

## Gilbert Louis Curry



Gilbert Louis Curry was born 27 April 1892 in Hastings. He was a son of James Dabney Curry (1859-1933) and Phoebe Emma or Ella Branson (1863-1943) who came to Hastings in the spring of 1885 from Rockingham County, Virginia. They lived at 4<sup>th</sup> & River Streets in Hastings where James built a house. Nine of their ten children graduated from Hastings High School. After James Curry's death in 1933, Emma moved to Minneapolis where some of her children had preceded her.

Gilbert and his brothers, Charles and Paul, joined the service in August 1918. Gilbert served as a Musician 2<sup>nd</sup> Class in the all-Black 809<sup>th</sup> Pioneer Infantry. In those days, the troops were segregated. The men of the 809<sup>th</sup> were assigned primarily to non-combat jobs including construction of hospitals, roads, bridges and railroad lines. Gilbert and his brother Paul served in the Infantry's Band. They trained at Camp

Dodge, Iowa. The 809<sup>th</sup> Infantry arrived in France in September of 1918. During the 14-day voyage aboard the *USS President Grant*, about half of the five thousand men on board became ill with influenza, and many died en route. Within two months of the 809<sup>th</sup>'s arrival, Armistice was declared on 11 November. Curry was released from service on 26 July 1919.

After the War, Gilbert went into auto tire work; in 1942, he worked for U. S. Rubber Co. He also had a farm in Robbinsdale, Minnesota. He was married twice, first to Fredericka, who died in 1931, and to his second wife, Martha Zelinski, in 1957. He died on 25 March 1958 and is buried in Fort Snelling National Cemetery.