

## Civil War & Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi Transcription Protocols

Established: September 1, 2019

Revised: December 20, 2022

Review Date: May 1, 2023

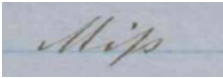
Civil War & Reconstruction Governors of Mississippi Transcription Protocols were inspired by those of the Civil War Governors of Kentucky (CWGK), the Library of Congress's By the People project, conversations with other documentary editors, and the standards of the Association of Documentary Editing.


CWRGM transcriptions are done using FromThePage (FtP) software and must follow these protocols to keep the transcription process uniform, user-friendly, and useful for CWRGM's diverse audience. While CWRGM visitors can see the original document as well as the transcription, it is still important to maintain standards throughout the process.

### The Process

All transcription work is completed in FromThePage and goes through a two-stage verification process after transcriptions are drafted. Drafting may be performed by a member of the CWRGM research team or a volunteer transcriber, but all two-stage review work must be completed by a member of the CWRGM research team to ensure transcriptions adhere to the project's transcription protocols and that subject tagging features are added correctly (to learn more about subject tagging, view the Tagging Protocols). The research team is credited for their transcription work on the website's [Project Team page](#) (hyperlinked), and all volunteers and members of the research team receive specific credit for their contributions to each document within the "Contributor field" under the "Document Metadata" tab of all documents. In rare instances when a document must be re-uploaded due to technical issues, the contributor field data may be lost. Contributor data is also pulled automatically from FtP to the website, therefore CWRGM cannot control how volunteers represent their names in FtP and in instances where volunteers do not provide this information, they will be listed under an alias generated by FtP.

### Spelling, grammar, punctuation, word order, long s, X marks, fractions, symbols:

- All misspellings will be preserved; transcribe abbreviations as they appear
- All punctuation and lack of punctuation will be preserved
- Duplicate words will be recorded
- Capitalization will be preserved; don't capitalize text if the word isn't capitalized in original document, even at start of sentence, proper noun, etc.
- When a "long s" — which looks like this  — is used, it will be transcribed as "ss." In this example, a "long s" is used in the abbreviation for Mississippi. This would be transcribed as "Miss"
- When an individual signs by making his or her mark, render with carets as: John ^his X mark^ Doe
- For abbreviated dates where a slash is used, render spacing as it appears.
- Fractions are rendered as a slash between two numbers, eg. 1/2. If they are superscript in the original doc, use FtP coding to indicate this (see "superscript" in this document).
- For checkmarks in a document place the word checkmark in brackets. Example: [checkmark]
- Stray marks/slips of the pen are not rendered. Blotches or smears are not represented unless a portion of the text is affected; in which case the affected text is rendered using the [unclear] tag.

- An index  (also called manicule, printer's fist, or pointing hand) should be indicated in brackets with the word [manicule]. It is unnecessary to indicate the direction the manicule is "pointing" because site visitors can see that for themselves in the document next to the transcription.

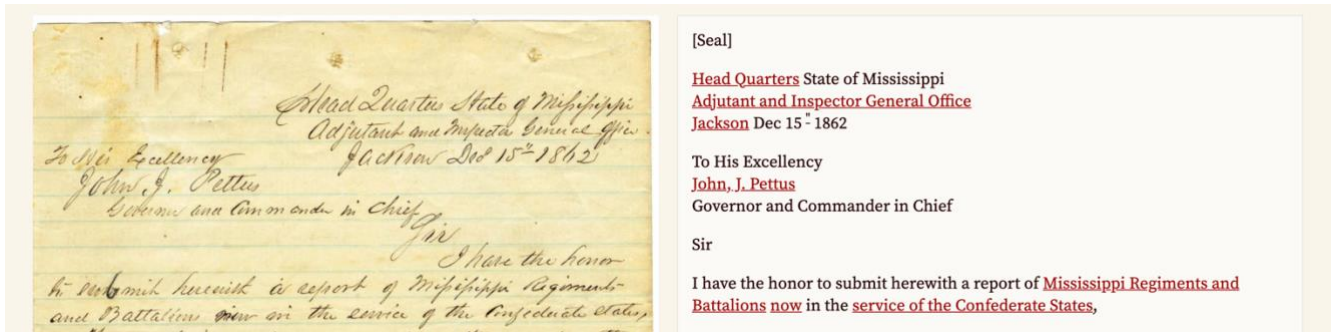
### **Bold, underline, italic, superscript, blanks, indentation, long line/hard rule, etc.:**

- Italics will be indicated as `<i>word</i>`; FtP will change it to *word* in the final draft.
- Bold will be indicated as `<b>word</b>`; FtP will change it to **word** in the final draft.
- Underlines will be indicated as `<u>word</u>`; FtP will change it to word in final draft.
- Superscript letters or numbers will be indicated as: `<sup>th</sup>`; FtP will change it to <sup>th</sup> in final draft. Note: FtP includes buttons at the top of the transcription text box to insert this coding. To use, click the "Sup" button and type in the text you want superscripted; or highlight the text you want superscripted and click the button to insert the coding.
- Subscript letters or numbers will be indicated as: `<sub>100</sub>`; FtP will change it to <sub>100</sub> in the final draft. Note: FtP includes buttons at the top of the transcription text box to insert this coding. To use, click the "Sub" button and type in the text you want subscripted; or highlight the text you want subscripted and click the button to insert the coding.
- Blanks or gaps in text will be indicated as [gap].
- If words have two or more of these features, transcribe with nesting as:
  - `<b><i>bolded italics</i></b>`
  - `<b><u>bold underline</u></b>`
 NOTE: be sure to sure to close (and balance) the tags otherwise you will receive a "page save failures" alert because tags were opened but not closed
- Indentations do not need to be preserved; all transcriptions are left justified.
- Use the tag `<hr></hr>` to insert a "hard rule" or a long line that authors used to divide a section of a document or separate one section from another. Underlining `<u>` coding should not be used for a hard rule. Do not use the `<hr>` tag to separate a document unless the author specifically drew a line in the document.

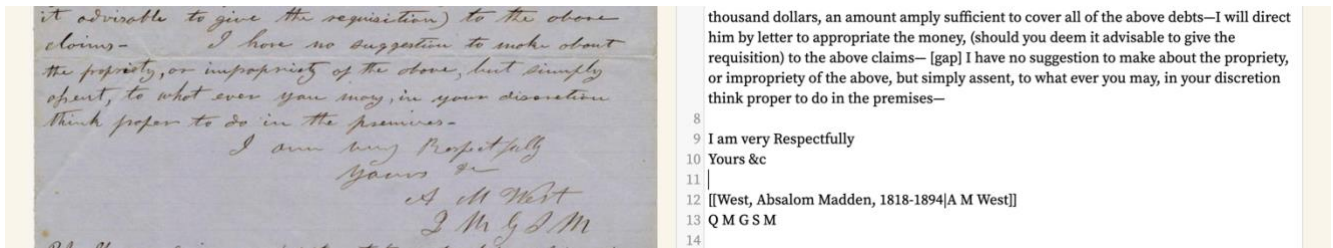
### **Line Breaks and spacing:**

- Insert an extra line break between paragraphs to keep the paragraph spacing clear.
- Do not maintain the line breaks as they appear in the body of original document (viewers can see the original next to transcription).
- The only line breaks to respect from the original documents are in the date, header, and the opening and closing salutation.
- Group the date and header as they are grouped in the document with the opening and closing salutations set apart.

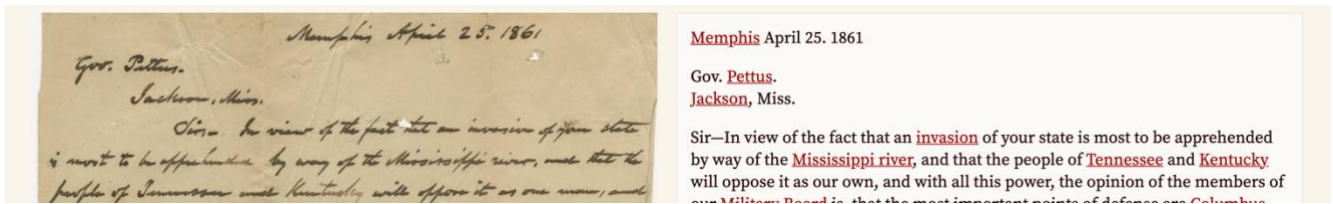
### Date, Header, & Opening Salutation:



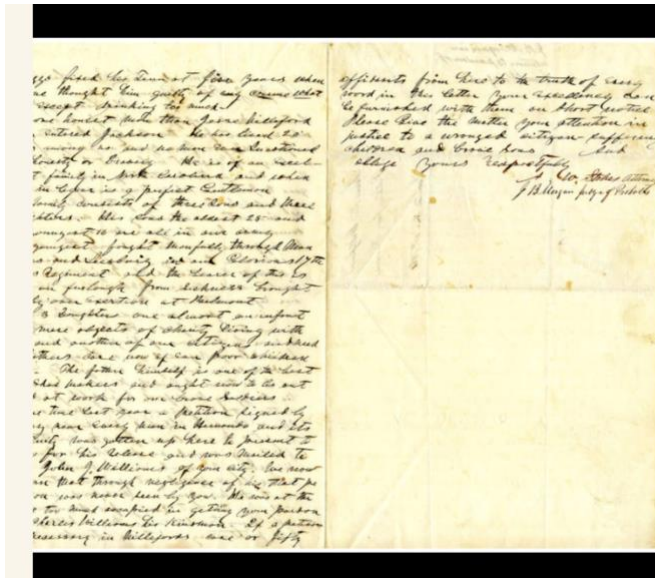
**Closing Salutation:**



- If a salutation runs directly into the body of the document without a line break or other stylistic change, for example, “Dear Governor we the undersigned...”, treat it as part of the paragraph.



- All transcriptions should be left justified, regardless of centered letterhead or a date that might be on right side of document.
- If a word is hyphenated at the end of a line in the original text, place the hyphen (-) in the same spot within the word, but you do not need to maintain the line break. If the author uses an equals sign (=) in place of the hyphen (-), the transcriber will likewise insert an equals sign in place of a hyphen (-).
- If a word is broken at the end of a line (including at the end of a page), but the author did not insert a hyphen (-), the transcriber will insert a hyphen (-) to avoid the need to insert a space that may complicate coding.
- Regularize spacing between initials. If the author wrote J.J. Pettus transcribe it as J. J. Pettus.
- Generally, transcribe the text of the document from left-to-right and top-to-bottom. However, if the beginning of a document (the opening salutation) appears out of order (for example, on the right-hand side of a divided landscape page), begin with the opening salutation as the author intended.
- Do not use a hard rule (which looks like this <hr></hr>) to separate a landscape page unless the author explicitly drew one.
- Maintain the line break between a paragraph split between the left and right hand sides of a landscape page.



5 His family consists of three sons and three daughters. His sons the oldest 25 and the youngest 16 are all in our army The youngest fought manfully through [[Bull Run, 1st Battle of, Va., 1861|Manassas]] and [[Ball's Bluff, Battle of, Va., 1861|Leesburg]] in our Glorious [[Confederate States of America. Army. Mississippi. Infantry Regiment, 17th 17th Miss Regiment]] and the bearer of this is now on furlough from [[Disease and illness|sickness]] brought on by over exertion at [[Belmont, Battle of, Belmont, Mo., 1861|Belmont]].

6

7 His 3 daughters one almost an infant are mere objects of charity living with one and another of our citizens and need a fathers care now if ever poor children did. The father himself is one of the best of [[Shoemakers|Shoe makers]] and ought now to be out and at work for our brave Soldiers

8

9 Some time last year a petition signed by very near every man in Hernando and its vicinity was gotten up here to present to you for his release and was mailed to Col [[Williams, John J.|John J. Williams]] of your city. We now learn that through negligence of his that petition was never seen by you. He was at the time too much occupied in getting your [[Pardon|pardon]] for [[Williams, Charles|Charles Williams]] his kinsman—If a petition is necessary in Willefords case or fifty

10

11 affidavits from here to the truth of every word in this letter your Excellency can be furnished with them on short notice

12

13 Please give the matter your attention in justice to a wronged citizen - suffering children and brave sons And oblige

14

15 Yours respectfully

16

- For salutations and closing, respect where the author ends each line but keep everything left justified.
- Maintain list column lineation (where the author ends each line) as it appears in the document but render all text flush left, unless it appears as a marginal note. If a document contains multiple columns, transcribe each column vertically starting left-to-right. Note the start of a new column using a line break and only include the `<hr></hr>` code if the author explicitly drew a line. Do not use the `[gap]` code to separate column entries.
- If the author inserts a table, note the identifier number, and contact the Sr. Assistant Editor.
- Do not add an additional line break after each item listed in a list format.
- Dash length (not hyphens) will be standardized through use of an em dash (do not use spaces around the em dash).

Example: Enclosed you will find one dollar—for which you will please send me a commission

- Stops represented by two dashes (also called double-lined dashes) that look like an equal sign will be transcribed as they appear, flush with the text, using no spaces. Double-lined dashes used as punctuation will be rendered as an equals sign. Example, “...your petitioners will ever pray=”

### Illegible or unclear text:

- When words or parts of words are obscured because of damage, bleed-through, smudges, blotches, etc. use `[unclear]` in the place of the illegible word.
- When words or parts of words are illegible due to poor handwriting, poor copy, etc. use `[?]` in the place of the illegible word.
  - If transcriber is confident, but not certain of the text, type the word you think it to be, open and close it with brackets, but add a question mark within the brackets. Example: `[Governors?]`
- When entire paragraphs or pages are illegible (not due to scanning error), enter the issue inside brackets based on amount of text affected `[illegible paragraph/page]` followed by a brief explanation. For example: `[illegible paragraph: the original document scanned here is a letterpress copy; page 2 is too faded to be legible]`

- When entire pages are illegible due to scanning errors (most notable by a blurry image), enter the date, object identifier number, and issue in the “Image Upload Issues—From MDAH” file in the Transcription and Tagging folder.
- If a page is torn, preventing the transcriber from even guessing at the missing word, use [page torn]

**Insertions, deletions, and strikethroughs:**

- Interlineations (inserted words in the text) will be recorded, properly placed within the text, and indicated by inserting the caret tag. Example: They ^left^ Natchez on April 13
- For strikeouts, if legible, use <s>word</s> and FtP will change it to ~~word~~ in the final draft.
  - If a word is overwritten with another word, transcribe it as a strikeout and place it immediately before the word written on top of it. Example: "<s>January</s>February" with no space between for ~~January~~February
  - If part of a word is overwritten, render it as a strikeout within the word itself: Govern<s>ed</s>or for Govern~~ed~~or.
- For illegible strikeouts, use an [?] tag: <s>[?]</s> for ~~[?]~~

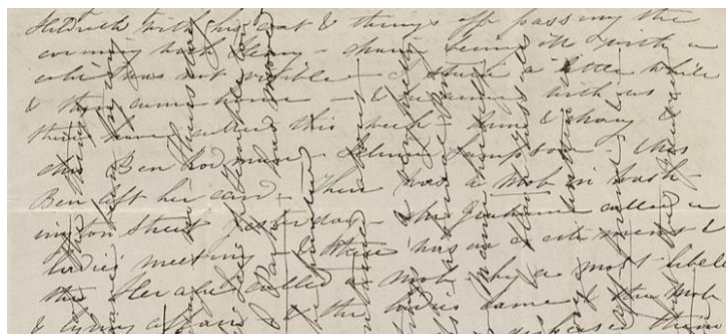
**Marginalia and unusual formatting:**

- Marginal notes, such as a comment in pencil from an archivist at some point in the document's history, will use [note] and [/note] around the word/phrase such as: [note] 757-930-2-1 [/note]
- Notify CWRGM Sr. Assistant Editor when you encounter irregularly formatted notations and information presented in tables. Include the object identifier number and the Sr. Assistant Editor will insert the coding to place the text in a table. For example:

10 Percussion Pistols and appendages	- - - - -	5	$\frac{2}{3}$	“
10 Belt Pistols, including appendages	- - - - -	13	$\frac{1}{3}$	“
10 Holster Pistols	- - - - -	17	$\frac{1}{3}$	“
10 Holster Pistols (with one attachable carbine breech per pair)	- - - - -	19	$\frac{2}{3}$	“
10 Cavalry Carbines, including appendages	- - - - -	25		“
10 Artillery Carbines with sword bayonets	- - - - -	26	$\frac{1}{3}$	“
10 Rifles with appendages	- - - - -	32	$\frac{2}{3}$	“
10 Sharps' Carbines with appendages	- - - - -	23	$\frac{2}{3}$	“
10 Cavalry Sabres	- - - - -	6	$\frac{1}{3}$	“
		4		“

} Colt's patent revolving breech arms.

- Do not transcribe the reverse side of newspapers clippings or scrap paper letterhead used in docketing.
- When one or more pieces of pre-printed stationery are used to continue a document, do not transcribe the letterhead on the subsequent page(s) UNLESS the date, place, or other information has been filled in on the subsequent page(s).
- A crossed letter is a document where the author wrote over previous writing (usually due to paper shortages) Example:



In crossed letters, sideways text will be rendered horizontally, flush left, but its placement within the document will be replicated as closely as possible to the author's original intent

### **Seals, Stamps, Envelopes, and Forms:**

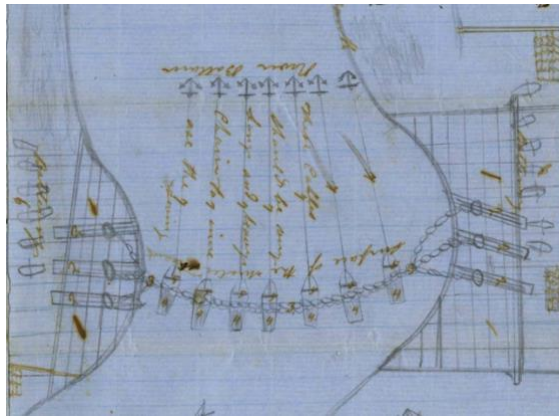
- Envelopes will be transcribed in the following order (when present):
  - return address
  - address
  - stamp and postmark
  - docketing and other writing
- Pre-printed forms often have gaps or blank lines left in paragraphs for the writer will fill in. Do not use the underline code to indicate text that the author filled in. Sometimes these are left blank. In that case, transcribe as a continuous paragraph:
  - Use [gap] to represent intentional spaces left in the text. Example: "on the [gap] day of January, 1862."
  - When an intentionally blank space has been filled with a dash rather than being left blank, represent with the em dash. Example, "on the—day of January, 1862"
- Note stamps and seals with a brief description of 1-2 lines.
  - Transcribe all writing on stamps using opening and closing stamp tags, including hand-written and printed words of the stamp. If it is illegible or does not include text, use: [stamp]
  - Transcribe text in seals when possible, using the opening and closing seal tag. For example, [seal] The State of Mississippi [/seal]. If illegible, use: [seal].

### **Docketing:**

- Render paragraphs as if in body of text.
- Do not transcribe docketing in columns.
- Transcribe long brackets only when they function as a bracket with text on the opposing side of the bracket. If a long bracket is merely decorative, do not transcribe it.
  - In court docketing, when a long bracket often separates the name of the court from the abbreviated *scilicet*, e.g.: Madison Circuit Court  
May Term 1864 } Sct.
- For standard court docketing, e.g.:  
The Commonwealth  
vs } Indictment for Murder  
John Doe
- For the Secretary of State's docketing and other similar non-judicial clerk docketing, render text with single line breaks as it appears going down the sheet, without regard to hand shifts.

### **Images:**

- Note any sketch, illustration, or doodle in brackets with a brief description: [Image: short description of image].
- For example, note any tally marks with a brief description: [Image: tally marks]
- For example, the following image should be transcribed as: [Image: sketch of proposed defenses of Mississippi River].



**Use separate paragraphs for clear section breaks:**

Madison  
Cir Ct  
Remitted  
TEB  
vs  
John Doe  
Stabbing

Sent for fee  
Sept. 9/  
1864

**IMPORTANT:** When you FINISH your transcription, you must do 2 things — click "Save Changes" and enable "Needs Review"

**Transcription Review — for CWRGM Staff Only:**

All transcription review will be conducted by CWRGM graduate or undergraduate researchers, staff members, project partners at MDL, or by the CWRGM assistant editor or director. Each transcription must go through two-stage verification by two separate people who did not draft the original transcription. All reviewers will re-read the CWRGM Transcription Protocols on the first day of every month to ensure that they are following the CWRGM standard transcription policies for formatting, unclear words, etc. All reviewers will go through training at the start of each semester.

**Metadata check:** As you review the transcription, make sure the title of the document describes it adequately. Some of these are outdated. If you think a change needs to be made, do NOT make it yourself. Email the project director to state why you think the change is needed and a proposed alternative title.

When you are transcribing a document in FromThePage, be sure to check to make sure the metadata matches the document you are working in. When you find a discrepancy, contact the project editors right away with the identifier number and a summary of the issue. For example, if the document you are transcribing is written by C. F. Baskins to T. K. Rawlins, but the title states it is a letter from Martha Jones to Doctor Smith, there is a discrepancy in the metadata that needs to be addressed.

**Enhanced Tagging Features:** FromThePage, the transcription software used by CWRGM for all transcriptions, allows users to make early annotations to documents by spotlighting subjects through the use of double braces ([[ ]]) as well as the vertical bar (|) sometimes referred to as the pipe character. These generate an index that lets the CWRGM team and site users see connections within the document collection such as letters from a specific city or county, or from or relating to a particular person. CWRGM policy is that we do not ask volunteer transcribers do any early annotations; these are done during the Transcription Review. You must review CWRGM Tagging Protocols for more information on how to properly tag items.

**IMPORTANT:** When you FINISH your stage 1 or 2 review of transcriptions, you must do 2 things — click "Save Changes" and enable "Ready for Review."