

# Dodge, Peter C., Papers

Peter C. Dodge Papers  
ca. 1938-1948



## Title Statement

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.2011.012

### Unit Date

ca. 1938-1948

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

The collection contains VT student memorabilia, ca. 1938-1948.

### Creator

Dodge, Peter C.

### Extent

0.3 Cubic Feet 1 box

### Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

## Administrative Information

### **Conditions Governing Access**

The collection is open for research.

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### **Source of Acquisition**

The collection was donated to Special Collections in 2001.

### **Processing Information**

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Peter C. Dodge Papers was completed in February 2011.

### **Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Peter C. Dodge Papers, Ms2011-012, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

## **Biographical Note - Peter C. Dodge**

Peter C. Dodge was from Catonsville, Maryland. A student at V.P.I from 1936-1940. He was a Member of the 1941 Class, but never graduated with his class. It appears that he enlisted in the Navy during the war. He graduated in 1948 with a Civil Engineering degree. While at school, he joined the Corps, took part in Intermural Bowling, and attended a number of concerts, dances and plays.

## **Administrative History - VPI Clubs and Dances**

In 1887, the Cadet Dancing Club was formed, with its "germans" (a type of formal dancing) becoming social features for the students. the German Club started to hold dances. In 1891 the club renamed itself, forming the VAMC German Club. It obtained a charter in October 1893. Membership was restricted to male students who had the "anxiety to dance" and who could "acquit himself creditably on the ballroom floor." Membership was by application, but was limited in number and was not easily attained. A dance usually began with a figure, led by one of the club members. The Viennese waltz, german, cotillion, polka, schottische, and two-step were the dances of the day; any new dance had to be demonstrated for, and approved by, faculty wives before it would be allowed. At the 1940 Mid-Winter Dance, Tommy Tucker and his orchestra were to play for the dance-goers, on February 2 and 3. The concert was held on February 2 from 6:45 to 7:15 at the ballroom of the Student Activities Building. In 1947 two dances were held by the German Club. The first February 7th and 8th, followed by November 14th and 15th. At these dances, Johnny Long and His Orchestra and Russ Morgan and His Orchestra played for the guest.

In March 1913, the first dance was presented by the Cotillion Club. The next year, the club "allowed some of the new dances, the one step, grapevine, and the hesitation waltz being the most prominent." The Cotillion Club was in competition to the German Club Dances.

The Ring Dance is a VT Class tradition which symbolizes the transition from Junior to Senior. The tradition has been celebrated for over 100 years. Upon entering the dance, each couple receives a pair of ribbons in the Class colors. The lady wears her date's ring on her wrist with the darker colored ribbon, and the gentleman wears his date's ring on his wrist with the lighter colored ribbon. When the time comes for the Ring Exchange, the Corps of Cadets walk into the ballroom and stand in the shape of the Class numerals. As each couple exchanges rings, "Moonlight and VPI," written specifically for the Ring Dance by composer Fred Waring and lyricist Charles Gaynor, is played. As the clock strikes midnight, the evening ends with an elaborate fireworks display on the Drillfield, and the playing of "Silvertaps." The Class of 1935 held the first Ring Dance on April 27, 1934, where the ring figure, sabre arch, and presentation of the ring by the Junior's date were introduced. Since then, the fame of the Ring Dance has spread across the nation, introducing many memorable highlights. Always, the Dance is a night to remember for those receiving their rings: "Night after night we "dragged" the rats and learned to flip our sabres correctly. . . Friday finally rolled around and brought our dates... as well as V. M. I.'s ambassadors of good will. The reception at the S. A. B. formally opened our debut and after three years of waiting... the figure - the ring - and the kiss. And we were made men." (from the 1942 Virginia Tech Yearbook)

Halted temporarily during the years 1944-1946 due to World War II, the Ring Dance has been a

manifestation of fine dining, superior entertainment, and distinctive guests. The entire weekend, which occurs in the spring of the junior year, is primarily for the Juniors and their dates, although the entire university community is invited. Since the beginning, each Virginia Tech class has designed a ring distinctive and unique to their class. Today, Virginia Tech is one of only a few colleges and universities that redesigns their ring collection each year.

The Christian Club was succeeded by the Young Men's Christian Association during the 1882-1883 session. In 1965 the YMCA merged with the Young Women's Christian Association but retained the YMCA name. Sue Ann "Susie" Shertzer became the first female student to be elected as its president in 1967; she was the only woman in the country to head a chapter of the organization. The YMCA still exists and operates from the Lucy Lee Lancaster house on Washington Avenue. Lancaster, one of the first five women to enroll at Virginia Tech in 1921 and a long-time librarian at the university, donated the house to the Y.

The Maroon Mask was an undergraduate student theater club, successor to the Tech Players, and a chapter of the National Theater Honor Society, Alpha Psi Omega. By the 1940s, student membership had reached 175 people. It was through Maroon Mask that the University Theater was formed.

## Scope and Content

The collection contains VT student memorabilia, ca. 1938-1948. The collection includes student identification cards, letters from the school to students, concert and performance pamphlets, ticket stubs, a dance card, Honor Code, an over due book note, Social Club forms, a list, and membership cards.

## Keywords

University Archives

University History

## Rights Statement for Archival Description

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged by subject matter.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Concert Association Materials

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

### Concert and Theatre Programs

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 2 (folder)

### German and Cotillion Club Materials

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 3 (folder)

### Membership Cards and Ticket Stubs

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 4 (folder)

**Programs and Newsletters**

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Religious Emphasis Program**

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 6 (folder)

**Silver Lake Social Club**

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 7 (folder)

**Unidentified Ephemera**

**box-folder** 1 (box)

**Container** 8 (folder)