

Preserving Primary Sources for ESDA Articles



Introduction

Your article was written based on primary sources. Since the ESDA will be a digital resource, every effort should be made to digitize (scan) the *unique and significant primary sources* that were used to write your article. This brief guide will show you how to do this.

You will encounter sources that you should preserve in digital and in non-digital format. Although it is hard to define a *unique and significant primary source*, the item(s) you save should be along these guidelines:

1. It is one of the numerous kinds of sources that provide evidence for an important point in your article, including but not limited to: *advertisements, affidavits, art, articles, birth certificates, books, broadsides, censuses, church books, committee/board minutes, death certificates, deeds, diaries/journals, financial ledgers, genealogy charts, hospital records, interviews, letters, manuscripts, maps, marriage certificates, interviews, newspaper items, oral accounts, passports, patents, periodicals, photographs, police reports, posters, rolls, school bulletins, school report cards, school yearbooks, sermons, social medias, stamps, travel documents, pamphlets, posts, statistics, tracts, videos, wills*
2. It is not available on an Adventist heritage website, such as Adventist Digital Library, GC Archives, Center for Adventist Research, Ellen G. White Estate, etc.
3. It is rare, unique, or was produced by you (e.g., a photo, interview, document, etc.)
4. Photographs (with people, places, events, and things that can be identified) that feature one or more of the following:
 - pioneering/groundbreaking work and workers
 - early national/native leaders and workers
 - important meetings, evangelistic meetings, baptisms, gatherings, meeting places, convocations, conferences
 - headquarters, churches, or other places of administrative or historic interest for the global church, that demonstrate the context, condition or manner of working at the time
 - rare photos of your article subject
 - date before 1950

Digital Sources

Save the sources listed above that you discover online by downloading them from websites; or if you can't do that, take screenshot and save as a pdf or jpeg. Be sure to be thorough in getting the applicable information for each source, inserting this information into a Word document:

- Title
- Original producer/source

- Document type
- Document date
- Subjects in the document
- Website it was retrieved from (title and URL)
- Date it was retrieved from website
- Page number
- Participants
- Etc.

In short, put down all the information you can about the source. Name the actual file in correspondence with the information in the Word document (perhaps by number or title).

Non-Digital Sources

Try to digitize sources physical items not accessible in presentable shape online so that innumerable others can benefit from them. Although cases will vary, below are methods to digitize sources:

- When you discover any paper source (letter, manuscript, deed, etc.) seek to scan it. If you are in a library, archive, or a government office you can usually purchase a scan. If there is no employee to scan a document for you, try to borrow or buy the document and get a quality scan of it (by flatbed, sheet-fed, or book scanner). If this is not possible, take a photograph of it, either with a phone or camera.
- For rare photographs of your subject, try to get a scan of 600 dpi. If this is not possible, take a quality picture of the photograph.
- Take pictures of 3D sources. Be sure the picture is focused and hi-resolution. Take several shots from different angles.
- Take high-quality photographs of buildings, memorials, grave markers, and other physical objects that pertain to your article.
- Record interviews and oral histories, and keep the media file; it can also be transcribed.

In a Word document, include the same information about the primary sources you digitized as those you downloaded from online. Save these items in your digital folder and back it up on a cloud, thumb drive, email inbox, or some other way.

The editor who commissioned you the article will contact you about uploading your files to an ESDA repository. Thank you for your contribution to this world church project!