

History of Pasta in Brooklyn

Presented at
Brooklyn Public Library
September 28, 2016

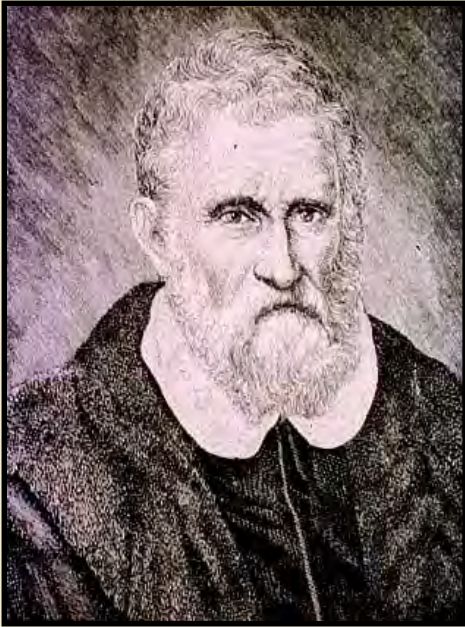
Leonard J. DeFrancisci
DEMACO



- Legend is that Marco Polo brought macaroni to Italy
- More likely, every culture developed form of macaroni
- Thomas Jefferson brought macaroni to US & invented a macaroni machine



BBC: April Fools
1957



1254-1324

In the book *Travels of Marco Polo*, Marco Polo described a process for making a form of paste made by “flour [that] is put into tubs full of water, and stirred with a stick.” He further described that this process forms a sort of bread that when done, “This bread tastes rather like barley-bread.” Marco Polo also said that he “brought [back] with him some of the flour, and also some of the bread made with it.”

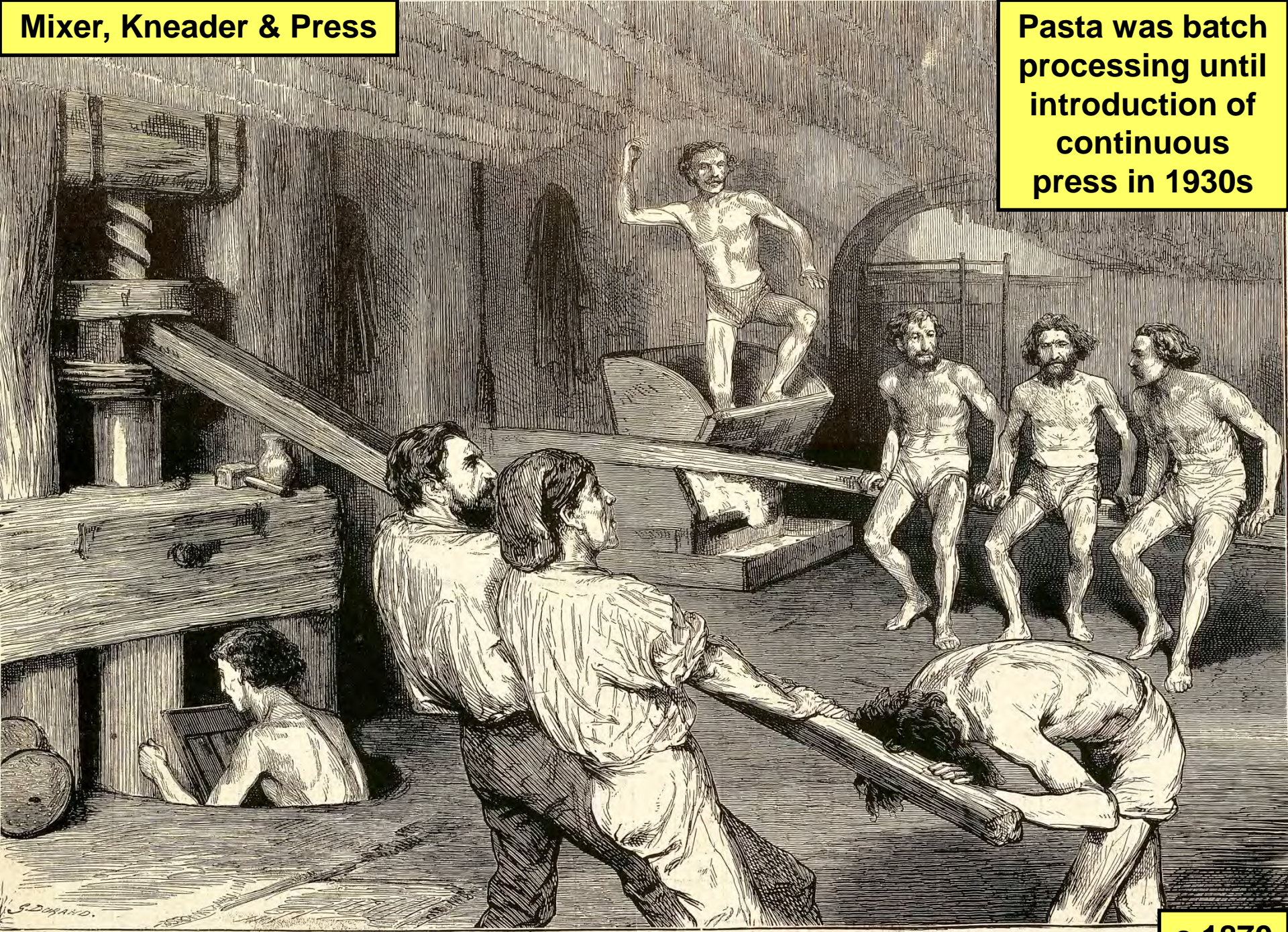
Written down by Rustichello da Pisa circa 1300



Model found in Egyptian tomb showing breadmaking processes

Mixer, Kneader & Press

Pasta was batch processing until introduction of continuous press in 1930s



c.1870

MACARONI MAKERS AT NAPLES



Pasta Drying in Dirty Streets of Naples c.1890s

A pastaio was
responsible for
making pasta

**Naples: best
climatic conditions
in world for
making pasta**



**Eating pasta
in Naples**

**Neapolitan pasta
vendors 1915**





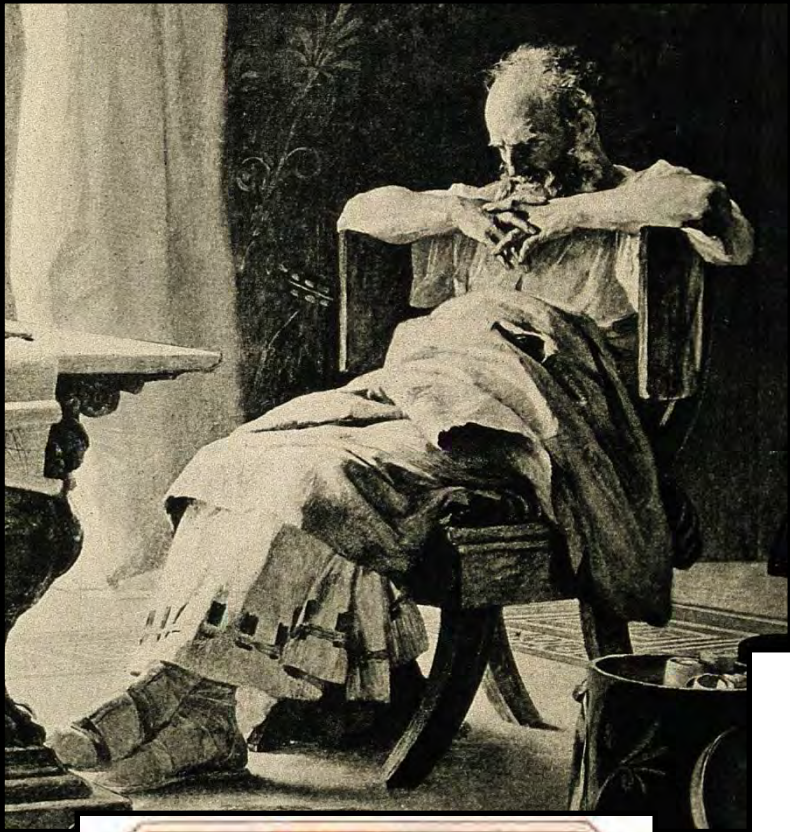
The MACARONI.
A real Character of the late & Misqueroade.
Printed by J. H. W. & Co. 21, St. Andrew's Street.

**Macaroni
Fashion**

*Yankee Doodle went to town
Riding on a pony;
He stuck a feather in his hat,
And called it macaroni*

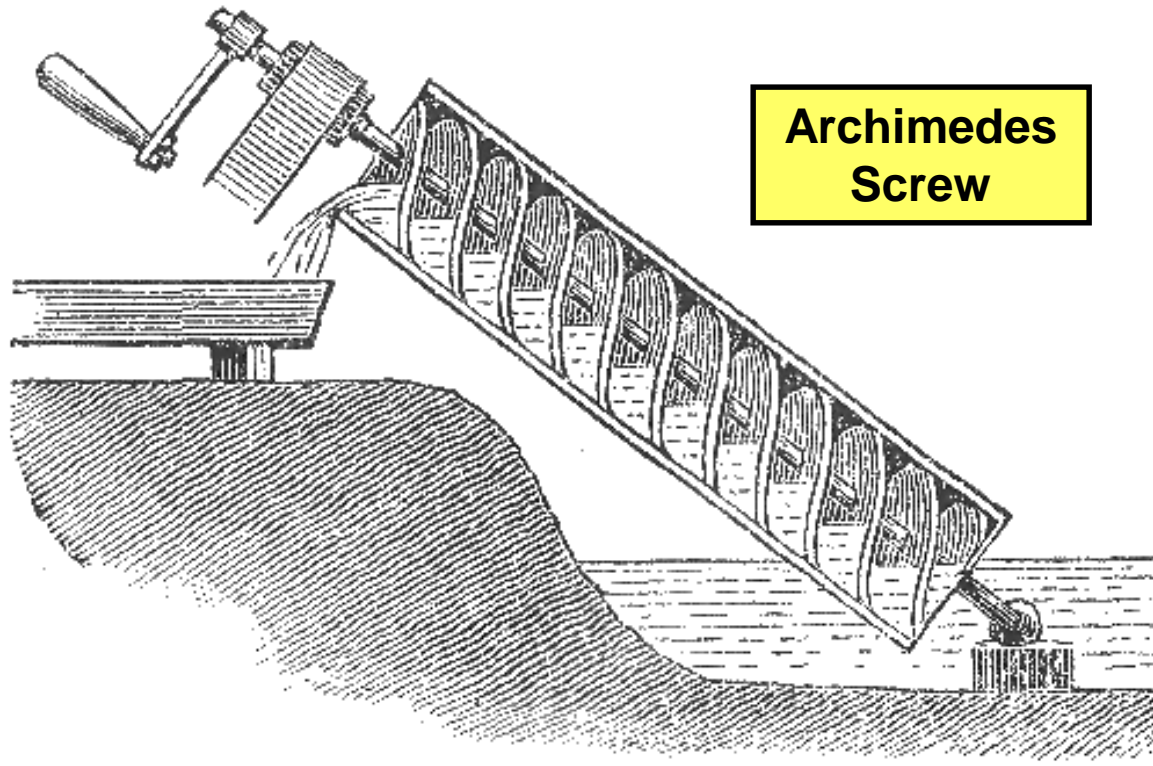


Archibald MacNeal Willard (circa 1875)



Archimedes of Syracuse

c.287-212 BC

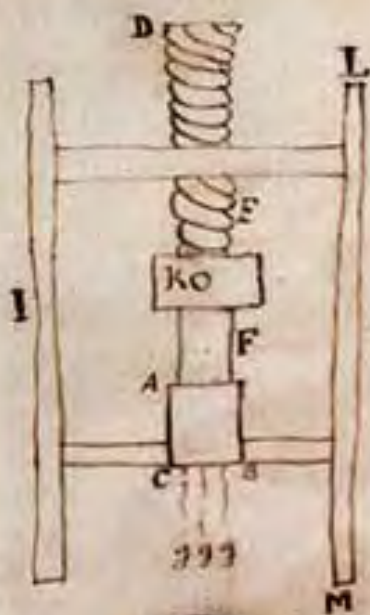


Macaroni.

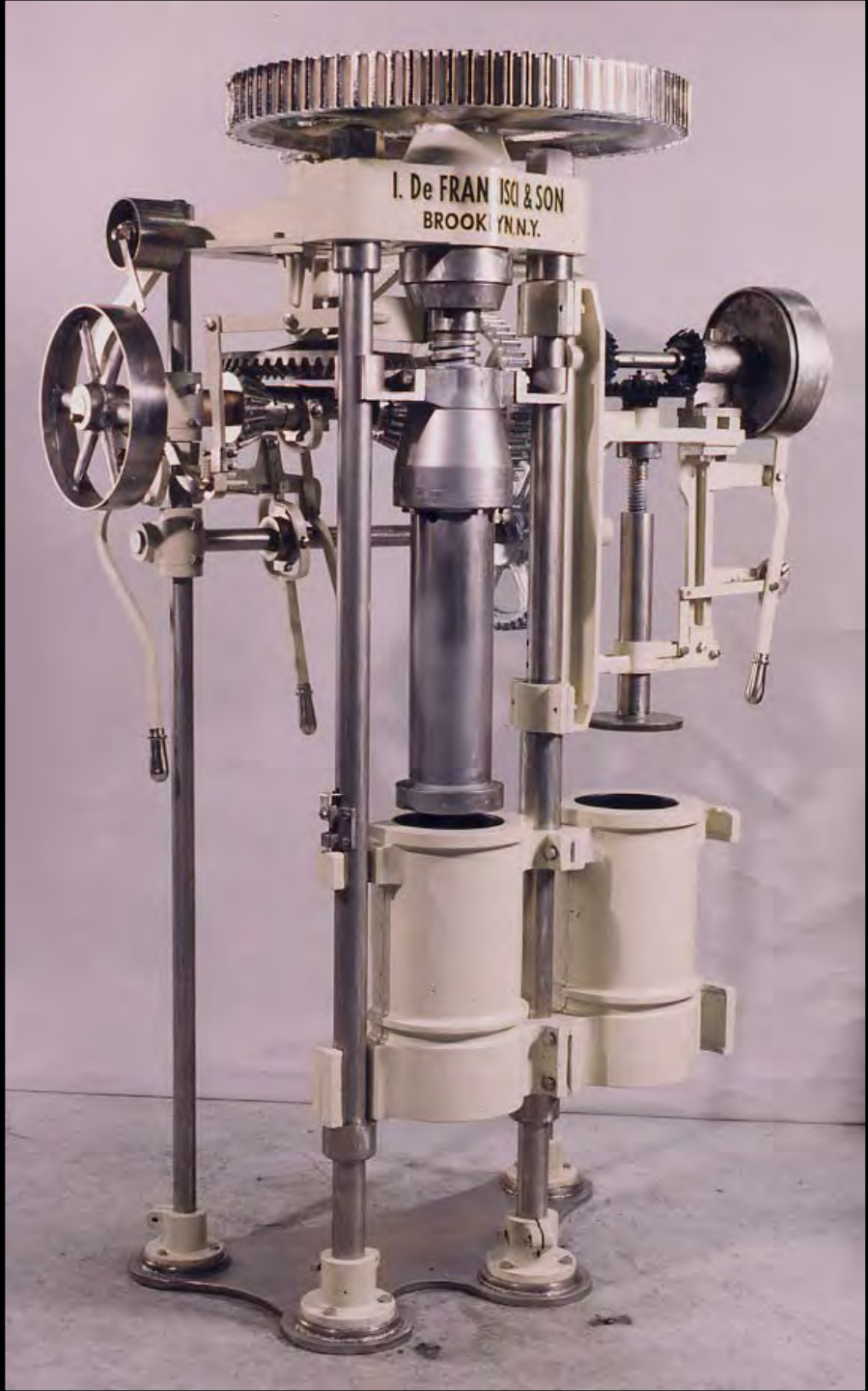
The best macaroni in Italy is made with a particular sort of flour called Semola, in Naples: but in almost every shop a different sort of flour is commonly used; for, provided the flour be of a good quality, & not ground extremely fine, it will always do very well. a paste is made with flour, water & leys yeast than is used for making bread. this paste is then put, by little at a time, viz. about 5. or 6. lb each time into a round iron box ABC.

the under part of which is perforated with holes, through which the paste, when pressed by the screw DEF, comes out, and forms the Macaroni egg, which, when sufficiently long, are cut & spread to dry. the screw is turned by a lever inserted into the hole K, of which there are 4. or 6. it is evident that on turning the screw one way, the cylindrical part E which fits the iron box or mortar perfectly well, must press upon the paste and must force it out of the holes. LIM. is a strong wooden frame, properly fastened to the wall, floor & ceiling of the room.

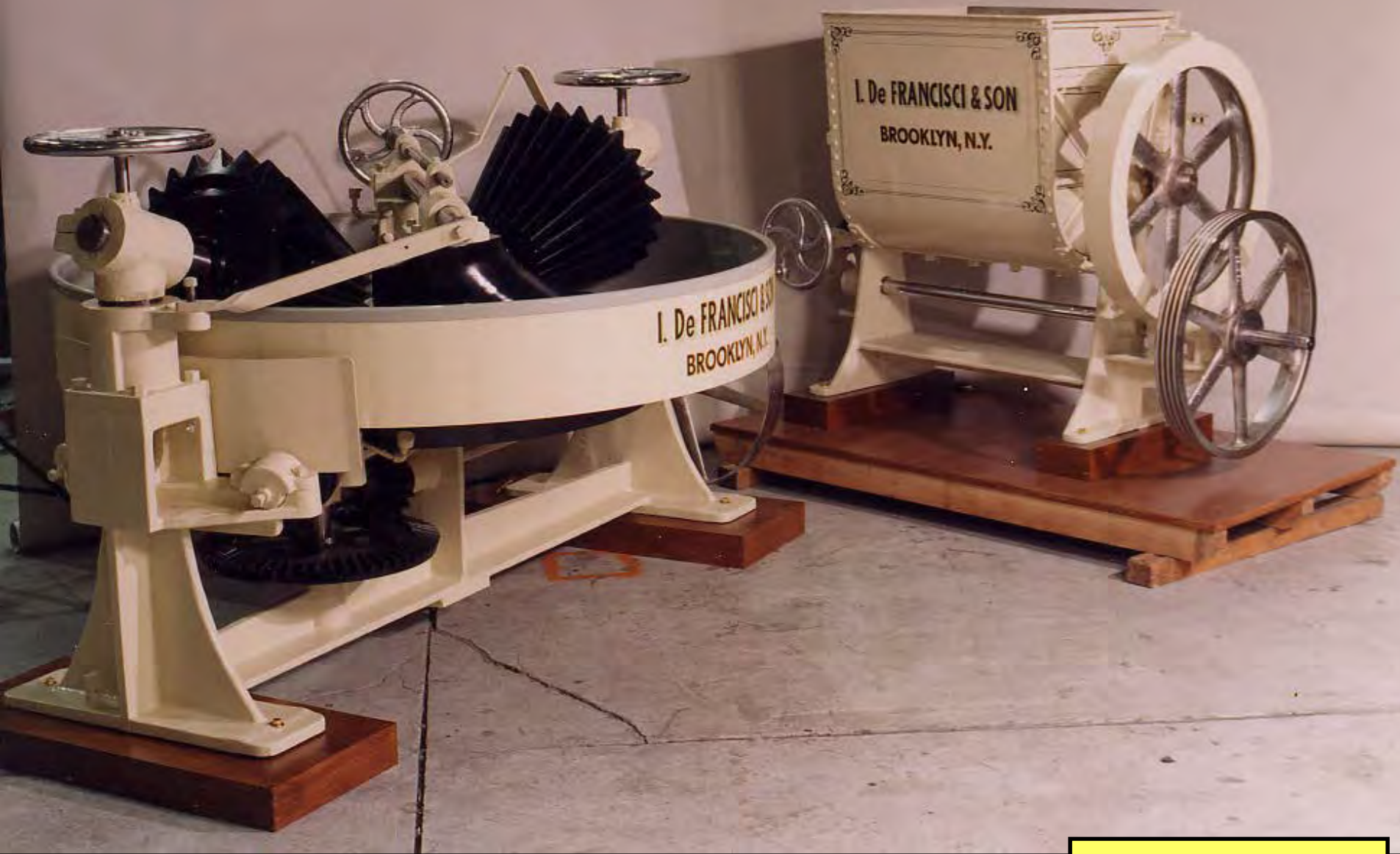
N.O. is a figure, on a larger scale, of some of the holes in the iron plate, where all the black is solid, and the rest open. the real plate has a great many holes, and is screwed to the box or mortar: or rather there is a set of plates that may be changed at will, with holes of different sizes for the different sorts of Macaroni.



**Batch
Processing**

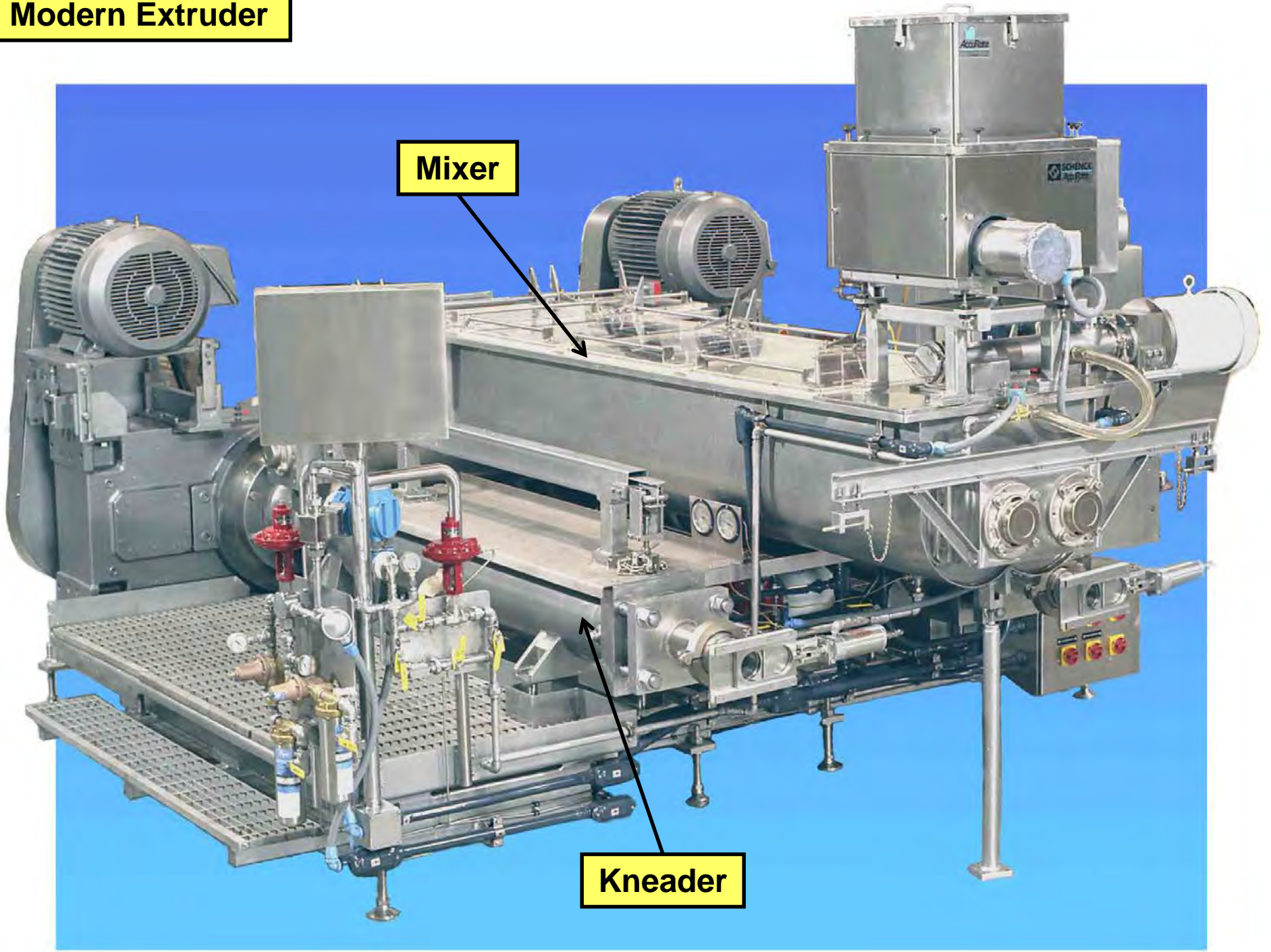


**Macaroni
Mechanical Press
1914**



**Macaroni
Gramola & Mixer
c.1920**

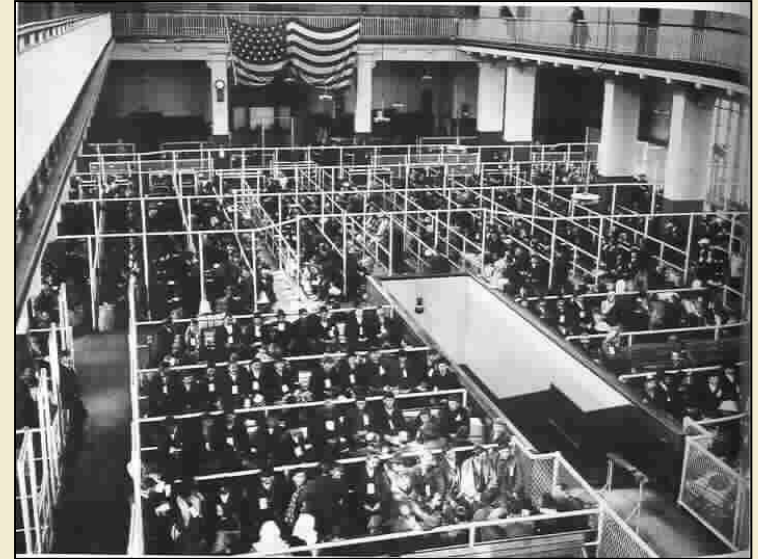
Modern Extruder



Mixer

Kneader

- 4M Italians immigrated to US 1880-1924 and many took up home in Brooklyn





Pasta sold in dry good
where you would find
bins of loose pasta

Horse drawn carriage
delivery

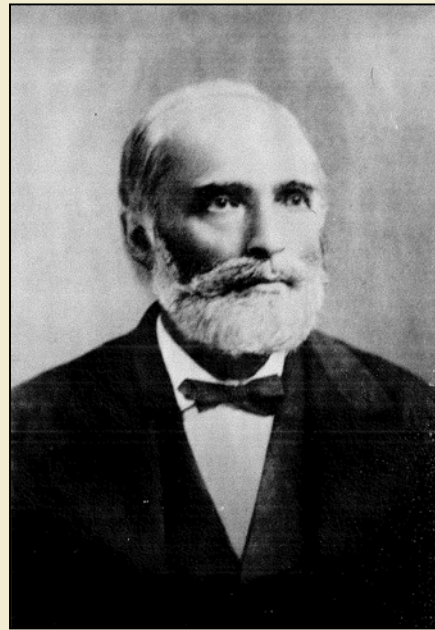


A. Zerega's Sons, Inc.

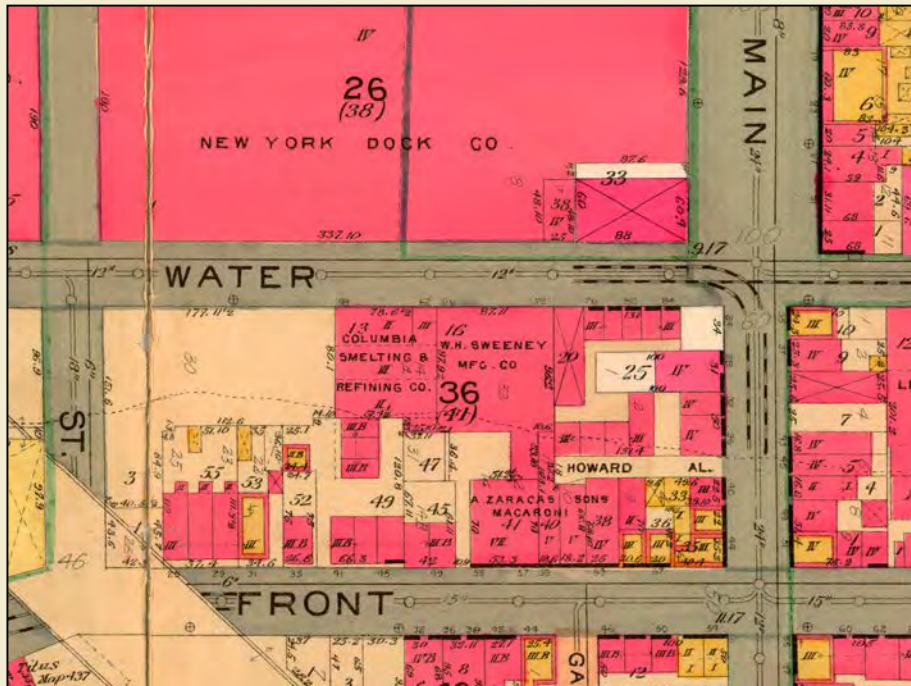
28 Front Street

Founded 1848

Antoine Zerega



Zerega Ave & the elevated train station on the Pelham Line were named after Antonine





Zerega trade show booth
circa 1920s (top left)

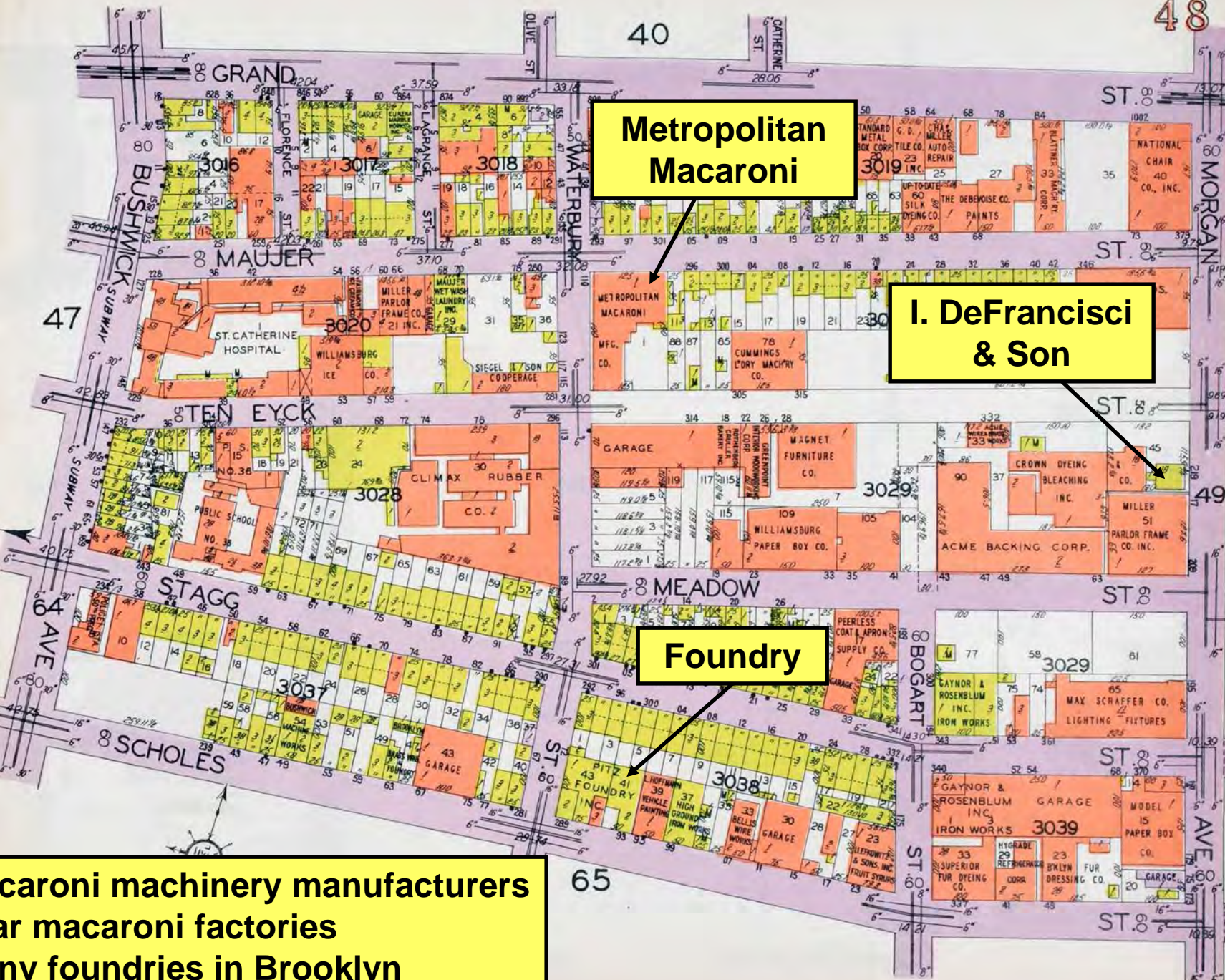
Zerega sales team (top
right)

- Due to ban on imports from Europe during WWI, pasta manufacturing companies emerged in US



**Sunset Park
47th & 4th Ave**

- Still considered at the time an ethnic food consumed mostly by Italians



**Metropolitan
Macaroni**

**I. DeFrancisci
& Son**

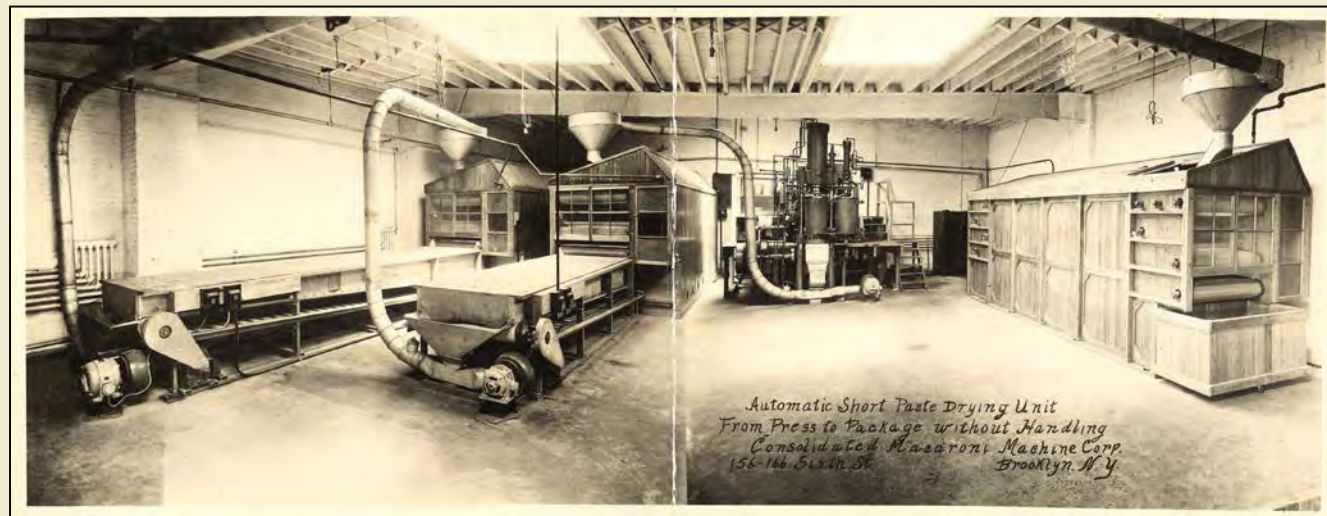
Foundry

- Macaroni machinery manufacturers near macaroni factories
- Many foundries in Brooklyn

I. DeFrancisci & Son

219 Morgan Ave

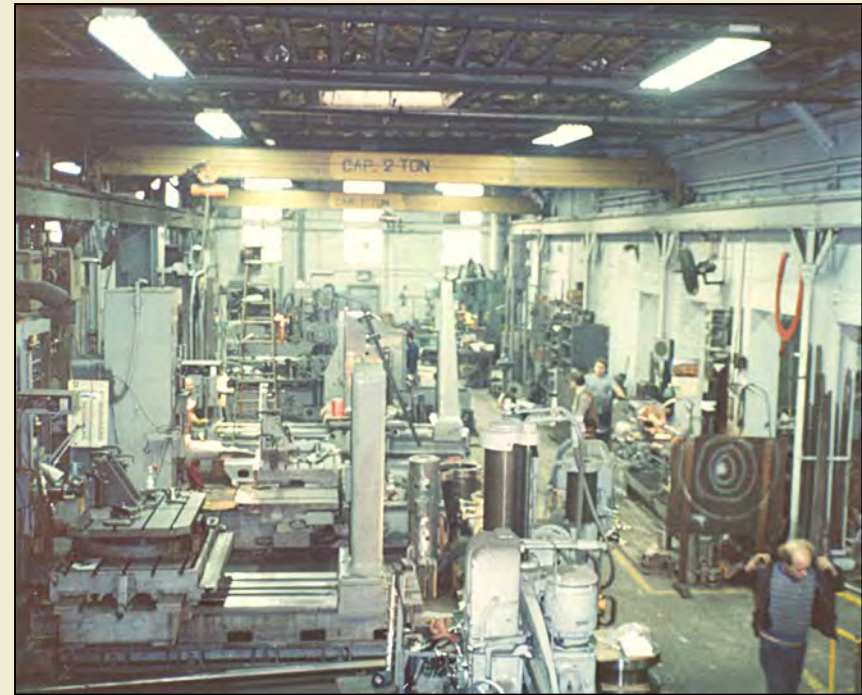
- Starting building pasta machines in 1914
- 1926, merged with Cevasco, Cavagnaro & Ambrette, Inc. to become Consolidated Macaroni Machine Corporation located 156-161 6th Street
- 1952, became DEMACO



DEMACO

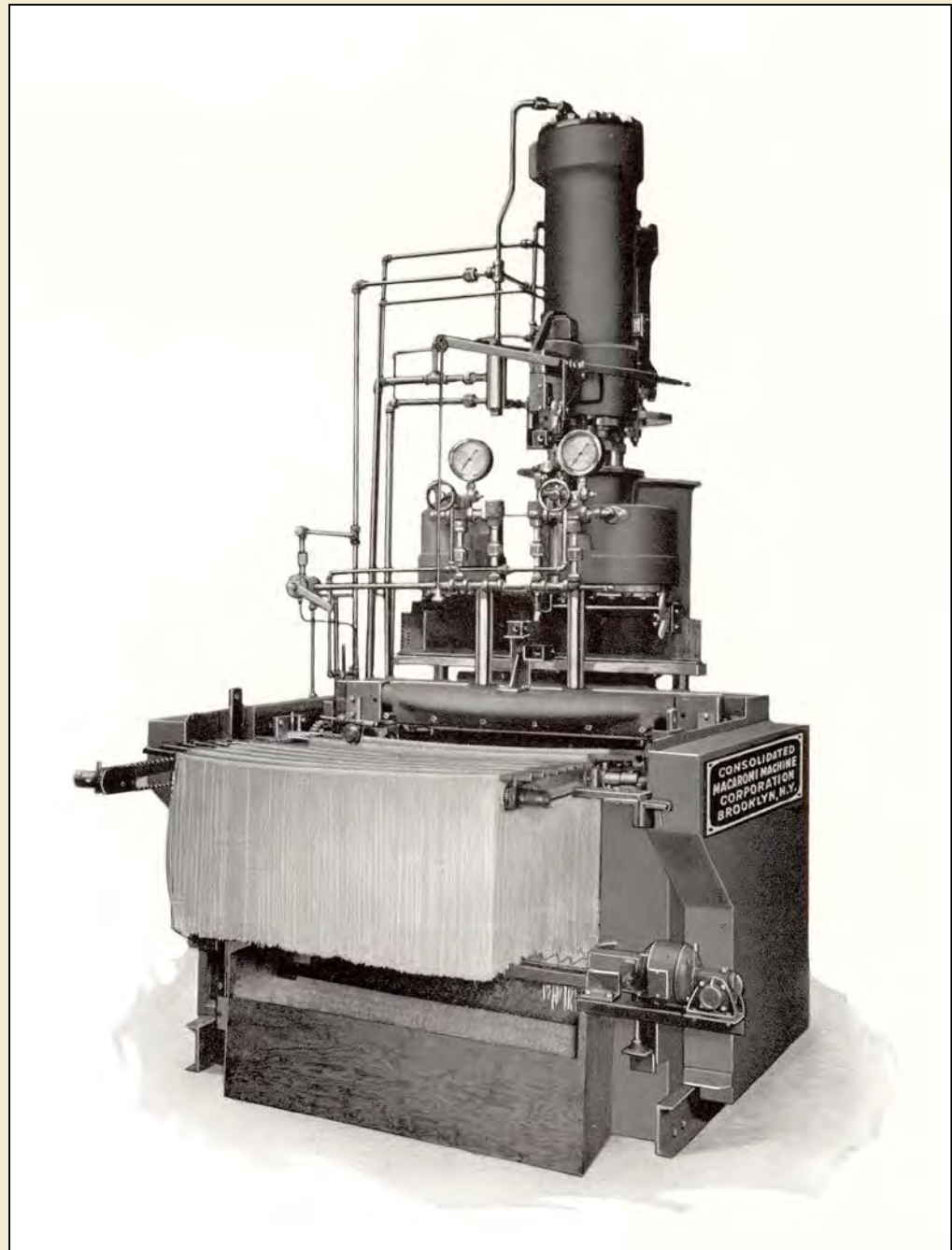
46-45 Metropolitan Ave

- Cardinale introduced Joseph DeFrancisci to the building
- Prince Macaroni took over building at Cardinale



Spaghetti Spreader

Brooklyn becomes spaghetti capital of the world



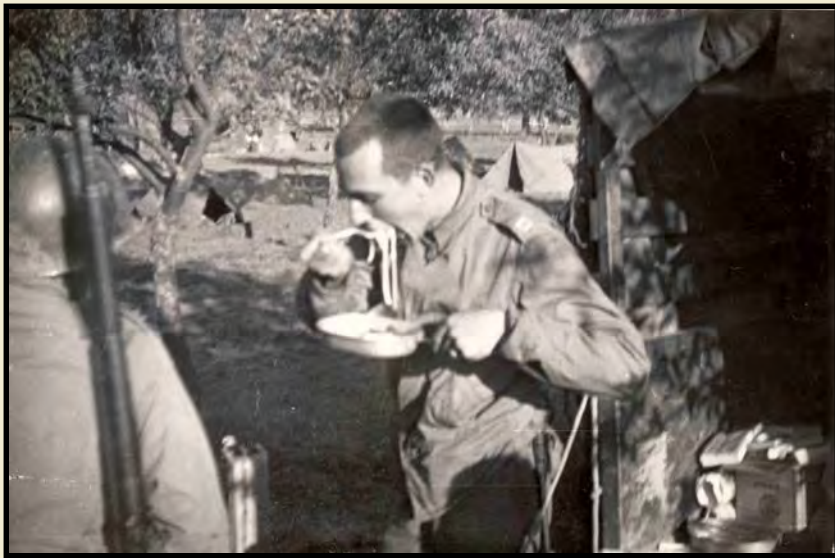
V. La Rosa & Sons
Macaroni Company
473 Kent Avenue
Founded 1914



Packaging Pasta 1939



La Rosa developed individual packages of pasta



Uncle Ray's Corner For Boys and Girls

Italians Have Excuse for Drying Macaroni in Public

Many soldiers of the United Nations are getting to see more macaroni and spaghetti than they ever saw before. I am thinking of the men who have gone into Italy to drive out the Germans.

Italy is the original home of macaroni, and the yellowish-white food product is a national dish among Italians. So far as the wheat supply has held out, it has been made all through the present war. The Italians have been on short rations, but macaroni has kept an important place on their tables, also spaghetti and vermicelli.

A special kind of wheat is used in making macaroni. This wheat has more gluten in it than most other wheat, and it is widely grown in southern Europe and Algeria. Now that sea routes are open between southern Italy and northern Africa, the supply of macaroni wheat should become better.

The wheat is ground, and the bran is taken out. Then water is added to the powdered wheat, and a dough is prepared.

Macaroni-making machines press the dough into tubes. An old custom in Naples and some other Italian cities has been to hang the



Scene in a Naples macaroni shop.

macaroni up to dry on wooden rods, in shops or even out on the edge of the sidewalk.

To handle macaroni in that way is to invite germs which are spread by flies or dust. The macaroni must be cooked before eating and that should kill the germs, but people in our land would rather have their macaroni come in boxes from a sanitary factory.

One excuse may be given for

hanging macaroni in public view. If it is dried by hanging over a rod, Italians say it is a proof that it was made with the right kind of flour. When made of flour taken from the wrong kind of wheat, it will break when hung up.

Spaghetti is more popular with many Italians than macaroni. It is made in much the same way but is pressed from the machines so it comes out as a string or cord, instead of a tube. The word "spaghetti" means "little cord."

Vermicelli is the thinnest member of the macaroni family. It comes from the machines in thread-like form.

(For Travel or General Interest section of your scrapbook.)

Uncle Ray

Tomorrow: Armistice Day.

Ten illustrations by Frank C. Pape appear in the picture leaflet, *Africa's People and Customs*. If you want a copy, send a self-addressed envelope bearing a three-cent stamp to Uncle Ray in care of this newspaper.

BROOKLYN EAGLE, WEDNESDAY, NOV. 10, 1943 25

Pasta crosses cultural boundaries & becomes staple in US

- Great Depression
- Many GIs exposed to pasta during WWII

D. Maldari & Sons

557 Third Ave

Founded 1901

Donato Maldari



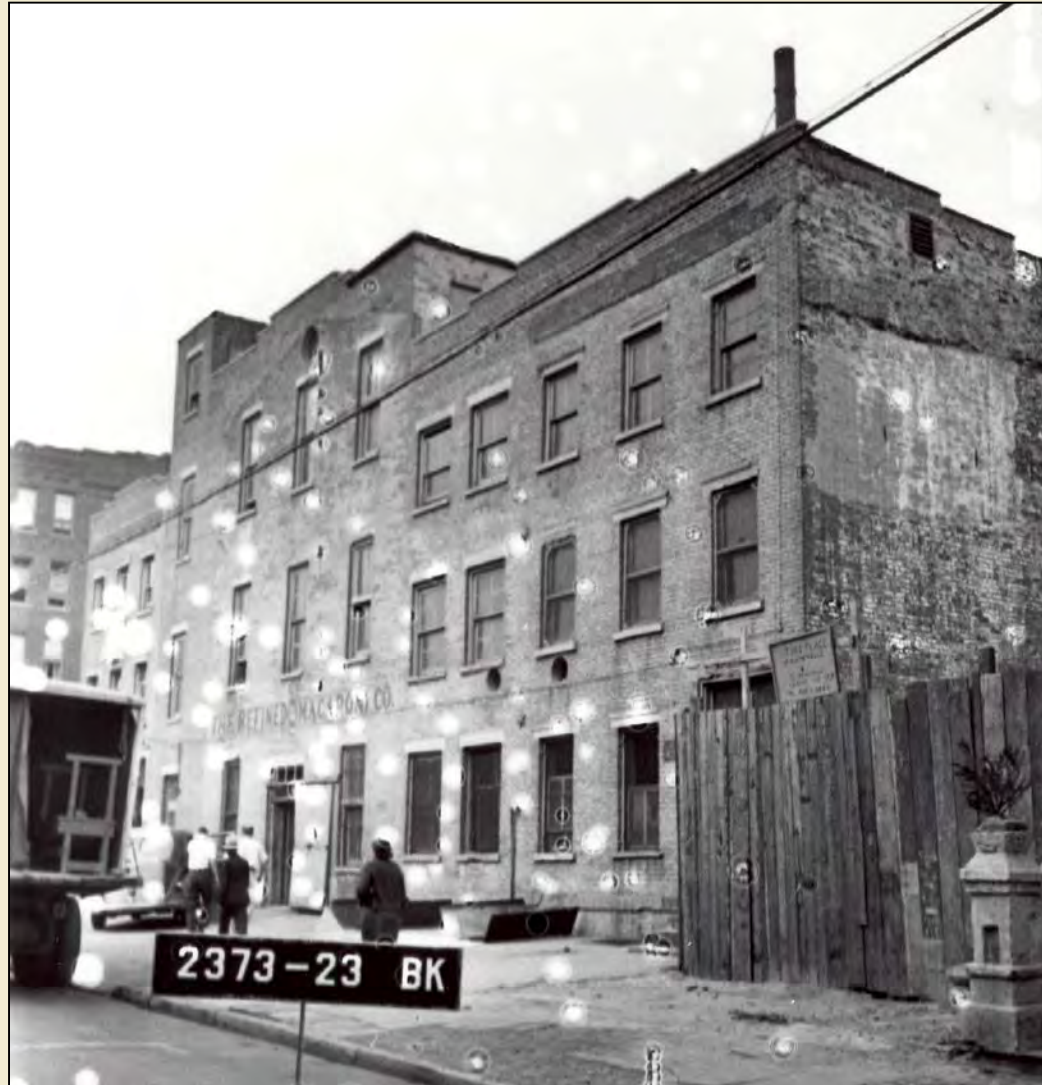
- Clermont

- Sirico founded Clermont in the 1920s & passed the company on to his two sons and son-in-law.
- In the mid 50s, Clermont moved its offices and manufacturing facility to 280 Wallabout Street.
- As large conglomerates became popular in the 1970s, Carlisle Corporation bought Clermont.
- Clermont was acquired by two other companies & went out of business by the mid 80's
- John Amato, Sirico's son-in-law continued as president of the company for many years.

DEMACO shared building
with Clermont in the 1980s



Refined Macaroni Company
 421-427 Rodney Street



Santoro Macaroni

225 Cook Street

Gaspare & Joe Santoro

Benny Pepitone

Founded 1940

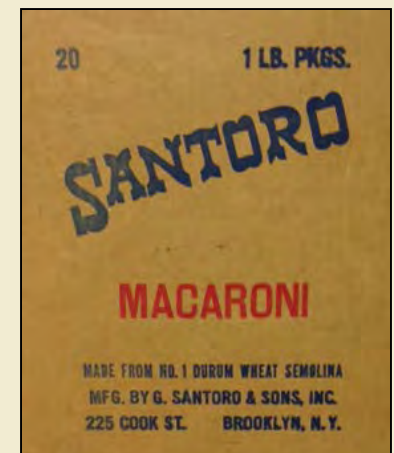


Santoro Macaroni
are the best!

VITAMINS
VITALITY
PURE PRODUCTS

*Free Premium
Catalogue*

**MANUFACTURED BY
REFINED MACARONI CO.**
421-427 RODNEY ST. BROOKLYN N.Y.



20 1 LB. PKGS.

SANTORO

MACARONI

MADE FROM NO. 1 DURUM WHEAT SEMOLINA
MFG. BY G. SANTORO & SONS, INC.
225 COOK ST. BROOKLYN, N. Y.



Brooklyn Macaroni Company



Regional brands from Brooklyn





Long Island City
Founded 1916

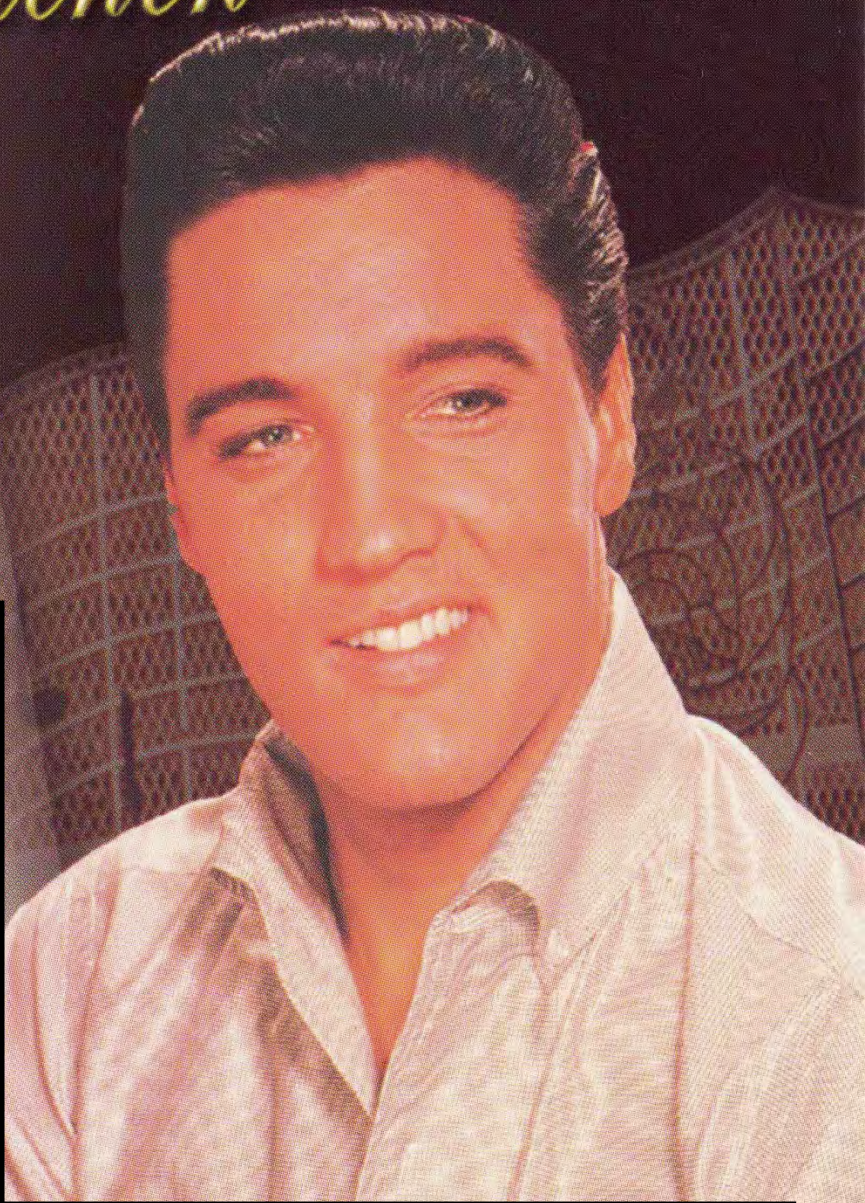
- Because of space, became difficult to expand in Brooklyn
 - Pasta making highly logistical
 - Manufacturing closer to raw materials
- 1980s, consolidation of industry from family owned to corporate ownership
- 1990s, old factories close with mega factories making pasta for multiple brands
- Today, artisan pasta companies focusing on quality & regional flavors with chefs as the pastaio

From Elvis' Kitchen

MACARONI SALAD

- 1 lb. macaroni
- 1/2 cup sweet pickles
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1 dozen boiled eggs
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt

Boil macaroni for 10 minutes. Drain and add ingredients.



**"Everything you see I owe to spaghetti"
Sophia Loren, Macaroni Week Queen 1955**