

- **EXAMPLE OF ARTICLE PROPOSAL COVERING LETTER** -

[Your address or letterhead]

The Editor: [name here]

Magazine: [name here]

[Address]

Re: Proposal for feature article on the Gypsy Royal Family of Yetholm.

Dear [name here].

[The summary paragraph - see note 1]

Yetholm is a village a mile north of the Scottish border in the foothills of the Cheviots. It is a well-known stop-off point for ramblers on St Cuthbert's and the Pennine Ways. Up until the early 20th Century it was the home of the self-proclaimed gypsy royal family and the alleged ancestors of Bill Clinton.

[The query paragraph]

Would you be interested in a 1200 word article covering the historical background and current tourist opportunities? Please see the attached synopsis for further details.

[The bio paragraph - see notes 2, 3 and 4]

I am a journalist by profession (see my website www.thecraftywriter.com) and have a bachelor's degree in history. I have had a number of historical articles published and attach some samples of my work.

[The wrap-up paragraph]

I have included a SASE for your convenience and look forward to your response..

Sincerely, etc.

Note 1: A short summary of the article including its unique selling point – the most interesting / controversial / newsworthy point of the piece. Try to show and understanding of the readership and style of the magazine. The magazine I targeted features a mix of history, local culture and travel tips for readers, so I try to fit in as much of this as possible.

Note 2: Only mention educational or professional qualifications if they have some relevance to the article and give you credibility in the field. My MA in Creative Writing, for example, would not be of importance to this editor and even less, my PhD in biochemistry (if I had one!)

Note 3: Only mention portfolio material (or ‘cuts’) if you have any, otherwise, don’t bring it up. Remember, if you have nothing else, blog posts in a related subject might do. If you do have cuts, only mention ones in a relevant subject area. For example, I wouldn’t mention Sports Illustrated or Dog Magazine for this piece as it has no relevance. On the other hand, if they are all you’ve got, do so.

Note 4: For a start-out writer this paragraph is always a problem. Do you pretend to have more experience than you actually do? Do you admit you’re a rank amateur? Neither. Rather be as non-specific as possible and emphasise what expertise you can bring to the article. For example:

‘I have been visiting Yetholm and the surrounding areas for the last 20 years. I have a degree in history and am currently moving into freelance magazine writing.’

Or

‘I have worked in the tourism industry for the last 10 years, am well-versed in the history of the region and am currently moving into freelance magazine writing.’