



Battle Lines

Newsletter of the Atlanta Civil War Round Table
Founded 1949



General Dodge Portrait
by George H. Yewell.
(Council Bluffs Library)

Our April Program

Due to restrictions resulting from COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders, the Round Table is unable to meet this month. Our April speaker William B. Feis, Ph.D. has transformed our scheduled program into this essay for Battle Lines. We are honored to present his work: "The Life and Times of General Grenville M. Dodge, 1831-1916." Bill teaches history at Buena Vista University in Iowa. He has a special interest in military intelligence and in General Dodge, one of its more skilled practitioners.

Remembering a Great American Life

When Iowa Civil War hero and famous railroad builder Grenville M. Dodge passed away in Council Bluffs, Iowa, on January 5, 1916, former president Theodore Roosevelt paid his friend the highest compliment he could give. "He was typical," said Roosevelt, "of what we like to regard as essentially American." Civil War general, railroad pioneer, business leader, presidential adviser, veterans' advocate, animal lover, philanthropist, and a devoted family man who had a front row seat to American history in the mid-to-late 19th century, "Gren" Dodge packed far more into his eighty-four years than most "typical" Americans, prompting one observer to note that the lives of average Americans seemed "frivolous and futile" when compared to the lowan's grand achievements. After researching and writing about his remarkable life for many years, I find no truer statement than that.

General Grenville M. Dodge's Civil War

After Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, Iowa's governor Samuel Kirkwood appointed Dodge to command the Fourth Iowa Volunteer Infantry and he quickly established a camp near Council Bluffs to train his men for battle. That day came on March 7, 1862 when Union and Confederate forces collided at Pea Ridge, Arkansas. Commanding an infantry brigade consisting of the Fourth Iowa, the Thirty-fifth Illinois, the Third Illinois Cavalry, and the First Iowa Light Artillery, Dodge was in the thick of the fight.

Sent to shore up the Union position near Elkhorn Tavern, Dodge's brigade held the right flank of the Union line against repeated attacks by a superior Confederate force. During the fight, Dodge had three horses shot from under him, a fourth horse suffered multiple gunshot wounds, and he was wounded in the hand from either enemy muskets or a falling tree limb severed by artillery fire. With the Elkhorn Tavern line nearing collapse, the Union defenders finally retreated. Dodge was not about to depart the field, however, without delivering one final blow. As his immediate superior described it, Dodge's brigade "retired a short distance, waited for the enemy's approach, gave him one last volley, which checked and turned him, and then marched off the field with colors flying." By nightfall, the Union army had survived the fierce onslaught and the next morning counterattacked and scattered

Confederate forces. The stellar performance of Dodge's brigade in their baptism of fire attracted notice. One Confederate commander reported "that Dodge fought more like a devil than a human being" and refused to believe that the brigade numbered only 600 men because they fought as if they had 3,000. Another referred to Dodge's brigade as those "black-coated devils."

Dodge's battlefield heroics led to his promotion to brigadier general, but his next assignment would take him back to his old line of work. In June 1862, the army capitalized on Dodge's railroad building skills and sent him to repair the Mobile & Ohio Railroad (M&O) between Columbus, Kentucky, and Corinth, Mississippi. Over this 150-mile section of the M&O traveled the vital supplies for Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Tennessee operating in northern Mississippi following Union victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, Shiloh, and Corinth. Confederate cavalry and guerrillas routinely tore up the tracks and burned bridges, and Dodge's men repaired the damage and protected the road. In late October 1862, however, Grant gave Dodge a division in the Army of the Tennessee and ordered him to defend Corinth, a vital rail junction in northern Mississippi and key to supplying Union armies during the upcoming campaign against Confederate-held Vicksburg, Mississippi. Though happy to trade railroad building for a combat command, Dodge was disappointed that he would be stuck in one place. "No doubt I shall see some sharp work here," he wrote his brother, "but I would much rather have a division moving through Mississippi."



General Grenville M. Dodge:
Matthew Brady (National Archives)

While Dodge settled in at Corinth in the fall of 1862, the war took a new direction when Lincoln announced that on January 1, 1863, he would issue an Emancipation Proclamation aimed at destroying slavery in the South and liberating nearly four million enslaved blacks. Union forces would now become armies of liberators, freeing slaves every mile they knifed into the South. As a young man, Dodge had disliked abolitionists and had little sympathy for slaves or for blacks in general. After witnessing the horrible reality of human bondage firsthand, however, he concluded that slavery must be destroyed. Because of Lincoln's proclamation, many escaped slaves (called "contrabands") sought freedom behind Union lines at Corinth and Dodge promptly established a "contraband camp" outside of town where refugees would receive food, clothing, and protection. The Emancipation Proclamation also authorized Union authorities to raise black volunteer regiments to fight for the Union and Dodge responded by quickly filling two all-black units, the First and Second Alabama Cavalry regiments.

In late April 1863, Grant unleashed his campaign against the Confederate stronghold at Vicksburg, Mississippi, and Dodge would play a unique yet critical role in its eventual success. Though he desperately wanted "to go to Grant . . . and take my chances," Dodge instead stayed behind in Corinth to recruit and deploy a corps of scouts and spies to gather intelligence on the Confederates in Vicksburg and elsewhere. During Grant's campaign, Dodge employed around 130 operatives, including several women and black slaves, making it the largest intelligence organization the war had yet seen. During the campaign, Dodge's operatives traveled thousands of miles on over 200 separate missions, some ranging as far as Atlanta, Georgia and Richmond, Virginia, and were paid with profits from the sale of cotton confiscated from Confederate sympathizers. So proficient was his "secret service" that one newspaper correspondent proclaimed it was "impossible for the enemy to get within less than fifty miles of him without him knowing it" because his "system of espionage and scouting is the most perfect in the West." In the end, Dodge's scouts and spies provided critical intelligence that helped Grant capture Vicksburg on July 4, 1863,



Major General Dodge (Library of Congress)

a victory that split the Confederacy in half. Afterwards, Grant fully understood the importance of Dodge's intelligence-gathering role in the success of the campaign. He had "a much more important command," he wrote, "than that of a division in the field."

After Vicksburg's fall, Dodge was stationed in Pulaski, Tennessee working on railroads and, while there, inadvertently created a Southern hero. In November 1863, Union troops captured a twenty-one-year-old Confederate spy named Sam Davis and brought him to Dodge. A military court found Davis guilty of espionage and sentenced him to die. After the war, however, Dodge revealed that he had offered the young Southerner an opportunity to escape the hangman if he revealed the identity of his superior, known only to Union officials as "Captain Coleman." Davis refused, apparently with the words "I would rather die a thousand deaths than betray a friend." In the shadow of the gallows, the young man again declined Dodge's offer. On November 27, 1863, Sam Davis died in silence but afterwards became part of Confederate lore as the "Nathan Hale of the Confederacy." In 1909 Dodge contributed money to erect a statue in Nashville to honor Sam Davis' heroism and sacrifice. "He was a fine, noble fellow whom I tried to save," Dodge wrote, "but he would not let me, preferring to die rather than to give up his principles." Though he admired Davis's courage, he despised the cause for which he died.

During Gen. William T. Sherman's campaign against Atlanta in the spring of 1864, Dodge commanded the 16th Corps of the Army of the Tennessee and was in the thick of the fighting in northern Georgia, especially at Resaca and Kennesaw Mountain. Sherman finally reached Atlanta's outskirts and on July 22, Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson, commander of the Army of the Tennessee, feared a Confederate attack on his left flank and sent Dodge's corps to shore it up. McPherson knew the Confederates had a new commander, John Bell Hood, whose legendary aggressiveness meant an attack was imminent. As Dodge deployed his corps, two Confederate divisions appeared and a desperate fight ensued. In the heat of the fight, McPherson was killed as he oversaw the Union defense. Under Dodge's skillful battlefield direction, however, the 16th Corps repelled several savage assaults and prevented the flank from collapsing. As one of his fellow officers later remarked, "The Lord placed Dodge in the right place today."



Dodge's hat: A bullet pierced it and injured Dodge August 19, 1862, during Sherman's Atlanta campaign. Dodge lost a patch of hair and suffered a concussion. (State Library of Iowa)

The campaign continued into August, but by then Sherman had chosen to construct fortifications, cut Atlanta's supply lines, and starve the city into submission. During the siege, Dodge spent much time in the trenches nearest the enemy directing the construction of fortifications. On August 19, he ventured out to examine the enemy works on his front and an officer in a forward trench showed him "a peep hole through the bank" he could look through. As the General leaned down to take a look, a bullet zipped through the opening and struck him in the head. Dodge crumbled to the ground and those around him believed he was dead. But the wound looked far worse than it really was. Miraculously, the bullet did not penetrate but glanced off his skull, taking a patch of hair with it. Though suffering a concussion and staining the contents of his coat pocket with blood, including his 1862 promotion certificate (now housed at the Iowa State Historical Society along with his hat with the bullet hole), Dodge would live to fight another day.



Dodge's Bloodstained Promotion Certificate (State Library of Iowa)

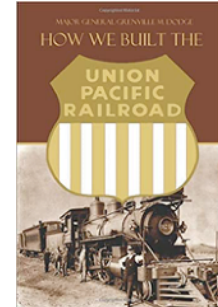
After recovering, Dodge hoped to return to his command and finish out the war with Sherman's army, which had captured Atlanta in September and was now marching to the sea and into legend. However, in December 1864, Grant selected him to head the Department of Missouri with orders to hunt down Confederate guerrillas in Missouri and later to chase marauding Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in Colorado and Nebraska Territories. At one point, Grant inquired of Dodge's whereabouts and was told that "Nobody knows where he is, but everybody knows where he has been."

In the midst of this, Dodge learned the war had ended at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, on April 9, 1865. But his elation was soon checked by news of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Dodge had met Lincoln before the war and fondly remembered the “tall, gaunt, stooping, homely man, who . . . meant everything that makes a cause worth dying for.” He went to Springfield, Illinois, on May 4 for the funeral, an occasion he called “the saddest episode of my life.”

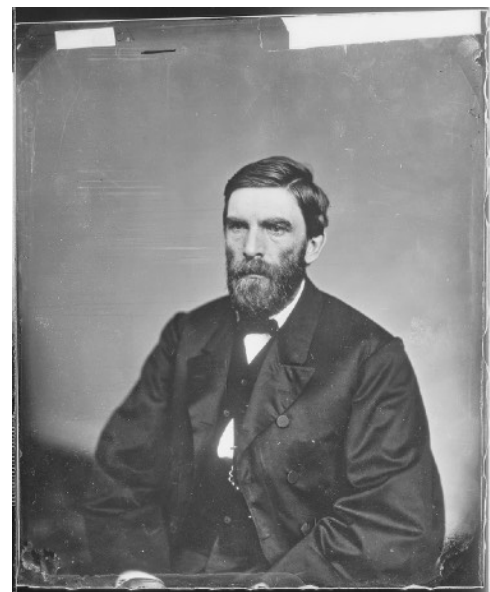
Railroads

With the war over, Dodge traded his uniform and sword for a plug hat and a surveyor’s transit. In 1862, Lincoln had signed into law the Pacific Railway Act authorizing the construction of a transcontinental railroad by two railroad companies—the Central Pacific (CP) and the Union Pacific (UP). The CP would build eastward from Sacramento, California, to link with the UP coming from Omaha on the Missouri River. Dodge took the job as chief engineer of the UP charged with overseeing the construction of that line. He was also the UP’s official land agent tasked with organizing and carving up the lands granted to the railroad by the government and he spent much time marking junction sites and passenger stations as well as plotting new towns sites along the line. Dodge laid out the town of Cheyenne and between 1866 and 1869, he and other surveyors plotted and named numerous towns along the line, including Grand Island, North Platte, Sidney, Laramie, Benton, Rawlins, Hillsdale, and Evanston. In all, Dodge established twelve depots with towns. Though usually given little credit, Dodge not only redrew the map of the West, he helped fill it in.

While working on the railroad, Dodge, like many well-known Civil War officers, found himself being hounded to run for public office. Though reluctant to run, in 1866 Dodge easily won a seat representing Iowa’s Fifth District in Congress and took his seat in March 1867. Unfortunately, he soon found politics distasteful and, more importantly, frustrating because it kept him from his day job. As a result, he spent significant time in the West working on the railroad, which meant he was absent



Dodge's 1910 book *How We Built the Union Pacific Railroad* (Cover of 2016 Reprint)



Dodge as Congressman (National Archives)



East and West Shaking Hands: Samuel S. Montague of the Central Pacific Railroad (left, center) shakes hands with Grenville M Dodge (right, center) of the the Union Pacific Railroad. (Library of Congress)

for nearly half the votes during his two-year term. Claiming that his doctor had advised him to go out West for health reasons, Dodge left Washington in April 1867 with “no disposition now to come here again.” And for the most part, the one-term congressman kept his word.

On May 10, 1869, two locomotives—the Central Pacific’s Jupiter and Engine No. 119 from the Union Pacific—faced each other only a few rail lengths apart. Between the two hissing locomotives the final act of an epic national drama unfolded. After driving golden spikes to connect the last rail to the last tie, the telegraph lines hummed with the simple but powerful message: “DONE!” A photographer captured Dodge shaking hands with his counterpart from the Central Pacific, a now famous image that has come to symbolize the linkage of East and West and cemented Dodge’s place in history. Only 38-years-old at the time, Dodge had for the second time in his life—and both within the last decade—played a prominent role in uniting the nation. He had grown up with the “Iron Horse” and had done perhaps more than any other man to realize the dream of a transcontinental railroad. Now, nearly 1,200 miles of shiny rails

from his home in Council Bluffs, he stood proudly on Promontory Point surveying his magnificent accomplishment. It might as well have been the top of the world. After this profound moment, Dodge continued his efforts to connect the nation by rail. As the most famous railroad builder in the US, he was in high demand and would oversee the construction of five more rail lines, create at least eight railroad construction firms, and serve as president of seven rail companies. But the project closest to his heart was the one closest to home. In 1871, he designed the UP's Missouri River Bridge (completed a year later) that spanned the river between Council Bluffs and Omaha, making it the only link between rail lines coming from the east and the transcontinental railroad headed west. By the 1880s, Dodge's bridge had helped transform Council Bluffs into a major rail hub boasting eight passenger and six freight depots to accommodate the numerous rail lines converging on the UP bridge. At its height of transferring passengers Council Bluffs had thirty-one hotels to choose from, including the UP's luxurious Transfer Depot and Hotel. Before becoming president, Abraham Lincoln visited Council Bluffs and, peering across the river from the bluffs, told Dodge that "Not one, but many railroads will someday center here." His prediction had come true and Council Bluffs, the fifth largest city in Iowa by 1870, was booming as a result. Indeed, Council Bluffs—not Promontory Point—was where East met West and where the nation truly became "transcontinental."



Dodge with an exploration party: from his book *How We Built the Union Pacific Railroad*.

Veterans Organizations and Remembering the War

Like many veterans after the war, Dodge joined and held leadership positions in various Union veterans' organizations, including the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS). However, his most beloved group was the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, a tight-knit fraternal organization commemorating the army in which Dodge and his close friends Grant, Sherman, and James B. McPherson had fought and sacrificed together. As a measure of the great esteem the members had for the General, Dodge served as the Society's president for twenty-five years following the death of the first president, William Tecumseh Sherman, in 1891. As president, Dodge embraced his duties and attended every annual meeting he could, three of which were held in Council Bluffs (1894, 1906, and 1911). At the 1894 reunion, Dodge went all out, spending \$10,000 on an elaborate reception and banquet as well as bankrolling

the restoration and reopening of Council Bluff's Grand Hotel for the veterans. He also attended national events commemorating the Civil War, including the 1895 dedication of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the first national Civil War military park established after the war.

At these ceremonies, Dodge presided over the festivities as the head of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee and often tendered his own remarks on the occasion, sometimes offering advice to his countrymen both North and South on how to "prevent forever, in the future, any question that shall as a nation divide us." But he also warned the younger generation against falling under the spell of the myth of the "Lost Cause," the specious Confederate rewriting of history that claimed, among other things, that a dispute over states rights, not slavery, had caused the war and that Confederate armies were overwhelmed by superior numbers not defeated by skillful Union generalship and the dedication and sacrifice of Union soldiers. "[T]he tendency all the time," Dodge complained, "is to wipe out history, to forget it, forgive, excuse and soften, and when all the soldiers pass from this age it will be easy to slip into the idea, that one side was as good as the other." But this was one battle he and his comrades would ultimately lose.

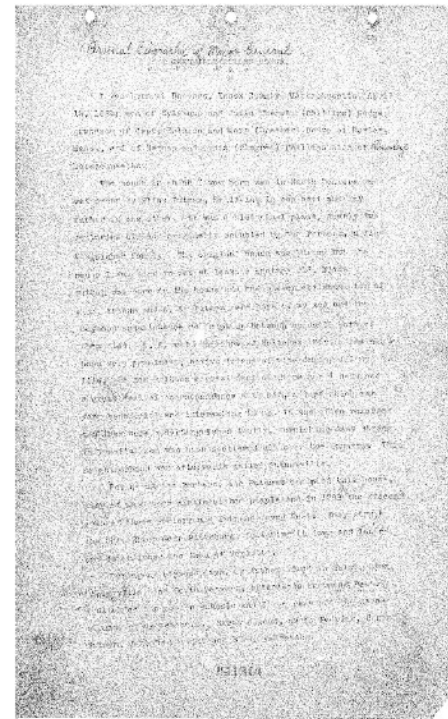


Charles A. Whipple: Portrait of Dodge as Grand Marshal at the dedication of Grant's Tomb in New York, April 27, 1897. (Council Bluffs Library)

In 1897, Dodge served as the Grand Marshal of the parade for the dedication of Grant's Tomb in New York City. Despite the horrible weather on April 27, the Grant's Tomb dedication parade of 60,000 marchers proceeded without a hitch in front of over one million spectators. At the turn of the century, Civil War "monument-mania" also gripped the nation as veterans' groups built memorials to their comrades and the battles they fought. After his friend William T. Sherman passed away in 1891, Dodge spearheaded efforts to design and construct a monument to his former commander in Washington, D.C., which was completed in 1903. Three years later, Dodge joined an official excursion with Iowa governor Albert Cummins and 160 dignitaries to officially

dedicate memorials built by the state to honor Iowa soldiers at Vicksburg, Shiloh, Chattanooga, and Andersonville, the infamous Confederate prison camp in Georgia. At the dedication of the Iowa Monument at Vicksburg, by far the largest memorial built by the state, Dodge served as the representative of Secretary of War William Howard Taft to accept the monument on behalf of the U.S. government.

Like many aging Civil War veterans, Dodge realized that the memory of the war could be memorialized on paper as well as in marble. Theodore Roosevelt had pushed him to write his memoirs because it would be “far and away the best book that has ever been written about the Civil War.” Between the early 1900s to 1914, Dodge produced a 1200-page draft of his “Biography of Major General Grenville M. Dodge from 1831 to 1871: Written and Compiled By Himself” covering only his Civil War career and his tenure as chief engineer for the UP, periods he clearly considered to be the crown jewels of his very full life. By the time of his death, he had also written *The Battle of Atlanta and Other Campaigns* (1911), *Personal Recollections of President Abraham Lincoln, General Ulysses S. Grant and General William T. Sherman* (1914), and *How We Built the Union Pacific Railway* (1910), which were his three finest works. Dodge also donated his voluminous correspondence and official papers to Iowa’s State Historical Department (now the State Historical Society of Iowa). So vast were the Dodge Papers that it would require a special room to hold the entire collection. The archival curator considered the Dodge collection to be “a memorial of a mind.”



First Page of Dodge's “magnum opus, Biography of Major General Grenville Mellen Dodge. (Author Photo)

Dodge the Philanthropist

By 1907, Dodge had served the nation and his state without pause since 1861. Now 76 years old, it was time to retire. He had spent the better part of the past twenty years living in New York but chose to return to Council Bluffs and spend the rest of his days with “the friends and neighbors of my young manhood” and to live in a magnificent mansion he built that, of course, faced west. That house, now a museum and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, remains a brick-and-mortar monument

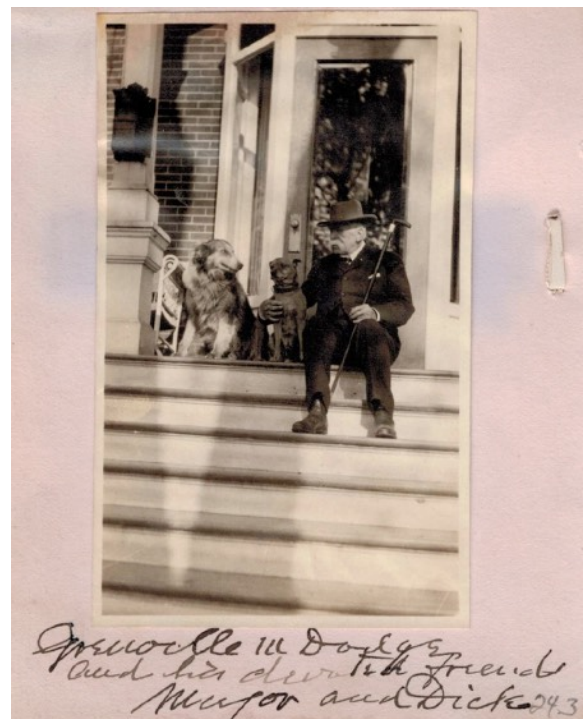
to his remarkable life. While in retirement, Dodge continued working for his fellow veterans and all who lived in his beloved community of Council Bluffs. In 1905, the city built a new library using funds donated by Andrew Carnegie, who was on a crusade to build “noble” free public libraries across the country. Through Dodge’s persuasion, however, Carnegie gave Council Bluffs \$20,000 more than he usually allocated for libraries. As much as he enjoyed books, the General may have loved animals more.

Dodge surrounded himself with many dogs, two of his favorites named Major and Dick, as well as a gray tomcat that could be seen sitting on his lap, sitting atop his dresser, tucked under his arm, or perched on his shoulder as he walked to his office every morning. He was also very fond of horses and worried about their mistreatment, especially the work horses hauling freight and passengers in the streets of many cities at the turn of the century. Summers were particularly deadly times for working horses, with hundreds dying of thirst across the nation due to the lack of access to water in the streets of many cities and towns. In 1907, Dodge spearheaded the building of a fountain for horses and other pets in downtown Council Bluffs. The General presided at the dedication ceremony and remarked: “[E]very man should do all in his power to make [the animal’s] journey through life as comfortable as possible . . . I have no use for the brute that ever punishes him or mistreats him.”

Dodge also saw many of his fellow townspeople suffering. Some families of Civil War veterans struggled to make ends meet and the thought of their children staring at empty stockings on Christmas day led the General to host an event where Christmas presents would be given to “the children of the old soldiers.” This became an annual social event held every year until the General’s death in 1916. To ensure they would be cared for after he died, in his will Dodge left \$50,000 (around \$1 million in today’s dollars) to be disbursed by the city to indigent Civil War veterans and their families.

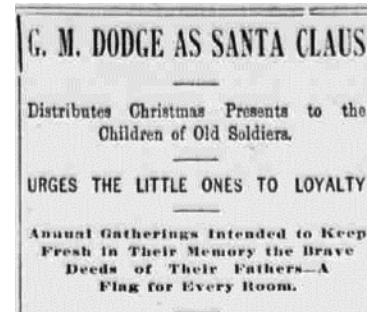


Historic General Dodge House,
Council Bluffs, Iowa



An elderly Dodge with his dogs Major and Dick
(Historic General Dodge House)

Dodge also provided for other poor residents of Council Bluffs in his will, which stipulated that twenty-one years after the death of his last grandchild a large portion of his estate would go to Council Bluffs to be used to benefit people in need within the community. Because of the General's generosity, since 1989 the city has distributed over \$1.4 million to charities and agencies "that provide for basic human services to the residents of Council Bluffs, Iowa."



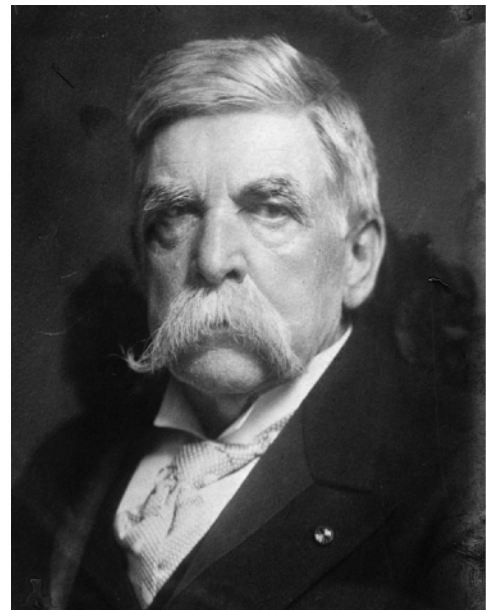
Dodge Santa Headline (Historic General Dodge House)

"The Grand Old Man of the Missouri Valley"

After 1913, Dodge developed bladder cancer and his health deteriorated. The cancer, he said, was "wearing me out by inches." During this time, journalist Grosvenor Clarkson painted with words the most compelling portrait of the aging general shuffling toward the twilight. "A tired old man, but an impressive figure," Clarkson wrote, "a D'Artagnan sobered and gray and not so sure, a Ulysses with the great adventure behind him, touched everywhere with the sublime dignity of the growing shadows, wanting only to go to his home in the West to die."

On January 3, 1916, the old soldier passed away in the house he built, surrounded by the town he made and adored, in the heartland of the nation he helped save. Though many people had urged the General to make Arlington National Cemetery his final resting place, Dodge never wavered in his preferred choice. "When my time comes," he wrote, "I want to be taken back to Council Bluffs . . . [to] sleep amid the friends and neighbors of my young manhood." The "grand old man of the Missouri Valley" had finally come home to stay.

During his funeral, state and local government offices and businesses around the state closed in his honor and over 2,000 people marched in a procession that took two hours to wend its way through downtown Council Bluffs. "It must be wonderful," mused one eyewitness, "to be such a great man that the world will love you enough to do that for you when you die." After his death, a journalist wrote: "So passes the last of the Titans of the elder day. Grenville M. Dodge was the American of yesterday—



Aging Dodge (Library of Congress)

filling to the full the American ideal of courage, vision, action and candor—and should have constant study from the American of today.” Dodge never saw himself that way, however. “I am just an old soldier,” Grenville Dodge told a reporter in 1914. “There were dozens of them in my day who accomplished more than I did. I did the things that came to me to do—and that’s about all you can say about me.” This calls to mind what Council Bluffs mayor James H. Cleaver once said of Dodge. The General, Cleaver quipped, “never dodged a battle or a duty, in fact, was never known to dodge anything but a compliment.”

Please forgive me for rambling on for so long. I feel I am in good company, however, for General Dodge also had difficulty getting to the finish line during his speeches. Though I am writing this instead of delivering a talk, I will still say to you what General Grenville M. Dodge told his audiences: “I have detained you far longer than I intended, but when you say a word about these early great events you never know when or where to stop.” So, I will stop now and thank you very much for inviting me to speak to the Atlanta Civil War Round Table. I wish I could have delivered my talk (with accompanying pictures!) in person but I am glad John Dietrichs gave me this opportunity to share Grenville M. Dodge with you in **Battle Lines**.



Author Bill Feis has a special interest in military intelligence, an area in which General Dodge was an innovator. Bill is also the author of *Grant's Secret Service: The Intelligence War from Belmont to Appomattox* (University of Nebraska Press, 2002) and co-author of *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (Free Press, 2012). Bill also published “*Essentially American*”: *General Grenville M. Dodge and Family* (Donning Publishers, 2017), a work commissioned by the Historic General Dodge House in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In 2018, Bill gave an invited lecture on Civil War military intelligence at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which aired on *C-Span 3 American History TV*. He is currently a professor of history at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, where he has taught American history for nearly 25 years.

Please stay safe and well!



**Civil War Round Table
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The President's Corner – April 20, 2020

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Round Table – While it is a great disappointment that we could not have our usual dinner meeting at the Capital City Club this month thanks to the pandemic, this *Battle Lines* carries much of the story that would have been told. Dr. Bill Feis generously agreed to put pen to paper and tell us the story of General Grenville Dodge, working around his University teaching duties which, of course, are now conducted electronically and at a distance. I personally have thanked him on behalf of our Round Table — to the extent we can, we want the “show to go on” with stories being told about the personalities and events surrounding the War. This is our “virtual” meeting.

Unfortunately, I must report that we have canceled our May dinner meeting as well due to the likely extension of “shelter in place” restrictions, and continued closure of the Capital City Club for such gatherings as ours. Dr. Gary Gallagher was scheduled to speak on the Shenandoah Campaigns of 1862 and 1864, but he will be invited back to offer up this program when his schedule allows, hopefully next year.

In the meanwhile, as one cable news anchor says each evening, “We are one day closer to reopening the country.” So we Civil War buffs are also one day closer to reopening the Atlanta Civil War Round table. I cannot close without recognizing the commitment and hard work of our editor Carol Willey in helping to prepare and format this special edition of *Battle Lines*. She placed Bill Feis’s pictures and found additional photos and art, which add so much to the text. Thanks Carol!

Once again, our entire Board and key Staff wish every one of you and your loved ones the very best as we traverse this crisis. Looking forward to seeing all of you as soon as possible.

John