

Historical Marker - S655C - John and Horace Dodge / The Dodge Brothers (Marker ID#:S655C)



Front - Title/Description

John and Horace Dodge

Auto barons John (1864-1920) and Horace (1868-1920) Dodge were born and raised in Niles. During the 1830s, their grandfather, Ezekiel, had migrated from Massachusetts to Niles, where he ran a steam engine shop. John and Horace's father, Daniel, operated the business during their youth. The Dodges lived in a small house that stood on this site. John once recalled they "were the most destitute kids in town, often going without shoes in cold weather." The boys spent their free time in the machine shop, developing an interest in mechanics at a young age. In Niles they built their first vehicle--a high wheel bicycle. Upon John's high school graduation in 1882, the family left Niles. However, in 1919, the brothers formed a building and loan association here that built homes for Michigan Central Railroad workers.

Significant Date:

Civil War and After (1860-1875)

Registry Year: 1996 **Erected Date:** 1996

Marker Location

Address: 1724 North Fifth Street

City: Niles

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Berrien

Township: Niles

Lat: 41.84412600 / **Long:** -86.25048700

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

The Dodge Brothers

John and Horace Dodge moved to Detroit with their family in 1886. Already experienced machinists, they worked for several shops in Detroit and Windsor, Canada, until 1901 when they began producing automobile parts. Their first major order came from Ransom Olds of the Olds Motor Company, who ordered three thousand transmissions. In 1903 the Dodge Brothers contracted with Henry Ford for 650 chassis and acquired fifty shares of Ford stock, worth ten thousand dollars. They sold it back to Ford in 1919 for \$25 million. In 1913 they established the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company. Based on the Dodges' reputations, twenty-two thousand people applied for dealerships before the first car rolled off the assembly line of the Hamtramck plant on November 14, 1914. Both brothers died of