

Collection #
SC 3460
OM 0689

**FREEMAN FAMILY
COLLECTION, 1848–1985**

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Processed by

Lyndsey Blair
July 2018

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

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| VOLUME OF COLLECTION: | Manuscript Materials: 4 manuscript folders, 1 oversized manuscript folder Visual Materials: 3 photograph folders, 1 cold storage color photograph folder, 2 OVA photograph folders, 1 OVB photograph folder |
| COLLECTION DATES: | 1848–1985 (Bulk: 1910s–1950s) |
| PROVENANCE: | Eleanor (Freeman) Potts, 17 July 1995 |
| RESTRICTIONS: | Items listed as being in cold storage need at least four hours to acclimate, so patrons are advised to call ahead of their visit if they wish to view those items to allow for thawing time. |
| COPYRIGHT: | |
| REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: | Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society. |
| ALTERNATE FORMATS: | |
| RELATED HOLDINGS: | Crispus Attucks High School Collection, M 1094 |
| ACCESSION NUMBER: | 1995.0622 |
| NOTES: | |

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Leon Thomas Freeman was born 25 May 1898 to John and Henrietta Freeman in Indianapolis, Indiana. The family lived at 953 Paca Street, which is a short distance from Indiana Avenue. Leon attended IPS School #17 and graduated in 1913.

On 6 June 1918, Leon Freeman married Lula Gates. Shortly after, Leon was drafted into the U.S. military to serve in World War I. Following the war's conclusion, Leon and Lula had their first child, Leon Wilbert Freeman, on 22 October 1919.¹ The couple's second child, Lottie Eleanor Freeman, was born 13 January 1922.²

Leon Freeman Sr. held a number of jobs throughout his career. One of his first positions was a chauffeur for Circle Flower Store (located inside Circle Theatre). The last twenty years of his career (1945–1965), meanwhile, were spent performing maintenance work for the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad.

Leon was also affiliated with various fraternal organizations. He served as a member of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (now known as Shriners International). He was also 33rd degree Mason in the Scottish Rite.

Leon spent his later years with his second wife Gladys Harris Freeman (née Lewis).³ A lifelong Indianapolis resident, Gladys was a member of Bethel A.M.E. Church and the Duchess Social Club. The couple lived at 521 West 41st Street.

Gladys Freeman died 27 June 1975, and Leon Freeman followed six months later on 26 December 1975.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

"George Potts [Obituary]." *Recorder* [page 7] (Indianapolis, IN), October 4, 1969.
<https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/indiana?a=d&d=INR19691004-01.1.7&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->

"Gladys H. Freeman [Obituary]." *Recorder* [page 15] (Indianapolis, IN), July 5, 1975.
<https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/indiana?a=d&d=INR19750705-01.1.15&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->

"Leon Freeman [Obituary]." *Recorder* [page 7] (Indianapolis, IN), January 3, 1976.
<https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/indiana?a=d&d=INR19760103-01&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->

1900 United States Federal Census, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018

¹ Lula Gates was born 20 August 1898 to Isaac and Nannie Gates in Kentucky. She died 25 September 1979. Leon Wilbert Freeman died 26 December 1998.

² Lottie Eleanor Freeman married her first husband, Clem Smith, in 1950. Her second husband was George Arlington Potts, who was born 20 December 1915 in Atlanta, Georgia. George died 25 September 1969. Eleanor (Freeman) Potts died 5 July 2009.

³ Gladys Harris Freeman was born 1 January 1898 to William and Susie Lewis.

1920 United States Federal Census, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
1930 United States Federal Census, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
1940 United States Federal Census, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
Indiana, Birth Certificates, 1907–1940, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
Indiana, Death Certificates, 1899–2011, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
Indiana, Marriages, 1810–2001, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
Indiana, Select Marriages Index, 1748–1993, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995 [Years: 1919, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1936, 1942], Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018
U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918, Ancestry Library edition, accessed 5 July 2018

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains documents and photographs pertaining to the Freeman family. Most of these items relate specifically to Leon Thomas Freeman—his 1913 diploma from School #17, booklets from his fraternal organizations, certificates he received from various organizations, and photographs of Leon and his relatives. There are also materials on Emmerich Manual Training High School, Crispus Attucks High School, Bridgeport Brass Company, June Festival Chorus, Persian Temple Band, and the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway (CCC&StL).

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Freeman Family Members, ca. 1892-1920

Leon Thomas Freeman on Paca Street, n.d.

Eleanor (Freeman) Potts (?), n.d.

IPS School #17 Diploma for Leon Thomas Freeman,
11 June 1913

Certificates for Leon Thomas Freeman, 1 June 1928 &
25 April 1952

Booklets from Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of
the Mystic Shrine [Shriners] & Scottish Rite, 1945,
1956, 1962-63, n.d.

Shiners Imperial Council Certificate for Leon Thomas
Freeman, 7 December 1957

Group Photos of Bridgeport Brass Company, Persian
Temple Band, and Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and
St. Louis Railway, 1942, n.d.

June Festival Chorus Performance Photo, 17 June
1920

Group Photo from "Community Christmas Tree
Dedication Services", n.d.

Emmerich Manual Training High School Graduating Class
Photograph (Ivy Day), January 1916

Crispus Attucks High School Golden Anniversary
Souvenir Book, 1985 [Eleanor's Second Husband,
George Arlington Potts, Graduated in 1935]

Affidavit of Birth for Price (?) Faulkner, 11 September
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Land Grant to Abraham Branaman (Jackson County,
Ind.) Signed by President James K. Polk, 10 May
1848

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