



Murrieta Valley Historical Society Newsletter

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It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Murrieta Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.

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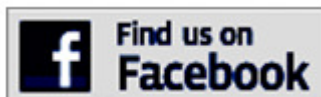
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Harold Valby Dodd & The Draft

By Jeffery Harmon

When America declared war against Germany during World War I, the government implemented the draft to raise a National Army. All men aged 21 to 30 were required to register for military service. Most of the men who were eligible for service were unmarried and had no dependents. There were exemptions for unmarried men who provided the sole income for dependent parents.

Murrieta resident Harold Dodd filed for exemption to provide income for his parents, but after reading a newspaper article, officials reexamined and revoked his request.

Harold Valby Dodd was born September 8, 1886 in Alden, Freeborn County, Minnesota. He was the only surviving child of Miles W. Dodd, Jr. and Emma E. Valby Dodd. By 1900, Miles Dodd moved his family to Los Angeles, California. He went into business with Samuel M. Lester to develop irrigation systems for landowners in Murrieta and surrounding areas.

The Dodd family began buying land in Murrieta around 1903. In November 1905, the Dodds established the Murrieta



World War I poster
(Source: internet)

Development Company.

“The Murrieta Development Company filed articles of incorporation in the county clerk’s office yesterday. The amount of capital stock is \$50,000, of which \$500 has been subscribed. Los Angeles is the principal place of business and the directors are Miles W. Dodd, Emma E. Dodd, Mary P. Brooks, Dona A. Haller and Jennie Kline-man, all of that city. The company is incorporated to buy, sell, develop, and deal in farms and farm-



Registration Notice
(Source: internet)

ing machinery and stock and stock ranches, to conduct a general farming, produce and stock business, to develop water rights and water plants and to transact a general brokerage, collection and real estate business.” (November 28, 1905, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

Research suggests that the company was never successful and folded within a short time. Miles Dodd bought Sam Lester’s Murrieta ranch in November 1907. In 1908, he built a new home for his family in Murrieta. At the end of the year’s harvest season, Miles Dodd made improvements on his land.

“Mr. Dodd has a grading outfit from Los Angeles working on his ranch. It is his intention to prepare 100 acres for alfalfa. He is making numerous other improvements, making his ranch appear too much better advan-

tage.” (November 4, 1908, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

A few months later, his health began to decline. Dr. H. G. Brainard of Los Angeles, a nerve specialist, was called in by Dr. Hugh Walker for consultation. Under the physician’s care, Miles Dodd’s health slowly improved. During his father’s illness Harold began overseeing his father’s operations on the Dodd ranch.

Research shows the Dodd family continued to be successful farmers. They shipped “a trio of fine turkeys” to Arizona in 1912. Miles Dodd built a new barn in August 1913. A few months later he shipped out a carload of hogs. In 1914, he ran a thresher outfit in Murrieta and the surrounding area.

In August 1915, while working in Wildomar, disaster struck the Dodd threshing outfit:

“Monday witnessed quite a serious happening when Dodd’s threshing machine caught fire and was completely burned together with about 150 sacks of wheat, the latter being the property of A. L. Mathews. It is understood that Mr. Dodd intends buying another machine and resuming work immediately.” (August 20, 1915, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

Within a month, Miles Dodd received a new thresher and tractor from Chicago and resumed operations. Meanwhile, at the annual stockholders meeting of the Consolidated

Bank of Elsinore, Miles W. Dodd was elected to the board of directors.

Miles W. Dodd sold another carload of hogs for \$1,100 in 1916. Afterwards he bought a five-passenger Saxon automobile. In the summer, the Dodd’s threshing crew worked for six weeks in the back country, operating a successful business.

When President Wilson declared war on Germany in April 1917 and the Selective Service Act was enacted on May 18, 1917, the federal government was authorized to raise a National Army.

On June 5, 1917, Harold Dodd, age 30, reported to the Murrieta register’s office and turned in his registration card to George L. Black. He did not claim exemption from the draft, but a large “x” was placed on his card.

Harold requested exemption from military service in order to provide for his parents’ financial needs. His father’s health was declining and Harold was their only child. During the summer of 1917, Harold continued to manage and work his father’s threshing operation. By August he was notified that he was exempt from military service. However, within a month a newspaper article was published in the county paper that caused officials to question Harold’s exemption request.

“Harford & Greenleaf report an exchange this week

involving \$60,000 on each side, in which Miles W. Dodd of Murrieta exchanged a very fine ranch of 310 acres, well improved, for a hotel and other property in the northwestern part of Los Angeles, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Hugh E. Davis and Mrs. Davis' mother, Mrs. Caroline B. Lancaster." (October 4, 1917, Riverside Daily Press)

An investigation was opened to review Harold Dodd's case.

"Harold Dodd of Murrieta set forth in his claim for exemption that the independent income of his parents for the preceding year was only \$40, and that he had contributed over \$400 to their support. A similar affidavit was sworn by his father, Miles W. Dodd, and a supporting affidavit, setting forth the same facts, was sworn to by John M. Ormsby, cashier and manager of the Consolidated Bank of Elsinore." (October 24, 1917, Riverside Daily Press)

The investigators concluded that the affidavits were false. In 1916, the Dodd ranch had grossed \$10,000 and the threshing outfit had an income of \$3,000. Furthermore, the Los Angeles property that was traded for the ranch was an apartment house with 30 rooms, with 20 occupied and residents paying \$11 per month rent. Also there were two rental houses with occupants included in the trade. Overall, the investigators felt that the rental income alone would sustain Harold's parents during his military service.

"With this showing, the board was convinced that the family was not dependent upon the son for support, as claimed in his affidavits for exemption. Young Dodd was permitted to withdraw his claim, and was certified up to the district board as held for service." (October 24, 1917, RDP)

In March 1918, the second national army was called up for duty. Harold Dodd was one of twelve men chosen from District 2. On Good Friday Night, March 29, 1918, Harold Dodd gathered with the other drafted young men in front of the Riverside County Courthouse and answered roll call. He marched in a procession led by the Riverside Military Band and the Home Guard down Main Street and then turned on Eighth Street to the Santa Fe train station. The men lined up on the station platform for final instructions before boarding the train bound for Camp Lewis, Washington.

"As the train pulled into the station, the crowd – those who were not cheering or weeping – joined in "America" singing the new verse "God save our men." And when the train began its journey northward the band burst into the martial yet melancholy strains of "Keep the Home Fires Burning." (March 30, 1918, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

Harold Dodd arrived in Camp Lewis in April 1918 for military training. It is speculated he may have witnessed the departure of the 91st Division

from the camp in July. It is unknown if he completed his training or if he was deployed overseas.

With the Armistice being signed in November 1918, he would have been discharged by the spring of 1919.

After his time in service, Harold enrolled at Stanford University in the fall of 1919. He graduated in 1922 with an engineering degree and began working in the California oil fields.

In Los Angeles on September 30, 1922, Harold Dodd married Mary Dangler, a school teacher from Palo Alto, California. They settled in Taft, California where Harold worked for an oil company. Harold and Mary Dodd had one child, Wil-

(Continued on page 4)



I Didn't Raise my Boy to be a Slacker by Theodore Baker, Song cover (Source: Library of Congress Online)

liam Dangler Dodd, born August 31, 1923. From 1930 through 1940, Harold's family lived in Coalinga in Fresno County, California.

In 1942, Harold Dodd, age 55, filed his draft card during World War II. At the time he worked for the State of California's oil and gas department as a deputy supervisor. His family lived in Bakersfield, California. Because of his age and his need to support his family, he was exempt from service.

Twenty-four million men registered for the draft during World War I. Of those men, 2.8 million were conscripted into military service. It is estimated that fewer than

350,000 men tried to "dodge" the draft. Some men lied, some men maimed themselves, and a few committed suicide.

Harold Dodd lied to avoid the draft, but after his exemption was revoked, Dodd took to the patriotic cause with gusto, proving his willingness to serve his country. He served his time and was able to return to civilian life.

Harold's father, Miles W. Dodd, died at the age of 62 on Sunday morning, March 22, 1925 in Los Angeles. Harold's mother, Emma, died on March 19, 1950 and was laid to rest next to her husband. Harold Dodd died at the age of 67 on April 18, 1953 in Santa Clara

County, California. He was laid to rest in the Hollywood Forever Cemetery in Los Angeles next to his parents.

Even if Harold Dodd and his parents initially conspired to avoid his entrance into military service, we can honor him for the service he eventually gave to our country. There are probably many other stories of men who received undeserved exemptions from military service and were never caught.

Today, whether men and women volunteered or were drafted for military service, we remember and honor their service or sacrifice for our country.

From the Archives: Large Acreage Changes Hands

Murrieta Ranch of Miles W. Dodd Exchanged for Hotel Property in Los Angeles –

Ill Health Causes Mr. Dodd to Retire from Active Work

Harford & Greenleaf report an exchange this week involving \$60,000 on each side, in which Miles W. Dodd of Murrieta exchanged a very fine ranch of 310 acres, well improved, for a hotel and other property in the northwestern part of Los Angeles, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Hugh E. Davis and Mrs. Davis' mother, Mrs. Caroline B. Lancaster.

The Dodd ranch at Murrieta is known as one of the best ranches in Riverside County, there being about 100 acres in alfalfa on semi-moist land, and

although Mr. Dodd has a large pumping plant and some artesian water, he never uses it for irrigating purposes. These 100 acres produced a crop of barley which runs 15 to 18 sacks per acre, a cutting of hay, and later in the fall a crop of alfalfa seed which usually averages \$40 to \$50 per acre: the balance of the land is seeded to wheat, barley and Sudan grass. This last year Mr. Dodd harvested, besides his wheat and barley and hay, nine tons of Sudan and over 11 ½ tons of alfalfa seed. The gross receipts of the ranch this year,

aside from hogs and cows and stock, amount to about \$16,000.

Poor health on the part of Mr. Dodd necessitated his giving up active ranch work, and after closing out his farming operations, he, with his family, will move to Los Angeles. Mr. Davis has been engaged in looking after his extensive interests in Los Angeles, but will take possession of the ranch the latter part of this month.

(Source: October 4, 1917, Riverside Daily Press)

YARD SALE!

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4 & SATURDAY, AUGUST 5
7 AM TO 12 NOON

THE MURRIETA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS HOSTING A LOCAL YARD SALE TO HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR THE CLEANUP AND PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC ITEMS ON A LOCAL HISTORIC PROPERTY.

CASH ONLY, PLEASE!

Historic Ray's Cafe
24770 Washington Street
Murrieta, CA 92562
(back of business)

Support local history!

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Next Monthly Board Meeting:

Monday, August 7, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at
Honeycutt Farms Family Restaurant
40477 Murrieta Hot Springs Road, D2
(In the Alta Murrieta Shopping Center)
All members welcome to attend



**ICE AGE:
MURRIETA**

Presented by Darla Radford,
Collections Manager, Western Science Center

**Monday, July 10
Beginning at 6 PM**

In the Library's Community Room:
8 Town Square, Murrieta, CA 92562

Call the historical society
for more information:
(951) 387-4862

Support local history and
become a member today!

 **MURRIETA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
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Membership Application

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Annual \$25.00
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