

The DeWitt Post Office was established March 2, 1837. With the following postmasters, and dates of appointment, serving the people of the community and area since that time.

<u>Postmasters</u>	<u>Dates of Appointment</u>
Ephraim H. Utley	March 2, 1837
David Scott	March 30, 1837
Adam W. Partridge	November 13, 1849
James M. Estes	May 3, 1853
John Ranson	October 26, 1855
Moulton Sprague	December 9, 1856
John W. Gardner	July 13, 1860
Adam W. Partridge	January 31, 1862
Jonathan A. Sweet	February 21, 1865
Henry C. Hart	April 27, 1881
Adolph M. Starmont	August 28, 1885
Hiram A. Simmons	August 29, 1889
Thomas W. Baldwin	May 10, 1893
Edward M. Webb	May 8, 1897
Charles W. Webb	May 13, 1904
Ray Derham	March 29, 1915
Fred E. Hazle	May 21, 1920 (served throughout 1929)
Mark A. Norris	July 3, 1930
Vedah W. Halterman	May 6, 1935
Arthur F. Newman	March 1, 1946

Brief History of DeWitt Area

DeWitt was settled by Capt. David Scott Oct. 4, 1833 and platted by him Oct. 26, 1841. Located on the north side of the Looking Glass River. Capt. Scott arrived from Ann Arbor with his wife and 2 sons. He obtained the consent of the Indians to occupy one of their wigwams until his own cabin was completed.

In 1837 Capt. Scott received his commission as postmaster of the hamlet and established the office in his home. In 1839 he built a frame building for a store-room and grocery with the point having been established the following year as the county seat-early sessions of court were held with Judge Hubbard presiding.

In 1840 a school-house was built and in 1842 a spacious and well appointed hotel was erected by Capt. Scott. Capt. Scott continued to reside in DeWitt until his death in 1851.

One by one, family by family, the DeWitt settlement increased in number. In 1839, 28 descriptions of property were on the assessment roll of the township, while in 1840 the township embraced with the limits of the present township of DeWitt, contained 45 resident tax-payers.

It is worthy to note that DeWitt Township, which was actually settled the first of all townships of the county, was for some years the commercial center of the county and contained the county seat, while Bingham was the last of the whole number to receive a settler in Dec. of 1837, and now contains the largest city of the county and has the county seat.

In 1853 the DeWitt--St. Johns highway was opened to Lansing as a stage and mail route from St. Johns to Lansing through DeWitt. Taverns were soon built along this route. Myron Wolcott's tavern called the Half-Way House stood half-way between St. Johns and DeWitt. Later a better structure was built on section 17. Orange Ferguson likewise opened a public house at Muskrat Lake (Merle Beach). South of Half-Way House, a Frenchman, J. P. Russell conducted "The Traveler's Home". John Huits' brewery was nearby. John Norris was the first postmaster to handle the mail in Olive township. After the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad reached St. Johns, the mail route along this highway was soon discontinued and the sole post office in Olive was of the past.

The first Riley post-office was established in 1855, the second in 1857.

In 1838 Riley J. Woodruff arrived in DeWitt with his parents. At that time Capt. Scott owned the property at the four corners of what is now DeWitt Village. Eighty rods east of the corners on the Grand River Road, was a log house, and to the west of the location of the hotel, a son of Capt. Scott had his dwelling. Across the river stood a single log house. At this time the Grand River road was the only highway through the state from Detroit to Grand Rapids and the land office at Ionia, and consequently was a much traveled route. Money from the Ionia land office was carried to Detroit by way of DeWitt, in a wagon drawn by horses and guarded by soldiers. In DeWitt the boxes of money were frequently unloaded and placed in the bar-room of the hotel, where surrounding the treasure, the soldiers lay down for a night's rest, guarding the boxes.

The Scott Road, as it was then called, extended northward from DeWitt, crossing the site of the court house square at St. Johns, and from there pursued a more or less divious course to Rochester Colony, and from there ran to Flint. Capt. Scott blazed this trail.

Mrs. J. Esther Webb Williams, now a resident of The Masonic Home in Alma, Michigan, is a Great Granddaughter of Capt. Scott and relates that she has many happy memories of early DeWitt days.

At the time of Fred E. Hazle's postmastership the post office was in the Interurban Depot which was located across the street from what is now the Vincent-Rummell Funeral Home. Later it moved to the building on West main street, now occupied by LaVerne's Beauty Shop. Postmasters serving in that building were Mark Norris and Vedah Halterman prior to the appointment of Arthur Newman in 1946. A new post office building was built in 1952 by Dr. L. O. Martin and has been the home of the DeWitt Post Office until the completion of this present building in July 1963.

Mrs. Vedah Halterman--former Postmaster still resides in DeWitt as does Mr. Carl Van Fleet--former carrier.

We realize that there are probably many people in the village of DeWitt who possibly are familiar with facts pertaining to the history of the postal system of the Village of DeWitt, and we would be happy to receive such facts and information for further completion of the history to be kept on file in the DeWitt Library.