

The A. R. Wallace Correspondence Project manuscript transcription protocol.

Version 4

INTRODUCTION

The transcription protocol we have developed for our project is largely based on that used by Darwin Online (http://darwin-online.org.uk/Manuscript_transcription_policy.html) and the Tyndall Correspondence Project (<http://www.yorku.ca/tyndall/transcription.html>). The protocols these projects use were in turn based on those adopted by the Darwin Correspondence Project (<http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/editorial-policy>).

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR TRANSCRIBERS

Before beginning work, please turn off all auto text correcting functions in the word processor you are using *e.g.* auto capitalisation and spelling correction. Please use Arial 12 point font and the simplest document template available (we don't want any fancy formatting!)

Please follow the conventions below and if you encounter a situation not covered by them then please discuss the matter with George Beccaloni before proceeding any further!

DOCUMENT LAYOUT

PAGE NUMBERS: These denote the pages of the letter which have text on them - blank pages are not taken into account (the total number of pages including blanks is, however, recorded in the project's database). Page numbers should be inserted into the appropriate place in the text and should be enclosed in two sets of square brackets *e.g.* "[[p. 2]]". The first page number "[[p. 1]]" should be the first text present on page 1 of the transcript and it should be separated by subsequent text by a paragraph mark (but not a blank line).

SENDERS ADDRESS: The address is aligned right and each line should be separated from the next by a paragraph (but not a blank line). Printed or embossed addresses should be in *italics*.

DATE: The date of the letter is transcribed exactly as it is written and it should be separated from the address by a paragraph and a blank line, and aligned right. A paragraph and blank line should follow the date.

LISTS: Each line of any text which is written in the form of a list should be separated from the next by a paragraph (but not a blank line).

TABLES: Tables are reproduced as close to the original format as possible.

VALEDICTIONS: (The parting words at the end of a letter) These should be combined into single lines to save space, and the positions of line-breaks in the original should be marked by vertical bars “|” (pipe characters).

PARAGRAPHS: Paragraphs should be left flush with the left-hand margin with a blank line between them (except for the exceptions noted above). Special manuscript devices delimiting sections or paragraphs, for example, blank spaces left between sections of text and lines drawn across the page, are treated as normal paragraph indicators and are not specially marked or recorded unless their omission would make the text unclear.

TEXT IN THE MARGINS: Text which is part of the original letter and is written in the margins, is transcribed at the point in the transcript which you believe it was intended to be read. An editorial comment (see below) should be made which describes the position of this text in the manuscript. In rare cases the final part of the text of a letter with more than one page may be written in the margin of the first page. Please record this using an editorial comment and do not insert a page number.

LATER ANNOTATIONS: If it is likely that handwritten text was written after the letter was completed by the author, or the handwriting is not in the hand of the author of the letter, then use footnotes to record it (see below).

ILLUSTRATIONS: Any hand-drawn illustrations and diagrams that occur in the document are usually omitted since images of the manuscripts will be provided. However, editorial comments should be made in the appropriate place in the text, briefly describing them *e.g. [a sketch of a butterfly appears below]*.

PROTOCOLS FOR TRANSCRIBING THE TEXT

When transcribing manuscripts you should adhere as closely as possible to the original format and spelling of the original, enclosing all text which is not part of the original in square brackets *i.e.* []. Original spelling should be retained and misspellings should be indicated by inserting *[sic]* immediately after the misspelt word. In cases of grossly misspelled words please supply the correct word in brackets instead of inserting “*[sic]*” *e.g.* "evolooshun [evolution]".

PERIODS & DASHES: Dashes at the ends of sentences should be converted to periods if it is clear that the dash was intended to serve this purpose. If no punctuation mark occurs at the end of a sentence then insert a period in square brackets *i.e.* [.] Dashes should be written as hyphens (-) rather than longer en-dashes or em-dashes.

MISFORMED LETTERS: For example an inadvertent crossing of 'l'. A 't' is only transcribed when it is clear that this was the intended letter.

WORDS CROSSED OUT: Use strikethrough font to depict deletions which are still legible *e.g.* ~~deleted~~ See below for how to record illegible text.

UNDERLINING: When the author has underlined text this should be shown in underline font. Where the author of a manuscript has indicated greater emphasis by underlining a word or passage two or more times, the text should be rendered as **bold underlined**.

PARENTHESES & BRACKETS: Parentheses () are used when they are part of the original document, and square brackets are used for insertions and comments by the transcriber or editor. To avoid confusion, if the writer of a letter used square brackets, they should be changed to parentheses. Regular square brackets [] enclose editorial insertions, whilst italic square brackets [] enclose all editorial comments, which are themselves written in italic text. Angle brackets < > are used to insert surmised text in cases where the original text is damaged or unreadable.

1. Editorial insertions

If possible please supply text which the author has accidentally or deliberately omitted and enclose it in square brackets *e.g.* "In the morning we went [to] the village" or "The plum[age] of this species is most handsome.", or if you are uncertain include a question mark "This bee[tile?] has greatly enlarged mandibles." If the date of the letter is incomplete but the missing part is known then please supply it *e.g.* [1890] (a footnote might be needed to explain how this was arrived at). In the case of less common abbreviations please supply the missing part of the word[s] *e.g.* "y[ea]r" instead of "yr"

In the case of mutilated or illegible text, if a word or words can be deduced from the context, then insert it in angle brackets < > *e.g.* "My son <William> wrote to you..." Uncertain guesses should be followed by a question mark *e.g.* "Bates says that the local ladies are very <attractive?>".

2. Editorial comments

Enclose them in square brackets and italicise these and the enclosed text *e.g.*
[The following two sentences were written vertically up the left hand side of the current page]

2.1 Uncertain interpretation

If you are unsure whether you have read a word correctly then place a question mark directly after it in square brackets *i.e.* [?] (don't leave a space between it and the queried text).

2.2 Text missing or unreadable

In the case of damaged or illegible manuscripts, if no guess can be made about the missing text (see above) an appropriate comment should be made *e.g.*

[2 words illeg.] (illeg. = illegible)

[MS burned]

*[MS blotted]*ing Darwin!

th*[MS illeg.]* Bates

2.3 Signatures

[signature] should be inserted after all signatures – whether full or initials.

FOOTNOTES: Comments that provide additional information about the text, or about people, places and things mentioned in the text, should be placed in footnotes at the bottom of the final page of the transcript and referenced using superscript numbers at the appropriate place in the text *e.g.* in order to explain who a person simply referred to as "Herbert" is, insert a superscript "1" after the name *i.e.* "Herbert¹" and write a footnote at the end of the document, which might read: "1. ARW's brother Herbert Edward Wallace (1829 - 1851)."

Footnotes should also be used to record handwritten text which was added after the letter was written and/or text that was written by someone other than the author of the letter. Use a superscript number in the text as near to the place that the text in question appears, and then write a footnote which lists the text *e.g.* "2. Text in the hand of William Wallace reads "Letter 20"

The heading "**FOOTNOTES**" should be added above any footnotes.