

Boston Musical Instrument Manfy.

Boston, Massachusetts

- 1869 Company formed from Graves & Co. and Wright & Co. Leading craftsmen were George, Elbridge & William Graves, E. G. Wright, Henry Esbach, Louis F. Hartman & William Goldman Reed. #71 Sudbury St. at corner of Hawkins St. First catalog is September 1869 (directory published July 1 does not include them so probably started in the summer).
- 1870 Elbridge Wright leaves to join Hall & Quinby. Samuel Graves retires after a stroke then dies in 1878 (dir).
- 1871 William Graves now gone & E.G. Wright dies (dir).
- 1874 Elbridge Graves is now gone (dir).
- 1875 William Reed is listed as Treasurer & George Graves is now gone (dir).
- 1877 Boston introduces the new One Star cornet "Ne Plus Ultra," which is Latin for "none better."
- 1879 Henry Esbach is granted patent #214,498 for cornet design (photo 2; photo 3 from Horn-u-copia.net).
- 1880 Esbach's best Three Star cornet is introduced.
- 1882 A fire does some damage to the factory.
- 1884 Herbert Clarke decides to use a Three Star cornet, which gives the company much recognition.
- 1887 Catalog includes 2-star & 3-star cornets (below).

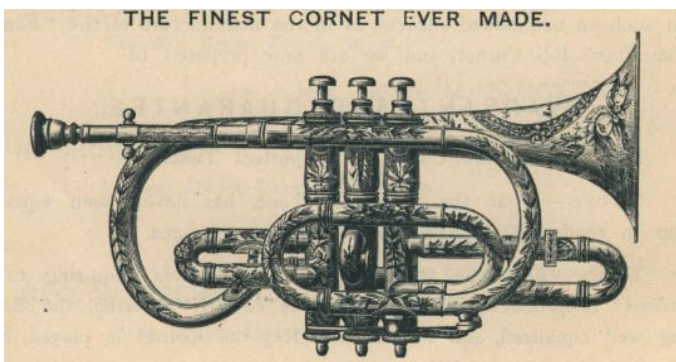
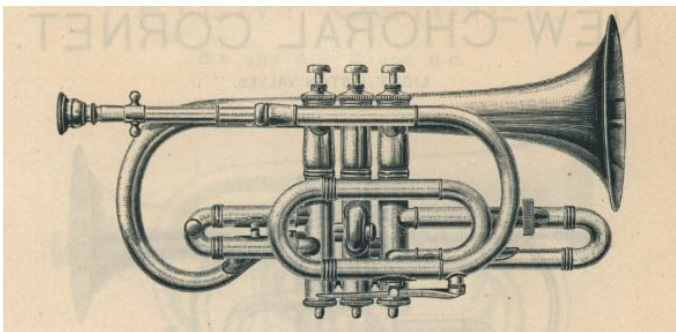
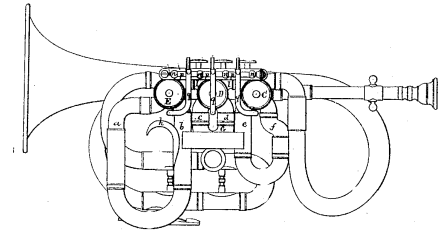


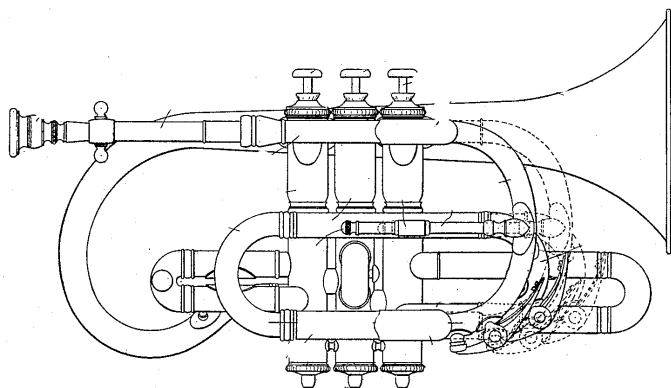
Photo 1: Robb Stewart

Photo 4: auction listing

Below is Three Star cornet #10773 c.1890 (author's photo)



1889 Henry Esbach is granted patent #417,671 on 12-17 with assignment to Boston MIM for a Bb/A quick change slide.



1899 A July 7th fire destroys the factory and all stock (*MTR*).

1900 Boston Musical Inst. Manuf. moves to #51 Chardon St. Hartman, Esbach & Reed are all still with company (*dir*).

1902 Henry Esbach dies on May 22 at age 75 (*MTR*).

1903 Hartman dies at age 76. The company name changes to Boston Musical Instrument Co. (or poss. 1902).

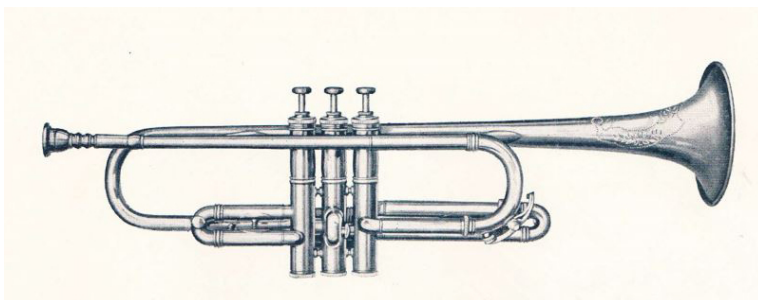
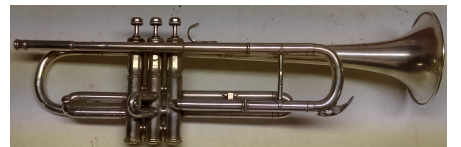
Below is Three Star cornet #16314 from c.1903 (author's photo) with name change. Cornet 15523 has the old name "manufactory."



[Photos at right from Horn-u-copia.net or auction sales except photo 2 from Robb Stewart.]



- 1904 George Gale (Reed's father-in-law) becomes the president and manager. His son Willard is treasurer.
- 1905 Reed dies at age 59 (*MTR*). BMI Co., #51 Chardon (dir).
- 1913 They incorporate as Boston Musical Instrument Company. Three Star cornet #20616 photo 1 at right, c.1915, changed very little since its introduction; it now has a fixed lead pipe.
- 1914 Cundy-Bettoney purchased BMIC (Farrar, *AMIS* newsletter Feb. 1990, p.5) (or perhaps 1918, see below).
- 1916 George Gale dies; Willard becomes president; Charles Harris is manager.
- 1916 Cundy-Bettoney moves manuf. to #102-106 Chestnut, Jam. Plains & their sales room to #51 Chardon (Farrar, p.5).
- 1916 The Boston directory has C-B at #66 Hanover St. (this is in conflict with the above statement unless it was later that year).
- 1917 Boston now offers the "Boss-Tone" trumpet (photos 2-4 and below). The lowest serial number I have found so far is 20740. Some have the second slide straight out while others angle back.



This left side view of Boss-Tone #22412 shows the secondary tuning slide (author's collection).



- 1918 BMIC & C-B now both at #51 Chardon (dir) (this would put the sale & move listed in 1916 above in 1918).
- 1919 Purchased by the Cundy-Bettoney Co. (Ayars). [photos on right from Horn-u-copia.net]

- 1922 Listed at #228 Tremont St., room 6, with C-B Co. (dir). New Model 11 three-star trumpet (*MTR*, Sept 1921).
- 1924 Boston Three Star trumpets made by C-B have been good sellers for Grinnell Brothers in Detroit (*MTR*, January).
- 1925 BMI Co., #106 Chestnut (same as C-B factory) (dir).
- 1927 Common stock is reduced from \$21,000 to \$9,000 on Jan 4. Instrument maker Julius Kretschmar dies in Nov. after 50 years with BMIC (*MTR*). C-B shows a Boston 3 Star trumpet at the National Music Conv. (*MTR*, June).
- 1928 The US Army band under Captain William Stannard has been outfitted with Boston Three Star trumpets and cornets made by the C-B Co. (*MTR*, August). [photo 2 is cornet 24587 marked "USQMC" so perhaps made for this contract]
- 1936 "The Cundy-Bettoney Co. still makes some of these cornets and trumpets, which had no real competitor until 1915" (statement by Harry Bettoney; Ayars, p.220).
- 1939 "V. G. Latham, Boston, president of the Boston Musical Instrument Co. at Hampton Hotel" (*Times-Union*, Albany, June 4th).
- 1955 The corporation is officially dissolved on March 23.



Boston Trumpets:

The earliest modern trumpet I have found is #18xxx from c.1908.



This odd one has #9367 (see last page for another like this)

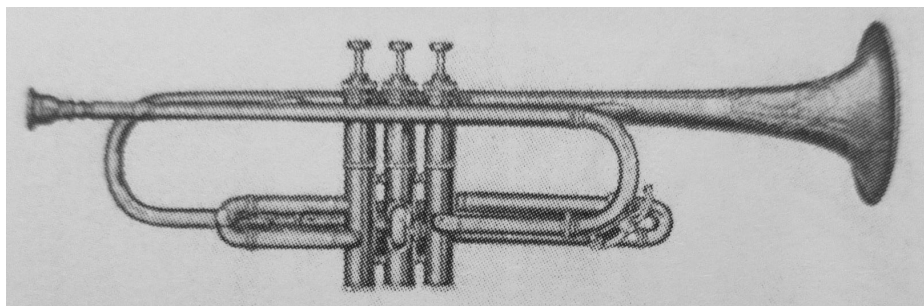


Photos this page from
Horn-u-copia.net except
cornet above by
author.

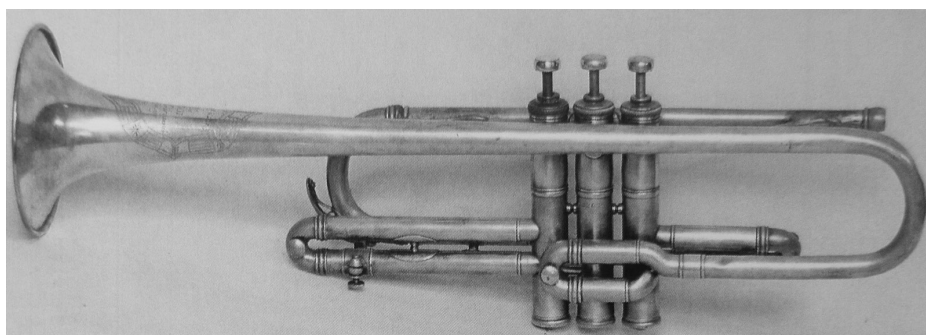
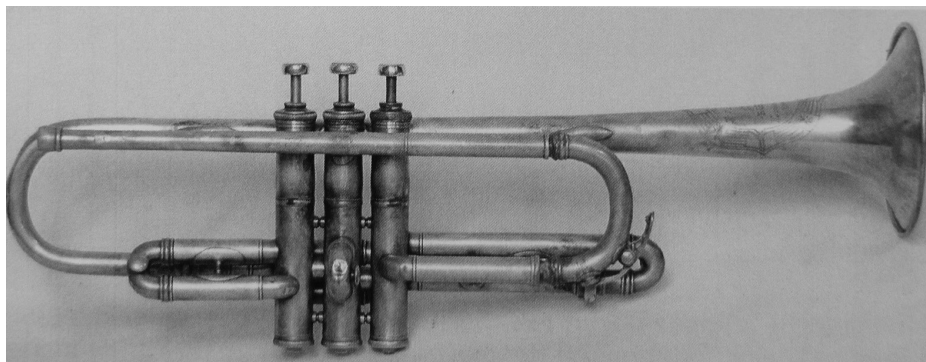
Boss-Tone model from c.1917; 2nd slide angled back (Horn-u-copia)



Boss-Tone catalog drawing c.1919



Boss-Tone from same period (Robb Stewart photos)



Here is Boss-Tone #22412 with its original case & accessories from c.1920; the extra tuning slide is for A (author's collection).



This one is highly engraved with a pattern similar to the cornet from c.1900 at the top of page 1.



In September of 1921, their ads in *Jacob's Monthly* change from the Boss-Tone to the Model 11 trumpet. I have found these with serial numbers as low as 23252 which overlaps a little with the Boss-Tone numbers.

The New "THREE STAR" Trumpet



Style 11
MADE BY THE
BOSTON MUSICAL INSTRUMENT COMPANY
MAKERS OF BRASS INSTRUMENTS FOR 80 YEARS BOSTON 30, MASS.

We have just perfected the new model "Three Star Trumpet," as fine a trumpet as human skill can produce—designed to meet the requirements of the most exacting players—of the same high quality of workmanship as other "Boston" products.

Steadily maintaining its policy of conservatism over a period of 80 years, the Boston Musical Instrument Co. has never resorted to extensive display advertising—it has never subsidized artists. It has established its national prestige solely through its high quality product.

Many of the "Boston Three Star Cornets" are still in daily use after periods of from 30 to 40 years service. Their owners become endeared to them and rarely are they offered for sale. BOSTON instruments are lifelong friends.

Reliable Agents Wanted **Send for Catalog and Free Trial Offer**



Here is Model 11 #23402 from c.1922. There are a number of design changes that appear with this model including a new bell logo (top right photo), stamped serial numbers instead of engraved, and single, rounded ferrules instead of the traditional triple bands (author's photos).




This came with its original case and accessories which matches the catalog drawing on the next page.



The only variation with this c.1921 ad is the double-brace on the tuning slide. The oddity here is the stamp with Bradlee St where they moved to in c.1940 (ad courtesy Robb Stewart).

THE
BOSTON **THREE** **STAR** **TRUMPET**



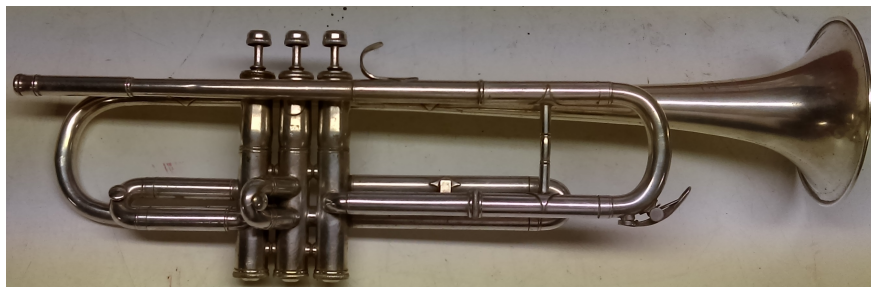
NEW MODEL NO. 11

A MASTERPIECE

MADE BY
THE BOSTON MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CO.
BOSTON 30, MASSACHUSETTS

FOR SALE BY
THE CUNBY - BETTONEY CO. Inc.
Bradlee St, Hyde Park, Boston, Mass.

This one is probably a little later with flat ferrules.



Late French Horns: Here are three French horns with the highest serial numbers I have found, around 25500. Both have a bell engraving similar to the Model 11 trumpets. Were these some of the last instruments sold c.1928?



Photos from Horn-u-copia.net

The Bayley Cornet:

In 1861, Benjamin F. Richardson of Boston partnered with John Bayley Sr. of England to produce the Bayley cornet with the bell below the valves. This partnership only lasted one year but Richardson continued to make this horn as shown in the 1863 ad below.



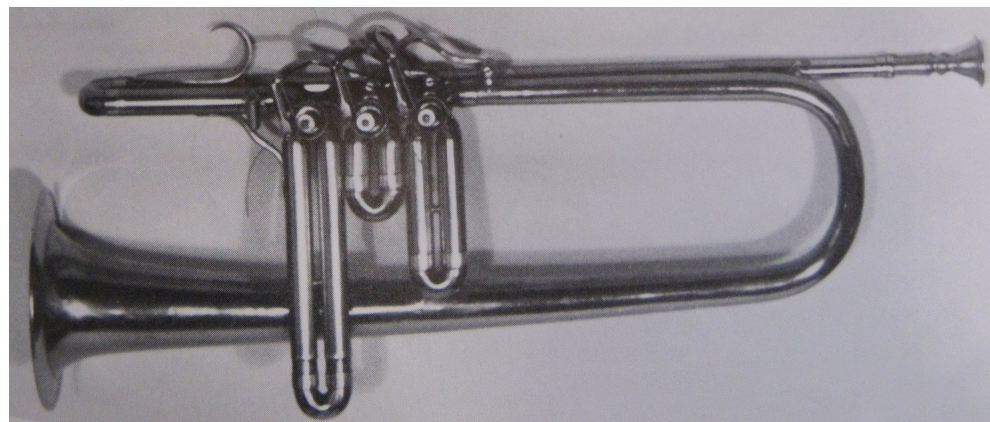
B. F. RICHARDSON,
MANUFACTURER AND DEALER IN ALL KINDS OF
Musical Instruments for Military Bands, &c.

Originator and Sole Manufacturer of the
Celebrated "Bayley Cornet,"
Pronounced by all our best Musicians to be
The Richest Toned Instrument in the World!

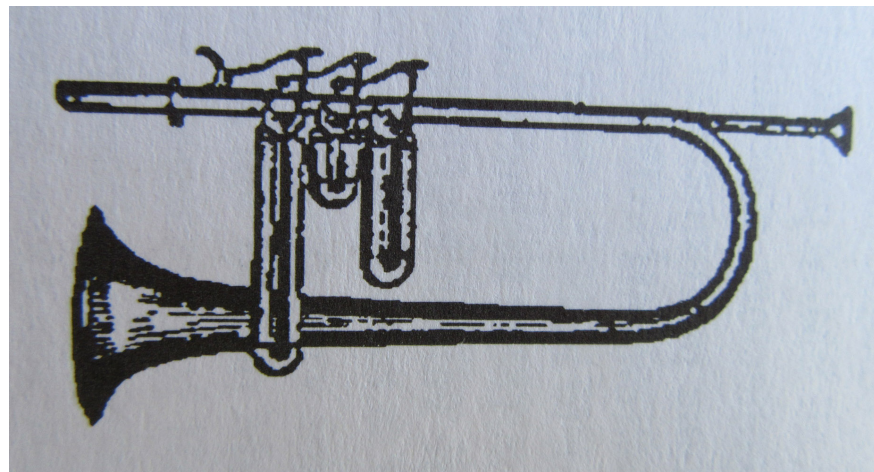
No. 13 WATER STREET, BOSTON.

The advertisement features a detailed illustration of a Bayley cornet, a trumpet with a bell positioned below the valves. The text is arranged in a formal, typographic style typical of 19th-century print.

Here is a rare example made by Richardson



The 1869 catalog by BMIM shows this same cornet for sale



The 1937 book by Ayars on Boston instrument makers says that there is "no record available of how or when they [BMIM] took over the Bayley cornet." I have yet to find an example of one they actually made, but it's possible they did.

Here are some examples of Boston ads in the city directory.



Boston Musical Instrument Manufactory.
(Formerly E. G. WRIGHT & CO.)
MANUFACTURERS OF

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

New Pocket E flat Cornet.
71 Sudbury Street, BOSTON.

1874

HENRY ESBACH. L. F. HARTMAN. W. G. REED.



Auction photos



To the right is an example of the “new pocket Eb cornet”. It even has a fourth key on the lead pipe.

In 1877 they changed their ad to a piston valve cornet.



Boston Musical Instrument Manufactory.
(Formerly E. G. WRIGHT & CO.,)
MANUFACTURERS OF

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

71 Sudbury St. Boston, Mass.

1877

HENRY ESBACH. L. F. HARTMAN. W. G. REED.



In 1881 they switched to the Esbach patent cornet.

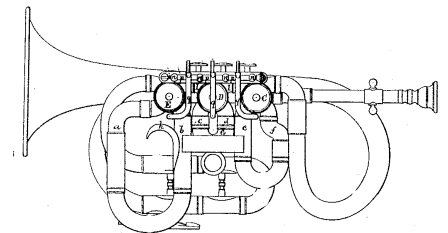


Boston Musical Instrument Manufactory.
1881 (Formerly E. G. WRIGHT & CO.),
MANUFACTURERS OF

Musical Instruments

71 Sudbury St. BOSTON, MASS.

Henry Esbach, W. G. Reed,
L. F. Hartman.



The 1900 ad shows the new address change after the fire.




BOSTON MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MANUFACTORY
1900 Celebrated Band Instruments.
51 CHARDON STREET, BOSTON.

The Famous "Three Star" Cornet

The high notes above C are easily obtained on this instrument. The low notes are full, rich and resonant. The workmanship and quality of materials used in the manufacture of the "Three Star" Cornet, together with its fine tone and accurate tuning, are known the world over.

The "Boss-Tone" Trumpet

Boss-Tone, as the name implies, is a most wonderfully toned instrument. Boston Musical Instruments have for seventy-eight years been the leaders of superlative quality when speaking of band instruments.

The Trumpet with the perfect bore, beautiful finish and workmanship.
The Trumpet with the light valve action.  Write for
The Trumpet with the proper proportions. Catalogue

Boston Musical Instrument Co.

51 CHARDON STREET

Manufacturers of Brass Band Instruments

Boston, Mass.

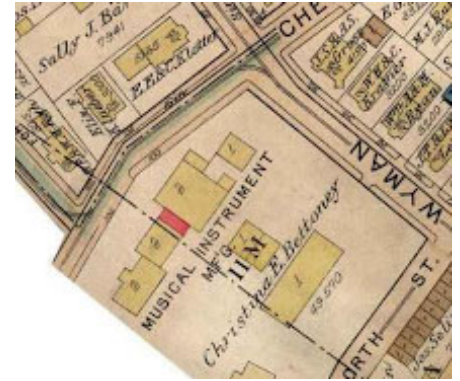
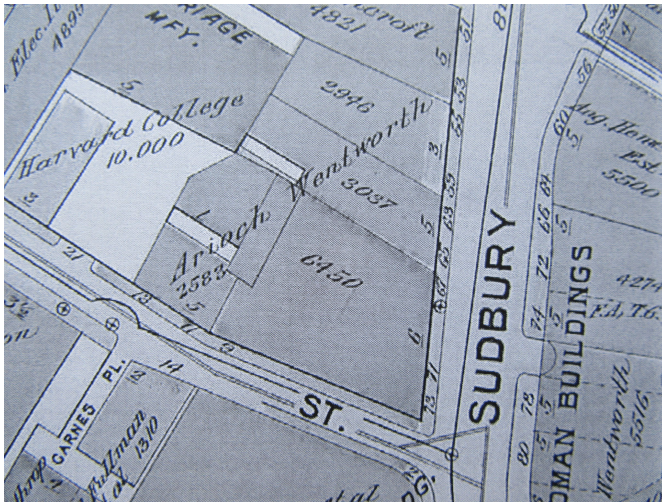
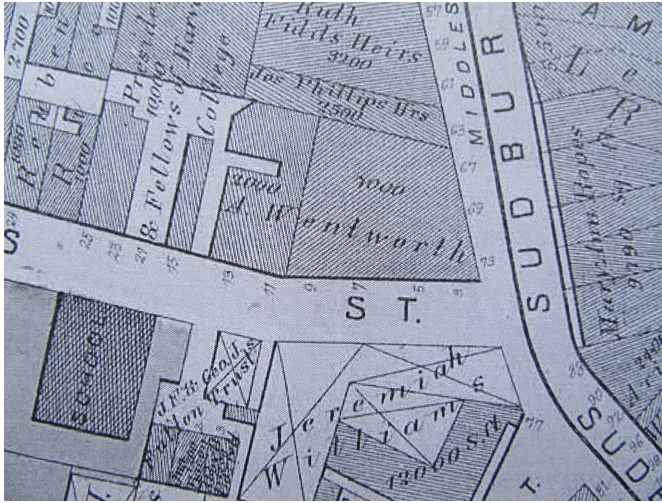
78 years would be 1841 which is a reference to when founder E. G. Wright started in Boston

Boston's trademark from their 1887 catalog

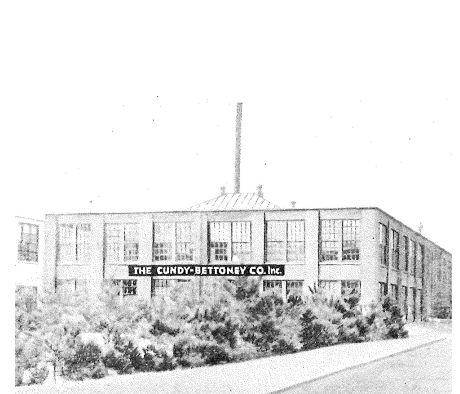


Factory Sites:

#71 Sudbury Street: This site is shown in the 1874 and 1898 maps below as belonging to Arioeh Wentworth, and was at the corner of Sudbury and Hawkins Streets.

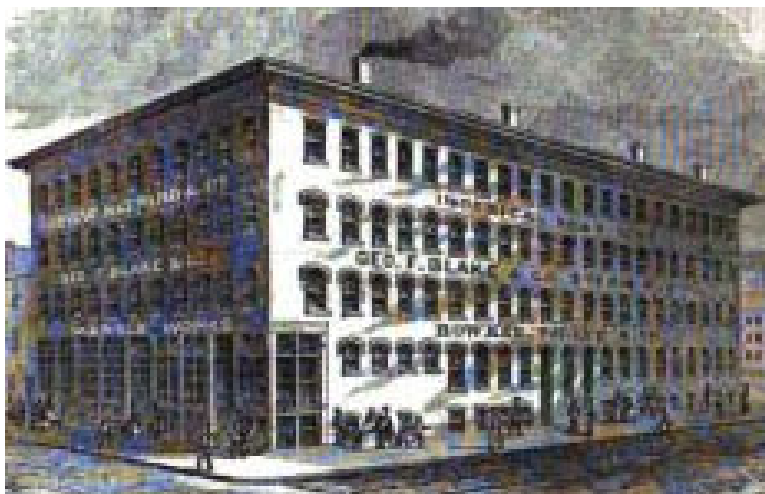


C-B factory at #102-106
Chestnut St, 1916-c1939



#96 Bradlee St factory
c.1940-c.1972

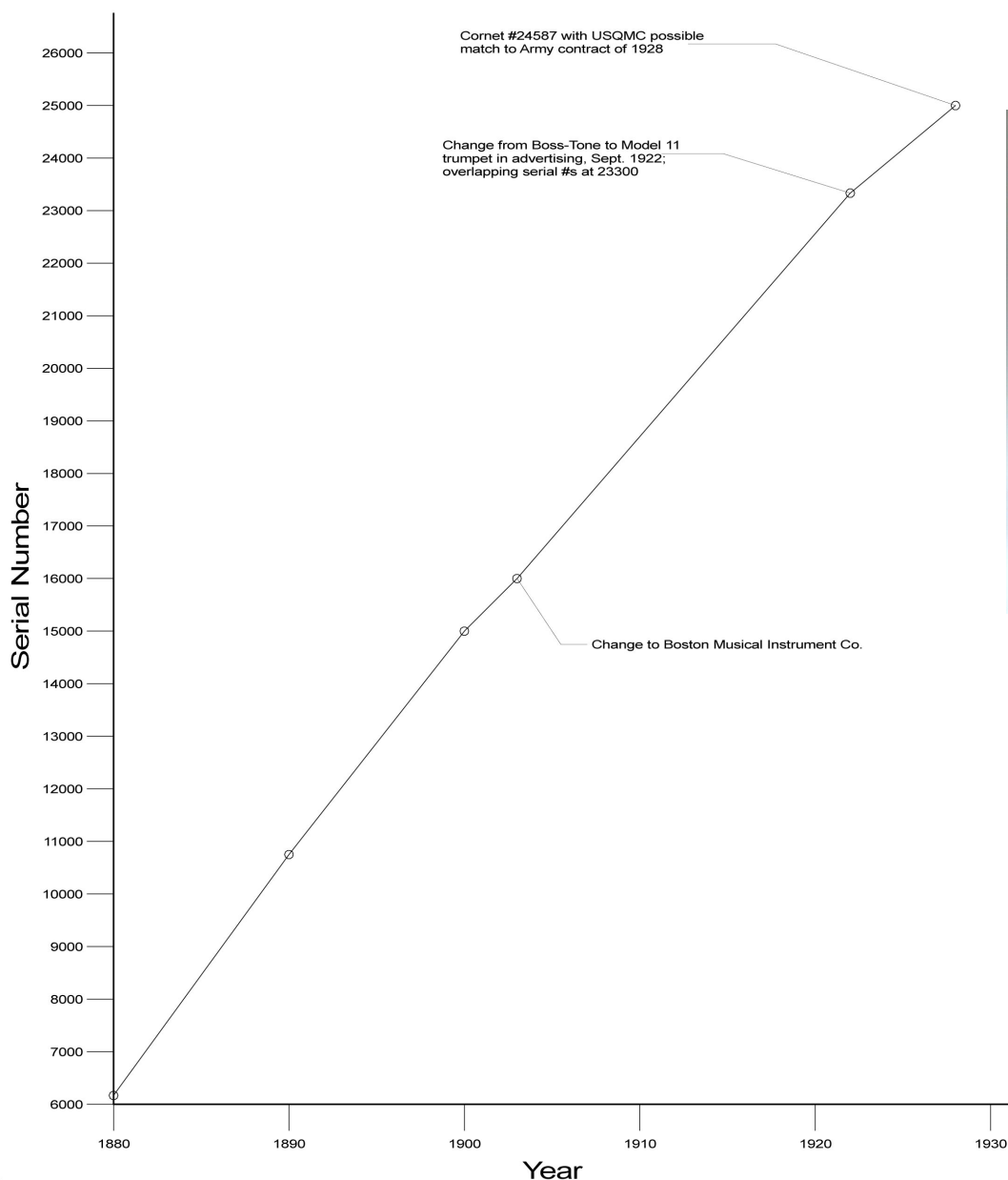
#51 Chardon Street: They moved here in 1900 following the fire that destroyed the business. This was the Bowker & Torrey Marble Works at the corner of Portland Street so they were just renting a section of the building.



Dating Boston Instruments:

According to the serial number list at Horn-u-copia, Boston started numbering their instruments in 1880 at around #6000. After this, we have the c.1903 change from Manufactory to Company in their name which shows up around #16000. The next marker would be the Boss-Tone model trumpets produced from c.1917 to August 1921, which range from 20740 to 23302 in examples I have found. The Model 11 trumpet from mid-1921 to ? have a range of 23252 to 23533 so perhaps only lasting into 1922. Below is a graph of this which seems to fit a steady production rate with a slight slowing down at the end.

Dating Boston Musical Instrument Co. Brass Instruments

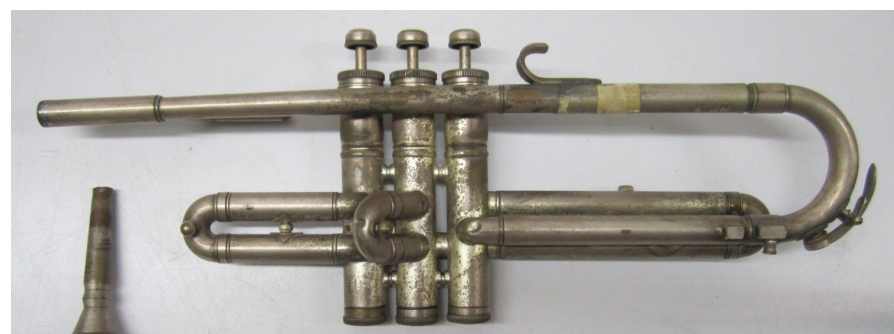


United Musical Instrument Company:

Although not found in the city directories, the name United Musical Instrument Company seems to have been a short-lived precursor to the BMIM. This rare example displays the same construction and engraving style as the Bostons (photos courtesy Nick DeCarlis; Ward collection).



This trumpet defies a category so I have left it for the end. This carries serial #6602 yet is completely unlike anything else made by Boston. My guess is that this is a 1930s example sold by Cundy-Betty. This has a unique bell engraving and stamped serial number. (photos from online auction)



This is the same design with #9367 (Horn-u-copia.net)



These have to be stencil horns but who made them?

Quote from May, 1917 *Musical Messenger*, p.28

"[The Boston Musical Instrument Co.], which is still in existence, and doing a good business, is probably the most conservative of any in the country, and has no time for fads or freaks. It specializes in cornets and has probably made fewer changes in its instruments than any other American house. There can be but one reason for this, which is that the instruments were originally better than most others."