

Dear Curator,

I cannot begin to tell you how delighted I was to find my Great Aunt Louise Perreault (River Rouge City Treasurer mentioned in one of your pdf newsletters. My name is Bill Giesin and I live in Louisville, Kentucky. Interestingly enough a lot of my family roots come from the Downriver area (River Rouge and Wyandotte, Michigan). The Giesin (Republicans) and The Gallagher aka Perreault (Democrats) Families basically grew up in The Down River area. Consequently, I thought I would share some of my Geneological information with you as it may be of some interest to you. Louise Perreault (City Treasurer of River Rouge) and her brother Albert (a Captain Of The Great Lakes) truly were remarkable people. Along with some of the following text provided by my Aunt Emma (Gallagher) Schmitt are some photos and text that may be of some interest. My Grandmother Angeline (Perreault) Gallagher was one of Louise and Albert Perreault's sisters.

*Albert Perreault was born in Canada on Sept 13, 1872 and died on September 15, 1960. He went to St. Mary's School in New Baltimore, Michigan. In the winter it was too far for the little kids to walk to New Baltimore from Fair Haven, Michigan so Fr. Glemmy, the pastor at St. Mary's got a Fair Haven farmer to donate a small cabin to be used as a school for the younger children. It was the older boys job on their way to school to build a fire in the cabin stove so the little ones would be warm. The teacher complained that by the time she and the children got there the fire had been almost out and the cabin was cold. The pastor got after the boys (Albert was one of them) and they decided to make it really hot for the teacher and her charges. They overdid it, and when the teacher and the children got here the cabin had burned to the ground. When Albert was fifteen years old he became a deckhand on a Great Lakes freighter. At the end of his first season the young sailor went to the tavern with some of his shipmates. He figured that if he worked like a man he could drink like a man. Sifroy always locked the door to their house at 9:00 p.m. Albert got home well after that time. Finding the door locked he beat on it and hollered, "Open the door! Let me in!". His father yelled back, "go back to your drunken friends!". Albert ordered, "Stand back! I'm coming in!" He put his shoulder to the door and shoved it right down. His father didn't say another word and he never locked the door again. When Albert was 20 or 21, he and his father built the house at 59 E. Cicotte in River Rouge, Michigan. Some years later Sifroy asked Albert for \$700.00 to repair the house. Bert told him for \$700.00 he wanted the deed. Bert gave Sifroy the money and he got the deed. The next morning his father was gone along with the money. Sifroy ended up on his brother's farm. He stayed alone in a cabin on the property and Pierre's sons brought him supplies once a week. One day they came to deliver supplies and found him dead on the floor which was probably caused by a stoke or a heart attack. Zephrein Perreault, his brother, sent a telegram telling the family what had happened, and not one of his family went to his funeral. Albert became the sole support of the family after his father had left, and only Louise and his mother remained in the home. Albert, a Captain on the Great Lakes, would sail until the lakes froze over then he worked at the Ford Motor Company in the off season. When World War I came along, Albert could have been commissioned an officer in the Navy, but the top of his trigger finger was missing so he ended up 4-F. Albert was a first mate by that time. There is a story behind the missing finger tip. It goes back to Canada when Dolphus (Tuffiel'), Victoria, and Albert ('Bert') were very little children. Their mother had a baby the day before, and was in bed and the kids were on their own. They were hanging around by the chopping block which had the axe embedded in it. Dolphus pulled the axe out and dared Bert to lay his hand on the block so Dolphus could chop it off. Bert did it! His brother started down with the axe and Bert tried to pull his hand away while Dolphus tried to stop the down swing. Bert's right index finger was almost cut through just above the first knuckle. Dolphus and Victoria took off to the tall timbers and Bert went crying and bleeding to*

*his mother. She (Flora Perreault) got out of bed, finished cutting off the finger, cauterized it and bandaged it.*

*The Perreault children had a nickname for their parents, Minnie and Pippie. The children are listed as follows; Victoria (Perreault) Silk , Albert Perreault, Florence (Perreault) Mannausa , Angeline (Gallagher) Perreault, Louise Perreault , and Dolphus Perreault. Dolphus is believed to be buried near Windsor, Canada. \*Victoria Silk's husband, George Silk (born 1863 - died 1943) is buried near by. Victoria Silk was married to George Silk on Nov 16, 1892 in Chicago at Cook Co. Il.*

*(\*note Flora Perreault (mother) is interred with Victoria, Florence, Louise, and Albert in Mt. Carmel Cemetery off of Northline Road in Wyandotte, Michigan. Victoria Silk's son, Tom Silk is buried in another section near Louise and Albert Perreault.) Leo Gallagher (born 1896 - died 1935) , Joseph R. Gallagher's nephew, is buried in the same family plot. Emma (Gallagher) Schmitt said the young man was handsome, liked to drink, and enjoyed a good brawl. One night when he had been drinking, which was often, he became involved in a fight, and fell down some steps, and broke his neck. This then is just one of stories of how Joseph R. Gallagher gave away his family cemetery plots at Mt. Carmel Cemetery. Later he would give five of the graves to other Gallagher and Perreault relatives. Only a son ,James, and a daughter ,Eleanor (Gallagher) Giesin (my Mother), were buried in the plot intended for the Joseph R. Gallagher family. There were other stories that circulated regarding the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Gallagher. Caroline Fogarty, a close friend of Eleanor (Gallagher) Giesin, shared a story of how the Gallagher's donated enough money to buy an altar for St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church after their son, William A. Gallagher, was killed in World War II.*

*Below are several obituaries on the Perreault family as listed in The Detroit News.*

*Florence (Perreault) Mannausa (born- May 12, 1876 - died January 7th, 1960) death notice in a Detroit paper read. "Florence M. Mannausa, 83, or 13 Ruth, Ecorse, died on Thursday at Wayne County General Hospital, after a lengthy illness. Mrs. Mannausa was born on May 12, 1876 in Canada. Survived by her children, Earl of Detroit, Mrs. Lyda Lacombe of Wyandotte, Lawrence, of Gibraltar, and Phillip and William of Ecorse; two sisters and one brother, Louise and Albert Perreault of River Rouge and Mrs. Joseph Gallagher of Wyandotte; ten grandchildren. Funeral service were held Monday from the Gallagher Funeral Home in River Rouge and from St. Francis Xavier Church in Ecorse. Interment was in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Wyandotte."*

*A Social Security Death Index Search revealed the following information on Florence (Perreault) Mannausa children; Lawrence L. Mannausa (Feb 22, 1907 - Aug 8, 19880) last residence Port Charlotte, Fl. Phillip Mannausa (Nov 6, 1910 - Jan 1960) \*died in Michigan on the day his mother was being buried. Earl Mannausa (Nov 12, 1899 - Oct 1978 in Michigan), and William R. Mannausa (Feb 3, 1913 - May 20, 1990). I tried to find an obituary or a death notice on both Louise and Albert Perreault, and found only this on Louise Perreault appearing in the Detroit News. "Perreault, Louise of 58 E. Cicotte St River Rouge Dear aunt of several nieces and nephews Funeral from Edward Girbach Sons Funeral Home River Rouge Wednesday at 9:30 am Our Lady of Lourdes Church at 10. Interment Mt Carmel Cemetery, Wyandotte Rosary 8 pm. Albert lived in the home at 58 E. Cicotte with his sister, Louise, and his mother, Flora, after his father left River Rouge, Michigan to live with his brother, Pierre. Many of the Perreault family roots are tied to the Detroit, Michigan area. Angeline's brother, Albert Perreault was a vessel captain (according to the 1912 Detroit City Directory) and his spinster sister, Louise Perreault was Treasurer of the City Of River Rouge (according to the 1930-1931 Detroit City Directory). The two lived together at 56 E. Cicotte St. and 58 E. Cicotte St. (the*

*duplex that Albert and Sifroy built) and upstairs and downstairs apartment. Neither the brother or the sister ever married. They did buy several homes on Cicotte Street in Detroit's "down river area", River Rouge, Michigan which they later rented out. Obviously it was a convenient arrangement as Albert Perreault was a Merchant Marine Captain that sailed the Great Lakes, and his sister Louise (a woman ahead of her time) was elected City Clerk for six years and Treasurer of the city*

*of River Rouge for eleven years. Emma (Gallagher) Schmitt attributes much of Louise success in winning the race for Treasurer of River Rouge to her father, Joseph R. Gallagher, as he was her Campaign Manager in the election.*

*Louise and Albert Perreault had a convenient relationship for what better way to pool their resources than to buy and rent homes in the down river area of Detroit. Albert would have a place to stay between voyages, and Louise would have a brother as well as a companion to spend time with. They were kind, caring people who would go out of their way to help either a relative or a neighborhood child. Albert was a vessel captain who sailed the Great Lakes until 1938. It was during that year that his ship almost collided with another ship on the Great Lakes during a fog. Both captains were vindicated for the accident, and neither lost their license. Albert Perreault, however, was never allowed to pursue his role as captain again on the Great Lakes. The Perreault children spoke French and very little English. My Great Aunt Louise Perreault once told me that my grandmother, Angeline (Gallagher) Perreault, was a strong willed woman who moved from Michigan to Chicago, Illinois and is said to have "learned to read and write the English language from reading the newspaper."*

*An example of the Perreault generosity occurred in 1915 when their recently married sister (who would later be my grandmother), Angeline (Perreault) Gallagher and her daughter, Eleanor, returned to the Detroit area and lived with the couple on Cicotte Street for a brief period of time while she was temporarily separated from her husband, Joseph R. Gallagher (Grandfather). Their daughter, Eleanor (Gallagher) Giesin (Mother), didn't learn to speak English until the first day she started school. Apparently the Perreault family had a tendency to fall back into the habit of speaking the French language they had learned as youngsters in Canada.*

*My Great Aunt Louise cared for her ailing brother right up to the time of his death on September 19, 1960. Years later during 1963-1965, I visited my Great Aunt Louise Perreault to reminisce about my mother, Eleanor and my Grandmother, Angeline. On one occasion five or six neighborhood children literally "camped out" in her home. Concerned that the elderly lady might be taken advantage of by the youths (10 to 12 years of age that roamed freely about the house, I asked her about the situation. Louise confided to me that the neighborhood kids needed someone to care about them, and expressed the concern that their parents had neglected them. Remarkably Louise remained a spinster until the time of her death. She was a very kind and nurturing woman who loved children, and would have made a wonderful mother had she married. Emma (Gallagher) Schmitt provides the following incite on a reason why Louise Perreault never married. She once told Emma that she had two serious relationships. "One man was not Catholic enough, and the other man was too Catholic." She once loved a man who was an "atheist" who constantly attacked the Catholic Church. Louise being a devout Catholic ended the relationship. The second man was a very devout Catholic who went to Church every Sunday. The couple decided to marry, and one Sunday after the bans had been announced after church, a woman approached Louise, and introduced her as the man's sister, and explained that he was already married and had a wife and six kids. Louise ended the relationship, and remained a spinster for the rest of her life.*

*Albert and Louise Perreault only source of income in their later years must have been the pensions they drew from their working years, and from the rent payments they received from their tenants in River Rouge, Michigan. I tried to do a Social Security Death Search on them, and could not find either an Albert or a Louise Perreault that would fall within their time frames. My conclusion is that they never received a Social Security payment during their lifetime. Perhaps the reason for this was due to the fact that Social Security did not start until 1930, and by this time the couple had most of their working years behind them.*

My Aunt Louise Perreault was truly a remarkable woman. I find myself asking the question "How many women were politicians during the 1930s? Not to mention the fact that she was "one of the most honest and deeply religious people I ever had the privilege to know".

p.s.

My Grandfather George F. Giesin Sr. also ran for Commissioner and City Clerk, and my Great Grandfather Moses Antaya was one of the City's first residents. Thank you so much for sharing your wonderful website with me. I have more photos and text .... if interested.

Sincerely,

Bill Giesin

2506 Savannah Rd.

Louisville, Ky.