

Caribbean Records Series

Author Instructions

Definitions

GDE: Mary-Jo Kline and Susan Holbrook Perdue, *A Guide to Documentary Editing*, 3rd ed. (University of Virginia Press, 2008), <https://gde.upress.virginia.edu/>.

Editor: The scholar responsible for preparing the edition.

Source: The original document or documents being edited, including manuscripts, printed works, archival records, oral histories, photographs, maps, and other primary sources.

Transcription: The editor's representation of the source's text and, where appropriate, other features.

Edition / Editorial text: The complete text prepared for publication, including its editorial apparatus and scholarly commentary.

About the book series

The *Caribbean Records Series*, published by the Jamaican Historical Society in partnership with Open Book Publishers, is focused on producing scholarly editions of primary sources relating broadly to the history of the English-speaking Caribbean.

The series also considers calendars of primary sources, historical dictionaries and encyclopaedias, gazetteers, archaeological reports, and other scholarly reference works. Projects may vary in length, more or less than the traditional 80,000 words, and may be published in multiple volumes where appropriate.

A scholarly edition should help readers understand both the source as a historical artefact and the editorial decisions involved in presenting it. Editors must clearly distinguish the source from material supplied or modified by the editor. These instructions primarily concern scholarly editions. Authors proposing other types of volume should contact the Series Editorial Board at serieseditors@jamaicanhistoricalsociety.org.jm.

Geographic and temporal scope

The series focuses primarily on the English-speaking Caribbean, broadly defined. This includes culturally Caribbean territories beyond conventional geographical boundaries, such as Belize, Guyana, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, as well as English-speaking or English-based creole-speaking territories within larger non-English-speaking states, such as the Mosquito Coast, San Andrés, Saba, Sint Maarten, and Sint Eustatius. Material from elsewhere may be considered where its connection to the English-speaking Caribbean is clear and substantial.

The series welcomes material from any period, including earlier archaeological and historical material and the pre-Anglophone histories of territories that are now predominantly English-speaking.

Preparing a manuscript

Selecting sources

The series seeks to publish significant primary sources that remain unpublished or otherwise unavailable to readers. Sources may include correspondence, diaries, administrative and court records, newspapers, pamphlets, maps, photographs, oral histories, and other documentary or material evidence.

An edition may present a single source, related sources, or a carefully selected collection. Where multiple versions survive, editors should identify them, explain their relationship, and state the basis for the published text.

Copyright, ownership, and permissions

Editors should establish the legal, institutional, and ethical status of the proposed material, identifying where applicable:

- The repository or owner, collection, and reference or call number.
- Copyright status and relevant rights holders.
- Required permissions and any institutional, legal, ethical, or contractual restrictions.

Written permission must be obtained before publication wherever required. Rights to reproduce photographs, illustrations, maps, recordings, oral histories, and other third-party material should be established separately where necessary. Projects involving living individuals must also address privacy, confidentiality, consent, and relevant ethical requirements.

Alongside the Book Proposal Form, editors must submit a rights statement outlining ownership, copyright, permissions, and restrictions. Copies of permissions and supporting documentation should be retained for submission to the publisher when required.

Transcription

Transcriptions should be as literal and faithful to the source as possible, preserving significant features such as:

- Capitalisation, spelling, punctuation, and emphasis.
- Deletions, additions, corrections, abbreviations, and supplied text.
- Marginal and interlinear material, paragraphing, lineation, and page or folio divisions.
- Other textual or physical features relevant to historical or textual interpretation.

The aim is not to reproduce every physical feature typographically, but to represent faithfully those that matter to understanding the source. Significant non-textual features, including seals, stamps, letterheads, annotations, diagrams, illustrations, and unusual layouts, should be reproduced or described where appropriate.

Editors proposing to normalise, omit, expand, or otherwise regularise recurring features should submit a statement of editorial conventions explaining the proposed treatment and identifying interventions that will not appear in the transcription. Conventions should be agreed during publication. Unless otherwise agreed, the series follows the principles of the *GDE*, particularly chapter 4.

Editorial interventions and textual treatment

Editors must distinguish clearly between the source and editorial interventions, using a consistent system to represent, where relevant:

- Illegible or damaged text, gaps, and missing sections.
- Conjectural readings and supplied text.
- Deletions, substitutions, and original or editorial corrections.
- Editorial insertions and emendations.
- Abbreviations and their expansions.

Interventions must not be introduced silently where this would obscure the source or prevent readers from distinguishing original from editorial material. Substantive emendations must be recorded and justified in the textual apparatus.

The edition's editorial principles and conventions should be explained in a dedicated section, normally within the introduction or editorial methodology.

Editorial apparatus

The apparatus should suit the source and may include a physical description, provenance and repository details, textual and variant notes, editorial symbols and conventions, abbreviations, chronology, glossary, bibliography, biographical register, index, illustrations, and acknowledgements of repositories and permissions.

Not every volume requires every element. At a minimum, scholarly editions should normally include:

1. A description of the source or sources.
2. Provenance and repository information, where available.
3. Editorial principles and conventions.
4. A scholarly introduction providing historical and contextual information.
5. Explanatory notes or other appropriate commentary.

Editors should also maintain a record of the primary sources consulted, including significant related materials or alternative witnesses not reproduced in the edition.

Scholarly commentary and annotation

Editions must include substantial scholarly commentary appropriate to the material and subject to the series' scholarly standards and peer review.

The introduction should address relevant aspects of the source, including its creator, date and place of creation, historical context, provenance and survival, intended audience and purpose, relationship to other sources, editorial method, and scholarly significance.

Explanatory notes or other annotations should clarify material necessary to understand the source. They may identify individuals, places, institutions, organisations, and events; explain historical references and specialised, archaic, dialectal, or foreign-language terms; identify quotations or references to other texts; and discuss significant ambiguities.

Commentary and annotations must be based on appropriate scholarly research and distinguish evidence from the source from editorial interpretation and supplementary information. See chapter 7 of the *GDE* for further guidance.

Citations and bibliography

Use the Notes and Bibliography system of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 18th ed. Citations, notes, bibliographical references, headings, terminology, and other elements should be consistent throughout. Where publisher or series requirements differ from Chicago, those requirements take precedence.

Images and digital materials

Editors are encouraged to include facsimiles or representative images where handwriting, layout, annotations, illustrations, seals, stamps, or other material features contribute to understanding the source.

All reproduced material must have appropriate captions, source information, credits, and permissions.

Supplementary digital materials may include manuscript images, audio or video recordings, additional transcriptions, datasets, appendices, extended indexes, and finding aids. Formats and technical requirements should be agreed with the Series Editorial Board and publisher.

Use of artificial intelligence

AI tools may assist with machine-assisted transcription, OCR, and handwritten-text recognition. All machine-generated output must be checked by a human editor against the original source; editors remain responsible for the accuracy, completeness, and fidelity of the published edition.

Generative AI and large language models must not substitute for the editor's scholarly judgement or research. In particular, they must not be relied upon to produce scholarly commentary, historical interpretation, annotations, biographical or bibliographical information, or factual claims.

Any AI use that materially contributes to preparing the edition must be disclosed to the Series Editorial Board and, where required, acknowledged in the published volume. Editors should be able to explain how AI-assisted work was verified. The series may issue further guidance as practices develop.

Proposing a manuscript

Projects may be proposed at any stage. The Series Editorial Board also welcomes enquiries from prospective editors who have not yet begun work or identified a source.

To submit a proposal:

1. Download the Book Proposal Form from the [Open Book Publishers submissions page](#).
2. Complete it as fully as the project's development permits.
3. Email it to serieseditors@jamaicanhistoricalsociety.org.jm, together with the rights statement described above.

The Editorial Board will assess the proposal initially and, if suitable, advise on the next stages. Completed manuscripts prepared according to the agreed requirements will normally undergo peer review. Publication is subject to peer review and the final decision of the Editorial Board and publisher.

Manuscript submission

Detailed technical requirements will be provided during publication. Final submissions should include, where applicable:

- The complete editorial text, scholarly introduction, and commentary.
- Notes and other editorial apparatus.
- Bibliography and source and repository information.
- Image files, captions, permissions, and rights documentation.
- Lists of abbreviations and illustrations, and an index where appropriate.
- Any supplementary digital materials.

Substantial departures from the agreed proposal or editorial method should be discussed with the Series Editorial Board before submission.

Miscellany volumes

The series may publish miscellanies comprising several primary sources on related topics, edited by one or more editors and assembled through open calls or solicited contributions.

Miscellanies are particularly suitable for substantial sources that are individually too short for a full volume but together make a significant contribution to Caribbean history. Editors or contributors considering such sources are welcome to contact serieseditors@jamaicanhistoricalsociety.org.jm.