

## Charles (Carlo) and Anna Perrecone Family



My name is Frank Perrecone, grandson of Charles (Carlo) and Anna Perrecone. Their immigration history begins in Lucca, Sicily, a small town about 70 miles south of Palermo. Charles, whose birth name is Carlo Perricone, was born in Lucca on February 15, 1882. He was a farmer. He married Caterina Giordano on November 26, 1902. She died sometime prior to 1907. They did not have children. Anna Perrecone was born November 25, 1887 in Lucca. She married Charles on December 19, 1907.

They resided at Via delle Querce number 12 in Lucca where their two oldest sons were born, Pietro (Peter) on September 29, 1909 and Calogero (Carl) on September 12, 1912. In 2012 my wife Jody and I visited Lucca to meet relatives. They took us to the house where my grandparents lived and where my uncles Peter and Carl were born. My cousin, Piero Perricone now resides in the house.

Charles and Anna did not cross the Atlantic Ocean together. Charles and his brother Francesco left Naples and arrived at Ellis Island on April 11, 1910 aboard the Madonna. It appears Charles and Francesco did not stay long in the United States because records show Charles was back in Lucca before 1912 and Francesco died in Lucca in September 1913. It is believed Charles left Sicily a second time in about 1913 or 1914. He eventually settled in Marshalltown, Iowa, where he worked as a railroad laborer. Soon thereafter his wife, Anna, and two young sons, Peter and Carl crossed the Atlantic Ocean aboard the Dante Alighieri, leaving from Palermo and arriving at Ellis Island on June 12, 1915.

Charles filed his declaration of intention to become a United States citizen with the clerk of the district court in Marshalltown on July 18, 1917, about 3 months after the United States entered World War I. On April 11, 1924 he petitioned for citizenship and became a citizen on January 10, 1925.

On October 23, 1940, Anna registered with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Services indicating her intent to permanently reside in the United States. She became a U.S. citizen during World War II on October 5, 1943.

In the United States from 1917 and 1932, Charles and Anna had six more sons, Michael (Mike), Frank (Chico), Joseph (Cappy) and Dominico (Dominic) all born in Marshalltown. Samuel

(Sam) and Charles (Charlie) were born in Rockford. Their son Chico died in a hunting accident in Beloit, Wisconsin at age 16 in 1936.

In about 1928 the Perrecone family moved from Marshalltown to 1201 Clover Avenue in Rockford. In 1936 they moved to 1636 South Main Street. The Clover Avenue house was occupied by my uncle Peter and his family from about 1936 to 1954. My parents, Sam and Marie Perrecone, moved into the house in 1954. Our family lived at 1201 Clover Avenue until 1970.

Shortly after arriving in Rockford, my grandfather established CP Coal Company at 154 Morgan Street. The business diversified over the years with all sons working for their father. In addition to a coal yard, the family operated an ice house, sold fuel oil, carbonic gas and industrial supplies from the Morgan Street location. Lumber was sold from a South Main Street location. A liquor store was built and operated next to the family residence at 1636 South Main Street. My grandfather and his sons also sold seasonal items such as tomato plants, watermelons and Christmas trees to name a few from the grounds next to his house on South Main Street.

At some point the old Capitol Theater on South Main Street was acquired. Renters occupied the upper floor apartments and businesses rented parts of the first floor. Later, the family businesses used the building for storage. The building was probably sold in the 1960s. My parents have the old weight scale from the theater's lobby which required a deposit of a penny to activate the scale.

All of Charles and Anna's sons made Rockford their home. Of their 18 grandchildren only 5 currently reside in the Rockford area.

In researching Charles and Anna's immigration history a family mystery was partially answered. No one in the family knew why or when the spelling of the last name went from Perricone to Perrecone. Naturalization records show my grandfather changed his name from Carlo Perricone to Chas Perrecone sometime between his petition for citizenship and becoming a citizen.

A remaining unsolved mystery is why he changed the spelling of his last name. I believe it was due to a spelling error as there was no attempt to Americanize the last name. Also, his first name was misspelled, "Chas" instead of Charles, leading me to believe one of the two scenarios. My grandfather, in his thick Sicilian accent, pronounced Charles as "Chas" and that's what the government official processing the name change paperwork wrote down. Or, because "Chas", during that time period was a common abbreviation for Charles, my grandfather went with that spelling, not knowing it was an abbreviation.

Pictured above are Anna and Charles with their sons Dominic (in the middle) and (left to right) Peter, Charlie, Sam, Cappy, Mike and Carl. This photograph was taken in about 1957. As of this writing, only my father, Sam and my uncle, Peter's wife, Marian, are still alive.

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