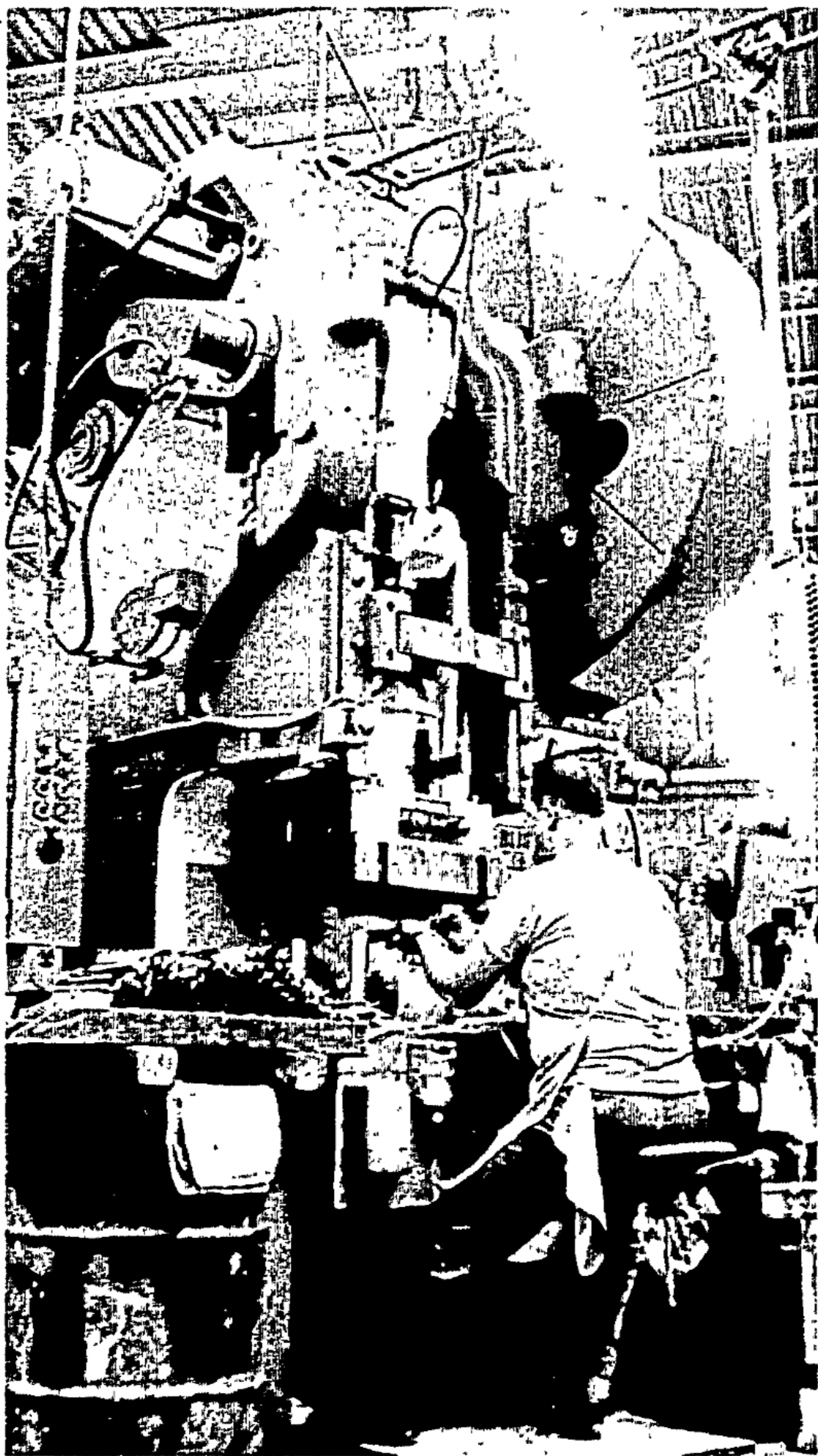


**THEY
HELP MAKE
RHODE ISLAND
GREAT #3**

Six businesses under one label:

This is the third in a series about major companies in the state which have made Rhode Island known throughout the world. Other installments will appear from time to time.



GIANT STAMPING MACHINE punches out stapler housings at East Greenwich plant.



DESK STAPLERS go together along this bench assembly line. Bostitch makes 900 different staplers and stitchers.

That big, ultra-modern Bostitch, Inc. plant overlooking South County Trail in East Greenwich wouldn't be there today if an upstate New York firm hadn't rejected an inventor's device 66 years ago.

The inventor was the late Thomas A. Briggs. His device is the Boston wire stitcher. Together they formed the nucleus of the Boston Wire Stitcher Co., forerunner of Bostitch, the world's largest manufacturer of staples, stapling equipment and wire stitching machinery.

In Bostitch is a Cinderella story of American business enterprise. The company started in a small, backyard barn in Arlington, Mass. Its product had already been turned down by one company that failed to see its potential.

Today Bostitch accounts for about 55 per cent of the industrial stapling market. It manufactures machinery for the corrugated container industry, and recently has developed a portable air-powered common nailer for the building industry.

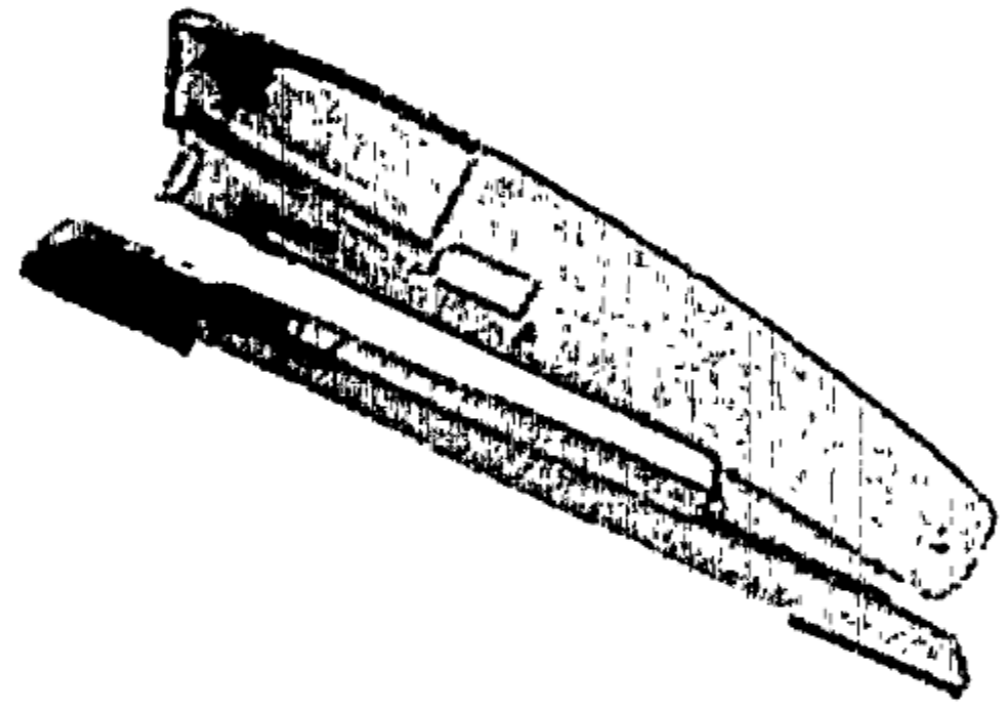
The company is literally six businesses under one management. It makes stapling machines, container machinery and equip-

ment, wire staples, pneumatic nailing machines, wire stitchers, and nails.

Out of the 679,464-square-foot Bostitch plant in East Greenwich pour a variety of products ranging from pocket-sized staplers selling for 98 cents all the way up to a \$105,000 folder, gluer, stitcher combination machine for making corrugated containers.

In its fiscal year ended Aug. 31 last year, company sales and other income amounted to \$35,305,249 on which net profit was \$4,131,777. This year domestic and continued on next page

BOSTITCH®



By
JOSEPH L. GOODRICH

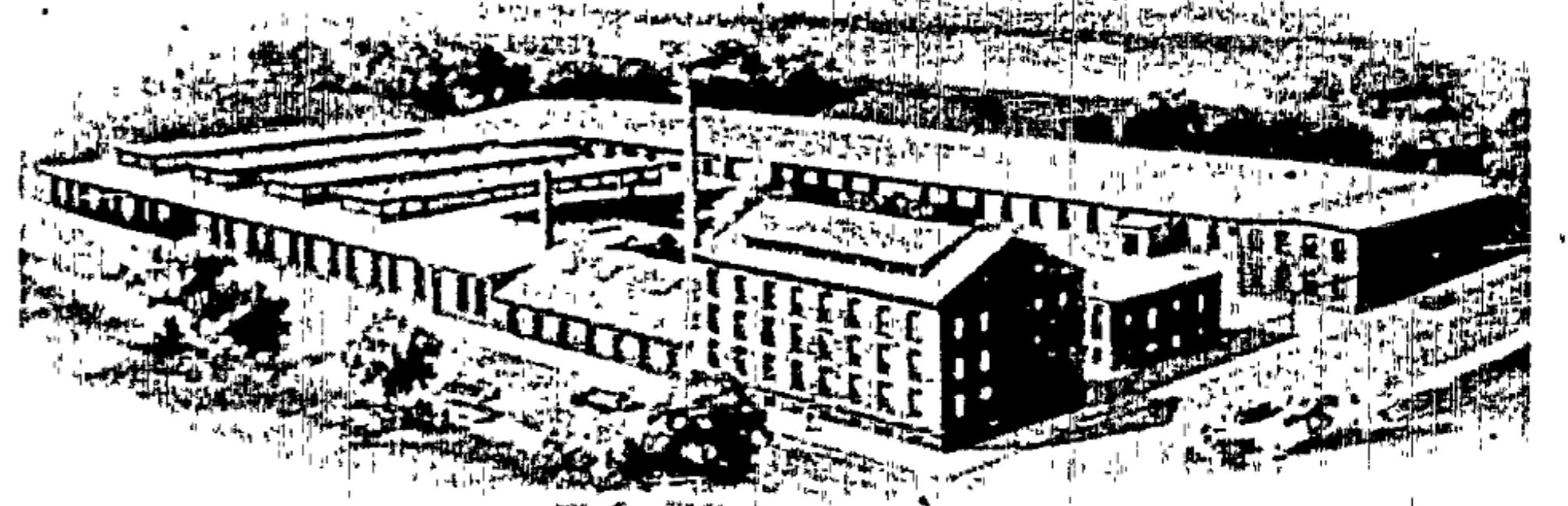


LATEST PRODUCT is this pneumatic nailer which drives up to 300 nails in one loading.

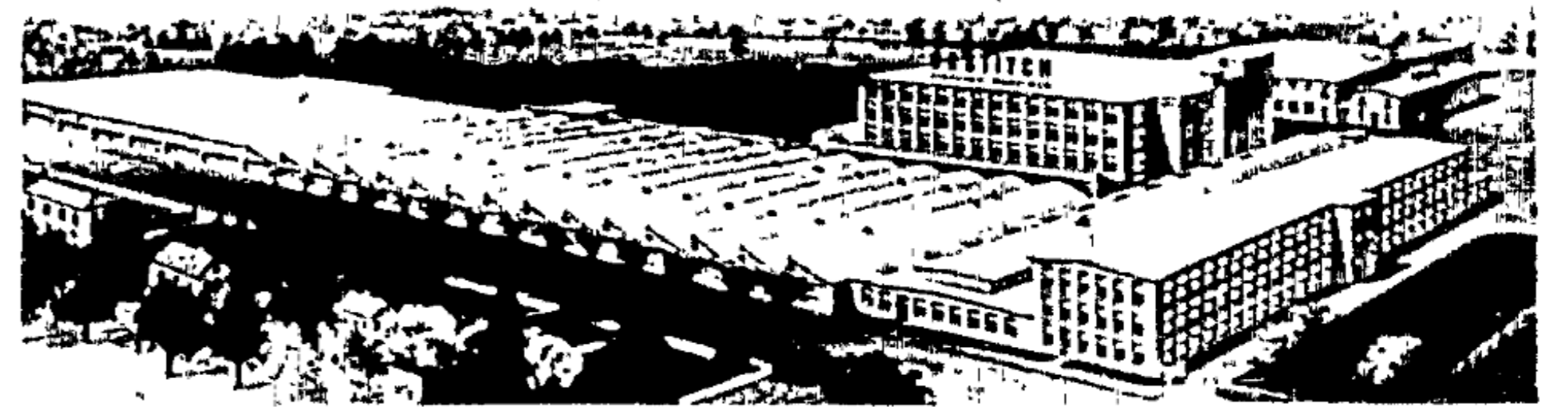
BOSTITCH got its start in this barn at Arlington, Mass., at turn of century.



FIRST PLANT was this former textile mill on Division Street, Warwick.



PAWCATUCK became the home of Bostitch when it left Rhode Island in 1946.



PRESENT PLANT in East Greenwich (see cover) has been expanded since 1957.



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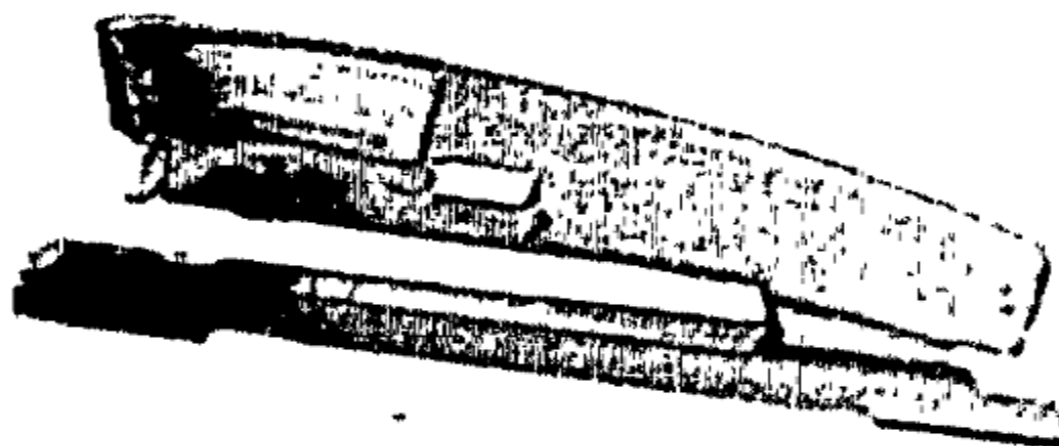
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continued

The first stitcher was rejected

foreign sales are expected to top 43 million.

The present fiscal year is the last Bostitch will complete as an independent company. Bostitch stockholders have approved the acquisition of the company by Textron Inc., another Rhode Island firm. On Sept. 1, Bostitch is scheduled to become a division of Textron.

As such, it will be backed by the resources of one of the nation's major industrial corporations. With this support, Bostitch is sure to exploit its growth potential even more rapidly than it is now.

Bostitch has made East Greenwich the pivotal point for extensive foreign operations which include wire staple manufacturing plants in West Germany, England, Canada, Mexico and a 25 per cent interest in a Japanese company that makes Bostitch products under license for Asian markets.

In this country, Bostitch operates a 140,000 square foot wire manufacturing plant in Clinton, Conn. and is building a new 83,000-square-foot plant for its Industrial Stapling Machine Division in Visalia, Calif. The division makes heavy stapling and nailing equipment and staples for industrial uses.

Altogether there are 2,108 manufacturing and sales personnel employed in Bostitch domestic and foreign operations. About 850 of those people are employed at the East Greenwich plant.

All of this had its beginning in a barn in the backyard of Mr. Briggs' Arlington home in 1900. An inventive genius with a very limited formal education, Mr. Briggs was commissioned by the Morrison Stitcher Co. of Niagara Falls, N.Y., to develop a wire stitching machine for binding sales order pads and pamphlets. Mr. Briggs invented the machine, but the Morrison people rejected it.

That started a chain of events that hasn't stopped since. A Boston firm, the American Type Founders Co., saw merit in the stitcher and decided to back it. In 1902, Mr. Briggs set up a Maine corporation called the Boston Wire Stitcher Co. and the foundations for Bostitch had been laid.

The company didn't begin manufacturing immediately. The first Boston wire stitchers, 300 of them, were made for the company by Taft-Peirce Manufacturing Co. of Woonsocket in 1903. That was the beginning of Bostitch's long love affair with Rhode Island.

A year later, Mr. Briggs, then 47, set up his Boston Wire Stitcher Co. in the former

Dews Woolen Mill on Division Street in Warwick, just over the East Greenwich town line. He started out with eight employees.

By 1909 it became apparent to Mr. Briggs that while he could handle the mechanical aspects of production, he was no hand at finances. He began casting about for a financial man. An insurance agent friend of his put him on to a young fellow who had been managing the Thomas F. Pierce & Son shoe store in Providence.

That young fellow was Joseph D. A. Whalen, then 25, who was graduated from Bryant College at the age of 16. Mr. Whalen, now 82, recalled recently that when he took the job in 1909 he figured it would last about three months. Instead, Mr. Briggs made him company treasurer and he stayed on for the next 57 years.

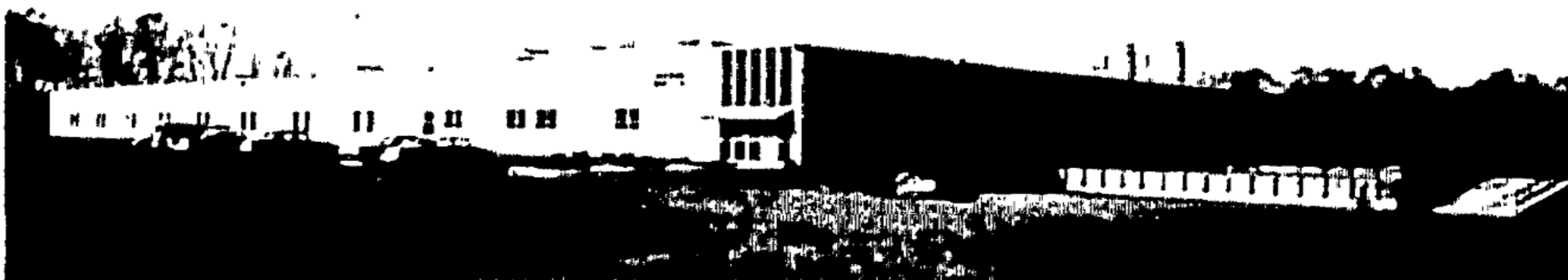
Mr. Whalen subsequently became presi-



BOSTITCH BUILDERS: The late Thomas A. Briggs (left), founder, and Joseph D. A. Whalen, who has helped guide the company's destinies for the last 57 years.

dent and a director of the company and later served as chairman of the board of directors. He is still an active member of the board. Under his leadership, Bostitch was transformed from a small business into a major corporate enterprise in its field.

When Mr. Whalen joined the company its work force numbered 40 people and its annual sales of wire stitchers were about \$250,000. For many years he and Mr. Briggs were the company's only executives. The



WIRE MANUFACTURING PLANT is operated by East Greenwich firm in Clinton, Conn. Completed in 1961, the 140,000-square-foot structure supplies 95 per cent of the company's wire needs.

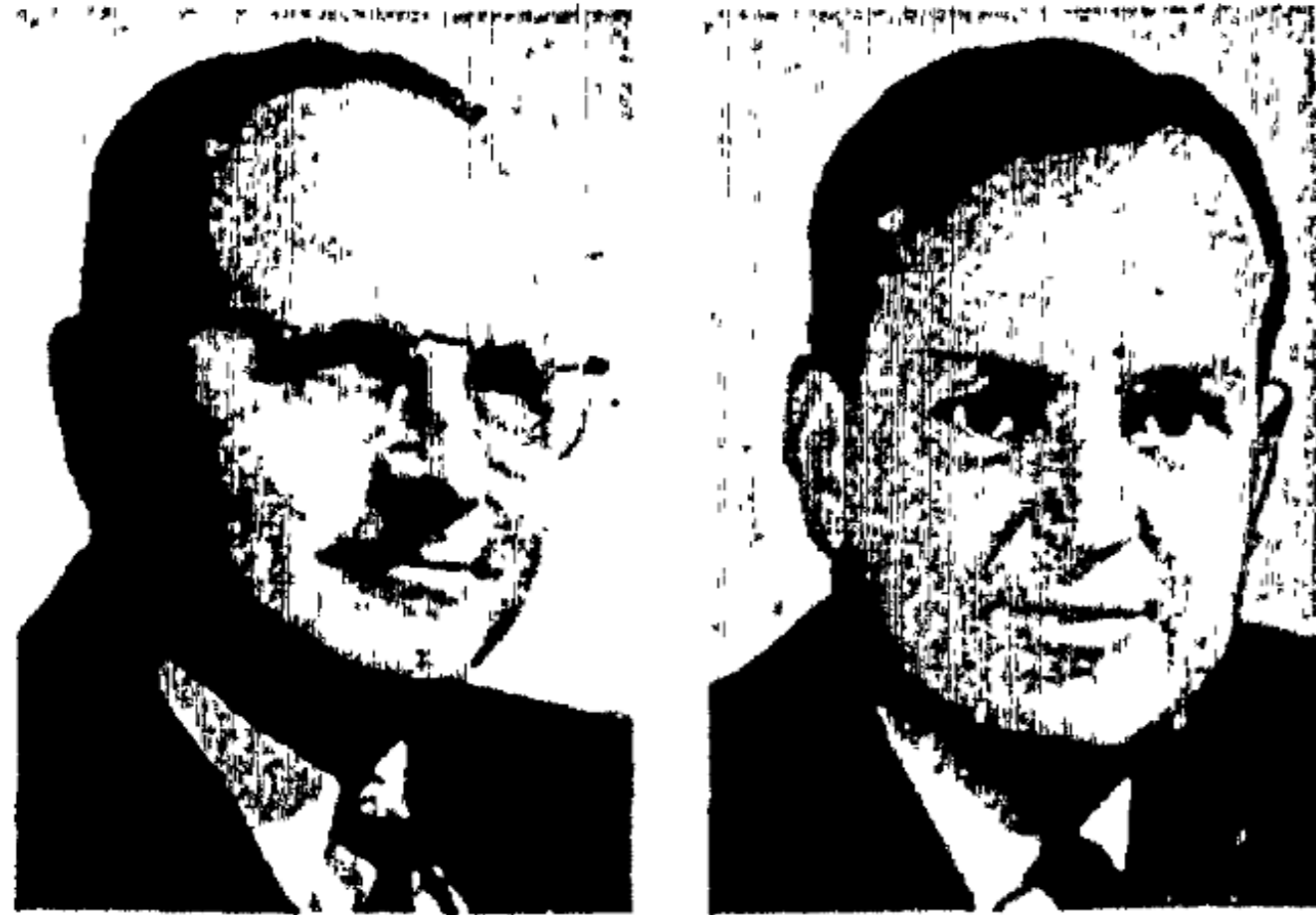
but that didn't stop Mr. Briggs

company didn't even have a board of directors until 1930.

Because Mr. Briggs had an inventor's distaste for administrative details, Mr. Whalen found himself called upon to make major management decisions early in the game. As early as 1910 the youthful company treasurer demonstrated that he had the foresight and imagination needed by a growing company.

In that year, he conceived the name Bostitch, jumping the gun by many years on the current corporate practice of using contractions for company names and trade-marks. More importantly, he had the name registered as the company's trade-mark in this country and throughout the world.

Trade-mark registration of this sort costs money and was quite an expense for such a small firm. But Mr. Whalen's decision has



TOP MANAGEMENT TEAM: Emmet G. Gardner (left), chairman of the board and former president, and M. Claude Schuler, who succeeded Mr. Gardner as president in 1964.

since been vindicated many times over. Bostitch is almost a synonym for stapling equipment today.

The Bostitch name was used in connection with Boston Wire Stitcher's first successful desk model stapler which was introduced in 1923 and sold a million units that first year. It helped employment to climb to 100 persons.

Mr. Briggs died in 1928 at the age of 71 and Mr. Whalen became president of the com-

pany in the following year. The changeover didn't even cause a ripple in management continuity. The same strong, capable hands were on the wheel. Under Mr. Whalen's guidance, the company continued to prosper even in the depths of the depression of the 1930s.

In 1931, for example, the company acquired the Bliss Latham Co. along with that company's Bliss stitcher head used for wire stitching of corrugated cardboard boxes. It gave the Boston Wire Stitcher Co. an entree into the container manufacturing field which was beginning to find its place in the sun. Bostitch has been sharing in the spectacular growth of that industry since.

Under Mr. Whalen's administration, the name Bostitch gained increasing corporate significance. In 1930 the Bostitch Sales Co. was established as the sales subsidiary of the Boston Wire Stitcher Co. to take over the sales function formerly handled exclusively by the American Type Founders Co.

Bostitch Sales Co. was incorporated in 1936 as Bostitch, Inc. and in 1948 this corporation absorbed the Boston Wire Stitcher Co., bringing both sales and manufacturing functions under the Bostitch banner.

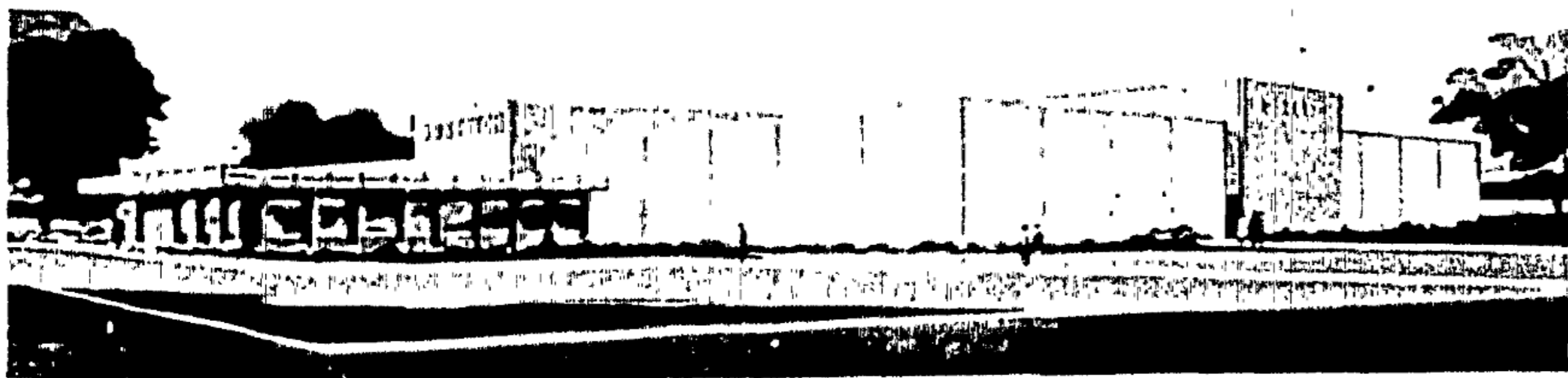
Modern industry's preoccupation with new product development is old hat to Bostitch. Under Mr. Whalen's direction, the Boston Wire Stitcher Co. used it extensively to stimulate growth in the 1930s, coming up with 15 different machines during that period of the nation's worst economic depression.

By 1939 the company work force had increased to 300 persons. It had outgrown the available floor space of the Dews Mill and had purchased the former Shore Mill on King Street in East Greenwich for its stapling machinery and wire staple production operations.

Mr. Whalen has something akin to a father's pride in the Bostitch contribution to the nation's war effort in the World War II years. The company became one of the organizers of the New England Small Arms Co. set up to assemble Browning automatic rifles and also established a company in Pawtucket to produce camouflaging material for the Army.

In 1946 the company's long love affair with Rhode Island ended temporarily. Cramped for space at East Greenwich, the firm moved to a 250,000-square-foot plant in Pawcatuck, Conn. It lost about half of its 600 production

continued on page 9



NEW FACTORY for its Industrial Stapling Machine Division is being built by Bostitch in Visalia, Calif. The plant will house the company's manufacturing operations on the West Coast.



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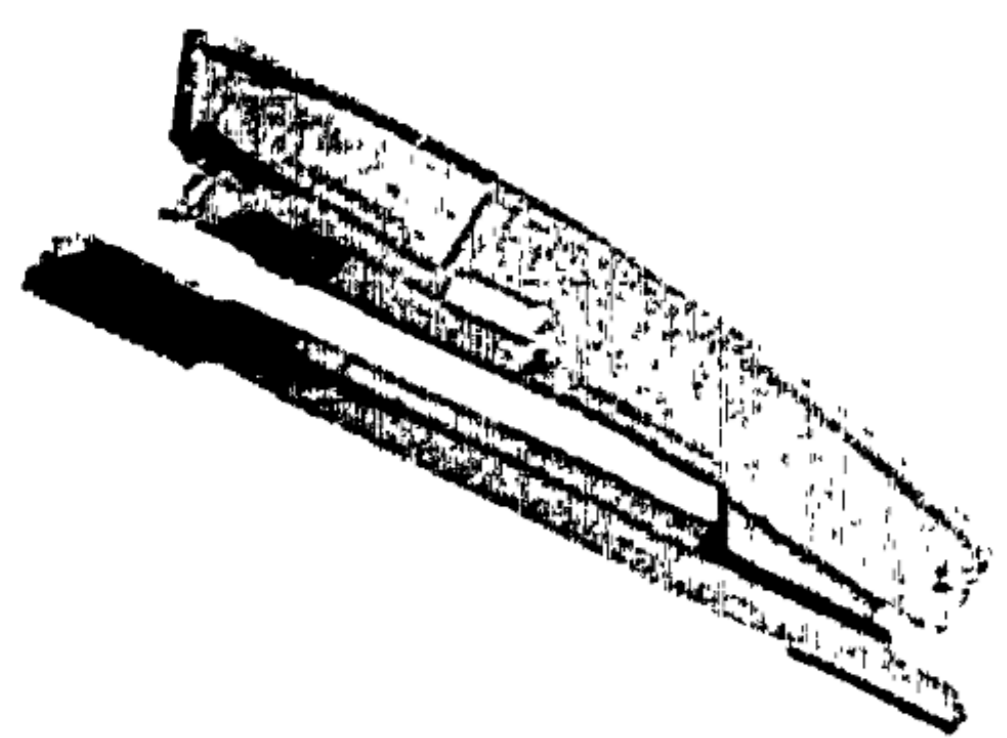
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continued

Expansion on South County Trail?

workers in the process but easily made up the difference in the Westerly area.

In that same year, the company began building a nationwide sales organization. "We had so many products we had to get more men to sell them," Mr. Whalen explained. At that time the company made 800 different stitchers and staplers and 150 different staples. Today it makes 900 different staplers and stitchers.

Mr. Whalen moved up to board chairman of Bostitch in 1952 and he was succeeded in the presidency by Emmet G. Gardner, an energetic decision maker with a background of executive experience in the metal working field. Mr. Gardner had been brought into the company in 1951 as executive vice president.

The new president provided impetus in several directions. In 1956, when Bostitch had outgrown its Pawcatuck facilities, he led the company back to East Greenwich, this time locating in a spanking new 576,664-square-foot plant which it occupied in 1957 on South County Trail.

Determined not to be caught in a plant space squeeze again, Bostitch made sure it had plenty of additional land on which to expand. Its decision was a good one. It already has built on an additional 100,000 square feet of floor space.

It was under Mr. Gardner's leadership that Bostitch developed its foreign production facilities and expanded domestic manufacturing operations to other parts of the country.

From 1958 on the company set up or acquired staple manufacturing operations in West Germany and England and developed a close tie-in with a manufacturer in Japan.

In 1959, Bostitch bought the Universal Wire Co. in Stamford, Conn., and in 1961 relocated it in a new plant in Clinton, Conn. The plant supplies about 95 per cent of Bostitch's wire needs. In 1961, it acquired Calwire Co. in Visalia, Calif., now the company's Industrial Stapling Machine Division.

The results of Mr. Gardner's management can be summed up in cold yet dramatic statistics. When he took over in 1952, Bostitch had an annual sales volume of \$14,572,000. By 1964 when he moved up to board chairman, he had built sales up to \$32,592,000 a year.

M. Claude Schuler, the first Bostitch chief

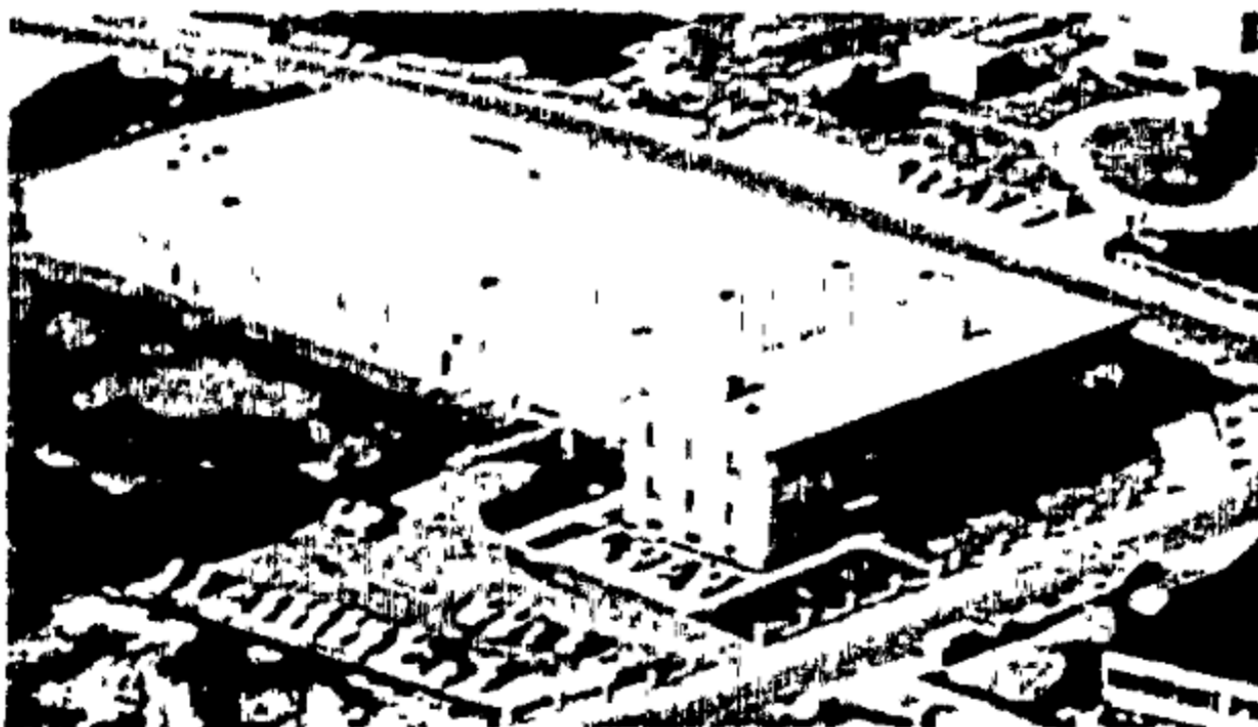
executive to come up through the ranks, succeeded Mr. Gardner as president and has pushed forward the development of the company's foreign business. This year the company has set up a staple plant in Mexico and plans are in the works for a plant in Spain.

Mr. Schuler started with Bostitch in 1946 as a salesman in the Kansas City, Mo., territory of the company's Bostitch Southwest Inc. sales subsidiary. He can see nothing but more growth ahead for the company.

A big part of it will come, he said, from the new Bostitch pneumatic nailer and the nails they use. The container industry continues growing and Bostitch has a new line of folder-glueers and semi-automatic box sealing equipment that will assure it a share in this growth.

Add this to the normal growth which Mr. Schuler expects in the Bostitch stapler and stitching machinery lines and in staples, and everything is pointing up.

Prospects are that the big plant overlooking South County Trail may become even bigger. □



OVERSEAS OPERATIONS of Bostitch include the Hans Krage & Co. plant in Hamburg, Germany (top photo) and the McGarry & Cole, Ltd. plant, Edenbridge, Kent, England, both manufacturing plants.

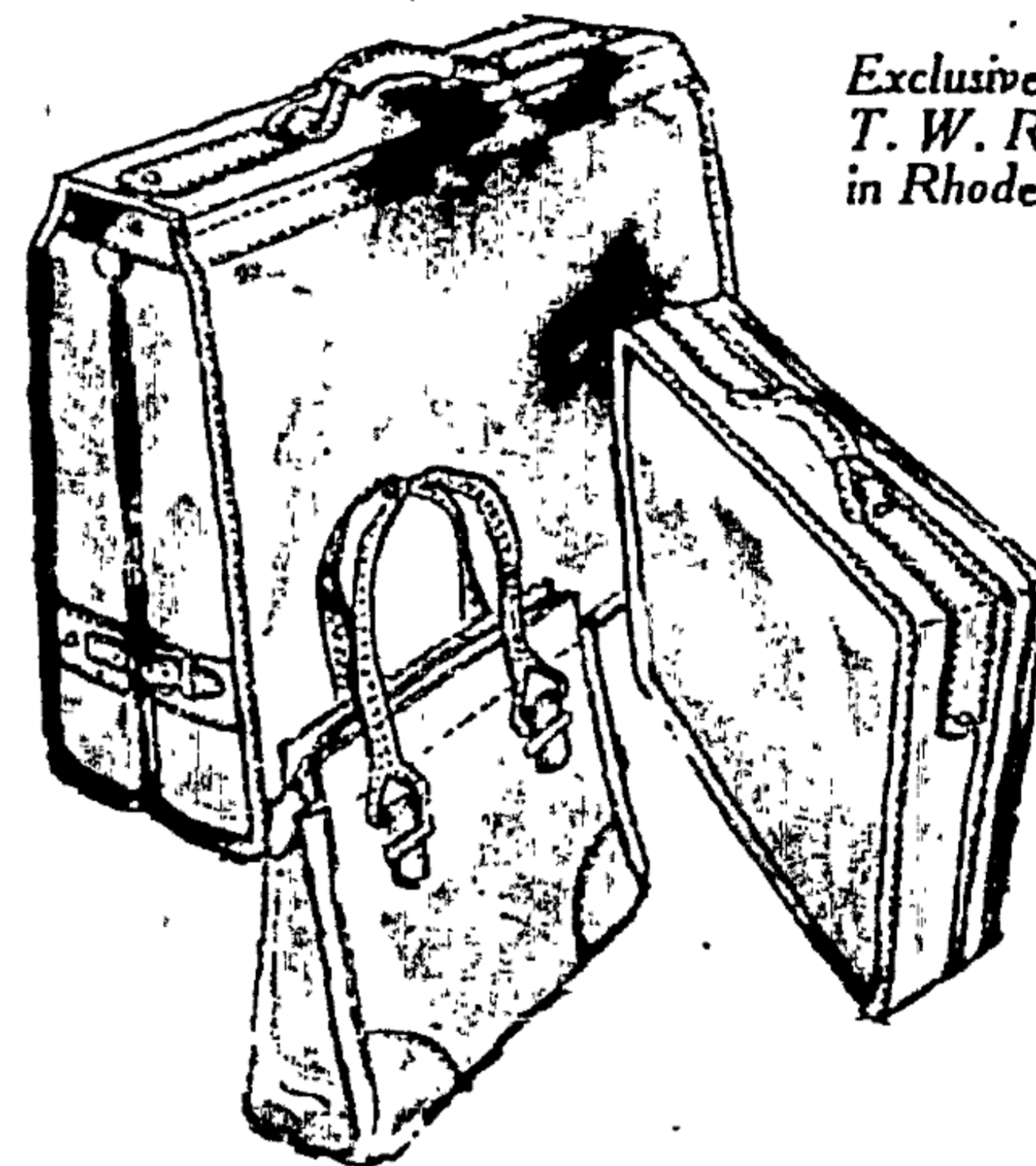
Pictures with this feature by staff photographer William L. Rooney and from Bostitch. The color cover is by staff photographer Lawrence S. Millard.



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