

Charles Russell Freeman

Charles Freeman was born on January 8, 1897 in Hastings, Minnesota to Russell Wing Freeman (1869-1967) and Sarah Cornelia Twichell Freeman (Lola) (1872-1954). Charles was their only child. At the first the family lived with James and Lorena Twichell, Lola's parents for several years. James is the Hastings City Clerk and Russell is a bookkeeper for the elevator. By 1910, Russell and Lola move to Eldridge, North Dakota where Russell is a grain buyer and then manages a lumber yard. Charles is listed as living with his grandparents but most likely lives in both states. On March 13, 1918, Charles decided to enlist in the North Dakota Military Men. He had just turned 21 and was working as a salesman.

He was sent to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri where he served in the medical department until his discharge. He made Corporal on July 16, 1918 and Sergeant on May 13, 1919. He was discharged in Chicago, Illinois on October 6, 1919.

Charles was a salesman until he retired. He sold the Comptometer, the first commercially successful key-driven mechanical calculator. It was extremely fast and specialized. Although it was primarily an adding machine, it could also do subtractions, multiplication and division. Special comptometers with varying key arrays were produced for a variety of special purposes including calculating currency exchanges, times and imperial weights. His job took him all over the United States, where he most likely met his first wife in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her name was Edna Florence Hibbert (1896-1974). They married in 1925 and had their only son, James in 1926 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. By 1940, the couple had divorced and Edna and James had returned to Milwaukee where she was a teacher. Charles then married Margaret P Hughes (1907-2008) on the Fourth of July, 1947. Charles died in Chicago, Illinois on January 21, 1953. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Hastings, Minnesota.

