

# Cat burglar prowls through 7 homes, nets \$300

A cat burglar struck at least seven homes in the southeast section of the township early Sunday morning, making off with a camera and more than \$300 from women's purses.

The burglar, who in most cases entered homes through unlocked doors, hit two residences on Heather Heath and one each on Alderly Way, Lee Crest, Abington, Tadworth and Cotton-

wood Knoll. West Bloomfield police tracked the burglar's footprints through snowy backyards and across subdivision streets. "He covered an awful large

area and no one saw or heard him," reported West Bloomfield police Cpl. Robert Scott. The burglar made off with one resident's Ford Mustang, which the police

recovered abandoned in the neighborhood several hours later. There are no suspects in the case, according to Scott, "and it doesn't look encouraging at this time."

He said the intrusions "are the simplest kind to prevent. He tried an awful lot of homes and didn't go in because windows and doors were locked."

## Book tells about John Dodge's link to mansion

There's a legacy at Meadow Brook Hall that not many people are familiar with.

Most know that the 100-room Tudor mansion was commissioned by Matilda and Alfred Wilson in the late 1920s as their permanent home. Not many know, however, that the history of Meadow Brook estates began years earlier not by the Wilsons, but by John Dodge.

Because of this lack of knowledge about the involvement of Dodge with Meadow Brook, his grand-



John Dodge (above) bought the land for Meadow Brook Hall, according to the new book on his life and involvement with Meadow Brook estates.

daughter, Fredericka Van Lennep Caldwell, underwrote the cost of a 29-page book "The John Dodge Story."

"Meadow Brook, now a monument, would never really have existed if it were not for the inventiveness, intelligence and good fortune of John Dodge, so it is fitting that his story be told for many to read and to understand where all this originated," she said in her forward in the book.

THE SOFT-COVER book, covered with an embossed copy of the bronze bust of Dodge done by AA Weinman at Tiffany Studios, New York City, contains pictures of Dodge and his family and many anecdotes.

Born to a poor family, Dodge and his brother Horace worked closely together, slowly building their fortunes. After the death of his first wife, according to the story, when Dodge was still penniless, Matilda Roush, 24 and daughter of a Detroit saloon keeper and a graduate of Gossline Business College, came to work as a secretary for the red-haired man.

AFTERWARDS, Dodge's wealth began to grow with the Dodge production of the Ford car chassis. By the time Ms. Roush and Dodge were married in 1907, he was a wealthy man. The book tells how Dodge purchased the land for Meadow Brook and how he renovated the farmhouse and built the clubhouse with its indoor swimming pool.

It also provides a description of the Tudor home the Dodges began building in Grosse Pointe. But when Dodge died in 1920, after contracting pneumonia, Matilda Dodge halted the construction of that home.

Later, after she was married to Alfred Wilson and they decided to build a home on the Meadow Brook estate, it was Mrs. Wilson, the former Mrs. Dodge, who fashioned the same type of home that Dodge had planned for their home.

THE BOOK is on sale at Meadow Brook Hall for \$1.50. Proceeds are donated to the preservation of the non-profit hall.

Anyone interested in viewing the book as well as the hall itself can take Sunday tours from 1-5 p.m., with the last tour at 4 p.m. Admission is \$3.50 for adults and \$2 for children under 13 years of age or for seniors older than 64.

Dining is available in conjunction with the tours. Visitors will be able to see the John Dodge archives, which grandson John VanLennep set up in the summer of 1977.

The bust of Dodge, which is on the cover of the book, is also on display. It's located in the Wilson study.

Meadow Brook Hall in Avon Township is located on the campus of Oakland University. Visitors should enter Meadow Brook off Adams Road south of Walton Boulevard.

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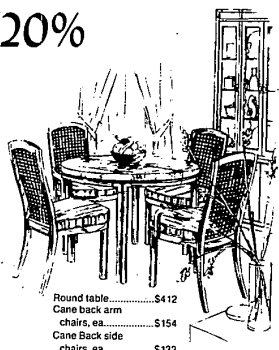
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