



Newsletter

Sonoma County Genealogical Society



Volume 11, Number 2

October, 2001

President's Message

by Audrey Herman

While looking through my recipe box for an old family cookie recipe to bring to the October 20th program at the Library, I realized my grandmothers did not bake cookies. My mother baked, my great grandmothers baked, and Great Aunt Kari, who was a caterer baked, but not my grandmothers.



My maternal grandmother, Thora Male, owned a dress shop, and had a housekeeper to do such mundane chores as cooking and cleaning. My paternal grandmother, Elsie Lindas, as the oldest of 12 children and having 8 children of her own, must have baked cookies. I do not remember ever eating a cookie at her house. She always gave us fresh baked bread with lots of butter and sugar sprinkled on top. Since sugar was rationed, she must have given the grandchildren her sugar ration on the bread rather than in cookies. She also made pies with melt-in-your-mouth pie crust. She rendered her own lard to make the crust. Even with all that cholesterol consumption, she lived to be 98.

My mother gave me recipes belonging to her grandmother, Anna Nielsen. I remember these as being very good cookies. She and her friends would meet to eat cookies and drink coffee and chatter in Norwegian. Now I wish I had paid more attention to what the ladies were saying and learned some Norwegian words. Her recipes call for a handful of this and a pinch of that. Not being Julia Child, or my Aunt Kari, I have never tried any of these and never will.

My cookie contribution will have to be my mother's peanut butter cookies. There is no family story attached to them. I do not know where she got the recipe. I do know they taste good, and they are my son's favorite cookie. I hope some of you will have better luck finding a cookie recipe with a fascinating family story attached.

Oct. 20th General Meeting: Date Change

The October General Meeting presentation will be about the U.S. 1880 Census on CDs. This is the first ever U.S. census published in its complete format. Meaning its the first record that covers the continental United States, which at that time included 38 states and eight territories. It does not contain the Indian Territory for what is now present-day Oklahoma. With 50.5 million names, the record is fully extracted with every name indexed. It contains each individual's full name, relationship to head of house, age, gender, race, marital status, occupation, birthplace, and the birthplace of the individual's parents. The census also allows viewing of neighboring families.

The Sonoma County Public Library Annex has the 56-CD-ROM set. The Santa Rosa Family History Center has two sets. Individuals can purchase sets for home use from The Family and Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Contact the Family History Center, at 525-0399 for ordering information. The record contains 35 data CDs, 20 index CDs, and a viewer CD and sells for \$49.00.

Larry Stratford is an Assistant Director for the Santa Rosa Family History Center and is in the Marketing Division of Agilent Technologies.

General Meeting

Oct. 20th
1pm—3pm
Lark Hall,
Room 2009
S.R.J.C.

Speaker:
Larry Stratford will present an overview of the U.S. 1880 census on CDs and provide an explanation of how to use this valuable record.

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Visit Our Web Site at: <http://www.scgs.org>

Ancestry Daily News

Michael John Neill

Research in different places frequently requires changing your mindset and learning about new records. However, here are some suggestions that may help your research regardless of where you are researching.

Read The Entire File Or Record

It can be very tempting to just quickly scan a series of court or probate papers, focusing on the “good stuff.” (“Where is that will?”) There are certainly papers from these files where you will want to be sure to see, try, and read through everything (you don’t have to copy everything, though). What on the surface might not contain clues could be very helpful. What seems to be a trivial clue could be extremely important later in your research. Early in my own genealogy endeavors, I quickly glanced over an estate packet and focused on the pages listing the heirs. I nearly missed a reference in another document to property the deceased owned in another state. This location was a significant clue and later opened up the door to more relatives and information.

Keep Your Wits About You

Maintain a healthy sense of skepticism when reading virtually anything. Are there three generations being born in twenty-five years? Are children selling land at the age of five? Are fifteen-year-olds witnessing legal documents? If you have to stretch your common sense to make the “story” hold, it’s probably wise to reconsider the story in the first place.

Research For Siblings

If you are not consistently researching for information on your ancestor’s siblings you may be missing out on large quantities of information. Records on your ancestor may not be as informative as those records on your ancestor’s brothers or sisters (or their husbands).

Be Aware Of Local History

How much do you know about the history of where your family lived? Learning something about that history might increase what you know about your ancestors as well.

Be Aware Of Local Geography

Was the county seat for the adjacent county nearer than the one for the county in which your ancestor lived? It might have affected where he went to elope (but not where his estate was probated). Did county borders change during the time your ancestor lived in a certain area?

Don't Bring A 20th Century Mind To An 18th Century Problem

Society and culture have changed greatly over the last three hundred years. The meanings of some words have changed significantly. Is it possible that you are assuming your ancestors lived and interacted with their environment and others the way we do today?

Also, remember their educational level might have been very different and they might not have spoken the language of many of their neighbors.

Reread Your Files

Is there a clue in your files that has gone virtually unnoticed? Do you know what is in your file folders? How long ago has it been since you read great-grandpa’s will? Are you sure there’s not a clue in there you have overlooked? If you have located new information since the will was located, it may be that the will needs to be re-analyzed.

Get Maps

Maps are one of the crucial building blocks of genealogical research. Use both current and historical maps. It is helpful to compare what is in a location today with what was there one hundred years ago and modern maps won’t show all the “old places” that no longer exist. Maps are always a great idea, and are especially helpful for those areas with which you are not familiar.

Type Or Read Copies Out Loud

Typing or transcribing a document forces the transcriber to look at the document in great detail. Digital scanning is great, but it forces the scanner and not you to look at everything (although scanning may make it easier for you to read or transcribe the document). Reading copies of a document out loud may cause your ears to hear something your eyes did not see.

Look At The Original

If genealogy has a mantra, this is likely it (you don’t have to sit in the lotus position and chant “go to the original” though). Typed books and materials are wonderful, but they were created by humans who occasionally make mistakes.

Don't Put Blind Faith In The Experts

They are experts . . . not deities. Any experts who insist they are deities, are to be avoided (actually ANYONE who insists they are a deity should probably be avoided). Most experts realize that they are fallible and do not know everything. Remember there are no guarantees in genealogy.

Don't Believe Everything You Read In Print

People who refuse to believe anything they read in a modern newspaper sometimes believe whatever they read in a nineteenth century county history or newspa-

Continued on page 3

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per. Make certain you are not one of them. It is easy just to take all the facts as correct, but they very well might not be accurate. Why would newspapers one hundred years ago be error free? After all, they didn't have spell checkers which always catch all mistakes.

Interview Family and Identify People In Photographs

Now!! *Do Not put this one off!* The courthouse will still be there. The cemetery will still be there. But when Great-Aunt Myrtle goes . . . she is gone! And so is whatever family history she had in her head.

Don't Put Blind Faith In Memory

Most records we use contain at least some information that was obtained from someone's memory at the time the document was recorded. Are you certain they remembered everything correctly? They most likely did not have to bring in "proof." Information given during a stressful time is more likely to be incorrect and could be why the death certificate contains some erroneous information.

Write A "Letter To The Editor" Of The Paper Where Your Ancestors Lived

Large urban dailies will not run letters of this type, but smaller dailies or weeklies might. These letters are a good way to reach those who don't visit genealogy Web sites or read genealogical periodicals. Many former residents of an area subscribe to their "hometown" weekly to keep up on the news as well.

There Are No "Always" Rules In Genealogy

Be especially cautious when using an "always" rule to make a genealogical conclusion. Things like "the first witness on a will was the wife's relative" might not even be true half the time, let alone in your specific situation. Sometimes these "always" rules are not even true all that often and sometimes there are just tendencies. There are some relative certainties though. If your ancestor has a tombstone it usually means he's dead (especially if the death year is inscribed). And if your ancestor was born before 1800, it ALWAYS means she's dead. Otherwise check it out—use the clues, but don't abuse them. Today we don't always follow every cultural norm, why should we expect our ancestors to do the same?

Check Your Assumptions

We all need to make assumptions to perform our work. However, assumptions are assumptions and not facts. When the data does not bear out our assumptions, it may be time to re-evaluate them. When making hunches, clearly indicate in your records that you have made a hunch. Do not just enter the hunch in as if it were correct (never assume you'll remember it either). Otherwise a hunch that cannot be documented

may accidentally turn into a fact. And erroneous facts can be very difficult to correct.

Double Check

A second look may reveal mistakes or something you overlooked. When in doubt, check it out.

Ask A Friend To Look At It

Someone else may see something you did not notice, or interpreted in a different way. I had a copy of an SS-5 form for NINE years before I realized the name at birth said AMYA and not ANNA! When you have looked at something a "gazillion" times, someone else may think what you have overlooked is absolutely obvious.

Michael John Neill, is the Course I Coordinator at the Genealogical Institute of Mid America (GIMA) held annually in Springfield, Illinois, and is also on the faculty of Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg, Illinois. Michael is the Web columnist for the FGS FORUM and is on the editorial board of the Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly. He conducts seminars and lectures on a wide variety of genealogical and computer topics and contributes to several genealogical publications, including Ancestry and Genealogical Computing. You can e-mail him at: mneill@asc.csc.cc.il.us or visit his Web site at: <http://www.rootdig.com/> Copyright 2001, MyFamily.com.

Interesting Site

Found on the 'Net by Fran Murray

This is an interesting site - found on the RootsWeb Review today. Good CW links as well as NY.

CIVIL WAR Letters of Fannie AUSTIN. This collection of 13 letters saved by Fannie Austin (a 19th-century English immigrant to America) during the Civil War era include those received from her husband, brother, and uncle who were all Civil War soldiers from Oneida County, New York (26th NYI and 14th NYHA). The letters and several miscellaneous photos were discovered in 1974 during a remodeling project to a home in Clinton, New York.
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~snugaza/austin/>

Sonoma County Genealogical Society

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Dues
\$20 per year individual or family
(onehousehold)
\$25 contributing (\$5 to book fund)
\$200 lifetime

Interest Group Meeting



Beginners Group

Contact: Virginia Murphree
5 4 2 - 5 4 2 9 E - m a i l :
bumblebee299@netzero.net



British Group:

2nd Thursday of month, 1:30 pm
Contact: Susan Simons 527-
7191 E-Mail: suesimons@aol.com



German Group

1st Saturday, 10:00 am, odd
months (except July) Contact:
Jim Cochran 526-7331 E-Mail:
cougars@sonic.net



Irish Group:

2nd Tuesday of month, 1:30 pm
Contact: Bill Murray 546-4160



Jewish and Eastern European Group

Meets monthly Contact: Suzanne
Waxman 538-4378



Southern States Group

Currently inactive!
Contact: Keith Bouldin 887-7287
EMail: dukenrat@sonic.net



New York Group

Currently inactive!
Contact: Karen Steelman
EMail: steelman@sonic.net



PC Computer Group

3rd Saturday of month, 1:00 pm
1783 Shuhaw Hall, SRJC
campus Contact: Betty Young 829-2388
EMail: punkywhy@pacbell.net



Mac Computer Group

2nd Saturday, 10:00 am, odd
months Contact: Fran Murray
Email: fjmurray@sonic.net

Italian Group Wanted

If there is interest in forming a group to
search for italian ancestors, please contact
Ines Williams at 838-0760 or e-mail her at:
inesw@mindspring.com.

Condolences:



The SCGS extends its
sympathy to George Margeson
who lost his wife of 49 years,
Betty, on Sept. 1, 2001.



Evelyn Ross presenting the September pro-
gram for Margaret Ingram who had to cancel
at the last minute.



Family History Month

Celebrate the Heritage of Your Family and Community.

October is Family History Month.

October 6 - Introduction to Genealogy,
Sonoma County Library

October 11 - FHC Genealogy Class~This is
the first in a series of four classes offered
Thursday evenings thru 1 Nov

October 16 and 18 - "The Ancestral Trail I"
First of a three part series of Beginning Ge-
nealogy Classes, Santa Rosa Recreation and
Parks Finley Center. For registration infor-
mation see Santa Rosa Adventure Guide Fall
2001 or call (707) 543-3832 or (707) 543-
3737.

October 20 - "Me & My Family Tree" Fam-
ily History Month Children's Program,
Sonoma County Library.

October 20 -SCGS General Meeting. Larry
Startford will walk us through the new 1880
Census CD,s.

October 27 - National Genealogical Soci-
ety Regional Conference, Crowne Plaza Mid
Peninsula Hotel, Foster City, CA. Informa-
tion: National Genealogical Society, 4527
17th Street North, Arlington, VA 22207-
2399, toll free phone (800) 473-0060.
Email: <conference@ngsgenealogy.org>

Family History Month Children's Program

"Me and My Family Tree", sponsored by
Sonoma County Library and Sonoma
County Genealogical Society, is scheduled
for 11 a.m. Saturday, October 20, in the li-
brary at the corner of 3rd & E in Santa Rosa.
Children are invited to come costumed as
an ancestor or historical figure. The program
will feature a story hour, and a member of
the Sonoma County Genealogical Society
will discuss the excitement of exploring the
family tree and explain family group sheets
and pedigree charts. Cookies will be pro-
vided by the Sonoma County Genealogical
Society.

In Response to Cheri Dohnal's Publishing Basics

Carmen J. Finley, CGSM

The September issue of the Newsletter carried an article by Cheri Dohnal on *Publishing Basics* that was very one-sided.

Her opening sentence was, "Unless you are writing a book that is likely to sell thousands of copies, you do not need a publisher, and publishers, frankly, don't need you." This simply is not true. Heritage Books of Bowie, Maryland, has now published eight of our society's publications and one of my own personally. Their minimum run is 100 copies. For my *Finleys of Early Sonoma County, California*, they printed 200 copies and sold them all in a year and a half.

The only requirement is that, given an approved topic and outline, you submit final camera-ready copy of at least 100 pages. From there on, the responsibility is all theirs. They pay the publishing costs, they ware-

house the material, they publicize the book both in their monthly printed catalog and on their webpage, they send the author five complimentary copies, and they send the author a 10% royalty check twice yearly. The author has the option of buying additional copies at a 40% discount.

In the case of the society's publications, when a hard copy is exhausted or nearly exhausted, they put it on a CD-ROM. Our society's first CD-ROM was just recently made. It contains six publications—four of which they published and two additional ones they scanned from publications with low inventories. The pre-publication price was \$23.00 and the regular price is now \$28.50.



No, I am not on the Heritage payroll, but I have worked on publications with them for about five years and find them supportive of an author's efforts and easy to work with.

Details of what is required is given on their webpage at: <http://www.heritagebooks.com>

E-mail from Jo Russell at Federation of Genealogical Societies

Subject: Re Jo/FGS report Tuesday, September 18, 2001 8:58 AM

Dear Audrey and All,

I regret not being present for the meeting to personally give a report on the FGS Conference and Family History Month. I think each of you will understand why I am visiting with each of my children and grandchildren enroute home.

Were I standing in front of you, I would tell you how proud I am to be a member of the American Family. My responsibilities at this conference were to represent SCGS, and to promote Family History Month. The tragic events of September 11 made this conference one which will be remembered by all those involved. What I will always remember is the spirit of unity and patriotism shared by all. The conference committee, the FGS staff and many of the speakers and those involved planning next year's conference were already in Davenport. I am sure there were many telephone calls home, but then the focus turned to those enroute to the conference. There were many serious discussions leading to the decision to carry on. I think that is part of our American Way.

There are some incredible stories of the innovative and cooperative spirit of how people manage to get to the conference. Carpools began in one city and gathered passengers enroute, and some just got in their cars and drove long distances. Everyone had a story

to share, but the common feeling was that the importance to carry on and not allow those responsible for the tragedy to disrupt our lives further. The cooperation for the trip home is also incredible.

The values of ancestors were never more evident than the moment of silence and the prayers that began each of the major events. There is no way I can tell you the sense of patriotism and pride I felt as I stood with several hundred fellow genealogists to sing *God Bless America* at the close of dinners and other events. Many of us had to fight back tears as we sang, but our pride prevailed.

The management of the Conference Center found a huge flag and hung it from the balcony railings above the FGS Booth, and they installed a television set near the booth where conferees could stop and watch news reports.

We did carry on with the meetings. I was delighted to hear that one of colleagues on the 2002 Conference Committee was so impressed by the advance copy of Janet's first edition of the SCGS Newsletter that he used it as an example in his lecture. Needless to say I had a difficult time keeping our table in Society Hall supplied with copies of that newsletter. Many also took copies of our publications list and some took seminar flyers. Family History Month took on another dimension as the conference progressed. I felt a part of so many



families; my family at home, my family of friends and colleagues, and the family which includes us all the *American Family*. I hope that you will join me in celebrating our heritage in each of these families, by some personal and community events to recognize and honor the deeds and values of those individuals who built our communities and our nation and have fought to preserve our values.



 Made with Macintosh

New at the Library

Compiled by Maggi Andrews

- 929.1 *Genealogy Basics Online ... Finding your Ancestors through the Internet;*
by Flinn
- 929.3415 *Discovering your Irish Ancestors;* by Radford & Betit
- 929.373 *Black Family Research / Records of Post-Civil War Federal Agencies at
the National Archives*
- 929.373 *Passenger and Immigration Lists: Irish to North America, 1803-1871;* CD
- 929.3746 *Heritage Books Archives: Connecticut, Vol. 2;* CD
- 929.3752 *Heritage Books Archives: Maryland, Vol. 2;* CD
- 929.3756 *Heritage Books Archives: North Carolina, Vol. 1;* CD
- 929.3764 *Tennesseans in Texas;* by Marsh
- 929.3768 *Heritage Books Archives: Tennessee, Vol. 3;* CD
- 929.3769 *Heritage Books Archives: Kentucky, Vol. 1;* CD
- 929.3794 *1900 Census: California Soundex*
- 929.379461 *1890 Great Register of Voters: San Francisco, California*



Heritage Books: On Line Library Subscription

by Audrey Herman

Heritage Books is now offering electronic books on-line. The catalog is searched by author, title, subject, or key word, just like any library catalog. There is an electronic card file which describes the contents of the book. There is also a list of the books available. They will be adding books monthly. You can access this list without being a subscriber.

Currently there are approximately 50 books. The majority of the books focus on the New England states.

The entire book has been scanned with either its original index, or one added by Heritage Books. Books are read on the Windows operating system using Adobe Acrobat Reader version 4.0 or higher. Macintosh and other operating systems need the latest version of Reader appropriate to that system. A fast connection is almost a necessity in accessing this site. "River towns of Connecticut", a 28 page book would have taken about one hour to download on my home computer. When I tried the same book on the faster Annex computer, it took five minutes. The four volume "Encyclopedia of Connecticut biography" would have taken about five hours per volume to download at home, but approximately one hour per volume on the Annex computer. Even at the speed of one hour per volume, I could drive to the Annex, copy

the pages I needed and be back home before the downloading was complete.

Once the book has been downloaded, it is easy to navigate. A click on an item in the table of contents takes you directly to the page needed. It would be very helpful to have the book indexes available as a separate item. One could check the indexes to see if the information desired was actually in a book before spending hours downloading a book that one did not need. Some of the titles are also available from Heritage Books on CD-Rom. The subscription price is cheaper than buying most of the titles offered. Using the same books in the Annex is even cheaper, as long as you avoid a parking ticket. Many of the titles are owned by the Annex.

Subscription:

\$30 a year See: <http://www.heritagebooks.com>

The Story Tellers.....

Author Unknown

Sent by Deanna Adams Holm

It was copied from the WVA....Raleigh County List.

We are the chosen. My feelings are in each family there is one who seems called to find the ancestors. To put flesh on their bones and make them live again, to tell the family story and to feel that somehow they know and approve. To me, doing genealogy is not a cold gathering of facts but, instead, breathing life into all who have gone before. We are the story tellers of the tribe. All tribes have one. We have been called as it were by our genes. Those who have gone before cry out to us: Tell our story.

So, we do. In finding them, we somehow find ourselves. How many graves have I stood before now and cried? I have lost count. How many times have I told the ancestors you have a wonderful family you would be proud of us? How many times have I walked up to a grave and felt somehow there was love there for me? I cannot say. It goes beyond just documenting facts. It goes to who am I and why do I do the things I do? It goes to seeing a cemetery about to be lost forever to weeds and indifference and saying I can't let this happen. The bones here are bones of my bone and flesh of my flesh. It goes to doing something about it. It goes to pride in what our ancestors were able to accomplish. How they contributed to what we are today. It goes to respecting their hardships and losses, their never giving in or giving up, their resoluteness to go on and build a life for their family. It goes to deep pride that they fought to make and keep us a Nation. It goes to a deep and immense understanding that they were doing it for us. That we might be born who we are. That we might remember them. So we do. With love and caring and scribing each fact of their existence, because we are them and they are us. So, as a scribe called, I tell the story of my family. It is up to that one called in the next generation to answer the call and take their place in the long line of family storytellers. That, is why I do my family genealogy, and that is what calls those young and old to step up and put flesh on the bones.

Genealogy Jack

Dear Jack,

I recently came across a privately published genealogy of a family which between 1770 and 1800 lived in Ohio County, (West) Virginia, on the banks of Buffalo Creek. This was the very place some of my ancestors lived at the same time. Although my family was not mentioned, I recognized many other names as contemporaries and neighbors. The source citation was "A Private History of Ohio County, W.V." by the Honorable Gibson L. Crammer, 1870. I've been unable to find a copy of the volume, and, I've looked pretty hard. It's not among the holdings of the Library of Congress, West Virginia State Library, West Virginia Historical Society, or Sutro Library in San Francisco. I really want to obtain or at least read the book. Any suggestions?

Disappointed

Dear Disappointed,

You've certainly made a good effort and logical choices. However, don't give up quite yet. The title suggests a very local history, so it is suggested you contact the county libraries of Ohio and Brooke (created from Ohio Co.) counties, W. Virginia. They might have a copy. You can consult various volumes of rare and out-of-print books, many of which are on-line. Consider contacting a rare books dealer, as this is their line of work. Consider queries to county libraries in areas adjacent to Ohio County. Also, note the title "Honorable" which precedes the author's name. The title was generally associated with a judge or elected official. You might consider a genealogical investigation of Gibson L. Crammer. Try the 1870 census indexes for W. Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. If you find him, try the county library of his residential location. You might even be able to find a descendant who possesses the book. Speaking of "the book", I've got to make a call to "Vinny"...I've got a hot tip on the 7th race at Aqueduct! Good Luck (to both of us).

Genealogy Jack

Cookie Call

Do you have an old family recipe for cookies? Want to share grandma's chocolate chip cookies? If you can contribute cookies for this event, please contact Roxane Wilson at 545-0831 ext. 562. A card telling about the origin of the recipe could be included.

We will share some of these stories at the program.

Cookies should be delivered to the annex by Friday, Oct. 19th.

Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to the Family History Month Children's Program on Oct. 20th at the Library.



Who is This Man?



Coming Events

NGS Regional Conference

In addition to their annual National Conference, the National Genealogical Conference holds several one-day events in various regions around the country. One such conference is coming to San Francisco on Saturday October 27th.

The NGS Regional Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Mid Peninsula Hotel, 1221 Chess Drive Foster City, CA. The conference will have two featured speakers, Curt B. Witcher and Cyndi Howell. Both are well known to genealogists everywhere.

Curt Witcher was a speaker at our own seminar two years ago. Cyndi Howell, as most of you know, is the originator of Cyndi's List, the much used and popular web site.

Fees are \$40 for members; \$50 for non-members. Registration is from 8-9 am. Eight lectures (choose four) take place between 9 am and 4 pm. NGS will host a luncheon at 11:45 am at the hotel, cost \$19.95.

Send reservations to NGS, 4527 17th Street North, Arlington, VA 22207. You can get more information by calling NGS toll free at (800) 473-0060; or email <conference@ngsgenealogy.org>; or visit web site <www.ngsgenealogy.org>

*Sonoma County Genealogical Society
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Santa Rosa, CA 95405-0273*



Board Meeting Oct. 9th, 2001

The Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 am in Room 17 of the Santa Rosa Senior Center, 704 Bennett Valley Rd. Santa Rosa. Society members are welcome to attend.

General Meeting October 20th, 1pm—3pm Lark Hall, Room 2009 S.R.J.C.

*There is now a \$2.00
parking fee at the college.*

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