

Scott

LOCAL HISTORY  
BOX COLLECTION  
FILE

Andrew Scott  
M. Johnson  
P. D.

RETURN IN FIVE DAYS TO  
HENRY N. WEBB  
R. P. D. NO. 1  
DEWITT, MICHIGAN



Scott

LOCAL HISTORY  
COLLECTION  
FILE  
BOX

Slanson, Montcalm Co., Mich  
Friday May 15<sup>th</sup> 1914

Dear Friends

Wm Scott.

I was somewhat surprised to get a letter from one I never saw but glad to hear from you just the same. I remember you father well, but it was 40 years ago before the war, but I would like to see him & you and family also. I am a farmer got good small farm 60 acres, all paid for & out of debt. I have lived up here most 40 years, I have 4 boys & 4 girls all married but 1 girl <sup>a teacher</sup> 23 years old & a boy 28, a carpenter & single I would like to see you & your Father. Come & see me when you can over

Scott

I have never hear from any of  
you since I came up here & I  
how little Baron ones ones to  
Sheridan. I saw your Uncle  
Baron in Stanton over 30 years  
ago, and I never knew where  
he went, I did not know as  
Hulda, was old, I remember  
her well and Uncle Levi & Aunt  
Martha & Big John & Vinney  
and Willis Elbridge and all  
the old stock. Now in regard to  
your Uncle James Scott, I  
don't know any thing about  
him I never heared of him  
I was a small boy when your  
Grandma (Hulda) married  
John Scott, so you see I don't  
know any thing about the  
business. Wish I did I would  
help you all I could. will  
tell close close, Com, as youd gain  
every time from Simon B. Cummings  
Stanton Mich R. 4.

Scott

State of Michigan, &c. On the third day of  
January of Clinton August A.D. one thousand  
 and eight hundred and fifty two, personally appeared  
 before me a Justice of the Peace within  
 and for the County and State aforesaid,  
 Elanissa Scott aged forty six years  
 a resident of Deloit in the County  
 of Clinton and State of Michigan  
 who being duly sworn according to  
 law, deposes that she is the widow  
 of David Scott who was a seafarer  
 in the last war with Great Britain  
 and who was granted the sum  
 of one hundred and  
 sixty acres of Land, which said  
 warrant was not issued until after  
 the death of her said husband,

She further states that she was mar-  
 ried to the said David Scott in the  
 Township of Sims in the  
 County of Washburn and State  
 of Michigan on the nineteenth day  
 of April A.D. 1841 by one  
 Mahlon Wards a Justice of the Peace  
 within and for said County and State  
 and that her name before her said  
 marriage was Elanissa Stevens, and  
 that her said Husband died at Deloit  
 in the County and State aforesaid on  
 the seventh day May A.D. 1851  
 and that she is still a widow.

That she herewith returns the said  
 warrant issued to her husband and asks  
 that a warrant be issued in its stead  
 in her name, and she further states  
 that the said David Scott had no  
 children living at the time of his  
 death.

Elanissa Scott

I have read and subscribed before me this third  
 day of July A.D. 1852 and I further certify that  
 I was acquainted with the said David Scott in  
 his life time also that Elanissa Scott has cohabited  
 with Scott as his lawful wife for six years to  
 my knowledge. Robert Clark Justice of the Peace

Scott

May 11, 1992

## DeWitt remembered: 1906 Charity Pearse essay faulty

By KEN COIN

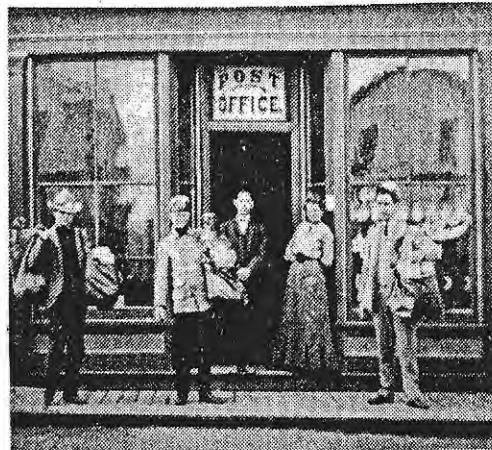
Last week I shared with you an excerpt from an old newspaper regarding DeWitt in 1906. Excuse my bad manners; I mentioned Thelma Grinold but failed to thank her. Thank you, Thelma!

That was a lesson in courtesy. Always say "Thank you." But this week's article is actually a lesson in history — don't believe everything you read.

My main concern when agreeing to write a column was that I might write something that is incorrect. Now, I have no problem admitting that I'm wrong, but I do have a problem with writing something incorrect which is taken by the public as truth and goes uncorrected.

Case in point — the 1906 newspaper which Thelma shared. It contains an article (essay style) written by Charity L. Pearce (1848-1919). I had seen the article before and pasted into several old scrapbooks but I never knew where it came from. I have always had the greatest regard for Mrs. Pearce's abilities (80 to 100 years ago) as both a record keeper for many area organizations as well as her detailed accounts of area happenings as DeWitt's correspondent (under the pen name of "Nonsense") to the county newspaper. She was also an accurate local historian — Not!

What she did in her essay of the founding of DeWitt was to actually rewrite a more obscure essay written several years earlier by David Scott, a son of Captain David Scott who founded DeWitt. That alone I can live with but she fell into the trap so prevalent at the turn of the century and that was to embellish the story, making it just a tad more dramatic than the original. (The original being about as exciting as a jar of mayonnaise). This too I can deal with. These are the venial sins. But then, the unforgivable, she interwove fragments of other stories. Gasp.



DEWITT POST OFFICE — 1906 — The post office in DeWitt in 1906 as it appeared in the Clinton Republican Golden Anniversary edition. Charles W. Webb is standing in the doorway.

Now I'm sure that this was all done with innocent intentions and who knows, maybe she was merely a victim of an editorial hatchet job (no offense, Al). But, whatever the case, her version of DeWitt's founding has now been clipped and saved, read and believed, and itself plagiarized by generations of school children (and being one of them, I know this for a fact).

The sad irony is she could just as well have written her own story as a daughter of a pioneer family and left David Scott's story stand as his own. As proficient a writer as she was, she undoubtedly could have written a fascinating story.

So, if you happen to come across her essay in your grandmother's scrapbook, read it, but don't believe it. And as for my articles? The same. Enjoy them. But if you want to judge their accuracy — go to the source.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.

# Celebrate Clinton County Sesqui

## Capt. David Scott was early explorer, settler in DeWitt

*Editor's Note: In celebration of the sesquicentennial of Clinton County, the Clinton County News in cooperation with the Clinton County Historical Society and Clinton County Archives will present weekly features about individuals and happenings in Clinton County from years ago.*

*Following is this week's feature, written by Ken Coin, about Captain David Scott.*

By KEN COIN

Captain David Scott, the leader of the first permanent settlement in Clinton County, was born in Litchfield, Conn., on Nov. 1, 1779. According to information recorded by his sons the captain was orphaned at a young age and was forced to fend for himself. Aside from this, nothing has been learned of his early life.

He served in the 23rd regiment, U.S. Infantry during the War of 1812, and an interesting item that appears in his federal military record is a reprimand, apparently from using some of the men who served under him to work his farm during "off time." During the war he attained the rank of captain, an appellation he would retain the rest of his life. His contemporaries more often referred to him as "Capt. Scott," or simply "the Captain" than by his given name.

In the spring of 1833, Nathaniel Brown, Charles Thayer, Capt. Scott, with a surveyor named Stratton as a guide took an extensive trip on horseback through central Michigan, to view the government lands with the intention of locating some choice tracts for purchase. This party traveled north out of Ann Arbor into Shiawassee County, then west along the north bank of the Looking Glass River on the Indian trail that would soon become the Pontiac-Grand River Trail.

THEY PASSED through the Indian village of Wab-wahnaseepee (where DeWitt now stands) to the larger village of Shim-ne-con (near Portland). Here the party turned north and continued to the trading post at the mouth of the Maple River (now Lyons) then followed the Grand River to Ionia (which was settled by the Dexter party in May of 1833). Apparently the Captain failed to see any land which pleased him as well as that in the vicinity of Wab-wahnaseepee, because at Ionia he parted company with his companions and returned to the trading post of William Hunt at the mouth of the Maple River.

The Captain induced his friend Hunt to hire an Indian to guide them to the Indian village where the city of Okemos now stands. From there Scott followed

a trail to Jackson, and then to the government land office at White Pigeon near the Indiana border.

David Scott, Jr., recorded the following narrative regarding his father's journey from Jackson to White Pigeon.

"On his way down from Jackson to White Pigeon, he lost his way and stopped with some Indians all night. As they had been taking plenty of fire water they were very noisy and all but one old squaw were rather hostile towards him. She said a few words to them however, and they quieted down, and she spread a blanket for him and motioned him to lie down, which he did, but not much sleep did he get.

HE COULD NOT talk with the Indians and as soon as he could see in the morning he mounted his pony and started, and as he did not know where to find the trail leading to the settlement, he wandered about for some time. But finally he saw an Indian boy catching a pony and when he came up to him he said to the boy, 'Gemoqua man wigwam.' He knew that meant 'white man's house.' The boy said 'Two shillings' which the Captain gave him. The boy then hopped on his pony and away they went.

Pretty soon the boy turned to one side and when he (Scott) got up to him the boy said, 'Two shillings.' The Captain gave him the amount asked again and on they went for a time, but soon the boy turned out and called for another two shillings, but as the Captain could see a rail fence not far in advance, the boy failed in his last demand and started quickly back for the Indian camp. Without further trouble, he (Scott) reached the land office at White Pigeon."

Captain Scott entered large tracts of land in Clinton County on May 14, 1833. Upon his return to his wife and family at Ann Arbor he concluded a journey of over four hundred miles.

On Oct. 4, 1833, the Scott party, consisting of the Captain, his wife Eunice, two of their youngest sons, and some hired men, arrived at the Indian village of Wab-wahnaseepee and began the laborious task involved in establishing a homestead so far in the wilderness.

THE CAPTAIN played a dominant role in the settlement of southern Clinton County and the development of the county as a whole. His initial log home, located on the Pontiac-Grand River Trail, soon became a well-known stopping over place for settlers coming into central Michigan. Many of these were induced at "Scott's" to stay and put down stakes in or near his settlement. He held many township and county offices and most early meetings of each group were held under his roof. He donated land to the county for an office building and jail, and DeWitt's



Photograph courtesy of Faye Hanson Public Library  
THE CLINTON HOUSE was built in DeWitt by Capt. David Scott during 1841-1842. It was located on the southwest corner of Bridge and Main Streets.

first post office was located in his home for many years.

Following the death of his wife Eunice in 1840, he began parcelling out most of his large land holdings to his children. He platted the village of DeWitt in 1841, but much of the land was actually that of his youngest son Charles. During the same time he also began construction of a marvelous hotel, the famous Clinton House, but that too would soon be handed over to Charles.

On April 19, 1841, Captain Scott was married a second time, in Washtenaw County, to Mrs. Clarissa Stephens (or Stevens) of Lima. Some sources from the 1840s indicate that they lived in the Clinton House for a time, until it was sold out from under him in 1846.

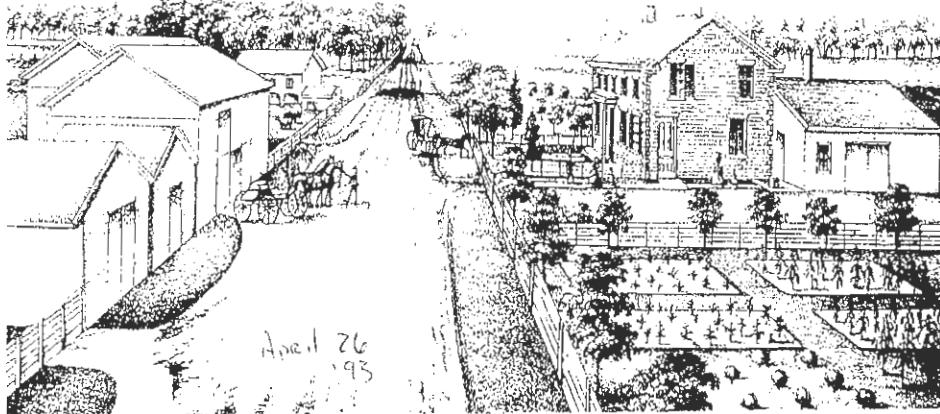
A LETTER from the period reports: "Charles Scott has sold the Tavern to Milo Turner and the Captain is as mad as you ever see anything and swears that he will never leave the house till he is carried out." Following this, the Captain, Clarissa, and her daughter Helen, took up residence in his former hotel and store building on South Bridge Street. Here he remained until his death, May 7, 1851. He was buried in that portion of the DeWitt cemetery which had been the original Scott family burial ground.

In 1916, the Clinton County Pioneer Society placed a large boulder on which was affixed a bronze plaque which read, "Captain David Scott — Made First Permanent Settlement at DeWitt, Oct. 4, 1833. 1778-1851."



Photograph by Ken Coin  
MARKER — The monument honoring Capt. David Scott was erected in DeWitt Cemetery by the Clinton County Pioneer Society in 1916.

Scott



Scott

DEWITT REMEMBERED — An old lithograph of the farm and imposing cobblestone home of Rufus and Lamira (Scott) Knight near Ann Arbor. Source unknown, ca. 1870. Courtesy of Myron "Knip" Knight.

## Scott sisters were collectively known as 'Mrs. Rufus Knight'

By KEN COIN

Several weeks ago I shared one of the secrets of the Scott family — the Captain's other wife. This week, another secret, or rather a mystery regarding two of the Captain's daughters. Individually these daughters were named Sally and Lamira. Collectively they were known as "Mrs. Rufus Knight".

In 1983 myself and one of the Captain Scott's great-great-granddaughters, Dorothy Scott, tried to piece together a genealogy of DeWitt's founding family which was no small undertaking. We managed fairly well tracking down descendants of the three Scott sons who came with their parents to DeWitt in 1833, but as to any of their other children, all we had to go on was a statement by David Jr. which read that his parents had 13 children of which he mentioned the three sons who came to DeWitt: Sylvester, David and Charles and three daughters: Susan, Lamira and Sally of which he didn't elaborate any further.

Then, about 10 minutes before our manuscript was due to the printers I was working at the dining room table in my house on Scott street when I heard the squeal of brakes and saw a big cloud of dust out front. The big Lincoln had hardly come to a complete stop when out popped a white-haired gentleman who bounced up the porch and banged on my door.

"Hi! I'm Knip Knight" he said (as if he were merely reminding me). Then without bothering to inhale he proceeded to explain to me that he was just passing through town, saw Scott street and my old house and wondered if maybe I knew anything about his ancestors, the Scotts. Well tie me up and poke me with a stick; I hadn't been so shocked since I found out that Ward and Jane Cleaver weren't really married.

He on the other hand seemed unphased when I ushered him in and showed him that his family history was strewn from one end of the room to the other — as if this would have been a standard feature of any DeWitt home. But as he began rattling off the top of his head what he knew of his branch of the Scotts, I became even more surprised. The names he was using were DeWitt people which I never would have associated as being one of the lost tribes of Scotts.

On June 15, 1833, as the Scott family was making preparations in Ann Arbor for their journey into the wilderness, their daughter Sally died from complications of childbirth. Her father, Captain Scott, has only recently returned from his tour of Central Michigan and was full of enthusiasm for the prospects that awaited them. But now, Sally's death would have to set back their departure.

Sally had married Washtenaw pioneer Rufus Knight about 1827 and had bore him three children, the last one causing her death. Her younger sister Lamira had planned to accompany the parents into the wilderness but now it was decided that it would probably be best if she stayed behind for a time to help care for her dead sister's three children. I suspect that her older brother Sylvester's wife, Sophronia, also stayed on at the Knight homestead as she did not come to DeWitt that first year either.

The situation worked out well; so well in fact that within a short time (a very short time), Lamira took over completely where her sister Sally had left off and also married Rufus Knight. In 1848, she and Rufus began work on the house pictured above which was completed in 1849 and has remained to this day one of the architectural showplaces of southern Michigan. It is of cobblestone. Not rocks or fieldstone but precisely set stones of uniform size and shape. A rarity in Michigan, such houses were all the rage in the Scott's old home of western New York where the digging of the Erie canal had offered an unlimited supply of stone for the sorting and taking.

As an aside — if you don't think Lamira's family in DeWitt was impressed by her new home, check out the foundation of her younger brother David's house here in DeWitt at 609 W. Main (the pretty yellow house with the fancy roof brackets). Hidden behind the evergreen bushes is an architectural rarity of Clinton County — not the usual split rocks but precisely set stones, each about the size of a baseball.

The puzzling aspect of the Knight family as it relates to the Scotts is that Rufus and Sally's son David Knight (named after his grandfather) came to DeWitt as a young man and is counted among the early settlers of the area. He settled on land in section 1 of DeWitt Township at the southeast corner of Krepps and Round Lake road. He and wife Susan raised a large family there and were counted among the socially prominent people of DeWitt for many decades along with his Scott uncles, aunts and cousins. Yet, not once during the next hundred and some odd decades was it ever recorded that the Knights too were descendants of the town founders, Capt. David and Eunice Scott.

As the history of the Scott family is continuously in the works if anyone out there has any information on the Knight family (their children included Byron, Ida (Mrs. Reuben Brink), Florence, Ira, Willie, Eva and Julius) we're waiting to here from you.

Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.

## Written history of Scott family is scant at best

By KEN COIN

It's rather a peculiar fact that DeWitt's founders, the family of Capt. David Scott, for as instrumental as they were in the town's founding, left very little record of their personal lives. They were a rather tight-lipped family. The records they themselves left for posterity are limited to a general historical essay of the town written about 1890 by David Scott, Jr.; a short interview of about the same date with Sophronia Scott (the Captain's daughter-in-law) regarding the Indian removal of 1839; and a more recent find (which has not yet found its way back to DeWitt) is a letter owned by a Scott Descendant in Arizona written by the Captain in 1838, to his daughter Lamira in Ann Arbor, describing the grizzly death of her brother Sylvester in the DeWitt sawmill.

Later descendants, third and fourth generation, tried to put to paper what they had heard of the family's early years. But by then it was too late; the principle characters had died, taking with them the insignificant trivia which is usually the only thing that makes history interesting.

Many years ago, when I was in Ann Arbor researching another early DeWitt family, I quite accidentally came across a bit of information which even Faye Hanson didn't know. (She was sort of my bench mark — if Faye didn't know it, I knew I had something good.) It was a record of a marriage of Captain Scott, a second marriage in his "Golden Years" which, I was to later discover, even the best genealogist of his own descendants were unaware of.

I have a feeling that the omission of the second Mrs. Scott from the family's record here in DeWitt was quite international. I don't think she was well received by her new step-children, she being more their own age and all. But aside from this being just a tasty bit of food for historical gossip, it serves to possibly answer some questions about Captain Scott's motives for the whirlwind of activity which took place at his town of DeWitt in the early 1840's

The original Mrs. Scott, the former Eunice Forbes/Fobes, and the mother to all the many Scott children, died at the Scott settlement in 1840 (her son David recorded it as May 7 but I think he was mistaken as he also records May 7 as the death date of his father in 1851. But the day is immaterial.)

A year later, on April 19, 1841, Captain Scott was married in Washtenaw county to a widow named Clarissa Stevens — the Mystery Woman. All that is known of her is that she was young, very young; about 33 years old (compared to the Captain who was 61 at the time. She had at least one child, an eight year-old daughter named Helen.

In November of the same year, the Captain had a portion of his vast land holdings surveyed and platted into a village (DeWitt); his first step of competition with the developing village of New Albany on the south side of the river. Also, in the same year, he began the construction of his most notable claim to (local) fame, the Clinton House hotel at the southwest corner of Bridge and Main.

The following year something happened. "What? What?", you ask with baited breath. I don't know; but whatever it was it caused him to turn over nearly all his substantial land holdings, including the Clinton House and the platted village of DeWitt, to his youngest son Charles. Why Charles? Again, I don't know. The Captains' daughters, who lived elsewhere got nothing (they had previously been sold acreage in this area at a bargain price but their story will be forthcoming.); his eldest son Sylvester was dead and his family was to get nothing; David (whom, it has been rumored for these past 150 years was responsible for Sylvester's death at the mill) got very little; but Charles, barely 21 years old, got the whole town, the largest building in mid-Michigan and more wild acreage than he could clear in three lifetimes.

If the Captain had any motives of being able to control his little empire through his young son, he would be sorely disappointed. In 1846, Charles sold the Clinton House to his father's competitor across the river, Milo Turner and daddy was less than pleased. In fact he went berzerk. Within a few weeks

even the old folks back in New York received word that their friend Captain Scott was on the verge of apoplexy. His beloved Clinton House was at the time the Captain's home and his son had sold it out from under him. "He refused to leave", the letters went on, and swore he wouldn't leave until he was carried out in a pine box!

For years I thought this incident was just an exaggeration, he probably didn't literally refuse to leave. But, a few years back, Bonnie Wickerham showed me a small ledger of very old agreements filed in the county's Register of Deeds Office which were too odd to be filed anywhere else and so, they were recorded in this book. One of those agreements was a life lease drawn-up at the time of this incident whereby Captain Scott was given life lease on a room in the Clinton House. The agreement was so specific that it described the location of the room and even gave an inventory of all the pieces of furniture in it which were to remain for his sole use.

And what became of the second Mrs. Scott? I don't know but if she came to DeWitt digging for gold she left with precious little. After the Captain's death in 1851, she and her daughter were living in one of the few pieces of property he had kept, another sort of hotel/mercantile building at the southeast corner of Bridge and Washington. In 1852, she apparently got wind of the application for bounty land which the Captain had filed as a bonus for his services during the war of 1812. She hired attorney Randolph Strickland to fire off a letter to Washington requesting that if such a bounty were granted, it should be put in her name. Whether or not she got it, the following year she sold her residence to Dr. John Bacon and departed DeWitt for parts unknown.

There are countless secrets interred in the DeWitt cemetery. Most of them are probably better left buried. After all, what family doesn't have its ups and downs. But it's still fun to dig one up now and then.

*Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.*

SCOTT

# Community

## DeWitt remembered:



Courtesy photo

THE WOLVERINE CONNECTION - Pioneers of a later generation, the log homestead of Mark and Emma (Moon) Scott still stands guard on a hilltop north of Wolverine, Michigan. (1983 photograph).

# Michigan town Wolverine has family ties to DeWitt

By KEN COIN

If your vacation takes you to the far north of the Lower Peninsula you might be interested in knowing that DeWitt has much in common with the small town of Wolverine, located about 40 miles south of Mackinaw City.

A close look at road signs and gravestones of the area's cemeteries give clues that the connection is "family" - many of them but too long ago for most to remember.

In the early 1880's, with the loggers leaving much of northern Michigan cleared and available for sale, many second and third generation descendants to DeWitt pioneers were leaving this area to experience for themselves pioneer life in the great north woods. A few, like brothers Elisha C. and Jacob "Sidney" Pike, had earlier joined in the logging operations and through their travels saw first hand some of the land that would soon be made available.

As to the high concentration of DeWitt folks who made their way to the Wolverine area, the Pike brothers appear to be the first and it was probably through their influence that so many more followed. Their sister Altie had married David Scott Jr. and her two maverick sons, Mark and James Scott, soon followed their uncles' lead and each established a hilltop homestead on opposing sides of the Sturgeon River at the settlement of Rondo, north of Wolverine. After them came many more DeWitt folks with names such as Webb, Osgood, McKee, Marshall, Briggs, Thorp and probably many others.

I don't know the real reason the Scott brothers set out to try their hand at pioneer life. If Mark and James went to search of the same excitement and self-fulfillment which their father David and grandfather, Capt. Scott, had experienced in settling DeWitt, I doubt if they ever found it - their "frontier wilderness" was much different. Much of their homesteads had already been cleared by the logging industry which had also left in its path a network of roads, railroads and telegraph lines - all within sight of the Scotts' cabins. Yes, the Scott brothers each built their home of logs, but that was certainly by choice rather than necessity as sawn lumber was then abundant in northern Michigan. And whereas, the Scott settlement at DeWitt in the 1830's was a two-day trip from any form of civilization, these Wolverine homesteads had relatively easy access (by horse or train) to the

commerce of Petoskey or the high society of Harbor Springs and Bay View.

James Scott's home at Wolverine no longer stands but that of Mark and Emma (Moon) Scott is still standing in remarkably good condition. A photograph of the house (now in the possession of Helen Moon) taken nearly 90 years ago by Harry Moon (the Scott's nephew) while visiting there with his parents shows virtually no change over the years. It has been well taken care of and the farm itself, interestingly enough, is the winter home to many of the Mackinaw Island draft horses.

I have been to the house on several occasions, walked its grounds and tried to interpret its message. As a well-preserved example of a late-19th century northern Michigan homestead, it is very beautiful but a remarkable fraud. Yes, it's undoubtedly of that age - but I'm afraid that rather than an example of what a northwoods family would have constructed by necessity - this is a well-planned design of what Mark (and possibly Emma) desired. I think it's quite possible that this was their clever way of achieving their interpretation of the lifestyle they had heard so much about as children but had been born just a little too late to remember themselves.

If that sounds a little too calculated consider how many of us remodel our homes to give them an older, more "established look"; fill our china cupboards full of Depression-glass and Jewell Tea china; dress in poodle skirts and leather jackets and go to a "50's Dance" (even if we're too young to remember the songs or the dance steps); buy brand new oak furniture styled "just like Grandma had". Like many people today who try to convey an illusion of wholesome country lifestyle I think it's probable that the Scotts' could afford to maintain a preferred illusion of the simple pioneer life.

It is private property but if you want to see it for yourself: follow Old 27/Straits Hwy north out of Wolverine - after about a mile you come to Scott road but don't turn on it - another mile on 27 and you turn left at Haakwood (it might be called Watson road, then again, it might not) - go about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a mile until the road ends at Bilder road. Turn right on Bilders, downshift, squeeze the steering wheel, hold your breath and drive straight up the hill. There really is a top to the hill and Mark and Emma's old home is there at the end of the road. (If you wait until the fall color is full you get a double delight.)

*Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.*

## Another chapter in the chronicle of the Scott family



Alta and Lenna Scott - Real life melodrama with tragic ending. Photos courtesy of Ken Coin.

By KEN COIN

By Another DeWitt "Founders Day" has recently passed and in lieu of my droning on about how DeWitt was founded, I'd simply continue with another chapter in the chronicle of the Scott.

Lenna and Ethel, daughters of James and Mary Scott, were born in DeWitt in the early 1870's. After the death of their mother on Christmas Day, 1875, it seemed only natural that the little ones should go to their grandparents' home until their father could find them a new mother. The little girls are doted on by their grandparents, David and Mary Scott. "Indulged" said some; "Spoiled rotten!" maintained others. But as they grew older - well-educated, well-dressed and well-mannered, they were well-received among the smart social sets of DeWitt and Lansing. But there was dark side to their formative years - the absence of their father.

James Scott remarried in 1880, to Sarah Throop, but the newlyweds did not bring the girls back into their new home. Within a few years the couple had begun a young family; still the girls were not called for. In 1884, James and Sarah moved with their children to Wolverine. Lenna and Alta did not go along but remained behind, still at the home of their grandparents.

In 1892, their grandmother Scott, who had raised the young ladies since they were toddlers, suddenly died. It was a tremendous shock to the grandfather, who began to show signs of failing health. It was soon time

for the girls to reverse the tables and begin caring for him. In 1895, while spending the winter at Knoxville, Tennessee with his niece, Agnes (Pike) Fair, David Scott died, leaving Lenna and Alta, both unmarried, to fend for themselves.

Now enters into the picture, a Creole from New Orleans named Placide Reynes'. I haven't a clue where or how he connected up with Lenna Scott but they met and were engaged to be married. In

1896 the Scott sisters went to New Orleans to meet his family and be introduced to Creole society. But the trip did not go as planned. No sooner had the girls arrived when Alta, then 24, became ill and died suddenly.

Instead of the long engagement she had planned, Lenna hurriedly married and stayed in New Orleans where Placide had a jewelry store. From this point, things went from bad to worse. Within a few years Placide shot himself.

Some might have called it suicide, but they would have been quickly corrected by the loyal family who maintained that a gun in the hand and a hole in the brain does not automatically equal suicide.

Having experienced quite enough of New Orleans, Lenna returned to Michigan. Family accounts do not state where she lived or how she supported herself, only that she was a gifted musician and, for a time, a milliner.

But let's recap here: within a matter of a few years Lenna lost the

woman who raised her, the man who raised her, her sister and constant companion and finally her husband. What to do? Lenna went insane. She spent the last half of her life (over 40 years) within the walls of the State Hospital at Traverse City. Following her death in 1957, she was at last reunited with the father who had given her up when she was three years old by being buried with him in the cemetery at Wolverine.

*Ken Coin is a DeWitt resident and the area's primary historian.*

# County pioneer women endured hardships

By KEN COIN

Eunice Forbes was born on Jan. 14, 1780, in Shoreham, Vt. Accounts by her contemporaries and recent research have yielded nothing about her early life.

Even her adult life can only be examined by the circumstances which surrounded her and the hardships she endured.

In 1801, she was married to David Scott, presumably at Shoreham, for it was there that their eldest child was born in 1802.

It is not known if she shared her husband's passion for new frontiers but, nevertheless, early on their life together became one of migration.

They spent many years moving about the western portion of New York State until, in 1825, they brought their family to Ann Arbor in Michigan territory. They remained there until Sept. 28, 1833, when their last move took them to the yet unsettled Clinton County.

This party consisted of Eunice and Captain Scott, two of their sons, David and Charles, a hired man, four yoke of oxen, Brindle, Buck, Spot, and Speckle,

nine cows, young cattle, and one horse.

They also hired two additional men and wagons to assist in carrying needed supplies.

The party followed a newly cut road from Ann Arbor into Shiawassee County where it intersected the trail cut by the Dexter party several months earlier.

They brought a tent for sleeping as there were no inns along the six day journey.

On Oct. 4, they arrived at their destination, the Indian village of Wabahnaseepee on the Looking Glass River, now known as DeWitt.

Their temporary quarters in that village was an elm bark longhouse, about 15 foot square, constructed of saplings bowed and tied at their tops and then covered with strips of elm bark.

There were bunks on two sides of the house and a fire pit in the center of the dirt floor. A hole in the middle of the roof sometimes allowed the smoke to exit.

Eunice was undoubtedly relieved, given these initial accommodations, that an immediate concern of the men was in building a more permanent home.

They had brought with them from Ann Arbor, two doors and several windows but, as the nearest

sawmill was at Pontiac or Ann Arbor, logs for the structure were fell on Oct. 5 and 6 and the flooring and shingles also had to be produced by hand.

By mid-November, the 20 to 25 feet square log house was completed and it was later recorded, "The occasion was one of great rejoicing."

All hardships considered, Eunice's life in the wilderness was probably more comfortable than many of the area's pioneer women. But her comfort, was amid isolation.

A doctor was a four day journey to and from Dexter, a preacher came only once a month, shopping was a week's trip to Pontiac, schooling was not available for her sons, Indians were her closest neighbors, and travelers her closest friends.

Eleven children are said to have been born to Eunice and Captain Scott but, to date, only six of them have been identified.

Three sons, Sylvester, David, and Charles came to their parents homestead in DeWitt, three daughters did not. Of the daughters, Susan (formerly mistaken as Ellen), the eldest child, married Col. Norman Perry in 1825 and immediately moved to Macomb County where they reared a large family.

Sarah (Sally) married a prosperous Ann Arbor miller and farmer, Rufus Knight. They had three children before dying on June 15, 1833, shortly before her parents move to Clinton County.

Another daughter, Lamira, also remained in Ann Arbor at the home of her brother-in-law, Rufus Knight, whom she eventually married in 1835. They had two children.

Although they did not make Clinton County their home, Rufus and Lamira (Scott) Knight did purchase property here, 200 acres in Olive and DeWitt Townships by 1842.

David Knight Rufus' son by Sarah Scott, came here to homestead his father's property in the early 1850's.

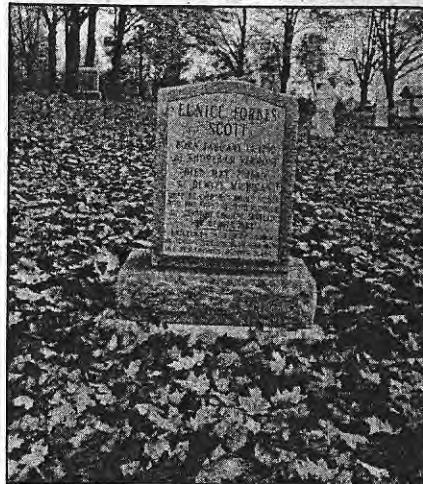
All of Eunice's three sons who came to Clinton County had moderately large families, but it is only the descendants of her grandson, David Knight, who remained in the county up to the present.

Eunice died at Scott's as DeWitt was then called, according to family sources of May 7, 1840, and was buried in the Scott family burial ground which later became the DeWitt Cemetery.

Her grave remained unmarked until 1983 when a monument was erected in her honor as an observance of DeWitt's sesquicentennial.

Besides the birth and death information it is inscribed: "Eunice (Forbes) Scott, wife of Captain David Scott and the First Woman Pioneer of Clinton County, settled at DeWitt, 1833."

It was erected by the Clinton County Historical Society, dedicated with her descendants, Oct. 8, 1983.



Courtesy photograph  
EUNICE SCOTT — This monument to Eunice (Forbes) Scott was erected in the DeWitt Cemetery by the Clinton County Historical Society in 1983.

Scott

Scott

## Charles Scott was son of early pioneer family in Clinton County

(Continued from page 1A)

name the lots which he did not own, rather than those which he did.

He apparently profited well from his business transactions for the home he built on his farm west of town in the mid-1840s (still standing at 1300 Schavey Road) was for its time and location, a marvel of Greek revival architecture, both inside and out.

On July 6, 1843, Charles was married to Julia Terry, a native of New York. They settled on a 200 acre farm, west of DeWitt and bounded on the west by the Looking Glass River.

It had previously been the homestead of Franklin and Jerusia Oliver. The following information regarding the homestead was recorded by J. Esther (Webb) Williams, a granddaughter of Charles and Julia Scott.

"My grandfather built a log house ... near the mill (one built by Franklin Oliver which never operated correctly) had stood near a spring. The spring water was as clear as crystal and was used for drinking and cooking. Later, a large sturdy house was built about half a mile to the east where a road had been cut through (Schavey Road).

"In my grandmother's day the wool needed was spun and carded and put in skeins on swifts and reels. The wood ashes were put in barrels standing on slanting platforms and each day a bucket of water was poured in each one and the lye ladled off into a

bucket to make soft soap from fat trimmings from pork butchered in the fall.

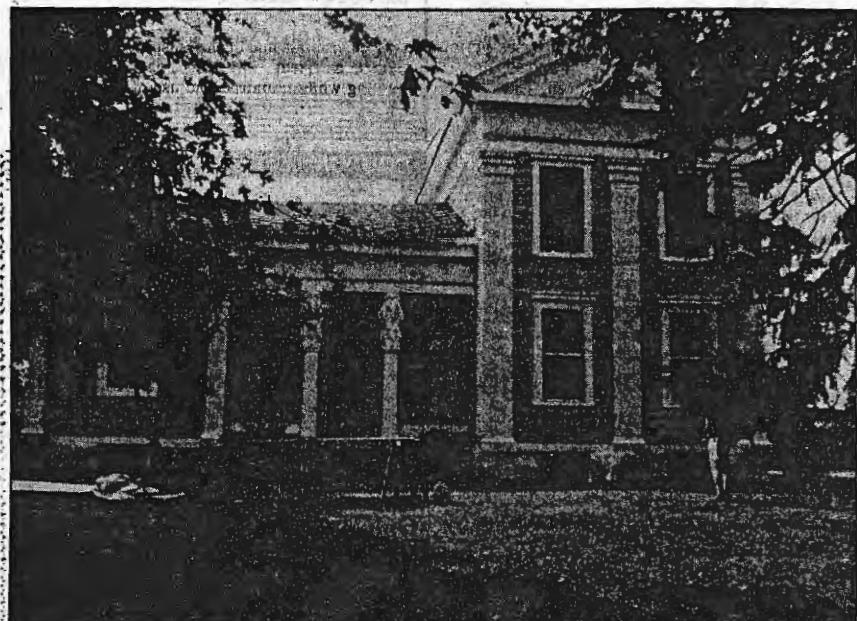
"In the fall, about six hogs were butchered and the hams and shoulders cured and smoked. Side pork was put in strong brine and spare ribs, a great treat, could be kept for some time as some rooms in the house were closed off and sometimes froze."

Charles and Julia had four daughters which they reared on this farm. All married local men and three of them married Webb boys from a nearby farm.

Although many descendants live in central Michigan, none are known to still live in the DeWitt area.

On May 21, 1861, Charles died at the young age of 41, from undetermined causes. Julia remained on the homestead for many years, eventually retiring to the village of DeWitt to live her remaining days with her daughters. She died there in 1906.

**Next week's CCN sesqui feature: renovation of a Victorian home in Ovid. In future issues: salute to early Mexican settlers**



PIONEER HOME — The home of Charles and Julia (Terry) Scott was built in the early 1840s. It is located at 1300 Schavey Road, DeWitt.

Courtesy photograph

# Times were hazardous for early pioneer settlers and their children in wilderness of Clinton County

*Editors' Note: In celebration of the sesquicentennial of Clinton County, the Clinton County News in cooperation with the Clinton County Historical Society and the Clinton County Archives is presenting weekly features about individuals and happenings in Clinton County from years ago.*

*Following is this week's feature, written by Ken Coin of DeWitt, about Charles Scott and Eunice (Forbes) Scott.*

By KEN COIN

Charles Scott, youngest and perhaps least remembered son of Capt. David and Eunice Scott, was born in Genesee County, New

York, on Dec. 16, 1819, and accompanied his parents to Ann Arbor in 1825.

He was only a young boy of 13 when he came with them to Clinton County in 1833, settling at the Indian village of Wabahnaseepee (now DeWitt).

If he was filled with the same thirst for adventure, typical in most boys, his teenage years surely must have offered wonder and excitement.

There would have been little enough time for fun, however, as hard work even for boys was always the agenda for the day.

Yet, loneliness, too, must have entered his youth as his brother, David, and perhaps a few Indian-

lads were the only youths in the area close to his age.

**FOLLOWING THEIR** arrival to Clinton County, as winter set in, it was a constant concern to keep the precious livestock fed on what could be obtained by cutting down trees in order that the animals could feed from the tender ends of the branches.

The livestock became so accustomed to this that merely the sound of an axe would bring them running.

When spring came, it was equally important to keep the livestock out of the low greening marshes, lest they become mired in the mud.

One set of oxen was lost in this manner. If this were not enough to

keep young boys busy, the livestock, apparently not as dumb as they looked, soon realized two things.

First, their range was for all practical purposes endless, and secondly, the feed had been better back in Ann Arbor and there was nothing stopping them from returning there.

On one occasion, the oxen set off to the west and it took Charles' older brother, Sylvester, the hired man, and a hired Indian six days on foot to chase them down.

**AT THE SAME** time, as if preplanned, the cattle started home to Ann Arbor. Charles and his brother, David, were dispatched after them.

The boys followed the cattle into Shiawassee County where they were able to overtake and herd them back all in one day, walking about 54 miles to accomplish this feat.

As an adult, Charles was closely associated with the business dealings of his father. He became the actual owner of DeWitt's famous Clinton House and much of the lands and plotted lots in and about the village.

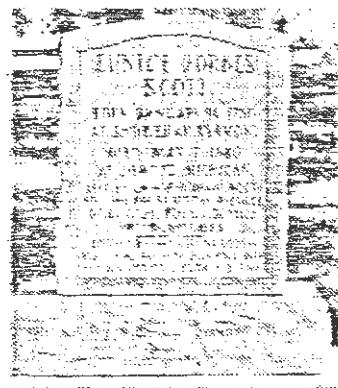
He was the owner, in fact, of so much village land during the 1840s, the tax assessment records of the period reveal that the tax collectors found it easier to list under his

(Continued on page 10A)

## Historic DeWitt

By Kenneth Coin

It is often an unfortunate oversight of history and historians to shower an individual with esteem and gratitude for an accomplishment of historical significance while at the same time overlooking the spouse and



family which supported, encouraged or even contributed to the accomplishment. Such is the case of the family of Capt. David Scott, in particular, his wife, Eunice Scott.

Last year, on Oct. 8, to correct this situation, the Clinton County Historical Society dedicated a monument honoring the individual and supportive accomplishment of Mrs. Scott. Local history has not treated her fairly in recording her life and deeds. She died at an early date in DeWitt's history (May 7, 1840) and except for limited references to her in Scott family histories and local histories, very few facts are known.

She was born Eunice Forbes in Shoreham, Vermont during the Revolutionary War, on January 14, 1780. Her childhood years as well as the identity of her parents remains unknown. In 1801 she married David Scott whose own early years are as much of a mystery.

Following the War of 1812 (in which David Scott served and achieved the rank of Captain) the Scott family moved to western New York and settled a homestead on land known as "The Holland Purchase." This homestead, located in Genesee county between the present towns of Covington and LeRoy, had to be forfeited after many years of hard work and improvements because of a faulty title. With little compensation for their efforts the Scotts moved on, in 1825, to the territory of Michigan and settled upon a piece of wilderness land near Ann Arbor. Here they were to remain until 1833 when Capt. Scott, opting for another home in the wilderness, moved the family to Clinton County. Only a few months after the death of a daughter in Ann Arbor, Eunice was compelled to leave what little comforts in life they had achieved, as well as her only grandchildren and another young daughter, and again

break a trail into the wild forests of the frontier.

Eunice set up housekeeping in an elm-bark long house, on loan from the local Indians of Wabwahnahseepee. She remained there for one month until a log cabin could be built.

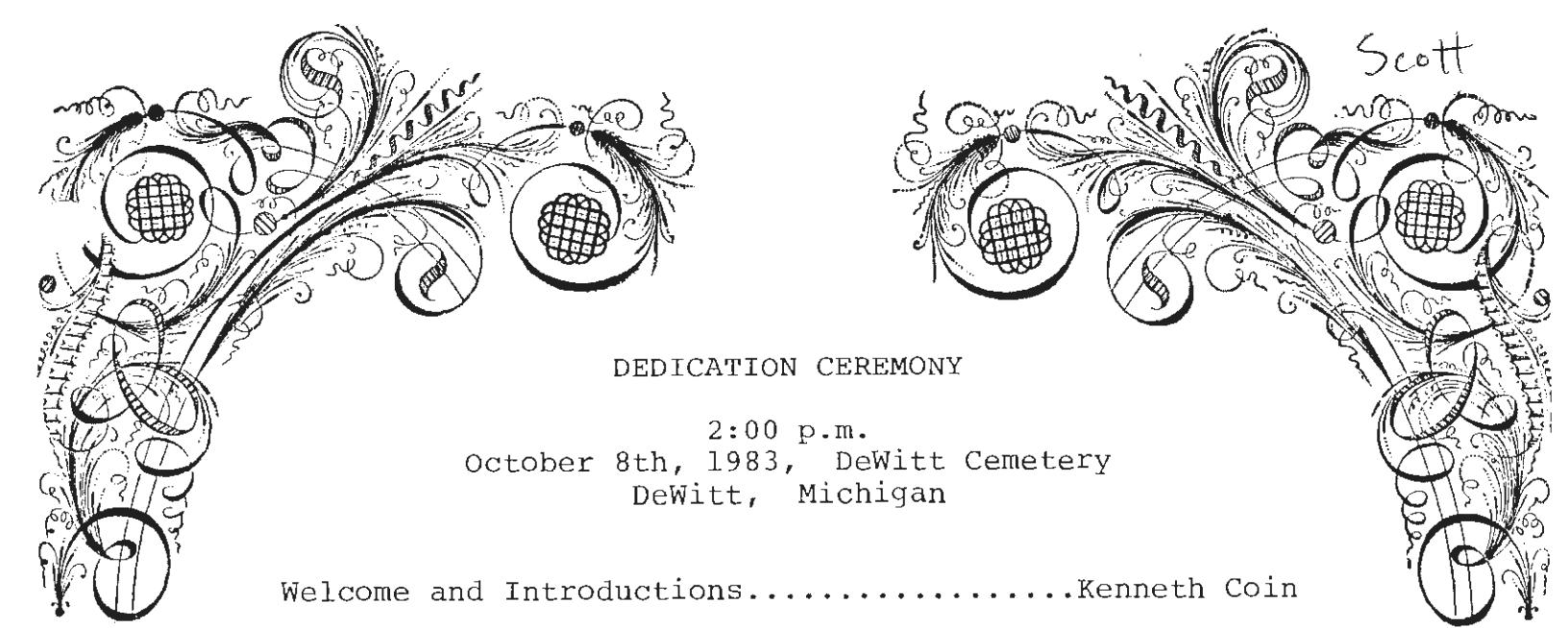
She probably lived more comfortably than many of the pioneer women of the area but her comfort was amid isolation. A doctor was a four-day journey to and from Dexter, Michigan, a preacher came only once a month, shopping was a week's trip to Pontiac, schooling was not to be had for her young sons. Indians were her closest neighbors and travelers were her closest friends. It was nearly a year before another white woman came to the area to live. It remains unknown what her attitude and opinion was of rustic life. Did she share her husband's enthusiasm for the wilderness or did she simply follow along as the dutiful wife, accepting it all as her lot in life?

Scott family records indicate that Eunice bore eleven children, only six of whom are known to have lived to adulthood. Of the six, one daughter died only months before the Scott's move to Clinton County and the eldest son, Sylvester, died a tragic death at DeWitt in 1838. Only four of the eleven

## Eunice Forbes Scott

outlived her when she died at DeWitt on May 7, 1840 at the relatively young age of 60. Even her burial site has gone unrecorded. It is presumed that she was buried in the old Scott plot of the DeWitt cemetery but as the original records of this cemetery were destroyed over fifty years ago, it cannot be confirmed.

5  
100  
+



DEDICATION CEREMONY

2:00 p.m.

October 8th, 1983, DeWitt Cemetery  
DeWitt, Michigan

Scott

Welcome and Introductions.....Kenneth Coin

Speakers:

Betty Moore, President of the Clinton County Historical Society

Geneva K. Wiskemann, Chairman of the Clinton County Historical Commission

Honored Guests:

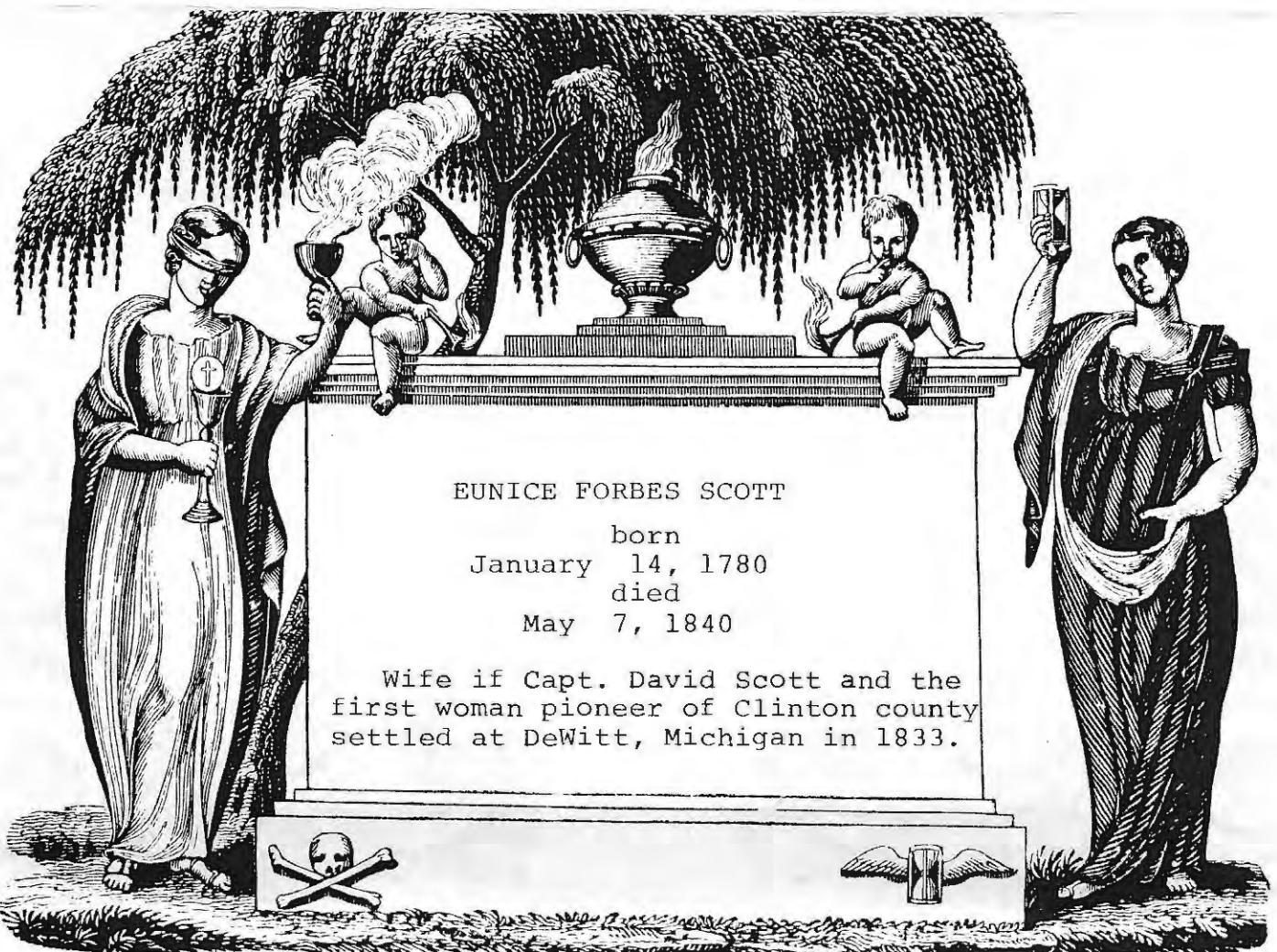
The descendants of Capt. David and Eunice Scott

Monument erected by the Clinton County Historical Society

The Clinton County Historical Society wishes to thank you all for your attendance at this historic occasion. We would also like to thank and acknowledge the following:

Yunker Memorials and Paul Tate, director of the DeWitt Area Chapel, for their assistance in obtaining the marker.

The City of DeWitt and Floyd Fowler, sexton of the DeWitt cemetery, and his crew for donating the footings. Their care and attention to this plot of Clinton county heritage is commendable and very evident as this cemetery, among the oldest in central-Michigan, is one of the most beautiful and best preserved in Clinton county.



# SYLVESTER SCOTT

Born in Dewitt in 1839, Died  
at Lansing on  
November 21.

Scott

## LIVED ON ONE FARM 68 YEARS

He Was Grandson of Capt. David  
Scott, Clinton County's First  
Pioneer.

Sylvester Scott was born in Dewitt, Clinton county, Michigan, October 23, 1839, and departed this life Friday evening, November 21, 1913, after several months of poor health caused from a general breakdown. He was united in marriage to Miss Mary Winters, July 31, 1864. Two children were born to them, one dying in infancy. Mr. Scott was born on the first farm west of Dewitt village, and has been a continuous resident there until about five years ago, when he disposed of his property and moved to Lansing.

He was converted under the pastorate of Rev. Thomas Riley, 28 years ago. He had been a faithful member of the M. E. church ever since.

He was a grandson of Captain David Scott, Clinton county's first pioneer. Mr. Scott has lived to see great changes take place. The mighty forests have given way to cultivated farms and beautiful homes. He was a member of the Clinton county Pioneer society, and always took an interest in it and attended as long as his health permitted. He was a kind husband, father, brother, friend and neighbor, respected by all who knew him. He leaves to mourn their loss his aged companion, one daughter, Mrs. Geo. Gross, of Lansing, one brother, Geo. Scott, of Dewitt, beside several other relatives and friends. His funeral was held at his late home Monday, Nov. 24. The body was laid to rest in Dewitt cemetery.

His nephews were pall bearers. Rev. LeGear officiated and Rev. Thomas Riley made some remarks. Both ministers were from Lansing. The floral decorations were numerous and beautiful, testifying the esteem in which he was held. Truly we may say of him, a good man has been called home.

Clinton Republican  
Nov. 27, 1913

## The Republican.

Thursday, Aug. 27, 1891.

## THE COUNTY.

### DEWITT.

DEWITT, Aug. 25, 1891.

Floyd Williams is suffering from a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism.

E. B. Hill, after sixteen years absence in Texas, is visiting his brother, Eber Hill, in this village.

Ed. Bedell will be at the store of E. M. Webb in this village September 4th, to fill out pension papers for old comrades.

Owing to the large and increasing business of Spencer Norris and Fred Blizzard, they are obliged to make their store larger, which will run to Dunham's hardware store.

The Cheboygan Tribune says: Mark Scott, a former DeWitt boy, now of Rondo, pulls the reins over the best team in that locality, a pair of gray geldings, which speaks well of the ability of our farmers as horse breeders, as Mark purchased them while visiting his father David Scott. We know of no good reason why Mark should not drive a good team, as he was always a good fellow when among us. MERCURY.

Scott-  
Knight

DECEMBER 21, 1905.

## REUNITED BY DEATH

John H. Brink Did Not Long  
Survive Wife

## RESPECTED PIONEERS

Of Dewitt, Whose Deaths Occurred  
Only Three Days Apart

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Brink, among the most highly respected citizens of Dewitt township, passed away within the past week their deaths occurring only three days apart. Mrs. Brink, who had been in poor health for some time, died Friday evening, December 15. Her companion of more than forty years, who had been ill for nearly two years, died Monday night at eleven o'clock.

Rachel Dickinson was born in Shacksburgh, Oswego county, New York, November 13, 1840. She moved to Lyndhurst, Onondaga county, New York, when two years of age and resided there until 1857 when she moved to Huron, New York, where for several years she taught school. On March 16, 1861, she was united in marriage to John H. Brink. Mrs. Brink has been a great sufferer for many years with a complication of diseases but bore her sufferings with patience. She was a member of the W. R. O. of Dewitt, in which she held various offices, also a member of Dewitt Grange, No. 459, in which order she was chaplain for six years. She was active in the Clinton County Pioneer Society and was chairman of the obituary committee for nine years.

John H. Brink was born in Phelps, Ontario county, New York, November 18, 1840, being just five days younger than his wife. He moved to Huron, Wayne county, New York, when a small boy. In 1861 he enlisted in Company F, 75th New York Infantry, and served three years. Mr. and Mrs. Brink came to Olive township, in 1868, and resided on a farm there until two years ago when they purchased a home in Dewitt village. Mr. Brink had been afflicted with kidney disease for several years but was able to be about his home until a few hours after his wife's death when he was taken with a chill and failed rapidly. Mr. Brink was a member of the G. A. R. and had held many offices in that order.

He was treasurer of Dewitt Grange for nine years and a member of the executive committee at the time of his death. He was also a member of the Clinton County Pioneer Society.

Mr. and Mrs. Brink are survived by two sons, Fenton, of Watertown, and George, who resides on the old homestead, in Olive, one daughter, Mrs. Theodore Neller, of Olive, and six grandchildren. Mr. Brink is also survived by one brother, Reuben Brink, one sister, Mrs. George Blizzard, of Olive, and one sister, Mrs. Jane Bradburn, of New York; while Mrs. Brink is survived by one brother, S. Dickinson, of Kansas; two sisters and one brother in New York state.

Mr. and Mrs. Brink were held in the highest esteem by all who knew them. They were always ready to aid the sorrowing and afflicted ones about them and their lives were filled with good deeds. No more fitting tribute can be paid them than that they did all they could to lighten the burden of others.

The funeral of Mrs. Brink was held at the Baptist church in Dewitt village, Sunday afternoon, Rev. W. A. Simmons officiating. The funeral of Mr. Brink was held today at 11 o'clock at the Baptist church. Interments were in the Dewitt cemetery.

## VETERAN DIES

Reuben Brink Passed Away at His  
Home in St. Johns, April 17.

Reuben Brink passed away at his home in St. Johns, Friday morning, April 17, from pleuro-pneumonia, after an illness of about ten days. Funeral services were held at the home Sunday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock, Rev. J. H. Wilcox of the Methodist Episcopal church officiating.

Reuben Brink was born April 3, 1848, in Huron township, Wayne county, New York. In 1866 he was united in marriage to Mary Jane Dickinson of New York. In 1868 they came to Michigan and settled upon a farm in Olive township, where some years later Mrs. Brink passed away. On July 31, 1895, he was united in marriage to Ida E. Knight of Olive. In February, 1906, they moved to Dewitt where they resided until two years ago when they moved to St. Johns.

Besides his wife, he leaves to mourn their loss, two sisters, Mrs. George Blizzard of Olive and Mrs. Jane Bradburn of Rochester, New York; also several nieces and nephews.

Mr. Brink was a veteran of the Civil war and a member of the G. A. R., having enlisted in Company A. of the 9th New York Heavy Artillery in September, 1864, and served until the close of the war. He took an active part in the battle of Cedar Creek and served under General Sheridan.

Those who attended the funeral from away were: C. L. Brink of Hartford, Wis.; E. O. Place of Owosso, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knight and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Behringer of Ann Arbor, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Knight and son, Lester, of Laingsburg and Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Neller and sons, Fenton and Elton, and Berton Neller of Lansing.

Nov. 1913

Scott

THE CLINTON REPUBLICAN, ST. JOHNS, MICH., DECE

## Pioneers' Column

### Devoted to Clinton's Early History

Note—In this column The Republican hopes to publish articles of historical value relative to Clinton county, believing that the opportunity to secure such information should be improved. To this end The Republican cordially invites those knowing historical facts of interest to send same to this paper for publication.

Why not start a scrap book, devoted exclusively to Clinton county, and in a few years you will possess a volume of much local historical value.

#### DEWITT THE FIRST PLACE OF SETTLEMENT IN CLINTON CO.

At the last annual meeting of the Clinton County Pioneer Society a resolution was adopted with reference to placing a boulder on the site where the first settlement was made in Clinton county, the boulder to have the following words on a bronze tablet: "This boulder marks the location of the first permanent settlement in Clinton county, Michigan. Captain David Scott, the first settler, located here 1833.—Erected by the Clinton County Pioneer Society, 1913."

George W. Scott and Jerome Dills of Dewitt and Fred W. Howe of Eagle were appointed as a committee to look after the work.

It was an honor to Mr. Scott to be placed upon that committee and an honor to the committee that he be made its chairman as he is the oldest pioneer in the place, having been a resident since 1834. Mr. Scott became deeply interested in the project at once and began search for the boulder.

One was finally located in the township of Watertown which we believed to be a good one and I want to assure you that we were not long making it a

resident of the village of Dewitt.

Friday, Nov. 4, being an ideal day, we placed it upon end on a cement foundation and around it a box 32 inches square and one foot high with a cove up the corners and around the top edge and filled the same with the best of concrete which forms the base.

The stone is 15x20 inches square and 4 1/2 feet long with three perfect corners, one being somewhat deficient. It stands 4 1/2 feet higher than the crosswalk and 3 1/2 feet above the base.

It is located on the south side of main street close to the sidewalk and in front of the post office building, and is also in front of where the log hotel was built in 1833 by David Scott, or Captain Scott, as he was commonly called, and who was grandfather of the chairman of your committee.

In behalf of the committee I desire to thank one and all who lent a helping hand in the erection of the marker, and especially Mr. Otto Smith, who donated the rock and Mr. Chas. W. Webb, postmaster, who consented to its being erected in front of his place of business. Mr. Webb is a great-great-grandson of Captain Scott.

Jerome Dills.

Scott

A Pleasant Wedding.

Married, at the home of the bride's parents in Dewitt, Wednesday evening, June 28th, 1899, at 8:30, Lucile, only child of Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Scott, and George Gross, of Dewitt.

The ceremony was performed by Rev. Buell and witnessed by 150 invited guests. Miss Marie McLouth played Mendelsohn's Wedding March. At the sound of the piano six young ladies dressed in white appeared carrying white ribbon, and formed an aisle through which the bridal party marched in the parlor and took their places before a large mirror decorated with water lilies, callas and vinos. The bridesmaids were Esther Webb and Olive Gross. The groomsmen were Clifton Reynolds and Frank Gross. The bride was attired in white silk trimmed with Mouseline Dusoir, and carried cream roses; the groom in the usual black. The bridesmaids wore white Swiss mull, and carried pink roses. After congratulations, young lady and gentleman waiters served a feast fit for a king, consisting of choice cakes, oranges, bananas, ice cream, etc. The morning hours were near before the last good byes were said. All present declared this event one of the most pleasant of the season. Mr. and Mrs. Gross were the recipients of many beautiful and useful presents

Chit. Rep.

7-6-1899

Alta Nancy Pike Scott

Source Unknown

DIED - In DeWitt, Mich. on the 8th of January, 1870, of ovarian dropsy, Mrs. Alta N. Scott, wife of David Scott. Aged 46 years, 9 months and 25 days.

Mrs. Scott was born in Alleghany County, N.Y. on the 14th day of March, 1823 and moved with her parents to this state in 1839, and was married the following year. She has been in poor health for several years and for the last three years has had ovarian dropsy, for which she has been tapped twenty-seven times, and had in all, over five barrels of fluid drawn from her. She bore her protracted suffering with a degree of courage and fortitude seldom ever equalled; and ever maintained a lively hope of a future happy immortality. She was a kind and courteous neighbor; a model wife and mother, and had the good will and esteem of all who knew her.

Scott

**UNDER SAD CIRCUMSTANCES**

**Occured the Death of Miss Alta Scott at  
New Orleans.**

The peculiar sad announcement of the death of Miss Alta Scott, of DeWitt, at New Orleans, La., last week, was received with much sorrow and regret by her many friends. Miss Scott went to Lansing about three years ago and has been a teacher in the fifth grade of the Walnut street school. Early last spring she suffered a severe illness, from which she did not recover sufficiently to resume her school duties, until about three weeks before the close of the year. She was regaining her health slowly and on Friday morning last, accompanied by her sister, Miss Tenna Scott, left for New Orleans. They intended to spend a month at the seashore before returning to their home in this city. The deceased was born in DeWitt, May 26, 1893. Her mother died when she and her sister were young and they were brought up by the late Mrs. David Scott. Miss Scott taught in the schools of DeWitt for some time before going to Lansing and had received an appointment to the sixth grade of the Walnut street school for the coming year. She was a sweet mannered and unassuming young lady and was very popular among her circle of friends.

Scott

12/26/74

# DeWitt- Yesterday and Today

By Faye Hanson

THIS CLIPPING FROM A 1891 PAPER WAS LOANED TO US  
by Mr. and Mrs. Burl Dieter who live on a Centen-  
nial Farm at 9920 DeWitt Road.

"On Monday evening, October 5th, seventy  
five friends and relatives met at the  
home of David Scott to celebrate his  
74th birthday. He first came to this  
county October 4, 1833, thus being a  
resident of this county for 58 years  
and of Michigan for sixty six years.  
His father,, Captain Scott, was the first  
settler in this county. David Scott is  
a worthy member of the Masonic order, a  
charter member of the grange and still  
belongs to the order. Mr. Scott, or  
Uncle David as he is commonly called,  
was the recipient of a beautiful willow  
rocker. Mr. G. Pennell, in behalf of  
his friends, presented the chair with  
some appropriate remarks to which Mr.  
Scott responded."

## Historic DeWitt

By Kenneth Coin

October 5, 1833 was a special day to young David Scott. It was his family's first full day at their new settlement on the Looking Glass, and also his sixteenth birthday. What an adventure it must have been for this young man, living among the Indians of the wilderness. It is from his memory that much of what was recorded of the early years of Clinton County has survived to the present. He was often interviewed by historians of the late 1800's and an essay written by Scott was published by the Michigan Pioneer Society, of which he was an early member. The following is a small portion of that essay:

"While living there (the Indian Village of Wabwahnahseepee) a party of Englishmen on their way to Grand River (now, Portland) stopped over for the night with the captain (David Scott, Sr.). One of the party was taken sick and captain went to Ionia, about fifty miles by the (Grand River) trail, for a doctor. The man died soon after the doctor came and was buried in a coffin made of bark taken from the wigwam. The funeral was attended by Capt. Scott's family, the only white inhabitants of the county, the doctor and the hired man...

"The captain and two sons, Sylvester and David, went to Ann Arbor for seed wheat with ox teams; not having bags to put the wheat in, it was put loose in the wagon box. On the way home the wagon got mired down crossing a swamp and we had to spread out our blankets and carry the wheat in pails from the wagon and put it on the blankets and when we got the wagon out, loaded up again...

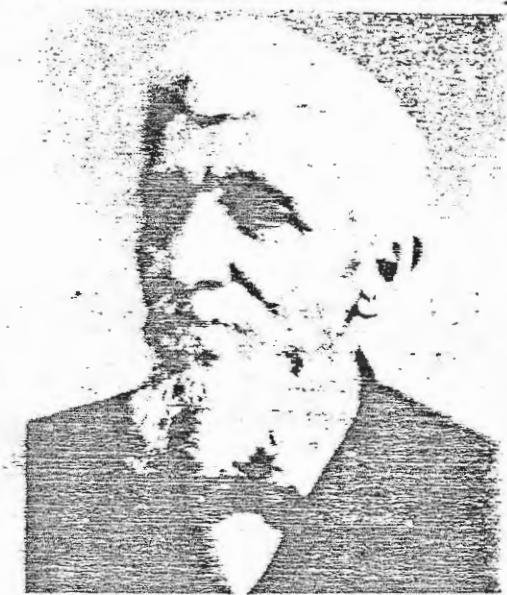
"(A) trip to Pontiac with ox teams took about ten days and as there were no settlers, save a short distance northwest of Pontiac, we had to camp out nights. We put the bells on the oxen and let them feed, but kept a good lookout for them or we might be short a team in the morning...

"The land located by Captain and Sylvester Scott in the year 1833 was the terminus of the oak land west in Clinton County. Their land bordered on the timber land west and north. About half of their purchase was rose willow plains with spots of grass. Most of this land had been cultivated by the Indians and the corn hills were plainly visible. In the breaking up of the ground many relics of earthen ware and of

## David Scott, Jr.

stone axes, pipes, and arrowheads were found. Later, when some of the streets in the village of DeWitt were graded, several skeletons of Indians were found."

David Scott, Jr. was born in Wyoming Co., New York on October 5, 1817. He was married in DeWitt in 1840 to Nancy Alta Pike, a daughter of Olive Township pioneers, Mark W. and Nancy (Cook) Pike. David and Nancy had two sons, James Knox and Mark Pike Scott, both of whom became early settlers of Rondo (near Wolverine), Michigan. David was the last surviving offspring of David and Eunice Scott and throughout his long life he witnessed the great change that took place in the DeWitt area. He was a civic and social leader of the community and county for many years, as well as a generous benefactor. David, his wife Nancy, and his second wife, Mary (Gibson) always found room in their home at 609 W. Main for local orphans and displaced children. David died on March 17, 1895 while visiting his niece, Agnes Pike Fair, at Knoxville, Tenn.



### CORRECTION:

Several weeks ago I stated that George Riley had been a governor of New York. The fact remains that Lovina (Knapp) Simmons did name both her son and the township of Riley in honor of George Riley but it is incorrect that he was a former governor of New York. The source of this information was an exhaustive family history written by a former DeWitt historian, Agnes Pike Steinhardt. Mrs. Simmons' source was her grandfather, George Riley Simmons, himself. Apparently he was of the mistaken belief that he had been named for a former New York Governor. Who was George Riley????

in the manufacture of boots and shoes, which he continued for a period of 4 years, when he abandoned it on account of his failing health. His services were then sought by the people as a public servant in an official capacity. He was first chosen township treasurer for one year, after which he was elected to the office of justice of the peace in which he was continuously chosen from 1870 to the date of his death. He held the office of supervisor from 1883 to 1890, and again in 1892, and closed his last week in that office at the last January session of the board. The confidence bestowed in him by his people, in an official capacity, was never betrayed. On the 9th day of June, 1895, he was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth Martin, daughter of Conrad Martin, deceased. She was the first white child born in the township of Westphalia. Ten children were born to them, four of whom died in infancy, and one but a few months since, leaving five children and a faithful wife to mourn the death of this kind husband and father. Mr. Petsoh was a life long member of the Catholic church.

ANDREW RICHMOND.—Andrew Richmond, an old and highly respected resident of Victor township, died at his home, Thursday, May 31, 1894, of paralysis, aged about 75. In going around the barn in which men were engaged in shearing sheep he was suddenly stricken with paralysis, and was found by one of the men lying in a pool of water with life wholly extinct. He was a native of Ireland and had been a resident of Victor upwards of 40 years. A wife, two sons living in Kansas, a daughter, Mrs. Theodore Curtis of Victor, survive him. His funeral occurred at the Grove Congregational church on Sunday, June 3, was largely attended by relatives and friends. Another pioneer of Clinton county has joined the great majority.

DAVID SCOTT.—A good man has gone. The oldest continuous resident of Clinton county is no more on earth. With an aching heart, it becomes our task to write these words. "Uncle" David Scott, Clinton county's most noted pioneer and our life long friend is dead. He was born in Covington, Wyoming county, N. Y., October 5, 1817, and died at Knoxville, Tenn., from a stroke of paralysis, on Sunday, March 17, 1895. He was well and favorably known throughout Clinton county, having lived within its borders 61 years, and in this State 69 years. In 1825 Captain Scott (a captain in the war of 1812, and father of our subject), accompanied by his family, moved from Genesee county, N. Y., to Ann Arbor, Mich. After remaining there 8 years, and in the spring of 1833, he came to what is now known as DeWitt. He was very much pleased with the situation and decided to make his future home there, which he accordingly did. In the following fall he, with his wife and two sons, David and Charles, began their pilgrimage toward their new home, in big wagons drawn by oxen. They took one horse and seventeen head of cattle with them, and were several days on the road.

They forded rivers, drove into swamps, were often mired and were obliged to pitch their tents wherever night overtook them. When they reached the end of their journey they obtained consent of the Indians to occupy one of their cabins or huts until they could erect one of their own. There were at this time three families of Indians living on the banks of the Lookingglass river, where the pretty village of DeWitt now stands. The cabin assigned Mr. Scott and family was made of bark, and the interior furnishings consisted wholly of a bunk on either side. Stoves were a thing of the future. They were obliged to build a fire in the center of the hut. The smoke could go out through a hole in the roof or stay in the room, which it most frequently did. But they soon had a cabin erected and moved in. Their nearest neighbors in those days were 40 miles away. They were obliged to go to Ann Arbor for their milling, blacksmithing and groceries. At one time, Charles, brother of "Uncle" David, was taken seriously ill. David went to Dexter, a distance of 80 miles on foot for a doctor, who came on horseback, stayed two days, put a \$50 bill in his pocket and returned home. In the early part of their residence in this county there was no hay here for fodder for the cattle, and trees were felled to supply this deficiency. The cattle would eat the leaves and tender twigs. They soon got used to this kind of fare and the only call needed was the sound of the ax. The pasture fields in those days were quite extensive, comprising Eaton, Ingham, Clinton and Shiawassee counties. At one time the cattle strayed away and were gone several days. When found they were on the grounds now occupied by the State capitol. Little did Mr. Scott then think there would ever be a \$1,500,000 building erected thereon. In 1842 Capt. Scott erected the large hotel now occupied by E. Pilbeam, in DeWitt village. "Uncle" David Scott was one among eleven children, all of whom are now gone. He was a member of DeWitt lodge No. 272, F. and A. M.; of the O. E. S.; also a charter member of DeWitt grange No. 459. He had been married twice. In 1840 he married Miss Altie Pike, who died January 8, 1870, leaving two sons, James and Mark, who now reside in northern Michigan. His second marriage was with Mary Gibson, May 3, 1871, and who died October 31, 1892. Both were splendid helpmeets and noble women. His two granddaughters, Alice and Lenna Scott, kept house for him until last fall, when he decided to spend the winter in Knoxville, Tenn. He, accompanied by his granddaughter, Lenna, went south in November. He enjoyed the mild southern weather and good health. On March 14 the writer of this sketch received a letter from him, dated March 12. It was written in his usual jolly style, and in it he expressed love and respect for his DeWitt friends. It was very sad indeed to his many friends to hear of his sudden demise. Never more will we see him at our pioneer gatherings, in which he always manifested so much pride and interest. How many times have we seen him standing alone

Scott

when the president of the Pioneer Society would ask at their annual gatherings how many there were present who had lived in Clinton county 50 years or more. Great has been the change in Clinton county since Mr. Scott first settled here. He has seen the mighty forests give place to cultivated fields. Comfortable homes, churches and schoolhouses now stand where once stood the Indian wigwam. It seems almost impossible for us to honor our pioneer friends enough when we think of the hardships they endured. We, of today, are reaping the fruits of their labors, care and toil. But they are fast leaving us. The silent city has been steadily growing until now it claims the greater share of the genuine old pioneers. Their hands are folded forever; their labor is done. But the record they have left behind them is more durable than any marble monument that could be erected to their memory. Mr. Scott has been a very prominent man in this community. He has held offices of trust of nearly every kind in town and county. He was always ready to lend a helping hand when needed for his fellowmen. He became a member of the first Universalist church of DeWitt last fall, under the pastorate of Miss O. J. Carpenter. He was strong in the faith that there is one God whose nature is love, revealed in one Jesus Christ by one holy spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness. Just a short time before his departure for the "sunny south," he told the writer that he felt assured he should meet with all the loved ones gone before when the summons came from the other shore. We trust his faith has not been in vain.

Mrs. C. L. PEARCE.

Scott



# It's of Tony new a

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Log homestead years ago...

## Bargain price!

It was nearly 100 years ago when Mark P. Scott purchased his 160-acre farm at a tax sale for a grand sum of \$18.21. The farm was located on top of one of Wolverine's highest hills at the north end of Bilder Road in Mentor Township. Today the farm still exists as does the original Scott log homestead. Today it is part of the Wolverine Camps owned by John Zimmerle. Horses are stabled in the barn and the log house serves as quarters for riding students of the camp. In winter horses from Mackinac Island are stabled here. The exterior of the house is unchanged; the interior, however, has been modernized. From the Scott hill, Burt Lake is visible. Mark and his wife, Emma, are in this old photograph. Others are sons Frank and Orville. Two others are believed to be daughters Ora and Adele. None are living today, nor are the grandchildren of the Mark Scotts. Marjorie Scott, widow of a grandson, Donald, is presently living in Cheboygan. Numerous great and great-great grandchildren survive.



Same log home today

Scott

## FORMER LOCAL WOMAN DIES IN CALIFORNIA

Word has just been received here of the death Wednesday, in Los Angeles, of Mrs. Mary Scott, 83.

Mrs. Scott until two years ago was a resident of Lansing, having come here with her husband, Sylvester Scott, from Dewitt about 15 years ago. Since the death of her husband, in 1913, Mrs. Scott had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. George Gross.

Mrs. Scott was sister of the late N. H. Wlnans.

Mr. and Mrs. Gross are enroute to Michigan with the body and will arrive here about Monday night. Funeral arrangements will be made after their arrival. Interment will be in DeWitt cemetery.

Mary (Gibson) Scott

Scott

A deep gloom settled over the people of DeWitt and surrounding country last Monday when the sad news came from Lansing that Mrs. Mary Gibson Scott had gone to her eternal rest. The subject of this sketch was born in New York State in 1839. Several years ago she came to DeWitt, Mich. She taught school for a number of terms in the Union School building at DeWitt. In 1871 she was united in marriage to David Scott. She was principal of the DeWitt school for a long time after her marriage and has taught a number of terms in adjoining districts. She was a very able instructor and had a great faculty of imparting knowledge to others. About two years ago her health failed to such an extent that she gave up teaching entirely. She was a great sufferer at times. Hers was a complication of diseases. Last winter she had a severe attack of la grippe, her life was dispared of. She got better but was never well again. December 25th she went to Lansing to visit her sister, Mrs. Bartlett. The next Sunday night she grew suddenly worse and died Monday at eleven o'clock a.m., Oct. (should be December) 31, 1869. She was a charter member of DeWitt Grange, her presence in our order was always warmly welcomed. Being naturally of a bright disposition she was the life of any society where ever she was. Whenever she entered a room the sunshine seemed to follow even if dark clouds had been there before.

Truly we can say,  
A light has from that counsel gone  
A form we loved is still  
A place is vacant in the home,  
Which never can be filled.

She was a member of the O. E. S. in DeWitt. Her remains were brought to her home in DeWitt, Wednesday, and funeral services were held at 1:00 p.m., Rev. Mr. Belas from Lansing officiating. His words were very fitting for the occasion and full of comfort to the aching hearts.

Clinton County Pomona Grange met at DeWitt the day of her funeral, Grange adjourned and in company with O. E. S. attended the funeral. The DeWitt School and teachers attended the funeral in a body, also a large crowd of neighbors and friends which proved far better than words in what great esteem she was held by all. She leaves an aged husband, two daughters, a sister, Mrs. Bartlett of Lansing, and a brother at Homer, Mich. besides a large circle of other relatives and friends to mourn her loss. Her brother and sister attended her funeral. Her remains were laid to rest in the DeWitt Cemetery. The afflicted family have the sympathy of the entire community in this their dark hour.

Scott

## MRS. WEBB DEAD

Was Granddaughter of Mr. Scott,  
First Settler in DeWitt.

Eunice Eliza Webb, whose maiden name was Scott, died in Lansing at 2 a. m., November 8. She was born on a farm about one mile southwest of DeWitt and lived there for most of her life. She was married to E. M. Webb, who passed away about seven years ago. Three children survive her, Charles M. Webb, postmaster at DeWitt, Frank Webb of Lansing, and Mrs. Floyd Williams of DeWitt. Mrs. Webb had been ill since last May and had been in Lansing for treatment. She was 68 years old last July.

Aug. 19 '85

Scott

# Historic DeWitt

By Kenneth Coln

## The Scott sisters

Histories of DeWitt and its founders, Capt. David and Eunice Scott, have commonly included information regarding the accomplishments of their three sons: Sylvester, David Jr., and Charles. What was not recorded and, in fact, has gone largely unresearched, is the seemingly forgotten members of the Scott family.

In 1982, as a project for DeWitt's sesquicentennial, myself, and Dorothy Scott, an avid genealogist and a direct descendant of David and Eunice Scott family, were with much effort, correspondence, and a minimum of sources able to piece together an up-to-date family history of the three sons.

We were proud of our accomplishment but regretted that we were unable to glean any record worthy of merit for the three known daughters of David and Eunice Scott. (They are said to have had 11 children in all.) These daughters, Ellen, Sarah (called Sally), and Lamira, seemed to have lived and died without leaving any record. Even an essay of DeWitt and the Scott family, written by David Scott Jr. himself in the 1890s, mentioned only two of his sisters.

After a "stranger than truth" chance encounter with a descendent of one of these sisters, we were soon to realize that the absence of these daughters from the early written record of the Scott family and DeWitt was indeed a grave injustice.

At first we decided that their exclusion was due to the fact that they had not accompanied their parents to Clinton County in 1833. We assumed that by the late 1800s, when histories of the DeWitt area were first written, the families had probably become disassociated and that the historians and genealogists of the period were unaware of their very existence.

While it is true that none of Capt. Scott's daughters are known to have ever lived in the DeWitt area, it is the next generation of the family in which the real mystery here begins to develop.

Ellen Scott, the eldest of the daughters, married a man named Perry, apparently even before the Scott family moved to Ann Arbor from New York state in 1825. They are thought to have lived in the area near Romeo, but their son, Norton Perry, is believed to have lived in DeWitt. His wife, Alice Webster, is speculated to have been the Alice who was a daughter of Parker Webster, owner of the DeWitt Mills from 1850 to the late 1800s.

Sarah (Sally) Scott was married in 1827 to a prosperous Washtenaw County miller and farmer, Rufus Knight. She died in June 1833, three months prior to her parents' departure for Clinton County. She left a husband and at least three young children: David, Harriet, and Sarah. Another son, Sylvester, died in infancy.

The youngest Scott daughter, Lamira (sometimes called Elmira), did not accompany her parents to Clinton County in September 1833. Instead, she chose to remain at Ann Arbor in the Knight household, to help in the raising of her late sisters children. She eventually married Rufus Knight and together they had two daughters, Mary and Electa.

Rufus and Lamira Knight bought substantial amounts of property in the DeWitt area from various members of the Scott family. By 1842, they had accumulated close to 200 acres in Olive and DeWitt Townships.

David Knight, the son of Rufus and Sarah, is known to have taken up residence on the aforementioned land by 1864 and has been placed in the DeWitt area as early as 1852 when he was married to Susan Phillips of Eagle Township, and 1859, when he became a charter member of the Clinton County Agricultural and Horticultural Society.

He was regarded among the prosperous and well respected farmers of Clinton County, being involved with various social and political organizations. His family retained a respected social position in the DeWitt area for several generations, were friends and contemporaries of their Scott cousins and were often mentioned in companionship with the Scotts in the "Loyal Brevities" of the county newspaper. Yet, when it came to recording the history of the area and of the Scott family, they were unduly neglected.

A team of avid genealogists is currently combing yet untapped sources to research the family and descendants of David Knight. Their aim is to set the record straight about the "forgotten family" of Capt. David and Eunice Scott. So, if you yourself are a descendent of the Knight family which long ago lived in the northeast corner of DeWitt Township, these genealogists are looking for you.

Scott

Funeral Cards from the Scrapbook of C. Harry Moon

Now owned by Eleanor Moon McKinney (1984)

Henry O. Scott- Nov. 29, 1880 Clinton County  
August 20, 1955 Flint, Mi.  
Osgood Funeral Home, August 23, 1955 2:00 p.m.  
Rev. C. Harry Moon- Eureka Cemetery