



# North Carolina Archaeological Society

## Newsletter

4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619

<http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas>

FALL, Volume 18, Number 3

### North Carolina Archaeological Society's 75<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY

Join the North Carolina Archaeological Society as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary! What better way to celebrate North Carolina Archaeology than with a classic BBQ dinner, some birthday cake (in the shape of Town Creek Indian Mound no less!), and the Schiele Museum's wonderful exhibits! The NCAS members along with the Southeastern Archaeological Conference attendees are invited to an afternoon of fun and an evening of festivities on Saturday November 15, 2008 at the Schiele Museum of Natural History in Gastonia. During the afternoon, visit the Schiele Museum's exhibits including the outdoor Catawba Indian Village, an 18th Century Back Country Farm, and the temporary exhibit "Swamp Things". Visit their website [www.schielemuseum.org](http://www.schielemuseum.org). NCAS members will be admitted to the Schiele Museum FREE on Saturday. Then join the Southeastern

Archaeological Conference's BBQ banquet at 5pm at the museum - BBQ dinner is \$15 and there will be a cash bar available. After dinner NCAS will provide Birthday Cake and a champagne toast. Enjoy sales on NCAS merchandise including a new mug, renew your membership for 2009, and take a chance at winning fabulous prizes in our raffle give-aways. Come on out and celebrate this momentous occasion - its not every day that your Archaeological Society turns 75!! **Please RSVP to Dee Nelms at 919-807-6552 or [dee.nelms@ncmail.net](mailto:dee.nelms@ncmail.net) so she will be able to provide the Schiele Museum with a list of members planning to view the exhibits. Also, if you are planning on attending the BBQ dinner, send \$15 to NCAS, 4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619, by November 3<sup>rd</sup>, extra plates will be limited at the event.**

### NEW CERAMIC MUGS

To celebrate the 75th Birthday of the NCAS we have commissioned a local potter to make 75 specially marked ceramic mugs to sell at the SEAC meeting, Birthday Party on November 15th. These beautiful mugs are being made by Allen and Jen Walton of TATE-WALTON Pottery. They will be green-glazed stoneware and stamped with the NCAS logo and 75 to mark the occasion. We will offer them for sale at a special, limited-offer rate during the birthday, and afterwards they will be \$12.00 each. Plan to pick one up and use it to toast the occasion; it will hold champagne or beer or coffee or tea! These will surely be collector's items, so don't miss out!!

### 2008 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The 2008 Election of Officers ballot is enclosed. Jeff Irwin and Matthew Jorgenson will be rotating off the board in January 2009. Please return the ballot to Dee Nelms, North Carolina Archaeological Society, 4619 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4619 by November 7<sup>th</sup>. As in previous years, we will take nominations from the floor at the NCAS 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday event at the Schiele Museum on November 15<sup>th</sup>. You will get a chance to cast your vote at the event if you do not send it in by mail.

# 75 YEARS AND GOING STRONG: THE NORTH CAROLINA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES A BIG ONE

Linda Carnes-McNaughton & Steve Davis

In October 2008 a momentous occasion will have many members sharpening their trowels and tightening their sifters, as the North Carolina Archaeological Society celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday! To toast this joyous event the NCAS is hosting a big birthday party in conjunction with the Southeastern Archaeological Conference, to be held this year in the Charlotte area. The party is scheduled for Saturday, November 15, 2008, and will be held at the Schiele Museum of Natural History in Gastonia (please see separate announcement for more details). We hope the celebration will be large and great fun for members and guests alike.

The society, originally named The Archaeological Society of North Carolina, began with an initial organizational meeting on October 7, 1933, at the home of Burnham Colburn near Asheville. The Rev. Douglas Rights, a Moravian minister and avocational archaeologist, was elected as the society's first president. Rights, one of the first to recognize and appreciate our state's wealth of archaeological resources, presented a paper at this inaugural meeting, appropriately titled "North Carolina as an Archaeological Field." Joffre Coe, who was still in high school at the time, did not attend but became a charter member and was appointed chairman of the archaeological survey committee. Well, the rest is history, so they say. He promptly drew up the state's first site survey form and set about to educate others interested in documenting the archaeological resources of the state. From this period until his retirement from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1982, Coe "dominated the state's archaeological endeavors," following the lead of Rev. Rights and Dr. James Bullitt, a UNC pathology professor. Bullitt and Dr. Guy Johnson, a sociologist and anthropologist at UNC, provided the nascent society with influential clout and academic respectability (Ward and Davis 1999:9), not to mention funding! This early partnership between the society and the university continues today

with the Research Laboratories of Archaeology (RLA) at UNC serving as one of its primary institutional sponsors, the other being the Office of State Archaeology, within the NC Department of Cultural Resources.

Under the direction of Bullitt, and assisted by Rights, Coe, and Harry Davis of the State Museum, the NCAS launched an ambitious excavation of the Keyauwee village site in 1936, which generated statewide interest in archaeology. Founding members of the NCAS soon afterwards participated in the Frutchey Mound (aka Town Creek) excavations beginning in 1937. Excavations at Town Creek, directed by Coe, continued to be supported by NCAS members for half a century. As history is known to repeat, the NCAS has again returned to Town Creek Indian Mound on two recent occasions to complete documentation (through excavation) on portions of the site (see reports on NCAS webpage 2006 and 2007 seasons).

Despite an early flurry of activities and major contributions to the archaeology of some of the state's premier sites (e.g., Town Creek, Keyauwee, Wall, and Hardaway), the 1960–1980s era was by contrast a rather quiet period for the society. The annual journal, *Southern Indian Studies*, continued to be published (though at times sporadically), and featured articles related to on-going site research, recent discoveries, artifact studies, and new dating techniques. Membership in the society ranged from a few dozen to several hundred, falling off significantly during the 1970s. In 1983, a new beginning came with the spring meeting held in Morganton. Dr. Roy Dickens, Jr., the RLA's new director, worked to reinvigorate the organization by reinstating regular meetings, establishing a regular publication schedule for the journal, and encouraging participation by members in on-going archaeological research projects. During the 1980s and 1990s the society became revitalized, and by 1991 efforts were underway to merge the society with another statewide organization, Friends of NC Archaeology, which

was sponsored by the Office of State Archaeology. The final merger occurred in 1992, and the resulting organization was named The North Carolina Archaeological Society. Institutional support was jointly provided by the RLA and the Office of State Archaeology.

Since 2000, the NCAS has experienced a florescence, participating in statewide events, hosting month-long celebrations, receiving state proclamations, working on public outreach projects, showcasing sites at our state fair booth, creating educational posters for distribution, partnering with museums and agencies to do fieldwork or host workshops, annually publishing a top-rank regional journal and quarterly newsletters, joining a national affiliation of other state archaeological societies (CoAS), and conducting “rescue” archaeology on sites threatened with destruction. Our membership now approaches 400, and members are spread

across the state and beyond. We have four active regional chapters who work within their communities to increase awareness and appreciation for archaeology. Members are working hard to further the mission of the NCAS to promote, preserve, and protect the rich archaeological resources of our state through education, enhancement, and enjoyment,

On behalf of the NCAS Board of Directors, we wish to thank members, sponsors, and all others for your continued support of this valuable organization and all it stands for today and has stood for in the past. We hope you will join us in celebrating this momentous occasion as we recognize 75 years of an organization devoted to the Archaeology of North Carolina. Hope to see you at the Birthday Bash in Gastonia, on November 15th. Please visit our webpage (<http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas>) to learn more about current activities and upcoming events.



Participants of the 1933 organizational meeting of The Archaeological Society of North Carolina. The Rev. Douglas Rights, the society's first president, is standing in the middle row (far right).

## Thirty-Six Years of Urban Archaeology in Edenton: An Exploration of Three Centuries of Historic Identity in a Colonial Port Town

Thomas E. Beaman, Jr., RPA

Given its historically modest size and meager population, one could hardly consider the colonial port town of Edenton as “urban” by period standards when compared to the eighteenth-century Atlantic commercial centers of Philadelphia or Charleston. In fact, if one has recently visited Edenton, they might even be hard pressed to consider them urban by contemporary standards when likened to Fayetteville, Greenville, or Wilmington, and certainly not when contrasted to modern inland cities such as Raleigh, Greensboro, and Charlotte. Yet largely due to the rural character and late development of North Carolina during the colonial era, it was smaller towns such as Edenton, New Bern, Halifax and Bath, Beaufort, Cross Creek, Hillsborough, Salem, and many others that fulfilled regional needs as developed centers, where material goods could be obtained and services rendered. As such, a definition of urban proposed for small communities, “an accumulation of people in a locus which serves political, social, and/or economic functions” (Samford 1996:68), can be applied to these towns. It is in this interpretation of urban where Edenton finds its proper historical context, as it served as an important commercial, social, cultural, and political regional center for northeastern North Carolina during the colonial period.

The historic town of Edenton is located in the Albemarle Region, in what historian Thomas Parramore (1967) referred to as “the cradle of the colony.” Colonists from Virginia first began to settle this area in the 1650s and 1660s. While the location had most likely been occupied since the late seventeenth century, Edenton was formally laid out into half-acre lots in 1712 (now referred to as the “Old Plan” lots), and was expanded westward in 1722 (presently referred to as the “New Plan” lots). It served as the first capital of North Carolina from its incorporation in 1722 until 1743, and was the major commercial center for the Albemarle Region throughout the colonial era and into the early nineteenth century (Parramore 1967). The historic population of

Edenton was slightly less than that of New Bern, as 133 households were calculated within the core area of the town from the Sauthier map of June 1769 (Beaman et al. 1998:16-18). Beginning in the early nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century, the essential function of the port in Edenton largely diminished. Commercial goods experienced more efficient transit by rail, and later road, to larger, more inland centers such as Raleigh, which grew to prominence in the political and social realms. Edenton reached early maturity and largely ceased expansion by the early nineteenth century.

A focus on the core area of Edenton as shown on the 1769 Sauthier map of the town reveals that the urban archaeology conducted since the earliest project in 1972 has been prompted by three separate factors: investigations at public historic sites, non-mandated investigations around private residences and associated yard spaces, as well as cultural resource management studies. All of these projects have contributed to the knowledge of individual sites within this early and important colonial port.

### Historic Edenton State Historic Site

While it presently embraces and encourages tours of a locally designated historic district, which was also declared a National Register Historic District in 1973, the Historic Edenton State Historic Site is actually comprised of three discontinuous historic properties: the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse, the 1773 James Iredell House, and the 1892 Louis F. Zeigler House. The most prominent of these buildings is the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse, also a National Historic Landmark. Systematic archaeological excavations conducted during its interior restoration in 2001 by State Historic Sites archaeologists identified the post-hole and artifact remains of the 1722 Council Chamber, the oldest governmental structure in North Carolina, as well as a stratified ca. 1720s-1750s trash pit under the East Wing. The preservation underneath the main courtroom and magistrate's platform was so

exceptional that wooden shavings planed from the mid-eighteenth century floor joists during their installation survived in abundance (Carnes-McNaughton and Beaman 2003).

This restoration project also involved the excavation of trenches from the existing structure through the rear yard, which included an extant nineteenth century standing jail and jailor's residence. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century domestic artifacts, possibly from the earlier eighteenth century jail shown on the 1769 Sauthier map, were also recovered from this trench. Footings for a detached mid nineteenth century building, referred to on the Sanborn maps as the "jailor's kitchen," were also unearthed (Carnes-McNaughton and Beaman 2003). Additional investigations around the 1767 Courthouse have included the discovery of the original ground level and number of steps to the street along the front of the structure (Clauser 1996), and an underground storm drain reservoir for a former twentieth-century structure behind the West Wing (Clauser and Joy 1993). Most recently, former East Carolina University graduate student Wesley Willoughby (2007) demonstrated that recovered artifacts related to the courthouse from disturbed contexts generally conformed to Cara Wise's (1978) public structure pattern.

The extant 1773 residence at 105 East Church Street served as home to local political leader and Revolutionary patriot James Iredell, who was later appointed by President George Washington as one of the original Associate Justices of the United States Supreme Court. The rear yard of the residence is presently a complex of reconstructed dependency buildings, as well as an historic schoolhouse (Cross 1985) and kitchen moved to the site from Bandon Plantation in northern Chowan County in 1963 and 2008, respectively. A myriad of small-scale and limited archaeological investigations have been conducted on the Iredell House property, all directed towards the restoration or utility installation of the main residence (Schwartz 1972; Nesmith 1974; Carnes-McNaughton and Beaman 2001a, 2001b; Beaman 2008), or in the rear yard for the reconstruction and movement of historic dependencies (Funk 1980a; Wilson 1984a; Mintz 2006, 2008). The most comprehensive investigation was a systematic shovel test survey by former State Historic Sites archaeologist

Thomas Funk (1980a), who determined the area to be "rich in archaeological resources." Funk identified articulated brick piers from what he interpreted to be two different historic structures. A third articulated pier was located in Mintz's (2008) evaluation of an area of the rear yard to which an historic kitchen was to be reconstructed. To date, none of these piers have been disturbed or further investigated by additional archaeological investigations, or in the subsequent construction or movement of reconstructed buildings. Most recently, in addition to the identification of a sandy path shown on the Sauthier map of Edenton, Beaman (2008) documented a heavy amount of fill from the early twentieth century on the western side of Lot 80, the location of a small creek shown on the same historic map.

The Louis F. Zeigler House, a high Victorian residence at 108 North Broad Street, designed by noted Knoxville, Tennessee architect George F. Barber (Butchko 1992:87-88), has been restored and is presently in use as the Historic Edenton Visitor Center. The limited investigations of this structure include the documentation of two late nineteenth-century cisterns (Carnes-McNaughton 1992a, 1992b), installation of new gutters and drain lines (Harper 1994), testing prior to the removal of a later addition (Harper 1988), and a summary of the monitored destruction of a 1940s breezeway and removal of a concrete wall around the former residence (Wilson 1984b). Additionally, a waterline was installed from this residence to and around the reconstructed garden in the rear of the Iredell House (Carnes-McNaughton 2001, 2002).

### **Non-Mandated Investigations**

There have been three different locales within the urban core of Edenton that were the subject of archaeological investigation beyond the State Historic Site and were not explored as a result of mandatory compliance. The first of these is Lot 1 of the "New Plan," located at 408 South Broad Street, which contains the Cupola House, another National Historic Landmark. A blend of diverse architectural styles from England and New England (Bisher 1990:16-19; Butchko 1992:114-118), the Cupola House served as a private residence from the time of its construction to its establishment as a house museum in 1966 (Coffey

and Moss 1995). This date of original construction, indeterminate by style or historical research, was eventually ascertained to be 1758 by a dendrochronology study of the yellow pine structural timbers (Heikkinen 1992). Initial exploration of the front and rear yards by Stuart Schwartz (1973) yielded evidence of a nineteenth century privy, a two separate brick chimney bases, an outbuilding interpreted as a dairy, the grave of a two-month old infant female, and 1,586 artifacts of various historic eras. Investigation of a gas line trench in 1995 revealed heavily mixed and disturbed stratigraphy (Heath 1995), which led to test excavations the following year to identify the original ground level around the residence (Zawacki 1996).

The second lot has been referred to in archaeological literature by two different designations: the Drane Property, named for former resident Rebecca Drane, and the Tea Party Lot, so called because of the nearby ornamental tea pot monument that commemorates the Edenton Tea Party of 1774. Drane privately funded five separate investigations in the yard around her late nineteenth-century home at 101 East Water Street by Funk between 1978 and 1981. In these investigations, Funk (1980b, 1981a, 1981b; Funk et al. 1979) identified brick foundations of pre-1770 waterfront commercial buildings, a late eighteenth century midden, two privies (one late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, the second mid nineteenth century), and a remnant indications of mid nineteenth century smokehouse. The reports, notes and artifacts from these projects have since been reviewed and further summarized (Joy 1991). Upon Rebecca Drane's death, Ross and Francis Ingles, whose home bordered this property to the south, purchased the land and continue act as its protective stewards. Staunch advocates of archaeology, the Ingles still proudly display many of the mended ceramic and glass artifacts from these investigations in their parlor curio cabinet. The Ingles residence, known as the Homestead, may also be a source of rich potential archaeological research, as their property was the colonial town home of Francis Ingles' ancestor, Josiah Collins of Somerset Plantation (Butchko 1992:251-253).

Another non-mandated archaeological site to consider in Edenton is an also perhaps the one of

the most serendipitous discovery. In 1980, the installation of a new phone line along Granville Street revealed a buried foundation in the yard of the mid nineteenth century Wessington House, "unrivaled as the grandest house in Edenton" (Butchko 1992:213). What was deemed the Wessington House assemblage, an unearthened English bond foundation contained a deposit of domestic refuse dating between the 1720s and 1760s, with a mean ceramic date of 1753 (Steen 1990:40). This structure was apparently demolished in the 1760s, as it does not appear on the 1769 Sauthier map. While only a small portion of the cellar was disturbed, archaeologists from the Historic Sites Section and local volunteers quickly documented the disturbance and collected what artifacts they could from this deposit prior to its reburial. Of the recovered artifacts, a cache of thousands of Philadelphia made lead-glazed redware sherds was identified as part of a single shipping container broke in transit (Steen 1999:63). This discovery led Steen (1990, 1999) to identify patterns of intercoastal trade of domestically produced ceramics, and have since helped archaeologists to identify the presence of Philadelphia-made earthenwares on other colonial town sites in North Carolina. Additionally, the nineteenth century cisterns at the Wessington House have also been documented as comparative to those at the Zeigler House (Carnes-McNaughton 1992a, 1992b).

### **Compliance Investigations**

To date, the core area of Edenton has only seen two investigations that have been the result of cultural resource management investigations. The first stands as one of the earliest and most complete examples of urban archaeology in Edenton. In the late 1970s, the proposed construction of a new courthouse complex with detention facility on a city block bounded by Broad, Church, Court, and Queen streets prompted test investigations on what was believed to be the site of the William Jackson tannery, as well as a contemporaneous snuff and tobacco factory. Two areas within this historic city block were archaeologically evaluated. Area A, the center of the block, yielded evidence of brick lined drain that dates to the late nineteenth century. Area B, along Church Street, revealed a late eighteenth/early nineteenth century brick

cellar that may have been associated with the snuff and tobacco factory, as well as later mid nineteenth century features, such as a fence line, well, and a privy (Foss et al 1979:32-33, 118-119). Though not as well preserved as the remnants of Halsen tannery in New Bern (Garrow and Joseph 1985:75), here the locations of the William Jackson tannery vats and a lime kiln were identified. Additionally, the former tannery pond and creek were found to have been used as a area for disposal of domestic refuse by nearby residents since the late eighteenth century (Garrow et al. 1978, I:29; Foss et al. 1979:1). Despite this project being over 30 years old, this study provides the most completely documented look at the diachronic changes that an entire town block has undergone in Edenton during the past three centuries.

The second cultural resource management project was a small evaluation of a property slated for the relocation of a nineteenth century cottage on the eastern edge of town. The proposed relocation site assessed was on Highway NC 32, approximately one-half mile east of its intersection with Oakum Street. Eighteenth century artifacts were located on the surface of the lot's present use as a cornfield, but no structural remains were identified. The artifacts were attributed to a neighboring extant eighteenth century residence still in use, and the cottage was moved to its present location (Wilson 1977).

### **Community Identity**

Today the self-defined identity of Edenton is as an historic town, maintained largely to draw in visitors through heritage tourism. This historic identity has led to a sense of pride and preservation and has resulted in the restoration of many historic buildings. Many of these historic buildings have been featured in a number of publications, whether academic or designed for coffee table display, and archaeology has played a vital role in the exploration and restoration of several historic properties. To the citizens of these communities, these historic residential, governmental, and commercial structures from the eighteenth, nineteen, and twentieth centuries represent part of an evolved urban landscape that exists as a testament to their past, and helps to define a unique sense of place within each town.

Yet perhaps one of the most overlooked aspects of urban archaeology within historical towns is the effect its historical identity has on its modern citizens. The cultivation of local interest in archaeology within Edenton has been critical in the identification and preservation of urban remains. Many in Edenton are passionate advocates of archaeology, and feel that when archaeologists explore the town that they are investigating their past as well. A few residents have become so interested that they volunteer their time to actively participate in archaeological excavations. For example, the name of Madison Phillips should be familiar to archaeologists who work in Edenton, as he has been a part of almost every archaeological project since the early investigations at the Cupola House in 1973. In fact, to assist Carnes-McNaughton and Beaman with the investigations at the Chowan County Courthouse in 2001, he even took weeks of vacation time from his job driving medical samples between various regional medical facilities in the Albemarle area work to work under the building. Phillips is but one example, for if you look at the acknowledgements in many reports and field notes, many of the same names often repeat frequently. Most enjoy screening the removed soil more, as it is not as physically taxing and they get to discover the "treasures" that the sites yield. Other citizens, such as the late Rebecca Drane of Edenton, became so interested and enthusiastic about the past that they paid archaeologists to investigate the history of their home lot. These diverse examples of support for archaeology stand as a testament to the devotion of local residents who value the history of their towns. This same active level of community involvement is usually not as common in larger cities, if it is indeed present at all.

*Acknowledgments.* The author especially wishes to thank Linda Eure, Site Manager of Historic Edenton State Historic Site, and her staff, as well as Madison Phillips, for lengthy discussions on the institutional memory and historical perspective of various archaeological projects (and archaeologists) in Edenton. This newsletter article was abstracted from a larger study on the archaeology of North Carolina's port towns presented at the 2007 Society for Historical Archaeology conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. Linda Carnes-McNaughton, John Mintz, and Pam Beaman read and commented on the original study, for which it is much improved. However, the author assumes full responsibility for any factual errors and the interpretations presented in this newsletter article.



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## NCAS Grants-in-Aid Program for 2008-2009

Randy Daniel and David Moore  
Co-chairs, NCAS Endowment Committee

This fall, the North Carolina Archaeological Society will continue its Grants-in-Aid Program designed to fund research pertaining to North Carolina Archaeology. At least one grant up to \$1000 will be awarded each year. Applicants must meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) a graduate or undergraduate student actively pursuing a degree in archaeology or a related field; (b) an individual enrolled in an internship program with a museum, a state historic site, an archaeological park, or a Native American group (with state or federal recognition); or (c) an avocational archaeologist who is a member of the North Carolina Archaeological Society and has over time demonstrated a concern for the protection or study of archaeological resources within the state. The next deadline for proposals is November 1, 2008. Full details and application instructions can be found on the web at <http://www.rla.unc.edu/ncas/Grants/index.html>. Grant recipients will be selected by the NCAS Endowment Committee, whose members currently include Randy Daniel (co-chair), Rick Langley, David Moore (co-chair), Ken Robinson, Vin Steponaitis, and Ann Tippitt.

The grants are underwritten by the NCAS Endowment Fund which was established in 2001 from

the proceeds of the sale of the "Blue Banks" property near Greenville. The sale took place largely through the efforts of then-president Robert Graham. We owe him our thanks for making these grants possible!

**NCAS Newsletter  
Publication Schedule**

All NCAS members are encouraged to submit articles and news items to Dee Nelms, Associate Editor, for inclusion in the *Newsletter*. Please use the following cut-off dates as guides for your submissions:

Spring Issue - February 28	Fall Issue - August 31
Summer Issue - May 31	Winter Issue - November 30

**NCAS Officers**

**President:** Terri Russ, PO Box 81, Hillsborough NC 27278.

**Vice-president:** Tommy Stine, 1923-36<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Hickory, NC 28601.

**Treasurer:** E. William Conen, 804 Kingswood Drive, Cary, NC 27513.

**Secretary:** Linda Carnes-McNaughton, Dept of the Army, Directorate of Public Works, ATTN IMSE-BRG-PE, 2175 Reilly Road, Stop A, Fort Bragg, NC 28310-5000.

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**Executive Board Members:** Jeff Irwin, Matthew Jorgenson, Ruth Morgans, Kate Pattison, Scott Seibel, Archie Smith

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