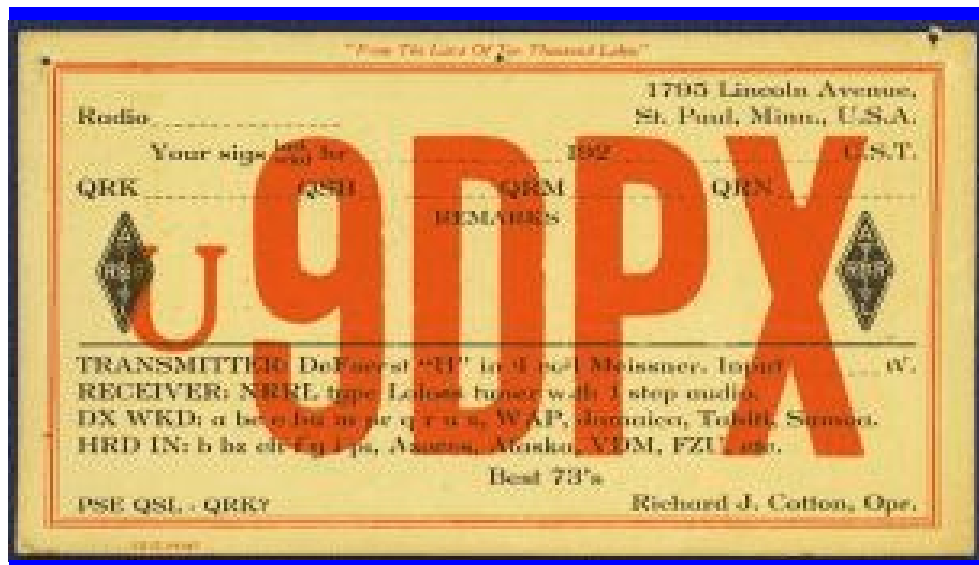


**W8DX - 9DPX Radio Inspector Richard J. Cotton \*1905-1995\*** Dick a former FCC engineer in charge at the Detroit Field Office, expired 29 July 1995, in Detroit. He was 90 years old.



Richard was first licensed in the spark era the year 1917 and issued 9DPX - He was proud of his O O T C membership Number 1613. In the twenties he became W8LEC and eventually W8DX.

An active DX'er (331 Mixed as of 1986) He was one

of the first amateurs on the Oscar satellites and held satellite DXCC. His successor as EIC of the Detroit Office, Ed Atems W8BX remembered Cotton as someone who got on amateur television by winding his own deflection yoke coil.

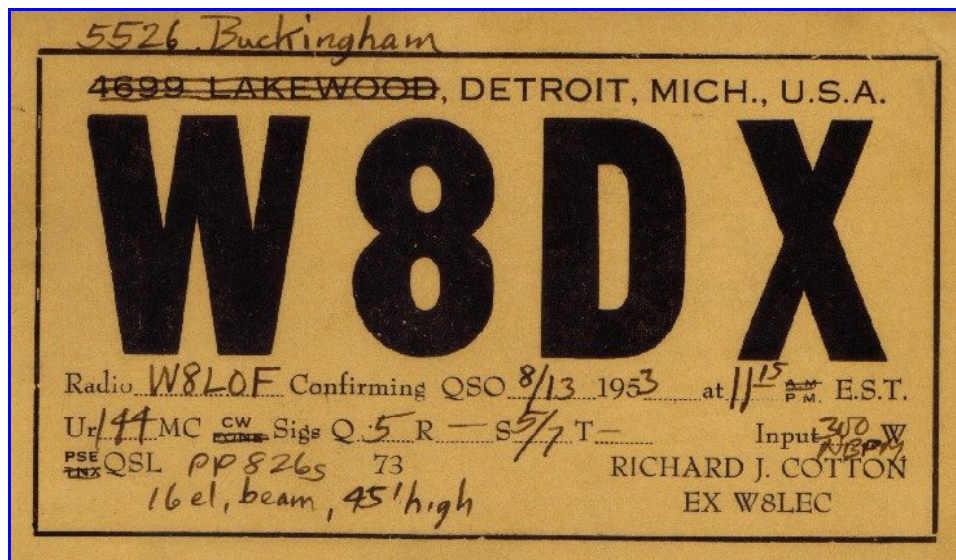
Dick graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in “radio engineering.” He attended university in the 1920s and was a relief operator on cargo ships. He had a lot of interesting stories to tell of his foreign travels and shipboard operating as 9DPX. With a wonderful knowledge of geography, Dick would have no trouble recognizing the national flags of foreign ships passing on the Detroit River in the view from the FCC on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of the Federal Building, WQ4L John Reiser said.

Following a stint at a US Govt monitoring station on Mt. Hood, Oregon, Dick joined the Federal Radio Commission’s Detroit office in the early 1930's. Legendary, no-nonsense, terse, stiff necked, archly. The titles still come in this very day about Radio Inspector Cotton.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol had an individual signal number devoted to R.I. Cotton when he came on station to inspect the two way radio’s. The Patrol Post would hurriedly call district headquarters and say Signal 46, signal 7. Meaning R.I. is on station, Chief Technician come immediately. The R.I. in the beginning could usually find a FM transmitter out of tolerance and write them up. He respected the Columbus OSHP HQ and usually didn’t raise any issues with them.

It was also said, concerning R.I. Richard Cotton “If ever there were a face to the Federal Communications Commission, it was this man: stern, imposing, black-suited. He collected the form 610's from a hand full of quivering, fearful civilians and allowed the clattering, paper tape machine to send a series of shrill “V’s” “Hear it Okay?” He would ask, spearing extra, inefficient words. Dick retired in 1971 - An impression from your author, I never had contact with him in my duties on the western side of Ohio in the State Highway Patrol. Sometimes I wondered if he would show up before he or I retired! Yet he was one of us and a great Dx'er both HF and VHF/UHF - Continued

One of Dick's nautical assignments was "The S.S. Liberty Bell" - radio call KUIJX was laid down for the U.S. Shipping board in 1920 at the A.I. Shipbuilding Co Pennsylvania. 5590 gross tons at 390 feet long, designation; cargo vessel. Steam engine single screw, service speed 10 knots. On charter to Amr. Premier Line, sold to British Ministry in 1941 and renamed SS Empire Mahseer, installed as a cargo ship for Ministry of War UK service and torpedoed by U160 commanded by Capt Georg Lassen. CDR Lassen would sink a record 30 plus British and U.S. ships. U130 would be destroyed herself by British war ships in 14 July 1943.



Thus the SS Liberty Bell was one of Cotton's shipboard experiences, luckily he had other employment before the fateful day when she was torpedoed. I wonder if he ever learned the fate of the SS Liberty Bell AKA Empire Mahseer?

John Reiser said "Dick was also

interested in VHF/UHF operations and amateur TV and constructed his own equipment." He told us that of investigating reports of a mysterious unlicensed TV station in Flint Mich - during the mid 1950's built entirely by a high school student. The station was supposed to be closed circuit with a transmission line from the small RF modulator to a receiver in another part of the house. Yet there was sufficient radiation from the line so a number of homes in Flint could pick the signal.

At the same time there were no TV stations in Flint and most homes had tall poles on their roofs with high gain antennas to pickup Detroit stations located about 75 miles to the south. Dick Cotton was so impressed that he decided to build his own amateur TV station entirely from scratch...

Some of the Ohio Highway Patrol technicians remember Dick coming on station and checking frequency tolerances to the letter. Many low band channels were perfect, others were off frequency that would require a FCC pink slip. If it were an unlucky day for you Cotton would ask you how do you derive the actual power input from that transmitter? You would be greatly embarrassed if you didn't remember the old formula plate input power was plate voltage times plate current.

Dick had a lot of well known amateur friends such as John Krauss W8JK and General Windom W8GZ. He and I (Reiser) would go together to the Dayton Ham Convention in its early days to give ham license tests there. Cotton is still a fond subject of many today.

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