

Preface

This book is about the descendants of John Dorcy, Civil War soldier, and Mary Ellen Carroll and their families, many of which lived in Skagit and Whatcom counties in Washington State since the turn of the century.

After a chapter on the history of the Dorcy family in Ireland, the first three generations are presented as separate families, each in their own chapter. From the fourth generation on each of the direct descendants of the Civil War Soldier is printed in bold type and each person has number beside their name which denotes their generation, the Civil War soldier being generation one (1). The generation numbers correspond to the numbers in the descendency chart in appendix B. Also, each successive generation is indented for ease of identification.

Marriage and birth years are shown in the text when known. In general marriages which ended in divorce and produced no descendants are not included.

The sources of our information are many and varied. Instead of citing the sources in the text as a well written book should do, we have included what are called family group sheets. Each set of family group sheets contains the husband, wife and children of that marriage as well as the sources of the information about them. The family group sheets for the first three generations are in appendix B in this book and an explanation of their use and content is provided there.

The reader may find some discrepancy in ages from one source to another for the same individual. In one place it may say John Dorcy was born in 1832 and in another it may say 1833. The census records are particularly inconsistent in recording ages from one census to another taken ten years later. The fact is people's memories are sometimes faulty, or it may be the handwriting was not clear, or simply errors in copying. If other facts show that an individual is who we think he or she is, we have to simply overlook the discrepancies in age.

About names - we have found that there are many ways to spell a name and in researching the many records over the years we have come to accept the several ways to spell even "simple" names. None of our names escape the mangling of the record keepers. An example is the various spellings used in the John Dorcy letters (see appendix A) which were probably written by several different people. Literacy was not as widespread in the early years as it is today, and the letter writer probably listened to John Dorcy's pronunciation of his name, spoken by one whose native language was probably Gaelic, and just did the best he could. Even in Poplar Grove National Cemetery the sign noting the location of John Dorsay's grave and the grave itself differ in the spelling of Dorcy. In many cases we have used the actual spelling found in the records, so one can see the various spellings that are brought about by the phonetic translations that occurred.

The writers would welcome any additions or corrections to these records.

