



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 OOTC 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. 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 Office on the 10th 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.

Some described 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 - 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 - He is still mentioned today. w8su 2007