



THE DODGE FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1981 by Col. Robert Livingston Dodge,
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*From the desk of Faith Dorothy Dodge Nelson
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Spring is coming, I do believe, but I'm almost too busy to notice it yet this year. Neck deep in wedding preparations for my daughter, Linnea, preparing to help with the school's annual fund-raiser, busy with commitments at church, I also need to complete the last six weeks of lesson plans for the three boys who are learning at home. Then we will be off to Indiana for the college graduation of my second son, Jesse. So whenever I leave the house, I only look wistfully at the garden beds that need attention. This will not be a year for major improvements

to the Nelson yard. I hope that I can at least keep the weeds at bay.

If you have read my past letters, you may recall that my two youngest sons and I are studying American history this year. We recently finished reading about the Civil War. As much as possible, I try to supplement our textbook reading with historical biographies, or works of fiction which put flesh onto the skeleton of dry facts found in most textbooks. We read a poignant novel, *Across Five Aprils*, by Irene Hunt, which chronicles the experiences of a boy in southern Illinois. Nine-years-old at the outset of the war, Jethro's experiences capsule the tragedy of the war: brothers who serve in opposing armies, a sister whose sweetheart leaves to fight and is wounded, another brother killed in battle, a cousin who deserts, and threats to civilians from roaming renegades.

We also watched a couple of my favorite films, *Gods and Generals*, and *Gettysburg*. They helped us understand the view of people in the Confederacy, the amazing character of some of the war's heroes, and the horrible loss of life. I had borrowed a couple other movies from the library, but decided that I couldn't bear any more tragedy right now.

I knew, or course, that Dodges served in the Civil War. On the back of this letter is information on a book written about the 38th Iowa Infantry. The author, David Wildman, in his research, found records of a Levi Dodge and his fourteen-year-old son, Norman, who both enlisted on the same day. Norman, who served as a fifer, died in St. Louis almost one year exactly after enlistment. What a sad story that must be, if only the mystery of it was known. The sorrow of it makes my problems seem quite inconsequential.

So back to lesson plans. We read about World War I in one day (not fair treatment, I know, but we have only six weeks to finish the year, so I must now pick and choose a little more carefully.) Then we will move on to the Second World War and the rest of the last century's history. So much to cover, and so little time! So much to do and so little time! How will I get these lesson plans done, not to mention all the other work needing to be completed by the June 10th wedding?

"Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Good advice from an ancient book. I had better prioritize, let go of high expectations, and focus on today. I need to make time to watch my young son's puppet show, or take five minutes to pick some daffodils. Life will go on even if the wedding invitations are mailed a week or two late, and my son won't be doomed to fail in life if he doesn't entirely finish his 6th grade math book. A proper perspective on the pressure I face reveals it isn't as great as I thought. Perhaps I'll enjoy spring after all.

Faith

P.S. On the other side of this letter is a brief article on Iowa's Martyr Regiment and the Dodge men who were part of that regiment.

There is also a form for you if you would like to purchase our book, "Report of The Memorable First Reunion of the Dodge Family in America by Robert Dodge, 1879. Only \$10 with postage paid is an offer that is hard to beat.

You may also use that form to pay your dues.

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Excerpts From Iowa's Martyr Regiment, by David Wildman

Chapter 1

The average age of the recruits was twenty-six years. Three boys could claim to be among the youngest. **Norman Dodge from Janesville was fourteen when he enlisted as a fifer. His father enlisted with him as a private.**

...*Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion*, 6 vols. (Des Moines, IA, 1908-1911), 5:865, hereafter cited as *Roster and Record*. **Norman's father was Levi Dodge, forty-four, of Janesville, who enlisted on the same day....**

The 38th was consolidated with the 34th Infantry on January 1, 1865. From the roster of the 34th Iowa: **Dodge, Levi. Age 44. Residence Janesville, nativity New York. Enlisted Aug. 20, 1862. Mustered Nov. 4, 1862. Mustered out Aug. 15, 1865, Houston, Texas. See Company B, Thirty-eighth Infantry.**

During the Regiment's time at the siege of Vicksburg most of the men contracted some type of ailment. Most suffered from fevers and dysentery, which would eventually kill more than 300 men. There were cases of malaria also, and typhoid fever took many lives. By late August of 1863 the Regiment's sick had been scattered among the hospitals along the Mississippi.

Chapter 9

The men who were left at Vicksburg did not fare much better. In the larger hospitals they were exposed to infection of one kind or another, and the rations were about the same as at Port Hudson. Efforts were being made by various sanitary commissions to bring in bedding and medical supplies and food, and to get the ones most sick to larger hospitals up the river, by July 31 eight more men had died there.

About this time the hospital steamer *R. C. WOOD* pulled away from the waterfront at Vicksburg and slowly headed up river with a load of sick soldiers, at least fifteen of them from the Thirty-eighth.

Men known to be onboard the *R. C. WOOD* when it left Vicksburg about July 31: Co. B, **Levi Dodge, Norman E. Dodge**, and Francis Huston. Co. C, Emery J. Gates and Henry Shoemaker. Co. E, John F. Relf. Co. G, Amandus Gersbacher (Gersbaaher in *Roster and Record*), and Perry R. Wilbur. Co. H, William Ketchum, Adam Saltsgiver, and Andrew Wattenbaugh. Co. I, Charles Craghill. Co. K, William Fitzgerald, Orrin M. Payne, and George Skelton....

A few days later it was reported that Henry Saltsgiver, and Orrin Foster had died at the Barracks Hospital in New Orleans. For those who anticipated a trip to northern hospitals the prospect for survival was not any better. In St. Louis **twenty-four men died, including the teenage fifer, Norman Dodge**. Six more died at Vicksburg, and four in Memphis including Samuel Oldham and Sylvanus Pepin.

Ed Note: Amidst the pressures of day to day living we forget the sacrifices that were made for us in the building of our country, AMERICA. You can see a lot more about this Regiment if you will browse to:

http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cooverfamily/dw_contents.html

It behooves us to stop a few minutes and take note of our past history so that we can better appreciate our freedom to have hectic and hurried lives.

My life is just as hectic as Faith's but with different objectives, the Dodge Association being one of those objectives... Journal, Web Site, Office, etc.

Once again, we want to bring to your attention, the book "Memorable Dodge First Reunion". The normal price is \$16.00 but we are offering it for \$10.00 ppd.

The book documents the very first Dodge reunion in America, which was held to mark the 250th anniversary of Dodges coming to America. This reunion was held before it was known that there were actually two Dodge lines in this country. Therefore, many Dodges from both the Tristram line and the William/Richard lines attended. There were speeches by many including Robert Dodge, who subsequently gathered Tristram genealogy and published the first Tristram genealogy book. There are also letters in the back from Dodges - descended from both lines - who could not attend.

This is a very historical item and a great addition to your library. Order your copy today!

I would like to order _____ books of the Memorable First Dodge Reunion at \$10.00 each ppd. My check for _____ is included. I also would like to update my dues at \$20 per year. \$_____ Is also included in my check.

Name _____