

History

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Our firm's history is part of everything we do. Our century-plus legacy is a point of pride and a source of confidence and stability that we take with us into the courtroom and the conference room. It's a reminder of the enduring values and the history of excellence that drives our relationships with clients and the trust they place in us.

Early years

Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster traces its establishment to 1873. Francis V. Balch first entered the practice of law that year in Boston, forming a partnership a few years later with Charles Sedgwick Rackemann. Balch and Rackemann, located at 39 Court Street, specialized in the sale and purchase of real estate and title examination.

By the mid-1880s, the firm had grown and changed in other ways, including the addition of Frank Brewster as a partner. Its real estate practice had become national in scope, helping investors and businesses in the nation's burgeoning mining industry as far away as California and Alaska. Members of the firm also became heavily involved in the civic, legislative and professional affairs of the city of Boston and the commonwealth of Massachusetts, a tradition that continues to this day.

A leading title firm...and more

As the city, state and nation prospered and grew through the end of the 19th Century and into the 20th, demand increased for reliable real estate title information. Accordingly, the firm repeatedly added to its title library and its employment of top title examiners, eventually creating one of the most extensive and comprehensive title abstract collections in the Boston area.

It wasn't too long after George Sawyer joined the firm in 1921 that practice areas expanded to look a lot like they do today. Most of the original partners had passed on or retired, and a new generation of lawyers had taken on the helm. That was about when the firm added specialized areas of the law such as trust and probate, environmental, corporate and insurance law and litigation.