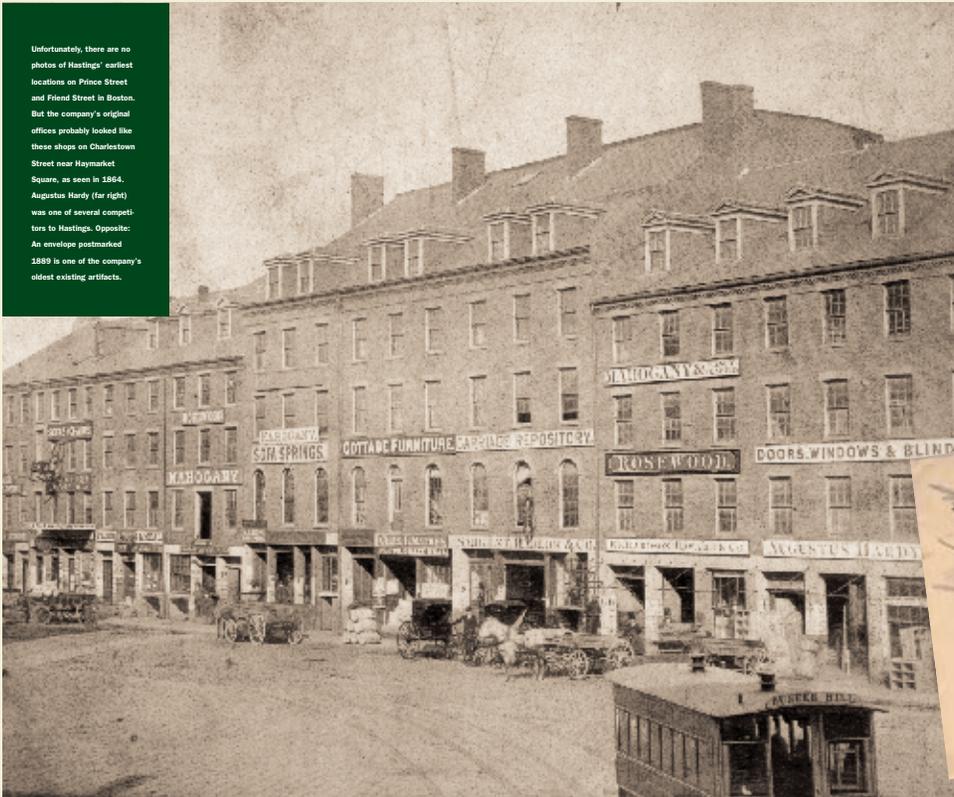


A Look Inside

Unfortunately, there are no photos of Hastings' earliest locations on Prince Street and Friend Street in Boston. But the company's original offices probably looked like these shops on Charlestown Street near Haymarket Square, as seen in 1864. Augustus Hardy (far right) was one of several competitors to Hastings. Opposite: An envelope postmarked 1889 is one of the company's oldest existing artifacts.



CHAPTER ONE

THE FOUNDING

Old companies, like old houses, are full of stories about the lives lived within them. Sometimes they harbor mysteries and a few ghosts as well. Such is the case with A. W. Hastings & Co., Inc. The stories that make up the Hastings legacy will unfold in this book, which is the company's first official history. It begins with a mystery: when was Hastings founded?

For most of its recent history, the company believed it started in 1857. In the 1970s, it uncovered an old catalog that claimed otherwise. "Established 1854" became the company tagline. Research for this book, however, revealed a starting date of 1846 — making the company older than safety pins, *Moby Dick*, and 32 of the 50 states.

Picking up eight years in age is a mere curiosity, though. What's more interesting is figuring out what happened in those missing eight years. Delving into them, we discover that A. W. Hastings & Co., Inc., was *not* founded by Albert Woodman Hastings. The company to which he eventually lent his name was started by others who have been ghosts until now. They include fathers and sons and brothers and blended families, a theme that echoes throughout the company's history.

THE BOSTON ERA 9

A. W. Hastings: An Illustrated History

Problem: Hastings, a window and door company, dates to the mid-1800s . . . but company files had no art from that era.

Solution: Search on eBay, where Hastings CEO Dusty Hoyt found and purchased this elegant old envelope. The 1889 postmark was close enough to the founding date for our purposes. The historical photo on the opposite page came from the Bostonian Society. It features a typical row

of small factories near Haymarket Square circa 1864, including a door and window maker that didn't survive—a gentle editorial reminder that Hastings has outlasted many competitors.

The Chapter One text introduces the mystery of when Hastings began and who actually founded it. Surprise: It wasn't Albert Woodman Hastings!



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www.corporatehistory.net
info@corporatehistory.net