George Curtis Simmons

George Simmons was born on June 5, 1889 in Hastings, Minnesota to Frank Simmons (1860-1946) and Ellen Pringle (1863-1930). Frank was born in Tennessee, his father was came to this country on one of the first ships following the Mayflower. His mother is a direct descendant of Governor Bradford of Massachusetts and her Grandfather was a judge, US Representative and a diplomat appointed by Lincoln to suppress the slave trade in Africa. George was the second oldest of six children, two of which would die young of tuberculosis. George was raised on a farm just south of Hastings. When he registered for the draft on May 31, 1917 he was already 27 and had been working for Northern Pacific Railroad as a surveyor for a year. He was drafted and was part of the first group of men to leave from Hastings for Camp Dodge, Iowa.

George was assigned to Headquarters Company, 312th Engineers, 87th Division AEF as a mechanic. The thousands of engineer troops that served in France in 1917 and 1918 contributed both to front-line and rear-support efforts. The combat engineers constructed bridges, roads, and narrow-gauge railroads at or immediately behind the front. He left for France on August 24, 1918 on the SS Coronia from the New York harbor. He returned home and was released from Camp Dodge on July 3, 1919.

He returned to his childhood home and started working for the Dakota County Engineering Office. His oldest brother had died of tuberculosis at the age of 17 and he was needed on the farm. He married Marion Grawe in Iowa on October 20, 1923 at the age of 34. They moved to Lakeville, Minnesota where George took a job with the Post Office as a mail carrier. He worked here until his retirement. The couple never had children. He died at age 89 and is buried at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

The youngest brother of George was Carroll Bradford Simmons (1903-1992). An eccentric antique dealer who purchased the LeDuc Mansion in Hastings and donated it to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1957. The house sat empty until 2002 when it was turned over to the City of Hastings and the Dakota County Historical Society.