<u>Instructions to Complete Initial Document Transcription in Word</u>
(Last revised: May 2018)

The current goal of the PMVB Digital Edition is to provide verified first-pass transcriptions. That means that a document goes through two stages before publication: an initial, or raw, transcription and a first-pass, or proofing, by the co-editor or project director. (Most projects have several more stages of verification.)

Given our staffing constraints, our operating principle is that it is better to make a document that is 90% accurate available to the public than to wait years for 99% accuracy. While we do not have the staffing to provide the extra stages of proofing, it is still essential that we provide the public with as accurate a transcription as possible.

Transcriptions Files: Transcribe the document in a Word file according to the provided guidelines. If you transcribe a document by hand first, the transcription still must be entered into a Word file. When you create the Word file for your transcription, please give the file the exact same filename as the .pdfs of the original document, with the only difference the replacement of (#) with (Transcrip.). For example, if the .pdf filename is MVB to M. Cheathem, 3My17 (1), then your filename should be MVB to M. Cheathem, 3My17 (Transcrip.). Deviating from the assigned filenames makes it difficult for the editors to find and sort files. The completed transcription should go into your named folder on the desktop or Basecamp, i.e., Mark's Folder.

All transcriptions should be Courier New, 12-pt. font, double-spaced, with 1.5" margins on all sides. Note any issues that the editor needs to resolve on the transcript itself, either in pencil if hard copy or in bolded square brackets (i.e., [spelling error]) if in Word.

Title: The title should contain: 1a) the names of the sender(s) and recipient(s), if a letter, or 1b) the author and a description of the document; and 2) the date of the document. This information should be contained in the microfilm metadata at the bottom of the document .pdfs.

Regardless of their placement in a document, the name(s) of the recipient/sender will always appear at the very top of the transcription. If multiple authors/recipients, place the names in the order of signatures. If you are unclear about either the sender or the recipient in a particular document, mark it for an editor with either [Sender?] or [Recipient?].

Examples: MVB to Andrew Jackson, 31 May 1832
             MVB to [Andrew Jackson?], 31 May 1832
             MVB's address to the citizens of Schenectady, N.Y., 3 June 1836

Placeline: Regardless of its position in a document, the place of writing/sending (if indicated) will always appear at the beginning of the transcription, two hard returns below the recipient/sender line and directly above the date line. Place of writing/sending will be flush right. If you are unclear about the place of writing/sending in a particular document, mark it for an editor with Place?

Dateline: Regardless of its placement in a document, the date line will always appear at the beginning of the transcription, one hard return underneath the placeline. Dates will be flush right. If you are unclear about the date line in a particular document, mark it for an editor with Date?

Lagniappe (i.e., additional elements): Authors sometimes add labels such as "Confidential," "No. 2," etc., to letters. In those cases, place the additional element flush right above the place of writing/sending, with two hard returns separating it from the sender/recipient line and one hard return separating it from the place of writing/sending line.

Greeting/salutation: Regardless of its placement in a document, the greeting will always appear at the beginning of the transcription, two hard returns underneath the dateline. Greetings will be flush left.

Body: The body of the letter will always begin one hard return underneath the greeting. Each paragraphs should be indented one tab. Paragraphs will be flush left. If you are unclear about paragraph breaks in a particular document, mark it for an editor with ¶?

Closing: Regardless of their placement in a document, closing lines will always appear one hard return under the body. Closings will be flush right. If you are unclear about closing lines in a particular document, mark it for an editor with Closing?

Signature: Regardless of their placement in a document, signature lines will always appear at the end of the letter, one hard return under the closing. Signatures will be flush right. If you are unclear about the signature in a particular document, mark it for an editor with Signature?

Postscripts: Postscripts should be included underneath the signature. They should be flush left. If you are unclear about the postscript in a particular document, mark it for an editor with Postscript?

Marginalia: Any marginalia that does not appear to fit the main text of a document should be included underneath the signature (or postscript, if applicable) and should be headed Marginalia. It should be flush left. If you are unclear about the marginalia in a particular document, mark it for an editor.

Envelopes: Editors will determine the relevance of any information on a letter's envelope, so do not transcribe.

<div align="center">

EXAMPLE
Person to Person

</div>

<div align="right">

Confidential
Placeline
Dateline

</div>

Greeting
     BODY PARAGRAPH
     BODY PARAGRAPH
     BODY PARAGRAPH

<div align="right">

Closing
Signature

</div>

Postscript
Marginalia

Transcription Basics

Ampersands: Retain as written; do not change to "and"

Blank spaces, intentional by author: Indicate with [*intentionally blank*]

Brackets: Only editorial insertions/corrections should be in square brackets. Anything in an original document within square brackets should be changed to parentheses.

Capitalization: Capitalize the first letter of each new sentence. Retain all others as written without correcting. If uncertain, follow modern usage.

Crossed-out words: Indicate with ~~strikethroughs~~.

Interlineations: Indicate by surrounding word/s with ^carets^.

Italicized words: Handwritten words are italicized by <u>underlining</u> the word. In the case of printed documents (e.g., newspaper articles), use either *italics* or <u>underlining</u> as employed in the original.

Missing letters: If misspelled, see below. If missing because of mutilation or faintness, supply, if possible, the logical letter(s) in brackets, e.g., m[is]sing. Otherwise, render the legible letters of the word and indicate missing letter(s) with a bracketed question mark, e.g., m[?]sing.

Missing words: Indicate in bracketed ellipses, e.g., [. . .].

Misspelled words: Render as written without correcting.

Punctuation, end: Dashes at the end of sentences should be changed to the logical end punctuation, e.g., periods, exclamation points, question marks, etc. Dashes following end punctuation should be omitted.

Repeated words: Authors sometimes repeat words, especially when moving from one page to the next. In all cases, do not transcribe these repetitions.

Superscript and **subscript**: Make flush with the line, (e.g., M^r becomes Mr). Retain, but do not add, punctuation (e.g., M$^{r.}$ becomes Mr. and M^r becomes Mr).

Unclear words: If possible, indicate probable word in italics in angle brackets, e.g., *<word>*. If a word is completely unclear, indicate thusly in angled brackets, e.g., *<illegible>*. If multiple successive words are unclear, also use *<illegible>*.

Underlining: Retain underlining made by the author, but use single underlining in all cases, even if the author underlined two or more times.

<u>MVB PECULIARITIES</u>
In his datelines, MVB often includes an elevated dash after the day, e.g., 25⁻. Render as the appropriate suffix (e.g., 25th, 3rd, 1st, etc.)
In his greetings/salutations, MVB often ends with what looks like this: / (e.g., My dear Sir/). Render the / as a comma (e.g., My dear Sir,).