

# DODGE JOHN

NARRATIVE OF MR.  
JOHN DODGE DURING  
HIS CAPTIVITY AT  
DETROIT

John Dodge

**Narrative of Mr. John Dodge  
during his Captivity at Detroit**

«Public Domain»

**Dodge J.**

Narrative of Mr. John Dodge during his Captivity at Detroit /  
J. Dodge — «Public Domain»,

# Содержание

THE DODGE NARRATIVE	5
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	10

# John Dodge

## Narrative of Mr. John Dodge during his Captivity at Detroit

### THE DODGE NARRATIVE

The narrative of John Dodge is one of the records of frontier life during the period of the American Revolution that displays the intense feeling of hatred and unfairness evinced by the British soldiers to the American rebels. It was written and published during the time of the greatest excitement in the West – the scene of the Narrative – and is historically valuable because of being contemporary with the events in question.

It was considered of great importance at the time of its first appearance, having been at once reprinted in England<sup>1</sup> and passed through at least three editions in America.<sup>2</sup>

In other writings published in England in 1779, appear the first public notice of the cruelties and gross irregularities in the administration of justice in Detroit under the rule of Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton, and the presentment of Hamilton by the grand jury of Montreal for murder in the execution of a Frenchman convicted of stealing. From the Narrative were taken the charges made against Hamilton, when he was a prisoner in Williamsburg, in consequence of which he was confined in irons and barely escaped a more serious, and perhaps even a capital punishment.<sup>3</sup> But little at the present time can be ascertained of Dodge. He was born in Connecticut, July 12, 1751, and was the son of John Dodge and his wife, Lydia Rogers.<sup>4</sup> John Dodge, the father, was a Baptist minister by profession and a blacksmith by trade. His son John was one of a numerous family of children. His brother Israel, who was with him in the West, was nine years his junior, having been born September 3, 1760. Before John had reached his nineteenth year he had wandered into the northern part of the Ohio district and had entered into business as a trader in Sandusky. He was familiar with the Indian language used in his neighborhood and frequently acted as interpreter.

Many of the events of his life from this time, are contained in his Narrative and it is needless to repeat them here, but mention might be made of other acts of his and records pertaining to him, of which he makes no mention. On the fourth day of April, 1776, Dodge, with William Tucker, purchased a house and lot in Detroit, from Joseph Poupard Lafleur, for 3,000 livres, and a few days later Tucker agreed to repay Dodge whatever sums he had paid for this house if Dodge "went down the country," as he then contemplated.<sup>5</sup> Dodge did not go "down the country," but remained in Detroit and sold his interest in the land to William Tucker July 6, 1777. In this deed Dodge is described as "a trader of Detroit," and it is stated that he bought the house and lot of Lafleur June 7, 1774.<sup>6</sup> His Narrative does not agree with the records in all cases, for he says he was confined in jail from January to July, 1776, in daily expectation of death, while the records show that he purchased this house and lot during this period. The story of the rescue of a prisoner from the Indians, related in his Narrative, is contained in the report of the Virginia Council of June 16, 1779. Sometimes at liberty, engaged

---

<sup>1</sup> Almon's *Remembrancer*, 1779.

<sup>2</sup> First edition, Philadelphia, 1779, and second edition, Danvers, Massachusetts, 1780; also printed in *Connecticut Gazette and Universal Intelligencer*, February 2, 1780.

<sup>3</sup> *Virginia State Papers*, 1, 321.

<sup>4</sup> *Dodge Genealogy*, page 137. *American Ancestry*, 6, 192. The sketch in *The Magazine of Western History*, 4, 282, contains many errors.

<sup>5</sup> *Wayne County Records*, B. 9, 91.

<sup>6</sup> If this date is correct it would appear that Dodge was in Detroit before he was brought there as a captive.

in trading, and sometimes confined in jail as a rebel, he remained in Detroit and Mackinac till May, 1778, when he was sent down to Quebec, at which place he arrived on the first day of June.

In the reports of rebel prisoners at Quebec in June and July, 1778, are three entries referring to Dodge as follows: "John Dodge, 24 years old, from Connecticut, a trader settled at Detroit for seven years, sent down by Lieutenant Governor Hamilton. His commercial effects at Detroit. Taken up on suspicion of having been in arms with the rebels."<sup>7</sup> He remained in Quebec until the ninth day of the following October when he escaped, going first to Boston and subsequently to General Washington. Dodge does not state where or when he met Washington, but as the General was in attendance at Congress from December 21, 1778, until some time in the following January, he probably met him at Philadelphia. Dodge says he visited Congress "having some matters relating to Canada worthy their hearing." This related to the "certain expedition" referred to by Washington in his letter of December 29th, a proposition to invade Canada. Dodge was at Fort Pitt in the early part of January, 1779, and from that port wrote a letter to John Montour.<sup>8</sup> There is no record of Dodge's appearance before Congress, but he wrote a letter on the subject, to Congress, as follows:

Honorable Congress  
*Pitsburg Jeneary 25 1779 —*

as I have Ben one of the grateest Suferers that is now in the united States of Ameraca Both in Person and Property

I have Sufferd Every thing But Death Robd Plundered of Every far thing that I was master of But loock upon it as an honour that I have Suffard in so just a Cause as we are now Engagd in and very happy that I have made my Escape from the Enemi after Being Prisener two years and nine months I think it my Duty as I am now in the Service of the united States to Enform your honnours of the Proceedings and Carriings on in the Department where I am – it Both greaves and Shagrans me to the hart to Se matters so Ill Conduckted as they are in this Department – it is very natural for Every one that has the Cause of his Contry at hart to Enquire into the reason of our grevences – is not one the farmers Being Drove of thair Plantation on our fronteers By the Saveges – Could they remaind on thair Plantations they Could have Ben very Sarvesable in Suppliing our main army in Provisions in Stead of that the Poor mifortonate Peopel are obleged to retreet into the thick Setled Contry and I may Say live almost upon the Charrity of the Contry which of consequence must Distress the hole Contry for Provisions we will Enquire why those Saveges are our Enemies they are Bribd By the British to take up the hachet against us whare is thair rendevous Detroit a place Stockaded in with Cedar Pickets and Eighty Soldiers to gard it But it is Strong Enough to keep a large Quantity of goods in so the British Can and Do give near a millian Presents to Bribe the Saveges to fall upon our fronteers and Distress our hole Contry – But we will Suppose that Place to Be Esily taken which it raly is if matters ware Conducted as they ought to Be – But we will Say that the Publick has Ben at grate Expençe for two years Past and thare is nothing Done I may Say nothing thare is a fort Bult at Bever Criek and one at tuskerowayes which if they are not rainforst with men and Provisions very Spedily we have no reason to think But they will fall into the hands of the Enemi in the Spring now had one of those forts Ben Bult at Preskeele or Kichoga or any whare on the lake side the men might have Ben Employed this winter in Boulding of Boats or gundelows

---

<sup>7</sup> Manuscript, British Museum.

<sup>8</sup> For a history of the Montour family see Egle's *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, 1, 118. John Montour was arrested and confined in Detroit in 1778. See *Michigan Historical Society Collections*, 9, 434.

So that in the Spring we Could Command the lakes which if we Dont we Cant keep Detroit if we take it or if the winter had Seveir we Could have gone on the ice and taken Detroit and vessels to and with half the men that it would have taken at any other Season of the year for the vessels would Be all froze up But in Stead of that they are Bult in an Endian Contry whare that all Supplies may Be very Esily Cut of and give the Saveges Susspicion that we are a going to Conker them and not our Enemi the English and very good right they have after there has Ben such threats throw out to them as there has we hant the reason But to Expect then all against us Before general McIntosh marcht from Bever Crik the governer of Detroit Put up a few of the lower Sort of Saveges By Bribing them to Send word to the general that they would meet him at Shuger Crik and give him Battel at the Same time there was more than four to one Sent him word that they would not Enterfeir or misleit him on his march as he had told them that he would go to Detroit the general marcht to the Place But there was not one that apeard against him he then gave word that all those Saveges that Did not Come in within twelve Days time and join him that he would loock upon them as Enemies and use them as Such and that he would Destroy thair hole Contry – now it was an impossibility for those nation that sent him word that they would not misleit him to get word in that Short Space of time which the general thought Proper to Set much more Come in – now what Can we Expect But to have them all against us if there is not Some Spedy rimedy – I Cannot Say what opinion your honours may have of the Saveges But I Can assure you that they are very numerous thair numbers are not known that there has not one out of a hundred taken up the hachet against us yet But we Cannot But Expect they will if there is not Proper Steps taken and that Spedily – we will Suppose that the Proper Steps are for us to march threw thair Contry and take Detroit which is Esily Done if matters ware Conducted as they ought to Be – and By having that in our Possession and the lakes it will Be in our Power to forse all those near nations to Come upon our terms and that will Enduce all the farrons ones to Be upon alliance with us and then we Shall have all the trade of that Extensive Contry Quite from the north west hutsons Bay lake Superier the heads of the maceippia which will make our Contry flourish – But we will Say the Publick has Ben at grate Expenche for two years Past and we are no nearer now than we was when we fust Set out But what is the reason it is Because there was Peopel Sent that Knew nothing of the mater the general told me that he was Brought up by the (sic) Sea Shore and that he knew nothing about Pack horseing in this wooden Contry – I Dont take it upon me to Dictate or Sensure no one But I think that ought to Be Enquired into Before there was thousands Spent But now it is to recall the horses and Bollocks are Dead the Provisions is Eat the men must have thair Pay it is Sunk lost gone and here we are Still going on in the Same way the general has likewise got the ill will of all his officers the melitia in Protickaler which I am very sorry for as they are the only Peopel that we have to Depend upon to Do any thing in this Deartment – now if there was not any one that knew how matters Should have Ben Conducted it would have Ben a meteriel Diference – But there is a gentlemon of an unblemisht Carrecter who has Singulied himself By leaveing Every thing that was near and Dear to him and Come in to this Quarter of the Contry Prepared Proper talks for the Saveges and as he was grately respected By all those who knew him it had its Entended Effect and I Can assure your honnours that it has Ben the Saving of hundreads of lives and I Can further assure you By various Surcomstances and Credible Intilegence that if he had not have Come and Did what he Did that there would not have remaind one family this Side

alagane mountains – he is Still Striveing to keep them from falling upon us But as here is others here Strieveing to Set them up it will Be a very Difecult matter for him to Do it he has Sent for the Cheifs of the nations to Come in and that thare is Still mercy for them if they will know thair Duty and as his Enfluence is grate with all those nations who know him I am in hope it will have its Effect But I Should not Be Disapointed if they Did not after receiveing Such threts as they have he has like wise at his own Privat Expençe hired men and Sent threw the hole Contry abought Detroit and this side found out the Situation of it and when I was Prisener with the British I have heard them often make remarks that if he Did not Come against that we had not another man in our Parts that knew the Situation of the Contry and had the Enfluence with the natives as he had – But whatever knoledge he may have Concerning those matters he has not never had the offer of ordering of them But in Stead of that he has Ben Put under an arest By the fals raports of a Poor Ignorant Set of Peopel which is to the Eternal Shame of our Contry after he had Savd them from Being masacereed By the Saveges that was his reward – now I beg that your Honnours will take it into Consideration and order some Spedy arangement Before this Quarter of the Contry is ruined a house Devided against it Self Cannot Stand and your honnours may rely upon it that is the case here if I have taken to much liberty I Beg your honnours will loock over it as I would not wish to Do more than My Duty – form your most obedient  
*and humble Servant – John Dodge —*

upon Colo. Morgans arival here he Sent an Express to the Endian nations for them to Come in and thare has two runners jest arived here with Speaches of grate Concequence which I suppose he will acquaint Congress with the Eairliest oppertunity —

*(in pencil)*

Specimen of the Literati of '76 – !

*(Indorsement)*

Letter from John Dodge

Pittsburg 25 Jany 1779

Read Feby. 17th. —

Referred to the board of war —

This letter or statement was not received by Congress till December 13, 1781, nearly two years later, and the committee to which it was referred, reported adversely to the suggestions contained in it, March 20, 1782.

Early in 1779, Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton was captured by General George Rogers Clark at Vincennes and was carried to Williamsburg, Virginia, as a prisoner of war. The letters and Narrative of Dodge had been read by some members of the Council of Virginia and the Council resolved, June 16, 1779, that because of the cruelties inflicted by Great Britain on the American prisoners of war, it was proper to begin a system of retaliation, and they conclude their resolution as follows: – "this board has resolved to advise the governor that the said Henry Hamilton, Philip Dejean and William LaMothe, prisoners of war, be put in irons, confined in the dungeon of the public jail, debarred the use of pen, ink and paper and excluded all converse except with their keeper, and the governor orders accordingly." The charges preferred by Dodge against Hamilton, were urged as an additional reason for confining the latter in jail. Hamilton answered that the statements of Dodge were mutual, and that the latter was "an unprincipled and perjured renegade."<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> *Michigan Historical Society Collections*, 9, 512.

Hamilton's excuses were not well received, and although no longer confined in irons, he remained in prison for some time, but was finally released and subsequently returned to Canada as Lieutenant Governor of the province.

Dodge was appointed Indian Agent by Virginia and was located in Kaskaskia from 1780 to 1788 and possibly until a later date.<sup>10</sup>

When claims of the Revolutionary soldiers to the western lands were being considered Dodge laid claim to a section, as a refugee from Canada<sup>11</sup> and his heirs were awarded a tract containing 1280 acres in the year 1800. This indicates that Dodge died before May 8th of that year. Four patents were issued to the heirs of John Dodge for lands in town sixteen, range twenty, Ohio, July 12, 1802.

Henry L. Caldwell, a grandson of Israel Dodge, wrote as follows: – "I do not know the date of the death of Colonel John Dodge, neither can I locate his grave or that of my grandfather, Israel Dodge, but the remains of both are, beyond doubt, resting in the old grave yard in Ste. Genevieve, Mo., which adjoins the catholic grave yard."<sup>12</sup>

John Dodge, while living at Kaskaskia, held a commission of Colonel received from Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia. His brother Israel Dodge was a lieutenant under him at that place. Israel had married Ann Hunter at Carlisle, Pa., before he moved to the West, and at Vincennes, their son Henry, who afterwards became the first Governor of the Territory of Wisconsin, was born October 12, 1782. He was named after Moses Henry, who was in the fort at Vincennes when it was captured by Governor Hamilton in 1778, being the only private in the "Army" which held out against the British invader.

---

<sup>10</sup> *Fergus Historical Series*, number 31, page 62. See also number 33, pages 159, 182, 183, 209; also *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 1, 367.

<sup>11</sup> *American State Papers, Public Lands*, Volume 1, (Gales and Seaton), 106, 110. A letter from John Rice Jones on file in the Interior Department, dated January 18, 1800, states that Dodge and his wife were both dead.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Henry L. Caldwell to Louise M. Dalton, Missouri Historical Society, dated December 4, 1906. Mr. Caldwell died April 11, 1907, a very old man. Miss Dalton was secretary of the Missouri Historical Society and died in June of the same year.

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.