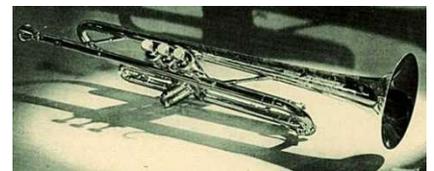


F. E. Olds & Son

LA & Fullerton, CA

- 1861 Frank Ellsworth Olds (photo 1) is born May 19 in Medina, NY (obit)
- 1870s Frank learns to play trombone & wants to build them (1927 Catalog)
- 1880 Frank moves to Elkhart to work for Conn (probable)
- 1885 Frank moves to Los Angeles (obit)
- 1886 Frank is listed as silver plater (voter registration)
- 1887 Frank works at the LA Tool Works (R. Dale Olson)
- 1892 Frank Ellsworth Olds, manufacturer (voter registration); works starts on making trombones (1947 catalog)
- 1896 F E Olds, manager of Pacific Cycle Co (voter registration)
- 1899 son Reginald Birdsall Olds (photo 3) is born on Sept 11 (birth cert.)
- 1900 Frank is a Locomobile agent, #206 24th St (census)
- 1910 Frank E. Olds, manufacturer of musical instruments; #206 W. 24th St, Los Angeles (census); he worked in a shop behind his home called the "barn" (Olson)
- 1912 Olds licensed trombone patent #1,021,890 by Riblet
- 1913 Olds perfects his trombone design (1927 catalog)
- 1922 Olds moves production to #1914 Raymond Ave (photo 2) (Olson); son Reginald likely starts working full time with him now [Reginald is listed as "no occupation" in the 1920 census and "student" in a 1921 passport application for a European tour but was likely put to work there whenever he was home.]
- 1924 Olds starts making ivory mouthpieces and engraving their trademark "Golden Bear" on trombone bells (Stewart); they become F.E. Olds Inc. (News Tribune, 1959)
- 1928 Olds begins the design for their trumpet (Olson); Frank dies October 9 of heart failure while on a ship (obit) and Reginald begins full management (Olson)
- 1929 Olds produces their first trumpets on February 5th (photo 4) (Olson)
- 1936 Catalog shows Standard, Self-Balancing, Military & Super model trombones, Standard, Military and the new French model trumpets, and Standard & Military model cornets.

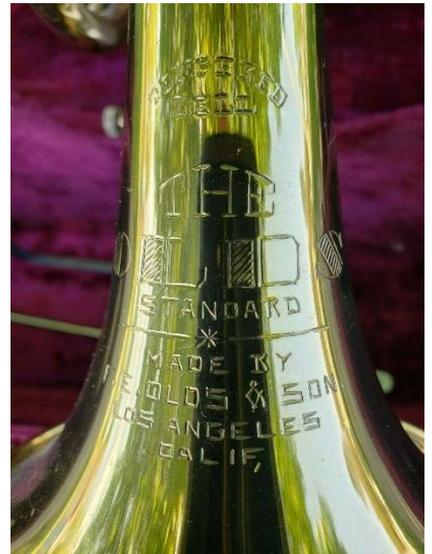


French model #6059 c.1939

- 1939 Catalog shows Standard, Super, Featherweight, & Bass model trombones, Standard & Super model trumpets, and Standard & Radio model cornets.
- 1941 Catalog shows Special, Standard, Super, & Recording model cornets and trumpets.
- 1942-1945 Olds converts to military production of aircraft parts such as gun sights (Olson)
- 1947 Catalog shows Standard, Super & Special models of trombones, Recording, Super, Standard & Special model trumpet (in descending price order), and Recording, Super & Special model cornets.
- c1948 Olds meets with the Chicago Musical Instrument Co., a long-time distributor, about the future of Olds and the Ambassador line was developed to meet the student market demand. CMI buys a majority of Olds stock and brings Foster Reynolds (photo 2) out of retirement to run the factory. Because of him, the shop unionizes. (Olson) [A 1973 US tariff report says that CMI bought Olds in 1945.]
- 1949 Catalog shows Recording, Super, Studio, Special & Ambassador model cornets & trumpets.
- 1951 Don Agard starts working for Olds (news article, 1979)
- 1952 Zigmant (Zig) Kanstul starts work with Olds (Olson)
- 1954 Agard has the serial numbers for all instruments merged at 100000 in January. (Olson) Production is moved 40 miles away to a new factory at #350 S. Raymond St in Fullerton, CA. Each department moved separately and there was no break in production. (Olson)
- 1959 Sousaphones have been made since 1955 and a new Flugel horn was being developed; they have 180 workers making 50 models (News Tribune article)
- 1960 Reynolds dies while working at the plant
- 1961 R. Dale Olson joins Olds in January as a designer and Director of Research to work on the trumpets (Olson)
- 1965 Reginald retires (obit.)
- 1969 CMI now becomes a division of Norlin Industries. (1973 US tariff report) [see conflict with 1973 statement below]
- 1970 Reginald Olds dies on July 9th (obit.)
- 1971 All Olds & Reynolds instruments are now made in Fullerton. (1973 US tariff report)



- 1972 Zig Kanstul leaves Olds and leaves a large hole in management of the factory (Olson)
- 1973 CMI is purchased by Norlin Corp.; one of the cost-cutting measures tried was to reduce the number of steps in fitting the valves; this resulted in the valves being too tight and many instruments returned; the quality issue lost them many dealers (Chuck Madera)
- 1974 Olds has 400 workers (news article, 1979)
- 1975 competition with Yamaha, reduced school budgets and problems with quality all contribute to a reduced workforce to 200 (news article, 1979)
- 1979 Olds production ends on July 13 and the plant closes in November; a buyer for the firm was sought but the asking price was not met; Don Agard turned out the lights for the last time on December 7th (news article & Olson)



Ambassador #595941 c.1967 (author's photo)

- 1980 The rights to the Olds name were purchased by the National Educator's Music Co. and some trumpets and cornets were made in the Netherlands by Schenkelaars in collaboration with a Mario Marconi. (photos 3&4)
- 1988 Schenkelaars folds and production changed to Blessing stencils from Elkhart. (photos 5-7)
- 2005 Instruments are made by Blessing and Amati.
- 2019 The Olds company is based in Mountainside, NJ with instruments made in the Czech Republic (Amati) & Asia.

