

DESCRIPTION AND ESTIMATE of the Present Cash Value

One story asbestos shingle roofed Brick Veneer building
located on Lot No. 11-12 in Block No. D.R. 86 No. 4601-03 Street
Lawrence Del Papa's owned by P. Larsen W. J. Jenkins, Jr. (To be owned by) in about 2 mo. 4-28

Occupancy: Basement 1' C.W. for
First Floor by 9 Owner Tenant for Dwelling
Second Floor by for
Third Floor by for

DESCRIPTION

When built? July '29 Last repaired or painted?

Is it on leased grounds? No. When does lease expire?

What is used for lighting? Collect. Is gasoline used? No.

Size of building? In dia

Plastered X
Number of rooms 5 + Breakfast room Halls 1 small Bath room 1
Celled and painted X

Number closets? 3 Porches? 2 Mantels and grates? None

H. W. Boney to P. Larsen et ux. 1 Brick to gnd
11 and 12 in block 86, Denver Resy 9/20/29
and improvements: \$10. Is public Fire Hydrant within 500 feet? Yrs. Within 1000 feet?

H. J. Mathis to R. W. Boney, lots 11 and 12 in block 86 of Denver Resurvey; \$2,000. d cost, at present value of materials and labor \$ 5100.00

E. R. Cheesborough Jr. to H. J. Mathis, lots 11 and 12, block 86, Denver Resurvey; \$1,500. 5/4/28
Deduct for depreciation from age, use or location. D.I.A. 8-35 per cent \$

E. R. Cheesborough Jr. to H. J. Mathis, lots 11 and 12, block 86, Denver Resurvey; \$1,500 (corrected). 5/5/28 \$

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

5-rooms and bath; 4601 Avenue O. P. Larsen, contractor; \$5,000. R. W. Boney contractor; 7/20/29 \$

1 Story comp roof frame Garage size 18x20' conc fl. Elect \$

1 story comp roof frame Chicken Ho. size 5'x7' \$

P. Larsen to Hazel Lois Davidson, wife of Dalton L. Davidson, full right title and interest in and to lots 11 and 12 in block 86 of Denver Resurvey and improvements; \$10 etc. (no revenue stamp) 3-19-48
Deduct for depreciation from age, use or location. 2/20/59 per cent \$

Hazel Lois Davidson and husband to W. J. Jenkins Jr., lots 11 and 12 in block 86 of Denver Resurvey and improvements; \$15,000 (United States revenue stamps indicate transaction up to \$15,000). 4-20-48 \$

REMARKS: W. J. Jenkins Jr. and wife to Lawrence Del Papa, lots 11 and 12 in block 86 of Denver Resurvey and improvements; \$10 (United States revenue stamps indicate transaction up to \$18,000). 7-18-50 \$



DEL PAPA DISTRIBUTING

BUILT ON HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND A STRONG WORK ETHIC

By Kimber Fountain

The fertile sands of Galveston cultivate not wheat, soy, or cotton, but success. The 19th century pioneers who transformed a tiny island into a powerhouse of creative entrepreneurship and international commerce set a standard of excellence for Galveston that has magnificently shapeshifted into myriad forms over the 20th century and today, yet always remained constant.

At times, this remarkable evolution has taken place not only collectively, but also within a single family. Nourished by a legacy deeply rooted in a city that honors innovation and forward thinking, some families have recognized like Galveston their enduring ability to adapt, overcome, and modernize, all while paying homage to their history. One such family name is literally on the lips of people across Texas, thousand of times every day - Del Papa.

Omero Del Papa was only 21 years old in 1903 when he opened his first grocery store at 2728 Avenue L, but he was already long acquainted with ambition. As a child in Lucca, Italy, he was enraptured by the promise of America, where a solid work ethic was practically currency, where honesty and integrity were considered investments, and where a

good name was one's most valuable asset.

Omero arrived in Galveston with his family in 1892, when it was the largest, most important city in Texas with opportunity on every doorstep. He worked in a cotton press and a bagging company before taking a job at his uncle's grocery store at 15th and Avenue K, where he started out cleaning spittoons for a dime per day. A dedicated employee who was keenly in tune with the operations, Omero was steadily given more and more responsibility and eventually decided to venture out on his own.

But first he would witness the other side of Galveston's precarious coin in 1900, as he clung to a tree in the middle of an ocean where once stood a city. The vicious wind and unrelenting rain pelted Omero's skin and stung his eyes, making him unable to see the deadliest storm in American history as it drowned Galveston's golden shore and undulating economy.

However, like so many others who survived, the Great Storm did nothing to diminish Omero's resolve. He and other like-minded individuals vowed to resurrect their island home and did so, much to the benefit of future

generations.

As the seawall was constructed and the grade-raising commenced, Omero's young business thrived. While many of his family members found themselves longing for their native land and eventually returned, Omero knew that Galveston was his home now. And somehow, as he looked around his quaint little store with every item meticulously placed and planned, he also knew this was only the beginning.

However, Omero was prompted to at least visit his hometown of Lucca, and this fortuitous decision led to his introduction to Giordina Celli. They were immediately smitten with one another.

The pair made a quick study of Cupid's arrow and married in the village parish by the time Omero's vacation was ended. When Celli arrived in Galveston, she was reunited with her brother Frank who had lived there since 1902 and was familiar with the town.

Omero soon discovered that his marriage included the unexpected bonus of an astute business partner in Frank, and the combination of their individual experiences inspired him to see a larger potential in his Galveston enterprise. Reaching more customers meant making the precarious transition from established retailer to unknown wholesaler, but having a partner mitigated the risk. In 1910, Celli & Del Papa Distributing, Wholesale Dealers opened their warehouse at 2401 Strand Street.

Celli & Del Papa focused on high-quality imports such as olive oil, ice cream, and other delicacies, but the largest driver of profit was beer. They acquired several accounts from popular brands of the era, but the coveted Anheuser-Busch distributorship belonged to a man named Moritz Brock.

Unfortunately, businesses small and large were in the same boat when the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified in January 1920. Federal Prohibition only made the bootleggers and rumrunners rich, law-abiding men such as Omero resisted the temptation to profit from the black-market created in its wake. He made the difficult decision to liquidate his commercial assets, dissolve the partnership with Celli, and return to Lucca with his wife and four children: Omero, Jr., Velma, Ivaldo, and Jenny.

Giordina gave birth to her fifth and final child Lawrence while in Italy, but despite the joys, Omero never ceased pining for Galveston nor the future it promised him. For ten years, he patiently bided his time while maintaining his U.S. citizenship, keeping a close eye on island commerce, and planning his eventual return.

Finally, in 1930, Omero sensed that public support of Prohibition was rapidly waning, especially since the onset of an international economic recession. Undaunted by the decade-long interruption of his business plan, he packed up his family and returned to Galveston to start over - again. But this time, he had experience.

Omero's perseverance was rewarded with spectacular timing. Immediately upon his return, he was able to



purchase an established wholesale dealership called the P. Romano Company with an office and warehouse advantageously located between 20th and 21st Streets in the heart of the Strand commercial district. Knowing innately that motivation drives sales, Omero decided that his employees would work on commission and renamed the firm to reflect this philosophy.

Three of the earliest employees at the O. Del Papa Commission Company were siblings Omero, Jr., Ivaldo, and Jenny who worked in the office. Also put to work were the intangible assets that had propelled Omero's previous success.

"[My name] was all I had," he recalled later in life. "But it was all I needed. People remembered. My friends remembered. And I started back - and succeeded."

This time around, Omero accomplished in months what had once taken him years. His reputation was so well-established, and so quickly, that he was soon poised to acquire the deal that would cement his legacy well into the 21st century. When Moritz Brock passed away in the summer of 1930, mere months after Omero's arrival in Galveston, Del Papa emerged as the front-runner to take over the Galveston-area distribution for Anheuser Busch helped in part by a glowing recommendation from restaurateur Mike Gaido.

Anheuser Busch officially named the O. Del Papa Commission Company its Galveston distributor on August 17. While Omero was in Lucca, Anheuser Busch had been



ABOVE FROM TOP: The 165,000 square-foot distribution center in Texas City was completed in April 2012; The fleet area of the distribution center has 16 loading docks. OPPOSITE PAGE: Omero Del Papa Sr. and sons Lawrence, Omero Jr. and Ivaldo. PAGE 28: Omero Del Papa Sr. overseeing horse-drawn delivery on November 24, 1943. PAGE 29: A young Omero Del Papa, Sr.