

C.H. Powell Company turns 100

In many ways the history of C. H. Powell Company is a reflection of the growth and changes in the economy of the United States over the past century. In providing its core services of international freight forwarding and customs clearance to exporters and importers since its founding in 1919, C.H. Powell Company has been a logistics provider in the global economy long before these terms came into common use. In March of 1919 Charles H. Powell left his position as Foreign Freight Agent at Adams Express Company and set up his own business to facilitate and support international trade. In doing so he established himself in a long line of entrepreneurs who had been responsible for the growth of Boston's shipping industry since colonial times. At his first office at 88 Broad Street, with a view of Boston Harbor and close to the U.S. Customs House, he and five employees saw to the details of freight forwarding in the export of merchandise and of customs house brokerage for the import of goods from other countries. One of these employees, Lillian Mackin, who had left Adams Express with Mr. Powell, played a significant role in establishing the new firm and would later become his wife.

The first customs house broker licensed in the port of Boston, C.H. Powell Company soon assumed an international character with the opening of an office in Liverpool, England in 1925 to coordinate the shipping and storage of British wool for some of its Massachusetts accounts. The growth of the company continued with the opening of an office at One Broadway in New York in 1929, allowing C.H. Powell to better serve its New England client base. By the 1930's New England was earning its reputation as the textile machinery capitol of the world. This machinery, and subsequently its parts and related equipment, became a major export commodity for the company for the next forty years. During the 1930's tanning materials and liquor were among the most significant imported commodities handled by the company.

During World War II when there was little commercial demand for the services of freight forwarders and customs brokers Mr. Powell was instrumental in setting up a cooperative in which forwarders condensed their efforts and worked as a group. He became known as the Dean of Freight Forwarders. After the War the company began to take on the character of a family business. Following his military service in World War II Alfred Powell became the first member of the second generation to work for C.H. Powell when he joined the company in 1946. Alfred was followed by John in 1951, Peter in 1959 and Paul in 1962 at which point all of the founder's son were active in what had truly become a family business.

During the 1950's Canadian lumber became a major import commodity for the firm. C.H. Powell handled shipments from Vancouver and Victoria, B.C., on the west coast of Canada, serving as port agents for vessels arriving in Boston via the Panama Canal. The lumber was shipped in bulk quantities and unloaded by hand at Castle Island upon arrival in Boston, then packaged and trucked to distributors. In the same decade C.H. Powell Company provided its international services to many of the major industrial firms in Massachusetts, among them Monsanto Company (Springfield), Norton Company (Worcester) and General Electric (Lynn). Upon the death of Charles Powell in 1958, Lillian Powell became president of the company and served actively and ably in this role into her eighties.

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In concert with local, national, and global economic development, the 1960's saw a watershed event in the growth of C.H. Powell Company. With the developing commercial viability of air freight as a service mode for international transportation

C.H. Powell made a capital investment in a new enterprise providing air transportation services at Boston's Logan International Airport. Intercontinental Air Freight (Intercon) was the first company specializing in international air freight services to be located at Logan and set the standard for the airfreight industry in Boston for many years. In addition to being the first customs broker at the airport, Intercon was the first to operate a second shift to accommodate late arriving cargo, the first to operate an in-house computer system and the first to offer training in government regulations concerning international activities to its clients.

Powell's account base expanded to reflect the growth of the technology corridor along Route 128, including firms such as Polaroid Corporation, Honeywell Computer Systems, General Radio and The Foxboro Company. Intercon actively assisted Digital Equipment Corporation in the licensing and transport of its first overseas order. C.H. Powell Company's airfreight department has been in continuous operation in Boston for over sixty years.

The sixties also saw the continuing exodus of manufacturing firms from Massachusetts and the rest of New England to the Southeastern part of the country due to the availability of less expensive labor. Many of Powell's long-standing customers followed this pattern, especially in the textile machinery industry, with Massachusetts firms such as Crompton & Knowles, Parks-Cramer, Whiting Machine, Saco Lowell and Draper Corporation relocating their manufacturing facilities to North and South Carolina. While this trend had a negative impact on trade volume moving through the Port of Boston it also heightened the demand for trade-related services in the Southeast. In 1975 C.H. Powell Company opened offices in Baltimore, Charleston and Greer, South Carolina, expanding significantly beyond its Massachusetts base to meet this demand.

This period also saw the development of containerization as the standard mode for ocean-borne commerce. Related changes in labor rules and practices paved the way for third party consolidation of ocean shipments and C.H. Powell Company was one of the first firms in Boston to offer this service, in conjunction with European partners Damco and ASG.

Throughout the sixties and seventies the import and export of consumer goods became a major factor in international trade and again Powell's roster of Massachusetts clients reflected this trend including firms such as The Gillette Company, Ocean Spray, Franklin Sports, Spalding, Milton-Bradley and Parker Brothers. In 1973 C.H. Powell Company was a recipient of the Presidential "E" Award presented in recognition of significant contributions to the development of United States export trade.

Another significant transformation taking place during the seventies was the influx of third-generation family members into the firm. This both heightened the need for and enhanced the ability of the company to further expand. Offices were added in Savannah (1984), Atlanta (1986), and Norfolk (1989). In the nineties the company expanded further, opening offices in St. Louis, Los Angeles, Seattle, New Orleans, Chicago, Miami and Houston, becoming truly national in scope. While

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too numerous to name, (at one time or another sixteen grandchildren of the founder have worked at the company) there are at present six third-generation and three fourth-generation family members working for the company, while Peter remains active sixty years in as Chairman of the Board.

The company is especially proud of its founding role in the Tandem Global Logistics Network in 2007. Together with likeminded partners, C. H. Powell Company offers its customers a consistent cohesive coverage in all global regions of trade, under a brand signifying working together well and closely.

While C.H. Powell Company looks to the future it remains proud of its past, proud of its family tradition and thankful to the many loyal and dedicated people who have contributed to its success since 1919.

About C.H. Powell Company

C.H. Powell Company is globally acting freight forwarding specialist headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. The company was founded by Charles H. Powell in 1919 and now has 18 offices in the United States employing 200 people. It is one of the 14 shareholders and founding member of Tandem Global Logistics Network.

At CH Powell, a “progress together” way of doing business has moved us forward since our founding in Boston, Massachusetts in 1919. We are a fourth-generation family business that has prospered by recognizing the importance of each team member and fostering the ultimate goal of enabling the success of our customers.

For a century, we have helped the flow of imports and exports that have fueled our country’s growth. We have been partners with great industries through rise and fall and transformation. We are participants in history – from our shipping and storage of British wool during the Lend-Lease Program in the 1940s to receiving the President’s “E” Award for excellence in Export Service and being granted the first freight forwarder cargo booking aboard a NASA space shuttle. Yet we are driven by the innovation and opportunity that lies ahead.

C.H. Powell’s Mission

- To provide expert information, technology and services that result in safe and dependable supply movement.
- To demonstrate value by defining efficient supply chain solutions that minimize disruptions to our customers' businesses.
- To deliver the highest level of customer service by being the best personal communicators in our industry.
- To create a work environment where industry experts thrive personally and professionally.

Key to C.H. Powell's mission is delivering the highest level of service by cultivating a work environment where industry experts thrive - so that our clients achieve their unique business objectives and exceed the expectations of *their* customers. Our client service model is based on dedicated teams that are experienced, reliable, and accessible. The long-term partnerships that we foster with clients are built on the long-term-commitment of our team members. The average tenure

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of our professionals far exceeds a decade. Our People are a strategic asset, and we take pride in supporting the very best in the industry.