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Major-General Grenville M. Dodge's military intelligence operations during the Civil War

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Major-General Grenville M. Dodge's military
intelligence operations during the Civil War

by

Brent Hamilton Ponsford

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: History

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1976

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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P775

	Page
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF DODGE'S MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS	6
CHAPTER II. DODGE'S SECRET SERVICE IN THE FIELD, VICKSBURG AND ATLANTA	37
CHAPTER III. MISSOURI, THE FINAL PHASE OF GENERAL DODGE'S INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS	83
CONCLUSION	108
APPENDIX I	114
APPENDIX II	116
BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE	118
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	120
VITA	123

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ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Map 1: Preliminary Strategy at Vicksburg	41
Map 2: Area of Military Intelligence Activity - Vicksburg	52
Map 3: Area of Military Intelligence Activity - Atlanta	68

DEDICATION

To my wife and son, Lisa and Paul,

To my father, mother and sister, Jack, Lois and Jackie,

To my grandparents, Wayne, John, Fern and Jesse

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank several people for their help in the researching and writing of this thesis. Mrs. Phyllis McClaughlin and Mrs. Lida Greene of the Iowa State History Department, Division of Historical Museums and Archives in Des Moines, were most helpful in finding relevant materials in the Dodge Papers. Professor George McJimsey served as chairman of my thesis committee. He endured my mistakes with patience above and beyond the call of duty. At the same time he made many constructive criticisms which have helped eliminate most of my errors. Professor John Dobson was kind enough to review the entire thesis at a time when his schedule was very crowded. He also substituted as chairman of my thesis committee while Professor McJimsey was on leave. I would like to thank both Professor Ross Talbot and Professor James Whitaker for serving on my thesis committee. Also I owe thanks to Sherry Schwarzhoff for typing the final draft. Finally, I would like to especially thank my wife, Lisa, not only for typing several preliminary drafts but also for being a constant source of encouragement.

INTRODUCTION

Historical archives bulge with pertinent materials, but the subject of [Civil War intelligence operations] has been an especially neglected topic, neglected, that is, by all but the romancers. Present-day intelligence and security operations are highly sophisticated matters. The substantive discussions they provoke [usually segregated from the public by government classification] tend to be technical, even esoteric, and richly complicated by conflicting schools of thought. Relatively few persons outside the closed circle have gained enough understanding of the subject to write plausibly about it - let alone do historical research on it. As an aspect of Civil War history, the topic still awaits competent students, to say nothing of something approaching definitive treatment.¹

This statement, written by Robert Dykstra in 1964, plus the availability of the Grenville Dodge Papers for such research prompted me to attempt a study of Dodge's Civil War intelligence operations. One of the major objectives of this thesis has been to place the romantic theme of Civil War intelligence in its proper perspective. Two of the earliest works on Civil War intelligence operations are Lafayette C. Baker's, History of the United States Secret Service (1867), and Allen Pinkerton's, Spy of the Rebellion; Being a True History of the Spy System of the United States Army During the Later Rebellion (1883). Baker served as chief detective for the Union War Department and Pinkerton served as chief detective for General Winfield Scott and later General George McClellan. Baker came under attack from critics who accused him of excessive arrests. His History of the United States Secret Service, is largely a defense of his tactics. It is meticulous but poorly organized. Pinkerton writes of his detectives' exploits during the war. However, to fill the gaps in his 500-page book,

Pinkerton began attributing super-human qualities to himself and his favorite detective Timothy Webster. In Pinkerton's book, one begins to see the romantic theme emphasized and the facts deemphasized. This led to the creation of many myths about the Civil War intelligence. The romantic theme which begins with Pinkerton's Spy of the Rebellion is continued in such books as Louis A. Sigaud's Belle Boyd, Confederate Spy (1945), and Mabel Frantz's book Full Many A Name: The Story of Sam Davis (1961).

Three historians, Wilton P. Moore, Edwin Fishel and David Sparks led the way in dispelling the romantic myths of Civil War intelligence operations. Each of these historians published articles in Civil War History. The first to appear was Moore's, "The Provost Marshal Goes to War" (1959). Fishel's article, "The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence" and Sparks's article, "General Patrick's Progress: Intelligence and Security in the Army of the Potomac," both appeared in 1964. These articles were followed by John Bakeless's book, Spies of the Confederacy (1970). Bakeless, like Moore, Fishel, and Sparks does an excellent job of presenting a factual, well-balanced narrative, and a scholarly conclusion. I have tried to continue the type of history that these four historians began. Although a spy certainly led a more exciting life than the average soldier, a more important topic is the organization and the usefulness of intelligence operations. The following pages thus downplay the romantic aspects in favor of the more fundamental elements of Civil War espionage.

The first chapter deals with the overall organization of Dodge's intelligence operations. Dodge had an unusual ability to organize. It was largely through Dodge's capability that his secret service worked as well as it did. The second chapter provides a chronological narrative of Dodge's intelligence work in both the Vicksburg and Atlanta campaigns. This chapter shows not only the value of such intelligence operations to the Union efforts as a whole but also the extensive nature of Dodge's operations. The third chapter deals with the final phase of Dodge's intelligence work in the Department of Missouri. It was here that Dodge's counterintelligence (security) operations became a major part of his intelligence work. Missouri was also the area in which Dodge used his spies to combat the Indians of the plains, which had risen in response to Chivington's Massacre.

The words "secret service" are misleading. One of the misconceptions that has grown up over the years is that "there was an organization in the Federal Government known as the Secret Service...."² An intelligence organization directed and organized on a national scale was non-existent during the Civil War. For this reason I have tried to avoid the use of the words "secret service." Dodge's military intelligence operations was one of several such organizations operating in the Civil War. The Secret Service Division, as we know it today, was not created until July 1865, when Congress appropriated \$10,000 for the use of the Secretary of the Treasury in "detecting and bringing to trial counterfeiters of treasury notes, bonds, or other United States securities."³

One final note should perhaps be made before proceeding. Several reasons motivated me to entitle this thesis: "Major-General Grenville M. Dodge's Military Intelligence Operations During the Civil War." To do a thorough study of Dodge's intelligence work, this study has not been restricted to intelligence work done by spies. His spies, though the major element of his overall operations, were not his only source of information. Southern newspapers, refugees, prisoners, scouts, cavalry, and detectives all must be given credit if a truly complete picture is to be drawn from this study. The words "military intelligence" thus more accurately describe all parts of Dodge's intelligence operations.

ENDNOTES

1. Robert Dykstra, "Intelligence and Security: Introduction," Civil War History 10 (1964): 341-343.
2. Edwin C. Fishel, "The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence," Civil War History 10 (1964): 344-367.
3. Kenneth W. Munden and Henry P. Beers, Guide to Federal Archives Relating to the Civil War (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1962), pp. 203-204.

CHAPTER I.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF DODGE'S
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

On the day that Confederate shore batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter, Grenville Mellon Dodge was some nine hundred miles away celebrating his thirtieth birthday in Council Bluffs, Iowa. During the four years of War which followed the bombardment, Dodge rose from the rank of Colonel in the Fourth Iowa Infantry to that of Major-General commanding the Left Wing of the Sixteenth Army Corps, Army of Tennessee. Dodge served under Generals S. R. Curtis, John C. Fremont, Stephen A. Hurlbut, William T. Sherman, and Ulysses S. Grant. Each of these Generals complimented Dodge's ability as a soldier by supporting him for promotion. At the height of his military career, Dodge commanded twenty-one regiments and five batteries.¹



Dodge's personal life prior to the Civil War contained little to suggest that by the end of the War he would be described by Ulysses S. Grant as "an exceedingly efficient officer" and a "most capable soldier."² Dodge was born in Danvers, Massachusetts, on April 12, 1831. In 1845 Dodge met Frederick Lander, son of Mrs. Edward Lander, who employed Dodge as a farmhand. Frederick Lander was a noted surveyor and civil engineer in Massachusetts and it was from this man that Dodge gained

his first experiences at surveying railroad routes. This interest continued throughout his life. In 1867 Dodge would become chief engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad.³

Dodge resolved to study engineering after having met and gained the friendship of Frederick Lander. In 1846 Dodge enrolled at Durham Academy in New Hampshire and by September, 1848, Dodge was able to enter Norwich University in eastern Vermont. Norwich University is deserving of mention since it was there that Dodge gained his formal military training. This, however, consisted of little more than simple drills and open field maneuvers; hardly sufficient training for what would be required of him later.⁴

After graduating from Norwich, Dodge grew restless and, at the age of twenty headed west to seek his fortune, hopefully as an engineer. His first destination was Peru, Illinois, where he had been promised employment by Senator George W. Gilson, an Illinois railroad promoter. He surveyed railroad plots around Peru until 1852 when he secured new employment with the Rock Island Railroad. By May 17, 1853, Dodge and a survey party had reached Iowa City, on the route to be taken between Chicago and the city of Omaha. By November 23, 1853, Dodge was south of Council Bluffs. From Council Bluffs he proceeded into the Territory of Nebraska. Later in life, as his biographer states, "Dodge could brag that the routes he selected were adopted by the chief engineers of the first transcontinental railroad."

The next turning point in Dodge's life occurred on May 29, 1854. After settling down in Iowa City for a time, Dodge was married to Ruth

Anne Brown. After a honeymoon in Boston, Dodge took his wife, and his own family, which had left Massachusetts for the West, to Elkhorn, twenty-three miles west of Omaha. Here Dodge continued to survey and in the process acquired valuable knowledge of Indians. Both the Omahas and Pawnees proved troublesome but Dodge and his family were able to survive.⁵

From this point on, Dodge established himself as a prominent citizen in Iowa. He lobbied the state legislature for the railroad and established a banking and real estate office in Council Bluffs. Yet in connection with his later military life, Dodge showed little in the way of promise. His contemporaries came to the same conclusion. An acquaintance said of him: "He seemed the average Civil Engineer, subordinate to his chief. I had no reason to anticipate for him much higher distinction. Still, he was self-asserting, and in some measure, egotistical."⁶

After Fort Sumter, Dodge sought the rank of colonel and a regiment to command. Believing war inevitable, he told his wife, "[t]he War [will] take every fighting man into the field, and I would rather take a position of leader than hereafter be forced to be a follower."⁷

Dodge's first attempt to raise a regiment failed. He approached Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood about the prospects of offering the 'Council Bluffs Guards' for active service in the Union Army. Kirkwood declined Dodge's proposal saying that Dodge lacked the necessary military experience and, more important, that the 'Council Bluffs Guards' were needed to protect Iowa's frontier against roving bands of Indians.

But Dodge persisted. After Kirkwood declined his offer, he hurried to Washington, D.C., to lay his proposal directly before Secretary of War Simon Cameron. But Cameron could not help Dodge either, for he could not supply Dodge with guns to arm his regiment. Cameron kindly offered Dodge an appointment as captain in the regular army, but Dodge just as kindly refused. Dodge was determined to lead a regiment in the volunteer army.

Undismayed, Dodge left Secretary Cameron's office and went to the Ordnance Department. Dodge's luck changed here. He was informed that some six thousand Springfield muskets were lying unclaimed at a nearby depot. Dodge hurried back to Cameron with the news of the unclaimed muskets. Luckily Cameron not only handed over all the muskets, but also the position Dodge had sought all along - colonel of what later became the Fourth Iowa Infantry. His appointment was made official in June, 1861. By August, Dodge "was leading [the Fourth Iowa Infantry] against the rebels in Northern Missouri."⁸

Dodge's lack of training in military science was offset by his natural ability to organize and lead men. After returning from Washington, he and his regiment were sent to Camp Kirkwood, a "tent city" south of Council Bluffs. Here Dodge "drilled, paraded, and hiked" his men from 4:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Yet when his men worked so did Dodge. He was always with them. Soon he gained his men's respect as a "tough little fellow."⁹

Early in August, Dodge's regiment was ordered to report to St. Louis. After arriving there, General John C. Fremont, commander of the Department

of Missouri, ordered Dodge to Rolla, Missouri, where Dodge took command of the Fourth Brigade in the Fourth Division of the Army of the Southwest under General S. R. Curtis.¹⁰

While at Rolla, Dodge led the successful attack on Springfield, Missouri. He also participated in the Battle of Pea Ridge, March 6-8, 1862, losing over one-third of his command. Every field officer was killed and Dodge had three horses shot from under him. As a result of his actions in the battle, Major-General Halleck promoted Dodge to the rank of brigadier-general.¹¹

While at Rolla, Dodge began to develop his intelligence operations. The development was triggered by war conditions following the Union defeat at Wilson's Creek. After the battle of August 10, 1861, the situation for the Union forces in Missouri looked as bad as it did in the east. Federal forces under Brigadier-General Nathaniel Lyon had been defeated by Confederate Generals Benjamin McCulloch and Sterling Price. Lyon was killed during the battle but Major Samuel D. Sturgis withdrew the Union troops to Rolla where Dodge had been sent by General Fremont.¹²

Shortly after the fiasco at Wilson's Creek, General Fremont, who was in St. Louis, began receiving numerous reports of Confederate movements toward the Federal lines. Jittery after the defeat, Fremont asked Dodge to help investigate the rumors about Confederate advances. This assignment proved to be quite a task since each rock seemed to hide Confederate soldiers.¹³ At first Dodge investigated the rumors by mounting all of his cavalry units and dispersing them anywhere Confederate activity was reported. Within a month, all of his horses

were worn out from chasing so many widely scattered reports. The system, he concluded, was unworkable.¹⁴

An alternative plan not only saved Dodge's cavalry but started Dodge's military intelligence system. Dodge is not responsible for the idea of sending spies into Confederate territory, however. One morning, a Captain White, who commanded an independent Missouri cavalry unit, came to Dodge's tent and complained about the ridiculous method Dodge was using to investigate all rumors of Confederate advances. White suggested sending some of his own men into the enemy's lines to obtain the desired information. By doing this Dodge would save the wear and tear on his cavalry units and free his cavalry for chasing down the guerrilla bands that constantly harassed his own lines.¹⁵

Dodge did send several of White's men into rebel territory. The men sent were truly worthy for the task since most were Missourians who knew the territory into which they went. Within a short time, they were returning to Dodge's headquarters at Rolla with reports that Dodge found very accurate.¹⁶

Dodge was completely convinced of the advantages of using spies after participating in the campaigns in the southwest during the Spring of 1862. At Fayetteville, Arkansas, one of his spies brought in a report that Confederate General Earl Van Dorn with 25,000 troops, "was right on top of" General S. R. Curtis's 11,000 man army.¹⁷

This information was of tremendous importance. Curtis had pushed Sterling Price's army to Fayetteville in February, 1862. General Halleck had ordered Curtis to halt his army here and await relief from Union

forces which would come "through southeast Missouri down the Mississippi [River] and up the Tennessee [River]" to force the Confederates to withdraw from Curtis's front. While waiting near Fayetteville, Curtis spread his army out over the countryside in order to obtain forage. This made him vulnerable to a concentrated Confederate attack.

In the month that Curtis's army had stopped at Fayetteville, Earl Van Dorn assumed command of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi District and planned an immediate campaign from Arkansas into Missouri. Van Dorn hope to join forces with Sterling Price who had fallen back to Springfield, Missouri, and then march directly on St. Louis. Van Dorn joined forces with Price in the Boston Mountains below Fayetteville. His total force consisted of 30,000 men.

On March 3, 1862, General Curtis learned of Van Dorn's movements just south of him. This intelligence had been gained from refugees who had fled to Curtis's lines in the wake of the Confederate advance. This information was followed by reports from Dodge's spies telling Curtis exactly where Van Dorn planned to attack his lines.

On the 6th of March several of Dodge's "scouts" brought in the news that Van Dorn planned to attack Curtis's rear by marching down the Little Cross Timber road. After hearing this, Dodge informed Curtis. Curtis sent Dodge and six companies of the Fourth Iowa Infantry and the Third Illinois Cavalry to Cross Timber Hollows. Here, Dodge had his men fell trees onto the road in order to slow the Confederate advance. His spies' reports proved to be accurate. Dodge was forced to abandon his tree cutting when Van Dorn's army was heard coming down the road.

By following up on his spies' reports and felling trees on Little Cross Timber road, Dodge frustrated Van Dorn's plans for a simultaneous attack. While half of Van Dorn's forces were halted by Dodge's fallen timber the other half of the Confederate force launched its attack. Curtis was therefore able to concentrate his outnumbered army where they were most needed. He held off Van Dorn and forced him to retreat to Memphis, Tennessee. In later years, Dodge credited his spies with saving Curtis's army.¹⁸

There was much more to Dodge's intelligence operation than a simple process of sending men into enemy lines. Much credit must be given to Dodge for his ingenuity in overcoming several obstacles. At Rolla and Fayetteville, Dodge had become convinced that military intelligence gave an officer many advantages. Yet Dodge, in order to have a truly effective intelligence operation had to overcome many problems. In meeting and overcoming these, Dodge developed an effective intelligence organization.

One of the first problems Dodge encountered was finance. When he discovered that the War Department had no funds available for his secret service, Dodge sought aid from his provost marshal, J. W. Barnes. Barnes had collected some money from "fines" and confiscations, but this was still inadequate.¹⁹ On January 3, 1863, Dodge wrote to Ulysses S. Grant requesting permission to retain all proceeds from the sale of contraband cotton for the purpose of financing his intelligence operations. Grant consented, probably because the sale of cotton had caused him a great many problems.²⁰

The cotton market had undergone a "boom" during the war years. Prices soared as the rebels held on to cotton and made it a rather scarce commodity in the North. Many northerners realized that the South, on the other hand, was short of many items such as "coffee, medicines, whiskey, flour, salt, and...an endless list of manufactured goods." There were many from both North and South who took advantage of the situation. Extensive trade in "contraband" cotton was carried on by both sections throughout the war.

Grant realized that southerners used the proceeds from the sale of cotton to purchase salt, beef, pork, and weapons in order to keep their armies in the field. The Administration overruled him, however, every time he attempted to curb the illegal trade. Undoubtedly, Dodge's request to use contraband cotton as the financial support for his intelligence operations was a welcome relief.²¹

The fact that Dodge's spies were paid from the proceeds of cotton sales suggests that they held a special station in the army. Further evidence of this can be seen in an incident which occurred at Corinth, Mississippi in 1863. Major-General Stephen A. Hurlbut, Dodge's immediate supervisor at Corinth, demanded that Dodge hand over the names of his spies, their reports, and their locations.

Dodge could not obey these orders. He feared that if Hurlbut was given the information requested, there existed the possibility that the enemy might get hold of it. This would not only ruin his intelligence operations, but more importantly, sentence all his spies to imprisonment or death.²²

General Grant was the only person who could resolve this dilemma. Dodge wrote to him, asking that Hurlbut's order be countermanded. Grant soon "took time from the fighting at Vicksburg to rescind the order." However, Grant did ask Dodge to send his intelligence information to commanders who might be affected by it. In sum, Dodge was not required to divulge the intricacies of his intelligence operations, such as spies' names, spy reports, and their locations. He was to write up a general intelligence report for the use of other Union commanders if they were affected by such information.²³

Grant had little knowledge of Dodge's spies. But he fully appreciated the information he was getting from Dodge. No other organization was able to work so closely with the Army and yet remain so anonymous. Dodge's intelligence work required such secrecy if his was to be an effective organization.

A second problem that Dodge had to overcome in the development of his intelligence operations was accuracy and uniformity in his spies' reports. Accuracy was, of course, a determining factor for judging the usefulness of his operations. One problem that vexed Dodge was the tendency of his untrained spies to exaggerate the numbers of troops they saw. This posed a serious problem. Dodge, however, devised a plan by which his spies' reports were not only made more accurate but also more uniform.

Since most of the information Dodge sought was military in nature, Dodge trained his spies to distinguish "a company, a regiment, division, or corps," and the rank of Confederate officers, not by count, but by

studied glance. Dodge accomplished this by simply showing them the space that each military group would take up on a road.

Spies were also trained to estimate the number of troops being moved by train. Dodge showed his spies the different types of train cars. Each of the types could hold different numbers of troops. For instance, a freight car could hold more troops than either a baggage or passenger car. Dodge's spies were told the capacity of each type and memorized the information. They then simply counted the number of passenger, freight, or baggage cars in a given train, multiplied this number by the total capacity for each type of car and arrived at an accurate troop strength report.²⁴

Dodge also taught his spies how to answer questions of Confederate officers. If a spy was detained, he or she was to tell the truth. As Dodge put it, a rule for a captured spy was "never tell a lie about our forces, avoid telling all he could, but whatever he did tell to tell the truth."²⁵

In order to help spies avoid suspicion Dodge would often give them contraband which was badly needed by the Confederacy or letters addressed to people in the South from prisoners he had captured. If a spy was stopped, which many were, he had in his possession items that only loyal southerners would normally carry.²⁶

Though Dodge instructed his spies on how to report accurately and gave them convincing contraband, he could not teach them how to avoid capture. Once a spy had been captured, detection meant death. A cavalry unit sent to rescue a spy could do more harm than good. If it failed,

its action would lead the enemy to conclude that the person held by them was not an ordinary prisoner of war. It was best for the spy to admit to being anything but a spy. Spies were usually hung whereas many prisoners of war were exchanged or paroled during the war.²⁷

Most spies, from the time they left their lines until they returned, had to rely on their own resources. Dodge did give them all the aid he could yet he realized that their fate was dependent on what was found on them and how convincing their story seemed. Not much else could be done. An example of this can be seen in the following message. General S. A. M. Wood, commander of all Confederate forces in the vicinity of Bear Creek, in Tennessee, had apparently captured some of Dodge's men, whom he suspected of being spies. Even though Wood threatened to hang two of Dodge's men for every man that Dodge hung, Dodge remained unmoved - at least outwardly:

Your communication of April 1st [1863], by flag of truce, arrived at my lines today; and in answer I have to say that James Niel is held by us as a prisoner of war, and treated as such. How you obtained such information I am unable to surmise, as there is no foundation for it. Your threat to hang two men for one is given its proper weight. Our Government never hangs men without good and sufficient cause (I wish I could say the same of yours) and when it decides upon hanging men the threats of Confederate officers count nothing. We have no fears of the old story of retaliation.²⁸

It is easy to see that General Wood did a disservice to James Niel. By mentioning his name, he undoubtedly drew undue attention to Niel. In his reply, Dodge did not make the same mistake. He never mentioned any specific name, if indeed Wood had mentioned them in his first message to Dodge.

A spy's work was quite hazardous. For instance, during the war Dodge was careful about whom he selected for such work. In his Personal Biography, Dodge wrote that "only men of peculiar gifts for such service, men of courage and cool judgment and undoubted [loyalty] were selected [as spies]."29

The following report written by Dodge's provost marshal and submitted to him on December 11, 1862, shows that Dodge did evaluate his spies in an effort to weed out those individuals who did not possess the needed characteristics of a spy:

Col. Wray has made several good trips to Columbia, Jackson, and Grenada [Mississippi]; Tuscumbia and Florence, Alabama. Philip Henson made good trips to Chattanooga and New Albany. Dr. Stout has served but, I think does not make any more trips...Joseph Palmer has made several trips, but I think is inclined to play-off and not go as far as he represents....30

Both Dr. Stout and Joseph Palmer were not employed after this report had been submitted to Dodge. Philip Henson, who received a much better evaluation, went on to become Dodge's most trusted spy.31

Dodge's selectivity was undoubtedly prompted not only by the fact that a spy's work was dangerous but also because he valued military intelligence quite highly. In fact, the importance that Dodge placed on military intelligence can be seen in the way he treated enemy spies caught within his own lines. In the case of two Confederate spies, their death sentences were carried out in a summary manner. Even the official transcripts of both men's trials had not reached Washington before the trap door on the scaffold had dropped from under their feet.32

Dodge justified this type of treatment when he wrote:

The severe penalty of death, where a spy is captured is not because there is anything dishonorable in the fact of...being a spy, but...the probability of great danger to an army is what causes the penalty to be so very severe. A soldier caught in the uniform or part of the uniform of his enemy...establishes the fact that he is a spy and is there[fore] in violation of the Articles of War.³³

In recruiting his spies, Dodge's first preference was southern unionists. In his first experience with the secret service at Rolla, Dodge had used southerners who were familiar with the territory into which they were sent. By using these people he created less suspicion on the part of the Confederates. His spies often remained inside enemy lines, their homes, during the entire War.³⁴

Some of the most successful spies of the Civil War were women. Names such as Mrs. Rose O'Neale Greenhow, Isabelle (Belle) Boyd, Nancy Hart, and Pauline Cushman were among the most well known. Dodge also recruited women for his spy operations. Like his use of southern unionists, Dodge undoubtedly reasoned that a woman was less likely to arouse suspicion than were men.³⁵

One of the first women Dodge used was Mary Malone. On June 1, 1863, she was paid the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars for secret service missions into Selma, Alabama, and Meridian, Columbus, and Okolona, Mississippi. By July 25, 1863, she had made additional trips to Jackson, Meridian, and Columbus, Mississippi. The dates and location of her missions suggest that she was sent to these places in order to detect Confederate troop movements eastward. Vicksburg was surrounded at this

time by Grant's army. It was Dodge's order to watch for any Confederate attempts to relieve that city.³⁶

Jane Featherstone also made a trip to Jackson, Mississippi, at about the same time that Mary Malone had been there. She returned through Pontotoc County and on June 1, 1863, she too was paid two hundred and fifty dollars. Her trip to Jackson was to watch Confederate troop movements eastward as was Malone's. There is no certain reason why Featherstone returned through Pontotoc County; however, Dodge filed reports on July 7, and August 18, 1863, that told of Confederate troop concentrations consisting of six regiments, two battalions, and one brigade in and around that area.³⁷

Mary McPitman did not serve with Dodge until late in the war. The story of this woman's service, however, shows the advantage of using a woman spy. McPitman submitted an itemized account of her expenses after completing a secret service mission. From March 1-31, 1865, she spent seven dollars on "wine and cake." The last entry is most interesting, however, "extra supper given to rebels in her room--\$10.00." She was paid three hundred and fifty dollars for her services.³⁸

A fourth woman had her secret service activities cut short. While on a mission into the city of Columbus, Mississippi, Mary Mainard was detected by the Confederates. She was captured by General Ruggles and locked up in prison in that city. Philip Henson, Dodge's best spy, was able to visit Miss Mainard while she was in prison but nothing could be done for the "poor girl." Mary Mainard remained in Confederate hands until after the war.³⁹

Three other women were also connected with Dodge's secret service operations. Very little is known about them. Rebecca Prater was discharged at Kansas City, Missouri, by Dodge's Special Order No. 138. She had been paid fifty dollars a month for her services. No records exist as to the actual number of months she served.⁴⁰ Two sisters, Mary and Jenny Thompson often aided Dodge's spy, Philip Henson, though there is no further indication that Dodge officially employed them in his operations.⁴¹

Selectivity, accuracy and uniformity in reporting were of great importance to Dodge's secret service. Of equal importance to these was secrecy. The conflict between Major-General Hurlbut and Dodge has already been cited as an example of the special station the secret service held in the army. This same incident can also be used to emphasize the extent to which General Dodge would go to insure the secrecy of his intelligence activities. Dodge would never have disobeyed his commander if he did not feel secrecy was of utmost importance. Still further evidence of this is the fact that in 1901, forty-four years after the Civil War had ended, Dodge hesitated to divulge the true identities of his spies to the public.⁴²

In any secret service operation, secrecy was important. Dodge went to extremes in order to insure that very few men knew the details of his intelligence operations. Few of his own staff knew that Dodge used spies. Two provost marshals, Captain Cameron and J. H. Baker, and Dodge's adjutant-generals, J. W. Barnes and Colonel George E. Spencer, were the only men that worked closely with Dodge's intelligence operations.⁴³

There are several incidents which indicate that Dodge was successful in keeping his intelligence operations secret. For instance, his soldiers thought his scouts acted as his sole source of intelligence.⁴⁴ Another testimonial to the secrecy of his secret service operations occurred when one of his spies was arrested by Union soldiers from another command. This man was charged with being a thief. It took a "strong" letter from both Dodge and General William T. Sherman to free him.⁴⁵

To insure complete secrecy Dodge substituted numbers or letters for his spies' names. These numbers or letters served as a recognizable code to Dodge alone. Names were dropped. For instance, in a small book entitled "Report of Spies," the entry designating Philip Henson is the letter "H".⁴⁶

Dodge's service employed more than a hundred spies, yet Dodge wrote their names only once. This was done on a single piece of paper. Though this paper does not exist today, it is known that a typical entry contained the spy's real name and his or her corresponding code designation. Dodge knew that if this paper fell into the enemy's hands, he would literally be sentencing over a hundred men and women to death, imprisonment, or both. For this reason Dodge always carried his list of spies on his person.⁴⁷

In order further to insure secrecy, Dodge worked out a system by which his spies could communicate with him indirectly. The reason for such a system was the simple fact that the less often the spy had to come to see Dodge personally, the less chance he took of being suspected and detected. Dodge ordered his spies to stay within Confederate lines as

long as possible. It was hard enough for a spy to enter Confederate territory and even harder to get out. The Confederates were quite suspicious of persons going in the direction of Union lines.⁴⁸

Early in the war, Dodge formed the First Alabama Colored Infantry and Cavalry Regiments. These regiments consisted of ex-slaves who had flocked to Dodge's lines. Dodge was able to communicate with his spies through many families and relatives of these regiments.

Dodge instructed his spies to deliver their secret reports to the families of a soldier in either the First Alabama Cavalry or Infantry Regiments. Most of these families continued to reside within the Confederacy. In turn, the family member receiving the report, was to come into Dodge's lines on the pretext of "seeing their people." After arriving at Dodge's headquarters, the family member would go directly to Dodge's tent ostensibly to ask his permission to visit his or her relative. While inside his tent, he or she would hand the spy's report to Dodge. Dodge, of course, granted permission to visit with the relative and no suspicions were aroused.⁴⁹

The system of indirect communication helped both the spy and General Dodge. Through such a system, the spy's risk of detection was lessened. Spies were not required to risk getting in and out of Confederate lines and by handing their reports over to these families they ridded themselves of any incriminating evidence. Dodge, on the other hand, probably received more reports through the families of the Alabama regiments than would have been the case had his spies been required to deliver them personally.

Most of Dodge's spy reports went to Ulysses S. Grant, William T. Sherman, and General Hurlbut only after Dodge collected them and put them in their proper order. To prevent their detection Dodge sent most of his reports in cipher. There is no evidence of the code used by Dodge but more than likely it was the "Route Cipher," the code most commonly used by the Union Army. The "Route Cipher" was made up of "a number of [word] columns" which were read either up or down depending on the key which was prearranged between the communicators. This code was very effective. The Confederates often were so puzzled by it that they would put an intercepted message in local southern newspapers in the hope that some citizen could decode it.⁵⁰

Though in later years Dodge described his spies as extremely dependable, he nevertheless had several ways of checking their reports. One way was seldom to rely on the report of a single spy. He usually sent two spies who were not aware of each other, into the same location. This was done in order to prevent spies from collaborating and turning in false reports. If, upon their return, their reports showed discrepancies, the information would either be discarded or rechecked by still another spy. Dodge also questioned slaves and prisoners about locations or future plans of Confederate armies and compared this information with that of the spies. If all reports checked out, Dodge would then forward his own report to Union officers affected by it.

By using two spies in one area Dodge sought accuracy but also intended to avoid falling victim to Confederate counterintelligence. Dodge knew much about counterintelligence work, since his best spy

posed as a scout for no less than four Confederate generals. It was much easier to detect a counterspy if Dodge had two reports from spies in the same location.⁵¹

Dodge also used sources other than his spies for gaining intelligence information. Slaves and prisoners served as good sources. Another valuable source was the southern newspapers. Newspapers were of value to both sides during the war. Confederate and Union officers often spent considerable time each day pouring through the enemy's newspapers. A common practice among spies of the Civil War was to bring all the newspapers they could when returning to their own lines.⁵²

One of the most interesting bits of information brought to Dodge, came from the Selma Dispatch. One of Dodge's spies returning from Alabama delivered it to him. The least that could be said about it is that it was a good forecast of what happened at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865:

One million dollars wanted to have [p]eace by the 1st of March. If the citizens of the Southern Confederacy will furnish me with cash, or good securities for the sume [sic] of one million dollars, I will cause the lives of Abrham [sic] Lincoln, William H. Seward, and Andrew Johnson to be taken by the first of March next. This will give peace, and satisfy the world that cruel tyrants cannot live in a land of liberty. If this is not accomplished nothing will be claimed beyond the sum of fifty thousand dollars, in advance, which is supposed to be necessary to reach and slaughter the three villians.

I will give myself one thousand dollars toward this patriotic purpose. Everyone wishing to contribute will address Box X, Cabba, Alabama, December 1st, 1864.⁵³

Few personal accounts from Dodge's spies exist. One that does is about Dodge's best spy, Philip Henson. Henson served Dodge during the

height of his secret service activity. The following account lends some color to the history of Dodge's secret service and seems to be a typical example of what many of Dodge's spies endured while serving in the war. As Dodge put it: "hundreds of these secret service men went through similar experiences."

Like most of his spies, Henson was a southern unionist. Born in Jackson County, Alabama, he moved around in the South until he finally established his permanent home in Rienzi, just fifteen miles south of Corinth, Mississippi.⁵⁴ Dodge first met Henson late in 1862. Henson had been employed as a spy under General Rosecrans but Dodge convinced Henson to work under him. From this time on, Henson worked solely for Dodge.

Dodge soon found that Henson had a natural ability for spying. Henson, in turn, found Dodge generous. Dodge gave Henson a beautiful horse after the latter had returned from a mission to Vicksburg. For another trip, Henson received one thousand dollars in cash.⁵⁵

During his career Henson was able to convince Generals Ruggles, Gholson, Ferguson, and for a while General Forrest, that he was loyal to the Confederacy. There were certain advantages to working in such a manner. For instance, Henson received a separate pass from each general. This allowed him a wide range of freedom while operating within Confederate lines.⁵⁶

Dodge also gave Henson a pass. In Confederate territory possession of it meant certain death. To avoid meeting such a fate Henson carved out an area in the stock of his pistol. When he entered Confederate

territory he would remove a brass piece which covered the carved out area, placed the pass inside, and then replaced the brass cover.⁵⁷

Henson's career as a spy ended in the spring of 1864. Though Henson had convinced most of the Confederates of his loyalty, Nathan Bedford Forrest, through some intuition, became convinced that Henson was a spy.

In the spring of 1864 Henson was sent into Confederate lines on his last mission. While near Tupelo, Mississippi, he was detained by some of Forrest's men. He was brought in front of Forrest and soon was sent on his way, under guard, to Meridian, Alabama, to face Confederate General S. D. Lee.⁵⁸

At Meridian he was brought in front of General Lee. During the course of their conversation, Lee asked Henson where he had seen him before. Henson, as was Dodge's rule, told Lee the truth. He had been released at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, by Lee in April, because of lack of evidence.⁵⁹

Henson was taken to a local blacksmith's shop in Meridian. Shackles were placed on his feet. These were then fastened together by three chain links "which permitted a play of only six inches" to his legs. Heavy handcuffs were also placed on his hands, allowing him two inches of movement.⁶⁰

His next destination was Mobile by train. While on his way there, his shackles and handcuffs remained on. To further insure that Henson could not escape, he was put in a freight car which contained poultry

coops. Henson was forced to the top of these where it took constant care to balance himself during the unsteady train ride. The Confederates placed a "fierce English Bulldog" directly beneath him. Henson knew that if he fell the dog would kill him. There was no way to protect himself since his handcuffs and leg irons held him tightly.⁶¹

At Mobile, Henson was taken to the "Hitchcock Press" or as it was otherwise known "the sweat box." This was a very small jail with no ventilation to speak of. In addition to his shackles and handcuffs, a sixty-four pound ball was attached to his ankles.⁶²

While he was in prison, General Forrest sent some of his men to Rienzi and arrested Henson's wife. She was unaware of her husband's activities and so could not tell Forrest anything that could endanger her husband. She remained under arrest for four months.⁶³

Dodge did all that he could for Henson. The following is self-explanatory:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt this day of your [letter] of the 11th enclosing letter in regard to your former scout Philip Hanson [sic]; Brig. Genl. Grierson leaves here tomorrow morning with a cavalry expedition, I have requested him to effect the release of Hanson [sic] if possible. If any of the family come to me, I will do all in my power, and will bear the matter in mind.⁶⁴



THE SPY IN CHAINS.

Before she was arrested, Mrs. Henson had visited Dodge to get money for an attorney to defend Henson in court. Dodge provided these funds. Ironically, the attorney hired by Mrs. Henson was Benjamin Davis, a nephew of Confederate President Jefferson Davis.⁶⁵

Forrest was never able to produce any evidence against Henson. No doubt one of the reasons was that Henson never wrote anything down on paper. On February 17, 1865, Henson was released from his shackles, handcuffs and ball. He was then ordered to show his loyalty to the Confederacy by enlisting in his choice of regiments.⁶⁶

He chose the 24th Mississippi stationed near Richmond. On his way to join this regiment, a Colonel Rogers "winked at his escape." After an arduous journey of some three hundred miles, Henson finally reached Dodge in St. Louis, Missouri. He was so emaciated Dodge could hardly recognize him.⁶⁷

Henson's wife had returned to their home in Rienzi about two weeks before he got there. Henson was never sent on a mission again. One of the last letters Dodge received from him is dated May 8, 1865. In it Henson hints that he fears his family will be endangered when it is discovered that he was a Yankee spy. To avoid this he offered to go with Dodge on a "campaign in Texas" if Dodge would help him move his family to the North.⁶⁸ Henson never moved however. He lived out the remainder of his life in the South.⁶⁹

Much credit is given to Dodge for the development and organization of his intelligence operations. It is true that the original idea of a secret service came from Colonel White of an independent Missouri cavalry

at Rolla. Yet it was General Dodge who took White's idea and developed it into a working organization.

Dodge developed a secret service organization that held the potential for being very effective. Dodge taught his spies to be quick and accurate in reporting. He developed a communication system which both lessened the risks to the spy and helped maintain the general secrecy of his organization. Dodge also developed a system by which his spies' reports could be checked for validity and at the same time prevent the possibility of being infiltrated by a Confederate counterspy. Dodge truly developed an organization which could be of utmost importance in the war.

Dodge not only ran an effective organization, but he also tried to aid his spies in all ways possible. Much, however, depended on the spy himself. Dodge went to extremes in financing and maintaining the secrecy of his spies. He taught them how to withstand Confederate interrogation, was particular in who he hired, and sent them into enemy lines loaded with convincing contraband. Once the spy had left his lines, however, Dodge knew that the spy was on his own. Personal ability would get him through.

It would seem from all this that if Dodge's intelligence operations were to fail it would be for reasons other than organization. But an organization was not enough. The system had to produce intelligence, and in the most crucial moments of the war: at Vicksburg and Atlanta.

ENDNOTES

¹Stanley P. Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge: Soldier, Politician, Railroad Pioneer (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 4, and J. R. Perkins, Trails, Rails, and War: The Life of General G. M. Dodge (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1929), p. 2. For copies of the testimonies sent to the President in favor of Dodge's promotion see: "Copies of the Official Testimonials of Major-General G. M. Dodge," Grenville M. Dodge Papers, Box 99, Iowa State Department of History and Archives, Des Moines, Iowa. Hereafter cited as Dodge Papers.

²Ulysses S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, 2 vols. (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1886), 2:47, 352.

³Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 6-7.

⁴Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁵Ibid., pp. 10-18.

⁶Ibid., p. 17.

⁷Ibid., p. 47.

⁸Ibid., pp. 45-57. For Dodge's assignment to command see: J. T. Granger, A Brief Biographical Sketch of the Life of Major-General Grenville M. Dodge (New York: Press of Styles and Cash, 1893), pp. 6-7.

⁹Ibid., pp. 47-48. Further evidence of Dodge's ability to lead men is shown by the fact that on August 8, 1863, over two hundred and forty of his officers petitioned President Lincoln for his promotion to major-general. See: "Copies of the Official Testimonials of Major-General G. M. Dodge," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 49; and Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, p. 77.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 53-58; and J. T. Granger, The Life of Major-General Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 8-9.

¹²For a brief discussion of the Battle of Wilson's Creek see: Barbara and E. B. Long, The Civil War Day by Day: An Almanac 1861-1865 (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971), p. 107.

¹³"The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99. This source consists of approximately ten pages of type written material which Dodge evidently intended for either his Personal Biography, or as an article. As far as is known, this has never been published.

¹⁴"The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

¹⁵Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, pp. 108-109. Throughout his military career rebel guerrillas kept Dodge's cavalry units and scouts preoccupied. One of the earliest indications of this can be seen in Dodge's message to General Quinby. See: Dodge to Quinby, 19 August 1862, A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (1880-1901), I 17:100-181. Hereafter cited as OR, etc. See also Roger D. Bridges, ed., The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant 5 vols. (London: Southern University Press, 1972) 5:228.

¹⁶"The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

¹⁷Personal Biography of Major-General Grenville M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:85.

¹⁸Grenville M. Dodge, The Battle of Atlanta and Other Campaigns, Addresses, Etc. (Council Bluffs, Iowa: Monarch Printing Company, 1911), pp. 18-29.

¹⁹The Secret Service in the Civil War, Dodge Papers, Box 99.

²⁰Perkins, General G. M. Dodge.

²¹Bruce Catton, Grant Moves South (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), pp. 347-356.

²²Personal Biography of Major General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1: 95-96; Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 68; "The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

²³Ibid.

²⁴"The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99. It might be mentioned that the passenger car had windows, and the freight and baggage cars had large sliding doors. These enabled a spy to see if the cars were filled or not.

²⁵"The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

²⁶An example of this can be seen in the way Colonel George E. Spencer used these letters (and also letters sent to families of the First Alabama Colored Regiments) in order to penetrate Confederate lines. When Spencer would arrive at Confederate picket lines, he would watch for the appearance of a young inexperienced Confederate soldier. He then would approach this soldier and in an urgent manner convince the guard that the letters he had needed to be delivered and that he must pass. The rule was that in any case such as this, the commanding officer was to go to the picket lines to check these requests out. More often

than not, Spencer would be able to pass to the commander's tent and of course while going there, observe all of the Confederate positions, forces, and fortifications before being stopped by a soldier who was "up on the rules." See: "The Secret Service in the Civil War," Dodge Papers, Box 99.

²⁷The fact that undetected spies could be released through prisoner exchanges is documented by Dodge. Captain Coleman was Confederate General Braxton Bragg's most effective spy. During the war, Dodge captured Coleman. Coleman concealed his true identity and was later released through a prisoner exchange. It was not until after the war that Dodge became aware of this.

²⁸"Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge," Dodge Papers, 1:97.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 134-135.

³⁰Statement of Captain Cameron, 11 December 1862, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

³¹Pay Vouchers for the Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

³²The two men referred to are Samuel Davis and a confederate spy known only as Urz. Davis's case is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3. Dodge added a touch of morbidity in the case of Sam Davis. On the day of his execution, Davis was placed upon his own coffin. As he was brought out to the site of his execution, a band played his funeral dirge. At the same time, Dodge ordered all of his men to watch Davis's execution, hoping that such a sight would help keep them in line and discourage any spies from doing more of their work in his lines.

³³Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:134-145.

³⁴Ibid., 1:96.

³⁵There are several good sources for these famous female spies. For Rose O'Neale Greenhow see: Nash K. Burger, Confederate Spy: Rose O'Neal Greenhow (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc. 1967) and John Bakeless, Spies of the Confederacy (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1970), pp. 1-63. For Belle Boyd see: Curtis Carroll Davis, Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison (New York and London: Thomas Yoseloff Ltd., 1968). For Cushman and Hart, a brief account of their activities is given in: Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., The Photographic History of the Civil War (New York: Castle Books, 1957) 8:272, 287.

³⁶Secret Service Pay Vouchers, Dodge Papers, Box 148. For Grant's order to Dodge see: Grant to Dodge, 18 November 1862, 18:96, Ulysses S. Grant Papers, National Archives. Hereafter cited as Grant Papers.

³⁷Secret Service Pay Vouchers, Dodge Papers, Box 148. See also: Dodge to Hurlbut, 7 July 1863, and General Oglesby to Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Binmore, 18 August 1863, OR I 24:326,486-487.

³⁸Secret Service Pay Vouchers, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

³⁹George S. Johns, Philip Henson: The Southern Union Spy (St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing Co., 1887), pp. 38-39.

⁴⁰Secret Service Pay Vouchers, Dodge Papers, Box 149.

⁴¹George S. Johns, Philip Henson, P. 39.

⁴²Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, p. 105, and Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 69.

⁴³Statement of Captain Cameron, 11 December 1862, Dodge Papers, Box 148; A. Rowell to Captain J. H. Barnes, 20 April 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 6; and Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, p. 105. Spencer was a close friend of Dodge's as was Barnes. Cameron and Baker dispensed secret service funds and so they knew about these intelligence operations.

⁴⁴Personal Biography of Major-General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:96. Dodge said this about his scouts: "My scouts were brave men. They were often sent into enemy lines, sometimes dressed in Confederate uniforms but they were not the men we relied on for accurate information of the enemy troops."

⁴⁵Personal Biography of Major-General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:271. The man arrested was James Hensal. Hensal had been sentenced to five years imprisonment on the charge of "smuggling and other things." He had been caught by Union soldiers in Nashville, Tennessee.

⁴⁶Report of Spies: 1863 to February 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 149. Further evidence can be found in a rough draft of the account of Henson's trip into the south in Dodge Papers, Box 99.

⁴⁷The Secret Service in the Civil War, Dodge Papers, Box 99.

⁴⁸The Secret Service in the Civil War, Dodge Papers, Box 99. One of Dodge's spies actually enlisted in General Longstreet's Corps and stayed with him until the close of the war. See: Personal Biography of Major-General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:114-115.

⁴⁹Ibid., Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 73-74.

⁵⁰Philip Van Dorn Stern, Secret Missions of the Civil War (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1959), pp. 315-317.

⁵¹Dodge's use of two spies worked well since the spies belonged to his organization and yet did not know each other. However, when two spies from different secret service organizations operated in the same area, the result could be bad. For instance, Lafayette C. Baker, Chief of Detectives for the Union War Department, and Alan Pinkerton, chief detective for General George B. McClellan, arrested each other's spies while both worked in Washington, D.C., See: Edwin C. Fishel, "The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence," Civil War History, 10(1964): 344-367.

⁵²Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., 10 vols. The Photographic History of the Civil War (New York: Castle Books, 1957) 8:239. The following is a good example of the use of newspapers for military intelligence information. This is an extract of a message sent to Jefferson Davis from E. Kirby Smith: "I see by the [n]orthern papers that three divisions of Grant's army are to operate in East Tennessee in connection with Buell's corps." Kenneth P. Williams, 5 vols. Lincoln Finds a General: A Military Study of the Civil War (New York: Macmillan Company, 1956) 4:25.

⁵³Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:304.

⁵⁴George S. Johns, Philip Henson, pp. 1-22.

⁵⁵Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge.

⁵⁶George S. Johns, Philip Henson, pp. 34-37.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 37.

⁵⁸Account of Philip Henson, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰George S. Johns, Philip Henson, p. 76.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 78-79. If this were not enough to send Henson to the grave, "One of those pleasant incidents happened which gave spice to [his] life--one Sam Gibbins [a Yankee spy] was hung" during Henson's period of captivity.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁶⁴General Correspondence, Major-General Dana to Dodge, 30 December 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 8.

⁶⁵Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:336.

⁶⁶Account of Philip Henson, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸General Correspondence, Henson to Dodge, 8 May 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 10.

⁶⁹George S. Johns, Philip Henson, p. 13. Johns claims that Henson's "most distinguishing feature" was his beard. Henson was 6'1" tall and at the time of John's book, Henson had a beard measuring 6'4". "[I]t is the truth that Col. Henson has the longest beard in the world." He grew this after the war ended.

CHAPTER II.
DODGE'S SECRET SERVICE IN THE
FIELD, VICKSBURG AND ATLANTA

In February 1862, Union forces under General Grant besieged and captured Fort Donelson, Tennessee. Tennessee was now opened for Union invasion. Kentucky, which was important to Union strategy, was secured.¹

The fall of Fort Donelson was followed by the Battle of Pittsburg Landing (Shiloh) in April, 1862. Corinth, Mississippi, described by Grant as "the junction of the two most important railroads in the Mississippi Valley...the great strategic position at the West between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers and between Nashville and Vicksburg" was occupied by Federal troops on May 31, 1862.² All of these events were significant for Dodge and his intelligence operations for it brought them out of Missouri and put them in a position where they could perform for Grant's army. After the fall of Corinth the question to be answered was: could Dodge and his secret service help Grant capture Vicksburg?

In June, 1862, Dodge received orders to proceed to Columbus, Kentucky for further orders. After arriving, he was told that his assignment was to rebuild the Mobile and Ohio Railroad between Columbus and Corinth. The distance was approximately 150 miles. Earlier, Confederate raiders had torn up the line, to prevent the Federal army from using it to supply its forces. Grant, however, wanted this line in operating condition in order to move supplies to his army as it marched towards Vicksburg.³

The Confederate cavalry made several attempts to stop Dodge's work. Generals Nathan B. Forrest and William H. Jackson made lightning-like raids along the line killing Dodge's pickets and wrecking his bridges. In order to protect his men Dodge came up with the idea of building two-story blockhouses all along the line. This was done. Grant was so impressed with these that he had others built on other lines. The following is the best description of these houses:

Because the upper and lower floors faced in different directions, men within these structures could see any enemy approaching from any point. Within a blockhouse, a company of soldiers could hold off a regiment of attackers and could be overpowered only with artillery, which southern raiders seldom possessed...Forrest and other Confederate officers failed to destroy any of Dodge's bridges.⁴

While working on the Columbus and Ohio Railroad near Humboldt, Tennessee, Dodge received orders to report at Corinth immediately. Dodge did exactly as he was told, not even taking time to change from his work clothes. There he met General Grant.⁵

Grant told Dodge that he was to take command of the Second Division of the Army of Tennessee at Corinth. Within a month Dodge received more orders. This time he was told to take over command of the entire "district of Corinth...and guard Grant's left flank."⁶

Grant had other military matters to take care of. From Corinth, he went to Jackson, Tennessee, and there began preparations to capture Vicksburg. Memphis had fallen to the Union on June 6, 1862. Now Vicksburg was the only Confederate stronghold left on the Mississippi River. By doing this the Confederacy would be cut in half.⁷

On November 2, 1862, General Grant notified General Halleck that he intended to commence his campaign against Vicksburg. His plan was to leave with three divisions from Corinth and two from Bolivar, Tennessee. With this force Grant intended to rebuild the railroad and telegraph lines as far as Holly Springs or Grenada, Mississippi.⁸

In December 1862, Dodge was told he would not go with Grant. Grant's intentions were that Dodge remain at Corinth. As Grant began his movement towards Vicksburg, Confederate General Braxton Bragg and his army were near Chattanooga, Tennessee, some 180 miles northeast of Corinth. Grant feared that if Dodge's command were not left at Corinth, Bragg would be able to approach his own army from the flank and rear unopposed. Therefore, Grant assigned Dodge the job of keeping his forces between Meridian and Corinth.⁹

Dodge was disappointed in not being able to go to Vicksburg yet he was not completely left out of the campaign. On November 18, 1862, Grant sent the following telegram to Dodge:

Can you get information from the East, say as far as Florence [Alabama]? I want to hear from along the Tennessee [River] from Tuscumbia eastward to know if any rebel troops are crossing there.¹⁰

Four days later, John Rawlins, Grant's Chief of Staff, sent a second telegram:

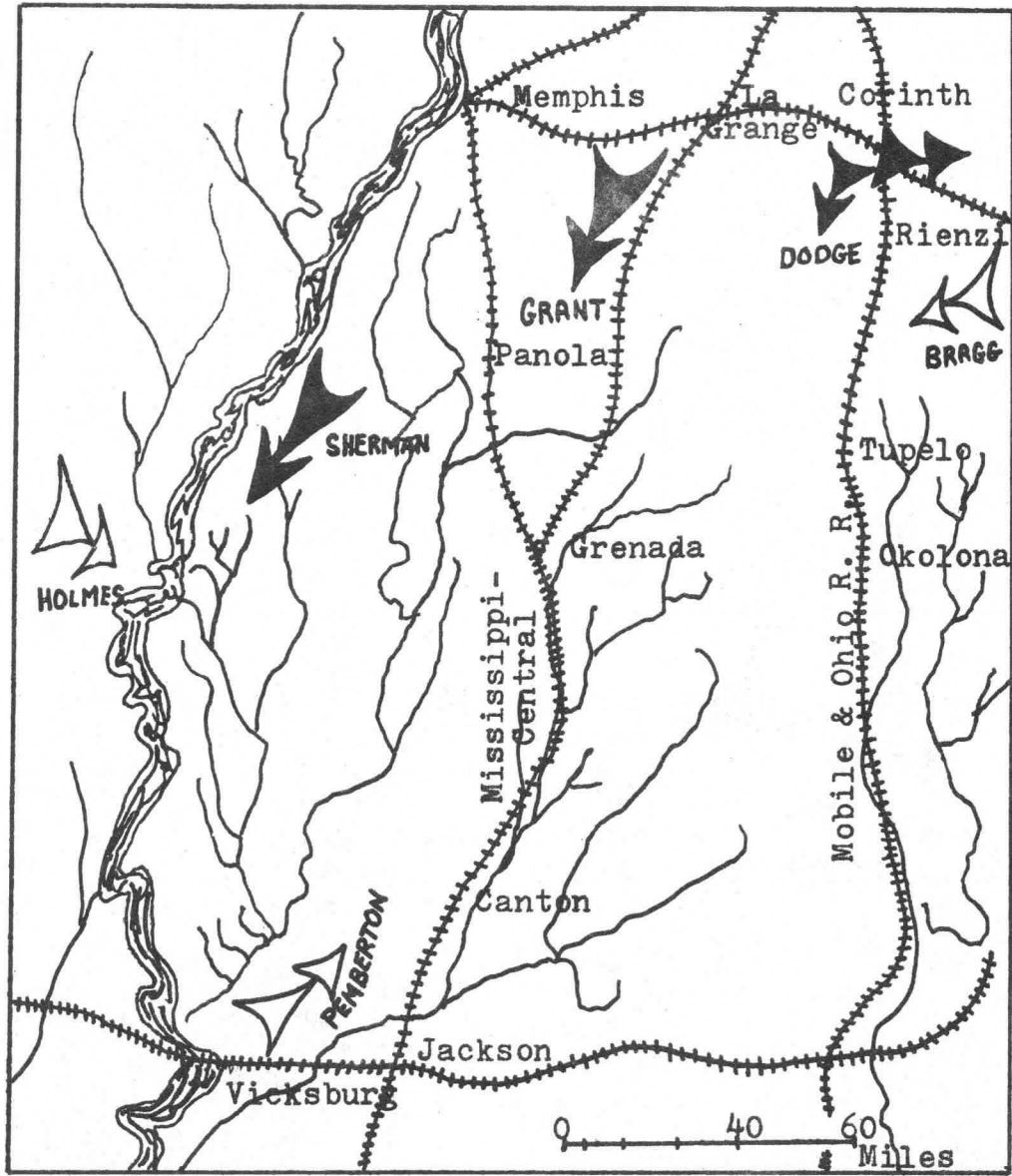
A dispatch from General Rosecrans, of date Nashville, Tennessee, November 21, 1862, just received, says there are some indications that the rebels are attempting to cross the Tennessee from the east; that signs to that effect reached him that night. You will send out spies and scouts east and obtain all the information possible.¹¹

These two orders are important. In both messages Dodge was ordered to send General Grant information of any Confederate troop movements from east to west. Dodge, therefore, concentrated his spies to the east of Vicksburg. Toward the close of the Vicksburg campaign, Joseph E. Johnston's army threatened Grant's rear. With Johnston's appearance to the east, Grant put Dodge's intelligence reports to use. With the aid of Dodge's intelligence reports, Grant reinforced Sherman's army, facing Johnston in the east, with reinforcements equal to those Johnston received. Grant, at the same time, was able to command a separate army around Vicksburg and eventually force General Pemberton to surrender.

Dodge then had two assignments. The first was to keep the Confederates busy to prevent them from attacking Grant's rear. The second was to use his secret service in order to send information of Confederate troops movements from the east.

Grant was not the only general who had asked Dodge for the aid of his intelligence operations. Generals Rosecrans and C. S. Hamilton ordered Dodge to send spies into the lower South as early as October, 1862. Dodge complied. He sent James Lightner and James Marshall to Columbus, Mississippi. Marshall spent the first ten days of November in Jackson and Columbus. Lightner went to both cities in October. Dodge also sent William A. Melvin to Vicksburg, Jackson, and Grenada, Mississippi, in October. A doctor, Joseph Stout was sent to Columbus and Jackson in November, 1862.¹²

Both Rosecrans and Hamilton were after similar intelligence. Rosecrans's army was north of Chattanooga. Facing his army to the south



Map 1: Preliminary Strategy at Vicksburg

was General Bragg's at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Rosecrans was no doubt interested in enemy troop buildups. Confederate General Holmes was four hundred miles west, near Little Rock, Arkansas at this time, and General John C. Pemberton was four hundred miles southwest of Murfreesboro, near Vicksburg. The city of Columbus was near the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, some three hundred miles south of Murfreesboro. Grenada was situated on the junction of the Mississippi and Tennessee, and New Orleans, and the Jackson and Great Northern Railroads, about three hundred and fifty miles west of Murfreesboro. Grenada and Columbus would most likely have been areas from which the Confederates would move troops northward. General Hamilton commanded the center of Grant's army. He was undoubtedly interested in the same type of information that Grant had asked for in his telegram of November 18th: Confederate troop movements from the east.¹³

On November 8, 1862, Grant's troops occupied Grand Junction and La Grange, Tennessee. By November 13th Grant's cavalry occupied Holly Springs, Mississippi. Here Grant halted his army. In the middle of November he went to Columbus for a conference with General William T. Sherman. Sherman was ordered to march two divisions down the Mississippi Central Railroad. On December 8, Grant then gave Sherman command of all forces east of the Mississippi River at Memphis. Sherman was ordered to move his troops down the Mississippi to Vicksburg, and with Flag Officer David Porter, to "proceed to the reduction of that place."¹⁴

On November 24, 1862, at about the time Sherman was headed towards Vicksburg, Joseph E. Johnston was given command of Bragg's, Pemberton's,

and Holmes's armies. In a letter to Richmond, Johnston suggested a future plan for his armies:

...Our two armies on this side of the Mississippi have the further disadvantage of being separated by the Tennessee River, and a Federal army [Grant's] larger, probably, than either of them. Under such circumstances it seems to me that our best course would be to fall upon Grant with the troops of Lieutenant-Generals Holmes [Little Rock, Arkansas] and Pemberton [Vicksburg] united for the purpose; those of General Bragg [Tennessee] co-operating; if practicable. The defeat of Grant would enable us to hold the Mississippi, and permit Lieutenant-General Holmes to move into Missouri. As our troops are now distributed, Vicksburg is in danger.¹⁵

Johnston's plans were of great portent for Grant. He had hoped to fight Pemberton alone. Then, if he were successful, he would turn to the next Confederate army and so on. As Grant stated, "Pemberton's force in my front was the main part of the garrison of Vicksburg...I hoped to hold Pemberton in my front while Sherman should get in his rear and into Vicksburg."¹⁶

While Generals Grant and Sherman moved towards Vicksburg, Dodge stayed at Corinth. His position here was a little less than two hundred miles southwest of Bragg's army at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and some two hundred fifty miles northeast of Pemberton's army at Vicksburg. At Corinth Dodge kept his soldiers busy fortifying the city. He also began sending his spies out to several locations east of Vicksburg. From these locations Dodge hoped to pick up Confederate movements towards Grant's rear.

Reports from Dodge's spies began coming in during December. On December 13, 1862, Dodge sent word to Grant that refugees from Alabama had told of seeing 11,000 troops on the way to join General Pemberton

at Vicksburg. These troops were moving over "the Meridian and Chattanooga road." Dodge followed up this report. He sent a small cavalry unit into northern Alabama but his men reported seeing no troops from Bragg's army. They did see small bands of Confederate cavalry foraging along the roads.¹⁷

Dodge's first intelligence of much importance was sent to General Sullivan on December 18, 1862:

One of my men arrived now. Left Shelbyville [Tennessee] Friday; Columbus Saturday; went to Tusculumbia; could not get through and returned to Waynesboro; left there yesterday at 2 o'clock.

Forrest, with 2,000 to 2,500 cavalry and five pieces of artillery, left Columbia yesterday, crossed the Tennessee at Clifton, or near there, Tuesday, Napin with from 2,000 to 3,000 and four pieces of artillery crossing at Carrolville Monday to join Forrest. They reported that they were to attack Jackson first and Bethel next, the intention being to stop supplies to our army. No infantry had left Shelbyville west, but there was a movement of all forces taking place north. Some said they were to go west, but this could not be ascertained. No infantry accompanied Forrest to Columbia....¹⁸

This report is significant in that it could easily be checked. On the day it was sent, Forrest attacked the Ohio and Mobile Railroad near Jackson, Tennessee. Forrest completely tore up the road. It was never used again during the War. Grant was forced to re-route his supplies down the Mississippi River. Most of what happened had been reported by Dodge's spy.¹⁹

The report of "movements of all forces taking place north;" also is verified. Bragg, who was in that vicinity wrote to Pemberton on November 6, 1862: "Our forces in motion, which may create a division

[against Grant] in your favor. My cavalry in North Alabama ordered to observe the enemy and harass his rear."²⁰

The report that no infantry had gone with Forrest proved correct too. On November 21, 1862, General Bragg wrote to Pemberton that Forrest had not been able to take infantry with him because they could not cross the Tennessee River.²¹

On December 7th, 21, and again on the 31st, Grant sent Dodge telegrams asking for more information on Bragg and Rosecrans.²² On December 26 Dodge sent two reports. The first came from his spies "east of the Tennessee River." This report told of six hundred Mississippi cavalry at Waynesborough and Clifton, Tennessee. At Old Carrollville, General Forrest had stopped long enough to leave his trains and then had left with about 3,500 men. The last part of this report mentioned that Jefferson Davis and Joseph E. Johnston had been in Chattanooga. The second report told of Bragg's army being at Tullahoma, Tennessee, some sixty miles southeast of Rosecrans's army. This spy had mentioned that Bragg's army was falling back to Chattanooga. Bragg's soldiers were foraging in three counties near the Tennessee River.²³

The intelligence information Dodge turned in during December was fairly accurate. Yet valuable intelligence is not only accurate but also preventive. The report that Dodge sent General Sullivan was generally accurate. But was the report of value? The report was sent the day that General Forrest attacked! The amount of damage done suggest that Forrest caught the Federals unprepared. The information sent by Dodge lost its

value by not being sent far enough ahead of Forrest's attack to be of real value.

Forrest's attack was not the only one launched in December. General Earl Van Dorn's cavalry moved rapidly from Grenada, Mississippi on December 20th and captured Grant's supply depot at Holly Springs in northern Mississippi. Fifteen hundred Union soldiers were captured and one million and a half dollars worth of military supplies were destroyed. This attack caused Grant to withdraw north from Oxford, Mississippi, to La Grange, Tennessee.²⁴

The appearance of Confederate cavalry added a new dimension to Dodge's secret service operations. Not only did Dodge have to continue sending spies to watch for Confederate troop movements to Vicksburg and the rear of Grant's army but now he also had to pin down the location of Van Dorn, and other Confederate cavalry units.

In order to combat the Confederate cavalry, Dodge combined some of his scout/spies²⁵ with his own cavalry. Instead of posting these men along railroad routes, in cities, or in the enemy's armies, he had them move with his cavalry into enemy territory. A good example of this type of operation can be seen in the case of William Callender.

In the summer of 1863, Callender and George Noris were sent seventy-five miles north of Corinth. Their assignment was to locate Colonel Newsome's cavalry. Newsome had been causing Union forces no end of trouble by his raids along their lines. After travelling several miles, Callender ran into a "citizen named Moon." Callender, who at the time was wearing a Confederate uniform, told Moon that he was a scout for

Newsome and was trying to rejoin his command. Moon, being unaware of Callender's true identity, told Callender that Newsome's cavalry was just ahead in a ravine.

After this brief conversation, Callender rode off, not in the direction of Newsome's cavalry, but in the direction of his own. It took Callender little time to reach them. The Union cavalry had remained just out of sight, during Callender's conversation with Moon. Soon, more than four hundred Union cavalry were on Colonel Newsome's trail.²⁶

When Dodge's scout/spies went into enemy lines, they usually wore Confederate uniforms. There were other ways this type of spy masked his true identity. As Callender said; "I wore my hair long, according to the southern style, and my clothes also befitted that sunny clime. The broad pronunciation of the average Southren I adopted without difficulty; and in a very short time, by continued practice, I became in person, manner, and speech a citizen or citizen soldier of the Southern Confederacy."²⁷

Unlike the majority of Dodge's spies, Callender was not a southerner. He also did not remain in a specific location for any length of time as did most of Dodge's spies. The type of intelligence operation that Callender was involved in was adopted for the purpose of locating enemy cavalry, and quickly following the information up with Union cavalry operations. This type of operation was best employed against the quick Confederate cavalry.

The month of January 1863, was relatively quiet for Dodge's intelligence operations. The only information filed went to General Rosecrans.

On January 17, Dodge reported he had captured orders from Bragg the day before. Bragg's cavalry, scattered along the Tennessee River, was to go to Chattanooga, sixty miles southeast of Rosecrans's front. Part of it was to join E. Kirby Smith's "train" which had gone to Tuscaloosa two weeks before. No reports were filed from Dodge's spies in Mobile, Meridian, and Jackson, Mississippi.²⁸

In February 1863, things began to happen. Joseph E. Johnston put Van Dorn's cavalry in motion. Bragg's army, on January 3rd, had withdrawn from Murfreesboro and had retreated forty miles south to Tullahoma. Van Dorn's job was to protect the left flank of Bragg's army as it retreated from Rosecrans's.²⁹

Dodge's spies picked up Van Dorn's movements on February 3, 1863.

This report was sent to General Rosecrans:

Van Dorn is concentrating a force at Tupelo, Pontotoc, and Okolona of mounted men, whose destination is, I think Bragg from the fact that corn has been collected on the Okolona and Decatur road at several points...one brigade has moved up that road. Southern newspapers of the 29th say that part of his force has already crossed the Tennessee; but I think not....³⁰

On February 4, a second report was sent. This one came from a spy from Okolona, Mississippi, some seventy-five miles due south of Dodge's lines. Van Dorn was there with his cavalry force. Other units from his command were at Cotton Ridge and at Pontotoc. No forces of Van Dorn's had crossed the Tennessee River.³¹

On February 10, a third report was filed. Van Dorn had two regiments and a battery near the Tombigbee River at Cotton Gin Post in northern Alabama. Van Dorn was crossing at Cotton Gin Post. Dodge's spy

had talked with several of Van Dorn's men. From these conversations he learned that Van Dorn was going to Bragg by way of the Pikeville and Russellville road. Both roads were approximately fifty to sixty miles southeast of Corinth in Alabama. Dodge also reported that captured mail indicated Bragg would fall back to Huntsville or Bridgeport, Alabama, in the northeast corner of the state.³²

Dodge showed how he could put this information to use. On February 12, he wrote General Rosecrans that his cavalry had caught up with Van Dorn's advance, twelve miles south of Burleson in Franklin County, Alabama. Dodge's men had caught a "number of prisoners." Van Dorn was still moving north, however, with twelve pieces of artillery and four brigades of mounted men under W. H. Jackson, R. McCulloch, J. W. Whitfield, and P. E. Armstrong. The prisoners taken by Dodge's cavalry were not aware where Van Dorn intended to go. Generals Roddey and J. B. Biffle, two independent Confederate cavalry commands, had crossed the Tennessee River and were collecting forces in Tennessee.³³

In his report of February 12th, Dodge suggested that a gunboat be sent to Florence, Alabama, near the Tennessee River. Dodge predicted that this would be where Van Dorn would cross into Tennessee. His superiors should have taken his request more seriously. On February 14, General Hurlbut wrote the following: "Van Dorn was crossing at Florence yesterday. Push your movement rapidly as consistent, and report by telegraph when they move."³⁴

On February 16, Dodge informed Rosecrans that he had engaged Van Dorn and had taken some fifty prisoners. Also, Dodge reported that

fifty deserters from Bragg's army had told him that Bragg would soon retreat to Bridgeport, Alabama. Bragg had brought an engine from Decatur and was to run it on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Bragg intended to load train cars full of corn for his army. One of Dodge's men who escaped from Van Dorn, told Dodge that Van Dorn could not stay and fight. His orders were to report to General Bragg immediately.³⁵

On February 22, 1863, Dodge sent his sixth report. In this one, he reported that Generals Van Dorn, Wheeler, Forrest, and Roddey were at Columbia, Tennessee fifty miles southwest of Rosecrans. The force Van Dorn crossed at the Tennessee River amounted to nearly 6,000 men, and could easily threaten Rosecrans's advance on Bragg's army. Part of his cavalry had crossed above Muscle Shoals.³⁶

The month of February, 1863, showed great improvement in Dodge's intelligence operations. In December 1862, both Forrest and Van Dorn had been able to strike Union lines effectively. In February Dodge's spies were able to keep closer tabs on Confederate cavalry. More importantly, their reports arrived in time to prevent the Confederates from completely surprising the Union army.

Dodge's intelligence work was accurate in December 1862. The same was true in February 1863. For instance, in his report of February 22, Dodge estimated Van Dorn's force at about 6,000 and that this force was headed for Columbia, Tennessee. This information is verified by Joseph E. Johnston:

...Lieutenant-General Pemberton had some six thousand cavalry near Grenada, unemployed, and almost unorganized. Under the circumstances described, Major-General Van Dorn

was directed to form a division of two-thirds of these troops, and move into Tennessee....When there he was either to assist General Bragg...or cover the country near Columbia, upon which [Bragg's] army depended for food.³⁷

The reports of February 1863, were not totally concerned with Bragg and Van Dorn. On February 23, Dodge sent General Grant information about events that had occurred in Vicksburg to that date. The report sent Grant came from Dodge's spies posted at Mobile, Meridian, and Jackson, Mississippi:

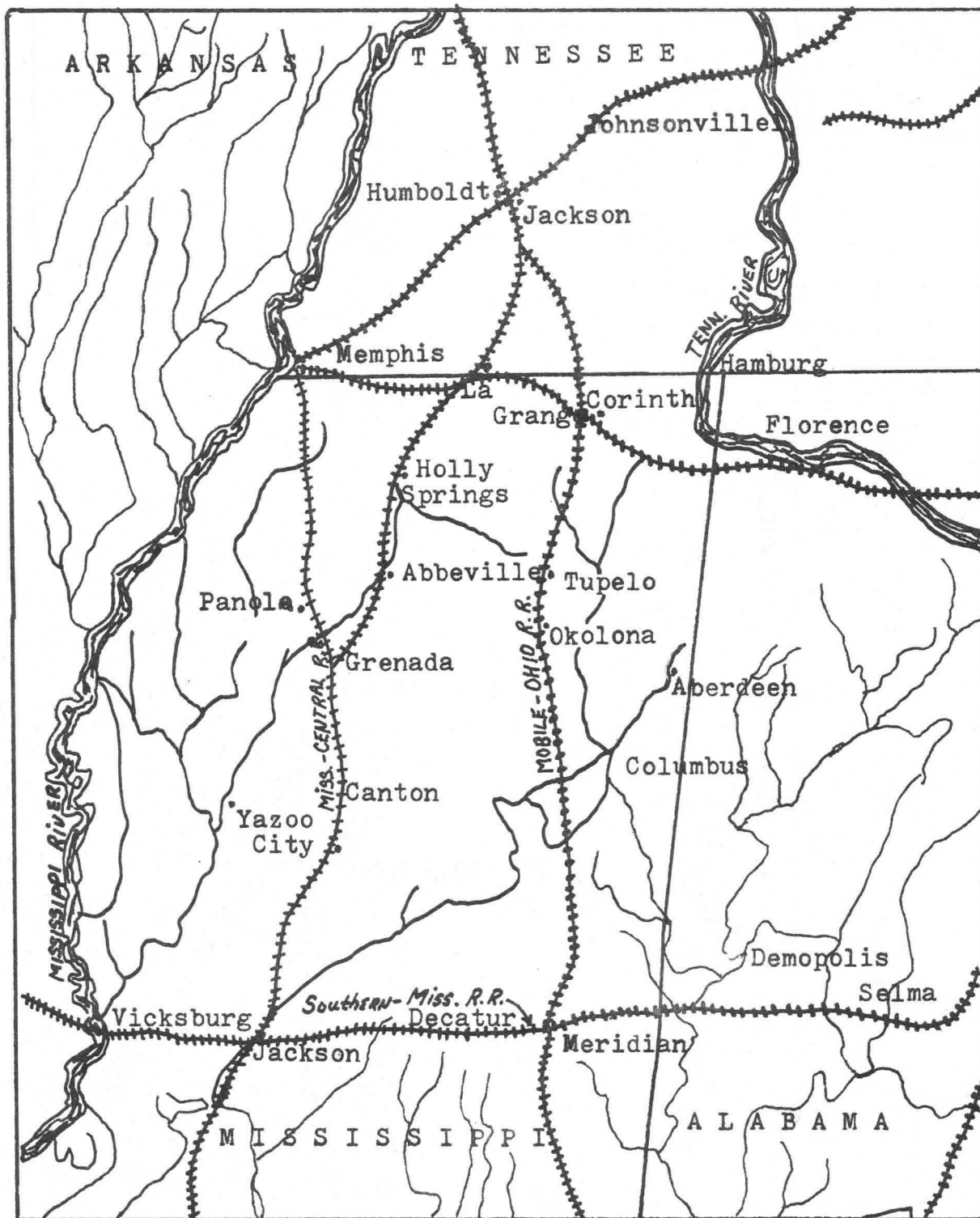
No troops have come to Pemberton's army since Smith's joined him about Christmas. All troops from Mobile up the road, and from Grenada, have gone to Vicksburg and Fort Hudson, leaving a few thousand at Mobile, some 600 at Meridian, and two regiments at Jackson, and about three militia regiments at Grenada. A portion that left Grenada all posted on Black River....Everything in the shape of government property has been taken away from the country bordering the Yazoo and adjacent streams, and all prominent points, such as Jackson, Grenada, Columbus, etc. At Jackson the foundaries are running and a cotton mill or two...but every preparation is being made to take them away. Mississippi is being entirely stripped of stock, provisions, forage, etc. and everything indicated they are getting ready for a quick move.

...the great stock of cars and engines at Meridian, are being taken east and south....

The trains go loaded from Vicksburg daily with sick and discharged soldiers. They say that they average 12 cars a day. Last week two heavy steamboat engines and the prow to a ram boat went up the road to Jackson; said to be placed in some boat on the Yazoo.

Deserters and conscripts are flocking into my lines daily, and so far as the above statements are concerned, they corroborate them...I still have men in Meridian, Columbus, Mobile, and Jackson, while one has gone on to Vicksburg, and will try to get to you....³⁸

In November 1862, Pemberton's force totaled 30,000 men. By the first part of January, 1863, President Davis had sent 9,000 more troops



Map 2: Area of Military Intelligence Activity - Vicksburg

from Bragg's army in Tennessee to Pemberton's at Vicksburg. Grant's army was about equal to Johnston's. By March of 1863, Grant was anxious to receive intelligence reports. Since Pemberton's force was equal to his, he could not afford to dispatch part of his own army to fight Confederates in his rear. He might not be able to take Vicksburg either if Pemberton received too many reinforcements.³⁹

Before Grant made his move to the rear of Vicksburg, he sent a telegram to Dodge asking him to "send a spy to Meridian," Mississippi. Meridian is one hundred and seventy-five miles east of Vicksburg. There had been several reports that large "numbers of cars and locomotives [were] concentrated there for the purpose of moving large bodies of troops over the [Southern Mississippi] Railroad."⁴⁰

The spy Dodge sent on this mission was E. D. Coe. After his return Coe wrote his brother James about his trip into "Dixie." On February 20, Coe had received orders to report at Corinth. After arriving Dodge told Coe to "fix [his] story" and be ready to leave Corinth by March 1st.⁴¹

The only incriminating evidence Coe kept on him after leaving Union lines as a "little map of the two states of Mississippi and Alabama," only five inches long and three inches wide. After reaching his destination, Coe decided to wait for the Confederates to find him. He went to a nearby farm and told the owner that he was a Yankee deserter who wanted to be paroled by the Confederates. He also told them that he "wanted to go to Georgia to live with [his] uncle."

A Confederate cavalry unit came to the farm and questioned him. They also searched him but only found "two letters directed to Bragg's

army." More than likely Dodge had given them to Coe. Coe explained that he had gotten these letters near his home of Bethal, Tennessee, however. A friend had a son in Bragg's army and Coe had volunteered to deliver them.

Coe remained in the custody of these Confederates for two days. He was then paroled. He bought a horse and before leaving, convinced the captain of the Confederate cavalry to write him a letter of recommendation. On the day of March 18, Coe reached Meridian where the railroad running from Vicksburg east crossed the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Dodge had told him to stay until May 1, unless he found what Dodge wanted before then. Coe left Meridian on March 22, 1863.

Coe proceeded east from Meridian and then north on his return to Union lines, in order to avoid the cavalry which had paroled him. At Tuscumbia, Tennessee, Coe ran into trouble. He was arrested and charged as a spy. He was questioned and searched. The Confederates found \$300.00 in Confederate currency and \$120.00 in gold. Dodge had given Coe the gold in order to bribe any Confederates who might detain him.

Coe did not have to wait long for his trial. Luckily, Dr. Owens, the owner of the farm where Coe had stayed on his first night in the Confederate territory, was near Tuscumbia. Coe talked Owens into vouching for his loyalty. Owens had little suspicion of Coe and he was soon released.

It was still dangerous for Coe to go directly to Dodge's headquarters so he stayed at Owens's farm for several days. While there, he met a Mrs. Martin and her five year old daughter. Mrs. Martin's husband

had been forced to leave the south because of his outspoken loyalty to the Union. Mrs. Martin told Coe that she wanted to join her husband in the north. Eventually Coe, Mrs. Martin, and her daughter made their escape during the night.

Coe was arrested by Dodge's pickets when he returned and was taken to Dodge's headquarters. Here Coe made his report. The Confederates had no intention of using the railroad cars at Meridian to move an army to Vicksburg. Dodge sent Coe's report on to Grant as soon as possible.⁴²

Coe was not the only spy active during March. On March 14, Dodge sent information to Major-General C. S. Hamilton. One of Dodge's spies had returned from a four week mission in Jackson, Mississippi. In his report Dodge stated that all Confederate troops at Jackson were moving west towards Vicksburg. Another division had left Grenada. Its destination was also Vicksburg. This same spy had gotten to within fifteen miles of Vicksburg but could not report on fortifications in that area.⁴³

On March 30, Dodge sent a report to General Hurlbut. General S. A. M. Wood's headquarters were at Florence, Alabama, fifty miles east of Dodge's lines. Wood had 4,000 men. Colonel C. R. Barteau had a brigade of cavalry south of Dodge at Verona. T. W. Ham and W. C. Faulkner were immediately west of Barteau. N. N. Cox, General Roddey, and a small detachment of Van Dorn's cavalry were in several northern Mississippi counties, close to Dodge's lines at Corinth.⁴⁴

The reports of March 14 and 30 were of some significance. The report of March 14 indicated that the Confederates were already concentrating in and around Vicksburg. Grant knew where his enemy was and

where to concentrate his own forces. The report of March 30 was also important in that it indicated Confederate forces were in northern Mississippi. This placed them in a strategic position south of Dodge's lines at Corinth, and in the rear of Grant's army. From northern Mississippi these Confederates could threaten Grant's supply lines on the Mississippi River and harass his rear. Dodge continued to watch these forces. They never moved on Grant's rear or the Mississippi River, however.

On March 30, 1863, General Hurlbut submitted his monthly report to General Halleck. In it he said, "General Dodge deserves great credit for his vigilance and activity." Still, the intelligence units had to keep a vigilant eye on Confederate activity in and around Vicksburg. Dodge could not let down. A quick move from the East could easily destroy Grant's entire campaign.

The month of April began with news of enemy activity to the East. On April 1, Dodge sent General Rosecrans word that bridges were being rebuilt "from Savannah, Tennessee, east and from Florence, [Alabama] north."⁴⁵ On the 4th, Dodge wrote to Hurlbut giving him information on Confederate activity around Vicksburg.⁴⁶

On April 8, Dodge sent Hurlbut another report. Four spies had returned. Each reported considerable Confederate troop buildups in eleven northern Mississippi counties. Generals W. M. Inge and J. R. Chalmers had twelve thousand men, 8,000 cavalry and 4,000 infantry, near Bear Creek, Fulton, Ripley, Pontotoc, and Verona in Mississippi.

Additional Confederate forces were blocking all roads south of Grand Junction, Tennessee.⁴⁷

Dodge sent three more reports on the 9th and two on the 13th.

Then, on April 14, 1863, Dodge sent General R. J. Oglesby the following:

Captain [George E.] Spencer, my assistant adjutant-general, has just returned from Tuscumbia; succeeded in getting through all the enemy's camps and obtaining valuable information. The forces are posted as follows: Colonel Dibrell, 900 men at Tuscumbia Landing; Colonel [Josiah] Patterson, 1,000 at Florence; Colonel M. W. Hannon, 1,800 at Tuscumbia; Colonel Roddey's old regiment, 800 at Tuscumbia Landing; Baxter Smith, 350, 10 miles this side; Colonel Hampton, 300 at same place; [W. R.] Julian, 300 at Grey's, 6 miles this side, and Smith, 100 at Big Bear. The above all cavalry. Between Courtland and Tuscumbia, one brigade of infantry, under Colonel Wood....This more than doubles their force. They have also five pieces of artillery at Florence and six pieces at Tuscumbia.⁴⁸

The information Dodge received from his spies in late March and early April indicated a large buildup of Confederate troops in northwestern Alabama. The location of these Confederates threatened the Vicksburg Campaign. The Confederates in northwestern Alabama could shield the Confederate flank if Generals Bragg or Johnston went to the aid of Pemberton at Vicksburg.

Dodge's spies had given him information on the locations and numbers of Confederate forces in northwestern Alabama. Dodge used this information to launch a successful attack which destroyed the Confederate supply lines to these troops. On his raid Dodge hit Bear Creek, Little Bear, Leighton, and Town Creek. He destroyed 1,500,000 bushels of corn, 500,000 pounds of bacon, and burned several tanneries and cotton mills. Before returning to Corinth Dodge also destroyed the railroad between

Tuscumbia and Decatur. His raid forced the Confederates to pull back to the east; exactly where Grant and Dodge wanted them. Dodge filed an official report of his actions on April 25. In ending it, he put the following: "It is said...that Johnston says he cannot send any more reinforcements. I think the entire force ahead does not exceed 5,000 men."⁴⁹

The month of May, 1863, saw Dodge's intelligence operation reach its pinnacle. In that month Grant sent Sherman toward Jackson, Mississippi, to force Joseph E. Johnston away from his rear. Several days later, Grant's army fought the decisive battle of the Vicksburg Campaign - Champion Hill. After his successes in the Champion Hill and Jackson engagements, Grant forced Pemberton into Vicksburg and began the siege of the city. Pemberton surrendered, but not until July 4, 1863.

On May 1, 1863, General Pemberton had surprised both Joseph Johnston and the Confederate War Department when he informed them of Grant's close proximity to Vicksburg. On May 9, a telegram from the War Department reached Johnston at Tullahoma, Tennessee. It directed Johnston to: "proceed at once to Mississippi and take command of the forces there, giving to those in the field, as far as practicable, the encouragement and benefit of your personal direction." Johnston took three thousand men from Bragg's army with him. After Bragg's arrival in Mississippi, Secretary of War John Seddon promised more reinforcements from General Beauregard in South Carolina and Georgia. Others would be sent as soon as possible.⁵⁰

Johnston's move put Grant in a predicament. On his right, at Jackson, Johnston controlled all railroads in the area. By using these, Johnston could bring in men and supplies from the east to his army. Pemberton, on his left, could now escape from Vicksburg if Grant were to weaken his army by dispatching part of it to stop Johnston's advance. Grant, therefore, decided to send Sherman against Johnston at Jackson. This is where Dodge claims his spies' information proved of greatest value in the Vicksburg Campaign.

Southern newspapers had reported the forces of Johnston and Pemberton at 60,000. The report of Dodge's spies estimated their total at 25,000 to 30,000.⁵¹ Dodge was more correct. With the reports from his spies:

General Grant called first upon General Scholfield in the Department of the Missouri, to send his spare forces to him so that he would not have to detach from his army in front of Vicksburg to meet this force of Johnston and as General Grant [said] in his memoirs, he gave the command of this force located near Black River Bayou to General Sherman and as fast as General Johnston concentrated his forces, General Grant also received reinforcements....⁵²

On May 14, 1863, Sherman reached Jackson. By midmorning, Johnston and his men had retreated northward. Meanwhile, General McClernand, marched his corps to the Southern Mississippi Railroad, between Vicksburg and Jackson. Once Johnston had been forced back, Grant turned his attention on Pemberton and Vicksburg.

Grant marched towards Champion Hill, Mississippi. Earlier, Johnston had requested that Pemberton march his army from Vicksburg and Edward's Station east so that he could join Johnston and jointly fight Grant's

army. Pemberton was a day late in doing this. As Grant's forces marched west they met Pemberton's going east.⁵³ One of Dodge's spies, who had infiltrated Johnston's army, reached Grant just prior to the Battle of Champion Hill. Grant received information on the position of Johnston's forces and the number of men he had with him. This spy's name was Sanborn, and Dodge wrote later: "he [Sanborn] never came back to me. We never knew what became of him."⁵⁴

Through May, Dodge posted spies as far east as Selma and Montgomery to watch for troop buildups in Johnston's army. On May 21 Dodge wrote the following:

Tuesday and Wednesday, five brigades passed through Chattanooga on their way south to join Johnston, also two brigades of Texans said to be going to Rome, Georgia....The troops were four days passing through Chattanooga...I saw two more brigades...two trains of empty cars going towards Tullahoma."⁵⁵

On May 31 Dodge wrote that Johnston was to get 10,000 troops up to the 16th of May from Savannah, Carolina, and Mobile. One division went to Johnston from Selma on the 23rd and one division went from Bragg in Tennessee. This brought Johnston's total to approximately 20,000.⁵⁶

Not all of Dodge's reports dealt solely with troop strengths and movements. The following was part of an intelligence report sent by Dodge on May 21. It indicates the feelings that Pemberton's leadership aroused. "It is said that Johnston had taken large numbers of prisoners; that Pemberton was traitor, and had sent a bouquet to Grant, so arranged as to give position of rebel troops...."⁵⁷

The last report in May gave Johnston's troop strength report:

"...Johnston has not received more than 8,000 and...his command on the

25th was not to exceed 20,000 including [General] Loring. He is of the opinion that Breckinridge has joined him."⁵⁸

By June 14 Johnston sent the following urgent message to Pemberton:

All that we can attempt to do is to save you and your garrison. To do this, exact cooperation is indispensable. By fighting the enemy simultaneously at the same point of his line, you may be extricated. Our joint forces cannot raise the siege of Vicksburg....⁵⁹

Johnston never received the "exact cooperation" he had asked for.

On July 1 Johnston was between Brownsville and the Big Black River just east of Vicksburg. He wrote Pemberton from there that his army would create a diversion so that Pemberton and his garrison could escape.

Johnston's planned action was to begin on July 7. As Grant wrote later: "Pemberton was made prisoner before this message reached him...the fate of the Confederacy was sealed when Vicksburg fell." Dodge received word of the fall of Vicksburg on July 13.⁶⁰

The Vicksburg Campaign had lasted nine months. Dodge's intelligence operations played an important part from start to finish. Throughout the campaign, the information Dodge sent was quite accurate. The one problem that did develop was the delivery of intelligence information far enough in advance to be useful. This was overcome as the Vicksburg Campaign progressed. Dodge sent more frequent reports between Confederate movements so that from one day to the next Grant was aware of Confederate actions to the east.

Confederate cavalry units posed a special problem for Dodge's intelligence operations. The majority of Dodge's spies were trained to watch for troop concentrations, fortifications, and movements which

required that they be stationed in cities or railroad centers over long periods of time. Confederate cavalry were quick and mobile. Dodge's stationary spies could not effectively observe cavalry units unless they happened to stop in cities for long periods of time. In order to overcome this problem Dodge sent out scout/spies. These men worked with Dodge's cavalry units in the field. A scout/spy would be sent a short distance in advance of the cavalry. When he discovered the location of Confederate cavalry units he would hurry back with the information. The cavalry would act upon this information immediately.

By his own estimate, Dodge felt that the greatest service his spies performed was in sending Grant information on Joseph E. Johnston's troop strength and location in the latter part of May and in June. As Dodge said, "I was almost in constant communication with General Grant about Johnston's forces."⁶¹ This information proved useful and enabled Grant to dispatch reinforcements from other Union armies so that his own could capture Vicksburg.

Vicksburg was not to be the final test of Dodge's intelligence operations. The next came in the Battle of Atlanta. Grant had planned to turn on Johnston's army as soon as Vicksburg fell. He had told General Sherman to be ready to drive Johnston out of Mississippi and destroy his army if he could. Dodge was to be a part of these plans.⁶²

On July 7, only three days after Vicksburg fell, Dodge was promoted to the command of the left wing of the 16th Army Corps at Corinth.⁶³ Between July and August, 1863, Dodge continued to watch the Confederate forces on his left. Grant wanted to fight the Confederates where ever

he found them. Dodge's spies continued to help locate them. On July 17, he wrote General Hurlbut that one of his spies from Decatur, Alabama, and one from Jacksonville had observed Bragg's Army moving in three columns toward Atlanta by Railroad and land. Rosecrans's army had moved against Bragg and his force had advanced as far as Rome, Georgia. He concluded by telling Hurlbut that it looked as if Johnston and Bragg were to unite.⁶⁴

On July 22, a spy from Okolona reported that Johnston's army had fallen back to the Chunky River, (Ala.). General Bragg had fallen back, too, and was currently at Chattanooga and Atlanta. No forces from Bragg had joined Johnston.⁶⁵

On August 3, 1863, Dodge sent Hurlbut the following: "Forrest, with about 800 men, was at Jacks's Creek day before yesterday, and moved toward Tennessee River to cross at Yellow Bluff...Yellow Bluff is about 60 miles from here...." This was the final report Dodge made before he left on furlough. It was not until October that he would return for duty.⁶⁶

During Dodge's absence the Battle of Chickamauga Creek took place. On September 19-20, 1863, General Braxton Bragg moved his army from Ringgold, Alabama, north to Chickamauga Creek. Southeast of Chattanooga he and General Rosecrans, who was moving south, soon collided. By the afternoon of the 19th both armies were engaged along a three mile front. General Longstreet, who had joined Bragg's army after arriving by rail from the Army of Northern Virginia, cut through the Union line on the 20th and forced Rosecrans to retreat toward Chattanooga.⁶⁷

In late October, Grant made plans to free Rosecrans who had been "trapped" in Chattanooga. Sherman was ordered to take Dodge's corps up the Tennessee Valley and free the Union forces there. Dodge was, of course, very eager to participate in this expedition, but he was soon disappointed. On November 5, 1863, Grant sent word that Dodge was to remain at Pulaski, Tennessee, while Sherman went on ahead to Chattanooga.⁶⁸

Dodge's army stayed at Pulaski until May 5, 1864, when General James B. McPherson, commander of the Army of the Tennessee ordered him to move to Chattanooga. Dodge soon found out why. Following the Union victory at Chattanooga, secret orders were sent to all the Northern commanders in Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Every command post which could afford to was to send east a few of its best men at night and by rail. Their destination was Georgia.⁶⁹

Sherman's campaign into Georgia began on May 4, 1864.⁷⁰ Dodge, of course, did not wait until the campaign opened to send spies in its direction. In fact, he began recruiting new ones as early as October. He sent the following to one of his division commanders on the 25th of October:

I desire you to use every exertion to obtain information and to keep thoroughly posted of all movements of the enemy [s]outh of you, especially in the direction of Grenada [Miss.]. Employ citizens when you can find them living in that vicinity, also good men who will go out. I have always found that a reliable way was to employ citizens living in the county who would report when any movement of importance was made. Instruct your men along the line to use every exertion in this way. I will pay liberally for all valuable information, and also will pay well, good scouts or spies...Our safety while we are so strung out, depends upon our receiving at all times the positions, strength, movements....⁷¹

At about the same time that this message was sent, Dodge also sent a circular to his provost marshals:

For the purpose of obtaining a thorough knowledge of the enemy in our front, you will always examine closely all citizens, refugees, deserters, and prisoners coming from the enemy's lines, and forward through your immediate commander direct to these headquarters, statements that may be of advantage, and such statements [that] relate to immediate movements of the enemy...commanders will see that close attention is paid to this circular.⁷²

This recruitment activity in late October, 1863, did not mean that Dodge had no spies in enemy territory at this time. Several of his spies were already concentrating their attention in Alabama and Georgia in October.⁷³ That month was relatively quiet however. This only incident of note occurred on October 19, when three of Dodge's scouts entered Pikeville, Alabama, arrested the county sheriff and took his jail keys. They then released seventy-three Union prisoners.⁷⁴

Dodge received reports from his spies through the months of November and December. Not until January 1864, did he begin to receive steady reports from Georgia, however. On January 6th Dodge sent word to Sherman that one spy had returned from Dalton, Georgia. There he had observed Johnston's army which the spy estimated "not to exceed 25,000 effective men." One brigade of General Martin's cavalry was at Cave Springs, the state militia was at Rome, Coosaville, and Gadsden, in northwestern Georgia. All the stores and hospitals were moved south towards Atlanta. Wheeler's and Wharton's cavalry were ordered out of east Tennessee and General Roddey was guarding the north bank of the Tennessee River from the Flint River to Bear Creek in northern Alabama.⁷⁵

On the 22nd Dodge's spy reported from Decatur, Alabama, and Rome and Summerville, Georgia. At Rome he observed the 4th, 8th, and 11th Texas Cavalry and the 7th Georgia Cavalry. General Biffle's cavalry was there also. The Confederates were transporting corn on the Coosa River in Alabama and General Clanton's cavalry had connected with General Roddey's at Courtland and Summerville. General S. D. Lee was between Russellville and Vincent's Crossroads in northwestern Alabama.⁷⁶

On January 30, 1864, Dodge received a report from Atlanta. Two of his spies, one from Montgomery, Alabama, and the other from Atlanta gave the following report: "...no troops left Johnston, but all commands southward have been moved to Mobile, as well as troops from Charleston and North Carolina."⁷⁷

Dodge evidently felt this last report was important. On the following day he wrote his assistant adjutant-general, George Spencer: "Find out all you can about Johnston's army, whether it is at Dalton, [Georgia]. Talk to the [Confederate] officer just as though you knew it [Johnston's army] had all gone from there. There evidently are large moves on the board by the rebels, and that is one of them."⁷⁸

January, 1864 was the first month in which Dodge's spies concentrated in and around Atlanta. From then on, the Alabama/Georgia area was the center of Dodge's intelligence operations. In the Vicksburg Campaign Dodge was assigned the task of watching Confederate troop movements from east to west. In the Atlanta Campaign his assignment was reversed: he now had to watch for troop movements from west to east.

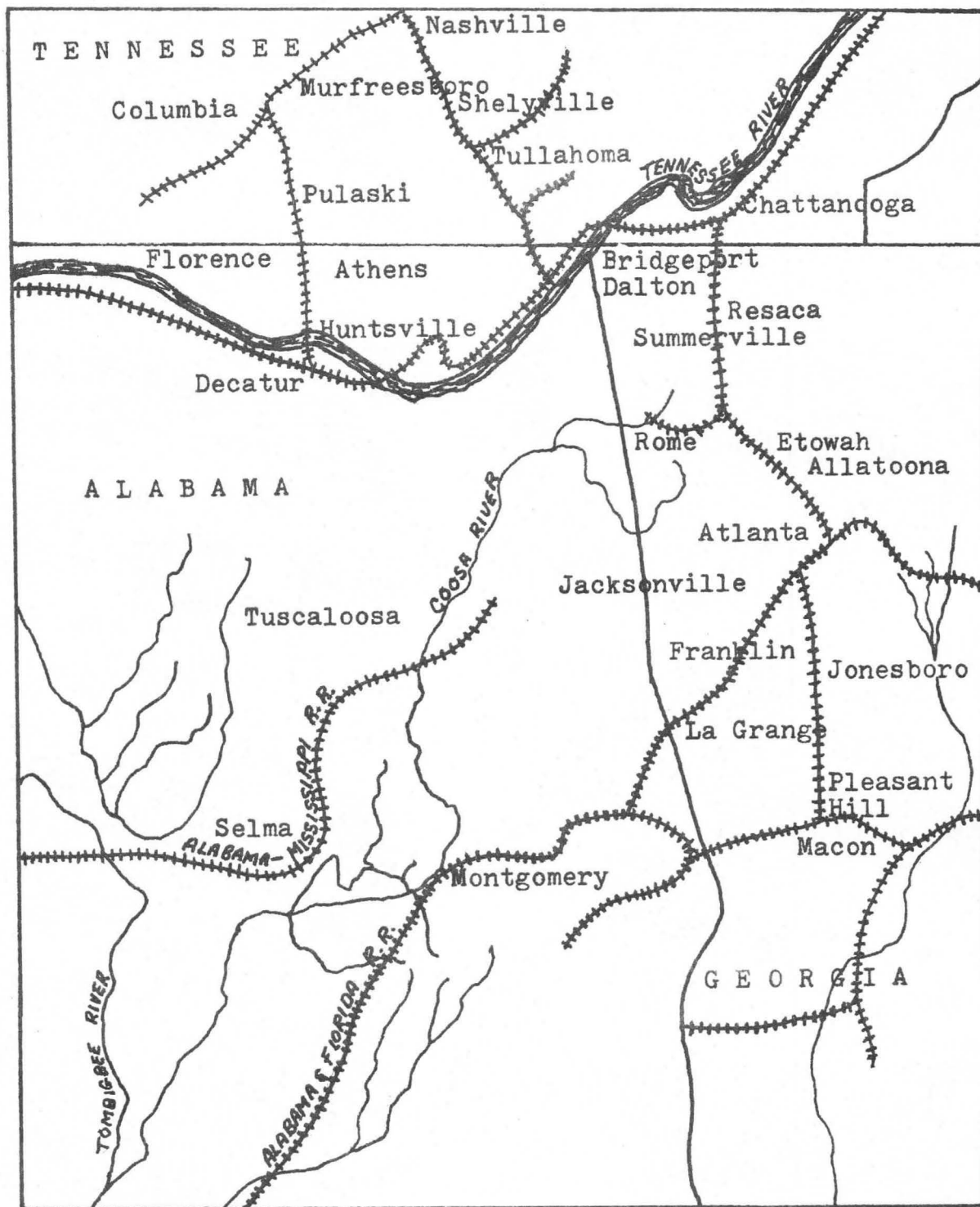
On February 14 one of Dodge's spies returned from Montgomery, Alabama. This spy reported seeing four regiments passing through that city going northeast toward Decatur. A division and a brigade had passed the same way a month before. The troops that made up these movements came from four depleted divisions. In the last sentence, the spy mentioned that conscription in Alabama was "raising many men."⁷⁹

On February 26 Dodge received information from Atlanta, and he sent the following on to General Grant:

The fortifications around Atlanta are simply 3 lines of rifle pits, surrounding the place; and on the Chattahoochee River; 11 miles north of Atlanta, commencing at the island, they are putting up works running down to the railroad bridge. These works have lately been commenced and every tenth negro has been impressed to work in them.

Dodge also gave the location of fortifications and artillery in and around Rome, Georgia. This same report gave troop strengths and their locations. Atlanta had 5,000 troops, Rome 3,000, Gadsden, Georgia, boasted 2,500 under Roddey, and there were 1,500 in Oxford.⁸⁰

The report of the fortifications around Atlanta was of some importance. The Confederate War Department had begun work on these fortifications as early as July, 1863. The work was not completed until April 1864. The fortifications around Atlanta prior to the battle for that city (July 22, 1864) consisted of "20 strong redoubts" connected by rifle pits. Breastworks were covered with "abatis and Chevaux de frise - stakes, the forerunner of the modern barbed-wire entanglements." Trenches had been dug in front of these, making it suicidal for a foe to attempt to storm the banks. Sherman undoubtedly used Dodge's report on February



Map 3: Area of Military Intelligence Activity - Atlanta

26 in deciding not to storm the city but rather to lay a siege around it.⁸¹

On February 25 Dodge sent Grant a report from a spy stationed at Montgomery, Alabama. In it Dodge told both Sherman and Grant that Confederate General Leonidas Polk's army had evacuated the Mobile and Ohio Railroad in central Mississippi and had retreated east to Mobile behind the Tombigbee River. The Confederates had left only a provost guard at Montgomery, Selma, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Joseph Johnston's army was still near Mobile.⁸²

This information proved correct. In his Meridian Campaign, Sherman forced Polk's army to retreat from Meridian, Mississippi on February 14. Fearing that after the fall of Vicksburg the Federals would launch an attack on Mobile, President Davis had advised General Johnston on January 14, 1864, to send troops there. Johnston approved of this plan. At the time of the spy's report, he was in that area.⁸³

Not until March 20, 1864, did Dodge send Sherman more intelligence information of much importance. On that day a spy had returned with information that only provost guards had been left at Gadsden and a single battalion at Summerville, Georgia. All other troops were concentrated at Dalton.⁸⁴

On March 22 a spy reported that Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry was observed leaving Pikeville, Alabama, and on March 17, going west to Eastport, Tennessee. The cavalry planned to cross the Tennessee River above Eastport in the northwest corner of Tennessee and attack the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Two cavalry units under Generals Roddey and Clanton

were then to attack Decatur, Alabama. Besides these cavalry reports the spy had seen the 21st, 27th, and 35th Alabama Infantry in Moulton. Dodge followed up this report and on March 23 reported that Forrest's crossing was feigned in order to draw his attention into Tennessee. Forrest had passed Corinth already.⁸⁵

On April 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 17, Dodge sent intelligence reports to his immediate commander, General George McPherson. These reports were concerned with enemy activity around Decatur, Whitesburg, and New Mount Hope, Alabama; Summerville, Gadsden, Triana, and Sulpher Springs, Georgia; and Hamburg, Tennessee. Filed just prior to the beginning of the Georgia Campaign, these reports show the geographical distribution of Dodge's spies during one month's activity. On April 13 Dodge reported Forrest's cavalry crossing the Tennessee River near Hamburg, Tennessee. On April 12 Dodge had reported no troops at Summerville, Georgia. The distance between these two points is approximately 150 miles.⁸⁶

In May 1864, the long awaited Atlanta Campaign began. The first battle of the campaign occurred on May 9-13 at Dalton, Georgia, approximately twenty-five miles southeast of Chattanooga. Dodge's spies had watched the buildup there as early as March 20, 1864. Johnston had concentrated a force of 43,000 men at Dalton in May. Sherman had 110,123. Sherman however, decided against a frontal attack on Johnston's army. Instead, he sent General McPherson on a flanking movement around Dalton. Dodge's army participated in this movement. Johnston held on to Dalton until the last minute and then while the huge Union army was bottled up

at Snake Creek Pass he retreated south to Resaca and prevented Sherman from out-flanking him.⁸⁷

At Resaca fifteen miles south of Dalton, Sherman launched a frontal attack. This failed, however, so Sherman repeated what he had done at Dalton. McPherson's army was sent across the Oustanaula River in order to flank Johnston's army. Johnston began to withdraw, this time to Cassville and then to Allatoona Pass. Sherman, without even fighting kept his army going towards Atlanta, forty miles southeast of Resaca.⁸⁸

Johnston was not to be out-flanked, however. On May 25 he beat Sherman to a place called New Hope Church. When Sherman arrived, Johnston launched an attack. After it was over his men referred to it as the "Battle of the Hell Hole." After three days of fighting Sherman lost more than 3,000 men, Johnston around 900. Johnston again withdrew, this time to Kennesaw Mountain, only ten miles northwest of Atlanta.⁸⁹

On July 3, 1864, Sherman began his final drive on Atlanta.⁹⁰ On the night and early morning of July 9-10, Johnston drew part of his army across the "W and A" bridge and then burned it. Johnston then went toward Atlanta on the Marietta Road. By July 12, Sherman's army had repaired this bridge across the Chattahoochie. On July 14, Lorenzo Thomas's Army of the Cumberland crossed Powers Ferry. General Schofield's Army of the Ohio and General McPherson's Army of the Tennessee crossed the Chattahoochie, "poised for a well-planned mortal blow at Atlanta...."⁹¹

At this point, one of Dodge's spies emerged from Atlanta, enabling Dodge to send the following report to General McPherson on July 18:

Scout in from Atlanta. He left there this morning, says the enemy were moving troops all night...Bates division moved upon Peach Tree road and is entrenched on south side of that creek, near Howell's Bridge, that the bridge is ready to be burned...one dismounted cavalry at Buck Head. This agrees with report of rebel lieutenant captured by me this morning....

On yesterday [General] Wood had the left, Polk the center, and [General] Hardee the right, the militia in Atlanta. Johnston has received no reinforcements up to today. The enemy are at work on their forts and entrenchments around Atlanta.

Atlanta papers up to the 17th have nothing of interest in them....⁹²

On July 19 a second spy came out of Atlanta bringing the Atlanta Morning Paper. This paper had news of a change in Confederate command. General Joseph E. Johnston had been replaced by General John B. Hood. General Scholfield, of the Army of the Ohio had known Hood at West Point. Scholfield knew Hood's personality and predicted that Hood would launch an attack, which he did within 24 hours. The spy who made this report had joined a rebel regiment. Dodge in fact, had not seen him for six months. After making his report, Dodge sent him back to Nashville where he would be safe.⁹³

Dodge kept two spies in Atlanta during most of the campaign. These spies sent information almost daily to Dodge or George E. Spencer, Dodge's assistant adjutant-general. One spy had even infiltrated General Johnston's headquarters. On one occasion a spy gave Dodge the exact number of Confederate soldiers and the names of all division, brigade, and regimental commanders in Johnston's army.⁹⁴

The intelligence information gathered on the 18th was correct: the enemy was, indeed, moving troops all night. General Hood had shifted his

troops to the right of Sherman and on July 20 launched an attack against the position held by General Thomas. The attack was a failure, however. By July 21 General Sherman's army moved south to within two miles of Atlanta.⁹⁵

The intelligence reports of July 18 and 19 forewarned Union commanders of a Confederate attack. In this they were useful. Both reports were received well enough in advance to allow Union commanders to prepare for Hood's attack. On July 22, Dodge was ordered to send one brigade of Fuller's Division to the flank of McPherson's Army of the Tennessee. Soon afterward, Dodge was ordered to send Sweeney's Second Division to the left of the position held by General Blair. These turned out to be lucky moves. Hood had transferred General Hardee's corps and two divisions of General Wheeler's cavalry to the rear of McPherson's army. When Hardee made his charge he was surprised to see Sweeney and Fuller facing him. After a hard fought battle Dodge forced the Confederates back. During the battle, Dodge's corps captured eighteen flags, 5,000 arms, and 2,017 prisoners.⁹⁶ The battle of July 22 is often referred to as the Battle of Atlanta even though the city did not fall until September.

Dodge stayed in the field until August 19, 1864. On that day Dodge went out to inspect his lines. As he peered through a small hole in a bunker, a rebel sharpshooter fired a shot which seriously grazed Dodge's forehead. The wound was painful and sand had been thrown into his eyes. He was unconscious for two days. This injury ended Dodge's career with Sherman's army. After regaining consciousness he was sent north to

Nashville and then home to Council Bluffs.⁹⁷ He would return to military service, but not in the East.

Both the Vicksburg Campaign and the Battle of Atlanta thoroughly tested the capability of Dodge's intelligence operations. During the Vicksburg Campaign, Dodge's spies and scouts were required to perform the double-service of delivering information on the movement of Confederate armies from east to west, as well as to watch and report on Confederate cavalry movements which had seriously threatened Grant's entire campaign in its earlier phases. Dodge used his intelligence information to launch several cavalry operations against the Confederates. Grant learned from Dodge's information of the approach of Johnston's army from the East, of the position of Bragg's army in Tennessee, and of Confederate activity in and around Vicksburg. Most useful to Grant, however, were the troop strength reports on Johnston's army. With this information Grant was able to reinforce Sherman and prevent Johnston from saving Vicksburg. Dodge's intelligence reports undoubtedly made it possible for General Grant to capture Vicksburg sooner than he would have had he not received them.

In the Atlanta Campaign Dodge was able to send Sherman and Grant continuous information of Confederate troop strengths, their movements, and fortifications. More than likely it was Dodge's report of extensive fortifications at Atlanta which caused Sherman to lay siege to the city rather than attempt a direct assault on it. Also, the news that Johnston had been replaced by Hood helped forewarn the Union army of Hood's likely attempt to break through Union lines and out of Atlanta. During the

Atlanta Campaign Dodge shifted most of his intelligence work from Mississippi to Alabama and Georgia. Not much else was changed in the operation. Dodge received information on Confederate troop movements from west to east. He also kept close watch on Confederate cavalry in his area. As Dodge moved near Atlanta, his spies were able to communicate with him daily.

The information received from his spies was generally accurate. Most of the information was distributed sufficiently ahead of time to enable those who received it to take appropriate action. It would seem, then, that Dodge's intelligence operations were quite valuable - not only to Dodge personally, but also to the overall success of the Vicksburg and Atlanta Campaigns.

ENDNOTES

¹Long, The Civil War Day by Day, pp. 170-172.

²Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:330-331; Long, The Civil War Day by Day, p. 218.

³Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 60-61.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 64.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Peter F. Walker, Vicksburg: A People at War (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969), p. 4.

⁸Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:423-424.

⁹Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 64-66.

¹⁰Grant to Dodge, 18 November 1862, OR I 17:353, and Grant Papers, 18:96.

¹¹Rawlins to Dodge, 22 November 1862, OR I 17:355.

¹²James Lightner, 28 November 1862; James Marshall, 28 November 1862; William Melvin, 28 November 1862; Joseph Stout, 4 December 1862, Pay Vouchers for the Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

¹³Phillip Benson, 4 December 1862, Pay Vouchers for Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 148. Dodge also sent spies right to Braggs's army. Phillip Benson spent from October 25 to December 6, 1862, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. At the bottom of his pay voucher Dodge wrote: "The trips were very dangerous and information gained very important."

¹⁴Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:427-429.

¹⁵Special Orders No. 275, 24 November 1862, OR I 17:423-424. On December 4, 1862, Johnston sent word to Richmond that he wanted Gen. Holmes's army in Little Rock, Ark., to press forward and join Pemberton. See: Johnston to S. Cooper, OR I 17:781, and Joseph E. Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), pp. 150-151.

¹⁶Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:431.

¹⁷Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:431.

¹⁸Dodge to General Sullivan, 18 December 1862, OR I 17:431-432.

¹⁹Long, The Civil War Day by Day, p. 298.

²⁰Bragg to Pemberton, 6 November 1862, OR I 17:743. See also: Bragg to S. Cooper, 22 November 1862, OR I 20:416-417. "You will perceive by my general orders the troops are all in motion toward the enemy...."

²¹Bragg to Pemberton, 21 November 1862; OR I 17:755.

²²Grant Papers, 18:161, 227, 265.

²³Dodge to Grant 26 December 1862; OR I 17:488-489.

²⁴Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:432-434; and Long, The Civil War Day by Day, pp. 298-299.

²⁵David W. Gaddy, "Gray Cloaks and Daggers," Civil War Times Illustrated 14 (July, 1975): 20-27, gives the following definition of a scout and a spy: "scouts, uniformed men on reconnaissance" and "spies, disguised soldiers or civilians." It seems to me that men such as William Callender fit both descriptions. Hence I refer to them as scout/spies.

²⁶William Callender, Thrilling Adventures of William Callender, A Union Spy from Des Moines (Des Moines: Mills & Co., 1881), p. 23.

²⁷William Callender, A Union Spy from Des Moines, pp. 23-26.

²⁸Dodge to Rosecrans, 17 January 1863, OR I 20:335-336.

²⁹Johnston to Bragg, 11 January 1863, OR I 17:832. Johnston wrote: "One of Van Dorn's great objects will be to cover your left by preventing Federal troops from going from West to middle Tennessee...Please order Roddey to report to Van Dorn." See also: Johnston to President Jefferson Davis, 17 January 1863, OR I 17:332.

³⁰Dodge to Rosecrans, 3 February 1863, OR I 24:43.

³¹Dodge to Rosecrans, 4 February 1863, OR I 24:54.

³²Dodge to Rosecrans, 10 February 1863, OR I 24:54.

³³Ibid., 12 February 1863, OR I 24:54.

³⁴Dodge to Rosecrans, 10 February 1863, OR I 24:54.

³⁵Dodge to Rosecrans, 16 February 1863, OR I 24:73.

³⁶Dodge: Report of Attack upon Tuscombua, Alabama, 22 February 1863, OR I 23:64.

³⁷Joseph E. Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. 160. See also: Johnston to Bragg, 24 February 1863, OR I 24:646. Johnston wrote: "I have just received a letter from Major-General Van Dorn, informing me of his arrival at Columbia. He wants horseshoes and horseshoe nails...."

³⁸Dodge to Grant, 23 February 1863, OR I 24:64.

³⁹Earl Schenck Miers, The Web of Victory, Grant at Vicksburg (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 159. Miers writes: "If Johnston and Pemberton worked in concert against him, Grant could be beaten, perhaps disastrously; but he gambled on time, on time to interpose his forces between the armies of Johnston and Pemberton, to beat each in detail to drive Johnston eastward and to push Pemberton back into Vicksburg."

⁴⁰Personal Biography of General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:102-103.

⁴¹Coe Letter, Dodge Papers, Box 148. This is a personal letter from Coe that Dodge used for a source in his Personal Biography. See also: Dodge Personal Biography, Dodge Papers, 1:103-106.

⁴²Coe Letter, Dodge Papers, Box 148.

⁴³Dodge to Major-General C. S. Hamilton, 14 March 1863, OR I 24:107.

⁴⁴Dodge to Henry Binmore, 30 March 1863, OR I 24:155-156.

⁴⁵Dodge to Rosecrans, 1 April 1863, OR I 24:200.

⁴⁶Dodge to General Hurlbut, 4 April 1863, OR I 23:242.

⁴⁷Dodge to Hurlbut, 8 April 1863, OR I 24:180.

⁴⁸Dodge to Major-General R. J. Oglesby, 14 April 1863, OR I 24:192.

⁴⁹Major-General R. J. Oglesby to General Hurlbut, 25 April 1863, OR I 23:244-245, and Hirshon, General G. M. Dodge, pp. 72-73.

⁵⁰Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. 173, and Miers, Web of Victory, p. 168.

⁵¹Personal Biography of General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:107.

⁵²Personal Biography of General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:107.

⁵³For the Battle of Champion Hill, (May 16, 1863) see: Long, The Civil War Day by Day, pp. 353-354.

⁵⁴Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:106.

⁵⁵Report of Spies 1863 to February, 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 149. On May 15th Dodge wrote that "spy H. P." had been 10,000 troops leave Vicksburg on April 16th but that they were ordered back after reaching Montgomery. Two regiments went from Montgomery to Vicksburg, also two regiments from Mobile went to Pemberton. All the bridges on the Memphis and Ohio Railroad were heavily guarded. Infantry and artillery had arrived at Aberdeen, Miss., several days before.

⁵⁶Report of Spies 1863 to February, 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 149. This information is nearly correct. Johnston in his Narrative of Military Operations, pp. 185-187, says he had 17,500 men at this time.

⁵⁷General Oglesby to Lt. Col. Binmore, 21 May 1863, OR I 24:336.

⁵⁸Dodge to Asst. Inspector-General W. H. Thurston, 31 May 1863, OR I 24:370. See also: Kenneth P. Williams, Lincoln Finds a General, 4:83-84. Williams says this about Dodge: "This thirty-one year old general, who would rise to a position of considerable importance before the end of the War...was also apt at forwarding information, and it was probably a report from him confirming the departure of Breckinridge that caused Grant to pass the word to Halleck with some confidence... [Breckinridge] would not have been cheered by Dodge's report, which Grant was reading the day before he himself issued his entraining order at Meridian."

⁵⁹Johnston to Pemberton, 14 June 1863, OR I 24:280. Actually Johnston had wanted to extricate Pemberton's army much earlier. See: Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, pp. 189-191.

⁶⁰Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:555 and Report of Spies 1863 to February, 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 149.

⁶¹Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:106.

⁶²Grant, Personal Memoirs, 1:566.

⁶³General Orders No. 89, Headquarters, 16th Army Corps, 7 July 1863, OR I 24:487.

⁶⁴Dodge to Hurlbut, 17 July 1863, OR I 24:539.

⁶⁵Dodge to Hurlbut, 22 July 1863, OR I 24:548.

⁶⁶Dodge to Hurlbut, 3 August 1863, OR I 24:572, and Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 79.

⁶⁷For a thorough discussion of the Battle of Chickamauga see: Stanley F. Horn, The Army of Tennessee (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), pp. 239-274.

⁶⁸Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 81.

⁶⁹Grant, Personal Memoirs, 2:120.

⁷⁰Key, Battle of Atlanta, p. 20.

⁷¹Dodge to General Sweeney, 25 October 1863, Records of the U. S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920: 16th Army Corps, (U. S. National Archives: Washington, D. C.) 32:299. Hereafter cited as Records of the 16th Army Corps.

⁷²Circular to Provost Marshals, 22 October 1863, Records of the 16th Army Corps, 32:298.

⁷³In fact as early as March 4, 1863, one of Dodge's spies had been in Atlanta and Mobile. In Atlanta he reported seeing only 500 soldiers and in Mobile about 5000. Five ironclads and two wooden gunboats were being constructed at Mobile. Personal Biography of General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:97.

⁷⁴Dodge to Colonel Harris, 19 October 1863, OR I 30:477. Most of this month Dodge's spies observed movements of Johnston's army. On October 26th Sherman wrote Dodge the following: "It will exactly suit us if Joe Johnston will assemble a force at Okolona. Don't disturb them now, but keep a spy there to report their object...." See: OR I 31:747.

⁷⁵Dodge to Sherman, 6 January 1864, OR I 32:35.

⁷⁶Dodge to Grant, 22 January 1864, OR I 32:179.

⁷⁷Dodge to Sherman 30 January 1864, OR I 32:266.

⁷⁸Dodge to Spencer, 31 January 1864, OR I 32:277.

⁷⁹Dodge to John Rawlins, 14 February 1864, OR I 32:391.

⁸⁰Dodge to Grant, 26 February 1864, OR I 32:476. For Dodge's report on the fortifications around Rome, Georgia, see the Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:172. "At Rome...a brigade of infantry is at work on the fortifications. Captain Green is engineer building the bridge on Oustanoula River. On the east side of the river a large

fort is being built, which commands approach from the west. Near it are some thirty, two pound guns, not mounted. This line of fortifications is laid out, but only partially built; runs up this river to the mountains north of town and connects with another fort, laid out but not built that commands the road running in from the north between the two rivers. From this fort four lines of rifle pits, now being worked on, run to the Etowah River. Some distance above the bridge over this river, a battery is built that covers the bridge and a small village on the south side of the river called Lickskillet...."

⁸¹William Key, The Battle of Atlanta and the Georgia Campaign (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1958) pp. 54-55.

⁸²Dodge to Grant, 25 February 1864, OR I 32:467.

⁸³Long, The Civil War Day by Day, p. 455, and Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. 254.

⁸⁴Dodge to Sherman, 20 March 1864, OR I 32:100. The reason for the importance of this information is that Dalton was the first battle Sherman fought in his Georgia Campaign (May 9-13, 1864).

⁸⁵Dodge to Sherman, 22 March 1864, OR I 32:114.

⁸⁶For all of these reports, except the one of April 8 see: OR I 32:274, 283, 286-87, 309-310, 334, 389. The report of April 8 is too extensive to fit into the text. Because of its importance as an example of thorough and valuable information, it is recopied in Appendix I. Polk's army participated in the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864.

⁸⁷Key, Battle of Atlanta, pp. 23-24, and Johnston, Narrative of Military Operations, p. 277: "The position of Dalton had little to recommend it as a defensive one. It had neither intrinsic strength nor strategic advantage. It neither fully covered its own communications nor threatened those of the enemy."

⁸⁸Key, Battle of Atlanta, p. 24.

⁸⁹Key, Battle of Atlanta, pp. 26-27.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 29-40.

⁹¹Key, Battle of Atlanta, pp. 41-48.

⁹²Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:237.

⁹³Ibid., 1:238.

⁹⁴Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 99.

⁹⁵Dodge, The Battle of Atlanta and other Campaigns, p. 39.

⁹⁶Dodge, The Battle of Atlanta and other Campaigns, pp. 40-49.

⁹⁷Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, p. 151. Also: Dodge to his wife, 19 August 1864, General Correspondence, Dodge Papers, Box 7.

CHAPTER III.
MISSOURI, THE FINAL PHASE OF GENERAL
DODGE'S INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

It was not clear immediately that Dodge would end up in Missouri. After he was wounded, Dodge was sent north to Chattanooga and then to Nashville where his wife met him. They then went to their home in Council Bluffs. Dodge was not able to stay home long, however. General Grant wired him asking that he "visit" Grant's headquarters at City Point, Virginia.¹

Dodge arrived at Grant's headquarters on October 7, 1864. He stayed one week. During which time, Grant offered Dodge a command in the East. Dodge refused to take the offer, however, as he wished to be assigned to a command in the West or South. Grant then sent Dodge on to Washington to meet President Lincoln. After his meeting with Lincoln, Dodge received "vague orders" to report to General O. O. Howard, commander of the Army of the Tennessee, and he left for Nashville.

Upon his arrival in Nashville, Dodge was ordered to take command at Vicksburg and to create a diversion for Sherman's army in Georgia by marching toward Montgomery or Mobile, Alabama. Dodge had hardly begun to do this when Secretary of War Edwin Stanton sent a telegram directing him to go to St. Louis, Missouri, and await further orders.²

On December 2, 1864, President Lincoln appointed Dodge Commander of the Department of Missouri, relieving General Rosecrans. On December 9, Dodge officially took command. So it was that Dodge who had begun his military career as a colonel in Missouri, would end it there as a major-general and commander of the department.³

Dodge had a tough assignment in Missouri. The state had been run by nine northern generals, including Fremont, Schofield, Curtis, and Rosecrans. Each had failed to calm the disorder in Missouri. As with other border states, Missouri, was fragmented among unionists, secessionists, and the remaining portion of the population who only wanted to be left alone. This situation produced one of the bloodiest features of an already bloody war - guerrilla warfare.⁴

Efforts of Union troops failed to suppress the guerrilla bands. Only with the surrender of the major Confederate armies would these irregular forces lay down their arms. Such men as "Bloody" Bill Anderson, Colonel William Clark Quantrill, Jesse James and Captain George Todd, carried on their warfare in Missouri with deadly effectiveness. Robert L. D. Davidson aptly characterized the situation in Missouri as: "Rocked by fratricidal and internecine strife, governed by a government in exile or one scarcely legitimate, belabored by intolerant military leaders or vacillation in policy from Washington...."⁵

Soon after taking command in Missouri, Dodge received several letters offering advice on how best to handle his new command. One person wrote: "Rule the rebels don't allow them to rule you." Senator John A. Kasson of Iowa even went so far as to write out a list of objectives:

To pacify Missouri, suppress guerrillas, restore order...by careful and persistent work...Rosecrans split on an easily avoided rock....The policy for the Commander of Missouri is to head all parties talk...Rosecrans loved pleasure and society, more than either.⁶

The first problem Dodge tackled was that of guerrillas and bushwhackers. He had only been in command for two days when he issued the following order:

I desire to send out of Missouri and to their friends in the rebel army the families of noted bushwhackers and robbers; also the prominent families of persons now serving in the rebel army...I believe this will have a salutary effect upon the State and will keep south many desperate men....These families are almost invariably the rendezvous of spies and guerrilla bands...respectfully request that you will designate some point on the Mississippi, Red, Arkansas Rivers where they can be landed and sent through the lines. Lists have already been prepared by district commanders, and as soon as the point is ascertained, they will be sent off quietly.⁷

One writer has contended that Dodge's secret service had broken up following his wound at the Battle of Atlanta.⁸ Many of the spies and scouts used during the Vicksburg and Atlanta Campaign never saw service again. But Dodge did continue to use an intelligence organization. In order to combat the guerrilla bands, boat-burners, and other rebel organizations in Missouri, however, Dodge used the same general system. For instance, on December 19, 1864, Dodge wrote to the commanding officer at Springfield that he wanted scouts sent out to the extreme southwestern part of the state. There had been several reports that the rebels were planning a move in that area. Dodge concluded, "Send any information you may get."⁹

Dodge apparently centralized his intelligence operations as much as possible. In Missouri, many of the intelligence reports concerning guerrilla bands went from the spy or scout to the district commander who was most directly affected by the information. Dodge, however, required that all intelligence information be submitted to his headquarters when

the district commanders filed their semi-monthly reports or, of course, immediately if the information warranted it.

As part of his attempt to centralize his intelligence operations at his headquarters in St. Louis, Dodge kept complete lists of all families who were considered disloyal. Each district commander out of his district was required to send Dodge a list of disloyal persons in their district. These lists were classified in a specific order. The first list was made up of the names of families of noted bushwhackers, thieves, and robbers. The second list contained the names of persons who had voluntarily joined Sterling Price's army. The third list was made up of families with members in the Confederate armies. The fourth contained those persons who harbored bushwhackers and other rebel sympathizers, and the fifth contained the names of those who were generally sympathetic with the Confederacy. In addition, Dodge required that each of these lists show the age, number in the family, and an account of the real and personal property each possessed. These lists were used to send suspected persons across the lines but they undoubtedly assisted Dodge in running down guerrillas who constantly traversed the state. The lists helped Dodge figure out where guerrillas might hide.¹⁰

Dodge showed guerrillas little mercy. In one month he sentenced over thirty men to be hanged. On at least one occasion Dodge found himself in a particularly touchy situation because of this.¹¹ Dodge was not the only one who was rough with guerrillas. On December 29, 1864, one of Dodge's district commanders reported that a scout had reported from Saline and La Fayette Counties. While visiting there, the scout

discovered that Quantrill had passed through three weeks before. Before leaving, the scout questioned a man by the name of McReynolds. When McReynolds confessed to having fed and aided Quantrill, the scout pulled his gun and shot him.¹²

From December through March, Dodge's spies, scouts, and cavalry were kept busy with the guerrilla war. Over one hundred engagements took place during these months in which Dodge's men either killed, captured, or wounded a total of one hundred rebels.¹³

Dodge received intelligence information from his district commanders on a semi-monthly basis. For instance, Colonel Catherwood, commander of the district of Rolla, Missouri, sent the following typical report on January 14, 1865:

1. Camped on Dove Creek - attacked a band of guerrillas. Killed Eliga Hatman and wounded Andy Hatman. These men belonged to Thomas Yeates band.
2. Camped on right fork of Big Piney [River] - William Morris [guerrilla] killed; killed Richard Douglas and James Robert Stevens and routed Thomas Yeates. Continued pursuit and killed [Doolan] and [Spoon].
3. Overtook band of Copeland's guerrillas on the 11th and killed [William and Wilburn Gilmore].
4. [On the] 12th - headed for Lichen and routed Copeland again on the Elk Creek. Supposed Copeland to be wounded.
5. From information gained the following bands of guerrillas [are] around [Rolla]: Thomas Yeates with about 12 men, John Maply with about 30, Captain Copeland with about 30, Richard Kitchen with about 15, and Colonel Freeman is said to be on Spring River with about 200 men.¹⁴

On January 18, the district commander of southwest Missouri, reported that two guerrilla leaders, by the names of McRae and Dobbs, were in the vicinity of Batesville and the northeast part of Arkansas. Seven

prisoners from Alf Cook's guerrilla band had been captured near Sugar Loaf Creek. Cook, Brown, and two other guerrillas had been killed by his cavalry.¹⁵

Brigadier-General Thomas Ewing, commander of the St. Louis district also filed a report. Scouts sent into Oregon County had killed seven guerrillas. From scouts and spies in northeast Arkansas, Ewing learned much about the concentration of troops in Arkansas:

General McClary commanding in N. E. Arkansas issued an order about the 15th inst. ordering his command into camp at Jacksonport on the 25th of January, with [the] promise that they should be clothed and furloughed to go home and make a crop. General McClary has from 2 to 4 hundred men in Lost Bottom...they are not in camp but scattered through the country at their homes. Colonel Tom Freeman of McClary's command ordered his men together...15 miles below Batesville... Colonel Reeve is not trying to get his men together. Same with Austin Johnson. Major Berryman is in Oiltrough Bottom, below White River with 80 to 100 men. Captains Pratt, Bosi, Denis, Philips, Wever, and Williams have independent companies and roam throughout the S. E. counties of Missouri and northern counties in Arkansas....Numerous squads of outlaws.¹⁶

The final report for January 1865, was submitted by Brigadier-General John B. Sanborn Commander of the district of southwest Missouri. Sanborn's report was similar in content to those of Ewing and Catherwood's. The spies in Sanborn's district had watched the Confederates north of the Arkansas River. In each of the following months, Dodge received intelligence reports from one end of the state to the other and also from northern Arkansas.¹⁷

The work done by Dodge's spies and scouts was so effective that on February 1, 1865, Dodge was able to send a Colonel Morrell to Governor

Oglesby with a list of the names and locations of numerous bushwhackers living in Illinois. On February 5, Governor Oglesby wrote back:

...with your letter in relation to bushwhackers in our state. I gave [Morrell] all the encouragement I could on the subject...it will afford me all pleasure to aid you all I can in every effort you may make here to punish this class of outlaws. It may occur however that in the act of carrying them out of the state that loyal sympathizers may interfere with legal processes to arrest the officer having in charge the outlaw and thus detain them...I cannot interfere to order a release - the forms of civil proceedings in a state prevents this by any Governor strong as my wish to do so...this I know.¹⁸

Even though Dodge's intelligence operations were vast and his cavalry continually engaged rebel guerrillas, many citizens were still not happy with the general conditions in Missouri. In January, 1865, Dodge received a letter from Austin A. King, a member of the House of Representatives from Missouri. King told Dodge that he had been unhappy with the reports he had received from citizens of his district. Bushwhackers still committed their atrocities, a squad of Dodge's soldiers had reportedly pulled a man from his house and had shot him on the spot, and robbery was a quite common occurrence. King ended by urging Dodge to launch an investigation and crack down on guerrillas. A similar letter was sent by Colonel H. R. Cummings of the 39th Iowa Infantry. Cummings threatened to "send [anyone] to heaven without waiting for the chaplain" if he caught any soldiers beating and robbing.¹⁹

Dodge took his strongest action in the latter part of January 1865, when he issued his General Order No. 7. This order required that all citizens report all encampments of bushwhackers. Those who failed to do so would lose their property and be banished from the state. Furthermore,

Dodge held disloyal residents in each county responsible for any injury done to Unionists in their area.²⁰

Lincoln felt Dodge's order was too harsh and criticized it in a letter to the governor of Missouri, Thomas C. Fletcher. Others liked 'General Order No. 7.' James S. Thomas, mayor of St. Louis, wrote Dodge that if Dodge's order were carried out, "these fiends in human shape" would be gone in sixty days. Amos P. Foster, secretary of the Missouri state convention, sent a resolution to Dodge congratulating him and giving the full support of the convention. Dodge felt that his order worked, for he wrote later that guerrilla activities declined considerably after he issued it.²¹

On February 5, 1865, Dodge received command of the Department of Kansas. General S. R. Curtis, who had been the previous commander, was sent to the Department of the Northwest. At the same time General John Pope was made commander of the Military Division of the Missouri. Dodge was to report to him. General Pope was "commander of the West" which encompassed several departments. However, it should not be thought that Dodge was superseded in Missouri. The Department of Kansas was simply merged with his own.²²

When he assumed his command, Dodge inherited a difficult situation in Colorado. In November 1864, Colonel John M. Chivington of the Colorado militia had led an attack on an encampment of peaceful Cheyenne Indians at Sand Creek in eastern Colorado. In the carnage over 450 Indians died and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes rose up against the whites. By February, Dodge was preparing for an extensive campaign.²³

Before Dodge took over his duties in Kansas spies had been sent into the Indian territory.²⁴ The following report was submitted by Brigadier-General Robert B. Mitchell on February 9: "I have sent three spies up to the Running Water in Dutch, Nebraska, one white man and two Omaha Indians with instructions not to return until they ascertain what Indians are there, their numbers, and what they are there for...."²⁵

On the day Mitchell submitted his report, Dodge sent an intelligence report to General Pope concerning Indian activities. In it he told of indications that large parties were moving westward on the Republican River in Nebraska. In January they had crossed the south fork of the Platte River twenty-three miles west of Omaha. They had camped near there. There were four hundred lodges, containing eight warriors each - "many lodges being thirty robes in size." These Indians possessed breech-loading carbines. They had gone northward past Fort Laramie.²⁶

Dodge even sent a letter to Governor Crawford of Kansas asking that a "competent man" be sent to the Pottowatomie Indians. Dodge hoped that several of the Pottowatomie could be recruited to serve as scouts and guides on the plains.²⁷

Dodge also had spies in the Indian territory on the western border of Arkansas and a portion of Missouri's southwest border. On February 14, 1865, Dodge received the following report from Major-General J. G. Blunt:

From Colonel Wattles, of the First Regiment Indian Home Guard, just arrived from Fort Gibson, I learn that the forces of Stand Waitte, Cooper, and Gans, together with a portion of the force that lately went south with General Price, numbering in all about 7,000 are at and in the vicinity of Boggy Depot,

Choctaw Nation. These forces are represented as being well mounted...[word from] refugees lately arrived from Texas is that small expeditions are organizing in Bonham and Sherman, Texas for the purpose of making a raid into the southwestern part of this state....²⁸

Dodge continued to keep spies among the Indians. Dodge wrote to General Mitchell at Omaha on February 17 ordering him to keep spies in northern Nebraska and also sending some Pawnees up "to find their camp."²⁹ In April 1865, Dodge wrote to General Blunt that Stand Waitte, under order from Confederate officials, was to operate against Kansas. The fifteenth Kansas Cavalry and the third Wisconsin was left with Blunt in case of such an attack. Dodge ended his report suggesting that Blunt "put some good man after Stand Waitte...."³⁰

The use of spies among the Indians seemed to work well. By employing friendly Indians, white men familiar with the territory, and half-breeds, Dodge was able to keep track of his enemy. As Stanley Hirshon states: "Unaccustomed to such operations, the Indians never suspected that army agents were among them. As in 1863 and 1864, Dodge supported these secret service activities with money procured from his quartermaster."³¹

When General Pope took command of the Military District of Missouri he asked that Dodge send spies out to observe Confederate activity around the Red River area in Arkansas. Colonel Jeff Thompson known as "the Swamp Fox of the Confederacy" had been in the area; but most of Dodge's first report dealt with Generals Price, Magruder, Stand Waitte, and Gans. Dodge informed Pope that these generals were near Camden, Boggy Depot, Washington and other points in the Choctaw Nation. The troops there were

in good condition and it was said that they would launch an attack in the spring. The leading officers were generally dissatisfied with General Price's command in Missouri the year before. There were four regiments of rebel cavalry wintering in Crowlee's Ridge, north of the Arkansas River. Dodge ended the report telling Pope that he still had spies in the Red River area who would return soon and give more information. Dodge followed this report with one on March 8, 1865. This one is even more detailed than the first.³²

Dodge's intelligence operations thus observed guerrilla activities in Missouri and Arkansas, arrested bushwhackers in Illinois, and spied on various Indian tribes in Kansas and Nebraska.

An additional aspect of Dodge's intelligence operations in the west involved his counter intelligence force. Dodge's detectives operated much like his spies. His detectives often masked their identity and often went into rebel territory. However, Dodge's detectives were sent on missions to arrest individuals. His spies were sent on missions to observe Confederate troop locations and their movements. Throughout the war, Dodge had employed such detectives. For instance, George W. Green had been one of Dodge's detectives at Corinth, Mississippi, and W. F. Harrison served as one while Dodge was at Pulaski, Tennessee.³³

Until January 1865, however, Dodge's detectives played only a minor part in his overall intelligence operations. In fact, Dodge's best known counter intelligence work to that date was done not by detectives but by scouts. Back in November of 1863, while Dodge was at Pulaski, Tennessee, Confederate spies infiltrated his lines. Captain Coleman, the chief of

scouts for Confederate General Braxton Bragg, disguised himself as a doctor and in this manner was able to come and go between the lines without suspicion.³⁴

Not until January 1865, however, did counter intelligence really become a major part of Dodge's intelligence operations. There was a special need for such work in Missouri, where various conspiracies were constantly coming to light during Dodge's assignment. Much of the credit for uncovering these conspiracies must be given to Dodge's detectives and his provost marshal-general, J. H. Baker.

Through his detectives and a postmaster at St. Louis, Dodge learned of plans to assassinate high ranking Union generals, but this knowledge did not save him from nearly being murdered. At dusk one day Dodge stepped out of the Lyndell Hotel and into an open carriage which was to drive him to his headquarters across town. On this particular day, Dodge scooted into the front seat along side the driver. As they rode down the street a shot rang out and the driver, a young black man, slumped against Dodge's shoulder, dead.³⁵

With the aid of his detectives, Dodge did manage to break up a smuggling ring. For quite some time, a group of people in St. Louis had been able to carry on trade with the rebels even though the entire city was surrounded with Union troops. Dodge assigned several detectives to the case. They soon discovered the membership and methods of the ring. The smugglers operated a funeral parlor of sorts. They would place contraband goods inside a coffin and then would form a funeral procession to pass; indeed, they probably removed their hats in respect for the

deceased. The coffin was buried and the last rites read. At night the smugglers from outside the city would go to the grave, dig up the contents, and proceed into the rebel lines. This smuggling was, of course, ended as soon as Dodge discovered it.³⁶

The most spectacular of all detective work involved the breaking up of a Confederate conspiracy to disrupt the Union supply lines on the Mississippi and its tributaries. An officer from the Union navy approached Dodge about the destruction of several steamboats "through bombs manufactured to look like cakes of coal." Dodge directed his provost marshal-general, Colonel J. H. Baker to put detectives on the case.³⁷

On March 29, 1865, Baker filed his first report. Baker had begun his operations in St. Louis but had gradually expanded them until they encompassed several other military departments. Most of his detectives were stationed in large river cities. Baker's detectives discovered the existence of an organized band of "boat burners." This group was directly financed by Confederate Secretary of War John Seddon, Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, and President Jefferson Davis.³⁸

By March several of these conspirators had been arrested and were awaiting trial in St. Louis. The evidence against these men showed that they

were at Richmond and Mobile last summer; that they crossed the lines in Missouri within twenty-five miles of Memphis and subsequently scattered in various directions; that they brought a large amount of gold from Richmond, which it was understood among themselves was to pay for the burning of certain Government property....³⁹

Baker went on to state that from the knowledge he had gained at this point he was confident he could arrest many of the "boat burners" in other departments. The only drawback was that in order to carry out this plan he would need more money. His base of operations had been extended as far north as St. Paul, Minnesota, as far south as New Orleans, and as far east as the Atlantic coast.⁴⁰ This led to higher costs in his operations. Dodge in this same report enclosed a letter requesting \$10,000. Edward Hoffman, one of the detectives used in this operation, wrote the following letter to Dodge complaining about the inadequate pay:

I have the honor to state that I have learned that you deem \$600 per month, for the service to be rendered in the contemplated trip too great. Permit me to say General that I think you have not fully thought of the dangers, hardships, etc., consequent upon such a trip...if you pay a poor price, you will only get poor men. You can get men for \$200 per month, but will they benefit you? Suppose they are misled?... My trip may save the Government millions of dollars and yet you hesitate about a few hundred dollars.⁴¹

On April 25, 1865, Baker submitted a second report. Baker had arrested a leader of the "boat burners" and had sent him to Gratiot Street Prison in St. Louis to await trial. Ten others had also been imprisoned. One of these men, under promise of immunity from prosecution, made a full confession. Meanwhile the leader of "boat burners" Edward Frazor, was charged and turned over to a military commission. There was a delay in Frazor's trial during which time he too made a full confession in order to avoid prosecution. The two confessions corroborated each other and so Baker forwarded his report with confidence.⁴²

These confessions indicated that several men, including Frazor, had gone to Richmond in the summer of 1864. There they held an interview with the Secretary of War John Seddon and later with Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin. Frazor showed a list of boats already destroyed. Secretary Benjamin offered \$30,000 in greenbacks "to settle" with the "boat burners" but they refused. Benjamin next offered \$35,000 in gold. This they accepted.⁴³

While Frazor was signing a receipt for the gold, President Davis walked into Benjamin's office. Davis talked of sending men to Nashville to destroy a bridge. Davis asked Frazor several questions about the bridge and then offered Frazor \$40,000 if he would do the job. Frazor agreed. Before the "boat burners" left Richmond, Benjamin gave Frazor a draft for \$34,800 on Columbia, South Carolina, and Secretary Seddon furnished them with passes out of the rebel lines.⁴⁴

In the same report, Baker submitted a list of the principal men involved in this conspiracy. Judge Tucker was "chief of this service under the secretary of war." Tucker had formerly resided in Missouri and had published the State Journal and later was connected with the Missouri Republican. At the time of Baker's report Tucker lived in Mobile, Alabama.⁴⁵

Next in rank to Tucker was Minor Majors. This man directed the boat-burning activities inside Union lines. John R. Barrett, a former Congressman from St. Louis, was in charge of "land operations." During the earlier phases of the war, Barrett had gone to Europe where he was suspected of collaborating with Confederate Ministers Mason and Slidell.

Baker had arrested Barrett in 1864 on the charge of being a member of a rebel organization, the Order of American Knights, but Barrett had been released for lack of evidence.⁴⁶

Robert Loudon of St. Louis had been sentenced to death but had escaped while being transferred from Gratiot Prison in St. Louis to Alton Military Prison in Alton, Illinois. Loudon was last seen by detectives in New Orleans. Another conspirator, William Murphy had voluntarily turned himself in, but had left St. Louis suddenly and had not been seen since. Isaac Elshire escaped from Gratiot Prison. Elshire was charged with the burning of the steamboat "Robert Campbell" in which several soldiers had lost their lives. Other names listed were S. B. Harwood, Harrison Fox, and Peter Mitchell all of St. Louis, Thomas L. Clark of Grenada, Mississippi, William Irwin of Louisville, Kentucky, and John G. Paris of Memphis, Tennessee. The list of principal conspirators was incomplete. Several others were still behind Confederate lines.⁴⁷

Baker followed the list of the principal conspirators with a list of the boats their organization had burned. The steamboat "City of Madison" was burned at Vicksburg in August, 1863. In the same month and year the steamboat "Champion" was burned in Memphis, Tennessee. The "Robert Campbell, Jr." was burned at Milliken's Bend, Mississippi on September 28, 1863. The "Imperial" was burned at St. Louis along with the "Hiawatha," "Post Boy," "Jesse K. Bell," "Chancellor," and "Forest Queen," in 1863. Several wharf boats were burned at Cairo and Mound City, Illinois, and a small tow-boat in Memphis, Tennessee. In his conclusion, Baker emphasized that his list of ships burned, like his

list of principal conspirators, was incomplete. Since the start of the war, these and similar burnings totaled over sixty in the St. Louis area alone.⁴⁸

After reading Baker's report both the inspector-general of the Army and A. A. Hosmer of the Bureau of Military Justice recommended that "all of the gang" be apprehended and tried together by a military commission for "treasonable conspiracy." Both departments concurred in Dodge's recommendation to send detectives to Richmond and Mobile and arrest the other "boat burners." The Bureau of Military Justice asked Dodge and Baker to send certified affidavits and other evidence to Washington "for the use or reference of the executive officers of the Government."⁴⁹

On April 25, 1865, Dodge issued his Special Order No. 109. This required that all boats on the Missouri River be taken over by military personnel. No citizen was to cross the river south of Leavenworth City without a military permit. Regular ferries and the North Missouri Railroad Company were the only exceptions. They could carry both freight and passengers. All other boat owners were to take their boats to a specific point on the river where they were to remain under military guard.⁵⁰

Because of the Confederacy's collapse, Dodge's Special Order No. 109, was the last measure taken to stop the "boat burners." On April 9, Dodge received a telegram from Secretary of War Stanton informing him of the surrender of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox. On April 29, Dodge offered Colonel Jeff Thompson the same terms as Grant had given Lee. On May 11, 1865, Thompson agreed to lay down arms at Wittsburg and

Jacksonport on May 25.⁵¹ After that the only noteworthy intelligence came on May 16, and 27. General Blunt reported that twenty guerrillas, formerly of Colonel Quantrill's party, had ridden through his district. On May 27, Dodge also received a report that E. Kirby Smith planned to continue his fight even if Thompson surrendered. Nothing came of either report.⁵²

Dodge ended his military career on June 1, 1865. One of the last of his reports, however, was sent on June 24, 1865. In it Dodge wrote General Pope that Confederate Jeff Thompson had surrendered and that all bands of bushwhackers in Missouri had surrendered at Lexington, Cassville, Fort Scott, and Bloomfield. In ending this report Dodge wrote: "I can report that peace and quiet reigns in Missouri."⁵³

In summary, it seems that Dodge's intelligence operations in Missouri were as varied as they had been during the Vicksburg and Atlanta Campaigns. In Missouri his spies, scouts, and detectives were put to work against rebel guerrillas in Missouri, Arkansas, and Illinois; against the Indians in revolt on the plains, and against several Confederate conspiracies, the largest being the "boat burners."

In order to combat the guerrilla situation in Missouri Dodge required that each of his district commanders submit complete lists of disloyal families. The information from these was classified into the five categories described earlier. This practice enabled Dodge to centralize his intelligence operations at his headquarters in St. Louis.

These lists, plus his district commander's semi-monthly intelligence reports kept Dodge up to date on guerrilla activity throughout the state.

It cannot be said, however, that this system, plus the use of his spies and scouts, overcame the guerrilla problem. It would seem that of greater significance in combating guerrillas was his Special Order No. 7. This required that any person knowing the location of guerrillas report them and that known rebel sympathizers were responsible for injuries committed on Unionists in their district.

Following Chivington's Massacre on Sand Creek in Colorado, several Indian tribes rose in revolt. At about this time Dodge was given the responsibility for commanding the Department of Kansas. Dodge was also able to use spies against the Indians. They never suspected that Dodge had sent spies to observe them. Dodge was able to keep tabs on several Indian tribes in both the Indian Territory and the plains through the use of this method. This enabled Dodge to know their whereabouts and where they might attack.

Though Dodge used detectives throughout the war, not until he took over the Department of Missouri did they assume much importance. The only other significant counterintelligence operation up to that point had been the arrest, trial, and execution of Sam Davis in November, 1863. Dodge's provost marshal-general used detectives to break up the "boat burners" conspiracy which was the largest counterintelligence operation Dodge encountered during the war.

Dodge's intelligence organization came to a halt the day Dodge left the service. On June 1, 1865, Dodge ordered all payments from his secret service funds stopped. However, this was not the last Dodge heard of his

secret service. Three years after he had left the Army, the auditors of the War Department asked Dodge to make an account of the exact sum he had spent for spies used in cooperation with Generals Grant and Sherman. Nineteen years later the War Department wrote: "Your secret service accounts for the years 1863 to 1865, amounting to \$17,099.95 have been examined and adjusted and are now closed on the books of this office."⁵⁴

Immediately following the war Dodge accepted the position of chief engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad. After its completion in 1869, Dodge joined the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, again as chief engineer. Throughout the remainder of his life, Dodge was connected in some way with approximately nineteen railway companies. In 1901 the Des Moines Register estimated his fortune at \$25,000,000. Dodge's time was not solely taken up with railroad matters, however. He was also a politician and an author of several books. Dodge finished his last book, Personal Recollections of President Abraham Lincoln, General Ulysses S. Grant, and General William T. Sherman, in 1915. He died a year later on January 3, 1916, and was buried at Council Bluffs.⁵⁵

Dodge received few letters from the men he used in his intelligence operations following the war. George E. Spencer, a former spy, wrote Dodge several days before Dodge left the service, asking Dodge to write President Johnson and recommend William H. Smith as military governor of Alabama. He also received several letters from Philip Henson. Other than these Dodge heard little of his secret service.⁵⁶

ENDNOTES

¹Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, P. 152.

²Ibid., pp. 153-155.

³General Order No. 294, 2 December 1864, and Dodge to Lieutenant-Colonel C. T. Christensen, 9 December 1864, OR I 41:749, 811-812.

⁴Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 110-111 and Albert Castel, "The Guerrilla War, 1861-1865," Civil War Times Illustrated, "Special Issue." (October, 1974) :3-50.

⁵Cited in the forward of William E. Parrish, Turbulent Partnership: Missouri and the Union 1861-1865 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1963).

⁶Major Jesse Bowens to Dodge, 14 December 1864, and John A. Kasson to Dodge, 16 December 1864, Dodge Papers, Box 8.

⁷Dodge to Lt. Col Christensen, 11 December 1864, OR I 41:829. Major-General Canby wrote to Dodge on December 28, 1864, telling him that all people sent out of Missouri would go to Little Rock, Arkansas. See: OR I 41:947.

⁸Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, p. 120. Perkins writes: "Dodge's secret service force of one hundred men broke up shortly after Grant went east to command, although a few of the more outstanding spies attached themselves to the Sixteenth Army Corps that Dodge commanded up to the time he was wounded before Atlanta."

⁹Dodge to Commanding Officer at Springfield, 19 December 1864. OR I 41:889.

¹⁰Circular to District Commanders, 24 December 1864, OR I 928-929.

¹¹Personal Biography of General G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:447-448. In the latter part of December 1865, he rode by stagecoach from St. Louis to Council Bluffs. As he rode through St. Joseph, a rebel guerrilla was hanged. Dodge had sentenced the man to death. As he proceeded on toward Council Bluffs he noticed that the two other occupants in his stagecoach were quite unfriendly. Later, he learned that these people were the brother and sister of the rebel guerrilla who had been hanged in St. Joseph.

¹²John F. Phillips to J. W. Barnes, 29 December 1864, OR I 41:960. Apparently Dodge was criticized for the brutal actions of this scout for on February 19, 1865, Dodge wrote to the Adjutant-General of the U. S. Army promising an investigation into the case of McReynolds. In ending Dodge wrote: "I have given such orders as will prohibit any such action from reoccurring." Dodge to Adjutant-General of the U. S. Army, 19 February 1865, OR I 48:645.

¹³Narrative of Military Services, January 1865 to resignation, Dodge Papers, Box 99 and Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:338.

¹⁴William Monks to Colonel Catherwood, 14 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9.

¹⁵Headquarters District of Southwest Missouri, 18 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9.

¹⁶Headquarters District of St. Louis, 27 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9.

¹⁷Brigadier-General John Sanborn to Dodge, 29 January 1865, OR I 48:678-679.

¹⁸Narrative of Military services, January 1865 to resignation, Dodge Papers, Box 99 and Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, 2:338. Dodge did send his men into Illinois. For instance, John Morrell was paid on January 3, 9, and 24, after "arresting bushwhackers in the state of Illinois." Morrill went as far as Springfield, Illinois. See: Pay Vouchers for the Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 149.

¹⁹Austin A. King to Dodge, 23 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9 and C. R. Cummings to Dodge, 31 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 7.

²⁰Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 112.

²¹Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 112; Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:338; James S. Thomas to Dodge and Amos P. Foster to Dodge, 16 January 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 99. For details of the Missouri state convention, see: Parrish Turbulent Partnership, pp. 200-204.

²²General Orders No. 32, Depart. of Missouri, February 1865, OR I 48:780. For Curtis see: Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), pp. 107-108.

²³Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 115.

²⁴There is no evidence of exactly who was responsible for sending them. However, it seems that Mitchell, the district commander in that area, probably sent them out on his own order.

²⁵Brigadier-General Robert B. Mitchell to Dodge, 9 February 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9.

²⁶Dodge to Pope, 9 February 1865, OR I 48:793-794.

²⁷Dodge to Governor Crawford, 11 February 1865, OR I 48:816.

²⁸Major-General J. G. Blunt to Dodge, 14 February 1865, OR I 48:851-852.

²⁹Dodge to Brigadier-General Mitchell, 17 February 1865, OR I 48:889.

³⁰Dodge to Major-General Blunt, 12 April 1865, OR I 48:83.

³¹Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 115. There is evidence that such work was not as hazard free as Hirshon suggestions. For instance, on February 23, 1865, General Mitchell wrote Dodge: "I have no report from scouts sent to [] Running Water. I think the scouts...have been killed. I should have heard from them a week ago...." See: OR I 48:961.

³²Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:328. For Dodge's report of March 8, 1865, see Appendix II.

³³George W. Green, 6 April 1863, and W. F. Harrison, (no date), Pay Vouchers for Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 149.

³⁴Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:131-134; Mabel G. Frantz, Full Many A Name, The Story of Sam Davis (Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1961), p. 26; Proceedings of a Military Commission in the Case of the U. S. Government vs. Samual Davis, Dodge Papers, Box 148; General Order No. 72, Left Wing 16th Army Corps, 20 November 1863, Dodge Papers, Box 148. Dodge detailed James Hensal, his own chief of scouts, and several others to catch Coleman. Hensal went to Giles County, Tennessee and there pretended to be a Confederate conscription agent. His first arrests were of Samual Davis, Captain Shaw, Joshua Brown, and several others. Sam Davis was carrying an intelligence report to General Bragg when Hensal caught him. Davis went through two interrogations in front of Dodge, but refused to identify Coleman. Dodge then issued orders appointing a military commission to meet on November 23, 1863, for Davis's trial. The court found Davis guilty and on November 27 Davis was hanged. The irony and tragedy of the Sam Davis story is that Captain Coleman, the man Dodge

was really after was actually Captain Shaw, one of the men arrested with Davis. Davis saved Coleman's life by not identifying him. Coleman was later released and sent north. In memory of Sam Davis's heroism, a monument still stands in Nashville, Tennessee.

³⁵Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 1:304 and 2:340.

³⁶Ibid., 2:340. In his investigations Dodge's men uncovered another line of operation. These conspirators had invented an "air gun for the purpose of shooting the prominent generals and people in the service." No further evidence is available to describe exactly what the "air gun" was. There is other evidence of interesting security work done by Dodge's men. Vital Trumble was paid from Dodge's secret service funds for detecting counterfeiters in and around St. Louis and Amos Sanders analyzed "one bucket of milk which contained arsenic...." Vital Trumble, no date, and Amos Sanders, 11 May 1865, Pay Vouchers for the Secret Service, Dodge Papers, Box 149.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Baker to Lewis B. Parsons, 29 March 1865, OR I 48:1291-1292.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Baker to Lewis B. Parsons, 29 March 1865, OR I 48:1291, and Edward Hoffman to Dodge, 10 March 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9. Edward Hoffman's real name was Lawrence A. Hudson. Hudson to Dodge, 3 June 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 10.

⁴²Baker to C. A. Dana, 25 April 1865, OR I 48:194-196.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹War Department, Bureau of Military Justice, 16 May 1865, and Adjutant-Generals Office, 26 May, 1865, OR I 48:196-197.

⁵⁰Special Order No. 109, 25 April 1865, OR I 48:197-198.

⁵¹Edwin M. Stanton to Dodge, 9 April 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 9; Narrative of Military Services, January 1864 to resignation, Dodge Papers, Box 99; Dodge to John Rawlins, 12 May 1865, Grant Papers, V 54:65-66, and Jeff Thompson to Dodge, 11 May 1865, OR 48:236.

⁵²Blunt to Dodge, 16 May 1865, OR I 48 (Part 2):472, and Narrative of Military Services, January, 1864 to resignation, 27 May 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 99.

⁵³Dodge to Pope, 24 June 1865, OR I 48 (Part 2):227-229, and Personal Biography of G. M. Dodge, Dodge Papers, 2:484.

⁵⁴William Thorpe to General Pope, 24 July 1865, Dodge Papers, Box 10. Thorpe was a stenographic reporter under Dodge. Dodge had sent Thorpe to Washington "to lay certain matters connected with the secret service before the Secretary of War." Thorpe wanted pay for six extra weeks he had served in connection with Dodge's secret service. See also: Perkins, General G. M. Dodge, pp. 119-120.

⁵⁵Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, pp. 132, 137-161, 256-262, and Granger, A Brief Biographical Sketch of G. M. Dodge, pp. 119-120.

⁵⁶Philip Henson to Dodge, 8 May 1865, and Colonel George Spencer to Dodge, 20 May 1865, General Correspondence, Dodge Papers, Box 10. Dodge did write a letter of recommendation to President Johnson. See: Dodge to Andrew Johnson, 25 May 1865, General Correspondence, Dodge Papers, Box 10.

CONCLUSION

Grenville Dodge's intelligence work began as a direct result of the wartime conditions he encountered. Furthermore, the concept for such work did not originate with Dodge. When Dodge was ordered to Rolla, Missouri in 1861 his immediate superior, General John C. Fremont, ordered Dodge to check up on the numerous rumors of Confederate advances towards Union lines. At first, Dodge sent his cavalry to do this, but he soon found that all his cavalry horses were being worn out. At the suggestion of one of his subordinate officers, Colonel White, Dodge sent several spies into rebel territory. When Dodge found that these spies' reports were accurate he began to organize and expand his intelligence operations.

Though the idea of using intelligence operations originated with Colonel White, General Dodge deserves credit for taking the idea and developing it into a working organization. Dodge's organization had four basic elements: systematic reporting, communication, secrecy and finance. The first of these was his system of reporting. Dodge soon encountered the problem of his spies tendency to overestimate enemy troop strengths. In order to overcome this problem Dodge taught his spies to recognize the difference between freight, passenger, and baggage train cars. His spies were taught the capacity of the cars. The spy simply counted the number of each type of car, multiplied the capacity and arrived at an accurate troop strength report. A second concept Dodge taught his spies was the amount of space a division, regiment, battalion, or brigade took up on a road. With these methods Dodge was able to receive accurate and uniform reports.

The second element in Dodge's intelligence organization was communication. Dodge developed a system of communication which lessened his spies' risks and maintained the secrecy of the organization. Dodge directed his men to stay within Confederate lines as much as possible. Early in the war, Dodge organized the First Alabama Colored Cavalry and Infantry. The families of these soldiers continued to reside in Confederate territory throughout the war. Dodge instructed his spies to deliver their reports to one of these families. The family could then take the report to Dodge's headquarters without arousing any suspicion. When Dodge became commander of the Department of Missouri, the system of communication changed. Whereas before, Dodge had received his spies' reports directly, in Missouri he had them funneled through his district commanders. More responsibility for the hiring of spies was given to his district commanders. Dodge had been a district commander when he first organized an intelligence operation. He probably felt that giving his district commanders more freedom in the area of intelligence work was the most practical policy. The district commanders were to report intelligence activities in their semi-monthly reports or immediately if the information warranted it.

A third fundamental element in Dodge's intelligence organization had to do with secrecy. Obviously, his practice of having intelligence reports sent through the families of the First Alabama Cavalry and Infantry protected the secrecy of his organization. In addition, Dodge made it a policy never to write down his spies' names more than once.

Names were dropped and his spies were designated by letters and numbers. This code was known to Dodge alone throughout the war.

The final element in Dodge's organization was that of finance. Spies held a special station in the military. They never held a rank, they remained anonymous, and yet their activities were strictly military. Because of this, Dodge could not find funds to pay for his intelligence work. Through the sale of contraband cotton Dodge was able to keep his spies, scout/spies and detectives in the field throughout much of the war.

In the field Dodge's intelligence work functioned well. In both the Vicksburg and Atlanta Campaigns Dodge's spies delivered detailed and accurate information. From November 1862 until July 1863, Dodge kept spies in the major urban and railway centers east of Vicksburg. Dodge's orders were to detect any movements Confederate Generals Braxton Bragg and Joseph E. Johnston made to the rear of Grant's army then in front of Vicksburg. To combat Confederate cavalry activities between Dodge's army at Corinth and Grant's at Vicksburg, Dodge seems to have relied heavily on his scout/spies. Through the information sent from his spies in southern cities and railway centers Dodge could locate Confederate cavalry. Yet cavalry units seldom stayed long in one location. When they left a city they usually were not heard of again until they had completed a raid. Dodge's scout/spies worked with his cavalry. In the field they often wore Confederate uniforms and rode just ahead of a cavalry unit. When the scout/spy learned the location of a Confederate cavalry, he would ride back to his own men and they would begin their

pursuit. Through this type of operation Dodge appears to have controlled a great many of the Confederate cavalry raids.

While Dodge's scout/spies concentrated on the Confederate cavalry in the countryside, his regular spies kept General Grant posted on the location, size, and plans of the Confederate armies. Grant used this information to draw adequate reinforcements from General Schofield's army in Missouri in order to send them to General Sherman's army east of Vicksburg. This enabled Grant to keep his army around Vicksburg while General Sherman kept Joseph E. Johnston's army from making any serious attempt to relieve the city. It would seem fair to conclude that Dodge's intelligence reports enable General Grant to capture Vicksburg sooner than he would have had he not received them.

Prior to the Atlanta Campaign Dodge ordered his division commanders to recruit new spies and scouts. This, plus the geographical area in which they operated, were the only significant differences between Dodge's intelligence operations in both campaigns. The campaign for Atlanta began in May 1864 and ended in September 1864. During this period Dodge sent Sherman and Grant constant intelligence reports.

After recuperating from his serious wound following the Battle of Atlanta, Dodge was ordered to St. Louis. There he was made commander of Missouri. Missouri was a typical border state of the Civil War: torn internally, and impossible to pacify completely.

Guerrilla warfare was one of the most pressing problems Dodge had to deal with in Missouri. The state was divided into districts. The commander of each district sent out spies, scouts, and cavalry in order

to combat the guerrillas who traversed the state. Dodge required his district commanders to send semi-monthly reports to Dodge's headquarters in St. Louis.

In addition to the guerrilla war Dodge used his spies against the Indians on the plains. The Indians were unaware of Dodge's spies, thus Dodge was able to keep tabs on them and prevent them from completely surprising settlements and forts on the plains. Dodge also used detectives to uncover and break up several Confederate conspiracies. The most important one involved several men who by burning Union steamboats hoped to disrupt supply lines on the Missouri River.

In five years of war, Dodge used the various parts of his intelligence operations in ten states: Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Louisiana and Arkansas; and in territory now the states of Wyoming and Nebraska. Dodge always relied heavily on intelligence information. He never gave up on it. Several years following the war, Dodge reviewed his intelligence information and was impressed by its accuracy.¹ As his most recent biographer states: "With his raids and secret service work, Dodge clearly made up in shrewdness and zeal what he lacked in military brilliance."²

ENDNOTES

¹The Secret Service in the Civil War, Dodge Papers, Box 99.

²Hirshon, Grenville M. Dodge, p. 75.

APPENDIX I

Intelligence Report: Atlanta Campaign

April 8, 1864

Left Rienzi, Mississippi March 15th, 1864. Met Forrest at Tupelo, he had rations issued to 4800 horses. Buford's division was with him, his troops are all Tennesseians and Kentuckians. Left, General Polk's headquarters at Demopolis, March 26th. Cars can run, to Tibbee bridge on M.&O.R.R. Cars not running from Meridian to Selma but men are at work on it. Polk was to move to Meridian as soon as the road was finished. He has 10,000 troops. French and Lorings besides some 3000 Vicksburg prisoners in camp not armed. No troops have gone from Polk to Johnson since Sherman was there. Nothing at Columbus, Miss. Lee and Adams are towards Vicksburg. Left Selma March 26th, nothing there. A good deal of army work going on there. Left Montgomery March 27th, nothing there. Left Atlanta March 28th, considerable number of troops there. All state troops. General Morgan with his command left on the 26th going north-east. Was going up to Longstreet's army. Said to have 6,000 men all mounted. Left Atlanta March 28th, went to Rome, Ga. General Brown's brigade at Rome, very small force not to exceed 1500. Men are at work on battery covering the crossing of the Oostamanda. Passed 21 cars loaded with pontoon bridges at Kingston going to Dalton. They also had a large amount of pontoons at Atlanta and were building them there, and at Selma and Demopolis. Johnson has about 45,000 men all told, infantry, cavalry and artillery. Most of his army, say 35,000 is at and about Dalton. It is the general impression that Johnson is getting ready to move. He has a considerable stock of provisions on hand ready. Johnson keeps his lines closed, allows no persons in or out. It is the general talk that Grant has taken a large force from our front to Washington. The movement in our right at Decatur, etc. they are watching closely. Have a courier line to Rome and do not know what to make of it.

Went back to Rome to West Point, Ga., left there April 2nd, came up and crossed Blue Mountains, left there April 2nd; at that point, Martin's division of cavalry had just arrived to recruit, and move 15 miles south; also three batteries that had been stationed there to recruit had gone to the front. Few cavalry left at Gadsden. Clanton left Saturday, crossed the mountains at Summit, thence to Oostamanda, thence to Whitesburg, thence to Flint River where he was this morning. Our mounted forces were skirmishing with him at Flint River.

Johnson is in good spirits, and at all other points despondent. They do not increase the army by the conscript act very much. It is the general belief that Sherman intends to turn their left by way of Coosa Valley, but it is the general rumor that Johnson intends to turn out left. They believe Thomas has only a small force, that Grant is

accumulating some 250,000 men in front of Richmond and has weakened Sherman to do it. At Rome the scouts saw an [] who was collecting 100 artillery horses, and he said Johnson was about ready, he had 1000 wagons loaded with commissary stores. The scout also saw that it was talked generally that Forrest was to cross to our right. Morgan on our left and break out communications. Morgan, Forrest and S. D. Lee were on consultation at Columbus, Miss. before Forrest moved north. This was from March 12th to 15th. So far what the scout saw the report is reliable and he is a shrewd observer and one of my best men. He gives the rumors as he heard them.

All the talk of officers was that Johnson intends to take initiative. All furloughs have been stopped. No troops since March 11th of any account have either moved east or west. Johnson's army is fed almost entirely from south Alabama and a large amount of produce goes from S.W. Ga. to Lee's Army. Stores in considerable quantities are accumulating at Atlanta to Blue Mountains over Selma and Rome Railroad. The scout says everything north of Atlanta is virtually skinned and the road he travelled from West Point to Blue Mountains is very poor, and the first good country he struck was around Jacksonville, Benton County. Columbus, Ga. is being extensively fortified.

Forrest left his trains at Tupelo and it is engaged hauling corn to that point. Two soldiers belonging to General Smith's command, wounded in the fight at Okalona, were killed in the hospital at Aberdien by some of Forrest's men. It created considerable excitement and indignation among the citizens. Lt. General Polk said if Smith had reached Sherman he would have gone to Selma and they could not have stopped him. H2 (Polk) said he estimated Sherman's forces at about 20,000 men. Scout had orders from General Forrest, General Polk, Atlanta, Rome etc. He says they all say their army is today at its maximum and that they cannot increase it. Every point he was at he saw gangs of deserters at work in chains and met them on all trains.

APPENDIX II

Intelligence Report: Confederate Activity in
and Around the Red River Area

March 8, 1865

Capt. J. McC Bell.

Asst. Adjt.-Gen. Military Div. of the Mo.

Captain: The following information derived from reports of scouts and from Lt. Col. Hayes, Twelfth Kansas Infantry, who has been a prisoner of war at Camden, Shreveport, Magnolia and other points in southwest since April 1st on parole, is submitted for the information of the Major General commanding the Military division of the Missouri. Two weeks ago the enemy's forces were holding a line from Washington to Camden, thence down the Washita to near Alexandria, thence south. Their forces were posted as follows: At Alexandria, Buckner with his division; at Grand Ecore, a small force at work on intrenchments; at Minden, twenty-five miles east of Shreveport, Churchill's division 9000 strong; Marmaduke's old division, Cabell's and Slemmons's division watching the Washita; Shelby's division in northwest Texas, headquarters at Clarksville; Walker's division, now commanded by Forney, at Shreveport, where Kirby Smith's headquarters are. Magruder commands at Arkansas. He has a small force posted at Washington and at Camden (now said to be withdrawn) also a force at Boggy Depot. At Shreveport there are two iron-clads and on the Red River fifteen transports. Their troops, except the old Missouri veterans, are poorly armed, badly equipped, and in a very poor state of discipline. All guerrillas and conscripts taken out by Price were dismounted, and placed in the infantry. Many are deserting and most of the guerrilla bands are working back into Missouri. The troops fear a campaign against them this spring, either up the Red River or by way of Arkansas, and most of the troops are so disposed as to meet such an advance.

Price's raid is considered a disaster, and there is no talk now of another, except in case no campaign is made by us against them. They look for a movement against them and hold that they can concentrate 40,000 men against us, but admits that if one is made in force they will have to fall back into Texas. There is no doubt that a large number of guerrillas and conscripts are preparing to come back into Missouri so soon as leaves come, and that they believe Canby or Reynolds are about making another campaign against them. Orders from Richmond have reached there to transfer those troops to the east side of the Mississippi River. Many of the officers are in favor of it, but the soldiers, especially those from Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas will not go. Officers admit that to do it they will have to break up into small parties and they believe if they do this they will never be able to get the men together again. It is certain that the Missouri troops are the nucleus around

which the army is held and is the element that holds it together. Many circumstances are related clearly proving this fact. When Walker tried to cross the Mississippi his troops mutinied. A rebel captain was ordered shot for being a leader in it and he had to be executed by Missouri soldiers, as none others would do it. No efforts had been made two weeks ago to cross any troops to east side of the Mississippi. Colonel Hayes thinks when they ascertain that no campaign is being made against them, they will make an effort to do this; but it will fail and they will, in the attempt, lose a large number of men from desertion, and to satisfy the Missouri troops a campaign will be made against the posts in upper Arkansas and Kansas. All able-bodied negroes were being forcibly collected in camps, but as yet none had been organized and armed as soldiers.

I am, Captain, very respectfully your obedient servant,
G. M. Dodge,
Major-General

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

The most important source used in this thesis was the Grenville Dodge Papers. The Dodge Papers are located in the Iowa State Department of History, Division of Historical Museums and Archives in Des Moines. These papers are quite extensive and cover his entire life. Boxes 99, 148, and 149 were of particular value. These contain Dodge's secret service pay vouchers, documents, and accounts of individual spies.

Dodge destroyed most of the intelligence reports he received from other generals and few of his own are in his papers. However, most of them can be found throughout the 128 volumes of the Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, and the 112 volumes of the Ulysses S. Grant Papers. Several other reports relevant to Dodge's intelligence operations are also in the Records of the United States Army Continental Commands: 16th Army Corps.

Military accounts served as good sources for this study. The Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies has already been cited. Ulysses S. Grant's, Personal Memoirs, Joseph E. Johnston's, Narrative of Military Operations, Dodge's, Personal Biography and his Battle of Atlanta and Other Campaigns, were also of great value. Kenneth P. Williams's, Lincoln Finds a General is an excellent source. Williams's 5 volume study is comprehensive and contains good accounts of both the Vicksburg and Atlanta campaigns. An excellent account of the Vicksburg campaign is Earl S. Miers's Web of Victory, and Peter F. Walker's Vicksburg: A People at War, 1860-1865. Stanley R. Horn's

The Army of Tennessee is a fairly good account of Confederate strategy and condition during the Vicksburg and Atlanta campaigns. William Key's The Battle of Atlanta is concise and fairly good on Sherman's entire Georgia campaign. A good reference for the locations from day to day of both the Union and Confederate armies is E. B. and Barbara Long's The Civil War Day by Day.

Several biographies have been written on Dodge. The best and most recent is Stanley Hirshon's Grenville M. Dodge: Soldier, Politician, Railroad Pioneer. J. R. Perkins's Trails, Rails and War: The Life of General G. M. Dodge, is good but tends to be biased in Dodge's favor. Both Hirshon and Perkins cover Dodge's entire life. J. T. Granger's A Brief Biographical Sketch of the Life of Major-General Grenville M. Dodge, places more emphasis on Dodge's military and railroad career.

There are short accounts of Dodge's secret service work in both the Hirshon and Perkins biographies. Of the two, Stanley Hirshon's is the best. In addition to these there are references to Dodge and his military intelligence operations in John Bakeless's Spies of the Confederacy and Edwin Fishel's article, "The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence", in Civil War History, vol. 10, 1964.

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VITA

Brent H. Ponsford was born in 1951 at Grand Junction, Colorado. He attended the district schools in that area and in 1972 graduated with an Associate of Arts degree from Mesa Junior College. While at Mesa College he received a scholastic scholarship, was inducted into the national scholastic society for junior college graduates--Phi Theta Kappa, and graduated with honors. In the fall of 1972 he entered Adams State College of Colorado in Alamosa, Colorado. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in both history and political science while there. At Adams State he was inducted into the school's President's Honor Society, received the Jack Cooper Foundation Scholarship for outstanding student in history, represented them at the 16th Annual Air Force Assembly, was final nominee from Adams State for a Danforth Fellowship, and graduated Magna Cum Laude. After graduating from Adams State College he was offered two graduate teaching assistantships; one at the University of Northern Arizona and the other at Iowa State University. He accepted the offer from Iowa State University.