



SINCE

1841

# WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM

## Dicks-Armstrong-Pontius, Inc. DAP



Robert H. Dicks



ELMER H. WIGGIM

Elmer H. Wiggim



MR. GEORGE PONTIUS

George Pontius

### The Story of DAP Products

#### 1865 Establishing Roots

DAP traces its roots back to 1865, when Robert H. Dicks and Elmer Wiggim began producing sealing wax for food-canning out of Dicks' garage in Dayton, Ohio. In those days before refrigeration and commercially prepared foods, canning was a widespread practice, and demand for their product was high.

The company was located at the corner of Monument Avenue and Foundry Street encompassing a building 60x90 feet in dimension in which held their equipment that was protected by United States patents. They also had a fire-proof warehouse on the corner of Monument Avenue and Sears Street.

Brands having a national reputation included "Zubian," "Climax," "Ex. Royal Gem," "Amber," "Royal Gem," "White," and "Gem."

In 1886, J.W. McSherry was manufacturing putty in his warehouse on Canal Street. In 1891 McSherry retired and his business was taken over by Dicks and Wiggim. They employed 10 to 12 men and produced 12,000 pounds of superior pure putty daily.

In 1903, the Dicks & Wiggim Company bought out the business of J.R. Kelch, who had been making sealing wax in his barn and was selling it in his neighborhood. Dicks & Wiggim kept the trade name "J.R.K." of the wax made from him.

### **1906 The Buy Out**

In 1906, Dicks bought out Wiggim and joined with George Pontius. They were producing the "Pontius Pure" and "J.R.K." brands of wax.

In 1911, Elmer H. Wiggim retired from the Dicks & Wiggim Company. The company was manufacturing sealing wax, putty, varnish and other products. An application was made to the secretary of state to change the company name to the Dicks-Pontius Company as George Pontius had been a long-time member of the Dicks & Wiggim Company.

### **1913 Dicks-Pontius Company**

In 1913, after Dicks bought out Wiggim and joined with George Pontius, they incorporated their partnership as the Dicks-Pontius Company. When George Pontius died, his son Thomas entered the business and expanded it to include putty and caulk manufacturing in bulk form.

By 1916, the company had grown out of its Monument Avenue building and embarked on building a two-story, concrete and steel, fire-proof structure on Wayne Avenue at a cost of nearly \$40,000.

The Dicks-Pontius Company was still growing and once again, needed to expand its facilities. It announced in December 1922 that a 12,000 square foot addition to the Wayne Avenue plant would be built with the capability of adding a second story if business warranted. A reinforced concrete tunnel would be built under the railroad switch to connect the new building to the original building. The firm now encompassed 123 – 131 Wayne Avenue.

By 1923, the Dicks-Pontius Co. was the worlds leading manufacturer of sealing wax producing 85% of the product. They also had a big share of fancy wax production including bakers', express, bottle, stationary, insulating and battery. They also made wax strings for cans that came in one-foot lengths and were placed around the edge of a can to seal it. The heat of the fruit in the can softened the wax so that the string was an easy and economical way of canning.

Additionally, the company made specialty putty's named "Steel Sash" and "Primeless" putty for the new skyscraper construction styles and factory buildings using metal sash and doors.

In October 1925, Robert H. Dicks, head of the Dicks-Pontius Company, stated that Dayton was the largest producer of their indispensable wax. Dayton was also among the greatest of putty producers, a commodity without which carpenters and glaziers would be sorely handicapped.

### **1940's & 1950's The Revolution**

The Dicks-Pontius Company revolutionized the home repair products market in the 1940's and 50's through its marketing and product development including moving the industry to marketing caulks and sealants in disposable cartridges.

## 1957 Dicks-Armstrong-Pontius

Through the 1950's, the company grew through several acquisitions, including a merger with the Chicago-based Armstrong Company in 1957. The resulting entity was renamed Dicks-Armstrong- Pontius, which was eventually shortened to the brand name DAP.

In 1998, the company moved to Baltimore, Maryland.

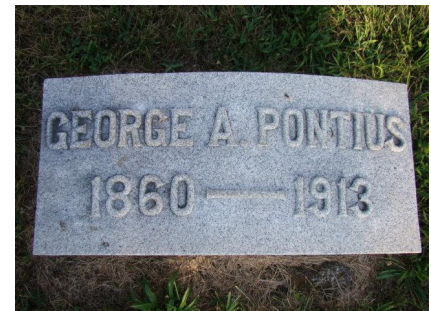
Sources: [dap.com/about-dap/history](http://dap.com/about-dap/history) and The Dayton Herald and Dayton Daily News, 1893 - 1925.



Robert Howe Dicks was born May 22 1854 and died July 2, 1938 at the age of 84. He is buried in Section 103 at Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum.



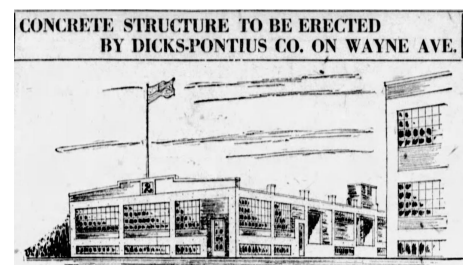
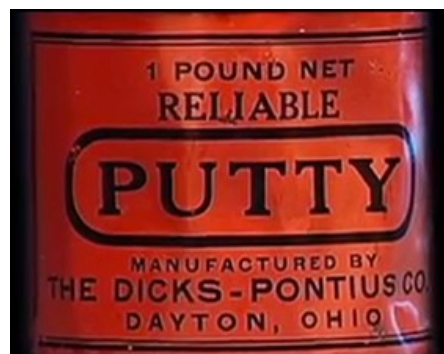
Elmer Hugh Wiggim was born February 20, 1862 and died on November 5, 1944 at the age of 82. He is buried in Section 102 Lot 1430 at Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum.



Robert Howe Dicks was born May 22 1854 and died July 2, 1938 at the age of 84. He is buried in Section 103 at Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum.

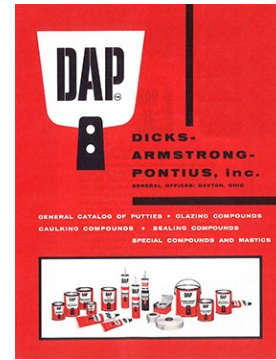


Zubian and Pontius Sealing Wax by the Dicks-Pontius Company



The Dicks-Pontius Building on Wayne Avenue in Dayton





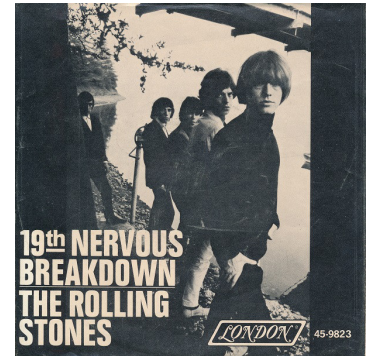
## Sealing Wax gets a moment in Pop Culture

From the Rolling Stones  
19th Nervous Breakdown  
1966

... Your mother who neglected you owes a million dollars tax  
And your father's still perfecting ways of making sealing wax  
You better stop, look around  
Here it comes, here it comes, here it comes, here it comes  
Here comes your nineteenth nervous breakdown

What does it mean?

Richard Litz on Quora.com stated, "I always took "perfecting ways of making sealing wax" as "doing something extremely pointless", as sealing wax was out of common use long before the song was written. No one made sealing wax because no one used sealing wax, so perfecting it would be beyond useless."



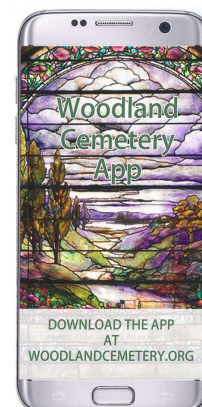
## November Guided Walking Tours

We have several tours available for you to take in the month of November including on Thanksgiving weekend. Get out of the house and treat your family and guests to a tour at Woodland. For more information on the tours and availability please click here: [bit.ly/WoodlandSunsetTours](http://bit.ly/WoodlandSunsetTours)

You can take your own walking tour at the cemetery or a virtual tour from the comfort of your couch by visiting our website at: [woodlandcemetery.org/tours](http://woodlandcemetery.org/tours).

From your phone you will be prompted to download our app. Take one of 12 walking tours we have available for your enjoyment at the cemetery. If you are on your desktop, laptop or tablet, you can take the tour right from the tour page. We will be adding more tours so come back often to learn about the men and women who made it Great in Dayton.

[Download the mobile app for your phone by clicking here.](#)



Memories of a loved one should last for generations.

Using our app, you can:

- Navigate to your relative or friend's grave using our GPS-based system
- Share stories about your family
- Upload photos and video
- Share memories with your family on Facebook

Your loved one's memorial page is automatically created when you make cemetery arrangements with our office. You may also share and upload information by using our burial database via our website ([woodlandcemetery.org](http://woodlandcemetery.org)). (please contact our office if you need assistance)



**WOODLAND**  
HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM



## A Woodland Milestone

To help us celebrate our 180th Anniversary, make a donation of \$180 or more to the Arboretum Foundation now through December 31, 2021 and you will receive a set of Woodland ceramic coasters. Limit one set per household.

Donate on our secure website by clicking below or click on the check to receive a donation form to mail in.



**Click Here  
Donate Now**



Woodland Cemetery & Arboretum | [Visit our website!](#)



Woodland Cemetery & Arboretum | 118 Woodland Ave., Dayton, OH 45409