

**Walks through History
DeWitt Commercial Historic District
September 18, 2010
By: Rachel Silva**



Intro

Hi, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the Walks through History tour of DeWitt! Before we get started, I'd like to thank several people for their help with the tour—John Cover, Gordon Burnett, Charlie Hamilton, Eunice Merritt, John Shallhorn, and Aubrey McGhee. And thanks to DeWitt Pride for providing bottled waters!! The DeWitt Commercial Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in April 2010 because it reflects the city's establishment as a center of Arkansas County government and commerce, and because it contains good examples of early to mid-20th century commercial-style architecture. There are 54 buildings in the district, most of which are located right around the court square. Out of those 54, two buildings are individually listed on the National Register—the Arkansas County Courthouse, Southern District, built in 1931-32, and the DeWitt Post Office, built in 1939.

History of DeWitt

DeWitt is located in the center of Arkansas County, which was the state's first and largest county. The first settlement west of the Mississippi River was established at Arkansas Post in 1686 by the French. France sold its vast landholdings to the United States in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and in 1812 present-day Arkansas became part of the Missouri Territory. Arkansas County was actually created in 1813 by the Missouri Territorial Legislature and comprised about two-thirds of

what is now the state of Arkansas and part of eastern Oklahoma. More than half of Arkansas's counties were formed from this original county. In 1819 when Arkansas Territory was created, Arkansas Post became its capital. Then in 1821, Arkansas's Territorial capital was moved to a more central location in Little Rock. When Arkansas became a state in 1836, Arkansas Post became the county seat of Arkansas County.

By 1845 Arkansas Post had a population of less than 100 people. Arkansas County had very few roads, and it was difficult for residents to travel to the far southeast corner of the county in order to conduct their county business. So a commission was formed in 1853 to select a site for a new centrally-located county seat. They chose a site near the geographical center of the county and platted the county seat. Then came the task of naming the new town...

Two of the three site committee members, along with town surveyor Adam McCool, met to decide the name of the new town. Each man wrote his suggestion on a piece of paper and placed it in a hat. McCool's paper was pulled from the hat. Because he was a great admirer of General DeWitt Clinton of New York, and because there was already another town in Arkansas named Clinton, he had written "DeWitt" on his paper. And so, DeWitt got its name out of a hat.

DeWitt possessed a number of valuable resources in its vast stands of virgin hardwood timber, prairie-grown hay, livestock, and cotton. However, there was no way to easily transport goods to outside markets. The only means of shipping or receiving goods was a crude wagon trail from the White River port of Crockett's Bluff, located 12 miles to the east. Although this situation hampered the town's growth, DeWitt incorporated on December 7, 1875. The economic underpinning of DeWitt's growth in the early years was in providing services to county residents who had business at the courthouse.

Then in 1891 the St. Louis and Southwest Railroad was under construction between Stuttgart and Gillett. Realizing that the railroad's proposed route would bypass DeWitt, concerned citizens quickly raised \$10,000 to pay for a 3-mile bend in the tracks, bringing the railroad through DeWitt. For the first time, DeWitt had the means to transport its raw materials. A building boom ensued, including the construction of a new (the third) courthouse in 1893 and the town's first brick building, located on the west side of the court square.

New shipping facilities for timber, hay, livestock, and cotton were constructed as well. In the 1890s, DeWitt had some of the best tracts of hardwood timber in the

state. Prairie-grown hay grew into a large summer industry that produced, at one time, a quarter of a million tons in Arkansas County. In the early 20th century, DeWitt claimed to raise more hogs and cattle than any 5 counties in the state. As timber lands were cleared, farmers planted cotton, the premier cash crop at that time. The woodland areas and river bottoms were good for growing cotton, but the prairie soil lacked the organic matter necessary for cotton to flourish. In an attempt to solve this problem, Nebraska native William H. Fuller planted his first rice crop in 1897. The results were less than stellar, but Fuller traveled to Louisiana to study their rice cultivation methods. In 1907 he produced 5,225 bushels of rice on 70 acres. This success story would change the entire nature of the Grand Prairie. Within a generation, the prairie lands around DeWitt became known as “the rice capital of the world.”

DeWitt’s diversified economic base helped to sustain the town during the Great Depression, and residents continue to rely heavily on the rice and soybean industries for their livelihood. The Arkansas Grand Prairie is also home to an abundance of wild game, attracting hunters from all over the country and leading to Arkansas County’s nickname as the duck hunting capital.

[The Cotton Belt RR moved its DeWitt office to Stuttgart in 1973, and the railroad tracks were taken up in the mid-1980s? The DeWitt Depot was located on Main Street between 3rd & 4th Streets. Now a foundation is all that remains.]

Arkansas County Courthouse, Southern District (IL on NR 11/20/1992)

Shortly after the town of DeWitt was named in 1853, a temporary courthouse was constructed one block south of the public square, which was reserved for a permanent courthouse. The first courthouse really consisted of 3 log buildings—one for a courtroom, one for the Clerk’s and Sheriff’s offices, and one for a Jury room. Arkansas County’s second courthouse was completed in 1862 on the public square. It was a handsome two-story brick building. After the arrival of the railroad in 1891, a building boom ensued leading to the construction of a third courthouse on the same site as the former building in 1893. It was a beautiful Romanesque-style building with three different shaped towers. However, the construction of the 1893 courthouse proved faulty, as cracks developed in the foundation and the building was condemned. This situation led to the construction of the fourth and current courthouse in 1931-32.

It was designed by Little Rock architect H. Ray Burks and erected by the E. V. Bird Construction Company. It is one of the best examples of an Art Deco-style

courthouse in the entire state. Art Deco-style characteristics include its stepped front parapet and fluted pilasters, which provide a vertical emphasis; the overall block-like massing of the building; and the elaborate floral and zig-zag patterns in the cast concrete panels around the building. [Arkansas County has dual county seats—the county seat for the northern district was established in Stuttgart in the early 20th century as a result of the town’s prosperity due to the rice-growing industry. The Arkansas County Courthouse, Northern District, is also listed on the National Register. It was built in 1928.]

Infamous story of Helen Spence, the 17-year-old who shot and killed Jack Worls, the man accused of murdering her father, in the courtroom during his trial in the early 1930s.

Court Square

Rather than being formed by intersecting streets, DeWitt’s court square was designed as a continuous street around a public square with one access street in the middle of each block. The northwest, northeast, and southwest corners have unique lots containing buildings with chamfered corner entrances. The town was platted in such a way that people wouldn’t just pass through the downtown and keep going--the courthouse and square would be your final destination. This is an extremely rare layout for a court square—I’ve never seen another town like it.

140-142 Court Square (NC)

The Leibrock Building is the oldest building in the district with a construction date of about 1904. Although the original brick façade is obscured by blue metal siding, the building originally had second story windows with decorative hood molding, brick corbelling at the cornice, and three symmetrically-placed roofline projections. See photograph.

In 1913, the building housed a general store with a telephone office on the second floor. By 1919, it was a barber and a grocery. Doctor’s offices have historically been located upstairs. Beginning with Dr. Charles William “Will” Rasco, whose family moved to DeWitt in 1896. Dr. Rasco went to medical school in Memphis and returned in 1906 to practice in DeWitt. His brother, Senator Roy Daniel Rasco, who was a lawyer by profession, also had an office upstairs for a time. Will Rasco’s son, C. W., Jr., also had an office here. Leibrock’s was a sporting goods store.

Site behind Leibrock's to the west

There was a hotel behind the Leibrock building for many years. By 1913, it was the Arlington Hotel, and then in 1919, it was the Parks Hotel. Probably by the 1930s or 40s, it was the Sparks Hotel, followed by the Hampton Hotel, and it finally burned when it was called the Rice Hotel. It had a large dining room and many people remember the building's mismatched additions.

138 Court Square (C)

Lizzie's was built in 1922, as you can see from the cast concrete panel in the upper façade. This building exhibits some nice brickwork with its inset rectangles of red brick with cast concrete squares at each corner.

The building was constructed to house Burd's Drug Store, and you can still see the name "Burd's" written in tile below the plate glass windows. Then Coker Hampton Drug Store moved to DeWitt from Stuttgart (still have a Coker Hampton Drug in downtown Stuttgart), and purchased the old Burd's Drug Building. You can still see the name "Hampton" written in tile by the front door. At an unknown date, Hampton Drug bought the Domino Parlor, which at that time was next door in 136 Court Square, and the two businesses switched places—Hampton Drug moved to 136 Court Square, and the Domino Parlor moved to 138 Court Square (where many people remember it being located).

136 Court Square (NC)

This is a new building (or at least a new front façade), so it's non-contributing. However, this location had some important occupants. There were two building storefronts here before Berry Law Firm & Title Co. constructed the current building. About 1915 a 2-story building was constructed on the south side of this space (left) to house Burnett Drug Store. The drug store was operated by Gordon Burnett's father, Shelby G. Burnett. Shelby Burnett's aunt lived upstairs. When Burnett Drug closed in 1932, Merle Hornbeck moved the DeWitt Domino Parlor into the left side of the current building. As I said earlier, the Domino Parlor switched places and eventually ended up at 138 (where Lizzie's is now). About 1925, another 2-story building was constructed on the north side of this lot (right). Gordon Burnett's uncle, B. Hudson, had a barber shop here in the 1930s and 1940s, and then Red Adams had a barber shop here. Will Rasco's other son, Dr. James Burnett Rasco, Sr., was a dentist and moved into the space above B.

Hudson's Barber Shop in 1938. The Berry family purchased it to become part of the law office and created the current façade across both buildings.

130 Court Square (C)

In the late 19th century, the town's water pump and water tower were located on this corner lot. By 1913, there was a 2-story, wood-frame building on this site that housed a grocery and confectionary. At least part of the time it was a grocery, it was known as Gordon & Toland's Grocery. Then Vince Walton's wife had a 10-cent store there, and Judge Brice (maybe Judge W. M. Trice?) had an office upstairs. The wood-frame building remained here until Ms. Cora Deane constructed the current one-story brick building in April 1940. This is currently Charlie Hamilton's TV & radio repair shop. It has very nice brick detailing for a mid-century commercial building, including the bands of buff brick, the tile-capped parapet, and the 6-pane transom windows.

120 Court Square (C)

There was a small, 1-story building on this northwest corner lot by 1933. A man by the name of W. W. "Red" or "Windy" Smith moved that building out to the south side of town near the cemetery to make way for the current structure. The current building was constructed about 1954 as a new location for DeWitt Bank & Trust. It features buff brick side walls and a chamfered corner entrance faced in cut stone with dentils at the cornice. DeWitt Bank & Trust remained here until 1977, and the building was purchased in 1979 to serve as City Hall.

114 Court Square (C)

Built circa 1905, so it is the second oldest building in the district, after Leibrock's. Constructed to house Home Bank, which went under in 1928, and then became DeWitt Bank & Trust. DeWitt Bank & Trust remained here until its new building next door was completed in 1954. Later in 1954, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Scougale moved their jewelry store into this building, and it was Scougale's Jewelers until 1962 when Charles "Chuck" Morton purchased the business. It later became DeWitt Florist. Currently, there are plans to restore this building and turn it into a restaurant/bar. [Susan Shaddox giving interior design technical assistance...] This is probably the most elaborate commercial building in the district with triangular pediments over the second story windows, medallions in the upper façade, a decorative parapet capped with tile, and brick quoins at the corners.

108-110-112 Court Square (C)

Constructed about 1915, this building features paired second story windows, brick corbelling at the cornice, transom windows, and a central stairway between the storefronts. By the early 1930s, Shallhorn Hardware occupied this building. William Frederick Shallhorn, Sr., moved to DeWitt from Indiana to work as a railroad agent. He opened up a hardware store on the square to sell products from Sears that came in on the railroad. Shallhorn Hardware was called “one of DeWitt’s oldest and most reliable establishments.” W. F. Shallhorn was also president of DeWitt Bank & Trust, mayor of DeWitt for 10-12 years, and planted the sycamore trees by the old Methodist Church. In August 1938, Shallhorn Hardware moved to the south side of the square next to the Merritt Building at 304 Court Square. All that remains of the old Shallhorn building is an empty lot surrounded by a fence. W. F. Shallhorn, Sr., was John H. Shallhorn’s grandfather. John was elected mayor of DeWitt in 1964 at the age of 24 and remained in office until 1990.

After Shallhorn’s moved out of this building, it was home to P. E. Martin’s Grocery, followed by LeRon Young’s Grocery. In 1956, Dr. John Hestir and Dr. Nolan Beverly established a medical office downstairs, and Dr. Shelby A. Woodiel opened a dental office upstairs in 1957. Dr. Woodiel took over Dr. E. A. Morris’s dental practice, which had been located upstairs in this building for many years. In 1963 Dr. Hestir and Dr. Woodiel moved to a new clinic at 220 W. Gibson in DeWitt.

106 Court Square (C)

Built about 1915 with a tall parapet that makes it almost as tall as the 2-story building to its west. This building and the identical double-storefront building at 100 Court Square feature simple recessed panels and decorative tie-rods. 106 Court Square was a hardware store in its very early years, and then it was Walt “Fibber” McGee’s Dime Store (called the Ben Franklin Store) beginning in 1938.

100 Court Square (C)

This building housed Loeb’s Department Store soon after it was built. Loeb’s was owned and operated by a Jewish family, and they sold very exclusive merchandise like Stetson Hats, Arrow Shirts, and Marx Suits (made by Hart Schaffner & Marx). In 1916 you could buy a good suit at Loeb’s for \$25. Then it housed a hardware store and by the early 1950s, Kroger was located here.

Walk north ½ block on N. Main St.

Behind 100 Court Square: Was Ronald Rawlings's Tin Shop beginning about 1930. The Methodist Church's first building was about 1 block off the square in this direction before they built a wood-frame building on W. Cross (already there by 1913). Red brick Methodist Church building on Cross St. was constructed in 1923 after previous structure burned in 1921. The 1923 building was designed by famed Arkansas architect Charles L. Thompson. The Methodist congregation constructed a new church building and moved out to Hwy. 165 in 2000.

Veteran's Memorial Building (C)

One of DeWitt's big hotels, the Commercial Hotel, was located on this site from at least 1913 to about 1940. It burned, and the lot sat vacant for a few years. Then the American Legion built the Veteran's Memorial Building here in the late 1940s. It served as a community center for many years. The buff brick building features some cast concrete detailing and glass block windows, giving it a restrained Art Moderne-style influence.

432 Court Square (C)

Built circa 1918 and housed the DeWitt Pharmacy, owned by Mr. Booker Latimer, from that time until 1945. Mr. Latimer also had the town's first liquor store in this building. Meanwhile, Clifton McGahhey ("McGahha") had spent several years in the hardware business, first at Stephens Hardware and then with L. A. Black Hardware. Then on March 15, 1946, Clifton McGahhey and his nephew, Floyd (who had just returned from the Army), opened McGahhey Hardware Store. Clifton had actually purchased the building from Doc Lumsden, who briefly owned the building as there had always been doctor's and dentist's offices upstairs. After it became McGahhey Hardware, Mr. Eason rented out hotel rooms upstairs and had a taxi service as well. As you can see, McGahhey Hardware is still open today. It's operated by Floyd's son, Gary McGahhey.

428 Court Square (C)

Built circa 1930, this building features a simple inset panel in its upper façade, which was typical of commercial architecture at that time. Eula Bonner had a women's store here.

426 Court Square (C)

Stepperettes was the location of an Arkansas Power & Light office.

424 Court Square (C)

Built about 1935, this was Lonnie Stedman's Barber Shop, where you could get a hair cut for 25 cents.

416 Court Square (NC)

Built about 1925, this building was owned by Ruff Holloway and housed Sanders's Shoe Shop, which repaired and sold shoes.

414 Court Square (C)

Built in the late 1920s, this building occupies one of the unique corner lots on the DeWitt square. It has a chamfered corner entrance with zipper brick. In the 1950s, the building housed Ted Danner's Shoes & Clothing. The *DeWitt Era-Enterprise* printing office was located in the north portion of this building by 1933. After the newspaper office moved in 1981 to its current location, a beauty shop occupied its old space here.

410 Court Square (C)

This entire block, including 410 and 400 Court Square, was occupied by L. A. Black Hardware. Lester Asher Black was involved in a number of businesses, including hardware, rice and seed, farm implements and machinery, and he grew cotton, rice, and livestock. In 1912 he was one of the founding shareholders in the First National Bank of DeWitt, and by 1915, he was the bank president, a position he held until his death in 1945. He also founded Blue Seal Petroleum in 1929. L. A. Black Hardware's original buildings burned in the late 1920s, but Mr. Black reconstructed this block, as you can see by looking at the concrete panel reading "L. A. Black 1938." There was also a blacksmith shop behind Black's to the east run by Mr. Earl. After the fire, Mr. Black moved his operations to the corner where Fault Line is now.

So after these buildings were rebuilt in 1938, Bill Lorrick's Dry Goods occupied this storefront at 410 Court Square. In the 1950s, this was Ed McKay's Grocery and meat market.

400 Court Square (C)

After 1938, this was Jim McKay's Grocery Store (brother of Ed McKay, down the block). Then it became Maxie Ruffin's ice cream parlor. [Charlie Hamilton worked in a shop behind this store repairing TVs and radios in the 1970s.]

121 E. Cross St. (C)

Behind 400 Court Square to the east...Built circa 1935. In 1943, it housed Leonard Parker's restaurant in the front and implements and machinery in the rear portions. Later it was a shoe outlet for DeWitt Shoe Factory, and there was a barber shop around the corner.

326 Court Square (C)

From at least 1913 until the early 1950s, this corner was occupied by a two-story building owned by Maggie Goodwin. She had a grocery on the first floor and she lived upstairs. Then this building was constructed in the early 1950s to house a short-lived farm co-op business. When it went out in 1954, this became Harold Young's Department Store. Young's Dept. Store really defined the 1950s and 60s in DeWitt. The store carried a large selection of goods, from toys to clothes to furniture and appliances. There was a service station in the back of the building and a meat market to take your animals for butchering. Most people remember riding the mechanical pony in Young's as a child. DeWitt Publishing Company and the *DeWitt Era-Enterprise* moved into this building in 1981 after Young's closed.

The *DeWitt New Era* was founded in 1882 by Charles H. Spiller and was appropriately named because it broke from the old era of short-lived newspapers in DeWitt (17 short-lived papers in all). The *DeWitt Enterprise* was founded in 1916, and in 1929, it absorbed the *DeWitt New Era* to become the *DeWitt Era-Enterprise*. The paper continues today, claiming to have never missed an issue in 128 years (since 1882 founding of the *New Era*).

320 Court Square (C)

The current building was constructed about 1925, but this block has changed a lot since that time. From that time until at least 1943, there was a 2-story building to the south of this one, followed by a 3-story building, and then a small, 1-story

building on the corner lot. They are all gone now. But Harry Lipman Dry Goods was in the northern storefront (left) of this building, and Snar Drug Store was in the right hand portion. In the next building over was Moncrief Grocery and then the Blue Front Café moved into that building. Underwood Dime Store was on the corner.

312 Court Square (NC)

This is NC because of the mansard awning on the front. It was probably built about 1935. It was home to Halbert “Shorty” Gordon’s furniture store.

308 Court Square (NC)

The current building at 308 Court Square was totally rebuilt in 2000. Before that, there were two buildings in this space—one was a 2-story building and the other a 1-story building, both probably dating to about 1910. The 2-story building was on the east side (left) and housed Joe Stephens Hardware in the early 1900s. Tony Mory’s Bakery was located somewhere along these storefronts.

304 Court Square (C)

A historic building was here before this one, but it was demolished circa 1940 to build Clyde Merritt’s Grocery store (current Merritt Building).

Vacant lot to west was Norsworthy’s Grocery and then Shallhorn’s Hardware, beginning in 1938, when they moved to the south side of the square.

Look south down Main...

123 S. Main (C)

Built about 1940, this building housed the Merritt Liquor Store.

201-203-205 S. Main (NC)

Also built about 1940, and housed J. W. White Feed & Seed.

209 S. Main (C)

Built about 1950 and has a unique arched roof or Quonset hut shape. It housed the J. I. Case Equipment Co. (farm implements).

204 S. Main (NC)

New “modern” store for Ferguson’s Grocery, constructed in 1967. We’ll talk about Ferguson’s in just a minute.

224-226 Court Square (NC)

Kroger came to DeWitt in 1935 and located in this building for a short time before moving to the north side of the square. By about 1937, Elmer A. Ferguson’s Grocery was located in this building, where it remained until its new building was constructed on S. Main St. in 1967. About 1968, Ed Cook moved his Southern Store to this location. The Southern Store sold clothes and shoes for the whole family (although shoes were eventually phased out). When Young’s Dept. Store closed in 1981, Ed Cook purchased the mechanical horse and put it in the Southern Store for future generations to enjoy. Ed’s daughter, Darlene Cook Horton, took over the store in 1997 and renamed it Southern Surprise.

220 Court Square (NC)

The Rexall Drugs Building was constructed about 1949 to fill the empty space left in the block after the New Theater burned. As far back as 1933, the New Theater was located about where the east (left) half of Rexall Drugs is now. After the fire, the New Theater relocated circa 1940 to a building off the alley at the southwest corner of the square. Just to the west (or right) of the theater was a little restaurant stand known as the burger tent. It was run by Barney Burnett and sold hamburgers, hot dogs, pie, and sodas.

After the current building was constructed in 1949, it housed Western Auto and Delian’s Jewelry Store before becoming home to Tommy’s Rexall Drug Co. in August 1999. The Rexall Drug Store had operated next door at 216 Court Square from 1951 until 1999.

216 Court Square (NC)

This was built about 1921, and a narrow building located near this one housed the well-known Duck End Café.

214 Court Square (C)

Built about 1940 and replaced a 2-story building that housed a furniture store on this site for many years. Hef Well's Liquor Store was located in this building but had an alley entrance. Mr. Patrick's shooting gallery was temporarily located in the N-S part of the alley.

212 Court Square (C)

This building was probably built around 1915, but it has obviously been modified since that time (with glass block windows and some other things). It was a restaurant for many years (maybe Ms. Rothenhoffer's or the Nowlins sisters' 3 Sisters Café??). It served as the DeWitt City Hall from sometime after 1945 until 1977 when it was damaged by fire from the New Theater next door. At that point, the City Hall moved over to its current location in the old DeWitt Bank & Trust Building.

“Little Broadway”

This alley going E-W was known as “Little Broadway” because the New Theater was located here to the west of 212 along with a restaurant, pool hall/beer joint, and a barber shop. The New Theater was purchased by two men from Nashville, TN, in 1972 and renamed the Cinema Theater. Then in 1974, Larry Hudson and John Walter of Monticello (or JO-LAR Enterprises, Inc.) bought the theater. The name was later changed to the Arkansas Theater, and it was destroyed by fire in June 1977.

210 Court Square (C)

Built about 1925 and housed H. B. Dudley Hardware. Still see the Dudley name in the tile by the front door. Later it was the Busy Department Store. The outside stairs from the alley went up to a lawyer's office.

206 Court Square (C)

Built about 1925 and housed Joe Shackelford's Grocery and then Al Henderson's Family Shoe Center. See Shackelford's name in tile by door.

204 Court Square (C)

Built about 1925. This was Bill Shallhorn's Hardware (William Shallhorn's brother), and now it is owned by Nora Watson as Watson's Hardware. The Dudley name is in the tile here, too, so he may have operated a store here at some point.

202 Court Square (C)

Built about 1910 and the only building on the square that features rusticated concrete block. The cast iron columns on the storefront are still visible and were manufactured by Chickasaw Iron Works, Memphis, TN. This was the Lester Winkler Grocery Store, then Jack Wells's Hardware, the Cashway Grocery Co., and most recently, a beauty shop.

200 Court Square (C)

Built about 1910 to house the First National Bank of DeWitt, which officially opened here on the square in 1912. The bank remodeled the building two times—once in 1923 and again in 1940. A telephone exchange office was located upstairs, and for a time in the 1930s, the post office was located in the rear portion of this building. First National Bank survived the Great Depression, buying up other Arkansas County banks when they failed. At one time, it was said that DeWitt's banks had more money in them than in the banks of any other city of its size in the state. Mr. Vick Gerard used to operate a popcorn stand out in front of the buildings at 202 and 200 Court Square.

Point out DeWitt Post Office (1939) and Old Methodist Church (1923), which are individually listed on NR & P.O. is part of district.

Also, we gave 2 grants to Methodist church for roof repair and structural issues. Next issue is windows. Methodist congregation moved to new building on Hwy. 165 in 2000, and the old building is currently occupied by CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and they provide special programs for children as well as residential space for transitional or at-risk kids.

Thank you for coming!

Questions?