

# F. L. Berney's Nature Diaries

This project is of great historical significance for both scientists and historians. Frederick Lee Berney (1865-1949) was a notable Australian ornithologist. He was a member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union (RAOU) from its inception in 1901 and served as its president from 1933-34.

The transcription of Berney's Nature Diaries will yield invaluable historic data about the animals and environments he observed, as well as information about the places he visited and the people who accompanied him.

In order to collection this invaluable data, we need both a verbatim transcription of the journal AND a record of the species, places and people he mentions. Please read the tutorial below to help us gather this information as effectively as possible.

## Using DigiVol

1. Login to DigiVol using your email and password
2. Click on the "Expeditions" tab
3. Select one of the F. L. Berney's Nature Diaries
4. Click on "Start transcribing"
5. Transcribe the page (following the tutorial below)
6. When complete, click "Submit for validation" (or, if partly complete, click "Save unfinished record")
7. Select "Transcribe another task"

## Transcription Tutorial

The most important thing to remember is that the transcription should be true to the author's original text – this includes his formatting, spelling, grammar and capitalisation. Anything added by us as transcribers (corrections, clarifications, formatting notes) should be written in square brackets – see below. Berney has written his observations in diaries that have dates and page numbers printed in them. This printed text should also be transcribed within square brackets.

### 1. Verbatim text field

#### Page numbers & dates

- For the alphabetical index pages at the front of the diary, transcribe the page's letter in square brackets, e.g. [A] or [J] on the first line of the "Verbatim Text" field and start your transcription of the author's text on the next line (do not transcribe the rest of the letters down the right hand side of the page)
- For the pages that have page numbers and dates printed at the top of the page, transcribe these on the first two lines of the "Verbatim Text" field as follows:

[Page 17]

[17 March 1898]

- Dates written by the author should be transcribed exactly as he has written them, but if the author hasn't noted the day, month or year, add the missing information between square brackets (if known), e.g. Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> [June 1898]

### **Transcribe exactly what is on the page** (following the points below)

- Format the transcription so that it matches the original (as best you can)
- Put line breaks exactly where the author has (including hyphenation at the end of a line)
- Where a paragraph is indented, put two spaces at the beginning of the line
- Use single spaces between sentences
- Please check your transcription once you've finished (spelling, punctuation, formatting). This will pick up any spelling errors you may have inadvertently added (but remember to leave those made by the author – see below)

### **Anything you add should be written in square brackets**

- Use rounded brackets when parentheses are used in the original document – square brackets are used to show insertions by the transcriber (see points below)
- If the author has used an abbreviation, spell out the abbreviation (if known) in square brackets after the abbreviation, e.g. Grampians N.P. [National Park]
- If unsure of a word, transcribe it as [?]; if unsure of more than one word use a [?] for each word, e.g. [?] [?] [?]. Alternatively, if you can guess the word, write [guess] after the word, e.g. swooping [guess]
- If unsure of a letter in a word, use a [?] for the letter, e.g. lett[?]r, or l[?]tt[?]r
- Transcribe misspellings as they appear, then mark with a \* and type the correct spelling in square brackets, e.g. rendersveu\* [rendezvous]
- Identify diagrams, maps, sketches and photos in square brackets, at the place they appear on the page, e.g. [diagram] or [photo]. Add more detail if you can, e.g. [map of Macquarie Island] or [sketch of an albatross in flight]
- If the author has underlined or circled a word/section, type these words between [underlined] and [/underlined], or [circled] and [/circled]
- If the author has crossed out a word/section, type these words between [crossed out] and [/crossed out], e.g. I [crossed out] hate [/crossed out] dislike rain
- If the author has used abbreviations in a deleted section, do not expand these abbreviations.

### **Margins, columns & insertions**

- If the author has written in the margin, transcribe this text at the end of the page or the end of the relevant section. Identify this text by typing it between the markers [margin] and [/margin]
- If there is text inserted ^ into a sentence, incorporate it into the text without indicator ^
- If the author has capitalised a word, transcribe the word in capitals
- Transcribe columns within the markers [columns] and [/columns]. Try to follow the author's formatting as best you can.

### **Symbols & dashes**

- Transcribe dashes as ' – ' (an m-dash). You can create this dash using the ALT code 0150 (hold down the ALT key and type 0150).

- Lists of ALT codes for symbols can be found online, e.g. <http://www.tedmontgomery.com/tutorial/ALTchrc-a.html>. Hold the ALT key down and type the code, e.g. ALT 11 is the code for ♂; ALT 12 for ♀; ALT 167 for °.
- Alternatively, spell out the symbol in square brackets:

<i>Original</i>	<i>Transcription</i>
15°	15 [degrees]
♀	[female]

## 2a. Species & common names field

- All species (animals and plants) that were actually observed (sighted or heard) should be recorded in section 2 – e.g. if the author wrote “I saw a Magpie that looked like a Currawong”, record only the Magpie in section 2 (not the Currawong)
- Do not record very vague descriptions such as fowl, wader, bird-of-prey
- Record the names used by the author, even if the name has now changed.
- Record scientific names in the scientific name field (leave party field blank)
- Record common names in the common name field (leave party field blank)
- Record common names in the singular not plural form, e.g. Silver Gull, not Silver Gulls
- Common names should be capitalised, except for the words directly after a hyphen, e.g. Silver Gull, New Holland Honeyeater, Rainbow Bee-eater, Wedge-tailed Eagle
- If the species name has been spelled incorrectly in the main text, put the corrected name in the species fields (if known).
- Record the locality, giving as many details as the author has, e.g. “swampy ground near limekilns at Sorell, Tasmania”. Always record the state/territory if known.
- Record dates using the format yyyy-mm-dd e.g. 1958-03-25; the day and even the month may be omitted if the date is vague. A range of dates can be indicated with a /, e.g. 1958-03-25/1958-03-31
- Add a new row for each observation

## 2b. Parties field – people & institutions/organisations

- All people and institutions/organisations mentioned by name (except for citations when the author is referencing a publication)
- Record the name exactly as it written in the original text (leave animal fields blank)
- If only part of the name is mentioned and you know who the person is, please provide the full name in square brackets (along with any other details known), e.g. for “Robert”, write “Robert [Robert Carrick, CSIRO]”.
- Add a new row for each mention of person or organisation

## 3. Notes field

- Record any comments here that may assist in validating this task.