**§ 8-41. Bills of lading in evidence.**

In all actions by or against common carriers or in the trial of any criminal action in which it shall be thought necessary to introduce in evidence any bills of lading issued by said common carrier or by a connecting carrier, it shall be competent to introduce in evidence any paper-writing purporting to be the original bill of lading, or a duplicate thereof, upon proof that such paper purporting to be such bill of lading or duplicate was received in due course of mail from consignor or agent of said carrier or connecting carrier, or delivered by said common carrier to the consignee or other person entitled to the possession of the property for which said paper purports to be the bill of lading: Provided, that such purported bill of lading shall not be declared to be the bill of lading unless the said purported bill of lading is first exhibited by the plaintiff or his agent or attorney to the defendant or its attorney, or its agent upon whom process may be served, ten days before the trial where the point of shipment is in the State, and twenty days when the point of shipment is without the State. Upon such proof and introduction of the bill of lading, the due execution thereof shall be prima facie established. (1915, c. 287; C.S., s. 1785; 1945, c. 97.)