



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Contact: Brian McNiff
Telephone: 617-727-9180

July 11, 2016

**BOSTON FINISHING WORKS, WILLIAMSTOWN, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO THE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Boston Finishing Works complex in Williamstown for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at a recent meeting. The nomination will be submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of Boston Finishing Works in the National Register will help preserve an important part of Williamstown’s industrial past.”

The Boston Finishing Works complex, 160 Water Street, consists of eight Classical Revival-style brick buildings, and three structures. The first building constructed at the complex served A. Loop and Company, established by Arthur Loop and Paul Chadborne, President of Williams College and local industrialist, in 1873. Later known as Loop, Hopkins and Company, the factory employed 23 people and operated until 1883. Successive owners brought new industries to the property, adding buildings or adapting those that already existed to suit their needs.

After Loop and Company, the original factory building (now known as Building 10) was sporadically occupied until 1892, when Boston Finishing Works, a cotton processing company originally located in South Boston, purchased the property.

-more-

Boston Finishing Works constructed the majority of the buildings that exist on the property today. The company specialized in the processing of unfinished cotton cloth through bleaching, dyeing, cutting, folding, and napping, and employed roughly 75 people until competition caused it to close in 1906. From 1909 to 1930, the John Boyd Manufacturing Company occupied the complex, producing fine textiles such as corduroy and velvet. In 1936, the Cornish Wire Company of New York City purchased the property. Cornish Wire produced radio and electrical wire, as well as extension cords and cord sets for appliances, hand-held power tools, and small electrical products.

The company started with just four employees doing site preparation, but soon Cornish Wire became a major employer in Williamstown, with 225 employees in 1943 and roughly 500 employees by the 1950s, rivaling Williams College as the town's largest employer. In addition to manufacturing appliances and electronics, the company provided products to transmission-line suppliers and the US military during and after World War II.

The General Cable Corporation, a nationwide firm based in Providence, RI, purchased Cornish Wire in 1960, and the factory remained one of the largest employers in town until the late 1970s, when demand began to wane and employment shrank.

Carol Cable purchased the property in 1984, continuing operations at a smaller scale. As they did not need the entire facility, the company rented some areas to other businesses. Carol Cable ultimately ceased manufacturing in 1996, but the property is still commonly known as the Cable Mill.

The property is presently undergoing conversion into housing, utilizing state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. The rehabilitation has included masonry repair and new aluminum windows, which replicate historic windows on all buildings.

The Boston Finishing Works complex is one of five historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

-more-

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

-End-