

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Henry Wells and William Fargo, experienced with delivery expresses in the east, established the Wells Fargo & Co. company to do business in the west. Originally focusing on banking, they soon became an all-purpose business with hands in transportation and communication. Wells helped to found the Overland Mail Company in 1856. This powerful stagecoach line fell to Wells Fargo's control in 1860, and secured the company's place as the most important express in the west.

In 1861 they joined as partial owners and agents with the Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company, the original Pony Express. Focusing on the delivery of news, this Pony Express ran until the completion of the transcontinental telegraph line on October 24th, 1861.

As miners flourished in the American west, Wells Fargo returned their focus to the delivery of letters and packages. Setting up stations at towns and mining camps in California and Nevada, the Pony Express was revived as the "Virginia City Pony Express" in 1862. Wells Fargo continued to expand their routes. In 1866, they purchased their largest competitor, Ben Holladay's Overland Mail and Express Company.

After the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1896, Wells Fargo was forced by the government to end its local mail service. They continued their express package service until the government consolidation of railroad express companies into the Railway Express Agency in 1917.



WELLS FARGO STAGECOACH IN PESCADERO, CALIFORNIA, 1890

WELLS FARGO & CO.

When Wells Fargo & Co. took complete control of the Pony Express contract in 1861, they lowered the rate from \$5 per ½ oz. to \$2 per ½ oz. They issued two stamps, lithographed by Britton & Rey, at this time: a \$2 red and a \$4 green. These stamps were only used for three months before the price was once again lowered.



143L1
GENUINE
\$2 RED



143L2
GENUINE
\$4 GREEN



143L2
GENUINE
\$4 GREEN
OVAL HANDSTAMP

Due to a government act passed in March of 1862, Wells Fargo was forced to cut their prices in half. Starting in July of 1862, the price per ½ oz. was \$1. Three new stamps, again produced by Britton & Rey, were issued: a \$1 red, a \$2 green, and a \$4 black.



143L3
GENUINE
\$1 RED



143L4
GENUINE
\$2 GREEN



143L5
GENUINE
\$4 BLACK



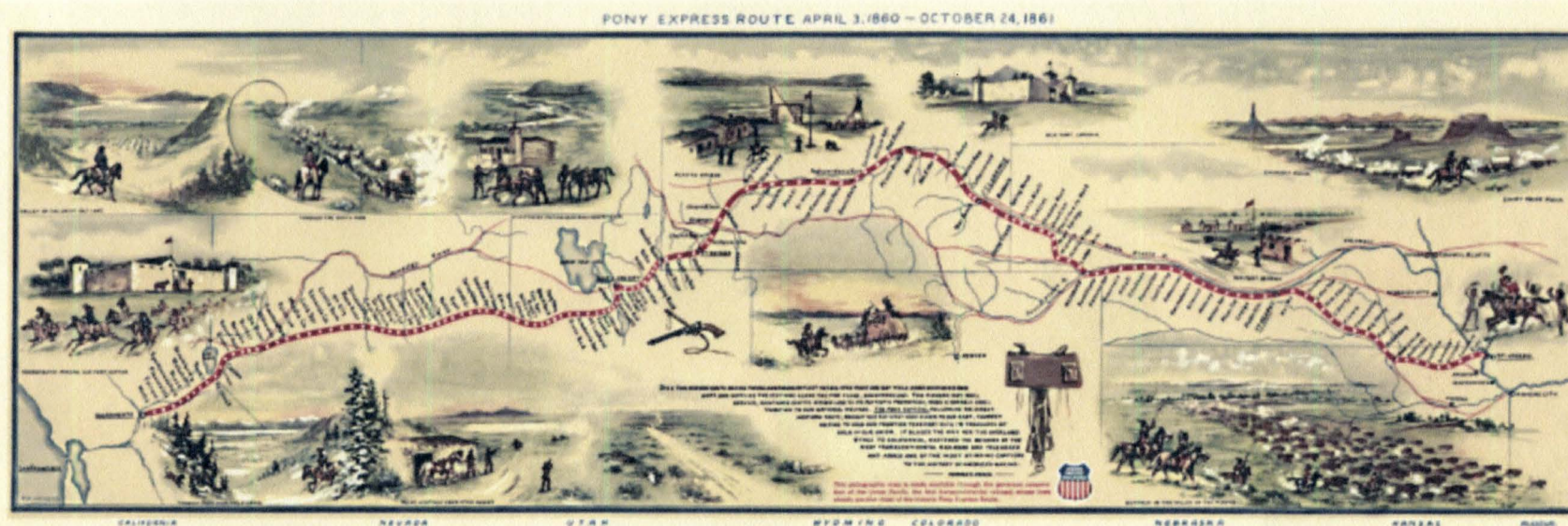
143L3
GENUINE
\$1 RED
OVAL HANDSTAMP



143L3
GENUINE
\$1 RED
OVAL HANDSTAMP

WELLS FARGO & CO.

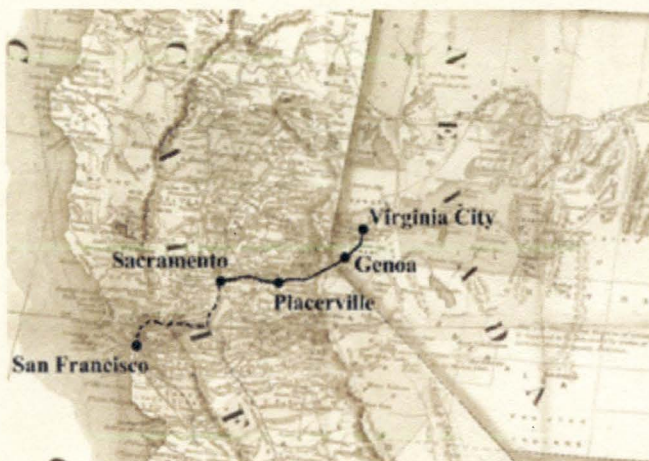
The illustrated map below shows the route of the Pony Express from St. Joseph to Sacramento, including stops along the way. Scan the QR code featured here to view a larger version of the map online.



ILLUSTRATED MAP OF THE 1860 PONY EXPRESS ROUTE
BY WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON - FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

WELLS FARGO & CO.

No longer needing to deliver news across the country, Wells Fargo shifted the focus of its Pony Express to speedy letter delivery. This new Pony Express service, called the "Virginia City Pony" or "Washoe Pony", set up relayed letters from mining camps around Virginia City, Nevada to San Francisco and Sacramento, California.



This new Pony Express charged 10¢ for each ½oz., and new brown stamps were made to reflect this change. When the price was raised to 25¢ in 1863, blue and red stamps of the appropriate denominations were issued.

MAP OF VIRGINIA CITY PONY ROUTE

RIDERS TRAVELED BY PONY BETWEEN VIRGINIA CITY AND PLACERVILLE. MAIL WAS THEN CARRIED BY TRAIN TO SACRAMENTO, AND BY BOAT TO SAN FRANCISCO.



143L7
GENUINE
10¢ BROWN (SHADE)



143L7
GENUINE
10¢ BROWN (SHADE)



143L8
GENUINE
25¢ BLUE (SHADE)



143L8
GENUINE
25¢ BLUE (SHADE)



143L9
GENUINE
25¢ RED (SHADE)



143L9
GENUINE
25¢ RED (SHADE)



143L9
GENUINE
25¢ RED (SHADE)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Pony Express stamps were sometimes cancelled by manuscript, but many were cancelled by handstamps. Different handstamps were used, which included city names. Most were stamped in blue.

In addition to stamps, Wells Fargo printed franks on prepaid envelopes. Due to their government contract, they were required to use the issued US stamped envelopes.

The cover below was mailed along the entire "Virginia City Pony" route, from Virginia City to San Francisco. The 1864 Pony Express stamp is affixed to a Wells Fargo franked stamped envelope, and tied by a blue "Virginia City N.T." (Nevada Territory) oval handstamp.



143L8
GENUINE
25¢ BLUE
BLUE COMPANY
HANDSTAMP



143L9 : GENUINE
25¢ RED
VIRGINIA CITY, NT. BLUE OVAL HANDSTAMP CANCELLATION
ON WELLS FARGO FRANKED STAMPED ENVELOPE
U34 : 3¢ PINK
PF CERT # 24469

This cover is addressed to Elliott J. Moore, a lawyer in San Francisco. Moore was also a trustee for several silver mining companies.

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Wells Fargo & Co. printed franks on US envelopes for use along their express routes. They also briefly printed their 10¢ and 25¢ Pony Express letter stamps on envelopes as well. These were printed on 1861 issue 3¢ envelopes.

The cover below is an unused example of one of these stamped envelopes. It shows a 25¢ red Wells Fargo stamp printed alongside the 3¢ pink US envelope stamp. The envelope is also printed with overall advertising for the Gould & Curry Silver Mining Co. in Nevada.



143LU3 : 25¢ RED
GENUINE ENVELOPE STAMP - PRINTED ON
U34 : 3¢ PINK
GOULD & CURRY OVERALL ADVERTISING ENVELOPE



The Gould & Curry Silver Mining Co. was a claim of the Comstock Lode that was discovered by Alvah Gould in 1859.

The mining operations ran successfully into the 1880s.

BONNER SHAFT OF THE GOULD & CURRY MINE
PHOTOGRAPH FROM 1874
FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The "Wells Fargo & Co. - Pony Express" stamps were reproduced in 1897, by the original printers Britton & Rey. While the original stones had been destroyed in 1864, the matrix had survived, which they used to make a new transfer of all five values in vertical rows of four. This new stone of five by four was then used to reprint all the stamps in the five colors originally used, with several shade variations.

Featured below is a proof pulled during the creation of the reprint stone. The proof includes black impressions of the 10¢ 1864 stamp without vignette and the entire \$1 1861 stamp. The values of the other stamps (25, 25, 25 / 2, 2, 3, 4) are included at the left and right of the designs.



REPRINT PROOF
25¢ AND \$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
PREVIOUSLY OF THE TWIGG-SMITH COLLECTION

This proof was described by W. S. Boggs as "The last state of the original die retouched for the reprints showing the denomination figures separately. This shows that the \$1.00 and the 10c were the last made."

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The "Wells Fargo & Co. - Pony Express" stamps were reproduced in 1897, by the original printers Britton & Rey. While the original stones had been destroyed in 1864, the matrix had survived, which they used to make a new transfer of all five values in vertical rows of four. This new stone of five by four was then used to reprint all the stamps in the five colors originally used, with several shade variations.

According to Springer, roughly only 100 stamps in each color were printed, before Britton & Rey handed over the new stone to the Wells Fargo History Museum. As such, these reprints could be scarcer than the original stamps.

The reprints matching the original colors are very difficult to differentiate from the genuine stamps, and can be dangerous for collectors. Two ways to tell them apart are: on the reprints, the horse's mouth is much wider open, and the hat of the rider is practically completely white.



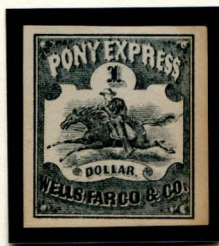
REPRINT
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



REPRINT
\$1 PALE RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



REPRINT
\$1 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



REPRINT
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)



REPRINT
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L3)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



REPRINT
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)



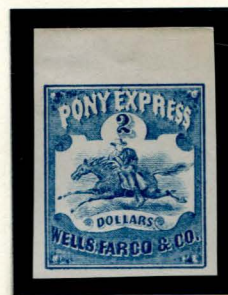
REPRINT
\$2 PALE RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)



REPRINT
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



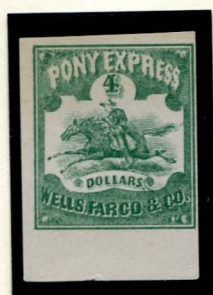
REPRINT
\$2 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L1)



REPRINT
\$2 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L1)



REPRINT
\$4 RED
ON WHITE
(143L2)



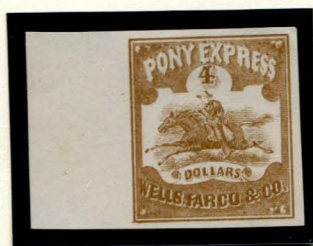
REPRINT
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



REPRINT
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



REPRINT
\$4 GRAYISH BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



REPRINT
\$4 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



REPRINT
\$4 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L2)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



REPRINT
10c RED
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c PALE RED
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c ORANGE BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
10c BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L7)



REPRINT
25c RED
ON WHITE
(143L2)



REPRINT
25c GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



REPRINT
25c BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L5)



REPRINT
25c BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Forgeries of the "Wells Fargo & Co. - Pony Express" stamps are plentiful, made by dozens of different forgers, in a wide variety of designs and colors.

This first forgery comes in the \$1, \$2, and \$4 variations, but also as a \$3, which Wells Fargo & Co. never used. They are often attributed to S. Allan Taylor, but these stamps are however nothing alike his usual work. They come with much larger margins, and colors that don't fit the colors he used for other forgeries of his. What makes it even more unlikely to be a Taylor production, is that almost every example has been hand cancelled, which is something he practically never did.

Two different handstamps can be found on them. The first is an oval with "PONY EXPRESS" at the top and "SERVICE" at the bottom. The other handstamp is a simple square grid design.



FORGERY A
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 BLACK
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$1 BLUE
ON BLuish
(143L3)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 BLUE
ON BLuish
(143L1)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 BLUE
ON BLuish
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 BLUE
ON BLuish
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY A
\$1 LIGHT BLUE GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 LIGHT BLUE GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 LIGHT BLUE GREEN
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 LIGHT BLUE GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$1 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY A
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 GREEN
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$1 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY A
\$2 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$1 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 BROWN
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY A
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 RED
ON WHITE
W/ SQUARE GRID
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 RED
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$1 VIOLET PINK
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$2 VIOLET PINK
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$3 VIOLET PINK
ON WHITE
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY A
\$4 VIOLET PINK
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP

The next forgery comes in six different colors and is known for all three of the dollar values. The horse appears a little different on each value, but keeps a distinctive three-pronged tail, which is one of the key identifiers for these fake stamps.



FORGERY B2
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY B
\$2 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY B1
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



FORGERY B1
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)
W/ "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY B2
\$1 BLUE
ON BLUISH
(143L3)



FORGERY B
\$2 BLUE
ON BLUISH
(143L1)



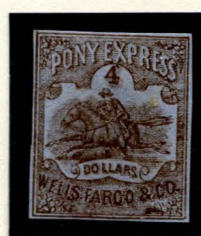
FORGERY B1
\$4 BLUE
ON BLUISH
(143L2)



FORGERY B2
\$1 BROWN
ON BLUISH
(143L3)



FORGERY B
\$2 BROWN
ON BLUISH
(143L1)



FORGERY B1
\$4 BROWN
ON BLUISH
(143L2)



FORGERY B2
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY B
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY B1
\$4 RED
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY B2
\$1 ORANGE RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)

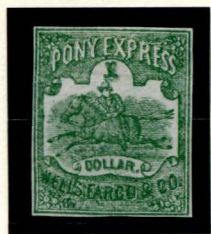


FORGERY B
\$2 ORANGE RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ OVAL "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY B1
\$4 ORANGE RED
ON WHITE
(143L2)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY B2
\$1 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY B
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY B1
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY B2
\$1 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
BLOCK OF SIX

WELLS FARGO & CO.

J. W. Scott tried to stay close to the original colors in his forgeries, which he printed on thin white paper and on thick cream colored paper. His \$1 design is different from the \$2 and \$4 designs, and can be recognized by the clear rein on the horse. Both the \$2 and \$4 stamps have a clear break through the left front leg of the horse. Additionally, the \$2 stamps also have a clear break through the rider's left foot and leg, while the \$4 stamps have a dark line going downwards from the horse's left rear leg.



FORGERY J
SCOTT
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY J
SCOTT
\$1 RED
ON CREAM
(143L3)



FORGERY J
SCOTT
\$1 RED VIOLET
ON CREAM
(143L3)



FORGERY C
SCOTT
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY C
SCOTT
\$2 RED
ON CREAM
(143L1)



FORGERY C
SCOTT
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY C
SCOTT
\$2 GREEN
ON CREAM
(143L4)



FORGERY C1
SCOTT
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY C1
SCOTT
\$4 GREEN
ON CREAM
(143L2)



FORGERY C1
SCOTT
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



FORGERY C1
SCOTT
\$4 BLACK
ON CREAM
(143L5)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Various more forgeries of the "Wells Fargo & Co. - Penny Express" dollar value stamps exist. Some were created by J. B. Moens, or recreated after his designs, but most of these stamps were made by unknown forgers. Many come with fake cancels, which could have been added later. Several of these fake cancels appear on multiple different forgeries, which suggests someone added these in a later stage.

Of the two forgery types shown here, the first one only comes in the \$2 value, but in multiple different colors. The "W" in "WELLS" has a much smaller left upright than its right upright.

The other forgery is known in all three values, and is identified by the much thinner lettering of "PONY EXPRESS" than in any of the other designs. This also makes the first "E" in it look like an "F".



FORGERY D
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
PAIR



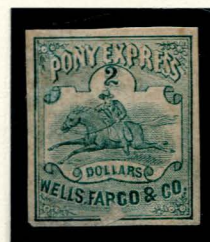
FORGERY D
\$2 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY D
\$2 RED VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY D
\$2 RED VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY D
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY D
\$2 BLUE GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY F
\$2 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY F
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Four types of forgeries are shown on this page. The first design is sometimes listed as different forgeries depending on the value, but has no other differences. It should as such be counted as only one type of forgery, but with all three dollar value variations. Key identifiers for this forgery are on the rider, who has a forward pointed shoe, and is wearing a bowler hat.

The second type of forgeries here is known in the \$1 and \$2 values, and can be identified by the second "E" in "EXPRESS" looking like an "F". Additionally, the horse touches the left border with its front leg, and the "O" in "FARGO" has no background shading in the center.

The forgery after this is only known in the \$4, and has a very crudely drawn design. Lastly, the final forgery stamps on this page are known in all three dollar values. On this design, all values say "DOLLAR." without the "S", and the horse touches the right border with its rear leg.



FORGERY H
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY H
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ CIRCULAR "WF & CO"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY H
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ CIRCULAR "WF & CO"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY H (R)
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY L
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY L
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY L
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ "PONY EXPRESS - PAID"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY L
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)
W/ "PONY EXPRESS - PAID"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY N
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



FORGERY O
\$2 RED
ON WHITE
(143L1)
W/ HANDSTAMP



FORGERY O
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY O
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

This page has four more types of forgeries. The first design is known only in the \$4 value, and can be identified by the clear bulge at the top of the saddle, behind the rider.

The next two forgeries were both designed by J. B. Moens. The \$2 stamp uses the same design as the \$1 image he used in his 1864 catalogue, and can be recognized by the very curly scrolls around the horse and rider image. The \$4 image was used in his 1883 catalogue, and has a very distinct thin lettering of "PONY EXPRESS".

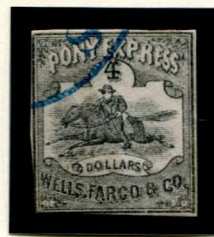
Lastly there is a previously unlisted forgery, known in the \$1 and \$2 values. The horse on this design has a malformed head, with pointed hair that looks like horns.



FORGERY P
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY P
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)
W/ "PONY EXPRESS - PAID"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY P
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)
W/ LARGE "PONY EXPRESS"
HANDSTAMP



FORGERY T
MOENS - 1864
\$2 PURPLE
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY Y
MOENS - 1883
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



UNLISTED
FORGERY
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



UNLISTED
FORGERY
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

This final forgery of the "Wells Fargo & Co - Pony Express" dollar values is a modern facsimile, printed in sheets of ten, in a multitude of colors. They were firstly printed without the numeral values, which were added afterwards, resulting sometimes in color differences between the numeral and the rest of the stamp. The design of the stamp is very crude, with "WELLS, FARGO & CO." almost unreadable.

The stamps are plateable thanks to various flaws, mostly around the border. Eight of the ten positions have "Facsimile" printed on the back of the stamp, but the backs of positions 1 and 6 have been left blank.



FORGERY K
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 ORANGE
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
(BACK)
"FACSIMILE"



FORGERY K
\$1 BLACKISH BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 RED VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 PALE PINK
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 PURPLE
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L3)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



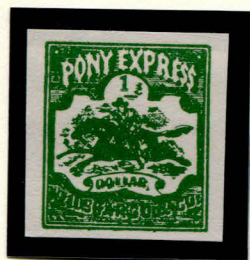
FORGERY K
\$1 VIOLET BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L3)



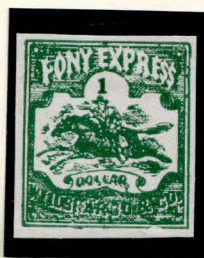
FORGERY K
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 DARK BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 DARK GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



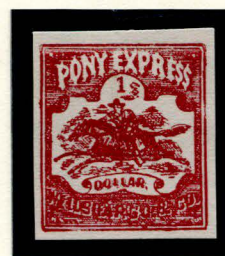
FORGERY K
\$1 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 YELLOW
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)



FORGERY K
\$1 RUSTY BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY K
\$2 BROWN VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY K
\$2 RED VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L1)



FORGERY K
\$2 PINK VIOLET
ON WHITE
(143L1)



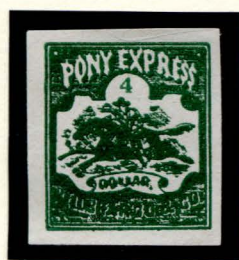
FORGERY K
\$2 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY K
\$2 LIGHT GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY K
\$2 LIGHT GREEN VAR
ON WHITE
(143L4)



FORGERY K
\$4 DARK GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY K
\$4 GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY K
\$4 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L2)



FORGERY K
\$4 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)



FORGERY K
\$4 GRAY BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L5)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY K
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN



FORGERY K
\$1 VIOLET BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY K
\$1 BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN



FORGERY K
\$1 YELLOW ORANGE
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY K
\$1 YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN



FORGERY K
\$1 GRAY GREEN
ON WHITE
(143L3)
SHEET OF TEN

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Forgeries of the 10¢ and 25¢ stamps are far less common than the dollar value forgeries, with only a few different types of forgeries circulating.

The first of these forgeries was made by J. B Moens, which he had used in his 1864 catalogue. It can be identified by the apostrophe shaped scrolls that replace the word "IF" right under the vignette.

The forgery after this was made by J. W. Scott, and as with his dollar value forgeries, he tried to stay close to the real colors of the stamps. These were printed on the same thin white paper and on the thicker cream colored paper. They can be identified by the background shading behind the horse, which exists solely out of horizontal lines without the crosshatching.



FORGERY GG
MOENS - 1864
10¢ BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L7)



FORGERY GG
MOENS - 1864
10¢ RED
ON WHITE
(143L7)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
10¢ BROWN
ON WHITE
(143L7)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
10¢ BROWN
ON CREAM
(143L7)



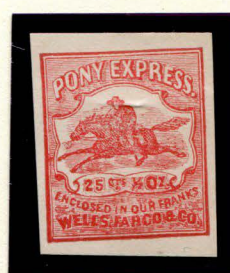
FORGERY XX
SCOTT
25¢ BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L8)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
25¢ BLUE
ON CREAM
(143L8)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
25¢ RED
ON WHITE
(143L9)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
25¢ RED
ON CREAM
(143L9)



FORGERY XX
SCOTT
25¢ RED VIOLET
ON CREAM
(143L9)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Of the following two forgeries, the first one comes with a variation, and can be recognized by the very wide tail end of the horse. The background shading lines outside the vignette are visible inside the lettering of "PONY EXPRESS", but this is fixed in the variation. Additionally, the horse's tail touches the vignette border in this variation.

The last forgery is a modern facsimile, created for the *Fourth Annual Chicago Hobby Show* in 1935, to hand out as a souvenir sheets. In 1946, the *North Shore Philatelic Society* reused the same image to create additional souvenir sheets for their Stamp Bourse in Chicago.



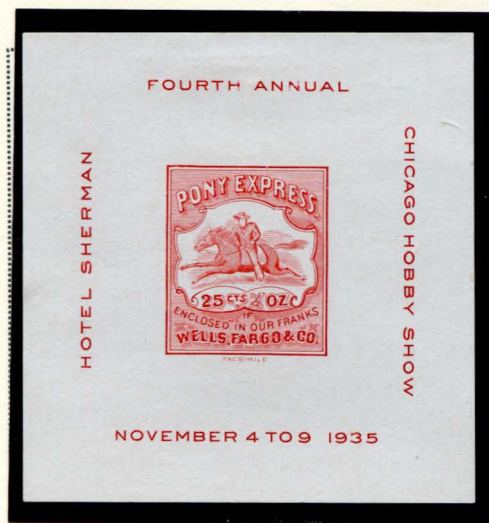
FORGERY QQ
25¢ BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L8)



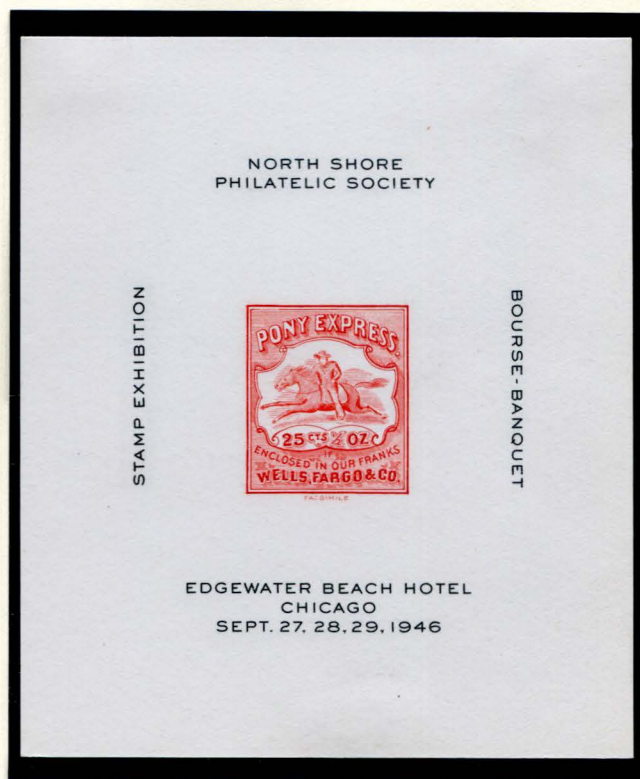
FORGERY QQ
25¢ RED
ON WHITE
(143L9)



FORGERY QQ (YY)
25¢ BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L8)



FORGERY DD
SOUVENIR SHEET - 1935
25¢ RED
ON WHITE
(143L9)



FORGERY DD
SOUVENIR SHEET - 1946
25¢ RED
ON WHITE
(143L9)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The "garter" design stamp was issued in 1861. This small stamp was used only for westbound mail from the east coast offices. Original stamps of this design are quite rare.



143L6
\$1 BLUE
ON THIN WHITE

The garter stamps were lithographed by G. F. Nesbitt & Co. They were printed in sheets of twenty subjects, arranged in four rows of five stamps.



143L6
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
HORIZONTAL PAIR
PF CERT #489455

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Forgeries of the "Garter" design were created by the usual forgers: George Hussey, J. B. Moens, J. W. Scott, and S. A. Taylor. All four forgeries have a horizontal line printed between the "½ oz" and "\$1.00.", which copies the hand drawn line that appears on the remainders. This line does not reach the sides of the shield on the forgeries made by Hussey and Scott, while it touches both sides on Moens' and Taylor's forgeries.

Taylor's design can be differentiated from the other forgeries by the missing period behind the "\$1.00". Another difference between the forgeries is the comma between "WELLS" and "FARGO". It is wedge shaped on Hussey's forgery; replaced by a small period close to the "S" on Scott's design; and does not appear at all on the other two forgeries.



FORGERY A
HUSSEY
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY A
HUSSEY
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY C
MOENS
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY C
MOENS
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY D
SCOTT
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY D
SCOTT
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY D
SCOTT
\$1 BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 5
\$1 RED
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 5
\$1 RED
ON YELLOW SC
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 5
\$1 RED
ON GRAY VIOLET SC
(143L6)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 6
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 6
\$1 BLUE
ON BLUE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 6
\$1 BLUE
ON PINK
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 11
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR - FORM 11
\$1 BLUE
ON PINK H LAID
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
\$1 LIGHT BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
\$1 LIGHT BLUE
ON CREAM
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
\$1 BLUE
ON CREAM
(143L6)



FORGERY B
TAYLOR
\$1 RED
ON CREAM
(143L6)

At some point, a modern reproduction of Taylor's design was made, printed in sheets of three by five stamps. They were printed in blue or black on white paper with a yellowish back, usually gummed.



MODERN
FORGERY (B)
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
(143L6)

WELLS FARGO & CO.



MODERN
FORGERY (B)
\$1 BLUE
ON WHITE
SHEET OF FIFTEEN
(143L6)



MODERN
FORGERY (B)
\$1 BLACK
ON WHITE
SHEET OF FIFTEEN
(143L6)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The Wells Fargo & Co. newspaper stamps, in seven different types, were first issued in 1861. Although the Type 1 is not technically a newspaper stamp, it is included due to its similar design and inclusion in Scott's *Specialized Catalogue*.

The Type 1 stamp, which reads "Wells, Fargo & Co. / Paid / Express" was used specifically for deliveries from the western offices to the eastern New York office. It paid the steamship express fee for the delivery to New York, plus the drop-rate fee once on shore. They were printed imperforate.



143LP1
GENUINE
TYPE I
BLACK
ON WHITE

The Type II stamps were printed in blue on white. The square stamp features an oval vignette with the text "One Newspaper / Over Our California Routes" in the border. In the vignette of this design, the text for "PAID" is shaded, and "Wells Fargo & Co." is printed in a decorative "Old English" font style.



143LP2
GENUINE
TYPE II
BLUE
ON WHITE
PSE CERT #23126

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The Type III Wells Fargo & Co. newspaper stamps used the same basic shape as the previous stamps (square with an oval vignette) but changed the design of the text and ornaments. Decorative flourishes were added to the corners and floral ornaments were included in the sides of the oval border. The vignette text is simplified, featuring the text "Wells Fargo & Co." in a san-serif font over an unshaded "PAID".



143LP3
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE



143LP3
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE



143LP3
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE
PARTIAL CDS

The Type III stamps were issued both as imperforate and rouletted at gauge 10.



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED
OVAL DATESTAMP



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED
BOTTOM MARGIN PAIR

WELLS FARGO & CO.



143LP5
GENUINE
TYPE III
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED
BLOCK OF FOUR

The corner ornaments were changed again for the Type IV stamps, and boxes with text "PAID" and "W, F & Co" were added to the lower two corners. In the vignette, "Wells, Fargo & Co." was placed in a bar across the center. The ornaments in the sides of the oval border are swirls of vines.

These stamps were first issued imperforate and rouletted.



143LP4
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE



143LP6
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED



143LP6
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED

WELLS FARGO & CO.



143LP6
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
ROULETTED
BLOCK OF FOUR

Starting in 1883, the Type IV newspaper stamps were also issued perforated. They are known with perforations in gauge 11, 12 or 12½.



143LP7
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP7
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
PENSTROKE CANCEL



143LP7
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
OVAL HS CANCEL



143LP7
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
PURPLE STAR CANCEL



143LP7
GENUINE
TYPE IV
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12½

WELLS FARGO & CO.

Wells Fargo & Co.'s Type V newspaper stamps are very similar in design to the Type IV stamps. Among smaller changes, the most identifying differences are that the side ornaments are changed from swirls of vines to flowers; and the font for "One Newspaper" in the oval border is changed.

The Type V newspaper stamps were first issued around 1883. They were issued imperforate and perforated in gauge 11, 12 or 12½.



143LP8
GENUINE
TYPE V
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE 3 SIDES
PERFORATED 12 AT RIGHT
PURPLE HS CANCEL



143LP8
GENUINE
TYPE V
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP8
GENUINE
TYPE V
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
PINK HS CANCEL

The Type VI stamps are almost identical to the Type V stamps, but are easily identified by the change in text in the oval border. It now reads "Over Our Routes In The US".



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 11



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 11
PURPLE HS CANCEL



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 11
OVAL HS CANCEL

WELLS FARGO & CO.



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE WMK
PERFORATED 12



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
BLUE HS CANCEL



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
PURPLE HS CANCEL



143LP9
GENUINE
TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
PURPLE HS CANCEL

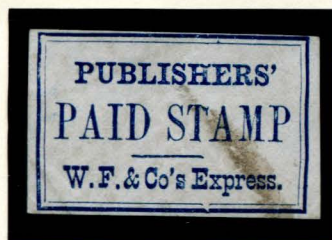
WELLS FARGO & CO.



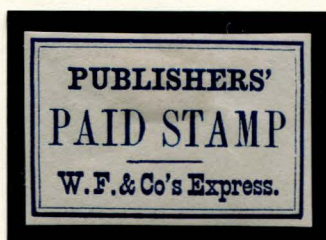
143LP9
GENUINE - TYPE VI
BLUE (SHADE) ON WHITE
PERFORATED 12
BLOCK OF FOUR
PURPLE WELLS FARGO OVAL DATESTAMP
MAY 5, 1888

The final type of Wells Fargo & Co. Newspaper stamps were printed for publisher's usage only. These Type VII stamps are much simpler in design than the other newspaper stamps.

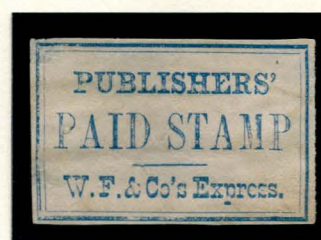
The Type VII stamps were printed in sheets of fifty. These sheets were made from repeating clichés of five vertical subjects, which can be identified by slight variations.



143LP10
GENUINE
TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE

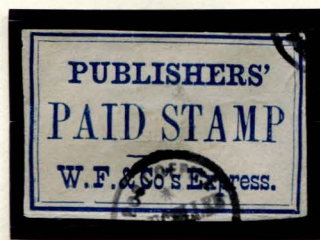


143LP10
GENUINE
TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE



143LP10
GENUINE
TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE

WELLS FARGO & CO.



143LP10
GENUINE
TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE
SMALL CIRCULAR
HS CANCEL



143LP10
GENUINE
TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE
BLUE OVAL
DATESTAMP

The piece below was mailed to San Diego California with a Type VII publisher's stamp. The piece, no longer entire, appears to be part of an almanac. A partial chart describing rates of rainfall is printed on the reverse.



143LP10
GENUINE - TYPE VII
BLUE (SHADE) ON WHITE
IMPERFORATE
GREEN (BLUE) WELLS, FARGO & CO. EXPRESS OVAL HANDSTAMP

Featured on the following page is a full sheet of fifty Type VII newspaper stamps.

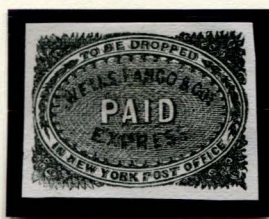
WELLS FARGO & CO.

Forgeries exist of all seven types of the "Wells Fargo & Co." newspaper stamps. J. W. Scott and J. B. Moens are responsible for most of the designs, having made images of all the stamps for each of their catalogues, which were then used again for the forgeries. S. A. Taylor created two designs as well, for the third and fourth types of the original stamps. A few other forgeries exist, made by unknown forgers.

Scott's forgeries generally aren't as finely detailed as the original stamps, mostly noticeable in the background lathwork. His "Type I" forgery can also be identified by the almost complete extra line to the left of the oval, while his "Type II" forgery can be told apart thanks to the lettering. Especially the curvy "S" in "ROUTES" stands out. This forgery comes in two variations, depending whether or not some flaws around the word "NEWSPAPER" are present.



TYPE I
FORGERY A
SCOTT - ALBUM CUT
BLACK
ON WHITE
(143LP1)



TYPE I
FORGERY A
SCOTT
BLACK (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP1)



TYPE I
FORGERY A
SCOTT
BLACK (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP1)



TYPE I
FORGERY A
SCOTT
GRAY
ON WHITE
(143LP1)



TYPE II
FORGERY A
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP2)



TYPE II
FORGERY A
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP2)



TYPE II
FORGERY A
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP2)



TYPE II
FORGERY A1
SCOTT - ALBUM CUT
BLACK
ON WHITE
(143LP2)



TYPE II
FORGERY A1
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP2)



TYPE II
FORGERY A1
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP2)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

On Scott's "Type III" forgery, the space between the "S" of "WELLS" and the "F" of "FARGO" is completely clear, with a well formed comma in it. Then on his "Type IV" forgery, the right ornament inside the oval is a circle with a dot in it, and three lines going upwards from it. To the right of the ornament is a small diagonal line.

Finally, for his "Type VII" design he used a fancy line with four end ornaments as separator under "PAID STAMP". Additionally, the apostrophe after "PUBLISHERS" looks more like a period.



TYPE III
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



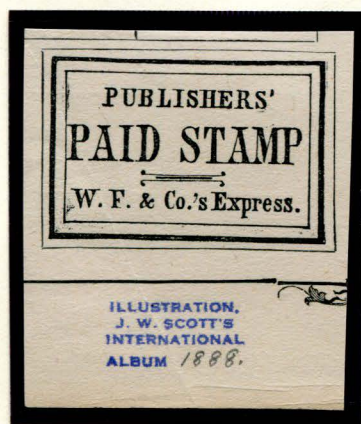
TYPE IV
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP4)



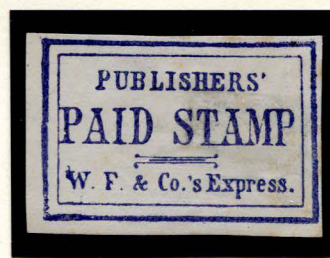
TYPE IV
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP4)



TYPE IV
FORGERY B
SCOTT
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP4)



TYPE VII
FORGERY A
SCOTT - ALBUM CUT
BLACK
ON WHITE
(143LP10)



TYPE VII
FORGERY A
SCOTT
VIOLET BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP10)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

S. A. Taylor's "Type III" design has side ornaments inside the oval, that have split ends at the top. His "Type IV" forgery has a similar right-side ornament inside the oval as it appears on Scott's design. The difference is that this ornament only has two lines going upwards.



TYPE III
FORGERY A
TAYLOR
LIGHT BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY A
TAYLOR
BLUE
ON WHITE V LAID
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY A
TAYLOR
BLACK
ON WHITE D LAID
(143LP3)



TYPE IV
FORGERY A
TAYLOR - FORM 6
BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP4)



TYPE IV
FORGERY A
TAYLOR - FORM 6
BLUE
ON BLUE
(143LP4)



TYPE IV
FORGERY A
TAYLOR - FORM 6
BLUE
ON PINK
(143LP4)



TYPE IV
FORGERY A
TAYLOR
LIGHT BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP4)

The next "Type III" design is by an unknown forger. It is one of many different "Type III" designs, which all can be recognized by the different side ornaments they use.



TYPE III
FORGERY D
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY D
BLUE (SHADE)
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY D
BLUE
ON BLUISH
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY D
RED
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY D
YELLOW GREEN
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY D
GREEN
ON BLUISH
(143LP3)

WELLS FARGO & CO.

The next three forgeries of the "Type III" newspaper stamp are all based on J. B. Moens' catalogue designs. These forgeries can all be told apart by the different side ornaments inside the oval.



TYPE III
FORGERY F
MOENS - ALBUM CUT
BLACK
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY E
AFTER MOENS
BLACK
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY E
AFTER MOENS
BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY F
MOENS - 1864
BLACK
ON BLUE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY F
MOENS - 1864
BLUE
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY F
MOENS - 1864
RED
ON WHITE
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY I
MOENS - 1883
BLACK
ON CREAM
(143LP3)



TYPE III
FORGERY I
MOENS - 1883
BLACK
ON PINKISH
(143LP3)