

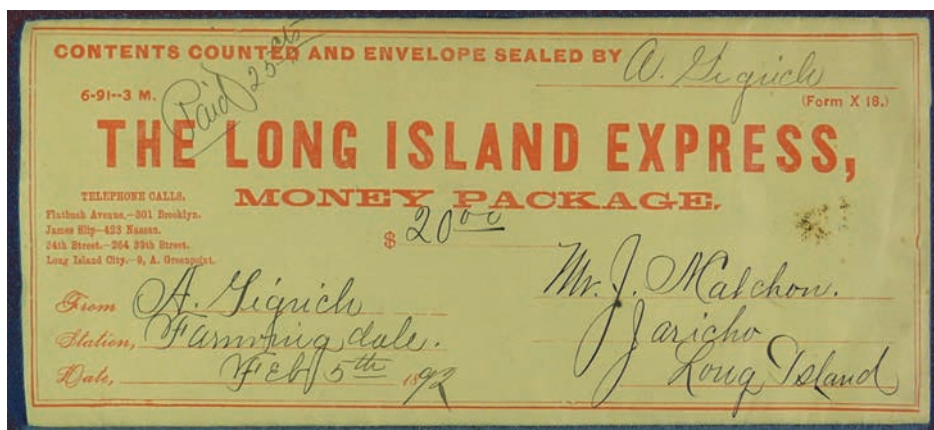
JULY 2019

WHOLE NUMBER 108

VOL. 27 NO. 3

THE PENNY POST

Official Journal Of The Carriers And Locals Society



Circa 1890's Long Island Express collectibles

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

EXPRESS BUSINESSES THAT OPERATED OVER
THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD SYSTEM

BARKER'S HANDSTAMP ON A CHEEVER & TOWLE STAMP
THE BROOKLYN CITY EXPRESS BLACK ON ORANGE STAMPS

A NEW LARGE FORGERY MULTIPLE
THE AMERICAN LETTER MAIL COMPANY'S NAME CHANGE

AND MORE



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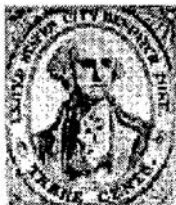
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THE PENNY POST

VOL. 27 NO. 3



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Editor's Message

By
Larry Lyons

The carriers and locals field continues to be hot! In late June there were 24 lots in the Erivan collection sale held by H.R. Harmer at the Collectors Club in New York. All sold at very strong prices including some new record prices. The Siegel rarities sale also held in late June featured 26 lots of carriers and locals which also brought strong realizations. The key here was good quality and/or great rarity. In contrast to these sales we see material of low quality or stamps with faults failing to find new homes. The conclusion has to be that today's buyers only want stamps and covers that are exceptional. There will be 2-3 more Erivan sales in future years and Siegel is already ready to run more carrier and local material in the very near future.

Something New – Questions

In January I began a new feature where questions would be posed to the readers. I posed three questions in the January *Penny Post* and so far I still don't have any responses! Cliff Alexander says he will research Placido Ramón de Torres, the Spanish lithographer who made the Moens images and forgeries. We need to unravel and confirm which forgeries were made by Torres. Anyone going to attempt to answer the first two questions?

In this Issue

We have a new multiple forgery find presented in this issue by yours truly. This large piece clearly answers the question about the identity of the forger for two different forgeries. My friend John Bowman teams up with Casey Jo White to solve an old mystery about a Barker's handstamp on a Cheever & Towle stamp. We also have an article on the Brooklyn City Express, black on orange, 28L6, stamps. This article, which I have written, attempts to show there is a difference between the black on orange Brooklyn City Express stamps and the reprints produced in the same color. These articles all present new original research in our field of study. In this same vein we have an extensive article on the express businesses that operated over the Long Island Rail Road system. Special thanks to Bruce Mosher for this very thorough study. And last, but not least, we have Part 11 of Dave Wilcox's adventure into the American Letter Mail Company. This segment puts forth a theory aimed at convincing us as to the identity of the second owner of this Independent Mail Company. Thanks to Dave Wilcox for his work in this area. So, we have five articles on various subjects, all adding to our knowledge in our field of study.

Future Meetings and Gatherings

Omaha StampShow, August 1-4, 2019
See you there!

Mission Statement

The purpose of *The Penny Post* is to present original research articles in the fields of United States Carriers, Local Posts, Eastern Expresses and Independent

Mail Companies. Forgeries in these areas are also researched. Any article in these fields can be submitted to me for publication (email: llyons@philatelicfoundation.org). These articles are reviewed and assistance is provided by the Editor's section heads who comprise the editorial board. *The Penny Post* continues to be at the top of society publications.

Special Appreciation

Once again, I wish to give special appreciation and thanks to David Snow. David Snow has been doing "peer review" and proofreading of the articles you eventually get to read and enjoy. Quite often he provides information, comments and images to our authors. We often confer on articles and David has been very supportive of my editorship. The finished articles greatly reflect the care and time David spends on them. David has been performing these tasks since the fall of 2012. I give extra special thanks to David Snow for his help behind the scenes.

Typing, Scanning, Insertions and Corrections

Special thanks to Deborah Davis who has been doing the set-up work for *The Penny Post* since 2001. Without her help you would not be reading such a fine journal.

Thank You Advertisers

I would be remiss if I didn't thank our advertisers for their continued support of our journal. I hope you study the ads and use the services of these fine dealers and auction houses.

Final Message

If you haven't taken my advice to visit a large stamp show I urge you to do so. The socializing with fellow collectors is exhilarating and rewarding. Socializing together is one of the great perks of stamp collecting! Nothing like stamp stories and great food! Nothing like hearing the whine and drinking the wine! Please join us for festivities at StampShow in Omaha. You will be pleased you did.

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~

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Barker's Handstamp on a Cheever & Towle Stamp – An Old Mystery Solved

By

John D. Bowman and Casey Jo White

This is a story of how an old philatelic mystery was solved.

Several years ago, I acquired an item that once belonged to Richard Schwartz, one of the founders of the *Carriers and Locals Society* (**Figure 1**). (It's worth noting that Schwartz was good friends with Elliott Perry, and acquired Perry's collection of carriers, locals and forgeries from his widow.) The notecard had two similar items attached, stamps of Boston's Cheever & Towle City Letter Delivery Post. The note at upper left reads "Boker says this is the exact [sic] stamp Souren offered in one of his bulletins and odd that it should end up in Burger material." Boker is John Boker, a major US collector and Y. Souren was a stamp dealer and auctioneer. The Burger Brothers were also stamp dealers.

The note under the canceled stamp is "I am sure I got stamp from large lot Burger sale (250.00) 1953." Below that, "John Boker compared it with Barker canc [sic] and finds color more orange than original handstamp – doesn't match up and letters differ." At right, "Red oval postmark – BARKER'S/CITY POST/10 COURT SQ. A very close match of the genuine oval Barker postmark. Nevertheless, a fake – unless someone years ago secured Barker's original handstamp."

Because reprints of the Cheever stamp are often found, I wanted to know if these specialists from decades ago were correct – is the handstamp a fake or is it authentic? Is the stamp a reprint or a genuine Cheever & Towle?

Not very much is known about Cheever & Towle's post. It was established sometime in 1846 by William R. Towle and was acquired in 1851 by George H. Barker. Barker operated it until 1859, making it one of the more successful local posts. The identity and role of Cheever remained unknown, until Gordon Stimmell discovered that a 65-year old widower named Elleanor [sic] Cheever lived next door to Towle and speculated that she might have helped finance the business.¹

Cheever & Towle printed stamps in panes of ten and offered them for 2¢ each and 60 for \$1.00. There is no record of Barker continuing to offer Cheever & Towle stamps after he acquired the post. And there are no reported Barker adhesives. George Barker may have acquired Cheever's remaining stamps, or perhaps honored those used by patrons that purchased them before he took over the post.

Genuine Cheever & Towle stamps have been more difficult for collectors to identify than stamps of most other local posts. The difficulty arises not from the several forgeries, but from the fact that a reprint plate was used to make several different printings after the post had closed. A definitive article about identifying originals from reprints and forgeries was written by Gordon Stimmell in *The Penny*

¹ Gordon Stimmell, "Latest Local Discoveries," *The Chronicle*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Nov. 2005), page 273.

Post.² He reported for the first time that the commonly reprinted pane of 10 does not include any clichés that match original stamps, and no reprints could be found that match the originals. Yet he goes on to say that there are similarities between some positions on the reprint sheet and originals.

It has been assumed that there was an original plate of two panes of 10 positions, one of which was seemingly used for original stamps and the other by J. W. Scott for several reprintings. As noted by Stimmell, this is based on an 1886 article in which the anonymous author (going by “Topaz”) claims that Barker himself kept an original Cheever plate of 20 as well as a Barker handstamp and sold these to a Boston dealer, who gave half the plate to Scott & Co. in 1870. Stimmell noted 11 types of originals with descriptions of their characteristics, reproduced in Larry Lyons’ *Identifier* Volume 1. He grouped them into five possible clichés according to similarities. However, I was unable to match the handstamped Cheever in **Figure 1** to any of these original types or reprints. Perhaps Stimmell did not have access to enough examples of the stamps to determine constant position characteristics.

The next question in this mystery was whether the Barker’s handstamp was genuine or not. Stimmell provided tracings of the eight different handstamps used by Cheever & Towle and its successor, Barker’s City Post, **Figure 2**.³ Five handstamps include Towle’s as the company name and three have Barker’s. With two reported exceptions, these handstamps only occur on stampless covers.⁴ It’s no surprise that Schwartz found **Figure 1** to be unusual and showed it to Boker.

Another stamp like **Figure 1** belonged to Stimmell. He called it a reprint with an indistinct red oval handstamp of Towle’s City Post 10 Court Street, **Figure 3**. However, closer examination with a computer indicates it is not Towle’s but rather Barker’s handstamp, type F like the **Figure 1** stamp. The Barker’s Type F handstamp is rare.

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate two stampless covers with the Barker’s Type F handstamp.

In order to determine whether the handstamp on **Figure 1** matches the original handstamp, I contacted Casey White, who I knew had experience in image processing and comparison. Ms. White prepared a composite image of the authentic handstamp by combining the images from the two stampless covers in **Figures 4 and 5**. The brightness, contrast, and saturation were adjusted to isolate the handstamps from the rest of their respective covers.

The two handstamps were lined up on a computer to create a single composite image, **Figure 6**. This step resulted in a more complete handstamp than either example by itself, although some insignificant graphic artifacts appeared. The nature of impressing by hand creates minor differences during each application, due to different people, different pressure, different paper, variations in inking, etc.

Figures 7a, 7b, and 7c show the stamp with handstamp enhanced, the stamp with the genuine handstamp layered over it, and the stamp with genuine handstamp overlaid or added together. The genuine (composite) handstamp is colored blue in

² Gordon Stimmell, “Cheever & Towle,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Aug. 1991), pages 4-20, available at www.pennypost.org.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ See Siegel Auctions, sale 1101 lot 704 and sale 925 lot 1473.

order to contrast it with the red handstamp struck on the reprint stamp. You can see that the handstamp image is a little darker where it overlaps the handstamp on the stamp. **Figure 8** is **Figure 7c** enlarged to show how well the handstamps match (parts which do not match would show the blue and red colors out of “synch.”) We believe the analysis demonstrates that the Barker’s handstamp struck on the Cheever & Towle “reprint” stamp matches that used on genuine stampless covers used in 1851-52.

At this point, I contacted Larry Lyons of the Philatelic Foundation and author of the *Identifier* set of books. I asked if he would examine the stamps and a Barker’s handstamped cover using the equipment at the PF. He agreed and provided the following narrative of the expertizing process:

“In the Philatelic Foundation review of the Cheever and Towle patient with the Barkers handstamp, several approaches were used. First a scan of a Barker’s handstamp from the Larry Lyons collection was overlaid onto the Cheever and Towle patient using the VSC6000. The match was perfect. Also this comparison was made with one handstamp changed to red and one to green so any differences could be studied. None were evident. [Figures 9a, b, c] The second test was to view a reprint of the Cheever and Towle stamp that appeared to be the same color, against the patient stamp under UV light. Again the VSC6000 was used and it was easily viewed that the paper of the patient was not the same as the known reprint. [Figure 10] The image was also saved. A chronometer also indicated that the paper of the patient is thicker than that of the reprint. These presentations and of course knowing that Barkers later owned Cheever and Towle lead the PF to conclude the patient was a genuine Cheever and Towle stamp with a genuine Barkers handstamp.” The PF gave it certificate number 558803.

And so, the mystery “reprint” of 37L1 with Barker’s handstamp that befuddled our previous generation of experts is now resolved thanks to methods that were not available to them. It is likely that the **Figure 3** item may also obtain a genuine PFC.

Donald Patton in Robson Lowe’s *Philatelist* of March 1964 noted the existence of a black double circle Barker’s handstamp on a Cheever & Towle stamp; the authors have not seen this item and would like to get a scanned image if a reader could supply one. We thank Larry Lyons for using the PF technology to substantiate our hypothesis.



Figure 1. Ex-Richard Schwartz notecard.

THE HANDSTAMPS

Towle and Barker handstamps almost always occur on stampless covers. Fonts of actual handstamps differ slightly from some of these drawings.



Type A: 1846-47



Type B: 1848-49



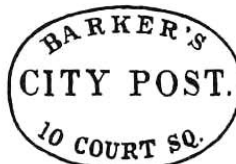
Type C: 1849



Type D: 1849-50



Type E: 1851



Type F: 1851-52



Type G: 1853-57



Type H: 1858-59

Figure 2. Handstamps of Towle and Barker as noted by Gordon Stimmell (original images from Donald Patton in *The Collector's Club Philatelist*).



Figure 3. Scan sent to author Bowman by G. Stimmell.

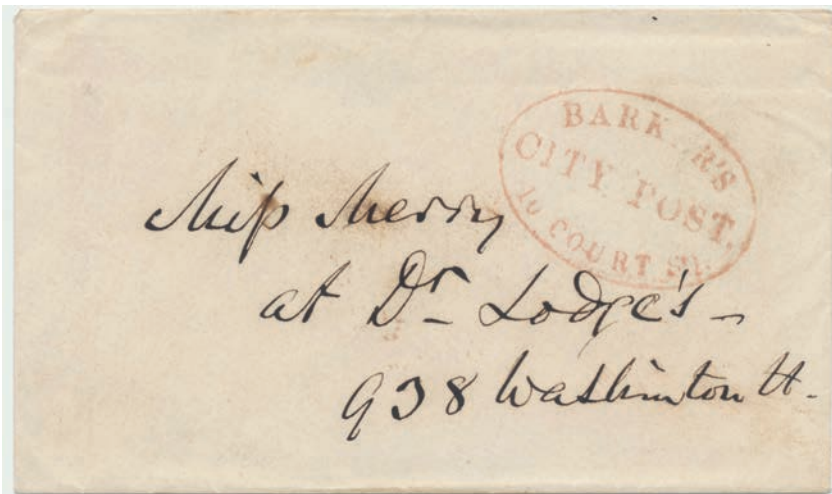


Figure 4. Authentic Barker's city delivery cover.



Figure 5. Like Figure 4 but with PAID signifying prepayment.

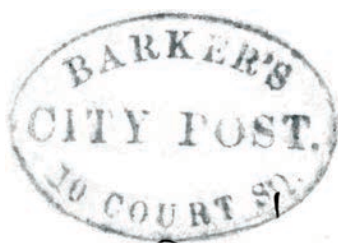


Figure 6. Combined images extracted from covers in Figures 4 and 5.



Figure 7a, b, c. Images prepared using image manipulation software. See text for explanation.



Figure 8. Enlargement of Figure 7c to illustrate the nearly identical match of the combined cover handstamp image with the stamp handstamp. Areas of coincidence are more heavily “inked.”



Figure 9a, b, c. Images prepared by the Philatelic Foundation using the VSC6000, rotated so the handstamp is horizontal and overlaid on the stamp. The 9c image is enhanced with contrasting coloration of the two images.



Figure 10. UV light comparison of reprint (left) and patient (right).

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*



The Brooklyn City Express Post Further Study

By
Larry Lyons

In the April 2007 issue of *The Penny Post* I authored an extensive article on the genuine stamps and forgeries of the Brooklyn City Express Post Stamps.¹ That study produced an order of issue of the Brooklyn City Express Post adhesives and the proprietor for each stamp issued. The handstamp types were presented as well as a cover census. Some commentary was made about the settings from which the various stamps were printed and I both confirmed and contested some of the early commentary on settings and reprint settings. A few issues were left unresolved and now after 12 years of further acquisitions this further study needs to be presented.

The Black on Orange, 28L6 Adhesive

Figure 1 is a tete-beche pair of Brooklyn City Express Post black on orange stamps and a scan of the back of these stamps showing almost full old gum. The presence of the gum is a major reason I believe these to be the genuine stamps. **Figure 2** shows what I believe are two genuine used singles of the 28L6 black on orange adhesives. These examples show pencil scratch cancelling. **Figure 3** shows pencil scratch cancelling on other Brooklyn City Express Post adhesives. **Figure 4** shows what I believe to be a genuine use of a black on orange 28L6 stamp on a cover with pencil scratch cancelling on the adhesive. **Figure 5** shows the top left corner ornament found on all of the black on orange adhesives so far presented. This is the key to identification of Type IV settings of the Brooklyn City Express Post adhesives. All of the two cent Brooklyn City Express Post reprint stamps have this same break in the top left ornament known as the "B" flaw. My conclusion is that setting IV produced genuine black on orange, 28L6 stamps as well as black on orange reprints. Here is my deductive reasoning.

More on the Black on Orange, 28L6 Setting IV

Figure 6 is what I believe to be a full sheet of two panes of black on orange 28L6 reprints. There are two panes of 24 (6x4) stamps printed work and turn with 9-10mm separating the two panes. Tete-beche pairs occur only between the panes. The birds on the stamps are tail to tail between the panes. There is no gum on these reprint panes. This printing could not have produced the tete-beche pair shown in **Figure 1** which I present as a genuine pair.

Figure 7 is a reprint sheet of the 2¢ black on pink, 28L4 Brooklyn City Express Post stamps. The "B" flaw in the top left ornament distinguishes these as a Type IV setting. There are two panes of 2¢ printed work and turn separated by 8mm. The bird images are beak to beak between the panes. The stamps have no gum. The color is not the same as on the original 28L4 stamps. The color is a much

¹ *The Penny Post, The Brooklyn City Express Post*, Larry Lyons, April 2007, Vol. 15, No. 2, pages 30-72.

deeper pink and there is much less glaze than on the original stamps, see **Figure 8**. Also the genuine stamps were printed on sheets consisting of two panes of 5x5 stamps, printed work and turn with the panes tete-beche. There are 6 tete-beche pairs in each pane in the genuine printing. The originals of the 28L4 stamps were printed from setting II and the 28L4 stamps come from setting IV. More basically speaking the reprint sheets have the panes far apart with a large tete-beche gutter between the panes. This is also true for the black on orange, 28L6 reprints. This shows the difference in the reprint pane set up from the original panes.

Conclusion

Genuine black on orange, 28L6 stamps come from setting IV but without a large gutter between the panes. See **Figure 9** which I believe is the setting which produced the genuine black on orange, 28L6 stamps. There are two panes of 24 stamps printed work and turn separate by 2.5-3mm. Tete-beche stamps occur only between the panes. The birds are tail to tail between the panes. The tete-beche pair of stamps shown in **Figure 1** were presented as genuine stamps. They exactly match the stamps from the sheet shown in **Figure 9**. They could not have been printed from the reprint pane shown in **Figure 7**.

I believe the above presentation forms the only conclusion possible that being the tete-beche pair shown in **Figure 1** are genuine 28L6a stamps.

Setting Summary

Setting I – 28L5 Stamps 2¢ Black on Dark blue

A unique setting with guide lines between the stamps.

See Figure 2, page 33, April 2007, Vol. 15, No. 2.

Reprints – None

Setting II – 28L4 stamps 2¢ black/pink with gum.

Spacing vertically between rows mostly 2.5mm.

Spacing horizontally between stamps 1-1.5mm.

Sheet 5x10 or 2 5x5 panes.

12 tete-beche stamps or 6 per pane.

At least 2 different settings and 5 different printings.

Reprints – no gum.

2 panes of 24 work and turn separated by 8mm.

Beak to beak between the panes.

Deeper color and unglazed in comparison to originals.

Setting III – (probably same as setting II) 28L3 stamps,

2¢ black on deep dark red

Reprints – black on crimson maroon.

Setting IV – 28L6 2¢ black on orange originals, most with gum but not all.

Two panes of 24 (6x4) work and turn separated by 2.5-3mm.
Tete-beche only between the panes.
Birds tail to tail between the panes.
Flaw B is present.

Reprints – no gum.

Two panes of 24 work and turn separated by 9-10mm.
Tete-beche only between the panes.
Birds are tail to tail between the panes.

Setting V – 28L1 1¢ black on blue, some with gum.

28L1 1¢ black on blue violet.

Two panes of 25 (5x5) work and turn separated by .5mm.
All tete-beche pairs from the middle from different panes.
Spacing vertically between rows: 2.5mm.
Spacing horizontally between the stamps: 2.0mm.

Reprints – no gum.

Two panes of 25 (5x5) work and turn.
The space between the panes have been found as 2.0, 2.5, 4.0,
5.0, 6.0, 6.5 and 7.5mm.
The color is the same as the originals.

Setting V – 28L2 1¢ black on green with gum.

Two panes of 25 (5x5) work and turn.
All tete-beche pairs are from the middle from different panes.
These are touching and overlapping.
Spacing vertically between rows: 2-3.5mm.
Spacing horizontally between stamps: 1.5-2.5mm.

Reprints – no gum.

The color is lighter and is blue where originals are green.
Two panes of 25 (5x5) work and turn separated by 6mm.
Birds are beak to beak between the panes.



Figure 1. A tete-beche pair of black on orange Brooklyn City Express Post stamps the author believes is a genuine original. The spacing between the stamp is 2.5mm. The right image shows the gum on these stamps.



Figure 2. Two used singles of black on orange Brooklyn City Express Post stamps the author believes are genuine.



Figure 3. Genuine Brooklyn City Express stamps with pencil scratch cancels.



Figure 4. A Brooklyn City Express black on orange stamp on a cover.
The author believes this is a genuine use of this stamp.

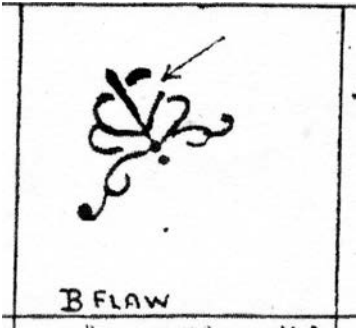


Figure 5. The top left corner ornament found on all of the black on orange adhesives. This is the type IV setting with the “B” flaw.

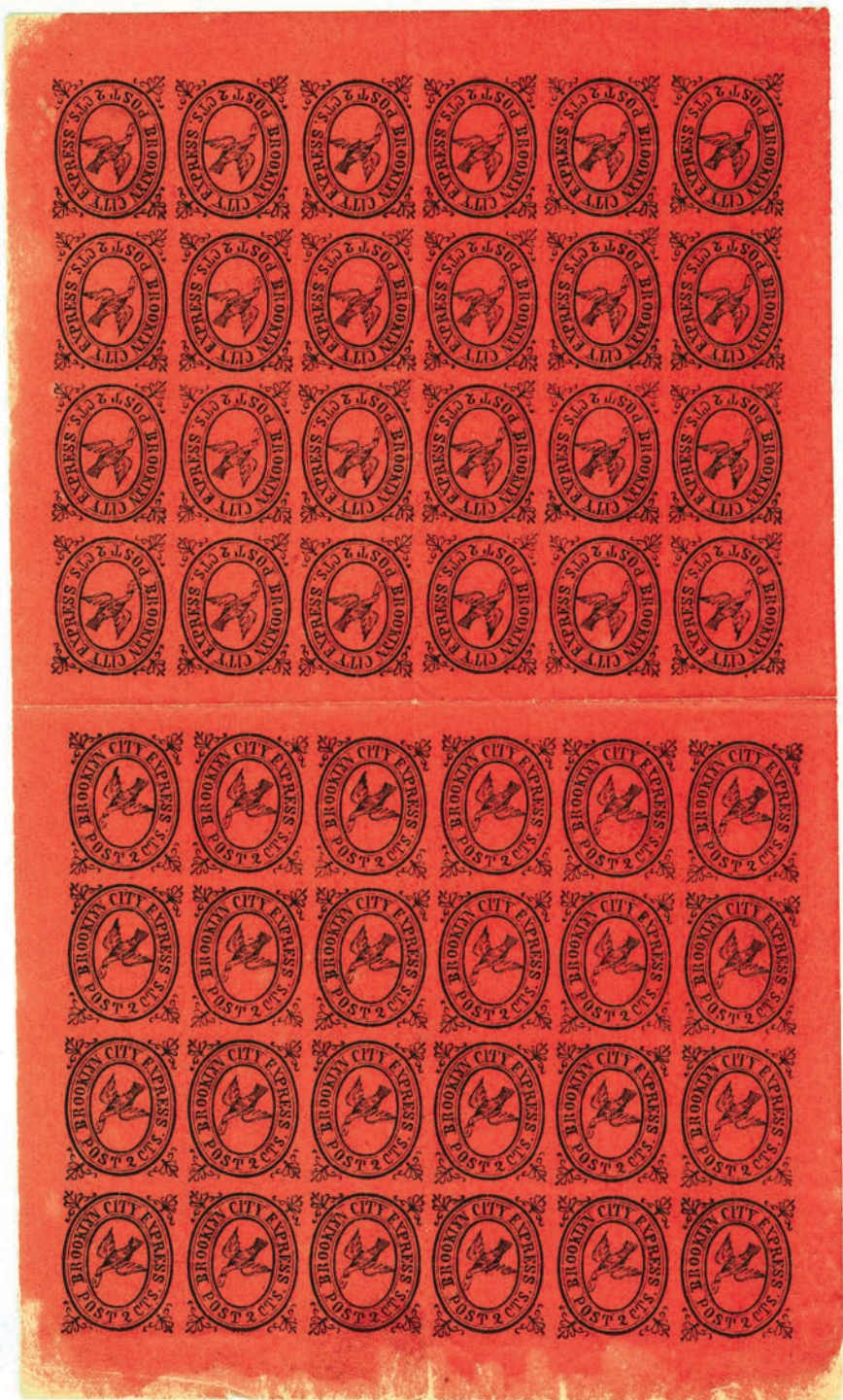


Figure 6. A full sheet of two panes of black on orange stamps. These are reprints. The spacing between the panes is 9-10mm.



Figure 7. A reprint sheet of the black on pink, 28L4 Brooklyn City Express Post stamps. The panes are far apart like the reprint pane shown in Figure 6.



Figure 8. Three genuine 28L4 stamps are shown at the left and three examples of reprints of the 28L4 stamp are shown at the right. There is a variation in color due to multiple printings.



Figure 9. A sheet of the black on orange stamps without a large gutter between the panes. The author believes this to be the setting for the genuine stamps.

A New Find

By
Larry Lyons

I had looked through this forgery collection many times over the years. This time was different. The collection has many carrier and local stamp forgeries and also some pages of old articles and old price lists taped to many pages. This time I must have been holding the album differently and the article mounted only at the top on the album page came forwarded revealing the multiple shown in **Figure 1** mounted underneath the article on the album page. I knew immediately what this multiple would prove to be. I grabbed my trusty, rusty "*Identifier*" and went to work.¹

Identification

There are six different forgeries in the large block, each are repeated three times. It would quickly become obvious as to the name of the forger. The *Identifier* led to the following information:

	<u>Forgery Type</u>	<u>Forger</u>
7LB11 USPO PAID	E	Scott
Broadway Post Office	C	Scott
Blood's "PAID"	A	Scott
Blood's "ONE CENT"	A	
Blood's "PENNY POST"	D	
Blood's "Post Office"	D	Scott

So, it is quickly determined that the Blood's "ONE CENT" Forgery A was made by Scott and the Blood's "PENNY POST" Forgery D was made by Scott. The block of 18 is a Scott form containing three of each of six different Scott forgeries. EMDW as we used to say. (Elementary My Dear Watson.)

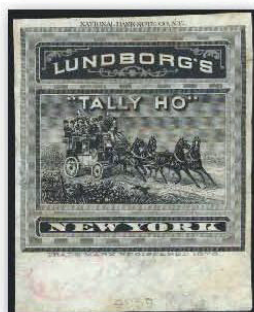
Does anyone else have a multiple of Scott forgeries? If you do please share it with our readers. I wonder if there are any other things lurking behind articles in albums.

I would price this item at \$3600 if anyone is interested in owning it.

¹ *The Identifier for Carriers, Locals, Fakes, Forgeries and Bogus Posts of the United States*, Larry Lyons, self published, Springfield Printing Co., 1998.



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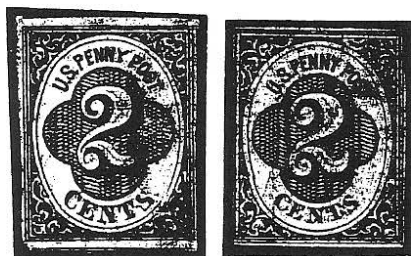
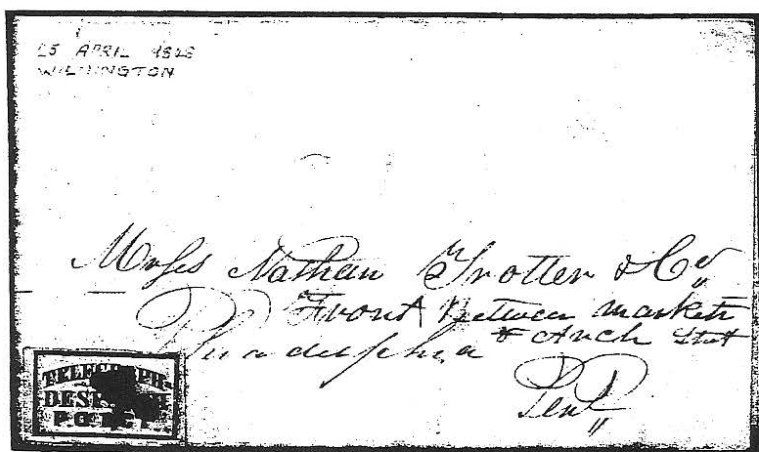
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Express Businesses That Operated Over the Long Island Rail Road System

By
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The Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) was chartered on April 24, 1834 and is the oldest railroad in the United States that is still operating under its original name. The LIRR was originally intended to serve as a connecting road for persons traveling from Washington, D.C., to Boston, Mass. At the time, it was not possible to construct an alternative road along the Connecticut shoreline because of the numerous marsh and river crossings that would be encountered. Civil Engineering techniques were not advanced enough for constructing the necessary bridges with sufficient structural strength to support heavy locomotives and lengthy trains.

Alternatively, construction of a railroad on Long Island would permit personal rail travel from Washington to the Northern New Jersey shoreline, ferryboat passage to Brooklyn, N.Y., LIRR transportation to Greenport, N.Y., ferryboat crossing to Stonington, Connecticut and a final leg by rail to Boston. This route was faster than traveling from Washington to Boston via any contemporary sail or steam-powered ship.

This report discusses the several private and Government express organizations that operated between 1848 and 1975 to move express goods over the Long Island Rail Road System. Illustrations are provided whenever available of contemporary business artifacts plus physical assets that accrued from these various express operations.


The LIRR opened for passenger travel between Brooklyn and Hicksville, L. I., in 1837 and then on to Greenport, L. I., seven years later in 1844. An 1847 Long Island map showing the initial LIRR rail route is depicted in **Figure 1**. The newspaper advertisement reproduced in **Figure 2** initially appeared in the March 1, 1837 edition of the *Long-Island Farmer & Queens County Advertiser* on the day when LIRR passenger and freight trains started running between Brooklyn and Hicksville. Later the newspaper announcement of inaugural LIRR passenger service to Greenport on July 29, 1844 was issued and is reproduced in **Figure 3**. This notification was printed the following day in the same newspaper, which was published in Jamaica, L. I.



Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1847, by W. Williams, etc.

Figure 1. Original Brooklyn to Greenport Long Island Rail Road route.

LONG-ISLAND RAILROAD.



NOTICE is hereby given that on and after the 1st inst. this Road will be open to the public as far East as **HICKSVILLE**—27 miles from Brooklyn; and, until further notice, the Cars will be dispatched as follows:

LEAVE HICKSVILLE—8 o'clock A. M.
 2 " P. M.
LEAVE JAMAICA—8½ " A. M.
 2½ " P. M.
LEAVE BROOKLYN—9½ " A. M.
 4 " P. M.

Passengers will be received and left at the following places on the line of the Road, viz:—Westbury, Hempstead, Flushing Avenue, 4 miles East of Jamaica, Union Course, and Bedford.

Tickets, with which **ALL** passengers are requested to supply themselves before taking seats, can be had at the various Ticket Offices.

FREIGHT TRAINS will leave Hicksville at 8 A. M. and Brooklyn at 4 P. M.; all goods designed to be sent by them must be seasonably placed in charge of the Agents, in the Freight Department; as the Company hereby make known, that they will not be responsible for the safe delivery of any articles not in the custody of the Agents; the only conclusive evidence of which must be entries by the agents, on the Register or Way Bills of the Company.

March 1, 1837. 451f

Figure 2. March 1, 1837 LIRR advertisement.

COMPLETION AND OPENING OF THE L. I. RAIL ROAD.



BROOKLYN TO GREENPORT 96 MILES.

On and after the 29th July, accommodation trains for the local business of the Island, will run as follows, and at the annexed rates of fare, viz.:

Leave Brooklyn at 3 P. M. every day, Sundays excepted, for Greenport, stopping at the following places, viz.:

Bedford,	12½ cts	Deer Park	88
East New York,	12½	Suffolk Station	\$1 12½
Union Course,	18½	Medford Station	1 50
Jamaica	25	St George's Manor	1 75
Brushville	37½	Riverhead	2 00
Branch	44	Mattituck	2 00
Hempstead	44	Southhold	2 12½
Hicksville	55	Greenport	2 25
Farmingdale	68½		

Returning, leave Greenport Depot for Brooklyn, at 5 A. M. stopping at the intermediate places.

The way trains will run as follows, viz:

Leave Brooklyn at 9½ o'clock, A. M., for Jamaica only.
 do do 3 do P. M., thro' to Greenport.
 do do 5 do P. M., for Jamaica.
 Leave Jamaica at 8 do A. M., for Brooklyn.
 do do 1 do P. M., for do
 do Hicksville & Hempstead, 7½ A. M. do

Light freight and packages taken by the passage train—freight to be paid in advance.

The arrangement affords an opportunity for the residents of Sag Harbor and Greenport, and the adjacent country, to remain in New-York five hours, and return the same evening.

Boats leave the South Ferry, New-York side, for Brooklyn, half an hour before the departure of the trains.

Due notice will be given of the connection of the road with the eastern lines to Boston.

Figure 3. July 29, 1844 LIRR announcement.

Even before William Harnden began the first organized parcel express in 1839, many packages and small mail items were transported between towns via stagecoaches, ships and trains—the men who conveyed these early packages just were not part of any organized express endeavor. It now seems highly probable that the embryonic Long Island Rail Road also participated in the movement of ‘articles’ (most likely including packages, but not mail) on their 1837 freight trains traveling between Hicksville, L. I., and Brooklyn, N. Y. The last paragraph of the **Figure 2** ad contains these revealing phrases (*italics and underlines added*) relating to accepted freight items:

- 1) “all goods designed to be sent by them [*i.e., via freight trains*] must be seasonably placed in charge of the Agents, in the Freight Department”
- 2) “they [*the LIRR Company*] will not be responsible for the safe delivery of any articles not in the custody of the Agents”
- 3) “conclusive evidence . . . must be entries by the agents, on the Register or Way Bills of the Company.”

To summarize, LIRR Freight Department Agents were accepting and way billing *goods* and *articles* beginning in March 1837. *Goods* and *articles* probably

could have included individual packages and parcels. This terminology certainly does not sound like normally perceived partial carload to carload-full freight shipments. The LIRR transportation of *goods/articles* in their freight cars seems to have persisted until 1848 when an independent express company took over and provided this service.

The July 29, 1844 opening announcement of Brooklyn to Greenport LIRR train service that is reproduced in **Figure 3** contains a further revealing statement concerning small shipments that is repeated below (underline added):

“Light freight and packages taken by the passage[r] train—freight to be paid in advance.”

The LIRR touted it was receiving and shipping *packages* between rail stations all along the Brooklyn – Greenport route. Curiously, this ad states that freight transportation charges must be paid in advance, but does not define anything regarding the handling of *package* transport fees. But, if we consider the cited *packages* to be similar to the **Figure 2** stipulated *articles*, in 1844 all *packages* were probably handled as freight items and transportation fees were charged accordingly.

There is no indication that an express company was involved in the early LIRR package transportation arrangements, but we now know the original LIRR package-freight delivery service certainly mimicked the way such a company, if involved, would usually have performed. It would be most interesting to find any old LIRR business paper (registers, waybills, consignment receipts, bills of lading, etc.) that was used in the 1837–48 transport of *articles/packages*, but nothing of this nature has been seen.

The Early LIRR Hosted Expresses (1848–53)

The LIRR package delivery service via freight shipments probably continued for several years and ultimately this transportation activity might have become the incentive (or the opportunity) for the creation of *S. S. Norton's Express* (a.k.a. *S. S. Norton & Co.*) in 1848. Norton's Express took over the package transportation business via LIRR trains as can be seen in the last paragraph in each initially-published **Figure 4** ad. It is assumed that S. S. Norton's Express began operations around the end of October 1848, since no earlier information has been found concerning this organization.

Information in the ads appearing in **Figure 4** reveals the trip from Brooklyn to Sag Harbor included a waterborne final segment from Greenport to Sag Harbor on the Steamer *Statesman*. This makes obvious sense since there were no rails to Sag Harbor in 1848. The *Statesman* plied the waters of Gardiners Bay and the Peconic River to travel between the loading docks at Sag Harbor and the railroad docks at Greenport. After reviewing the final paragraph in these two ads, it becomes apparent that Norton's also provided express service over the Steamer *Statesman*.

Comparison of the final paragraphs in both **Figure 4** ads does divulge two reporting anomalies. The *Corrector* ad states “*S. S. Norton's Express, for the transmission . . .*” while the other account reads “*S. S. Norton & Co. Express for the transportation . . .*” There is little doubt that both ads were referring to the same express business entity, so perhaps the two different Norton company nomenclatures were used interchangeably in 1848, and possibly thereafter.

GREAT REDUCTION, in Fare,
 via
L. I. R. ROAD & STEAMER STATESMAN,
Between Sag-Harbor & Brooklyn.
 Fare only \$2 each way, and only 50 cents each way, between Sag Harbor and Greenport



On and after Saturday, October 28th, 1847, the Fare between Sag Harbor and Brooklyn, will be Two Dollars each way.

Passengers leaving Brooklyn will procure their tickets at the office of the L. I. R. R. Co. for Sag Harbor.

Passengers leaving Sag Harbor for New York or Brooklyn, will pay their fare on Steamer Statesman, and receive tickets for Brooklyn.

In order to avoid confusion on the arrival of the cars, passengers are requested to have their baggage plainly marked, where it is to be delivered.

The above arrangement, it is hoped, will give perfect satisfaction to the traveling public, and a large share of their patronage is respectfully solicited as no pains will be spared to give satisfaction.

Freight taken at the usual prices

S. S. Norton's Express, for the transmission of Packages daily, between Sag Harbor, Brooklyn and New York. 46

GREAT REDUCTION IN FARE,
Via, L. I. Railroad and Steamer Statesman, between Sag Harbor and Brooklyn.
 Fare, only \$2.00 each way.
 Only 50 cts. each way between Sag Harbor and Greenport.

ON AND AFTER SATURDAY, Oct. 28th 1848, the fare between Sag-Harbor and Brooklyn will be two dollars each way.

Passengers leaving Brooklyn will procure their tickets at the L. I. R. R. Co., for Sag-Harbor.

Passengers leaving Sag-Harbor for N. Y. or Brooklyn will pay the fare on Steamer Statesman and receive tickets for Brooklyn.

To avoid confusion on the arrival of the cars, passengers are requested to have their baggage plainly marked where to be delivered.

The above arrangement it is hoped will give perfect satisfaction to the travelling public, and a large share of their patronage is respectfully solicited, as no pains will be spared to give satisfaction.

Freight taken at the usual prices.

S. S. Norton & Co. Express for the transportation of Packages daily between Sag-Harbor, Brooklyn and New York. 4w31

↑ *The Long-Island Farmer and Queens County Advisor* (Jamaica), October 31, 1848.

↩ *The Corrector* (Sag Harbor), October 28, 1848.

Figure 4. First newspaper advertisements containing a reference to Norton's Express.

Later in mid-December 1848, and for five months into 1849, we find the first express advertisement (see **Figure 5**) that is devoted solely to Norton's Express business. This ad identified its agents in Greenport, Jamaica, Riverhead and Sag Harbor, L.I. Norton's Express left the South Ferry LIRR Depot daily at 9 A.M., and then left their Brooklyn agency at 9:30 A.M. This ad additionally indicates that Norton's business was now operating similar to many of the full-service expresses of that era (e.g., Adams & Co.'s Express, Harnden's Express, Wells & Co., etc.) by promising speedy transmission of all kinds of merchandise, specie, bank notes, etc. Also noticed is the presence of G. W. Prescott's name (below Norton's) who might have become a partner in this express enterprise in December 1848.

S. S. NORTON & CO'S
Long Island Express.
LEAVES R. R. Depot, South Ferry, at 9, and Brooklyn, at 9½ A. M. daily, for Greenport, Sag Harbor, and intermediate places, for the speedy transmission of all kinds of Merchandise, Specie, Bank Notes, &c., &c.
 Agents in Sag Harbor Messrs. FORDHAM & SMITH.
 " " Greenport, Dr. S. C. PRESTON.
 " " Riverhead, J. L. WELLS, Esq.
 " " Jamaica, WATROUS & SEABURY.
 All orders attended to with punctuality and despatch.
 S. S. NORTON & CO.
 S. S. NORTON, }
 G. W. PRESCOTT. }

Figure 5. S. S. Norton & Co.'s, Long Island Express ad printed in the December 12, 1848 edition of *The Long-Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*.

As reported above, Sidney S. Norton conducted one of the earliest railroad expresses on Long Island and his was probably the original Island rail-express since no references have been found that pronounce any predecessor railroad expresses. The informative Norton's Express advertisements depicted in **Figure 6** were published in 1849 and 1850.

The Norton's Express ad at upper left in **Figure 6** no longer includes **G. W. Prescott** as a principal in the business. But interestingly, Prescott is named in the ad directly below (lower left in **Figure 6**) and it appears he was starting his own merchandise transportation business between New York and Greenport on June 1, 1849, although it was not stipulated as an 'express' operation. Prescott's involvement in this merchandise transport business is predicated upon the assumption that the "subscriber" cited in the ad was G. W. Prescott himself. This ad does not indicate that Prescott operated over any rail conveyance; in fact, his transportation medium is unspecified. We do note, however, that the ad cites "intermediate stations" between New York, Greenport and Sag Harbor as the valid places to leave forwarding orders for merchandise, so maybe Mr. Prescott did transport "merchandise, etc.," on the LIRR? Did the train image at the top of Norton's Express ad also apply to Prescott's ad? We just do not know as of this writing.

G. W. Prescott's later ad, last published in the May 8, 1850 *Corrector*, is shown in **Figure 7**; it provides little additional information about the nature of his transporting endeavors. This ad does incorporate an old passenger train image as its header, which helps to enforce the notion that Prescott may have conducted his merchandise forwarding business via rail cars—the Long Island Railroad's in particular. To this end, a search of the "Express" listings in contemporary New York City directories did not uncover any mention of a Prescott Express (or similar) business.

The second Norton's Express ad in **Figure 6** began running soon after September 5, 1849 in *The Corrector* and appeared continuously until December 7, 1850. This ad introduces A. D. Smith as Norton's agent in Sag Harbor and he was probably the 'Smith' partner of the original "Fordham & Smith" agents cited in the **Figure 5** ad. As stipulated in this ad, express matter could now be consigned to Norton's Express at Wells & Co.'s Express, 10 Wall Street in New York City. During the cited 1849–50 time period, two express messengers—S. S. Norton and D. A. Eldredge—were employed by Norton's Express according to its published advertisements.

As was commonplace in many express ads of this era, there is no mention in any known ads of the express fees charged by Norton's Express. Of worthy note, however, is the identification of an additional Norton's Express office that was opened at 135 Fulton Street in New York. Norton & Co.'s Express listings exist in all the 1851–53 New York City annual directories, but not thereafter. In 1854 Sidney S. Norton is found to be the surveyor and inspector of revenue for the port of Port Jefferson on Long Island. The later seems to substantiate that Norton was no longer in the express business by 1854.



Norton's Express,
Leaves Sag Harbor *daily*, at 8 a. m., for New York, for the speedy transmission of all kinds of merchandize, packages, parcels, specie, bank notes, &c., and for the transaction of business generally.
Packages, &c. left with Messrs. Fordham & Smith, will be delivered in any part of the city, and all orders for goods will be promptly attended to, and the goods returned on the following day. Office in N. Y. at R. R. Depot S. Ferry.
S. S. NORTON.
Sag Harbor, May 25th, 1849. 2 3m

A CARD—On and after June 1st, the subscriber will leave Greenport every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, New York every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, for the general transaction of business.
Merchandize, &c. forwarded each way daily if marked to his care.
Orders left at Messrs. Adams & Co's Office, 16 Wall st. N. Y., Mr. Walter Havens' Store, Greenport, or at any of the intermediate stations, will be promptly attended to. G. W. PRESCOTT.
May 25th, 1849.
N. B. G. W. Prescott will leave Sag Harbor every Wednesday morning. 2 3m




Norton's Express,
Leaves Sag Harbor *daily*, at 11½ a. m., for New York, for the speedy transmission of all kinds of merchandize, packages, parcels, specie, bank notes, &c., and for the transaction of business generally.
Packages, &c., left with A. D. Smith, of this place, or S. C. Preston, of Greenport, will be delivered in any part of the city, and all orders for goods will be promptly attended to, and the goods returned on the following day. Office in New York at R. R. Depot S. Ferry. Orders for the Island may be left there, or at Wells & Co's, No. 10 Wall st.
S. S. NORTON.
Messenger—S. S. NORTON.
D. A. ELDRIDGE
Sag Harbor, Sept 5th, 1849 30

↑ *The Corrector*, December 7, 1850.
Page 1.

← *The Corrector*, May 30, 1849, Page 3.

Figure 6. 1849/50 newspaper advertisements for Norton's Express.



NOTICE—The subscriber will leave Greenport for New York, after the 1st September, every Monday and Thursday for the transaction of business generally. G. W. PRESCOTT.
N. B. G. W. P. is general agent for the sale of Messrs. J. & A. Dearbon's Premium (bottled) Soda Water. All orders left with his agents will be promptly attended to.
August 25th. 26tf

Figure 7. Last *Corrector* ad by G. W. Prescott; published May 8, 1850 on page 3.

Identification of S. S. Norton's Express is also present in the 1849 edition of *Appleton's New York City and Vicinity Guide*. The **Figure 8** excerpted entries from Appleton's "Directory to Expresses" tables on pages 87 and 88 show the documentation style in that *Guide*.

NEW YORK CITY GUIDE.			
Place of Destination.	Name of Company.	Offices.	Time of Departure.
Greenport	S. S. Norton	R. R. Depot, South Ferry	9 A.M.
Jamaica, L. I.	S. S. Norton	R. R. Depot, South Ferry	9 A.M.
Sag Harbor	S. S. Norton	R. R. Depot, South Ferry	9 A.M.

Figure 8. Excerpts from the Expresses Directory in Appleton's 1849 New York City Guide.

An interesting EXPRESS listing (see **Figure 9**) for Lucas' Express appeared in Wilson's 1851 New York City Directory. The curious "L. I., by R. R." phrase in this ad could be interpreted to indicate that *Lucas' Express* was running on the Long Island Rail Road at that time. John A. Lucas did conduct a local New York City and vicinity express as attested by annual "city express" entries in the 1849–55 New York City directories. However, the illustrated 1851 citation is the only one that hints at Long Island railroad service, so we speculate that Lucas may have temporarily conducted express operations further to the east on Long Island for perhaps a year, after which he abandoned this extended route.

LUCAS' EXPRESS OFFICE for
City, Newark, Bloomfield, Brook-
lyn, Williamsburgh, and L. I., by
R. R., 30 Cedar

Figure 9. 1851 NYC Directory Listing.

Since the above listing is the only known reference indicating Lucas provided "L. I." express coverage of any sort, we do not know how far east on the Island his express service may have ventured. We also basically question whether John Lucas ever operated any effective express business over a significant stretch of the Long Island Rail Road since no additional corroborating references have been found. Maybe this ad was a mistake and perhaps the **Figure 9** Directory listing was erroneously written (unintentionally, of course), or perhaps it was meant to indicate the existence of some other operational Lucas Express route, but not 'to L. I. by R. R.' verbatim. Hence, Lucas' Express service on east Long Island is an uncorroborated express operation that might have involved contemporary LIRR trains.

No accountable/collectable business papers have been found for any of the early LIRR-hosted Expresses. There is little doubt that many of the above discussed express endeavors used waybills, receipts, activity logs, possibly office labels, etc.,

of some nature, but none of these vintage items have come under the author's purview.

The 1853–76 Corwin Family, LIRR Hosted Expresses

While Sidney Norton ended his express operations in 1853, another Island rail-express company quickly emerged, and it also utilized 135 Fulton Street as a subsidiary express office. George W. Smith and Hubbard Corwin (who lived in Greenport) started *Smith & Corwin's Long Island Express* in 1853 and operated from their main office at 58 William Street in the City. Smith & Corwin's company also provided express service between Brooklyn and Greenport via the Long Island Rail Road. Apparently George Smith was only associated with this Company for about a year as his name was dropped in the 1854 annual New York City Express listing. Since contemporary records show that Smith & Corwin's also occupied the 135 Fulton Street express office, it seems reasonable to infer they probably replaced Norton & Co.'s Express business.


In 1854 Hubbard Corwin enlisted a new partner, Henry L. Griffin to operate their *Corwin & Griffin Express* firm. One 1854 City directory stated the firm's name as *Corwin, Griffin & Co.*; however, this nomenclature was not repeated again in any other listings. This company was also headquartered at 58 William Street and similarly provided express service via the Long Island Rail Road between the City and Greenport. Corwin & Griffin moved its office to 72 Broadway in 1857 and remained there until its apparent closing in 1859. Additionally, a John V. Corwin was recorded as an expressman in the 1854 New York City Directory, but we have no information about his relationship to Hubbard's express enterprise. Corwin & Griffin's Express is found annually in the 1854 through 1859 New York City Directory business listings under 'Expresses.' No business-paper artifacts from Corwin & Griffin's Express are presently known.

A few years later in 1857 George W. Corwin and Oliver J. Munsell initiated *Corwin & Munsell's Long Island Rail Road Express* and it continued in business until 1870 when Munsell departed the company. George W.'s relationship to Hubbard is not known, but George may have been a brother, cousin or nephew. There were many Corwin families living on Long Island in the 1850's and thereafter, so there is strong suspicion that many of the reported Corwin expressmen were somehow related.

Corwin & Munsell appear to be the obvious successor to Corwin & Griffin despite the fact that both expresses are concurrently listed in the 1857 through 1859 New York City directories. We also note that during those three years, the primary office for both expresses was at 72 Broadway. The primary office occupancy by both expresses may indicate that a cooperatively slow transition happened as Corwin & Munsell's Express supplanted Corwin & Griffin's Express.

An early Corwin & Munsell express advertisement is reproduced in **Figure 10** as it was printed below a winter scheduling ad for the Long Island Railroad. The LIRR ad was initially published on or before November 16, 1857. It provides a list of intermediate Long Island Railroad passenger stations that this road served in addition to the Brooklyn and Greenport terminals. Included are stations at Riverhead, Yaphank, Lakeland, North Islip, Farmingdale, Hempstead, Jamaica and

LONG ISLAND RAILROAD.
Winter Arrangement.



On and after Monday, Nov. 16th, 1857, and until further notice, trains will run as follows:

Except on Sundays



TRAINS GOING EAST.

Leave Brooklyn for Greenport at 10 A. M.
 " Brooklyn for Riverhead at 10 A. M.
 " Brooklyn for Yaphank at 10 A. M. and 3.45 P. M. daily.
 " Brooklyn for Syosset at 3.45 P. M.
 " Brooklyn for Hempstead at 10 A. M. and 3.45, P. M.
 " Brooklyn for Jamaica at 10 A. M., 3.45, 5, and 6.30 P. M.

TRAINS GOING WEST.

Leave Greenport for Brooklyn at 10.30 a.m.
 " Riverhead for Brooklyn at 11.37 A. M.
 " Yaphank " 12.16 P. M.
 " Lakeland " 12.50
 " North Islip " 1.07
 " Farmingdale " 1.50
 " Hempstead Branch " 2.29
 " Jamaica " 3.05
 " Syosset for Brooklyn at 7.35 A. M.,
 " Hempstead at 6.55, 7.50 A. M. and 2.08
 " Jamaica for Brooklyn at 5.40, 7.40, 8.40 A. M., and 3.08 P. M.

WM. F. MORRIS, President
 S. H. TOWNSEND, AGT

CORWIN & MUNSELL,
Long Island Rail Road Express.
 OFFICE 72 BROADWAY,
 93yl NEW-YORK.
 A. D. SMITH, Agent. Sag-Harbor

Figure 10. Advertisement from January 23, 1858 *Corrector* (Sag Harbor).

Syosset. It is intuitive that Corwin & Munsell also provided express service at and between each of these LIRR stations in 1857.

The lower left Corwin & Munsell ad is earliest found in the April 15, 1857 issue of *The Corrector*. This ad reveals several items of interest concerning its express operations.

- 1) The Express' principle business office was located at 72 Broadway in New York. This was also found to be their main office through 1866 and probably into 1868.
- 2) A. D. Smith (who we cited earlier as a contact for Norton's Express) is now the Sag Harbor express agent for Corwin & Munsell.
- 3) The illustration of a steamboat in the ad connotes that this express also moved goods via boat – mostly probably a steamer between Greenport and Sag Harbor, similar to the Norton Express route.

The "93yl" notation on the ad was most likely Corwin & Munsell's account number at *The Corrector*. This alphanumeric appears in all of their ads.

A similar Corwin & Munsell ad that was published in May 1865 is shown in **Figure 11**. We now see that this express company had added an office at 5 James Slip, which was located at the Ferry House on the East River at the foot of New Chambers Street in New York.



Figure 11. Advertisement from *The Corrector* (Sag Harbor), May 6, 1865.

The Corwin & Munsell's express receipt shown in **Figure 14** was used in Greenport on January 31, 1864. This receipt documents the express delivery of a money package containing \$236.17 to Patchogue, L.I., and is signed by co-owner G. W. Corwin. There are left-side entry blanks for adding payment for extra insurance (not used), but there is no record on this receipt of the express fee that was paid by the cash consigner.

In 1864 there was no rail service to Patchogue, L.I.; however, there were many stage lines that ran from the existing LIRR Main Line stations to the nearby villages. The money package discussed in the **Figure 14** receipt could have been transferred to a stage-line carrier at the Suffolk Station (operated from 1842 and was identified as North Islip from 1861–7), or at Thompson's Station (operated 1842–69), or at the Bellport Station (2.5 miles east of Medford Station and in operation 1852–81). The latter Station was known to provide access to stagecoach service that traveled to villages on the South Shore, which certainly could have included Patchogue in 1864.

CORWIN & MUNSELL'S
LONG ISLAND RAILROAD EXPRESS,
No. 72 BROADWAY.

New York, *Jan 31* 186*4*

Received of *J. J. Schellman*
Per G. W. Corwin

Marked *Yes*

Which it is mutually agreed in to be forwarded to our Agency nearest or next convenient to destination only, and there delivered to other parties to complete the transportation. It is further agreed, and is part of the consideration of this contract, that CORWIN & MUNSELL are not to be held liable or responsible for the property herein mentioned for any loss or damage arising from the dangers of Railroad, Ocean, Steam or River Navigation, Locks, Piers, or from any cause whatever, UNLESS SPECIALLY insured by them, and to exempted by this receipt, which insurance shall constitute the limit of the liability of CORWIN & MUNSELL in any event; and if the value of the property above described is not stated by the shipper, the holder hereof will not demand of CORWIN & MUNSELL a sum exceeding FIFTY DOLLARS, for the loss or detention of, or damage to, the property above said. Nor shall claim be made for damage to goods and property packed and secured by transportation. An article of Glass will be taken at shippers' risk only, and the shipper agrees that the company shall not be held responsible for any injury by breakage or otherwise.

Freight, _____ For the Proprietors, *G. W. Corwin*

Insurance, _____

Baptist & Taylor, new Building, cor. Fulton and Nassau sts., N. Y.

Figure 14. January 31, 1864 Corwin & Munsell's LIRR Express receipt.

The **Figure 15** Corwin & Munsell's, Long Island Express receipt documents the transport of \$3,000 (in a sealed money package) from New York City to Sag Harbor. Even though the receipt's header title does not include the word "Railroad," the cited money package definitely traveled with a Corwin & Munsell Express messenger on a Long Island Railroad train to Greenport and then via messenger on a steamer to Sag Harbor. There are no provisions for entering payment of extra insurance on this receipt and there is no record of the express fee that was paid by the consigner.



Siegel Sale 950, Lot 2628.

Figure 15. April 19, 1866 Corwin & Munsell's Long Island Express receipt.

Corwin & Munsell's Railroad Express business continued to operate over the LIRR until mid-May 1870. Advertisements for this company were found in 1866–70 contemporary publications and are reproduced in **Figures 16** and **17**. The May 21, 1870 advertisement in **Figure 17** is the last known for Corwin & Munsell's Long Island Rail Road Express.

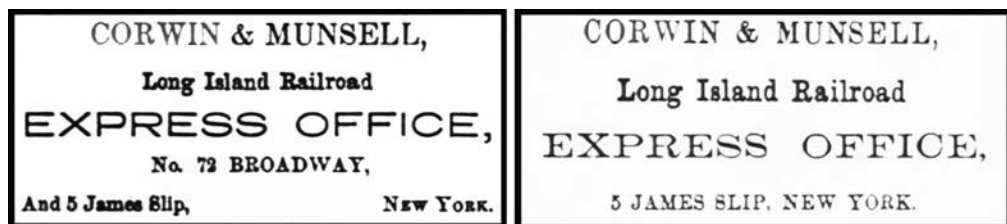


Figure 16. Express ads from New York City directories. Left: 1866. Right: 1867 & 1868.

The 1866 ad (at left in **Figure 16**) is the last one seen that cites the 72 Broadway office for Corwin & Munsell's Express. All known published express listings in 1867 and thereafter record this Company's office at 5 James Slip, but no longer at the Broadway location. The May 1868–70 ad in **Figure 17** records that Corwin & Munsell had opened an additional express office at the corner of Cumberland (misspelled as "Cumbland" in the 1868–70 ads) Street and Fulton Avenue in Brooklyn.



Figure 17. Ad that appeared in every weekly issue of *The Corrector* from May 23, 1868 to May 21, 1870.



Figure 18. Ad in *The Corrector*, May 28, 1870 issue and thereafter.

Oliver J. Munsell apparently left the Corwin & Munsell express business in May 1870 as deduced from the Company titles in the dated express ads shown in **Figures 17** and **18**. A latter newspaper article, however, indicates that Munsell may have left the Corwin & Munsell firm as early as 1867 (see **Figure 19**). Oliver Munsell was later found listed as an Importer in an 1868 New York City directory and yet even later (1875) was listed as dealing in Fancy Goods (that he imported?). He possibly participated in the Import business for approximately three years while still employed with Corwin & Munsell Express. Or, maybe the City directory ads were not completely updated until three years after Munsell left the express company.

Meanwhile, George W. Corwin continued the LIRR express business as owner of *Corwin's Long Island Rail Road Express* (also referred to as *Corwin & Co.'s Long Island Railroad Express*). Corwin ran this express endeavor for almost six years before closing up at the end of April 1876 and transferring the LIRR express business to Westcott's Express Company. The **Figure 19** excerpt from the April 29, 1876 issue of *The Corrector* documents this transition in ownership. Corwin's final Sag Harbor newspaper ad appeared in June 1876 and is reproduced in **Figure 20**. It is not known why Corwin's final ad was published over a month after he reportedly terminated his express business. Nevertheless, Corwin's business closing ended twenty-three years of Corwin family involvement in the several LIRR expresses that they operated or co-operated during that span.

The **Figure 19** excerpt from the April 1876 issue of *The Corrector* states that "Mr. A. D. Smith, who has been for 27 years agent in this place [i.e., Sag Harbor], ..." in the second paragraph. From this statement we calculate an 1849 initial involvement for Smith. If we recall that the **Figure 5**, December 12, 1848 ad names Sag Harbor express "Agents Fordham & Smith," comparing ad issue dates leads us to believe that A. D. Smith was very probably the 1848 cited Smith agent, especially since the **Figure 5** ad was published 27 years and 138 days prior to the **Figure 19** ad. We do note that Agent Abner D. Smith later passed away on

December 6, 1878 following 30 years of continuous service as express agent in Sag Harbor.

THE CORRECTOR.

SAG HARBOR, L. I.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1876.

L. I. Railroad.—Sag Harbor Branch.

FROM NEW YORK.		STATIONS.		TO NEW YORK.	
P M	A M	Pre (Leave)	(Arrive)	Mis	A M P M
8 00	8 30	James Slip, N. Y.	11 25	6 55	
8 15	8 45	E. 34th St.	11 25	6 25	
8 30	9 00	East New York	10 05	6 17	
8 30	9 00	Hunters' Point	10 51	6 16	
8 35	9 05	Manor	65	7 56	3 06
8 45	9 15	Moriches	70	7 59	3 54
8 50	9 20	Speonk	73	7 29	3 48
7 00	13 30	West Hampton	75	7 30	3 41
7 07	13 34	Quogue	77	7 10	3 35
7 12	13 39	Atlanticville	84	7 05	3 31
7 25	13 48	Good Ground	88	6 52	3 20
7 45	1 05	Southampton	90	6 58	3 04
7 53	1 13	Watermill	93	6 23	1 57
8 05	1 19	Bridge Hampton	95	6 15	1 50
8 30	1 50	Sag Harbor	100	6 00	1 35
P M	P M	Arrive	(Leave)	A M	P M

....Corwin & Co's. Long Island Railroad Express closes up this week and the business is transferred to Westcott's Express Company. Westcott will then have a monopoly of all the Express lines on Long Island Railroads. He also runs the Express business on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. It is about nine years since Mr. Munsell left the firm of Corwin & Munsell, and nearly eighteen since that firm took the Express business on the Long Island Road. We do not yet learn that there are to be any changes of subordinates under the new management.

Mr. A. D. Smith, who has been for 27 years agent in this place, is still retained. The Company have a number of offices in New York, and the accommodations for public delivery will be greater than heretofore.

Figure 19. Announcement that Corwin & Co.'s, LIRR Express was closing by April 29, 1876.

CORWIN'S

L. I. RAILROAD EXPRESS.

OFFICE—James Slip Ferry House, New York.

A. D. SMITH, Agent, Sag Harbor.

Figure 20. Corwin's last LIRR Express advertisement that appeared on the front page of the June 3, 1876 issue of *The Corrector*.

The 1876–82 LIRR Hosted Expresses

In 1876 the LIRR executed a five-year contract with Westcott's Express Company, which began on May 1 and was scheduled to terminate on April 30, 1881. Westcott's Express was an experienced and well-known local baggage express firm that had operated in Brooklyn, New York City and northeastern New Jersey since about 1855–56. Historically, we find that *Westcott's Long Island Express* was present on the LIRR starting in May 1876 and continued through August 31, 1882 when it withdrew in favor of LIRR's own express. Westcott's tenure on the LIRR accumulated to six years and 4 months versus the five-years stipulated in its

contract—an unforeseen extension of 16 months of non-contracted operating time over the LIRR that will subsequently be explained.

Figure 21 illustrates a Westcott's Long Island Express payment receipt for charges incurred to transport a package (i.e., "Pkg") from New York City on the LIRR. This Form 18 was issued on April 10, 1876 and was then put into use on July 18, 1876 by Westcott Express Agent, C. H. Harris to record A. P. Leach's 50¢ payment for the express services rendered.

4-10-76-10 R. [Form 18.]

WESTCOTT'S LONG ISLAND EXPRESS.
GENERAL EXPRESS FORWARDERS.

A. P. Leach *July 18, 1876*

To **WESTCOTT'S LONG ISLAND EXPRESS, N.Y.**

To Freight on *Pkg* from *Ny* \$ *25*

For Expenses *25*

Consignor _____ \$ *50*

Received Payment for the Company, *C. H. Harris.*

PRINCIPAL OFFICE,
No. 7 Park Place, New York

Figure 21. Westcott's Long Island Express payment receipt (Form 18.).

Evidence of letter mail being carried by any of the various Long Island Expresses is especially difficult to find. One such proof cover is shown in **Figure 22**, which bears a manuscript "L. I. Express" plus a "Pd 25¢" hand-written express payment-record at the top. This cover never entered into the Post Office Department's (POD) mail stream since it was turned over to the L. I. Express at an unknown station on the LIRR and probably was ultimately delivered to Mrs. B. H. Foster after being offloaded at the Southampton Station. No doubt the final leg of the delivery was achieved via express driver and wagon. The Southampton Station opened in February 1871; it was located on the Sag Harbor Branch of the LIRR.

The illustrated cover most probably carried letter-matter and not specie or other valuables, seemingly in direct competition with the USPOD postal monopoly. However, after July 1, 1853, government envelopes (prepaid postal stationery) were required by law to be used for outside-the-mails letter transportation and delivery by express companies. The **Figure 22** letter was legally eligible for Long Island Express conveyance because an 1876 Centennial Series stamped envelope was used, even though it was being privately transported between two places also served by the POD.

Although a Long Island Express fee schedule for letter mail has not been seen, 25 cents was a popular minimum express charge invoked by many contemporary U.S. expresses for delivering a light-weight letter (i.e., 'single rate' letter). There is no dating information on this cover, other than the obvious 1876 Centennial Series envelope stamp. These envelopes were first issued May 10, 1876 at the Centennial Exposition Station in Philadelphia, and due to immediate demand were made available at every post office in the country effective May 23, 1876, until

supplies were exhausted. If the **Figure 22** cover was mailed by express during its initial year of issue, or even during the ensuing five years, it must have traveled via Westcott's Long Island Express services.

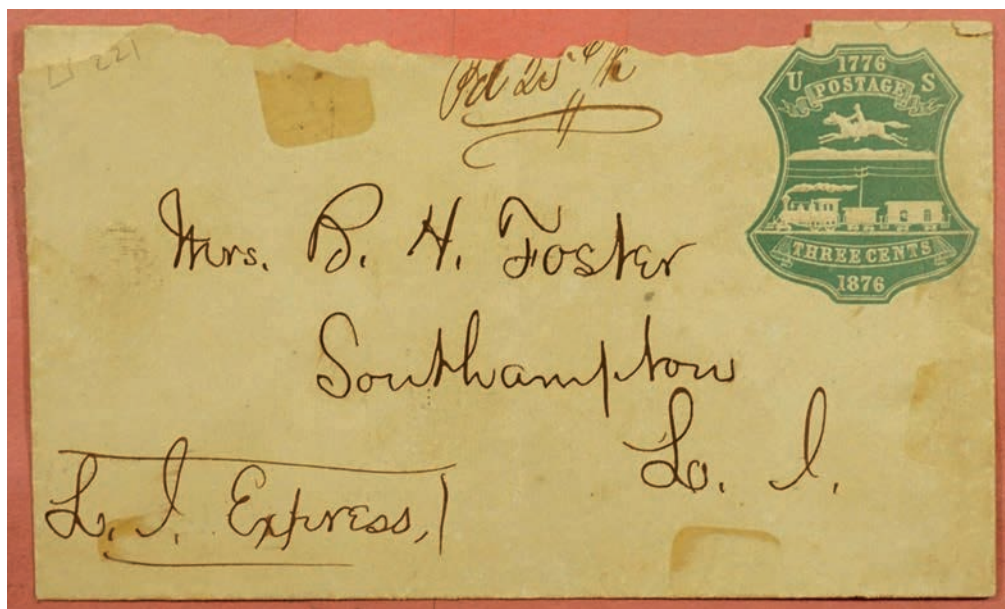




Figure 22. Prepaid cover transported by Westcott's L. I. Express (ca. 1876).

The postal card depicted in **Figure 23** was used to notify customer Joseph Craft (the 'consignee') that his express shipment of \$313(?) had been received by Westcott's Express at the Glen Cove, L. I., Station on the Oyster Bay Branch of the LIRR. The card also specified the \$2.00 express fee that was due on the shipment. The illustrated card was designated as Form 44 and initially preprinted on April 10, 1876. Westcott Express agent W. H. Leonard subsequently used this postal card on March 20, 1877 at the Glen Cove Station.

The illustrated postal card contained three retrieval provisions that were quite common for similar express company notifications of the era:

- 1) The express company held the received goods at the consignee's risk until they were picked-up.
- 2) Request to the consignee to pick up his goods immediately.
- 3) Notification that "Strangers must be identified." In case someone other than the consignee was sent to pick up the goods, he needed an authorizing note or other proof of permission from the consignee.





WRITE THE ADDRESS ON THIS SIDE—THE MESSAGE ON THE OTHER

Joseph Craft

Glen Cove

Long Island

4-10-76-5 M.

[Form 44.]

No.

OFFICE OF
WESTCOTT'S LONG ISLAND EXPRESS.

Glen Cove Mass 21 18 77

We have in this office *5 1/2 Dollars*

consigned to *John Adams*

Charges, \$ *2.00*

We hold goods subject to the order of Consignee,
and at Owner's Risk. Please call for the above im-
mediately.

Respectfully yours,
Wm. Westcott Agent.

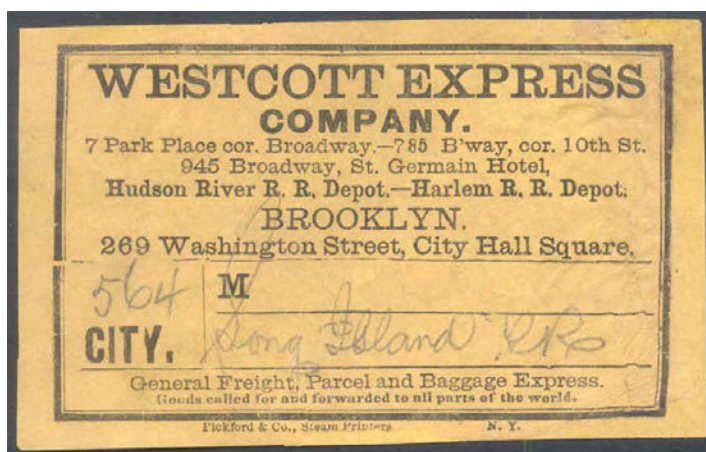
5/02 ~~STRANGERS MUST BE IDENTIFIED.~~

Figure 23. Westcott's Long Island Express delivery notification postal card (Form 44.).



WTTX-L29

Courtesy Bill Sammis.



WTTX-L14

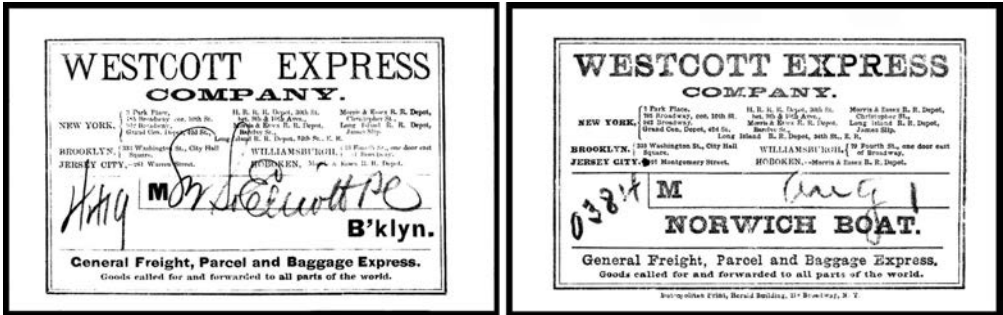
Courtesy Bill Sammis.

Figure 24. Express baggage labels used on LIRR transported luggage.

Two baggage express labels that were possibly used between 1876-82 by Westcott's Long Island Express agents are depicted in **Figure 24**. Each label contains a claim number that was assigned by the Westcott Express agent upon baggage consignment. These labels are printed on very thin, light-brown paper (their survival was/is problematic) and were usually affixed to the consigned baggage item. The **Figure 24** labels are recorded as WTTX-L29 (at top) and WTTX-L14 (at bottom) in the Author's 2018, *Catalog of Private Express Covers, Labels and Stamps*.

Additional styles of Westcott Express labels that were probably used during their Long Island Express business endeavors are illustrated in **Figure 25**. These label images were reconstructed from original damaged-label remnants. Both of these labels have two New York, "Long Island R. R. Depot" office locations (Railroad Depots at James Slip and at 34th Street, East River) printed on them as readily seen in the **Figure 26** enlargement. In retrospect, the 1876–82 time-period

was really the only valid time frame when Westcott's Express would have had a legitimate reason to include such location inscriptions on their express labels. These labels are recorded as WTTX-L30 (at left) and WTTX-L35 (at right) in the Author's 2018, *Catalog of Private Express Covers, Labels and Stamps*. Additional Mosher Catalog numbers appear under the express labels depicted in **Figures 41** and **51**.



WTTX-L30

WTTX-L35

Figure 25. Westcott Express baggage label styles that may have been used on LIRR transported baggage. Label images are reconstructed from damaged examples.



Figure 26. Enlargement of the New York Westcott Express Offices printed on the Figure 25 express labels. ‘E. R.’ is the abbreviation for East River.

Quite surprisingly, Westcott's Long Island Express decided not to end its express operations over the LIRR after its contract expired at the end of April 1881. Westcott's Express efforts persisted in 1881 until in November, a fed-up LIRR President (Austin Corbin) gave the Westcott Company notice to cease operations on its road within six weeks, but Westcott refused to comply. Meanwhile, the LIRR had decided to initiate its own express department plus it additionally made arrangements with the experienced *Dodd's Express* in January 1882 to provide interim express coverage in New York City and Brooklyn for several months. In the interim, Westcott's Express employees continued with defiant and perhaps illegal express service on the LIRR. This situation led to the issuance of competing declarations of LIRR express service that were published in the *New York Times* in January 1882 and are copied in **Figure 27**.

An ugly and contentious seven and one-half months ensued, replete with accusations and harassment from both sides that included several physical

altercations between rival express company employees. Then suddenly, for whatever unknown reasons, Westcott's Express withdrew from the LIRR as of September 1, 1882 and the 'battle of the two expresses' was over. LIRR's liaison with Dodd's Express was immediately terminated and the LIRR's own Express Company prevailed throughout its entire road beginning September 1, 1882 and continuing for many years thereafter.



Figure 27. Competing express ads that were published in the *New York Times* on January 17, 1882.

Additional historical information about the Westcott Express vs. Long Island Express conflict can be found in these references:

- 1) Chapter XVII of Vincent F. Seyfried's 1975 book: *The Long Island Rail Road, Part Six, The Golden Age, 1881-1900*.
- 2) *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* article "THE EXPRESS WAR." published January 20, 1882 on page 3.

No specially issued or modified business-paper artifacts have been seen that were indigenous to the interim efforts of Dodd's Express (which was then controlled by the New York Transfer Company) on the LIRR. Perhaps Dodd's Express did not find it necessary to issue any special forms, or to modify any existing forms, during their eight-month (January through August 1882) 'temporary' express operations on behalf of the LIRR.

LIRR's Express Business 1881–1913

Beginning in September 1882, *The Long Island Railroad Company's Express* was operating with full capabilities over the entire LIRR system. The LIRR's new express service acquired the business acumen plus necessary ancillary equipment and manpower to haul trunks, baggage, luggage, packages, boxes, bicycles, money plus many other items that qualified as express goods. The LIRR's Express department was then preparing to be in the express business for a long time.

The issue date on the **Figure 28** Money Package envelope (i.e., 12-8-81) points out that LIRR management had launched The Long Island Railroad Company's Express endeavors at least eight-and-a-half-months earlier than some historians cite. Based on LIRR's agreement with Dodd's Express, the newly formed LIRR Company's Express initially operated only outside of New York City and Brooklyn to the east end of the Island from its inception until September 1, 1882. Then after Westcott's Express and Dodd's Express both withdrew, the LIRR Company's Express quickly moved in to additionally provide service in New York and Brooklyn.

The Long Island Express agent at Long Island City (i.e., "L.I.C.") dutifully put the **Figure 28** money envelope into service on February 7, 1882. It was used to securely transport \$20.00 to Jericho, L.I. This envelope was issued on December 8, 1881 (i.e., "12-8-81—2M.") and is inscribed as "Form X 18", the "X" probably signifying it was created for Express department use. Notice the "Hicksville" notation at bottom. The illustrated envelope was off-loaded at the Hicksville Station (located on the Main Line of the LIRR) and taken via horse-drawn express wagon to the town of Jericho for final delivery to the addressee, James Malchon (see **Figure 37** for a clear image of this man's last name). Jericho was located approximately two miles north of the Hicksville Station.

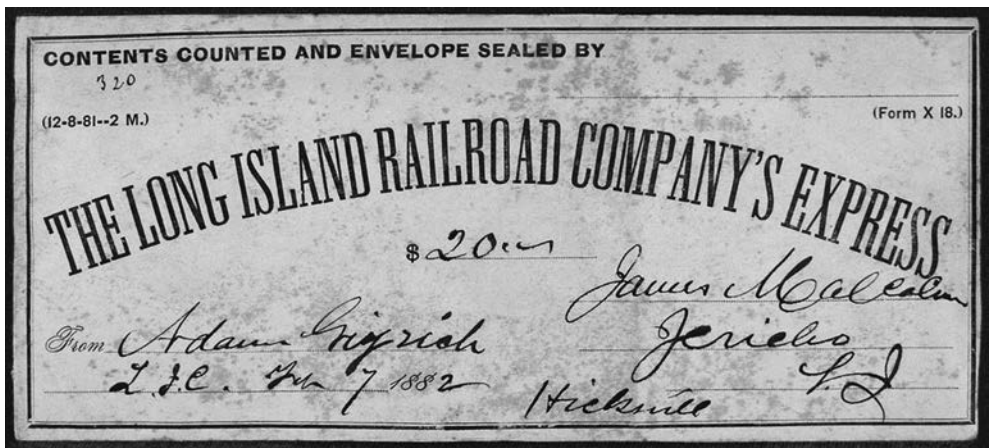


Figure 28. Money Package envelope (Form X 18.) that was used February 7, 1882.

A Company delivery-notification postal card is depicted in **Figure 29**; it was designated as Form X 26. This card was issued by The Long Island Railroad Company's Express department in March 1882 and was later used in Mineola, L.I.,

on May 27, 1882 by express agent T. B. Smith to notify the recipient that his expressed package had arrived and he owed five cents in express charges for its transport. The Mineola Station was located on the LIRR Main Line. The preprinted format on this postal card is very comparable to the similar notification card illustrated in **Figure 23**—only it was issued by a different express organization.

1 3-82-5 M. (Form X 26.)
No. _____
THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD COMPANY'S EXPRESS.
Mineola May 27 1882
We have in this office *one package*
consigned to *T. Fredrick*
Charges, \$ *05-4*
We hold goods subject to the order of Consignee
and at **Owner's Risk**. Please call for the above im-
mediately. Respectfully yours,
T. B. Smith Agent.
STRANGERS MUST BE IDENTIFIED.

Figure 29. 1882 express delivery notification postal card (Form X 26).

A Long Island Railroad Company's Express payment receipt, which was issued in June 1882 is shown in **Figure 30** and carries a "Form X 12" imprint at upper-right. This receipt was used on July 6, 1882 by Agent E. H. Reeves to document the payment of 36 cents in express charges on a shipment of three baskets (i.e., "bskts") of plants to Pearsalls, L.I. The Express Company also appropriated one box plus one stand in order to transport the plants. The "Benreat(?) H Blake" annotation at lower left may be the L. B. Imp[lement?] Co., representative who personally made this payment. The Pearsalls Station was located on the Sag Harbor Branch of the LIRR.

5-82-20 M. Form X 12.
The Long Island Railroad Company's Express.
GENERAL EXPRESS FORWARDERS.
McDonald *July 6" 1882*
To THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD COMPANY'S EXPRESS, Dr.
To Freight on *3 Bskts Plants* from *Pearsalls* *36*
For Expenses *1 Box 1 Stand*
Consignee *Benreat H Blake* Received Payment for the Company, *E. H. Reeves*

Figure 30. 1882 example of The Long Island Railroad Company's Express payment receipt.

Two oval wax sealers, each engraved “L.I.R.R. CO’S EX.” are illustrated in **Figure 31**. Express Agents typically used these brass sealers to impress their engraved image into hot wax deposits that were placed across the reverse flaps/seams of Money Package envelopes such as shown in **Figure 28**. The engraved numbers (i.e., 43, 87) on the sealer faces may have represented specific LIRR Express Agents. Presently, there are no preserved LIRR records that would provide the identification of Agent’s #43 and #87 names. Later issues of LIRR Express wax sealers (see **Figure 48**) appear to use numbers that represent the rail mileage from Long Island City to an engraved named station; however, this does not seem to be the case for the numbers on these two sealers.



Figure 31. Wax sealers used by LIRR Express Agents #43 and #87. Mirrored images of both sealer faces are shown.

Sometime between 1882 and 1886, the LIRR shortened their express department’s business name/title to just *The Long Island Express* (or sometimes *Long Island Express*, or *The Long Island Express Company*). These variations can be seen in the printed titles on subsequently illustrated LIRR documents. The most significant title difference being deletion of the word ‘Railroad,’ which is not used thereafter. The date for this name change was possibly January 1, 1883. This estimate is based on the titles and inscribed dates on express receipts in archived Company logbooks residing in the *John C. Totten Collection of Stage Coach Receipt Books* at the Queens Borough Public Library (Long Island Division). The express receipts in this collection that reside in the logbook titled “Long Island Railroad Company’s Express” are dated April 1882 through December 1882. The receipts in the “Long Island Express” titled logbook exhibit January 1883 through March 1884 usage dates. QED. After 1883, The Long Island Express (Company’s) shortened name(s) persisted to the end of the 19th Century and beyond until the Company was sold in 1913.

The daily express log sheet illustrated in **Figure 32** is an example of Company documentation that carried the shortened enterprise title. This “Form X 2” log sheet was extracted from a Company logbook inscribed “The Long Island Express”, which was issued in June 1886. Driver W. Hawkins used this specific sheet on December 22, 1886 at the Patchogue, L.I., express office (on the LIRR’s Sag Harbor Branch).

Form 53. THE LONG ISLAND EXPRESS. 2-10-1886

At *Patchogue* Date *June 12* 1886 *W. Franklin* Driver.

Check Number on Receipts	FROM	ADDRESS	DESTINATION	Amount Charges	Paid Through	Received in Cash or Other Receipts	Time Delivered
1000	J. D. A. Pichu	Patchogue		25		Mrs. L. J. J.	
1001	"	St. Louis		25		W. L. J.	
1002	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1003	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1004	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1005	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1006	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1007	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1008	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1009	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1010	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1011	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1012	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1013	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1014	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1015	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1016	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1017	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1018	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1019	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1020	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1021	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1022	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1023	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1024	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1025	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1026	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1027	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1028	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1029	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1030	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1031	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1032	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1033	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1034	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1035	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1036	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1037	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1038	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1039	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1040	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1041	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1042	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1043	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1044	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1045	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1046	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1047	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1048	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1049	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1050	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1051	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1052	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1053	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1054	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1055	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1056	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1057	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1058	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1059	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1060	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1061	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1062	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1063	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1064	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1065	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1066	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1067	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1068	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1069	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1070	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1071	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1072	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1073	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1074	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1075	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1076	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1077	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1078	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1079	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1080	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1081	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1082	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1083	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1084	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1085	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1086	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1087	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1088	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1089	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1090	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1091	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1092	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1093	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1094	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1095	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1096	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1097	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1098	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1099	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	
1100	"	St. Louis				W. L. J.	

Signature must be made with ink or indelible pencil. Books MUST be settled Daily.

Drivers MUST see that TIME IS NOTED

Figure 32. Consignments log page from June 1886 version of The Long Island Express issued Log Book.

The advertisement depicted in Figure 33 was published in the September 9, 1883 issue of the *New York Times*. Of particular interest is the sixth paragraph, which reads:

Baggage called for and delivered between Manhattan Beach and any point in New-York (below 65th-st.) or Brooklyn by the Long Island Express. THE ONLY EXPRESS line to Manhattan Beach. Rate, 50 cents per piece.

This ad is one of very few published instances where the express fee charged by the Long Island Express was stated. Of additional interest is information in the Tariff Table in Figure 39, which indicates that in March 1895 the Long Island Express charged 50¢ per 100 pounds of eligible express-matter to transport it from anywhere in New York City to Manhattan Beach. We do note that LIRR train service to Manhattan Beach subsequently ended in 1924.

A very readable 1884 map of the LIRR's lines on the west end of the Island is illustrated in Figure 34. Several of the LIRR's rail branches are included on this map. This map section extends as far to the east as the Great Neck/Hinsdale/Pearsalls Stations. The Manhattan Beach and Rockaway Beach Stations are just below the bottom of the map.

MANHATTAN BEACH.

Leave E. 34th-st. ferry *6:20, 8:30, 10:10 A. M., and half-hourly from 11:10 A. M. to 8:40 and 7 to 9:30 P. M.

Leave via Bay Ridge route, Whitehall-st., (terminus of all the elevated railways,) hourly from 9:10 A. M. to 9:10 P. M.

On race days extra boats will leave Whitehall-st. at 11:30 A. M., 12:30, 1:30 P. M., and a SPECIAL PARLOR C&R TRAIN will leave East 84th-st. at 1:00 P. M.; Long Island City at 1:10 P. M.

Return trains from Beach via 34th-st. half-hourly; via Bay Ridge hourly.

* Trains marked thus do not run on Sundays.

Baggage called for and delivered between Manhattan Beach and any point in New-York (below 65th-st.) or Brooklyn by the Long Island Express. **THE ONLY EXPRESS line to Manhattan Beach. Rate, 50 cents per piece.**

Falm's Bombardment of Alexandria every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Fairy Land every Friday.

Gilmore and his great band in afternoon and evening concerts.

Figure 33. 1883 *New York Times* LIRR train-service advertisement.

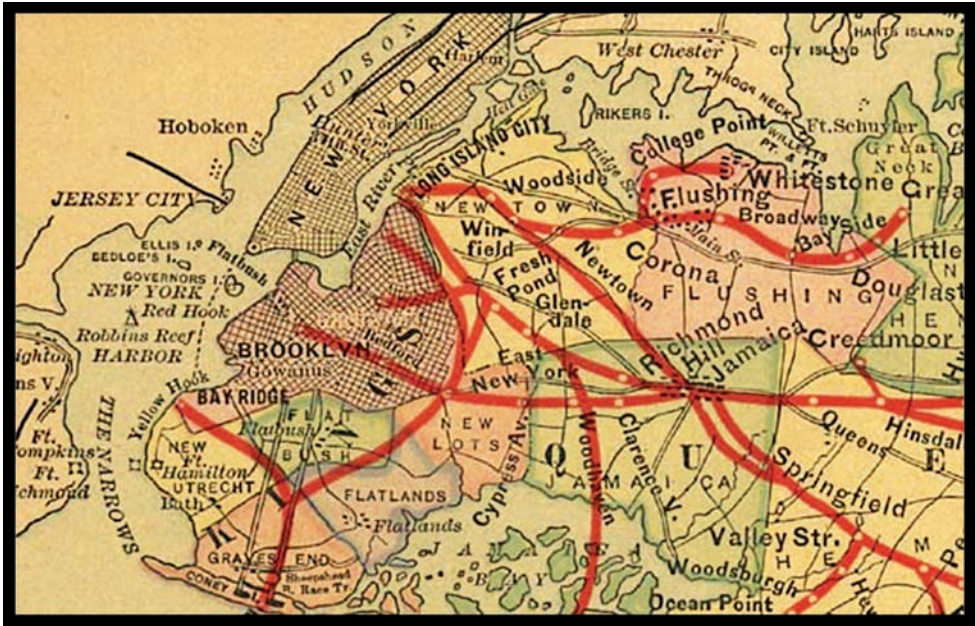


Figure 34. 1884 map of LIRR lines at west-end of the Island.

The Long Island Express issued the consignment receipt form shown in **Figure 35** in November 1889 as Form X 4. The depicted receipt was used at an unspecified LIRR express station on November 5, 1890 to document transport of one package to Glen Cove, L.I. There is a “C” in the COLLECT line at bottom left on this receipt (under the inset image) indicating an unspecified shipment fee (to be determined upon final receipt at the addressed station) was to be collected from the

recipient upon delivery. This receipt records Long Island City, N.Y., as the location of the Long Island Express' General Office, an office that was previously occupied by Westcott's Long Island Express. Long Island City may also have been the originating office where this receipt was put into use.

The reverse side of the **Figure 35** receipt is shown in the inset image. Three principal Long Island Express offices located in New York City and Brooklyn are listed plus nine branch offices residing in those two cities are cited.

11 89-20000 **READ THIS RECEIPT**—Charges cover delivery in New York below 70th Street only. Form X 4

NOTICE.—Shippers must have the value of their Packages inserted in this Receipt, otherwise this Company will not be responsible for an amount over \$50.

THE LONG ISLAND EXPRESS
Telephone 9 Greenpoint. **FREIGHT.** General Office: LONG ISLAND CITY, N. Y.

DOMESTIC BILL OF LADING. Station 188

Received from Wm. B. R. **VALUE**

Marked J. M. Gedney Wm. B. R.
For which this Company charges

PROMPT, RELIABLE AND AT REASONABLE RATES.

The only express for **Manhattan Beach, Long Beach, Rockaway Beach** and all points on the Long Island Rail Roads.

General Office, Long Island City, N. Y.:
Telephone Call, 9 Greenpoint.

Principal Offices in New York:

James Slip, Foot New Chambers Street, Telephone Call, "423 Nassau," and Foot East 34th Street, Telephone Call, "264 39th Street."

BRANCH OFFICES where Orders may be left in New York:

1313 Broadway.
954 Broadway.
683 Broadway, corner Third Street.
11 East 14th Street.
296 Canal Street.
142 West Street, bet. Barclay and Vesey Streets.
62 West 125th Street, Harlem.

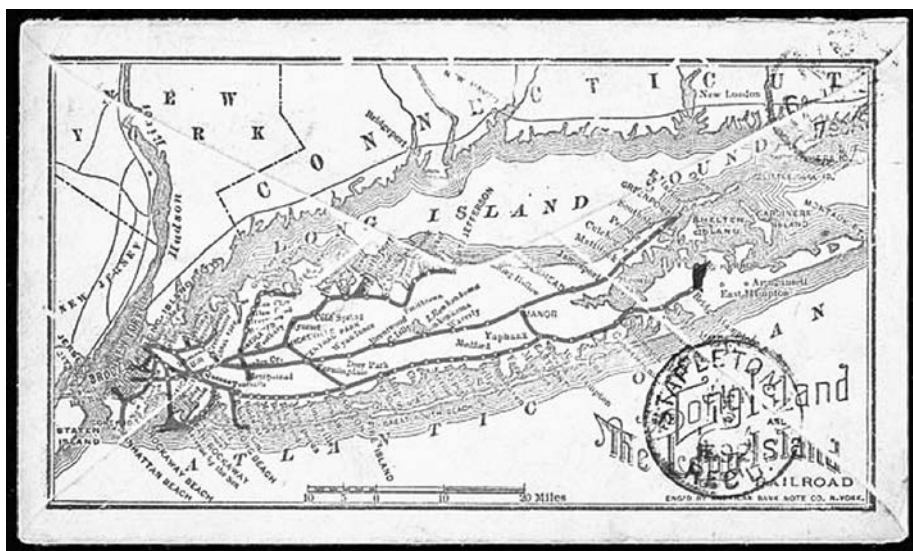
Principal Office in Brooklyn:
Long Island Rail Road Depot Corner Flatbush and Atlantic Avenues, Telephone Call "301 Brooklyn."

BRANCH OFFICES where Calls or Orders may be left:
333 Fulton Street and 107 Broadway, E. D.

First Class wagon service. Careful and courteous employe's.
Special wagons for money and valuables.
Connections with leading Express Companies for all points.
Notice of unsatisfactory service or of discourtesy, or neglect on the part of employe's will receive prompt attention, if sent to Superintendent of Express at Long Island City.

Customers are requested to see that this Receipt is made out with ink or indelible pencil.

Figure 35. 1889-style express consignment receipt plus reverse-side inscriptions.



Rumsey Sale 47, Lot 907.

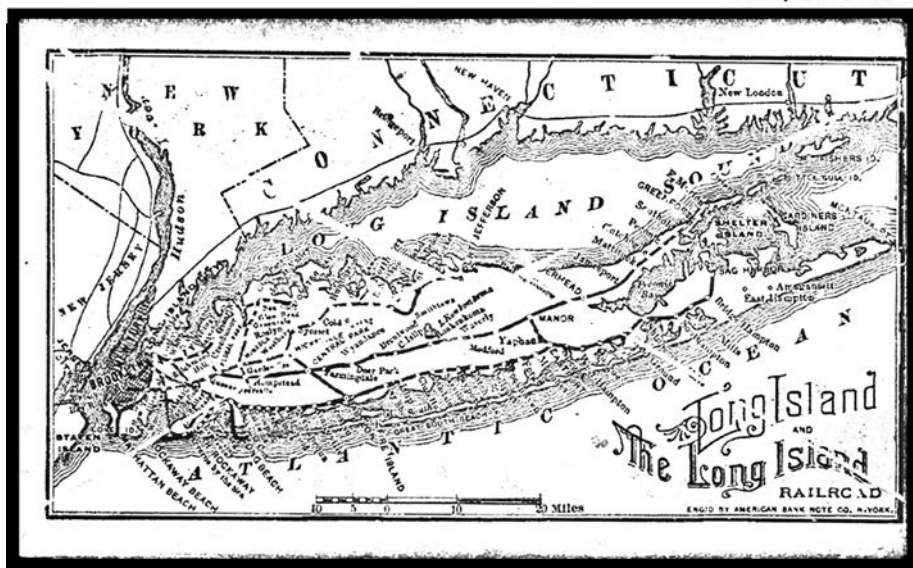


Figure 36. Reverse of two 1891/92 canceled LIRR corner card covers. Then-current LIRR system is shown in red on the top Long Island map. Bottom illustration is a similar cover image (but obviously no color) where some town inscriptions are easier to read.

The Long Island Railroad system had expanded quite a lot by the 1890s. The **Figure 36** LIRR maps were probably drawn about 1891 and they record the extent of this growth. The LIRR is now comprised of the original east-west Main Line plus several branch roads. The major western rail terminus is still concentrated in the Brooklyn/New York area offices that are listed in **Figure 35**. The Port Jefferson Branch extends to the town of Port Jefferson on Long Island Sound, the central Main Line rails extend eastward to Greenport on the Sound (this was the

original rail route), and the Sag Harbor Branch runs mostly parallel to the Atlantic Ocean through the towns close to the Great South Bay until it turns inland at Bridge Hampton to end at its eastern terminus, Sag Harbor. There were also several shorter branch roads, mostly on the western end of the Island, many of which can be seen on the **Figure 36** map.

A revised Money Package envelope design is shown in **Figure 37**. This item is designated “Form X 18.”; it was issued in June 1891 and put into use on February 5, 1892. The illustrated Money Package was employed to transport \$20.00 from the Farmingdale Station on the LIRR Main Line to Jericho, L. I. Jericho was probably serviced by express wagon (just as was speculated for delivery of the **Figure 28** Money Package) from the Hicksville Station about two miles away.

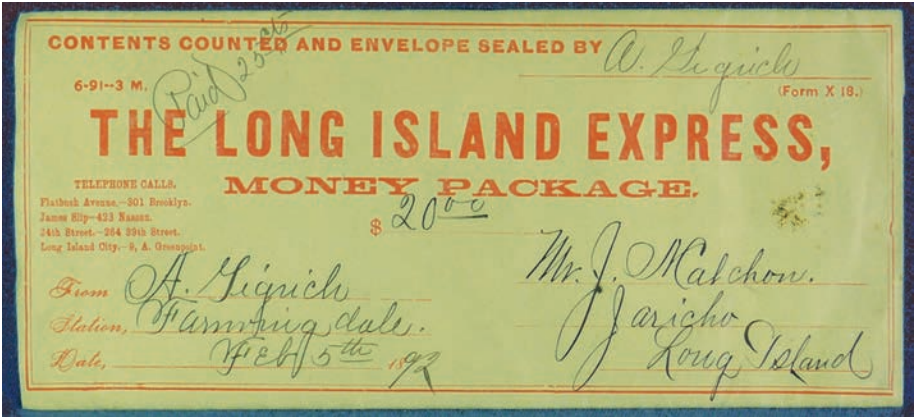


Figure 37. Money Package envelope (Form X 18.) that was used February 5, 1892.



Figure 38. 1894 style payment receipt (Form X 12) issued by The Long Island Express Co.

The Long Island Express Company’s Form X 12 receipt pictured in **Figure 38** documents payment for the express shipment of one package (i.e., “Pa”) from the Amagansett Station to Long Island City. Agent Hawkins received payment of 25¢ on October 31, 1895 for this express transportation. The Company issued this “Form X 12” document on July 25, 1894 per the inscription at upper right. Amagansett

Station is on the Montauk Branch of the LIRR. It was built in 1895 and opened June 1 of that year, just five months before the **Figure 38** receipt was used.

The revised Long Island Express tariff schedule that was issued by the LIRR in March 1895 is shown in **Figure 39**. Each entry defines the fee to express 100 pounds of express-matter from New York City to the cited town/city/point. The least expensive rate was 20¢ (to Long Island City) and the most expensive was 70¢ (to Greenport, Sag Harbor, etc.). Express shipments to the asterisked points in the tabulation received free company delivery to their final local destinations.

The **Figure 39** tabulation identifies a total of 118 unique points on the LIRR where Long Island Express service was provided. This list undoubtedly includes all of the 1895 Long Island places where the Express Company maintained service. Many of these places are shown and identified in the **Figure 34** and **Figure 36** Long Island Railroad maps.

LONG ISLAND EXPRESS.

The Long Island Express Company has issued a revised tariff book, showing rates from New York City to all points on Long Island. Their republication will be of interest to expressmen generally.

*Amityville.....	.50	Glendale.....	.30	*Patchogue.....	.60
Aquebogue.....	.60	Glen Head.....	.40	Peconic.....	.70
*Arverne.....	.50	Good Ground.....	.70	*Port Jefferson.....	.50
*Babylon.....	.50	*Great Neck.....	.35	Queens.....	.75
Baiting Hollow.....	.60	Greenlawn.....	.50	†Quogue.....	.70
Bayport.....	.60	*Greenport.....	.70	Richmond Hill.....	.30
*Bay Shore.....	.50	*Hempstead.....	.40	*Riverhead.....	.60
Bayside.....	.30	Hicksville.....	.50	*Rockville Centre.....	.40
Bellmore.....	.60	*Hollands.....	.50	Ronkonkoma.....	.60
†Bellport.....	.40	Hollis.....	.30	Rosedale.....	.40
Brentwood.....	.50	*Huntington.....	.50	*Roslyn.....	.40
Bridgehampton.....	.70	Hyde Park.....	.40	*Sag Harbor.....	.70
Broadway.....	.30	*Islip.....	.50	*Sayville.....	.50
Brookhaven.....	.60	*Jamaica.....	.35	St. James.....	.60
*Brooklyn F. B. Ave.....	.25	Jamesport.....	.70	*Sea Cliff.....	.40
Bushwick Jct.....	.30	Kings Park.....	.60	Setauket.....	.60
*Bushwick.....	.30	*Lawrence.....	.50	*Sheepshead Bay.....	.40
*Cedarhurst.....	.50	Lindenhurst.....	.50	Shinnecock Hills.....	.70
Central Islip.....	.60	Little Neck.....	.30	Smithtown.....	.60
Central Park.....	.50	Locust Valley.....	.40	Southold.....	.70
*Cold Spring.....	.50	Long Beach.....	.50	*Southampton.....	.70
*College Point.....	.25	*Long Island City.....	.20	Speonk.....	.60
*Coney Island.....	.40	*Lynbrook.....	.40	Springfield.....	.40
Corona.....	.30	*Manhattan Beach.....	.50	Stony Brooks.....	.60
Cutchogue.....	.70	Manor.....	.60	Syosset.....	.50
Deer Park.....	.50	Massapequa.....	.40	Valley Stream.....	.40
Dooglaston.....	.30	Mastic.....	.60	Wantagh.....	.40
*East New York.....	.40	Mattituck.....	.70	Water Mills.....	.70
Eastport.....	.60	Medford.....	.60	Waverly.....	.60
East Rockaway.....	.50	Merrick.....	.40	West Deer Park.....	.50
East Williston.....	.40	Mineola.....	.40	Westhampton.....	.70
Farmingdale.....	.50	Millburn.....	.40	*Whitestone.....	.25
*Far Rockaway.....	.50	*Moriches.....	.60	*West Brighton.....	.40
Fenhurst.....	.50	Morris Park.....	.40	*Westbury.....	.50
Floral Park.....	.25	Newtown.....	.30	Winfield.....	.30
*Flushing.....	.25	New York.....		Woodsburgh.....	.50
*Freeport.....	.40	*Northport.....	.50	Woodside.....	.30
*Garden City.....	.40	Oakdale.....	.50	Woodhaven.....	.40
*Glen Cove.....	.40	*Oyster Bay.....	.40	Yaphank.....	.60
		Ozone Park.....	.30		

*Indicates free delivery.
†Indicates free delivery June, July, August, and September.

Figure 39. March 1895 Tariff rates for expressing 100 pounds of goods.

Editor's Note: This article will conclude in the next issue of The Penny Post.

Part 11: The American Letter Mail Company's Name Change

By
David R. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Introduction

This series of articles has summarized and dissected the stamps and manuscript cancels found on stamps produced by the American Letter Mail Company (ALM). It has focused primarily on the last twelve months of the company's existence under its new owner who took over ALM from Lysander Spooner in the summer of 1844.¹

Part 11 will argue that the company seems to have been changing its name from The American Letter Mail Company to a shortened American Mail Company. Dropping the word "LETTER" from the company name was never translated into new stamp issues, because time ran out as the Government shut the company down. However, when provisional handstamps are compared, the name change may have been a major interest of the new owner. In addition, it implicates the new owner as a resident of Philadelphia.

Was there a plan for a new company name?

It is proposed here that Spooner's American Letter Mail Company had one ominous word that the new owner wanted to remove. It was the word "LETTER." Package express companies existed before the independent mails and had a very lucrative business. The government tolerated them, because the volume of government-carried packages was far too low to justify a confrontation, and the government was struggling as it was with their letter carrying monopoly. It was not until decades later that the government ventured into parcel express.

However, the letter expresses were another issue. The government was losing business, and the US Treasury was very much aware of that. The President of the United States reported that "...the revenue for the present year will fall below that of 1843, over \$200,000, mainly owing to the operations of the various persons engaged in carrying mail matter over the mail routes." (*Baltimore Sun* April 1, 1844).

Figure 11-1 illustrates a few Independent Mail Company covers of some interest. It shows the stamps often have the word "LETTER" or images of letters visible on the company stamps for all to see. Also, the covers show several examples of the companies starting to interact between their networks. Shown are a Hoyt's Letter Express and Pomeroy Letter Express conjunctive use (**frame a**), a triple conjunctive use between (Wells) Letter Express, ALM and Pomeroy (**frame b**), conjunctive uses between Pomeroy and (Wells) Letter Express showing two different issues of the Wells stamps (**frames c** and **d**), and a conjunctive use between Pomeroy and Hale & Co. (**frame e**). The companies alone were a threat to the US Mail, but furthermore, a combined network of companies could have soon easily rivaled the US

¹ David R. Wilcox, "Part 7: The American Letter Mail Company: A Customer's Perspective", *The Penny Post*, Vol. 26 No. 3, July 2018, pages 24-66.

Government Mail's entire network. Such a competing network would have completely undermined the government's claimed monopoly on the mails and destroyed an important revenue source.

This government control had been present from the earliest proclamation in the 1789 Articles of Confederation, and then officially, in the Act of Congress 1795. It gave the government mail the "power...to establish Post Offices and Post Roads." Early government reports focused on "inland letters." This has been well documented in a series of articles by Steven Roth in *The Chronicle*.² The contrast between a "letter" and a "packet" or "package" was the focus of many of the early laws and would have been very much on the mind of the Postmaster General, as well as, all Independent Mail Company owners.

Throughout this early history, various court cases attempted to defend the US Government's purported monopoly of the mails. In 1843, Alvin Adams, founder of Adam's Express, was taken to court over this and won an apparent victory against the government.³ However, this young US Government remained undeterred in holding onto control as they continued to experience significant heavy losses in revenue.

In addition to offering an alternative service for the nation, the Independent Mails were more efficient and less expensive. The government had good reason to be concerned. Despite the Founding Fathers recognizing the importance of control of the mails, the US Government had abused that responsibility through graft in awarding some postal routes over others and gratuities to its postmasters. The need for a more efficient and cost-conscious system was glaringly apparent. Enter the American entrepreneurs.

Some of the letter express companies arose from package expresses, but one of the largest express companies, Harnden's Express, shied away from carrying letters, apparently to avoid a government confrontation. Lysander Spooner, on the other hand, wrote defiantly about the conflict and the inappropriateness of the government monopoly on letter delivery. In his 24-page treatise dated January 1844, *The Unconstitutionality of the Laws of Congress Prohibiting Private Mails*, Spooner even noted on the title page that the pamphlet had been printed by his own company, "The American Letter Mail Company." He very much wanted the government to take notice of his company, and what he was doing was in direct defiance of their apparent monopoly of the mails. Many newspapers took up the debate.

If the new owner had learned anything from Spooner's experience, it was that the government did not like the Independent Mail Companies carrying letters. It is possible that the word "LETTER" in a company name became a red flag for the government's aggressive pursuit. Of course, removing "LETTER" from the American Letter Mail Company name was not going to stop the government attacks. There probably were several reasons the company decided to shorten its name, but the effort described below suggests they did consider the name change worthwhile.

² Steven M. Roth, "The War against the Private Expresses: An Examination of the Post Office's Monopoly Power," *The Chronicle*, Nos. 161-163, 1994.

³ Calvet Hahn, "Adams Express and Independent Mail" 1990 (Carriers and Locals Society website), *pennypost.com*. (also, *The Collector's Club Philatelist* Vol. 69 No. 3, May-June 1990, page 199.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 11-1 a through c.



(d)



(e)

Figure 11-1 a through e: Independent Mail Company covers showing their stamps with the word “LETTER” in the company name and interactions between the companies. Shown are a Hoyt’s Letter Express and Pomeroy Letter Express conjunctive use (a), a triple conjunctive use between (Wells) Letter Express, ALM and Pomeroy (b), conjunctive uses between Pomeroy and (Wells) Letter Express showing two different issues of the Wells stamps (c and d), and a conjunctive use between Pomeroy and Hale & Co. (e).

Postmaster General Charles A. Wickliffe began arrests with the intent of taking the companies to court for carrying mail over the post roads. The American Letter Mail Company was a clear target. They lost twice in court under Spooner. The proposed new owner of ALM, David Sands Brown (see Part 12), was an established businessman in other areas. If Brown was the new owner and continued like Spooner to conflict with the US Government Mails, he had much more to lose than Spooner, because of his other business interests. Even if the new owner was not Brown, this new owner was hardly a disciple of Spooner and likely had plans for his new investment that were in sharp contrast to Spooner's original vision. Spooner noted in his later writings that, "I was obliged to surrender the business into the hands of others, who did not see sufficient inducement for contesting the principle."⁴

Hale & Company was the largest of the big three Independent Mail companies. Hale escaped from the government attack without having to go directly to court (although his company was sued heavily). The full force of the U.S. government attack on Hale really did not get under way until Pomeroy went into submission, and ALM had lost its cases in court. Unlike others under attack, Hale and Company did not have "LETTER" in their name (as ALM and Pomeroy had), but they did have a pile of nearly twenty letters as the central motif on their stamps.

Of course, Hale & Company did not initially escape the full brunt of the government attack just because they lacked the word "LETTER" in their name. There were many reasons, including the fact that Hale & Company was clearly the big fish in the pond and represented a massive undertaking for the Government to go after. Hale was a large company, but also, it was a network of interacting companies. There is no question that the Government would have loved to make an example of Hale & Co. and did make efforts early on, but the full brunt of the government attack on Hale would have to wait.

The American Letter Mail Company, on the other hand, was visibly present both because of their success as number two in the nation and because of Spooner's public visibility and defiance. After the court damage to ALM was done, into about May or June of 1844, Spooner seems to have begun an effort to rid his company of the word "LETTER." In Spooner's sales pitch to the new owner, changing the name may have been an important topic. Spooner might have started the name change, but the new owner clearly was aiming to finish the change to just "The American Mail Company." He had to know he had bought into a tenuous situation, and this author feels that one small but important issue he could directly address first was the name change.

At first, common business sense would have told the new owner this change of the company name had to be gradual, or otherwise, he would have lost customer recognition. Unfortunately, the new ALM lasted such a short period of time, that the new owner never had a chance to produce new stamps without the original name. Both of the new issues in black (5L2) and in blue (5L3) were printed and put into use very soon after the new owner took over in late summer of 1844. The new stamps were larger and had no denomination when compared to Spooner's original stamp. The new

⁴ J. Morrison-Fuller, Walter C. Robs, Jan. 7, 1892. "*The Habit of Tyranny: A Study of Private Mails In 1844*", *Today*, page 706 (available as a download from Google Books).

stamps also had a new eagle image standing more upright. However, the new owner apparently felt his new stamp designs needed to keep the older, longer name, American Letter Mail Company. Dropping the word “LETTER” from the stamp would have to wait. However, introducing new handstamps with the name change was already well under way.

A closer look at the ALM handstamps

Changes in ALM’s handstamps offer support that the company saw a need for a name change. Spooner might have begun the process, and it is quite possible, based on the timing, that Spooner was in full discussion with the new owner on this issue. When Spooner began the company, there was a brief period where ALM stamps were canceled with some very attractive “field of stars” cancels, but these were short-lived. Throughout the early Spring of 1844 into the later court trials of that spring, ALM stamps, under Spooner, were primarily canceled with a broad paint stroke (see **Figure 11-3 frame a** for an example). A simple splash of color across the stamp face and any chance that the stamp could be reused was soundly eliminated.

This was somewhat reminiscent of Blood’s later acid cancels on many of its tiny rectangular 1848 stamp issues. In both cases, a quick touch of acid or a splash of paint, and the stamp became useless. This was important, since uncanceled stamps could and likely were reused by customers. After all, customers reuse uncanceled stamps even today, and a stamp’s value was far more significant in 1844 than it is today. This was a loss of revenue for the company, and the loss must have been significant, since the cancels were harsh obliterations. At that time, no one was worrying about upsetting future stamp collectors.

However, as ALM grew, it probably became apparent that more information was needed to identify a cover’s fate. The company’s customer base was growing and documenting a cover’s travels became more important, since the customers probably demanded it. In fact, the customers’ anger when a cover was not delivered on time could most easily be deflected when the cover was carefully stamped with information to calm the customer’s frayed nerves.

So, entered the handstamp. With a simple handstamp, a clerk could now indicate where money was due with a “COLLECT” stamp, or not due, with a “PAID” stamp. The “PAID” and “COLLECT” stamps helped to insure fees were collected and the company’s bottom line remained intact.

The rounded date stamp, either oval or circular, was perfect for establishing the company’s name on the cover and the company office location in the city where the cover was processed. Sometimes, a date was applied too. This was of course a form of free advertisement, but much more, it told the customer that their cover had gone through a careful handling process. It is quite probable (although there are no ALM records that survived), ALM offices kept at least a tally of the covers arriving and leaving a facility. As the company grew, this tally, if it existed, could have been an important means for the company to determine changes in its routes and the resources it needed to have at each city office. The rounded company handstamps that indicated forwarding or receiving information could have helped with that.

There is no written record of the process ALM went through to determine its new rounded handstamps, but it seems to have resulted from an initial experiment

with straightline handstamps in Boston and NYC. Before the Boston red oval handstamp, there were several experimental straightline designs in the summer of 1844 until ALM settled on a final handstamp unique to each city. **Table 11-1** summarizes the handstamps of the American Letter Mail Company. From this data, a sequence of events can be proposed that lead to the final rounded handstamps.

The ALM straightline handstamp experiments

In Bowman's survey of nearly 600 covers, the very earliest ALM rounded (oval) handstamp he found came out of Boston with the earliest recorded date of August 2, 1844.⁵ The earliest recorded Philadelphia rounded (circular) handstamp appeared just a few days after Boston on August 5, 1844. It looked quite different than the Boston handstamp and continued to change into September 1844. The final New York rounded (oval) handstamp earliest recorded use was not until August 30, 1844, but it continued unchanged until the company closed. The final NYC handstamp looked similar to the Boston Handstamp.

By August 1844, the company had been turned over to its new owner, so these new rounded handstamps appearing in all three major ALM cities were the first fruits of the new owner's focus (although Spooner may have started the process). **Figure 11-2** shows just three examples of the straightline cancels that lead up to the rounded handstamps. Some appeared on covers with interesting conjunctive uses with other Independent Mail Companies. The cover in **frame "b"** also involved (Wells) Letter Express and Pomeroy. The cover in **frame "c"** involved Brainard & Co.

It appears the company went through three experimental stages using straightline cancels as the rounded handstamps were introduced. It is possible to propose a timeline of events as the straightline experiments continued. There may be some errors in the exact dates of use for each straightline cancel. All we can go by are the surviving covers, so new discoveries may change the exact timeline dates.

Fortunately, Bowman's survey of 600 ALM covers gives us some degree of confidence in the timeline. The straightline handstamps were not the singular focus of his survey, but it is obvious from the survey that the straightline handstamps are quite uncommon. They appeared to be a brief company experiment rather than a permanent addition to the company operations. Most straightline varieties numbered under half a dozen known examples, and one is even unique.

The earliest straightline handstamps appeared in NYC in early May. The earliest known use being May 6, 1844. There are five examples known, and the handstamp had the company name and the phrase "Forwarded by" over it but no street address (Bowman's F13). Another, but unique example, looks slightly different in printing and was sent from Philadelphia all the way through to Boston on May 6, 1844 (Bowman's F15).

⁵ John D. Bowman "*The American Letter Mail Company*", *Eastern Independent Mail and Express Mail Companies 1840-1845*, edited and published by. Michael S. Gutman, 2016, Chapter 1, Table 3.

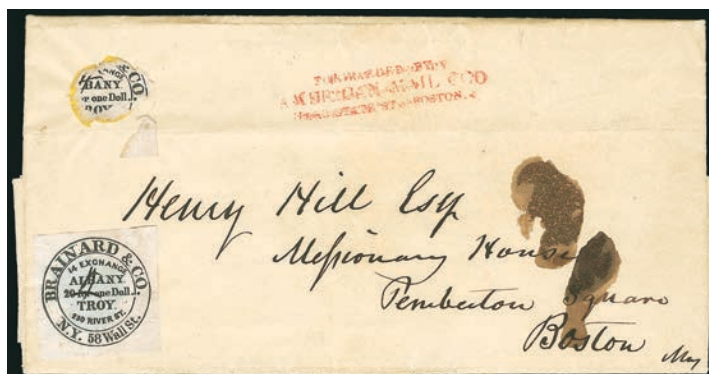
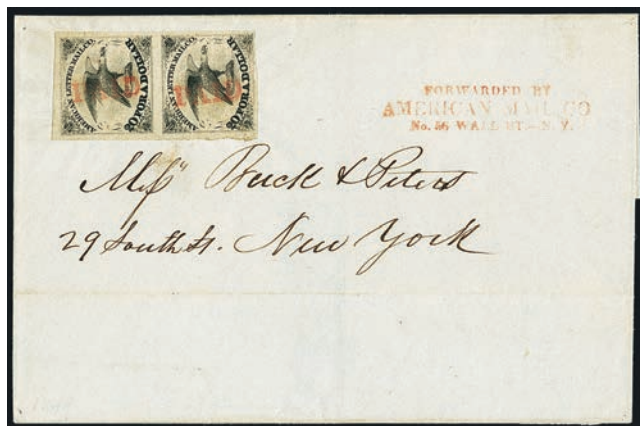


Figure 11-2 a, b and c: ALM straightline handstamps on a double rate ALM cover (a), in conjunction with (Wells) Letter Express and Pomeroy's (b) and in conjunction with Brainard & Co. (c).

These earliest handstamps appear to be stage one of ALM's straightline handstamp experiment. They were generic, in that, the city name was not included. They were significant, however, because the company name lacked the word "LETTER." While the handstamps dropped "LETTER" from the name, the postage stamps continued to contain the word. Even the new larger format stamp issues that appeared in August still had the full ALM name including "LETTER." This fact, and the rounded handstamps that resulted, suggests the straightline period was an experiment before the final rounded handstamps were approved and introduced.

The stage-one handstamps were followed in just a few weeks by handstamps that included a third line with the office address below the company name. Boston had two types (each uncommon with less than a dozen examples reported). One ended the company name with "CO" (Bowman's F01) and began the address line with "No. 12 STATE." The other (type F02) ended the company name with "COMPANY" and began the address line with "Office 12 State..." The earliest use for both types was June 13, 1844.

However, the Boston F02 handstamp may have been around and seen use a couple of weeks earlier, since there are five examples of the Boston F02 used on NYC covers but stamped at the bottom of the cover in such a way that the office address did not transfer to the cover. One possibility (although this is speculating) is that NYC borrowed the Boston stamp to try it out, but of course, did not want its customers to see the Boston address, so it stamped the F02 partly off the cover, so the address would not show.

NYC had its equivalent (type F07) of the Boston F01 in use as early as May 30. This NYC F07 stamp had the company name ending with "CO" as the Boston F01 did, but of course, changed the address line to "No. 56 WALL..." instead of "No. 12 STATE." These NYC F07 are seen as late as July 31, 1844. The Boston (F01 and F02) stamps were used into early July although some of the F01 handstamps continued to appear into October. This entire process of using a three-line, straightline handstamp in Boston and NYC appears to be stage two of the straightline handstamp experiment. The stage-two straightline experiment had added the address of the city as a third line. However, it should be noted that Philadelphia was not involved in these experiments at all.

During a third and final stage of the experiment, a couple of new straightline handstamps appeared in late July into August 1844. Straightline handstamps appeared from Gardiner, Maine (F05, July 26 through August 25) and Newport, Rhode Island (F06, August 21 and 27). These third-stage examples are all uncommon, and there are only six survivors (four from Gardiner and two from Newport).

TABLE 11-1: ALM Experimentation with Handstamps in 1844


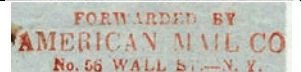


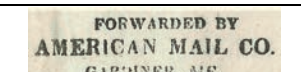




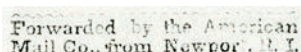



DATE	CITY	EVENT (Based on earliest date)	CODE	IMAGE
Early May	Boston (red) & NYC (blk)	Two-Line Experiment “CO”, No “LETTER” (No Address)	F15 & F13	
End May	NYC	Three-Line Experiment “CO”, No “LETTER” (Address)	F07	
June	Boston	Three-Line Experiment “COMPANY”, No “LETTER” (Address)	F02	
June	NYC (borrowed)	Three-Line Experiment “COMPANY” No “LETTER” (Address Off Cover)	F14 (F02)	
Late July	Gardiner, Me.	Three-Line Experiment “CO.” No “LETTER” (City Name)	F05	
Early August	Boston	Decision Boston “COMPANY.”, “LETTER” Oval (Boston did change again in March 1845, but due to an address change)	F03	
Early August	NYC	Three-Line Experiment “CO”, “LETTER” (Address) (“LETTER” in the company name returns)	F08	
Early August	Philadelphia	First Decision Philadelphia “CO.”, No “LETTER” (Old Address) (“MAIL CO.” Prominent) Circle	F10	
Late August	Philadelphia	Second Decision Philadelphia Date Slug (Introduced) “CO.”, No “LETTER” (Continues) (New Address) Circle (Continues), (“MAIL CO.” Smaller)	F11	
Late August	Newport, RI	Two-Line Experiment “Co.”, No “LETTER” (City Name)	F06	
Late August	NYC	Decision NYC “COMPANY”, “LETTER” Oval (Like Boston)	F09	

TABLE 11-1: ALM Experimentation with Handstamps in 1844. (cont'd)

DATE	CITY	EVENT (Based on earliest date)	CODE	IMAGE
End Sept.	Philadelphia	Decision Philadelphia Date Slug Dropped (Earliest) “CO.”, No “LETTER” (Continues) Circle (Continues) (New Address Continues)	F12 (F11)	
Mid-March, 1845	Boston	The last ALM handstamp change. The new Boston oval handstamp occurred only because of an address change, and was not part of the straightline handstamp experiments.	F04	

This third stage also included another form of the NYC straightline (F08). It was like F07 but larger and with “Office 56” beginning the third line of the stamp. There are only two of these F08 NYC examples known (August 5 and 28), and they seem a curious anomaly, because this handstamp included on the second line the company name “American Letter Mail Co.” The word “LETTER” in the company name had returned. The August 5 example was pictured in **Figure 11-1 (frame b)** and was a conjunctive use between ALM, (Wells) Letter Express and Pomeroy’s Letter Express. The August usage is late for a straightline cancel.

In all the other 67 straightline handstamps Bowman found, the company name was the “American Mail Company.” The word “LETTER” had been dropped. In fact, it seemed like dropping the name and testing straightline handstamps (in preparation for the later rounded stamps) was the purpose of the whole experiment. It is also likely the early experimental straightline handstamps were easier to make, since the lettering did not have to be curved. At best, the couple of F08 examples (where the word “LETTER” returned) seem to be a last experimental look at the old name. Only the two examples survived. However, NYC did finally decide to go with a rounded handstamp retaining the word “LETTER” in the company name, so the F08 handstamps may be significant in that respect.

In summary, the straightline handstamps were tried in both Boston and NYC with the word “LETTER” removed. In the final stage, straightline handstamps without “Letter” were also tried in Maine and Rhode Island. However, even as this third stage continued, ALM’s three major cities each introduced their new rounded handstamp to include the company name and the office address. Apparently after stage two, a decision for all three major cities had been finalized, and the straightline handstamps for the major cities stopped appearing by late August 1844.

There was only one rounded handstamp change after the three major cities established their rounded handstamp of choice in August 1844. In mid-March 1845, Boston moved its office from 12 State Street to 16 State Street. This was seven months after Boston had settled on using its first handstamp. It is curious that Boston moved

its office around the time Congress passed the March 3 Act that spelled the end of the Independent Mails, although this may have been just a coincidence. This later handstamp change, however, was strictly because of the new office location and not part of the straightline experiments.

So, the straightline handstamps were the prelude to the rounded handstamps, and by August 1844, ALM had decided to go with the rounded stamps. These handstamps then became the mainstay of ALM covers and were a most obvious new addition that we can attribute to the new owner.

It is possible that the new rounded stamps also reflected an evolution in ALM's growth as more information was being recorded for each cover, but without the company ledgers, that cannot be proven at this time. However, we do know that July through October 1844 had the highest number of surviving covers recorded in Bowman's survey, and this period spans the straightline experiments and the introduction of all the rounded handstamps including Philadelphia's dated handstamp. So, with the volume of covers handled increasing, perhaps the new rounded handstamps with their additional information were useful.

Apparently, the straightline experiments had not convinced Boston to drop the word "LETTER" from the company name. Their new oval handstamp still read "American Letter Mail Company," although their brief straightline experimental handstamps had dropped the word "LETTER." This may have occurred because Boston preferred the original name, or perhaps, they felt their customers would be most familiar with the older name and a name change was not the best idea at that time. If part of the motivation for the name change was to try and stay out from under the government's watchful eye, Boston and NYC may have just decided it was not worth the loss in the company name recognition.

So, the straightline experiment had run its course in Boston but did not lead to a name change. In NYC the straightline experiment also ended, so that, by as early as August 30, 1844, NYC introduced its very first rounded handstamp. In New York, as in Boston, the new oval handstamp did not change the company name. Despite the earlier straightline handstamps having removed the word "LETTER," the word remained in the rounded handstamp. Earlier NYC advertisements for ALM had always used "LETTER" in the name under Spooner, so perhaps that caused enough concern in NYC (and Boston) to stay with the original name at that time.

Although the reasons for not changing are unknown, this may explain however the couple of straightline cancels that were unique to NYC (F08) that went back to the older longer name with "LETTER" in it. Perhaps, in these couple of examples, NYC was just revisiting the older name, but in a straightline format, before it made its final decision (a kind of provisional use). Whatever the reason, NYC continued into 1845 with its new oval handstamp showing the full company name American Letter Mail Company. NYC never made a name change in their oval handstamps. By the end of August, both New York and Boston had experimented with a straightline handstamp with "LETTER" removed, but they both decided not to drop "LETTER" in their final oval handstamps.

Whatever the outcome, the new owner had to be involved in these decisions. All three cities introduced a new rounded handstamp within a short period just weeks apart in August 1844. This must have been a coordinated effort, and the new owner,

not Lysander Spooner, no doubt was at the center of the final decision process and approved the new designs and their content.

Was the ALM straightened handstamp experiment a flop?

In the middle of all this straightline handstamp testing, the new owner took over management of ALM. In Part 12 of this series, it is proposed that David Sands Brown in Philadelphia officially took over ALM from Lysander Spooner. Brown was no stranger to this company. David S. Brown & Company received many different covers carried by ALM throughout 1844 and 1845. The first frame of **Figure 11-3 (a)** shows a cover to Brown's textile company even before ALM was contemplating handstamps. The second frame (**frame b**) shows a cover to Brown's company and stamped with the first Philadelphia circular handstamp here used as a receiving stamp.

Also shown (**frame c**) is a stampless cover to Brown stamped with the final Philadelphia receiving handstamp (and without a date slug). It also has the new Boston forwarding handstamp, that, in March 1845, had replaced the first Boston handstamp due to a change in the office address from 12 to 16 State Street. Since ALM was closing at that time, ALM was probably not receiving many covers into very late June 1845. So, this stampless cover must have been one of the later covers ALM accepted in its Philadelphia office. The cover was datelined June 23, 1845 and processed by Brown's company on June 25, which is just five days before ALM was closed forever by the US Government. So, Brown's company had a long history of using the Independent Mails and particularly ALM.

David Sands Brown is hardly the only candidate for consideration as the new owner. It has been more than a century and a half, and no one has established the new owner's name. Part 12 will bring together what is known about Brown that suggests his possible role as the new owner, but the fact he used ALM so extensively and throughout shows his familiarity with the company. Of course, many large companies used ALM, but this familiarity was an early suggestion that Brown might have been involved in the ALM purchase or take over. Part 12 will discuss some even stronger support for this proposal.

One can wonder if the straightline experiment was a complete flop, since the new rounded handstamps showed no company name change. However, unlike NYC and Boston, Philadelphia did change the name of the company on its handstamps. This author feels the new owner had already made up his mind to change the name of his newly acquired company.

The new owner may have felt the name change would be useful after the outcome of the ALM court trials. The change might help avoid, or at least reduce, the US Government assault on his new company. Of course, he would not have imagined a name change is all it would take to stop the government onslaught, so it is likely that there were other reasons for shortening the name of his new company. The fact that NYC and Boston never made the change in their new oval handstamps supports that shortening the name, although considered, was not a necessity.

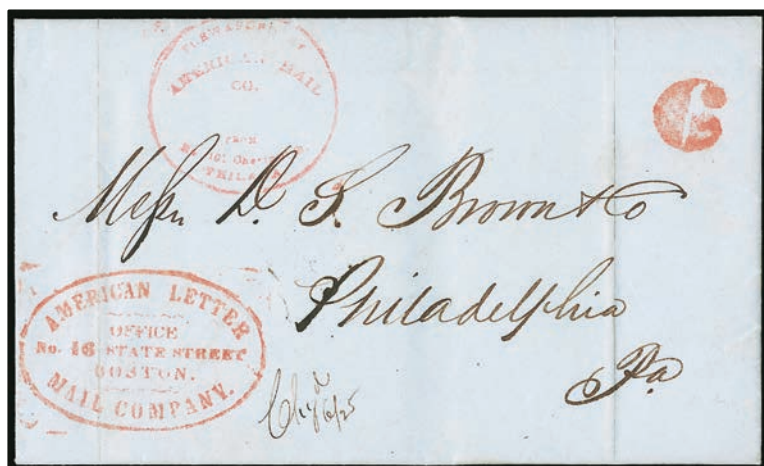
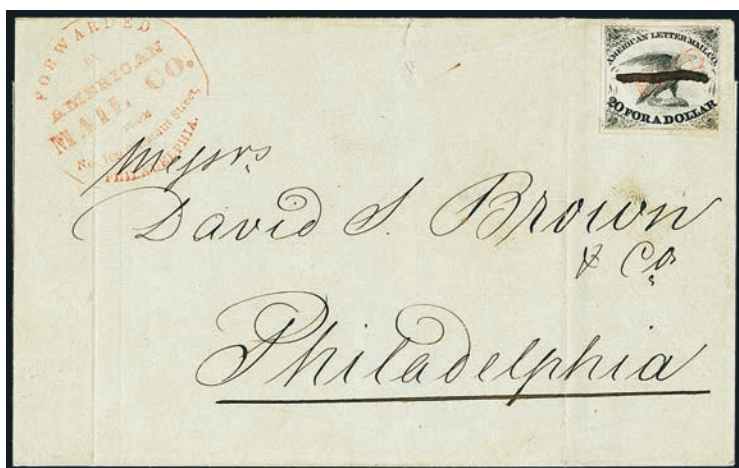


Figure 11-3 a, b and c: Three examples of many ALM covers sent to David S. Brown & Company during 1844 and 1845.

However, it seems the new owner (whether it was Brown or not) had already made a decision, and he introduced his new circular handstamp with a shortened company name in Philadelphia despite the contrary decisions in NYC and Boston. Philadelphia was where David Sands Brown lived and had a thriving textile company. If Brown took over ALM from Spooner, perhaps his impact was first seen in Philadelphia's new and distinct handstamps.

Of course, the new owner could have forced a change in the other two cities as well. However, it was apparently a carefully considered business decision that Boston and NYC were not ready for the change. The city of Philadelphia where Brown lived and worked, however, was apparently deemed ready for the change. After all, the new owner had to implement his ideas somewhere, and if the new owner was Brown, he certainly could monitor customer responses best in his own hometown.

Therefore, by this argument, the straightline experiments were probably only asking whether Boston and NYC should consider a company name change, since the new owner had already planned to introduce his new rounded August handstamp in Philadelphia anyway. This conclusion is supported by the fact that there are no surviving straightline cancels from Philadelphia. Philadelphia was apparently not part of these straightline cancel experiments.

This might add support that David S. Brown was the new owner. Brown's hometown of Philadelphia may have become ALM's new home base, and Philadelphia would be the first to show the new American Mail Company name. In Philadelphia anyway, the new name without the word "LETTER" would appear prominently in the new Philadelphia rounded handstamps.

At first, this may seem to be a trivial event, since the name change was not made in the Boston and NYC handstamps. However, the Philadelphia handstamps with a new name would be seen throughout the ALM network and in any interactions with other Independent Mail companies. ALM customers in all three cities and throughout the ALM network would now be introduced to the new name through the red Philadelphia forwarding and receiving handstamps. This seems to have been a decisive and concerted business decision, that impacted a significant volume of the company's mail.

Philadelphia was the city of choice for introducing new innovations

This new Philadelphia circular handstamp appeared as early as August 5, 1844. This was near the same time Boston introduced their new oval handstamp. NYC followed about three weeks later with their own. Philadelphia's first rounded handstamp was circular and not oval as in Boston or NYC. It was the boldest and most innovative of the three markings.

Not only did the Philadelphia handstamp drop the word "LETTER" from the company name, it spelled out in very large letters the words "MAIL CO." Not "LETTER MAIL CO" as in the new Boston and NYC handstamps, but boldly "MAIL CO." These words were in the largest type in the handstamp and glaring at the customers in the center of the handstamp (see **Table 11-1**, eight lines down).

The Boston and NYC handstamps were oval, and the information was crowded. If not stamped carefully, the words were sometimes hard to read. But the Philadelphia handstamp was a full open circle that left no question that this was a

“MAIL CO” and not a “LETTER MAIL CO”. In the proposed new owner’s hometown handstamp, it seemed that there was no question how he felt about the need for a new company name.

Philadelphia continued with this bold handstamp into November 1844. Somewhere in late August or into September, ALM’s Chestnut Street office moved from 109 to 101 Chestnut Street. So, with this address change in mind, and to accommodate a central place for a receiving or forwarding date, a new handstamp began to appear in Philadelphia near the end of August, and this continued into January 1845.

This second type of Philadelphia handstamp was still circular but had to push the “MAIL CO” out of the center of the handstamp to make room for the new date slug. This second handstamp was innovative and added a new dimension to the company mails. However, the company name remained “American Mail Co.” The word “LETTER” was still gone from this second Philadelphia handstamp, and now, it had a date stamp included. This did not happen in NYC or Boston, only in Philadelphia.

Around late September this same circular handstamp began showing up on covers but without a date in the center. Philadelphia had not really changing its handstamp at that time as much as it occasionally did not include the date slug with the handstamp in the center that showed the date. The center was blank. Some circular handstamps with the date continued into January 1845. Sometimes, the undated handstamps appeared even before January, apparently whenever a clerk forgot to include the date slug. It is possible Philadelphia had found the time necessary to change the dates on the handstamps each day was not worth the information it conveyed, or perhaps there were too many errors in the dates to make it useful. Whatever the reason, the dates finally completely disappeared from Philadelphia’s handstamp from February until the company closed at the end of June 1845.

Therefore, the Philadelphia handstamps were distinctively different from the new Boston and New York handstamps. Philadelphia’s handstamps were the most innovative, first with a company name change, and innovative again later with the introduction of a date. Boston and New York’s new handstamps were very conservative by comparison. Just like Philadelphia, Boston and NYC maintained ALM offices until the end of the company in June 1845, but the Boston and NYC handstamps never showed a name change and never a date slug for sending or receiving.

This again may support David Brown as the new owner of ALM. It is certainly consistent with the new owner being a Philadelphia resident. That city is where the new innovations were showing up. Philadelphia was Brown’s hometown. He lived and worked there, and he could have direct contact with the ALM’s Philadelphia office which was less than a couple blocks away from his rapidly expanding textile empire. The “EHB” cancels and the handstamps with a shortened name may have appeared first in Philadelphia, because that is where the new owner was introducing his innovations.

It is noteworthy that the dated handstamps appeared only in Philadelphia, and that the earliest of these dated handstamps was found on an August 24, 1844 cover. The author feels this was a time when the new owner was introducing several of his

new innovations for his newly acquired mail company. The “EHB” cancels with whatever they represented, the changed circular handstamp with a new company name, and later, the introduction of a date slug, all occurred first in Philadelphia. The earliest known use of the uncommon ALM blue eagle stamp was also in Philadelphia.

Again, it must be emphasized, that although these events were initiated in Philadelphia, they were seen throughout the ALM network and wherever ALM interacted with other Independent Mail companies. Out of Philadelphia, the new owner was sending clear signals of change and innovation.

It was proposed in Part 3 of this series, that there was a new system introduced under the new owner using ALM stamps canceled with the initials “EHB.” This new system continued until the company closed and may have involved “registering” the cover, or at least drawing attention to the importance of a cover, by using the “EHB” cancel on the stamp. The very first use of “EHB” as a cancel on any ALM stamp was in Philadelphia (the Thompson cover). It was datelined August 26, 1844 and involved a business transaction specifically involving David Brown’s company. In his letter, Brown (through a buying agent) requested John Thompson, a NYC merchant, to purchase materials for one of Brown’s major expansion projects.

If Brown was the new owner, it seemed like Brown may have been taking advantage of his David S. Brown & Co. textile business communication (construction of a new factory) to test his new “EHB” system for his new Independent Mail company. The new Philadelphia circular handstamp with a date and the Thompson cover using the “EHB” system applied to the new blue eagle stamp all appeared within two days of each other. Could these innovative ideas that appeared so close together in David Brown’s city be a coincidence?

The long-running ALM “straightline experiment” also culminated in Philadelphia in August 1844. Two covers experimenting with a Rhode Island straightline handstamp without the word “LETTER” in the company name came from Newport, Rhode Island. These were mailed to David Brown’s hometown Philadelphia, and specifically, to David S. Brown & Co. One letter was mailed August 21 based on docketing information on the cover. A second cover was handstamped August 23, 1844. The reported dates of August 25 and 27 were the dates noted on the covers when the covers were processed and charged to an account (see “Chg” and “Charged” on the front of the covers).

So, the first appearance of the new “EHB” system, the earliest known use of the blue eagle stamps and the earliest known appearance of the dated Philadelphia circular handstamp appeared along with the two Newport covers all within a few weeks of each other in late August 1844. This, of course, could have been a striking coincidence, but it might not have been a coincidence, if the new owner was from Philadelphia, and if he was experimenting with his new company only a month after his take over.

These are the only two covers known that were straightline handstamped (F06) by ALM from Newport R.I. (**Figure 11-4 frames a and b**). Notice that the second Newport cover was also stamped by the first Philadelphia circular handstamp (F10, no date slug yet). The Philadelphia handstamp was used as a receiving handstamp, but it was obviously not essential, since the first cover from Newport

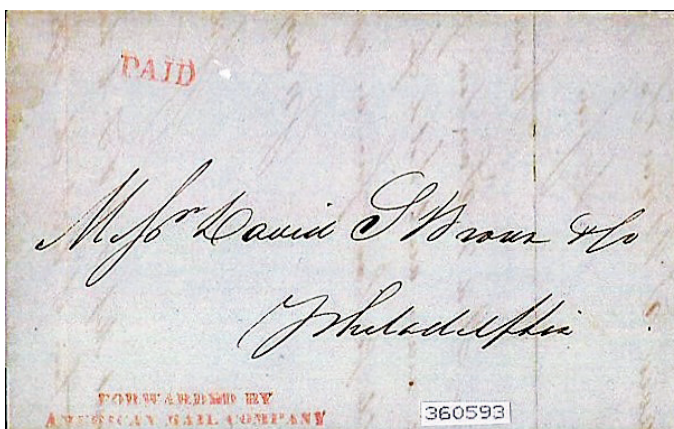
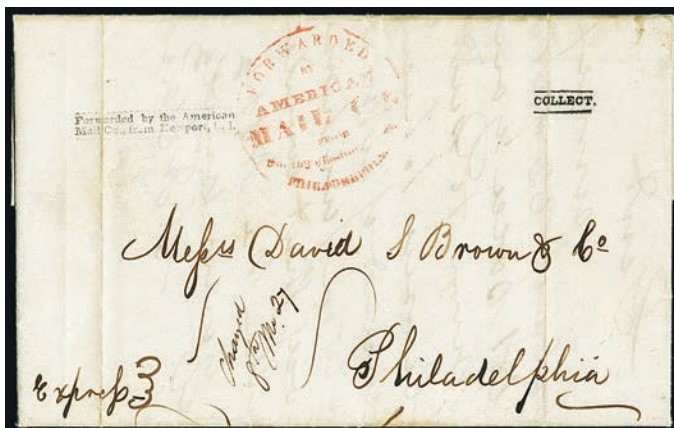
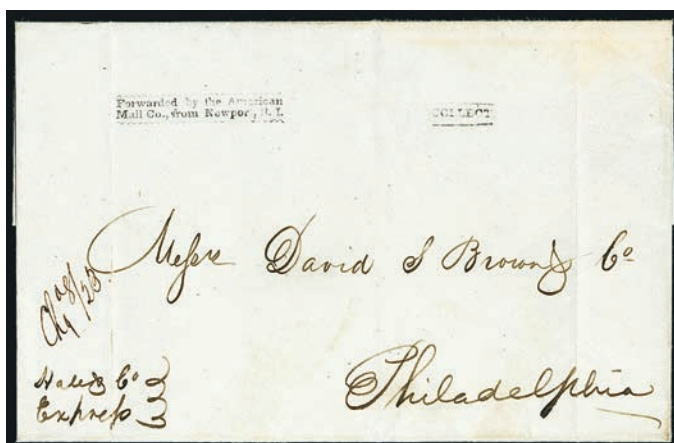


Figure 11-4 a, b and c: The only known covers with the Newport, R.I. straightline cancel (F06). Frame c shows another, but earlier, cover involved in the “straightline experiment.” All three covers were addressed to David S. Brown & Co.

never received one. The two covers are nearly identical except for the handstamp and the “Charged” notation date.

The “C07” marking on both of these covers is one of seven kinds of “COLLECT” markings Bowman reported. The typeset style of the “COLLECT” marking matches the straightline handstamp’s typeset. Like the Newport handstamp, this C07 “COLLECT” marking found on these two Newport covers was never observed again on any other ALM covers.

The sender of these two covers is unknown, therefore, it would be interesting to know the content of those two letters. The second cover has some writing showing through, and when the image is rotated and flipped, the inside writing clearly shows it has a written note and is signed by the sender. If ALM was mentioned in any way in the content of these letters, it might be the “smoking gun” that proves Brown’s involvement with the American Letter Mail Company. Obviously, if any reader owns this cover, this author would love to know what is inside.

The story of the straightline experiments outlined in this article apparently led to a decision to introduce the rounded handstamps. In Philadelphia, the American Letter Mail Company was renamed the American Mail Company in the handstamp. This seems to have been a concerted decision by the new owner to stay with the old name in NYC and Boston, but at the same time, introduce the public to the new name by the distinctly different rounded Philadelphia handstamp, and shortly later, by the introduction of the date slugs in the handstamp.

This was an early and crowning innovation for the new owner, and it is hard to conceive that the new owner was not a very active participant in this experiment. The new owner would likely have the final say in the decision. Therefore, any of the uncommon straightline covers that Bowman reported might point to the new owner. Accordingly, the two Newport examples in **Figure 11-4** might support David Brown as the new owner, but this could have, of course, been just a coincidence.

However, another cover apparently involved in this experiment was also addressed to Brown. **Frame “c” in Figure 11-4** shows a cover sent from NYC using one of the very early straightline handstamps where the handstamp was apparently applied so that the city name (which was on the third line) did not appear, since it was off the bottom edge of the cover. Bowman recorded only five covers with this pattern. This means three surviving covers from the straightline experiment, one from the beginning and two from the end, were specifically addressed to Brown.

All these innovations occurred in a short period of time, and David Sands Brown’s company keeps showing up. A coincidence perhaps, but perhaps not.

How did the ALM customers feel about the name change?

Two newspaper ads support that the shorter name was desired by the new owner, and more important, that the public had already accepted the shorter name by the time the government began shutting down the company. The two ads (notifications) appeared in 1845 and used the shorter name (**Figure 11-5 a and b**). Both ads were presumably submitted, or at least requested, by the new owner.

The first of these two new ads appeared March 8, 1845 immediately after the Act of 1845 that announced the end of the Independent Mails. The notification read, "The American Mail Company, the pioneers and establishers of cheap postage, continue to forward letter and packages as usual during the brief period that remains for them before the new Post-office law goes into effect." The notice was an appeal to customers to use ALM even though Congress had decreed that ALM must close in June. The man that had taken over ALM from Spooner wanted everyone to know that ALM was still servicing mail in the spring of 1845.

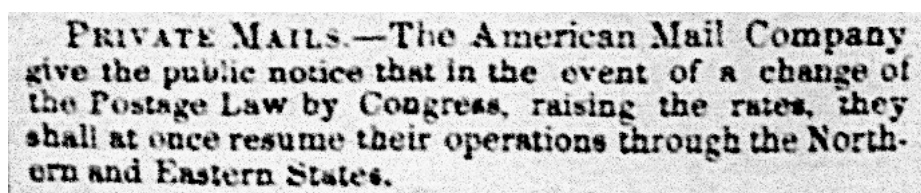
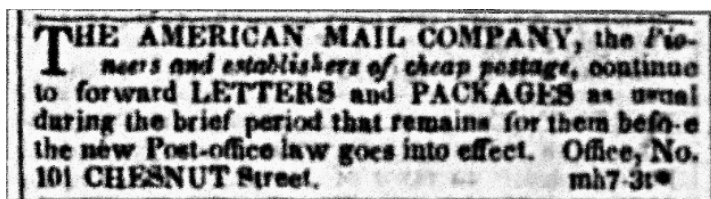


Figure 11-5 a and b: Two 1845 ALM notifications (March and December) omitting "Letter" in the company name.

The announcement appeared in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, and as such, was targeted for Philadelphia (where David Brown lived). The company name in this public notice did not include the word "LETTER" even though it would have been easy to include one more word. There was plenty of room in the ad, and the extra cost would have been trivial. ALM was encouraging the public to continue using their service, so the company could continue to make more money. Did the company spend money only to give the wrong name?

The ad was not intended to confuse the public; it was to enlighten. But it was far too late to be introducing a new name in March 1845, since ALM was going out of business in just three months. The new owner apparently knew the public would recognize the shortened name, especially in Philadelphia, possibly because the shortened name was already in common use by the mail clients.

A second notice was released six months after the company went out of business. It appeared December 19, 1845 in the *New York Tribune*. The company name given was The American Mail Company, not the American Letter Mail Company. This notice told the company's previous customers "in the event of a change of Postage Law by Congress, raising the rates, they shall at once resume their operations throughout the Northern and Eastern States." The company never did return to service, but both notices tell us that ALM customers were not confused by the shortened name.

These notices support that ALM clients had accepted the shorter name without the word "Letter" by the time early 1845 arrived. It was the name of choice

for the two notifications. There are no company notes describing the need for a name change. It is speculation that an official name change was coming, but we may never know, since the company did not survive long enough to make the change permanent.

Do these two ads suggest anything about the new owner?

After only twelve months under the new owner, the company was gone in June 1845. The new owner certainly was not going to order new stamps in June with a new name even though the supplies of the original stamps were apparently running low. But, in the owner's final two ads, the company's name was shortened apparently without any concern that it would confuse the public.

Both announcements cost money and were important notices. The new owner would not have advertised that his company was still active in March and would consider starting up again in December (after it closed on July 1, 1845), by using a company name in its announcements that was confusing and unfamiliar. It can be argued that the new owner deleted the word "LETTER" from the company name purposefully in both notifications, because the customers were already familiar with the company name in that form anyway. He knew there would be no confusion.

But why would the owner of an Independent Mail Company still spend money in December 1845 in the hope that his company would be resurrected from Congress's death knell? ALM and all Independent Mail Companies had apparently received the last nail in the coffin six months earlier. The ALM offices were all closed from Philadelphia to Boston, and no one except the US Government could travel with mail on the post roads without being arrested. Like ALM, all the smaller companies, as well as Hale and Pomeroy had completely stopped their operations.

It does not get any more final than an ACT of Congress. But here was someone, presumably the present owner, spending money in NYC for the second notification announcing to everyone who reads the *New York Tribune* (there were many) that his company was ready for a comeback. He apparently really wanted his company back, even if Congress said no. He knew he had made a good investment and possibly was making a significant profit when it was closed. The company was innovative and successful under his new ownership. There is no reason to believe that ALM went out of business because of poor management.

Someone paid for that December ad, and therefore, in the ALM owner's mind, the American Mail Company was still on his books. Someone had money to spend advertising for ALM even after the company was not making its own money. Someone had the resources to spend money in a failed attempt to revive interest in ALM. Perhaps ALM still had a pot of cash left over, but why use it on what appears to be a desperate attempt to tell customers they were not through offering their services, if the government did not follow through on its Act of Congress.

If Congress failed to lower the postal rates permanently, ALM's ad proclaimed they were ready to recommence their mail service. The rates did drop in July 1845, but there was still plenty of debate over what was the best decision for the future, and many still wanted the rates even lower. The rates fell again in 1851.

The December 1845 ad is consistent with the new ALM owner being a businessman with a significantly larger company that used the mails frequently. Although this fits others, it definitely fits David Sands Brown. In this context, the ad

may not have been an announcement as much as a threat against the government, if they failed to lower the rates. Perhaps the ad was announcing to the government that they should lower the rates more, or the new owner would start his ALM company's competition all over again (the Act would have stopped this, but it doesn't hurt to threaten).

Large companies using the mails extensively had plenty to gain if the postal rates were lowered. For them, therefore, the threatening ad was well worth the money spent if it helped to ensure that the rates were lowered, even if Congress's Act seemed to stop ALM from delivering mail again. Either way, the new owner stood to gain, if they also owned a large company that used the mails frequently. If rates fell further, or if ALM started up again, it was a win-win situation for the ALM owner.

However, to make that threat, it required ALM's owner to have enough money reserves to make that threat worth the cost of the ad. This might have been a consideration, if the new owner had no other outside commercial interests. However, for a very large company such as Brown's textile conglomerate, this would not have been a concern.

In summary, it appears that the company name-change experiment was finalized when the new owner took over the company in the summer of 1844 and was in full swing in the new owner's mind by the events of August 1844 in Philadelphia. By 1845, the name change had apparently been accepted by the customers, and the new name caused no confusion in newspaper announcements.

Unfortunately, the company name change never had a chance to be fully implemented and printed on new stamp issues. Stamp catalogs do not mention a name change, because there were no new stamps issued with the new name. However, the new owner's customers seem to have already accepted the company name without the word "LETTER." For many reasons, it is a shame ALM was forced out of business so early, and one consequence affected today's philatelists directly. If ALM had survived, we probably would have had some more stamp issues to collect, but the word "LETTER" would have been gone from the design.

Conclusion

This part of the series concludes that ALM was initiating a name change during 1844 and 1845 under its new owner. The company name was changing from the American Letter Mail Company to the American Mail Company. The name change was completed by the time the company closed and apparently accepted by ALM customers, but no new stamps were issued with the new name, perhaps because time ran out. The company was closed forever by a Congressional Act before the name could be added to any new stamp issues. However, a newspaper announcement appearing after ALM closed seems to suggest the name change was common knowledge.

The author is deeply indebted to John D. Bowman whose assistance, insights and guidance throughout this project allowed it to finally happen. Access to his extensive database of ALM covers and stamps was invaluable. Special thanks go to The Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries and The Philatelic Foundation for allowing generous use of their excellent search engines that made researching the many ALM varieties possible. The author welcomes comments and additional information at dwilcox1@comcast.net.

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