

SPRING 2014

# Meadow Brook



**The Dodge Brothers**

Sweat, Savvy & Swagger

SPECIAL CENTENNIAL ISSUE 1914-2014

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## 2 | Editor's Column

Getting into Dodge

## 4 | Around the Estate

Grants awarded

A few handy men

Ballet in the ballroom

Downtown Days

Dodge Brothers exhibit

Must do at MBH

All by design

## 36 | Last Page

Two brothers and two triangles

## BC | Museum Store

Roll out the bottles

## 8 | A Masterpiece Gets a New Voice

Meadow Brook partners with the DIA to conserve a 17th-Century Spanish painting, shining a light on Matilda and Alfred Wilson as collectors.

## 11 | The Dodge Brothers

From tinkerers to titans . . . the men, the machinists and the motor car. *A Special Meadow Brook Magazine Centennial Tribute*

## 12 | Living Large

The definitive Dodge Brothers' timeline – from small town boys to men of means.

## 20 | Detroit's Most Wanted

The facts behind the legend of John and Horace Dodge.

## 27 | A good name

The Dodge Brothers relied on their reputation to promote and sell their cars . . . and the strategy worked.

## 31 | Report to Donors

Friends, Guilders, Cornerstone and Heritage Society members build a strong case of support for Meadow Brook.

## 34 | A Child's Eye View

A Meadow Brook Writing Camp participant for many years, 13-year-old Miya Dixon talks with Richard Wilson about his childhood.

### On the Cover:

This iconic photographic portrait shows two inseparable brothers, John (approximately 48, left), and Horace (approximately 44), at the pinnacle of their careers, just prior to launching the Dodge Brothers motor car company in 1914.

# Meadow Brook

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## MEADOW BROOK

ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST ESTATE HOMES, AN ICON OF THE AUTOMOTIVE ARISTOCRACY, AND A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

*The former home of Alfred and Matilda Dodge Wilson, founders of Oakland University, Meadow Brook Hall is located on Oakland's 1,400-acre campus. The self-supporting auxiliary of the university serves as an internationally renowned historic house museum and cultural center.*

## | Editor's Column

# Getting *into* Dodge

As early as 2010, Meadow Brook's leadership team identified the interpretation of the Dodge Brothers' story as one of our highest priorities. For, without the Dodge Brothers, Meadow Brook Farms, Meadow Brook Hall and by extension Oakland University would not have come into existence. (Nor, sadly, the magazine you are reading!)

We started, as so many new initiatives do, with a vision . . . and that vision was to tell the Dodge story through artifacts, archival materials and a variety of interpretive methods. And, given that 2014 is the centennial of the founding of the Dodge Brothers motor car company, we had an end date to shoot for. Our initial goal was to stage a major Dodge exhibit this summer and fall, followed in 2015 by a stand-alone museum building (more to come on that topic in the Fall 2014 issue of MEADOW BROOK MAGAZINE).

But we had a lot of work to accomplish before we could start planning the actual

exhibit . . . and first and foremost was research. Fortunately, Matilda Dodge Wilson saved thousands of records and transactions involving the Dodge businesses, now housed in the Meadow Brook Archives. So, that is where staff started. But our search for Dodge-related historical items and information has taken us to museums and individuals across the country and even into Canada.

This is no small undertaking. In essence, we are building a museum from the ground up. Through grants and donations, we are accu-



*Dodge Brothers Club President Barry Cogan and Geoff Upward with the 1919 Graham Brothers truck (forerunner of Dodge trucks), loaned to Meadow Brook by the club in April.*

mulating artifacts ranging from actual vehicles to 1800s school photographs.

The target date to open the Dodge Brothers exhibit is June 26, the day the Dodge Brothers Club members bring their 90+ vintage vehicles to the Meadow Brook grounds as part of their centennial tour. The public will be invited to view the cars and participate in a variety of events during what is aptly being called "Dodge Days," including a new book-signing (see facing page and page 10).

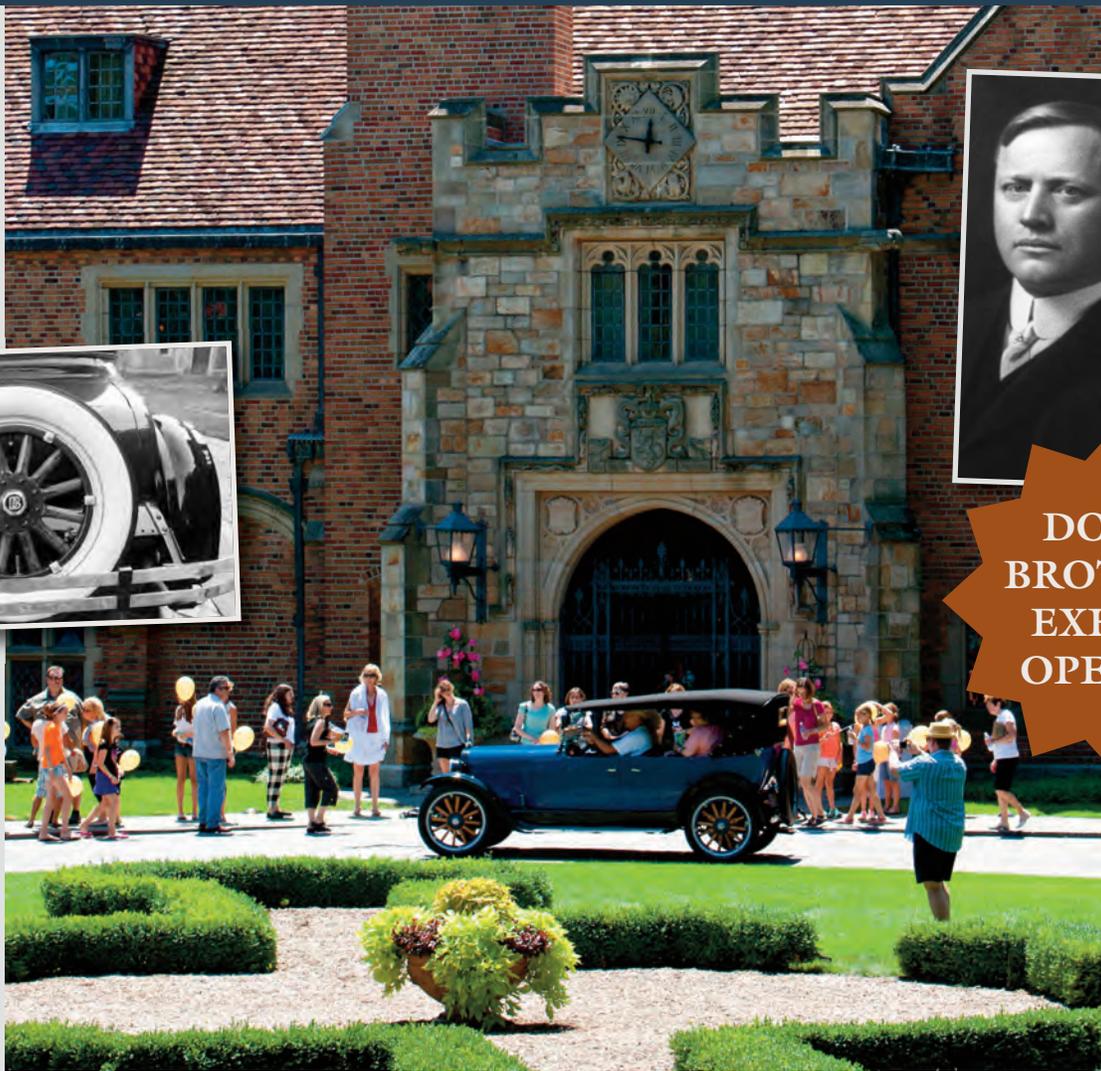
In the end, we hope visitors and friends come away with a new-found appreciation for the legacy of John and Horace Dodge . . . and an appreciation for their place in both American automotive and local history.

In the meantime, please enjoy this special commemorative issue; the result of much original research and the hard work of many . . . in the tradition of two gritty brothers from Niles, Michigan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Geoff Upward".



**DODGE  
BROTHERS  
EXHIBIT  
OPENING**



# Join us for Dodge Days!

Thursday, June 26, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

**FREE ADMISSION**

- ★ Vintage Dodge Car Show – featuring over 90 automobiles
- ★ Concessions ★ Live Musical Entertainment
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## Major grants announced



The Rochester Junior Woman's Club has announced a grant to support The Hall's historical interpretation of the 1926-37 rustic log cabin and workshop once belonging to Danny Dodge, son of John and Matilda Dodge. Danny's cabin and workshop was moved in 2013 to a site near Knole Cottage, the playhouse of Frances Dodge.

Funds will be used to fully interpret Danny's use of the cabin and workshop and, by extension, boys' life of the 1920s and 30s. The cabin will be outfitted with historically accurate furnishings, including games, toys and hunting and sporting goods, while the workshop will include the display of Danny's Red Bud runabout (go-cart), as he once worked on cars there. The cabin and workshop will serve as a new tour option for Meadow Brook Hall visitors and a site for educational programming.



The Hall also received a grant this Spring from the MotorCities National Heritage Area, an affiliate of the National Park Service, to support both the educational and interpretive programming components of the June 26, 2014 "Dodge Days" centennial celebration and the renovation of the Sheep Barn (moved to the Meadow Brook property in 2013), which will serve as a new Dodge Brothers Museum.

MotorCities support includes the staging of a preliminary Dodge Brothers exhibit in the Family and Visitors Garages, the printing of two Dodge Brothers publications and lectures and workshops.



*MBH curator Madelyn Rzadkowski with Dodge Brothers Club members, including President Barry Cogan (center).*

## “A few handy men”

For years, sitting on a back corner of one of Meadow Brook Hall's collections storage rooms, generally unseen by the public, was a wooden box. The contents of the box, a toolbox, are not surprising; like most, it is filled with not only tools, but spare parts, nuts, bolts and screws, and miscellany that were hastily stuffed in its drawers by its owner, a man more interested in machinery than organization... John Dodge. The screwdrivers, levels, and gears inside were used from approximately 1892 through 1903, a pivotal time in his career when John and his brother Horace acquired the skills and business acumen needed to open the small Detroit machine shop that would transform into one of the greatest car companies in the world.

Meadow Brook's curator, Madelyn Rzadkowski, invited members of the Dodge Brothers Club to help identify these remarkable artifacts of history.

Among the items were steel stamps

with John and Horace's names on them, bicycle wrenches and spoke parts from the Evans & Dodge bicycle company, a push drill screwdriver, a crank handle, and a spanner wrench set. After club members identified the pieces, the Hall's curatorial collections care team recorded the descriptions and measurements of each piece in preparation for their exhibition in the Dodge Brothers Museum.

Meadow Brook has been working with the club, collectors of Dodge Brothers cars and related memorabilia covering the years 1914-1938, in anticipation of the Dodge Brothers Centennial this year. As part of the collaboration, the Club is performing vehicle maintenance on the cars in The Hall's collection. The Club will hold its Centennial meet at The Hall on June 26, 2014, which will include a display of some 90 vintage cars and a community celebration.

# Ballet in the Ballroom

Even as a little girl, Gina Dudash, director of Southeastern Michigan Classical Ballet, was captivated by mansions. When she would accompany her father, a musician with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, to rehearsals at Meadow Brook Music Festival, young Gina would wonder about the big brick mansion just over the hill. At the age of 12, Gina's curiosity got the better of her. She wandered away from rehearsal and visited The Hall. "After that I became a frequent unofficial visitor so often that The Hall staff knew me by name."

"Fast-forward to a conversation in July 2012: a col-



league suggested that we perform a strolling version of The Nutcracker Ballet at Meadow Brook, similar to the performances done at Rosecliff mansion in Newport, Rhode Island."

In 2013, the Southeastern Michigan Classical Ballet held two performances of the Nutcracker at Meadow Brook, a strolling ballet, in which the audience and dancers move from room to room during the performance.

For Gina the performances at

Meadow Brook were a dream come true – marrying her love of dance with her affinity for Tudor Revival-style mansions. "The entire troupe looks forward to returning



to Meadow Brook."

Watch The Hall's website ([www.meadowbrookhall.org](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org)) for upcoming performances this November.

## Downton Days



*Matilda Wilson c. 1928*

Meadow Brook created a new trio of Downton Days events over four days in February that compared and contrasted what's seen on the "Downton Abbey" PBS series with real life at The Hall.

"Life at a Country Estate" included a lunch, lecture and tour.

An exclusive black-tie event included a five-course dinner served by white-gloved staff, aimed at letting guests experience

an elegant evening similar to one that Detroit's automotive "aristocracy" would have attended in the 1920s and '30s.

"A Servant's Life" immersion experience wrapped up Downton Days.

Arriving as if applying for a job in the 1920s, guests entered through The Hall's back service entrance. There they were met by the head housekeeper who explained what would



*Meadow Brook staff and volunteers in "downstairs" dress.*

be expected of someone in service at the Great Estate. After completing simple tasks, they were taken by a "footman" or "housemaid" to areas of The Hall in which they might work, where other volunteers performed demonstrations of household chores. Guests were then treated to tea and scones.

Look for other Downton experiences at Meadow Brook in the future.

# Dodge Brothers Exhibit

On June 26, Meadow Brook is opening a major exhibit in honor of the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Centennial



*Model of the Hornet II, c. 1910.*

(1914-2014). The exhibit will celebrate not only the Dodge Brothers Motor Car company, but also the two extraordinary men who founded it. John and Horace Dodge's work ethic, business acumen, philanthropic endeavors, and social and political interests played just as important a role in creating a car company as their mechanical genius. In the six short years before their deaths in 1920, Dodge Brothers had risen to rank second in American car sales.

Last summer, Meadow Brook received the first of the Dodge Brothers cars that will be featured in the exhibit. Mary Anne Petz donated a 1915 DB

touring car, which belonged to her late husband, Robert Petz, the great-grandson of Horace Dodge, who had

painstakingly restored and cared for the car. It was one of the first several hundred Dodge cars

made and is identical to the first one the Dodge Brothers released on November 14, 1914 at their Dodge Main plant.

Centennial exhibit features will include:

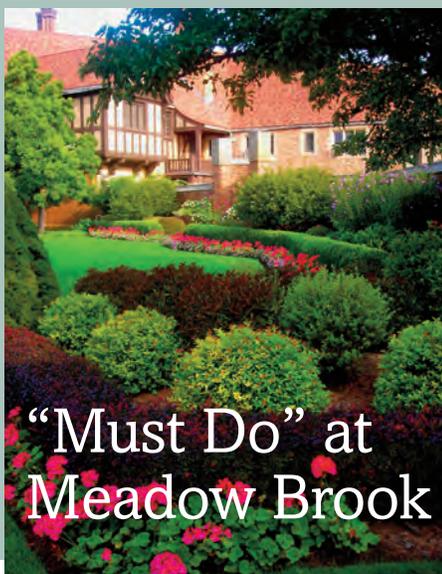
- John Dodge's personal bike, the first produced by the Evans & Dodge bicycle company
- Danny Dodge's runabout (go-cart)
- Dodge Brothers Motor Car ledgers, letters, and advertisements
- Tool kits and paperwork from early Dodge Brothers cars
- A model of the Hornet II yacht
- Original photographs from the Dodges' careers, family lives, and social activities



*Horace Dodge, c. 1901.*

Meadow Brook Hall has begun fund raising for expansion of the exhibit as well as for a future Dodge Brothers Museum which will include extensive gallery space, interpretive collections storage and visitor amenities. In the meantime, Meadow Brook, a self-supporting enterprise, is also seeking stories, items, and photographs that are relevant to the Dodge family and Dodge Brothers Motor Company to expand its research and collections archive.

All loan or donation inquiries can be directed to Madelyn Rzadkowsky, Curator, at rzadkowsky@oakland.edu or (248) 364-6253.



## **DODGE DAYS CELEBRATION, JUNE 26, FREE ADMISSION! 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

Meadow Brook Hall celebrates The Dodge Brothers Centennial with Dodge Days, an afternoon of lively activities including rides in period autos, lectures about the Dodge Brothers and a car show featuring 90+ vintage Dodges. Immerse yourself further into the world of the automotive aristocracy with the opening of a new and one-of-a-kind Dodge Brothers Exhibit! Enjoy concessions, a jazz trio and a barbershop quartet, while children take on the Dodge Challenge Kid Zone, create Arts and Scraps and more. Tours

of The Hall are available at a discounted rate. Reservations are not required.

## **JAZZ IN THE GARDEN CONCERT SERIES, JUNE 19, JULY 17 & AUGUST 21, \$35 PER PERSON, CASH BAR**

Enjoy live cool jazz in the garden at the Great Estate. Sip cocktails and enjoy hors d'oeuvres while taking in the sights and sounds on a warm summer evening.

## **MEADOW BROOK WRITING CAMPS JUNE 23-27, JULY 7-11, JULY 14-18, JULY 21-25, JULY 28- AUGUST 1 AND AUGUST 4-8**

Young authors will interact with award-

# All by Design

When The Hall offered a real-life client-agency project to Oakland University Assistant Professor of Art and Art History Lynn Fausone last Fall for her most promising graphic design students, she delivered . . . in the form of Amanda Grzadziel, Frank Lepkowski and Kayleigh McWhinne. And, in return, Meadow Brook got a series of logos for its new Dodge interpretive facilities that is nothing less than impactful and highly professional.

With guidance from Hall staff, the students studied Dodge Brothers' history, Meadow Brook Hall logos and historic Dodge ads and photos for inspiration. Charged with coming up with designs that could be used for a new Dodge museum, banners and sales merchandise, they began by working up independent sketches of their ideas. Then they met and collaborated, narrowing the designs to present to Meadow Brook management.

"To guide our process we took cues from classical industrial designs from the early 1900s and then gave them a



Frank Lepkowski, Kayleigh McWhinne and Amanda Grzadziel and their logos.



modern twist," explained Frank. "Before we received any feedback, we weren't sure what the team (at Meadow Brook) would like," Amanda agreed. "The initial direction was broad, so we could go at any angle. In the end they gave us room to come up with a lot of ideas to choose from."

"The man on the banner is from an early Dodge ad that showed a farmer with a pick ax. We took the profile and changed the tool," Kayleigh elaborated. They used the D and B from the Dodge Brothers factory gate. "The



wheel with the 12 spokes is historically correct," according to Frank. "And the blue for the logo is Dodge blue."

After input from the client and some refining, the final art work was selected. The re-

sults will be used on a variety of promotional communications, signage and product merchandise for Meadow Brook's Dodge Brothers Centennial activities.

As the project progressed, the three graduating seniors formed their own design company, PRIIIME (three "I's to represent the three partners), with help from Meadow Brook staff. And their first paid project resulted in label designs for The Hall's two new beers for sale in the Museum Store (see back cover). **MB**

winning, specially trained experts in the field of writing with the National Historic Landmark as the backdrop.

## MEADOW BROOK'S 9TH ANNUAL GOURMET WILD GAME DINNER & AUCTION, SEPTEMBER 17

Featuring a live and silent auction, raffle, hors d'oeuvre reception and seated gourmet meal – all to benefit the preservation of Meadow Brook Hall.

\$100 per person or \$1,000 table

## DINNER AND A MOVIE OCTOBER 9, 16 & 23, \$35 PER PERSON, CASH BAR

Meadow Brook presents Hitchcock at

The Hall. Guests will enjoy a casual three-course dinner while watching the famous Director's classics on the big screen in the Ballroom. Movies tbd.

## MYSTERY DINNER, OCTOBER 24, \$75 PER PERSON

Join us for an engaging evening of murder, mystery and mayhem at Meadow Brook. This fun event includes a three-course meal, cocktails and a chance to solve the mystery.

*Reservations are required for all Meadow Brook Hall events. Call (248) 364-6252 to make a reservation or for more information visit [www.meadowbrookhall.org](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org).*

# A MASTERPIECE Gets a New Voice



*Top: European Painting Curator Salvador Salort-Pons with students in the DIA lab; left: Conservation Director Alfred Ackerman; below, Conservation Scientist Cathy Selvius DeRoo;*

Meadow Brook partners with the DIA to conserve a 17th-Century Spanish painting, shining a light on Matilda and Alfred Wilson as collectors.

A year in the making, the process to conserve one of Meadow Brook Hall's 75,000 collection items, the 17th-Century masterpiece, "The Infant St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness" by Spanish painter Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, culminated in the February unveiling of the painting in the main European Paintings Gallery at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

In attendance were dozens of supporters of Meadow Brook and the DIA, leadership of the two institutions, some 20 Oakland University students and faculty who participated in the

conservation process, cultural media, and key staff who put together and executed the project: Salvador Salort-Pons, DIA curator of European painting and executive director of Collection Strategies and Information; Alfred Ackerman, director of Conservation; Cathy Selvius DeRoo, DIA conservation scientist; Geoff Upward, Meadow Brook Hall executive director; Kim Zelinski, MBH director

of museum operations; and Madelyn Rzadkowski, MBH curator.

In exchange for the conservation, the painting purchased by Matilda and Alfred Wilson in New York in 1926 for the living room of their new home will

be on exhibit at the DIA for the next five years, where its story will be shared with thousands in context with other great works.

Images of project highlights can be seen on these pages; a video

tracking the process from beginning to end can be found on [www.meadowbrookhall.org](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org) under "What's New" on the homepage. Click on "A Masterpiece Revealed."





*OU students at the Murillo unveiling with MBH Curator Madelyn Rzakowolski (second from left) and Chair of OU's Art & Art History department Vagner Whitehead (far left). Taylor Clayton is fourth from right and below.*

## The Student Perspective

*Meadow Brook Hall student employee and docent Taylor Clayton, ("TC") a sophomore Communications major at Oakland University, participated in the Murillo conservation lab visits by OU students and faculty. Here, she asks fellow students (Caryn Rochfort, "CR," a senior majoring in Art History and Studio Art; and Jerry Kern, "JK," a senior majoring in Studio Art with a double minor in Art History and Graphic Design) about their experiences. – ed*

**TC:** How does learning in a world-class conservation lab setting differ from classroom study?

**CR:** It's not that learning in a classroom is a bad thing, but actually going to the DIA and getting a first-hand look at how art is interpreted and cared for is much more intimate.

Meeting people who work with more professional or "real" pieces and seeing how they use materials to bring paintings back to life was, well, pretty cool.

**TC:** Has witnessing the conservation of the Murillo changed the way you interpret art?

**JK:** Going inside the DIA conservation lab let me see how a great artist like Murillo worked, what ma-

terials and pigments he used . . . basically his overall process. Now when I look at works of art, I go beyond my original interpretation and almost do detective work, investigating how the work was made and what materials were used.

**TC:** What was the most important thing you learned through this process?

**CR:** The overall experience really helped reveal how important art is, and not just for someone like me who studies and practices, or people who teach or people who work in a museum . . . but how important it is for all of us.

It's amazing that we can still have works of art like this to care for and appreciate. It showed me that there is al-



ways a story and a bigger meaning. It made me think about where we would be if not for the arts.

**TC:** In what ways has this experience affected your passion as an artist?

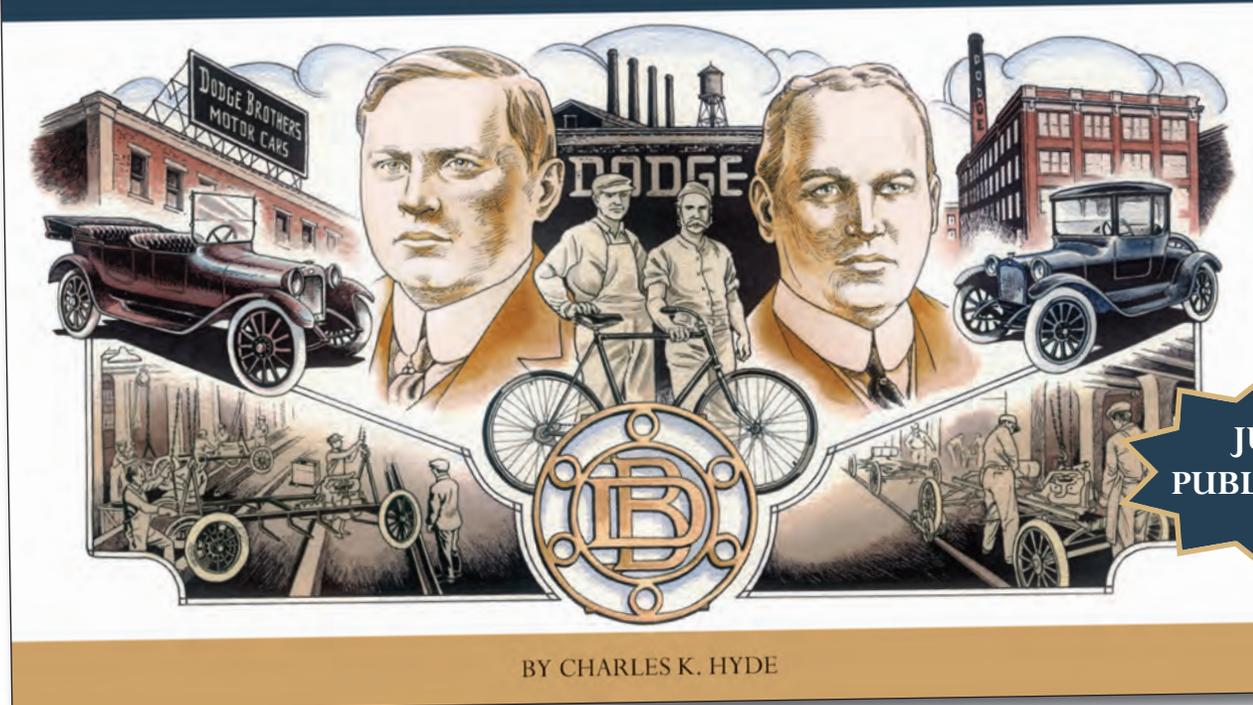
**JK:** Being part of such a rare opportunity through two of the world's top museums – the DIA and Meadow Brook – gave me incredible knowledge and insight to help fuel my passion.

Seeing a 400-year-old painting still making an impact in the art world today is pretty powerful stuff . . . 400 years old and still relevant. It shows that true art is timeless and that pushes me to try to achieve that in my own way. **MB**



# THE DODGE BROTHERS

## Detroit's Automotive Geniuses



**JUST  
PUBLISHED!**

BY CHARLES K. HYDE

# The definitive Dodge Brothers history!



The fascinating story of John and Horace Dodge at work and at play – from their boyhoods in Niles, Michigan, to the machine shops, barrooms and boardrooms of Detroit's young, rough-and-tumble automobile industry. Written by noted automotive historian Charles K. Hyde.



*The Dodge Brothers: Detroit's Automotive Geniuses.* Published by The Meadow Brook Press, Spring 2014. Softcover, 64 pp. plus cover, 67 black-and-white photographs and illustrations, 8-1/2" x 6" trim size.

**Cut out or photocopy the Order Form** and return with payment. Also available online at [www.meadowbrookhall.org](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org) (click on "Shop") and at Meadow Brook's Museum Store. Call (248) 364-6206 or email [glaza@oakland.edu](mailto:glaza@oakland.edu) for more information.



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# THE DODGE BROTHERS

From tinkerers to titans... the men,  
the machinists and the motor car



The Dodge Brothers story, largely untold, centers on the dynamic partnership of John and Horace Dodge, whose ingenuity, mechanical genius, business acumen and penchant for hard work contributed significantly to the creation of arguably the most powerful industry in the world.

From their humble beginnings in Niles, Michigan, to an almost unimaginable wealth earned through Detroit's burgeoning automobile industry at the dawn of the 20th century, John and Horace Dodge brilliantly navigated their personal and business lives by steadfastly standing behind their good name.

While their untimely deaths in 1920 cut short the possibility of even greater achievements, the Dodge Brothers created an enduring legacy that continues to benefit and touch the lives of untold numbers through the car company that still bears their name, Meadow Brook Hall and Oakland University.

# 1860-1885

## Formative Years



Daniel Rugg Dodge (father of John and Horace) his parents Ezekiel and Anna Dodge and brothers Caleb Kimball Dodge and Edwin Dodge, move from New Hampshire to Niles, Michigan operating a machine shop and foundry near the Michigan Central Railroad.

John receives a book from his teacher as an award for perfect attendance – not once tardy – during his first three years of grammar school.

John and Horace spend much of their spare time in their father's machine shop, puttering with engines, fabricating toys and to the amazement of the Niles community, creating a high-wheel bicycle from a baby buggy.

Horace develops his musical talents and interests, learning to play both the piano and violin.



1850-1860

1860

1873

1877-1882

1877-1882

1880s

1882-1884

Daniel Rugg Dodge (1819-1897) marries Maria Duval Casto (1823-1906), a seamstress from Indiana. They raise three children, Della lone (1862), John Francis (1864) and Horace Elgin (1868) in a small home on the outskirts of Niles.

John works odd jobs in Niles, including driving a cow three miles twice a day, hauling sacks of grain, operating a fence-mending business and working in a pill-box factory.

After John (age 17), pictured, graduates from high school, he, Horace (age 14) and the rest of the Dodge family move to Battle Creek where Daniel and John work as skilled machinists at Upton Manufacturing, producers of steam traction engines for farming use.

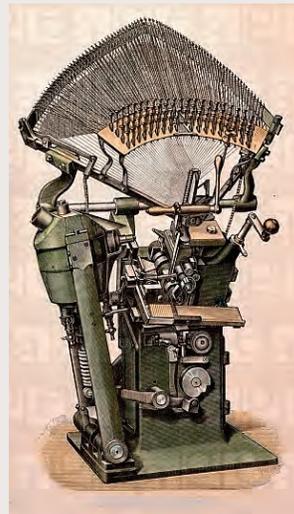


High school graduating class; John, back row, fifth from left





John marries Ivy Hawkins (1864-1901), a Canadian-born dressmaker. The couple have three children: Winifred (1894-1980), Isabel (1897-1962) and John Duval (1898-1942).



John and Horace take the ferry daily across the Detroit River to work at Dominion Typograph (later called Canadian Typograph), makers of the Rogers Typesetting Machine.

1886

Seeking a better job, John arrives in Detroit and finds employment at Murphy's Iron Works, manufacturers of marine and stationary steam engines. He is joined by Horace in early 1887. Horace earns a foreman's wage of \$18/week and John superintendent wages of \$20/week.



*Horace, left; John, right.*

1892

1892

1892

When John becomes ill with tuberculosis, Horace earns extra money working part-time as a machinist for Henry Leland of Leland, Faulconer and Norton. From Leland, Horace learns precision manufacturing skills.

## 1886-1899 Young Workingmen

# 1900-1913

## Entrepreneurial Success



In his backyard garage, Horace invents the “four-point bicycle ball bearing.” He and John receive the patent in 1896 and form a partnership with Fredrick S. Evans (general manager of Canadian Typograph) to manufacture the Evans & Dodge bicycle.

The first of seven yachts owned by the Dodge brothers, the Lotus, is commissioned. At the time the fastest steam-powered pleasure boat in the world, it is followed by the Hornet I, Hornet II, Nokomis I and Nokomis II. Prior to their deaths in 1920, each of the brothers commissions their own luxury yacht; Horace the Delphine and John the Frances.



1895 1896

During his lunch break, Horace marries Anna Thompson (1871- 1970), a piano teacher. The marriage produces two children: Delphine (1899-1943) and Horace Jr. (1900-1963).



1899 1900



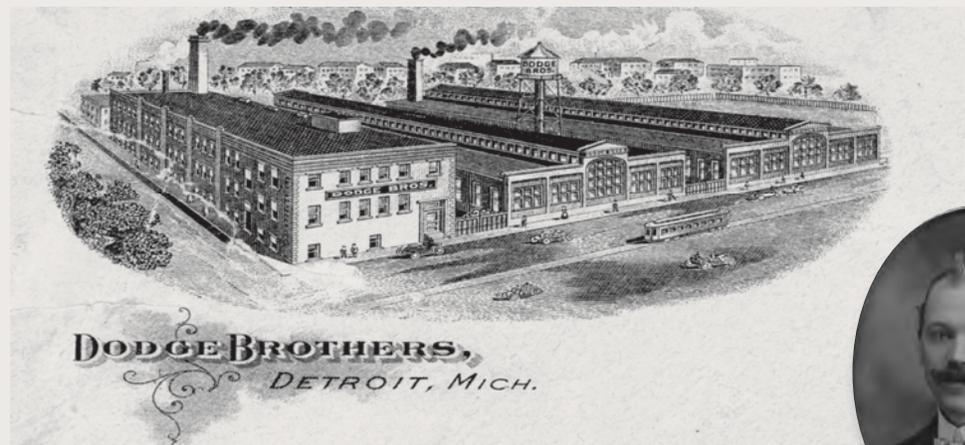
Horace, top row right; John, bottom row, second from right.

Fredrick Evans negotiates the sale of E&D bicycle to National Cycle & Automobile Company. John becomes the general manager at the new factory in Hamilton, Ontario while Horace stays at the Windsor plant. A year later, National is sold to Canadian Cycle Motor Co. (CCM).

1900 1901

Ivy Hawkins Dodge dies from tuberculosis.

Following the sale of National Cycle, John and Horace form the “Dodge Brothers” company in Windsor as the “successors to Canadian Typograph Company,” repairing typograph and other machines.



Horace (inset) and John, c. 1901.

Dodge Brothers construct a new three-story "Manufactory" in Detroit on Monroe Avenue at Hastings, employing 130 men. Over the next few years the factory expands to include several more buildings.

Henry Ford and his investors establish the Ford Motor Company and contract with the Dodge Brothers to produce the automobile's major parts: engine, transmission, frame and axels. The brothers become major stockholders, taking stock in lieu of payments from a cash-strapped Ford, with John serving as the company's vice president.

Detroit Mayor George Codd appoints John the city's water commissioner. During a five-year term, he significantly improves Detroit's water system.

1901

John and Horace facilitate the sale of Canadian Typograph and use the proceeds to open a new machine shop in the Boydell Building in Detroit, employing 12 men. Their first big break occurs in October when Olds Motor Works places an order for 3,000 transmissions for the Olds "runabout."



1902-1903

1903

Matilda Rausch (1884-1967), the Canadian-born daughter of George and Margaret Rausch, completes her studies at the Gorline Business School and joins Dodge Brothers as John's secretary.



1903

1903

Earlier in the year, John hires Isabelle Smith, a close friend of Anna Dodge, to help care for his children. In December, he marries Isabelle and keeps the marriage a secret throughout their four-year marriage, referring to her only as his "housekeeper." In 1905, Isabelle leaves the Dodge home and in 1907, John and Isabelle secretly divorce.

1905

Matilda accompanies John to various social activities such as the Detroit Opera House but leaves the employ of Dodge Brothers in 1905.

Sometime between this time period, John and Matilda begin a courtship. The couple attends social events such as the Detroit Opera House. In 1906, Matilda leaves the employ of Dodge Brothers.



John and Matilda purchase 320-acre Meadow Brook Farms in Rochester, Mich. as a country retreat for the family. The farm is expanded to include additional acreage, a clubhouse with indoor pool, 9-hole golf course, greenhouse, root cellars, farm and tenant buildings and pedigree stock.



*John and Horace in Commodore uniform, c. 1918*

Along the Detroit River in Grosse Pointe, Horace and Anna build a new residence called Rose Terrace.

Horace is appointed commodore of the Detroit Boat Club.



1907

John marries Matilda Rausch, with Horace and Anna serving as witnesses. John, Matilda and the children from his first marriage move into a new home on Boston Boulevard. John and Matilda have three

children of their own: Frances Matilda (1914-1971), Daniel George (1917-1938) and Anna Margaret (1919-1924).



1908

1910-1913

The success of the Ford Motor Company, specifically the Model T (a production of about 18,000 automobiles in 1909), prompts the Dodge Brothers to construct a new factory – Dodge Works – in Hamtramck. The factory employs nearly 3,000 workers who produce roughly 60 percent of the total value of the Ford automobile.



1911

1913

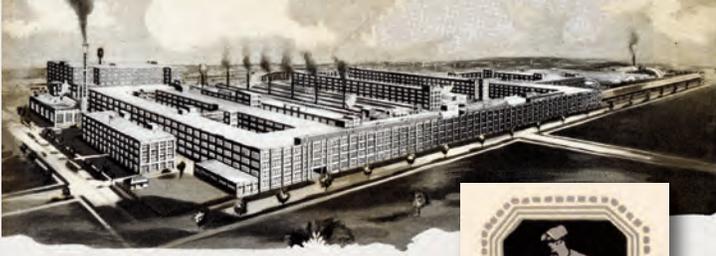
The Dodge brothers inform Henry Ford, per a one-year notification agreement, that they will not renew their contract after 1914, announcing they would manufacture an automobile under their own name.



*Henry Ford, front left, John front right.*

# 1914-1925

## Captains of Industry



July 17 – Dodge Brothers incorporates with a capitalization of \$5 million. John serves as president and treasurer and Horace vice president and general manager. They more than double the size of the plant at a cost of more than \$1 million.



On November 14, at the home of John and Matilda, the brothers introduce their new automobile – a four-door touring car priced at \$785 as they sit in the prototype, “Old Betsy.” The Dodge Brothers car is simultaneously available for sale at dealerships across the country.

1914

1914

More than 21,000 businessmen apply to become Dodge dealers. By November – before the new car is released – 72,000 orders are placed.



1914

1914

John, Horace and several friends purchase a hunting and fishing lodge in Michigan.



*Munuscong, Horace left, John right.*



*Left to right; Horace, Anna, Architect, Matilda, Frances, John.*

Car production climbs steadily through 1915 and by 1916, the company ranks fourth in U.S. production.

The Dodge Brothers win their lawsuit against Henry Ford in a dispute over the withholding of dividend payments to stockholders. The courts order Ford to pay the brothers their 10-percent share amounting to \$2 million.

John and Matilda begin construction on a new residence in Grosse Pointe, purported to be one of the country's largest and just a short distance from Horace and Anna's "Rose Terrace."



1916

1916

1916-1917

1917-1918

1918

During the U.S. military expedition to Mexico, three Dodge automobiles are used in a surprise raid by Lieutenant George Patton, Jr. against Pancho Villa. Impressed with the durability of the Dodge automobile, the Army subsequently orders 13,000 automobiles for various uses, including 1,000 ambulances.

During World War I, the U.S. Government enlists the Dodge Brothers to manufacture the delicate recoil mechanisms used in French field guns. The brothers build a new ordinance factory and impress the French government with the speed, quality and efficiency of their work.





John and Horace lend \$500,000 to the Reliable-Home Building and Loan Association of Niles to finance construction loans for much needed housing.

In just six short years, the Dodge Brothers triple the size of their plant to 3.3 million square feet, produce nearly 425,000 automobiles and employ nearly 20,000 workers. The company ranks as the number-two automobile producer, second to Ford.



Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company continues to operate and appoints vice president Fred Haynes as president of the company. Haynes forms a partnership with Graham Brothers, Inc., which allows the Grahams to build trucks with Dodge engines and drivetrains, sold exclusively through the Dodge dealer network.



The Dodge brothers' widows, Matilda and Anna Dodge, sell Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company to New York investment bankers Dillon, Read and Company for \$146 million, thought to be the world's largest cash transaction to date. Three years later, Dodge Brothers is sold to the Chrysler Corporation, moving Chrysler into one of "The Big Three."

1919

John and Horace sell their Ford Stock (2,000 shares) for \$25 million. Their initial investment of \$10,000 in 1903 yields an overall return of \$32 million in 1920.



1920

1920

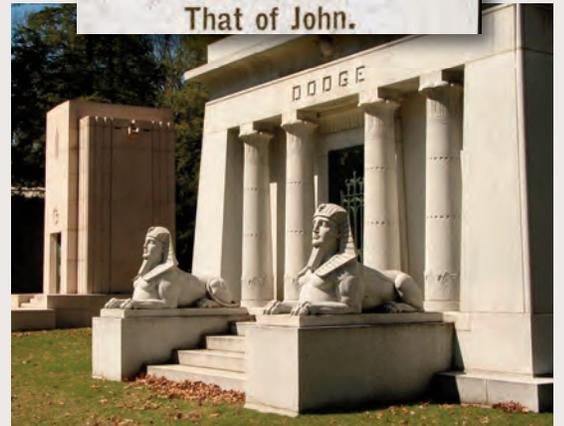
While attending the National Automobile Show in New York City in early January, Horace becomes seriously ill, a victim of the influenza epidemic. John remains at his side until he himself becomes critically ill. The families and personal physicians arrive in New York to be with the brothers. Horace's condition improves; John dies from pneumonia on January 14. Horace, chronically ill and devastated by his brother's death, dies 11 months later while he and Anna are in Miami, Florida. Both of the brothers are laid to rest in the Dodge Mausoleum at Detroit's Woodlawn Cemetery.

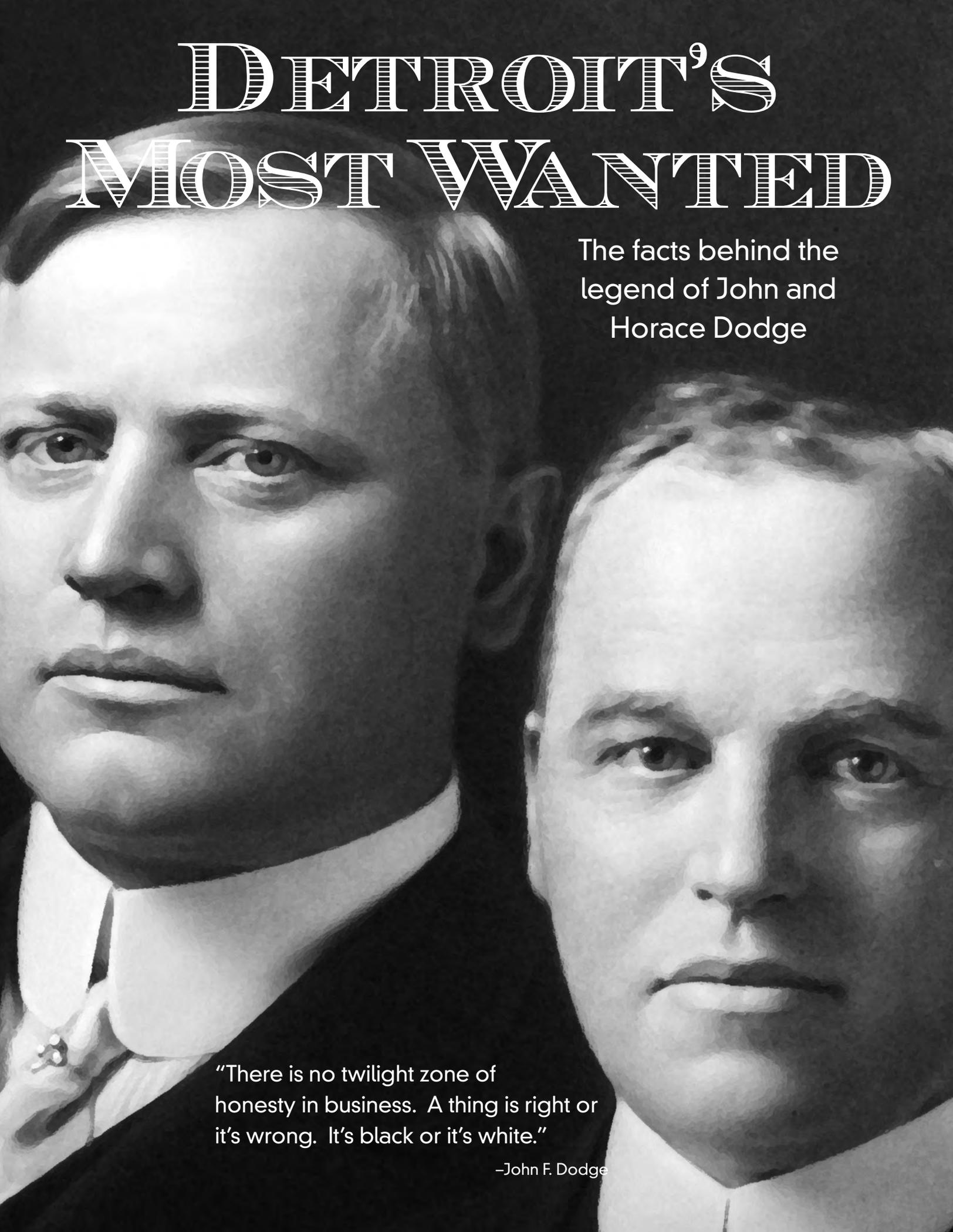
1920-1925

1925-1928

**DODGES TO LIE  
IN SAME TOMB**

Body of Horace on Way Home to Rest Beside That of John.





# DETROIT'S MOST WANTED

The facts behind the  
legend of John and  
Horace Dodge

"There is no twilight zone of  
honesty in business. A thing is right or  
it's wrong. It's black or it's white."

-John F. Dodge

BY KIM ZELINSKI

Welded by a brotherly bond of unwavering strength, John and Horace Dodge provided the perfect storm of grit and fortitude to ignite Detroit's burgeoning automobile industry. The tall, tough, red-headed brothers' path was largely fueled by raw determination, ambition and the entrepreneurial spirit of hard work. It was, however, their brotherly alliance – born of mutual trust and respect – that propelled them to achieve almost unparalleled mechanical and financial success.

## Mechanical Geniuses

**“They lived in a mechanical world of their own”**

– *Automobile Topics*,  
*The Trade Authority*

From the outset, John (1864-1920) and his younger brother Horace Dodge (1868-1920) demonstrated their budding talents in both mechanical aptitude and ability to work with their hands, tinkering in their father's machine shop located on the outskirts of Niles, Michigan. The brothers, dressed in worn overalls, their faces and hands usually grimy with grease, revealed at an early age their creative talents with such inventions as a high-wheel bicycle John made using the parts of an old baby carriage. Horace once fabricated a cast-iron bowling game that “skinned” any owned by his boyhood companions. He was said to have “done more with an old gas engine down by the dam than anyone else in town and John never did see a clock he couldn't make go.”

The brothers never tired of experimenting. Horace designed the “four

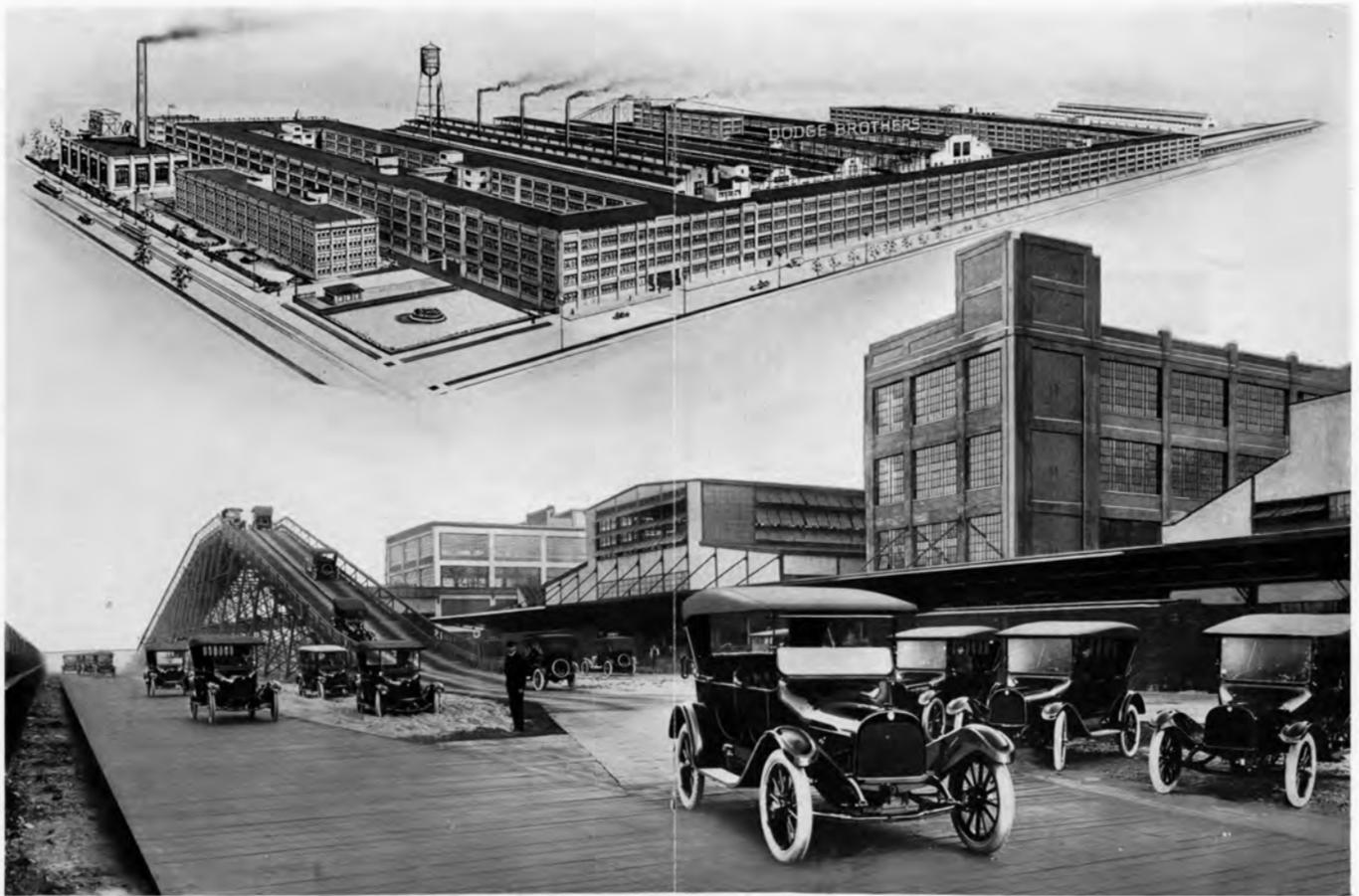
point dirt proof ball bearing” in his small backyard garage in 1895, an invention that presaged the Evans & Dodge Bicycle. He also designed and built the high-power engines for the brothers' yachts; the Lotus and Hornet, which raced with great success on the Detroit River.

While under contract to supply running gears (engine, transmissions and axles, mounted on a frame) to Henry Ford, Horace redesigned and made important mechanical improvements to the Ford automobile. Later, he designed the engine, devised new manufacturing methods and processes and managed the purchase and installation of machinery components, numbered in the thousands, for the Dodge Brothers own car.

When two American firms tried and failed to manufacture the delicate recoil mechanism for a standard artillery piece for the French Army in World War I, the U.S. government brought the problem to the Dodge Brothers. After taking the matter up with Horace, John told the government that if they agreed to not interfere with the operation, they could build it: “just tell us how many you want.” The Dodge Brothers erected a new plant to produce the



*John and Horace Dodge (bottom row, first and second from right, respectively), believed to be at Murphy's Iron Works, c. 1890.*



mechanisms, designing an entirely new manufacturing system that included 129 brand-new specialized machines. The French were amazed by the speed, quality and efficiency of the Dodge Brother's work.

Each year, John Dodge took every blueprint that had been used in the factory, roughly three thousand, to Meadow Brook Farms for review. He remained in seclusion for about two weeks and then emerged with the prints completely checked and covered with changes. There was never a year that these changes failed to save the firm less than half a million dollars.

Horace's office at their Dodge Main plant became almost a museum of mechanical parts; past, present, and prospective. He, or John never lost touch with their mechanical inclinations – they were workingmen to the

end. As John put it, "There isn't a man working in our shop whose job, if he were to choose to leave it, my brother or I couldn't take up and finish."

## The Men and their Factory

**"When the Dodge Bros. car comes out, there is no question that it will be the best thing on the market for the money."**

– Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record

The machine-shop game around the turn of the century was a hard, heavy-fisted business that John and Horace

excelled at. They knew the value of labor and the lessons of hard work – lessons that John had understood from a young age. When he wasn't at school or puttering in his father's machine shop, he worked odd jobs in his Niles neighborhood. He drove a cow three miles, twice a day, earning just 50 cents a week. He lugged huge sacks of bran out of freight cars, started a fence-mending business at the age of 11 and worked at a pill-box factory, earning \$1.25 a week.

While the brothers own work ethic demanded much of those they employed, they also possessed generous instincts. In 1899, while at their National Cycle Company, Fredrick Haynes, an engineer educated at Cornell, recalled how John had "applied the gaff" to him to see what he was made of. Haynes was assigned the un-

pleasant task of cleaning out the entire factory, including areas piled with four inches of soot. After several long days on the job, Haynes, determined to quit, was greeted by John with: "There's no use you fussing around with this kind of work. You come down with me to the machine shop." Haynes, at John's recommendation, succeeded him at National Cycle, served eight years as the General Manager at Dodge Brothers and became president of Dodge Brothers Motor Car company after the deaths of John and Horace.

In the early days of operating the Dodge Brothers machine shop, John and Horace worked early and late: 18-hour days were not unusual. John estimated that between 1901 and 1903 he spent a total of only six weekday evenings at home. They installed machine tools of a size and character that nobody else in Detroit had the courage to consider.

At times they incorporated unusual tactics, like testing tires by rolling them off a four-story building and watching them bounce. When a certain tire stood-up to John's standards, he announced "that's the tire for the Dodge." He ordered multiples in the yet-to-be unveiled car and drove them one after the other into a brick wall, 15 to 20 miles an hour reasoning "I might as well, because someone else is going to do it when these cars get on the road."

John knew virtually every worker by name if he had been with the company in any capacity for more than half a dozen years. He was always looking for good motives to reward them, often enclosing additional compensation in their pay envelopes without any comment. When an important executive thanked him for such a gesture, John responded, "When the company ceases paying such rewards it will be a good time to hunt for a new job."

When John found 17 of his workers sitting in a saloon across the street from the forge plant, he provided 200 sandwiches and bottles of beer to

workers every day during July and August.

On another occasion, John's private vault in his factory office wasn't responding to the combination. One of their expert machinists was brought in, who promptly diagnosed the problem and opened the door. John took note and said, "You're too handy picking safes... you're fired." The man was sent to an area of the plant where John never went. For three years he went unnoticed until John ran into a snag making a certain valve operate. John remembered the lock picker and asked if he could be tracked down to help out. The man was brought in promptly solved the problem to John's amazement, who commented, "He's "one helluva mechanic."

## Oh Henry!

"Just think of all the Ford owners who will someday want to own an automobile"

— John Dodge

In late 1902, the Dodge Brothers gambled big when they agreed to partner with Henry Ford, a decision reached after what John described as "going over Mr. Ford's machine very carefully." Their 15-year relationship with Henry Ford, 11 of which were contractual, was marked with periodic conflict, yet a prevailing sense of mutual respect. While Ford's success would never have been realized without the Dodge Brothers, Henry Ford's success also made the Dodge Brothers wealthy men.

In the early years, it was not uncommon for Henry Ford to arrive at the Dodge Brothers shop with a horse-drawn flatbed truck to inspect and supervise the loading the Dodge components. It was a well-known "secret" that Dodge Brothers made 60 per cent of Ford's automobile. As one Ford employee put it, "We just put on the wheels and body."

After a few years with Ford, an associate asked the brothers why they didn't build their own car. John explained that they enjoyed the lucrative contracts with Ford and hefty stock dividends



*John Dodge (far left), Horace Dodge (second from left) and Henry Ford (seated in middle) with Ford's race car on the Detroit River, c. 1903.*

and did not want the aggravation of having to sell cars. This arrangement reversed in 1913, when John announced, “We have been fussing with these plans (to make their own car) for a long time. Our business has grown too big to be dependent upon anyone else and we have decided to go into business for ourselves.” Privately, he was also known to have said, “I am tired of being carried around in Henry Ford’s vest pocket.”

Henry Ford’s view of the Dodge brothers celebratory escapades, was likely disapproving. However, on more than one occasion, he laughingly repeated the stories to his associates. And, he once defended their verbal outbursts by saying “Their bark is worse than their bite.”

In the midst of the Dodge’s lawsuit against Henry Ford for withholding dividends, (which the Dodges, major Ford stockholders, eventually won), John put his differences aside so he and

death in 1920, he was deeply affected. A business associate of Henry’s recalled his reaction: “His faced dropped just like that. He completely changed. He didn’t look like the same man after, so he must have taken it pretty hard. He must have thought a lot of John Dodge.”

## Hammer and Tongs

“They meant what they said and said what they felt.”

– Newspaper biography

For as much as the brothers disliked public attention, they did not escape the notoriety associated with their infamous drinking habits and verbal outbursts. Although conflicting accounts exist, their obvious use of alcohol, not unlike other men of the time who

liked to “lift the glass,” was categorically sneered at by Detroit’s social elite.

While John and Horace mostly drank with each other, many of the ill-famed incidents occurred in the company of business associates. Following a Ford dealer’s meeting, John forced the saloon owner to dance on top of his bar by “persuading” him with a pistol. Another incident followed the announcement that

they would build their own car. The brothers celebrated by marching up and down the tables, breaking bottles and glasses.

The Dodge brothers’ tempers and innate sense of justice sometimes prompted aggressive actions. During a period when animal cruelty was a serious issue in Detroit, John came across

a truck driver mistreating two horses that were trying to pull a load too heavy for them to haul. John told the teamster to stop beating the horses. The teamster retorted with a string of obscenities. John bolted out of his car, dragged the teamster from his wagon, thrashed him soundly and drove off, much to the delight of a crowd of pedestrians.

Although Horace’s temper was slower to burn, a passerby felt his wrath one evening when he mistakenly laughed at Horace’s troubles trying to crank-start his car. Horace stopped cranking, walked over to the man and knocked him halfway across the street.

No matter the societal disapproval that may have followed these incidents, John and Horace were always apologetic and accepting of the responsibility for their actions. In the end their victims seemed to forgive them, particularly if monetary compensation accompanied the apology.

## Time Off

“The Dodge brothers enjoyed life.”

– Little Stick Newspaper

While they took their business life very seriously, the brothers’ leisure-time activities revealed a more relaxed side of their personalities. They shared common interests – hunting, fishing and boating – but also had distinctly different pursuits. John, the outdoorsman, preferred to wind down at his Meadow Brook Farms estate purchased with his young wife Matilda, in 1908. Relaxing in his clubhouse and on his 9-hole golf course, farming the fields, raising pedigree stock, tending the deer park or wrestling around with his pet bear Bobby, he relived his more rural roots.

The brothers’ chauffeur recalled that John and Horace created a game at the Meadow Brook Farms for their own amusement – a form of polo in which automobiles were used for “mounts” rather than horses. Only the two of



*Dodge family members at christening of the Hornet II, 1910 (front, left to right: Horace, Della, Isabel, Anna, Matilda, Winifred, John).*

his family could attend the wedding of Henry and Clara Ford’s son, Edsel, in 1916. After the legal battles ended, the Dodge brothers and Henry Ford had at least a publicly amiable relationship. John and Horace were among a very few men who stood up to the iconic Mr. Ford.

When Henry Ford heard of John’s



them played. A goal was scored when one or the other succeeded in butting (with their car) a four-foot rubber ball past goal posts located at either end of a field. John usually won.

The brothers had a passion for boating and owned a series of fine yachts and fast powerboats, although Horace more so than John. Between them, they owned the Lotus, Hornet I, Hornet II, Nokomis, Nokomis II and Delphine. Both brothers at the time of their deaths had commissioned new yachts as well – Horace the Delphine II and John the Frances.

In a friendly argument over where the brothers would go boating one



John Dodge in commodore uniform, c. 1918.

week-end; John wanted to go the Georgian Bay and Horace to Thousand Island's, a stand-off ensued. Usually, matters of this type were resolved with a coin toss. When Horace won the toss, John remarked "Now I'll have to go with you to the Thousand Islands, to which Horace replied "No, you'll be my guest so I'll have to take you to Georgian Bay."

## Gentle Giants

**"Find out the right thing to do and do it."**

Beneath their rough-hewn exteriors, their hearts were as big as the company they built. Much of their generosity was extended to the company's employees. They maintained a free clinic with a full-time medical staff on duty around the clock, purchased a group life insurance policy for all of their employees, established a \$5 million trust fund to help needy workers and their dependents, and created a workshop, the "playpen," for retirees who wanted to do craft work. Employees who became incapacitated in the factory were often taken to Meadow Brook Farms and allowed to build themselves up. The brothers hosted elaborate company picnics, sponsored bowling and baseball teams, offered free boat excursions and established the Dodge Brothers Industrial Band, made up of company employees.

John and Horace began making major contributions to charitable or-

ganizations around 1910. The long list of organizations included the Salvation Army, Detroit Federation of Women's Clubs, the Presbyterian Church, the American Red Cross and many others, some made anonymously. Horace was also a key supporter of the fledgling Detroit Symphony Orchestra. A musician himself, his love for music was well known. Horace once cut short a hunting trip at the brothers' lodge in northern Michigan and chartered a train from there to Detroit. He arrived

just in time to attend the performance of a favorite concerto, sitting in the back of the concert hall in his hunting clothes.

The brothers also frequently helped out old friends and favored acquaintances, including a well-known waiter John and Horace were fond of known as 'Buttons.' Buttons passed away, leaving his widow destitute. When

the brothers learned of her predicament, she was put on the Dodge Brothers payroll and remained a pensioner until her death. In Niles, a favorite "uncle" figure from John's boyhood became gravely ill and John gave instructions to provide him with anything he needed and to send the bill to him.

John was also involved in public affairs, serving the city of Detroit for several years as the Water Commissioner and as president of the Detroit Street Railway Commissioner. And their generous natures extended to their families as well, particularly their wives. In 1919, John gave his wife, Matilda, \$1,000,000 million as a Christmas gift and Horace purchased a pearl necklace for Anna once belonging to Empress Catherine the Great of Russia, worth \$825,000.



**EVENTS ON PLATFORM**

EVENT NO. 14—Zeppelin Race—Free for all.  
Contestants will be expected to sail high.



1st Prize—\$5.00 Pair of Shoes.
Won by.....
2nd Prize—\$2.50 Meerschaum Pipe.
Won by.....
3rd Prize—2 Pcs. Silk Socks.
Won by.....

Dodge Brothers picnic, 1916. Horace Dodge far right, John Dodge, second from right.



*Horace Dodge in his Dodge Main office, c. 1912.*

## The Brother-Act

**“The passing of my dear brother, John, is to me, personally a loss so great that I hesitate to look forward to the years without his companionship, our lives having been inseparable since our childhood.”**

A message from Horace Dodge to Dodge Dealer in February, 1920.

In 1892, when the brothers arrived at the Dominion Typography Company in Ontario in answer to a newspaper ad for a floor man, they were told “we only want one man.” John responded to the superintendent, “We’re brothers and we always work together. If you haven’t got room for two of us, neither one of us will start. That’s that!” They both reported to work that following Monday, and every day thereafter.

Without hesitation or thought when speaking with people, John and Ho-

race would make reference to “my brother and I.” And, a good way to incur the displeasure of either was to call their automobile a Dodge. They were emphatically, the Dodge Brothers with a capital “B.”

Their brotherly bond was epitomized in their company logo (see page 36): intertwined Greek deltas (triangles), one colored white and pointing up, representing the soul, and one blue triangle pointing

down, representing the body. And, in the center of the six-point star, is the intertwined D and B initials.

The brothers lunched together almost every day in their favorite chairs in John’s Boston Boulevard home (now on display in the living room at Meadow Brook Hall). If Horace built a yacht, it was sure to contain a special stateroom for John. When John sent a barrel of apples from Meadow Book Farms, to his Detroit home, he sent a barrel for Horace. When Horace ordered a commodore’s uniform of a certain yacht club, he likewise had one made for John. John purchased a large Aeolian organ that was to be installed in the mansion he was building in Grosse Pointe (near Horace’s Rose Terrace), no doubt for Horace to play.

C. Harold Wills, chief engineer for Ford Motor Company in the early years, asked John about the rumor of them selling their plant and motor car business. John replied, “Yes, Horace and I could do that, and then we could take a trip around the world and loaf, I suppose. But without work, the work we know and like and have made good at, we’d both be dead in a cou-

ple of years. We like work. We like to build things. We’ve been working too long and too hard to get along without it. And there are the boys we’ve got with us. Most of the fun in business is giving the boys an opportunity to make good. Horace and I owe something to all these boys. We are responsible. We got them to go in with us and we’ve got to see them through. And our name means a lot to us. We have worked hard for all that name stands for. So, you see, we can’t sell out and quit. We’ve got responsibilities.”

On New Year’s Eve in 1919, during a gathering of close friends at John’s Boston Boulevard home, the brothers withdrew discreetly to another room and toasted each other’s health to usher in the New Year. Afterwards, John told the group, “This will be the last time that my brother and I will ever greet the New Year in this house.” Although the remark was in reference to the new home he and Matilda were building in Grosse Pointe, the statement foretold the tragedy to come. Within the year, both John and Horace died from influenza complications, their brotherly bond eternally immortalized in the Dodge Mausoleum in Detroit’s Woodlawn Cemetery.

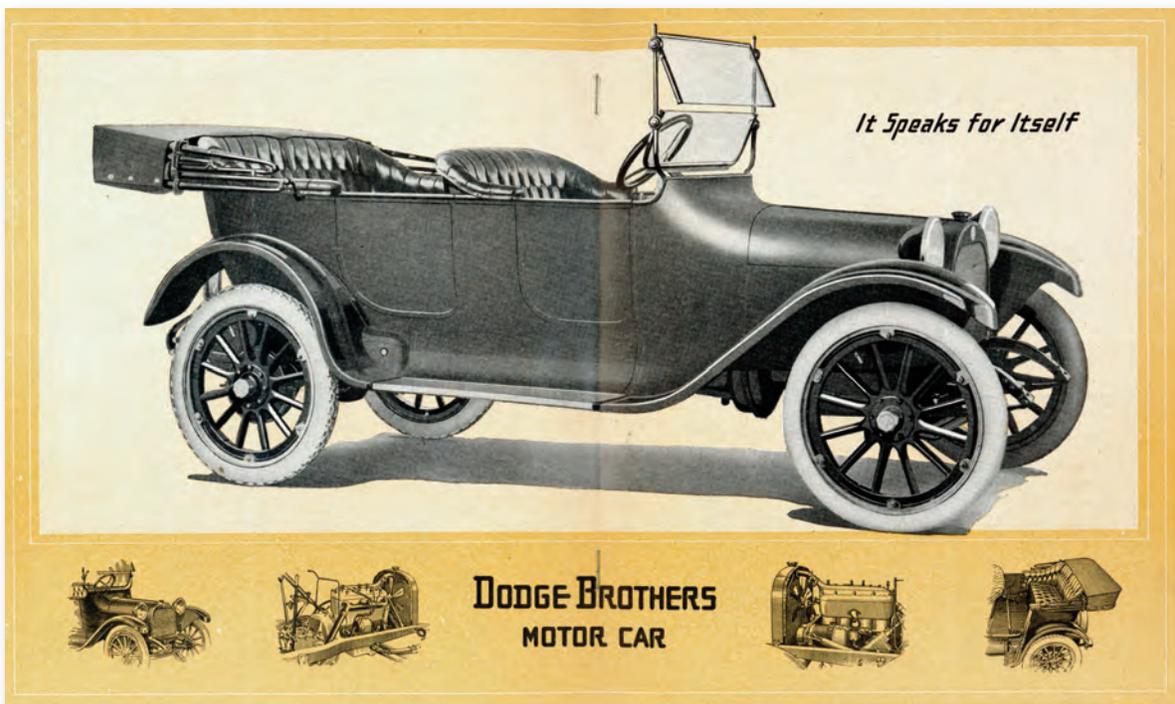
Nearly a century ago, chroniclers wrote that the Dodge brother’s accomplishments would “benefit Detroit for years to come.” This statement has certainly come true. The Dodge brand continues its legendary success, the incredible fortune inherited by Matilda Dodge Wilson made possible the construction of Meadow Brook Hall and the founding of Oakland University and untold charities and families benefited from their generosity.

The legacy of the Dodge Brothers, two magnanimous men who both demanded a great deal out of life and put a great deal into it has earned them a rightful place in Michigan’s automotive history as pivotal innovators and arguably Detroit’s most dynamic duo. **MB**

# A GOOD NAME

BY MADELYN RZADKOWOLSKI

THE DODGE BROTHERS RELIED ON THEIR REPUTATION TO PROMOTE AND SELL THEIR CARS...AND THE STRATEGY WORKED



*Dodge Brothers advertising booklet, 1914*

*“Horace and I go into the factory and sweat blood to save a tenth of a cent and you fellows turn right around and throw away ten percent.”*

This exasperated tirade from John Dodge to his advertising team became the foundation on which Dodge Brothers marketing was grounded. Impressed by John and Horace’s desire to provide customers with not only a well-appointed car, but also one that was durable, easy to maintain, and cost-effective, automobile marketing expert Theodore MacManus decided their advertising should manifest these objectives. The advertising would be candid, with no frills or exaggerations. MacManus wisely anticipated that Americans would respond well to this type of honest sales campaign.

For all of his purported impudence, John Dodge was no stranger to the power of



advertising. After his younger brother Horace invented the first enclosed bicycle ball bearing, the two founded Evans & Dodge Bicycle Company in partnership with friend and coworker Fred Evans. The company immediately started printing advertisements in medicinal journals, newspapers and engineering magazines. These advertisements were as diverse as they were abundant. In the 1899 *Canadian Journal of Medicine and Surgery* alone there were three dif-

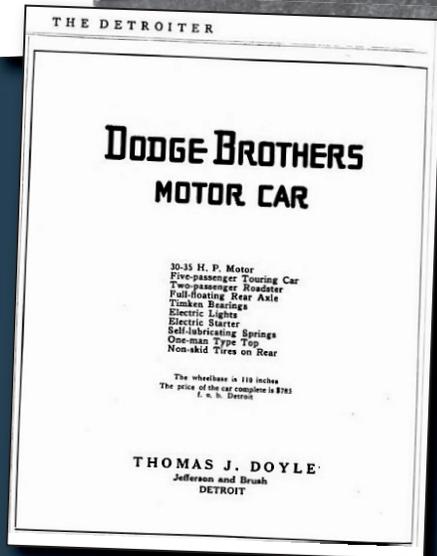
American Contractor regularly ran their requests for workers to start construction on what would be Dodge Main, one of the best manufacturing facilities in the world. In fact, they also ran advertisements touting the factory as one of the best in the world. A few years later, classified ads again ran, this time for workers to help expand the factory to include assembling facilities for a car in the Dodge's own name.

In April 1914, Dodge Brothers hired Arthur Irving Philp as general sales manager. He in turn hired advertising consultant Theodore MacManus, who, among others, had worked with Hupmobile, Packard, and Cadillac automotive companies. It was MacManus who was so impressed by John Dodge's honesty that he suggested a similar advertising tact for the company. So it was that the Dodge Brothers in 1914, despite their desire to restrict marketing costs, found themselves running one of the best marketing campaigns of all time. The use of

limited information and a respected reputation proved to be a winning combination for the advertising team. Before any information about the first Dodge Brothers car was released, some 22,000 dealers had applied to sell it.

In July, an advertisement ran in the *Saturday Evening Post* announcing the new Dodge Brothers car. No images or details of the car were included, but the copy did evince the talents and background of the brothers, specifically their construction of Ford Motor parts. Billboards were also popping up, the first with only "Dodge Brothers" emblazoned across. Once the public's interest was whetted, the words "Motor Car" were added, and weeks later still "Reliable, Dependable, Sound." Dodge Brothers had not released much information in those sparingly few words, but the novelty of the changing billboard attracted attention. The air of mystery surrounding the

## Attractive Window Display Will Help You Sell Sedans



ferent advertisements and two featured "articles" that were obviously purchased space. The ads stressed reliability and "perfect" design and they made bold claims – as any advertisement does – that the E&D bicycle would not only "last a lifetime," but a doctor who purchased one would likely save lives.

After E&D Bicycle Company was bought out by Canadian Cycle & Motor Company, the Dodge Brothers did not stop advertising. From 1900 on, however, they offered their services as machinists rather than a product. Though contractors to the Ford Motor Company from 1903-1914, as early as 1905 they posted advertisements in automobile trade journals about their ability to build complete chasses and gasoline engines. In the summer of 1910,

Top: Evans Dodge Bicycle Company advertisement, *Canadian Journal of Medicine and Surgery*, 1899  
 Middle: Dodge Brothers advertisement, c. 1921  
 Bottom: Dodge Brothers advertisement, *The Detroit*, 1914

new car only added to the building anticipation of its release.

The advertising team also understood the power of word-of-mouth communication. The team targeted not just potential customers, but the public at large, whether they could afford 30 cars or not even a tire. The strength of the company depended on the public recognizing and respecting the brand and on “Dodge Brothers” becoming a household name. To humanize the brothers and stress the accessibility of their automobile, the brothers on November 14, 1914 drove the first one, dubbed “Old Betsy,” out of Dodge Main and parked it in front of John’s family home for publicity photographs.

George Harrison Phelps became the director of Dodge Bros. advertising in October, 1915. Like his predecessors, he intrinsically understood the core strengths upon which he should capitalize. He used the brothers’ reputation as trustworthy, hard-working men who had built a car they could trust themselves... and therefore one that all people could trust. Phelps released monthly newsletters to Dodge Brothers dealers because he had to sell the concept to the salesmen before they could sell it to the public. One of his most memorable achievements was the release of the “Creed of the Dodge Brothers Salesmen.” This one-page document explained the reasons dealers should trust and promote the vehicles: chief among them that dependability of the two men who had created the car was of equal importance to its durability.

The advertising team also sent dealers confidential books with specific rules for behavior, signage, type fonts, and sales methods. It was important the dealers kept the brand consistent so that across the world Dodge Brothers Motor would present a unified front. The dealers received more than regulations, though. Dodge Brothers engaged in several advertising stunts. In 1915, they sent the car on a 1,000-mile drive through sweltering Death

A good name

DODGE BROTHERS  
Sedan

Sedan—\$1,440  
Coupe—\$1,280  
Touring Car—\$880

Roadster—\$850  
Panel—\$980  
Screen—\$860

THOMAS J. DOYLE  
Two Retail Stores  
WILMINGTON • BRANFORD • WOODVILLE • FLEMING TOWN

*Dodge Brothers advertisement, c. 1923*

THE CAR WAS DEPENDABLE...SO MUCH SO THAT MACMANUS INVENTED THE WORD "DEPENDABILITY" AFTER HEARING CUSTOMERS FREQUENTLY DESCRIBE THE CAR WITH THE WORD "DEPENDABLE." LISTENING TO CUSTOMERS WAS, IN FACT, ANOTHER THING THE BROTHERS DID WELL.



*Dodge Brothers motor car in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1918.*

Valley in California. Photographs and film were taken of the “Death Valley Dodge” and dealers were encouraged to show the resulting motion picture for free at the local movie houses. In 1917, they sent their new car around the world, having promotional photos taken in places as diverse as Portugal and Japan.

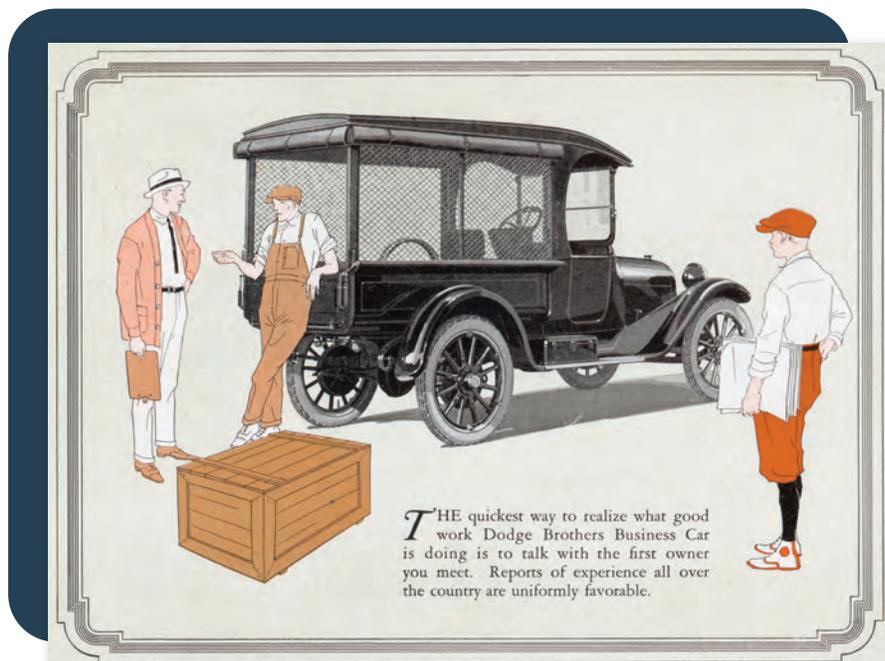
The theme throughout all Dodge Brothers advertising was simplicity, which was a reflection of John and Horace Dodge’s attitudes toward car manufacturing. Despite their other marketing attempts, like motion pictures and pamphlets and photographs, the advertisements remained virtually the same from 1914 to 1920. They were basic, simple ads that described the amenities of the cars and included a drawing or two. From 1914 to 1916, advertisements read simply, “Dodge Brothers. It Speaks for Itself.” Later ads read, “Dodge Brothers: A Good Name.”

It was remarkably bold to assume the public would admire...and buy... their cars, but it worked. The car, like the company, held no secrets. Looking at

one – and often hearing good reports from friends – was enough to sell the car, so the ads didn’t need to say much else. The car was dependable... so much so that MacManus invented the word “dependability” after hearing customers frequently describe the car with the word “dependable.” Listening to customers was, in fact, another

thing the brothers did well. As early as 1915, Dodge Brothers dealerships were distributing mileage reports and testimonials from happy customers. The brothers’ desire to engage people on every level had worked, and their customers were doing the selling for them.

The Dodge Brothers believed a superior quality, low-cost automobile would sell itself, and hesitated to spend money on something that had no impact on the manufacturing of their car. Self-promotion was uncharacteristic for these two gentlemen. And in fact, they may have succeeded without advertisements at all. In August 1914, the Michigan Manufacturing and Financial Record wrote, “The Dodge Brothers are the two best mechanics in Michigan . . . when the Dodge Bros. new car comes out, there is no question that it will be the best thing on the market for the money.” The Dodge Brothers car did, of course, come out and it was considered a good buy. In just six short years, sales of the car had risen to second place in the American market, no doubt because of the marketing genius that paralleled the characters of the Dodge brothers. **MB**



THE quickest way to realize what good work Dodge Brothers Business Car is doing is to talk with the first owner you meet. Reports of experience all over the country are uniformly favorable.

*Dodge Brothers business car booklet, c. 1919.*



# 2013 MEADOW BROOK HALL DONOR REPORT

## TUDOR CIRCLE (\$10,000 AND HIGHER)

International Paper Company Foundation – Roger B. and Barbara R. Smith  
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 Stoney Creek Questers #203  
 Geoffrey C. Upward

# 2013 MEADOW BROOK HALL DONOR REPORT



*Meadow Brook's "Decades of Dress" summer 2013 exhibit concluded with a special fashion show and fund-raising benefit in October. With the help of a Meadow Brook friends committee and Neiman Marcus, Meadow Brook not only met its financial goal, but exceeded it by three times. With this success, the curatorial department was able to conserve two iconic costumes worn by Matilda Wilson, a 1924 gold tissue gown and a 1927 ostrich feather gown. Additional funds will be used to replicate the curtains in the Breakfast Room of Meadow Brook Hall.*

## THE GUILDERS OF MEADOW BROOK (\$250 – \$999)

Gretchen Adler  
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Christine Burnard & Greydon Hyde  
Frank & Janet Cassise  
Michael and Carolyn Cregar  
Roger and Sharon Cregg  
Ted Cunningham  
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Fox Sports Detroit  
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Gramer Funeral Homes  
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Hopkins Burns Design Studio  
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Lowry Computer Products  
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The Mosaic Foundation of  
R & P Heydon  
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Michael Williams  
Women's National Farm and  
Garden Association  
WXYZ-TV

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 MEADOW BROOK HALL  
 (UP TO \$99)**

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 Kelly Lenda  
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 Meredith Long  
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 Anita Metzger  
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Frank Schmid  
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20/20 Vision  
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 Attitude Jewelry  
 Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce  
 Bass Pro Shop  
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 Beaches Tanning  
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 Dawn Bergeron  
 Bordine Nursery  
 Boyne USA Resorts  
 Roberta Bresette  
 Tom and Marie Brigstock  
 Carlson's Greenhouse  
 Carol Lewis Day Spa  
 Carsons  
 CBS Detroit Sports  
 Deer Lake Athletic Club  
 Detroit Symphony Orchestra  
 Geraldine Detterman  
 Doolin and Haddad Advanced Dentistry  
 Downtown Café  
 Lisa Drummond  
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 Edsel & Eleanor Ford House  
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 Janelle's Salon  
 Janet Varner  
 Just Baked  
 Patricia Koykka

Kruse & Muer Quality Foods  
 Lino's Italian Restaurant  
 Lombardo Taxidermy  
 Luca's Chophouse  
 Main Street Deli  
 Lois Mann  
 Margot's European Day Spa  
 Pamela Marin  
 Market Square of Birmingham  
 Marta's Loft  
 Kathy Mikuska  
 Neiman Marcus  
 Robert Newman  
 Oakland County Parks and Recreation  
 Paint Creek Chiropractic  
 Daniel Patrona  
 Chris Peyerk  
 Pure Swing Golf Academy  
 Rams Horn  
 Red Ox Tavern  
 Cynthia Rooney  
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 Royal Park Hotel  
 Salon Elan  
 Salon Monaco  
 Amy Schrodt  
 SEE Eyewear  
 Shades of Green Nursery & Landscape  
 Shanty Creek Resort  
 Debra Shea  
 Shepherd's Hollow Golf Club  
 Alice Siehda  
 Silver Spoon  
 Cathy Smith  
 Sole Sisters  
 Spillane and Reynolds Orthodontics  
 Barb Sucher  
 Tarro Beauty  
 Telly's Greenhouse  
 Pete Townsend  
 Tullymore Golf Resort  
 Verdura  
 WDIV Channel 4  
 Robert Weaver  
 Weed Lady  
 Weingartz Supply Company  
 Wings and Wine Society  
 Tom Wolf  
 Joy Wolfe  
 WXYZ Channel 7  
 Connie Yeo  
 Yum Me

*\*Deceased*

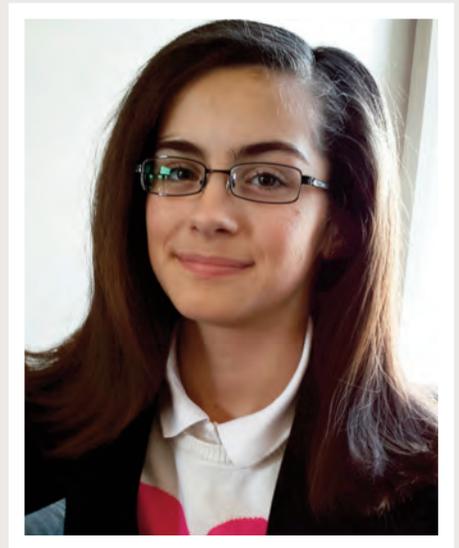
# A CHILD'S EYE VIEW

BY MIYA DIXON

*A Meadow Brook Writing Camp participant for many years, 13-year-old Miya Dixon talked with Richard Wilson about his childhood*

Every summer I attend the Youth Writing Camp for one week at the Meadow Brook estate. In 2013, I was given the opportunity to talk with Mr. Richard Wilson over the phone about what it was like to grow up in Meadow Brook Hall. Speaking with Mr. Wilson last August gave me a deeper understanding of both life on the estate and what it was like to be a child during the 1930s and '40s.

The Meadow Brook mansion is chock-full of original and well-preserved items from the time the family lived there. I asked Mr. Wilson if he recalled anything special. Out of the memorable items in the house, Mr. Wilson best remembered the organ. "I learned to play the organ . . . I took organ and piano lessons for about eight



*Miya Dixon*

years . . . I wasn't very good . . . I just played for my own fun," he remembered fondly, chuckling slightly.

While Mr. Wilson was discussing some of the things that he did for fun around the mansion I decided to ask him how holidays were celebrated in his family. For Christmas, the family had breakfast as usual and then went into the living room to open presents. For New Year's Eve, Mr. Wilson's parents – Matilda and Alfred Wilson – had a party with their friends. "They played bridge and had dinner at midnight. It was a great party and we always did that," Mr. Wilson recalls. "And then of course there was Easter and Thanksgiving, when we went over to my uncle's for Thanksgiving with my father's brother and his wife. Just different things we did, you know?"

Curious, I asked Mr. Wilson how he thought life was different today than when he grew up. Pausing to carefully select the right words, Mr. Wilson began, "Well, when I was growing up, families were a lot closer because they didn't have television and you did things with your family . . . like we learned to play cards and bridge, my sister and I, at the age of 12 and 10 years old." The Wilsons used to go to Denby Hall, an orphanage for girls, each year on Christmas Eve. Each girl would be given a little Christmas present and then they would put on a play for the family over dinner.

Listening to how close Mr. Wilson seemed to be with his family, I asked him to relate the best lesson he learned from his parents. He replied, "Being concerned about others and aware of other's needs."

Mrs. Matilda Dodge Wilson truly did care about other's needs. Her founding with her husband of Oakland University, which provides many students with an opportunity for a higher level of education, was a great example of this lesson. She was (and still is) a great role model to emulate.

In knowing that Mrs. Wilson was a

prominent figure due not only to her affluence and her generosity, but also to her political involvement, I asked Mr. Wilson if any important events happened when he had lived at the mansion, mainly during the late 1930s and 1940s. He remembered several. There was a rally at the mansion for Wendell Willkie in 1940, and a fundraising party for Madame Chiang Kai-shek, the wife and U.S. ally of Chinese Nationalist President Chiang Kai-shek, when she visited the mansion during World War II.

Mr. Wilson also mentioned a few other family events, like the weddings for Barbara, Frances and Danny. Mr. Wilson also told me a great and amusing story about Frances' 25th birthday party. "At my sister's 25th birthday surprise party, I was about nine years old at the time and my sister Barbara, about 7, and we weren't allowed at the party. But we would walk down the main hall and look down from the windows at the ballroom. And Tommy Dorsey, one of the best-known band leaders at the time, saw me and asked if I'd like to have a particular song played by his band. Of course, being nine years old, there's nothing special, so I said, 'Yeah, how about "Home on the Range?"' So they played "Home on the Range" – a world-famous band playing just a country song!"

Hearing Mr. Wilson's story, I thought about all of those times that, while touring the mansion, I had looked down at the ballroom from those very windows and pretended that a party was going on below. To find out that Barbara and Richard had actually done that was very interesting for me to learn.

Talking all about these important and fascinating events at the estate, I asked Mr. Wilson what his favorite part



*Richard Wilson, 1943, age 14*

about living there was. "It was an experience," he recalled, laughing. "Just remembering the history of it and what went into building it . . . I mean, where else are you going to go that is a place just like it?"

Throughout the course of his life, Mr. Wilson has seen and done a great many things. I asked him what he thought his biggest accomplishment was. "Probably living this long, for one thing . . . and having a nice wife and four nice children. Now I have nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

It was great to have the opportunity to talk with Mr. Wilson. I really want to thank him for taking the time to share his stories with me. He was so kind and genuine and gave me a wonderful new insight about life in the Meadow Brook mansion. I have always been in awe of the estate's grandeur, but after speaking with Mr. Wilson, I know that growing up at the Meadow Brook mansion would have been quite an experience! **MB**

# Two brothers and two Triangles

BY MADELYN RZADKOWOLSKI

The Dodge Brothers logo between 1914 and 1938 represents one of the more mysterious, and therefore misinterpreted, parts of the brothers' story.

There has been much speculation on their use of the hexagram, or Star of David, in the logo as an affront to Henry Ford, who was notoriously anti-Semitic, as an association with the Freemasons, or as an insinuation of Jewish ancestry (they were not Jewish). The Dodge Brothers had broken ties with Henry Ford, for whom they had been supplying parts, when they founded their motor car company and it remains a common misconception that there was animosity between the two companies. Despite rumors, Henry Ford and the Dodge brothers respected each other and the use of the hexagram was more directly and simply used because it was a very old symbol that had a much different connotation 100 years ago.

Early car manufacturers focused on their name and reputation to sell cars, and the logos they chose tended to reflect that. Oldsmobile and Ford combined their surnames with a heraldic-inspired design while Cadillac adapted his own family crest as his logo. In 1909, Ford's chief engineer and designer, Childe Harolde Wilde, used a script that became the Ford emblem still used today.

*Dodge Brothers logo, 1914.*

Dodge Brothers used this approach in their advertising but chose a logo with symbols that could be recognized internationally, without prior knowledge of their name: the globe and the hexagram. The hexagram, noted for its interlocking triangles, is often referred to as the Star of David, or in Christian religions, the Star of Creation. Comparable to the Christian cross, it is most recognized for the role it plays in Jewish identity, used as early as the 17th century in political, religious and even athletic activities. In 1948, the hexagram was adopted for the Israeli flag.

The Star of David, however, was derived from an ancient symbol that, across Western and Eastern cultures, was interpreted as a guard against evil. It represents a joining of two opposite forces, such as fire and water, darkness and light or heaven and earth. It was this definition that the Dodge brothers and their contemporaries most likely related to in 1914.

Even so, there remains conjecture as to their intent on using the hexagram on their logo. Fortunately, the brothers issued their own explanation. The one-page document in Meadow Brook's archives describes the hexagram's use "by the Hindoos as a charm against evil," on the insignia of European military officers in the medieval period (seen later on sheriff's badges in America), and by the brothers as a symbol of "the mysterious union of mind and body . . . or any of the various dualisms of nature." Superimposed over a globe that signified their desire to create a car that would be internationally known and used, the hexagram's dualism hinted at a car that was both affordable and luxurious, lightweight and dependable, durable but fashionable. **MB**



# Weddings at The Great Estate



Theresa Finck Photography

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## Museum Store

# Rolling out the Bottles

On the occasion of the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company centennial, the Meadow Brook Museum Store is pleased to announce a new line of merchandise inspired by the brothers' fascinating lives – lives marked by hard

work and equally hard play. First out of the blocks are two new beers, a wooden six-pack carrier and slate coasters. Shop online or stop by the Store itself to see more Dodge-related products.



“Two Fisted Pale Ale” / \$2.25 per bottle or \$12.00 for six. \$2.00/\$10.80 members (available in Store only)

“Old Betsy Lager” / \$2.25 per bottle or \$12.00 for six. \$2.00/\$10.80 members (available in Store only)

Wooden Six-Pack Carrier, featuring a new Dodge Brothers centennial logo. Pine, leather and brass hardware / \$39.95 / \$35.95 members.

Slate coasters (set of four), featuring a new Dodge Brothers centennial logo / \$12.95 / \$11.65 members



Visit the Museum Store, order online at [www.meadowbrookhall.org/shop](http://www.meadowbrookhall.org/shop) or call (248) 364-6206.