editorial information such as the modern version of a place name or the full version of a personal name; unusual spellings; unreadable text, or to represent missing text due to document damage:

- To help identify old place names or where a personal name is known by the editor from details elsewhere, use square brackets to include the full or modern name directly after the word, this helps the search capabilities of the catalogue system, e.g. **Lord F J Gilbert [Lord Frederick John Gilbert]** or **Luxullion [Luxulyan]**.
- If you are unsure of a spelling, particularly place names or surnames, use the square brackets with a question mark [?] after the uncertain word, e.g. **Mr Archillis[?] Hoblyn[?]**.
- For unreadable text use [...] to represent the word, e.g. **Mr [...] Smith**.
- For missing text due to document damage (holes, degraded text) use [missing text] to represent the damage, e.g. **The boat sailed [missing text] at 2.00pm we docked**.
- For any further additional editorial notes use [text], e.g. **British Museum [Letterhead] or [Includes pencil sketch of rabbit with annotation 'white and brown spots']**.

### Reading cross-written text

Cross-written text should also be treated as one continuous transcription.

Identifying where the cross-over starts and finishes can be very difficult. Look for forms of signing off a letter such as 'your affectionate...' or 'I remain always...' to find the last page. Work backwards from this point to help identify the order of the cross-written section. The author usually completes writing on one whole piece of folded paper (front to back) and then crosses over on the front page before starting to write on a second piece of new paper. However, this is not always the case! Think of them as jigsaw puzzles and make sure the letter content makes sense. If the letter consists of more than one piece of folded paper, the second piece will start from image 4.



## Laying out your transcription – for user friendly reading

We are not reproducing an exact copy of the document line by line or with text layout - keep it simplified, neat and easy to read.

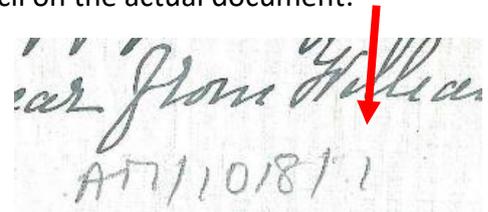
- Start each line at the left margin, do not indent anything.
- Do not try to replicate the text layout line by line, type out normal running text.
- Use a new line at the start of a new paragraph for easy reading.
- For letters - use a new line to separate the main letter text from the letter date, recipient and sender details. Identify letterheads with square brackets, e.g. **British Museum [Letterhead]**.
- For letters - if there is more than one item to record in the entry, such as a letter and an envelope or multiple letters, copy the following layout to help identify each item within the Description box. (This additional identification layout is not required if only one letter is present). The number of items can be identified by looking for the reference number written in pencil on the actual document.

**1) Letter, [AM/1018/1].**

**Enter Transcript text here.**

**2) Envelope, [AM/1018/2].**

**Addressed to 'your text'. Postmark 'your text'.**



OR

**1) Letter, [AM/942/1].**

**Enter Transcript text here.**

**2) Letter, [AM/942/2].**

**Enter Transcript text here.**

**3) Envelope, [AM/942/3].**

**Addressed to 'your text'. Postmark 'your text'.**

- If there are diagrams, sketches or illustrations identify them where they occur in the text using square brackets, e.g. **[sketch]** or **[illustration]**. Also add a note describing them, in square brackets, at the end of the transcript, e.g. **[Includes pencil sketch of rabbit with annotation 'white and brown spots']**. We use **sketch** for a doodle or something quick and hand drawn, **diagram** for scientific and/or mathematic drawings and **illustration** for more complete/finished pictures.
- Ignore any page numbers, other reference numbers and crossed out text (strikethrough).
- Documents may consist of one or more pages but treat them as one transcription.