

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS

It is said that this post was created by three or four ex-carriers for Boyd's, or other local posts, in 1856. They created and sold a good number of stamps before decamping with the proceeds. Some versions of the story claim that there was, at first, a genuine intent to deliver mail, serving an area not quite reached by Boyd's. Many versions, however, claim that the "post" was a scam from the start.

Although this old story has never been proven as fact, no other history is known for the post. It is true that the genuine stamps likely never saw use outside of philatelic collections.



65L1
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
GENUINE

Two covers featuring Essex Letter Express stamps are known: one which has been in the Ferrary, Mason, and Schwartz collections; and one which has been in the Caspary, Middendorf, and Golden collections. Neither cover has the stamp tied and there is no proof that they represent genuine usages.

Despite being an extremely short lived post, if it ever acted as a real service, this stamp was widely forged starting in the 1860s. The stamp design lives on today; modified versions made their way to the public domain and are sometimes used in fabric or crafting elements.

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS

While there are several different types of forgeries of the "Essex Letter Express" stamps, there are only two designs that have the "SX" in the flag, as it appears on the original. One of these designs was used by J. W. Scott for his catalogues and his forgeries, and is the design closest resembling the original stamps, as it also still has a full body of water in the bottom half of the oval. The water is not as wavy though, and the "2" below it is rounder, with a smooth foot stroke.



FORGERY A
SCOTT
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)

S. Allan Taylor made the other forgery that still has the "SX" in the flag. This design however does not have a full body of water in the bottom half of the oval, but in stead has a blank area. As such it has a unique design combination only found in this forgery.

A variation exists, probably due to plate wear, in which two small breaks appeared in the left border, right above the "X" of "ESSEX". This variation can be found on forms "B3" and "AB18".



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON YELLOW
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON GOLD YELLOW
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON PEACH
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON PINK
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON GRAY
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON BLUE
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB1
2¢ BLACK
ON GREEN
(65L1)

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM AB19
2¢ BLACK
ON ORANGE SC
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM BB2
2¢ VIOLET
ON LIGHT BLUE
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
2¢ GRAYISH BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM B3
2¢ RED
ON BRIGHT BLUE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM B3
2¢ RED
ON BRIGHT ORANGE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM B3
2¢ RED
ON SALMON
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM AB18
2¢ BLACK
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM AB18
2¢ BLACK
ON OFF-WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - (FORM AB18)
2¢ GRAYISH BLACK
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM AB18
2¢ BLACK
ON LIGHT BLUE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM AB18
2¢ BLACK
ON LIGHT ORANGE
(65L1)



FORGERY B VAR
TAYLOR - FORM AB18
2¢ BLACK
ON BRIGHT GREEN SC
(65L1)

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS

Taylor had made a different forgery before the other one, based on the illustration in J.-B. Moens' early catalogues, and as such it does not have the "SX" in the flag. He even had copied the extra border as part of the stamp, but he forgot to add a period after "CTS", and this is the only forgery that lacks that period, making it the easiest way to tell it apart.



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 5
2c RED
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 5
2c RED
ON GRAY VIOLET SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 5
2c RED
ON YELLOW SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 8
2c YELLOW
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 8
2c PURPLE
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 8
2c PURPLE
ON YELLOW
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 13
2c BLACK
ON SCARLET SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM 13
2c BLACK
ON YELLOW SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c DULL GREEN
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c PINE GREEN
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c DULL BLUE
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c DULL RED
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c RED
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2c MAROON
ON WHITE
(65L1)

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2¢ DULL BROWN
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2¢ DULL BROWN
ON PINKISH H LAID
(65L1)



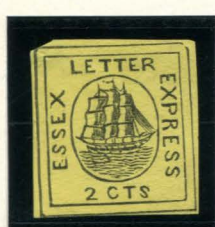
FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2¢ RED VIOLET
ON WHITE V LAID
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA1
2¢ BLACK
ON ROYAL BLUE SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA4
2¢ BLACK
ON ORANGE BUFF
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA4
2¢ BLACK
ON YELLOW SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA4
2¢ BLACK
ON LAVENDER SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA4
2¢ BLACK
ON LIGHT BLUE SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA6
2¢ BLACK
ON PEACH SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA6
2¢ BLACK
ON LIGHT YELLOW SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA6
2¢ BLACK
ON GREEN SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA6
2¢ BLACK
ON LIGHT BLUE SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA7
2¢ BLACK
ON TEAL SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA24
2¢ BLACK
ON GOLD YELLOW SC
(65L1)



FORGERY E
TAYLOR - FORM AA24
2¢ BLACK
ON GREEN SC
(65L1)

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS

The history of the "Essex Letter Express" stamps is full of rumors and stories. In one such story, told for the first time by none other than S. Allan Taylor in 1868, it was said that when George Hussey was looking for examples of the Essex stamp to make reproductions, he was slipped a copy from W. P. Brown, another New York stamp dealer. However, unknowingly to Hussey, Brown had altered the stamp by removing the "SX" from the ship's flag, and placing it at the bottom of the oval, underneath the ship.

Hussey, thinking it was real, got one of his engravers, Thomas Wood, to copy the design, and print 500 copies of it by February 14, 1863. Claiming this to be a newly discovered "Essex Letter Express" stamp, it didn't take long for other prominent stamp authorities, such as J.-B. Moens, to list it as a real stamp. Because of this, other forgeries ended up being based on this altered design.

On Hussey's forgery, the second "S" in "EXPRESS" is smaller than the first. On later printings, which were in horizontal strips of four, the first "E" in "LETTER" has a short top bar. Due to various flaws, each stamp in the strip is distinguishable, resulting in four plateable positions of the forgery.



FORGERY F
HUSSEY - EARLY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY F
HUSSEY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
STRIP OF FOUR
(65L1)



FORGERY F
POSITION 1
HUSSEY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY F
POSITION 2
HUSSEY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY F
POSITION 3
HUSSEY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY F
POSITION 4
HUSSEY
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)

ESSEX LETTER EXPRESS

J.-B. Moens had both the genuine stamp and Hussey's forgery listed and illustrated in his 1864 catalogue as real stamps. The example of the genuine stamp was lithographed by Pierre Schmitz, but is missing the "SX" in the flag. The other stamp was lithographed by F. Deraedemaeker, and is very close to the design Wood had made for Hussey. The lettering is slightly different, most noticeable in the "S"s.

Two more forgeries based on Hussey's design are showcased here, but it is unknown who made these. The first one is known both with and without the "SX" under the waterlines, and has the flag's point almost touching the oval. The other forgery has a wider "SX" under the waterlines.



FORGERY H
MOENS / SCHMITZ
PHOTOCOPY FROM
1864 CATALOGUE
(65L1)



FORGERY G
MOENS / DERAEDEMAER
2¢ BLACK
ON WHITE
(65L1)



FORGERY C
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY C1
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)



FORGERY D
2¢ BLACK
ON VERMILION SC
(65L1)

An image using the name and design elements of the "Essex Letter Express" stamps has found use within the modern textile industry. This new "forgery" can be found on fabrics and crafting accessories. Although the layout of this forgery is similar to the real stamp, it is easily identifiable. The center ship is entirely different, and "CENTS" is written out fully at the bottom rather than the original "CTS."



MODERN FORGERY
2¢ BLACK
ON CANVAS
CRAFTING ELEMENT