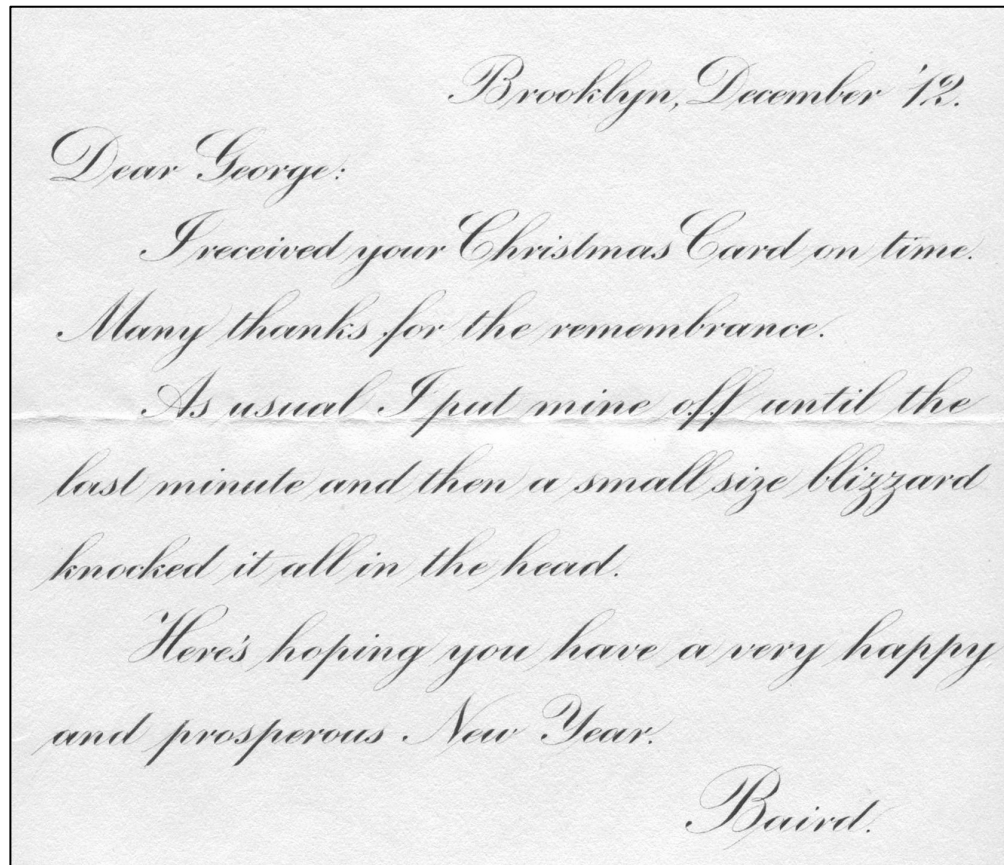


# An Examination of Line Spacing in Letters Written by Past Masters

by Dr. Joseph M. Vitolo, 2014



Letter penned by Willis A. Baird (1882-1954)

*Philadelphia, Dec. 2 1907.*

*Mr. G. G. Hoole,  
Columbus, Chic.*

*Dear Sir:*

*In this letter you have a specimen of my  
Engraver's Script.*

*Hoping it will please you, I am,*

*Very truly yours,*

*Charlton V. Howe,*

*1747 Milton Street.*

This letter was written using five spaces per sentence line plus an added separator space (between the blue and green lines) to keep the sentences separate and prevent the ascender and descender forms from overlapping.

Letter penned by Charlton Valentine Howe (1870-1952)

Image created by Dr. Joseph M. Vitolo, 2014



Brooklyn, December '12.

Dear George:

I received your Christmas Card on time.

Many thanks for the remembrance.

As usual I put mine off until the last minute and then a small size blizzard knocked it all in the head.

Here's hoping you have a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Baird.

This letter was also written using five spaces per sentence line but he does NOT an added separator space as shown in the previous letter from Howe.

This also shows that his line spacing was basically the same as that seen in lined papers such as Rhodia tablets albeit much smaller line separation. However, the sentences are kept separate by maintaining the five spaces for each sentence thereby preventing the ascender and descender forms from overlapping.

Letter penned by Willis A. Baird (1882-1954)

Image created by Dr. Joseph M. Vitolo, 2014

Philadelphia, Oct. 19, 1901.  
Dear Readers:—

Inclosing the series of  
lessons in Engraver's Script which I have  
conducted beginning with the September  
'99 issue of the Penman and Artist, I desire  
to extend my sincere thanks to you for the  
generous appreciation which you have  
accorded me. I assure you that it is a  
source of much gratification to know that  
my efforts have merited your approval.  
With best wishes for your success,  
I remain,

Very truly yours,  
Charlton V. Howe.

This letter does NOT use five spaces for each sentence to maintain line spacing as shown in the two previous examples. While it is beautiful, it also appears very 'tight' or compressed to my eyes. This letter was planned out by Mr. Howe (see next image). However, that did not prevent every overlap from occurring (see the area shown by the red dotted circle).



Philadelphia, Oct. 19, 1901.

Dear Readers:-

In closing the series of lessons in Engraver's Script which I have conducted beginning with the September '99 issue of the Penman and Artist, I desire to extend my sincere thanks to you for the generous appreciation which you have accorded me. I assure you it is a source of much gratification to know that my efforts have merited your approval.

With best wishes for your success, I remain,

Very truly yours,  
Charlton V. Howe.

Reduce to 4 1/2" —————> <—————

Here is the original layout of Mr. Howe's letter from the previous image. This also shows that his line spacing was basically the same as that seen in lined papers such as Rhodia tablets. The difference here is that he is not reserving 5 complete spaces per line of sentence.

Note that the overlap area shown by the red dotted circle was accounted for prior to his executing the letter.

Letter penned by Charlton Valentine Howe (1870-1952)

The following is meant for comparison purposes and as a guide. It should NOT be considered as the absolute proportions.....JMV

1) English Roundhand (Copperplate): Bickham's Universal Penman

*Virtue & Friendship* .....Header  
.....Baseline

2) Engrosser's script (Engraver's script): Dr. Joseph M. Vitolo

*Engrosser's Script* .....Header  
.....Baseline

3) Spencerian/Ornamental Scripts      A) PR Spencer    B) EA Lupfer

A) *On the Spencerian* .....Header  
.....Baseline

B) *Study and practice should be properly combined* .....Header  
.....Baseline

4) Ornamental script: HP Behrensmeyer

*HP Behrensmeyer* .....Header  
.....Baseline

5) Business Penmanship: EC Mills

*Naphazard practice is very poor* .....Header  
.....Baseline