

The Rufus Dodge Maples

Fort Atkinson

The line of maple trees just at the edge of McCoy Park in Fort Atkinson was planted by Rufus Dodge, one of the early settlers. Dodge and his family immigrated from New York in 1837 and started farming about a mile west of the city on Highway 12. At that time the highway was known as the Territorial Road and connected Fort Crawford in Prairie du Chien with Mineral Point and Milwaukee.

Dodge married Rebecca Foster, sister of Dwight Foster, the city's first settler, and indulged his love of

trees by planting a row of maple seedlings along his road. People are still enjoying their beauty and shade.

One of the trees is irregular in shape because of a shooting accident. A relative of Dodge's shot at some blackbirds sitting in the tree and tore away a number of branches. The gap is still noticeable.

Also on the Dodge property is a pear tree, planted over 100 years ago, that is still bearing fruit.

Sources: Hannah Swart, Fort Atkinson
Tom Kramp, Fort Atkinson



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R. D. Durbin (1981)