



Our history begins in the last decade of the 19th century when young Francesco Montalbano left his native Italy in search of a better life in America—the land of opportunity.

In the old country, Francesco had worked in a flour mill and was hoping to continue his trade in the United States. As he went through the immigration process in New Orleans, Francesco was asked about his previous work experience. His English was very limited, so someone told him to reply “mill” in response to the immigration officer’s question. The officer assumed he meant a lumber mill and directed the young immigrant to a saw mill in east Texas. Once there, Francesco had no choice but to learn his new trade. He was bewildered at having to go from being a miller of flour to working with logs and lumber.



Francesco continued his employment at the lumber mill until he saved enough money to work his way over to Houston. Once in the Bayou City, he began selling firewood. One thing led to another and, in 1900, Montalbano Lumber came into existence.

Our founder continued working in the business for the next 47 years. Francesco’s son, Joseph, joined his father in the lumber and homebuilding business of the day. In 1929, Joe married Sadie Butera and the couple worked side-by-side for the next 61 years! During the 1950s and 60s, “Mr. and Mrs. M.” were joined by their sons, Frank, Michael and John, who helped build the business to two Houston locations and more than 100 loyal employees.

Today, the third, fourth, and fifth-generation Montalbanos actively work with a dedicated team of management and staff to continue the legacy begun by Francesco over a century ago. It is the goal of all of us at Montalbano Lumber to continue providing quality building materials, competitively priced, with personalized service, as we have since 1900.



Our original location, 1309 Houston Avenue, circa 1929.