



Vol. 7 – September 2019

# HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

newsletter



**Next meeting...**

*Memories of Bob-Lo Island Amusement Park*

## Welcome to the September newsletter.

When's a good time to work on family history? *Anytime (trick question).* When's a good season to work on family history? *Anytime the weather turns inclimate.* When's a good time to prepare materials? *Now!*

Gather your photos, scans, photocopies, text files, and hand-written, scrawled notes you've made (but did nothing with) into one massive pile. Next get it organized, Sort by decade, by person or family groups... anyway that makes sense to you. Ready it now, and once you've finished donating all your leaves this Fall, and it's really cold out, you'll be all set to work.

**Here's a suggestion:** Consider creating a simple website. Free services exist. You can fill page after page of stories, photos and documents... whatever. These sites are easy to use. This will provide you a great excuse to connect with relatives, and once they've seen your site, they'll share more pix and stories to further enhance your site and family knowledge.

Consider your site a digital scrapbook that preserves your info to share with others (everyone or just one person if you wish). I've used Weebly for several family sites. It also provides a safety "back-up" should flood, fire or theft occur.

Check out my own site at: [www.alexandermccormickuel.weebly.com](http://www.alexandermccormickuel.weebly.com). It costs me nothing, but a bit of time. Speaking of which, it's time for our next meeting... **See you there?**

## Next Meeting

**Thursday, September 26th 1:30 PM**

**Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Meeting Room**

Another summer ends, with another set of memories added to our personal collection, as we look ahead to Fall; itself a great time of year. **Our HEIRS meeting will feature a look back at the amusement park years on Boblo Island.**

HEIRS Director Ted Steele will present the history of the park - it's amazing rides, as well as the causes of its eventual closure. Ted will share his memories of working there over 2 summers in the 1960s.

Our members are very much encouraged to add their memories to this meeting, and to bring and share any souvenirs or mementos. This will be both a fun & nostalgic look back, probably also a little sad in some ways, but we should count our blessings. **Boblo being part of our childhood was certainly one of those blessings.**



## **Summer Students Heading Back**

*HEIRS has enjoyed the services of two young students all summer long. Cassidy Kost and Micaela Nimmo have worked at many tasks, mostly bringing better order to our files and updating our records, keeping the centre open for researchers and helping visitors find what they needed.*

***“Service with a smile” has been their daily policy these past 2 months, and we thank them for all they have done.***

***As of May 1st, HEIRS membership dues of \$25 per year were being collected, and most members are now paid up. Thank you.***

***Unfortunately, for anyone who has not renewed their dues, this September newsletter will be the last issue sent out to you.***

***\* Don't miss a single edition of our informative publication - make sure you are a fully paid member today.***

**OUR DUES ARE JUST ABOUT THE BEST DEAL AROUND!**

***Seems we're doing the job.  
Thank you all for the encouraging words !***

***It's always good to get feedback on what we are doing right, and what could be improved. Your ideas, opinions & thoughts on what & how HEIRS is doing, are greatly appreciated. Drop us a line.***

***One member writes:***

***“We're enjoying the newsletters. Keep up the excellent efforts!”***

***Another member concurs:***

***“Enclosed please find my cheque for \$25 membership fees for 2019-2020. I have been enjoying your newsletters since 2012 and look forward to receiving them.”***

# The Amherstburg Echo.

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE COUNTY

Vol. XXX No. 15.

AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 1904.

Whole No. 2,474

## 100 ACRES FOR SALE.

In 2nd concession, Anderdon Township, about 4 miles from Amherstburg, 20 acres of bush, some small buildings.

For further particulars and price, see

FALLS BROS., Agts.,  
Amherstburg.

## THE SOVEREIGN BANK OF CANADA.

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO, ONT.

CAPITAL PAID UP \$3,000,000  
SURPLUS AND UNDIVIDED PROFITS, 350,000  
ASSETS 50,000

H. S. HOLT, ESQ., President. D. M. STEWART, General Manager.

## SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT.

Interest allowed on Deposits of \$1.00 and upwards at highest current rate.  
Farmers' Notes Discounted at lowest possible rates.

## HARROW BRANCH. AMHERSTBURG BRANCH.

C. A. MacMAHON,  
Manager.

M. I. LANE,  
Manager.

### LOST.

LOST—Strayed from my place, Vereker, on Sunday, Feb. 29th, a black white and tan English setter bitch, answering to the name "Lady". Finder will receive liberal reward by returning to me, or on being notified I will go after her. A. F. HILLIS, Vereker.

### ADDITIONAL LOCAL.

Miss Wm. Hanson's condition kept her about the same.

### MALDEN.

Ernest McGee, of Flint, Mich spent Sunday at home.

Mrs. Frank Hunt has been suffering from an attack of la grippe.

Win. Golden is suffering from being attacked of influenza rheumatism.

Mrs. Alice McLean, of Windsor, is on her feet after being confined after about a week.

## BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.

Judge McHugh Refuses to Grant New Trial.

At the recent sittings of the Division Court in Amherstburg, Mrs. James Brooker sued the corporation of Amherstburg, for injuries sustained, alleged to have been due to a fall on a defective sidewalk. She was awarded \$80 and costs. The town, through their solicitors, Davis & Davis, applied for a new trial on the ground, of the plaintiff's alleged carelessness. The learned Judge refused to grant the appeal and the text of his decision is as below:

BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.—Mr. Rough for Plaintiff, D. B. Davis for defendant. This action was tried before me at the last sittings of the Division Court at Amherstburg. It is brought by the plaintiff to recover damages for personal injuries sustained by the female plaintiff by falling on a sidewalk on Fort St. where the defendant alleges was in a dangerous state of disrepair. It is contended by counsel for the defendant that if the plaintiff has a good cause of action the damages claimed are less than they would be entitled to recover. The law requires a municipal corporation to keep its streets and highways under its control in repair and if it neglects to perform that duty the law provides that it shall be civilly responsible for all damages sustained by any person by reason of such neglect. The defendant corporation applies to set aside the judgment entered hereon, on the ground that there is no evidence that the sidewalk in question was in a dangerous state of disrepair at the time the plaintiff fell thereon. It is contended by counsel for the plaintiff that the sidewalk in question was in a dangerous state of disrepair at the time the plaintiff fell thereon, and that the defendant corporation is liable for the damages claimed.

## ANDERDON COUNCIL.

Saturday, Feb. 27th.

Council met in regular session with all members present. Moved by Messrs. Groulx and Cote, that the minutes just read be adopted.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Volans and Cote, that Fred Pagnou get a warrant for \$4 groceries furnished to the Verger.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volans, that Isaac Groulx get a clearing ice from of 60¢.

Messrs. Cote and Volans got a warrant on each of the bridge on each of the streets of Amherstburg. Moved by Messrs. Groulx and Cote, that Isaac Groulx get a refund of dog tax.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volans, that Harold Wain get a refund of dog tax.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volans, that Willis Howard get a refund of dog tax.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volans, that Willis Howard get a refund of dog tax.—Carried.

## BURK BROS.



## September 5

A costly fire at Herbert A. Ferriss when he lost his large barn 80 x 30, a cow stable 24 x 30, two sheds and his season's crop when flames from a threshing separator set the stack ablaze.

Roy Taylor's threshing equipment had just turned out 200 bu. of wheat when John Butler, Herman Quick and Gordon Hughson saw flames shooting through the blower.

They had a close call to escape the fire, and to remove the machine. Loss about \$4,000, with \$1,800 insured with Essex & Kent Farmers Co.

Mr. Ferriss is unsure about re-building, since he is being offered good prices for land in 10 acre lots for growing vegetables for the canning industry.

Harry Manning has the basement excavated for a tile and stucco residence for F. H. Bell on the lake front; stoe and a half, main part 24 x 28, and annex 10 x 17.

## A letter from W. G. Wright:

People of Colchester South and adjoining townships- don't you know the Clark Co. Ltd. will buy all the tomatoes and beans you may grow, and other things as well, and the Quality Canners will buy all the corn, peaches, citrons, beans and peas as well for their factory. The Heinz Co. will buy all the pickles and cauliflowers as well, and are paying good prices.

They certainly deserve to have the patronage of all the people. Don't forget that the working people in these factories will pay not less than \$4,000 this summer to the boarding houses for their board, and the produce used in the boarding houses is all got from the famers as well.

Besides, the factories pay upwards from \$1500 to \$2000 a week each, and more for hired help. Think of it for one minute! Any reasonable man will say there is no better thing for us. I must say I am 79 years old, and I know what I am saying. It is one of the grandest helps

*for this township that ever came. All the other enterprises combined together in this township aren't a drop in the bucket to these factories.*

*All stand together, give them all you can of the different products they need, for they are paying thousands of dollars each week for these products to the farmers.*

*Tobacco is all right, but there are a good many chances to take - drought, frost, the seasons and combined prices. I have no way to help produce myself, but will help others all I can so they will succeed themselves. My days are about out and I am willing to help the others every time.*

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### September 19

*The largest tobacco crop will soon be under cover. Labour is next to impossible to procure, and high wages are being paid. Five dollars a day and board are common, \$6 is also paid, one active man asked for \$8 and board.*

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*W. Clark Ltd reported the best year they have had since they began in Harrow. Besides the local tomatoes, they have received 60 cars from outside points.*

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*Sir Adam Beck spoke regarding the electrification of the Pere Marquette west of St. Thomas to Windsor and from Chatham to Sarnia. This will put Harrow right on the map - to carry early vegetables and fruits speedily out of the district.*

*Solomon Plant, one of 16 children born to Mr. And Mrs. Gilbert Plant, who lived between Fawdry's Corner and Foote's Corner on Walker Road, died in Detroit at age 61.*

*Solomon learned blacksmithing from A. and V. Pillon, and opened a shop in McGregor in partnership with his brother Henry. He married May Anne Donnelly of Anderdon, and moved to Detroit 25 years ago.*

*Fred Branton has purchased the vacant lot between his present garage and the Drummond House from Frank Herdman and is preparing to erect a modern cement garage 40 feet x 150 feet.*

*Miss Bissett, milliner, has returned and is announcing millinery operations at Boyce & Co's for Sept 2*

*Charlie Dyson is renting the vacant store in the Bell building and is opening a shoe repair shop.*

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### September 26

*Bertha Arner, chief chemist in one of the largest ice cream manufacturing establishments in Buffalo, is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Arner.*

*Clark & Co. has more to do than it can handle. There is work for every man, woman and child, in handling the bumper crop of tomatoes.*

*Paying 8 cents a crate for picking, and some boys are earning 75 cents an hour.*

## 6 Events / Notices

### **ElderCollege - add it to your calendar**

Be sure to look at the Fall guidebook for ElderCollege. Among it's many entries you will find another "Trivia Challenge" (the 3rd one) hosted by our own Esther Meerschaud and conducted right here in Harrow, this one in early October.

**Also listed is a session with Ted Steele, on some amazing history connected with Halloween.**

Specifically, the stories of the real Dracula and vampires, the Countess who bathed in the blood of young girls to remain youthful, the real Castle Frankenstein and its history, and why almost every country has its tales of werewolves, weretigers, etc. **Come out, be entertained & educated... and ElderCollege has no tests!**

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### **Kingsville Presentation**

Ruth Hutchins Nicholson, UE is a long-time HEIRS member who has addressed our group in the past.

On Saturday, September 14th, she will speak to the Bicentennial Branch of the United Empire Loyalists in Kingsville, discussing "Three Loyalist Heroes - Ferriss, Land, and Cornwall".

These are 3 of the earliest families to settle Essex County, and many descendants remain today. The public is welcome to attend, and HEIRS members will be especially welcomed.

**The meeting is at 1 PM at the Church of the Epiphany on Main Street in Kingsville. I personally plan to be there to be entertained and educated.**

### **Low Demand**

We really hate to write this notice, especially being a former school librarian / teacher but HEIRS will soon discontinue its "Lending Library" due to low book demand.

**Reading, it seems to be, is no longer the past-time it once was and our shelf space is limited.**

In the near future these books will be sold; more info to come at September's meeting and likely through our next newsletters. **Just another sign of the times?**

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### **DVDs on Sale**

At our May meeting, HEIRS set out dozens of DVDs of top line movies which were donated to us by members Deb and Dave Malley.

They were available for purchase at any 3 selling for \$5. The ones remaining will be set out at the September 26 meeting for sale.

**Be sure to take a look. You may find some treasures you have been wanting to watch!**

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**Did you know that Fort Amherstburg was the headquarters of the Right Division of the British Army in Upper Canada during the War of 1812?**

Re-enactors bring the War of 1812 to life with period encampments, musket and cannon firings, cooking demonstrations, and battle recreations. This weekend event starts Saturday September 28th & ends Sunday Sept. 29th at Fort Malden in Amherstburg.

**Cost: Youth free / Adults \$3.90 / Seniors \$3.40**

**GROWING YOUR FAMILY TREE** - by Ted Steele, Director

This new section in the newsletter will focus on genealogy, with tips and tricks to help anyone struggling to get their own tree in order.

I inherited a large file of family info in 2001, developed over 50 years by other family members. In sorting and organizing these, I made some basic assumptions, and have built a large tree. This past summer, 2 more boxes of family files, dating from 1972, surfaced and were given to me to add to the "Steele Archives".

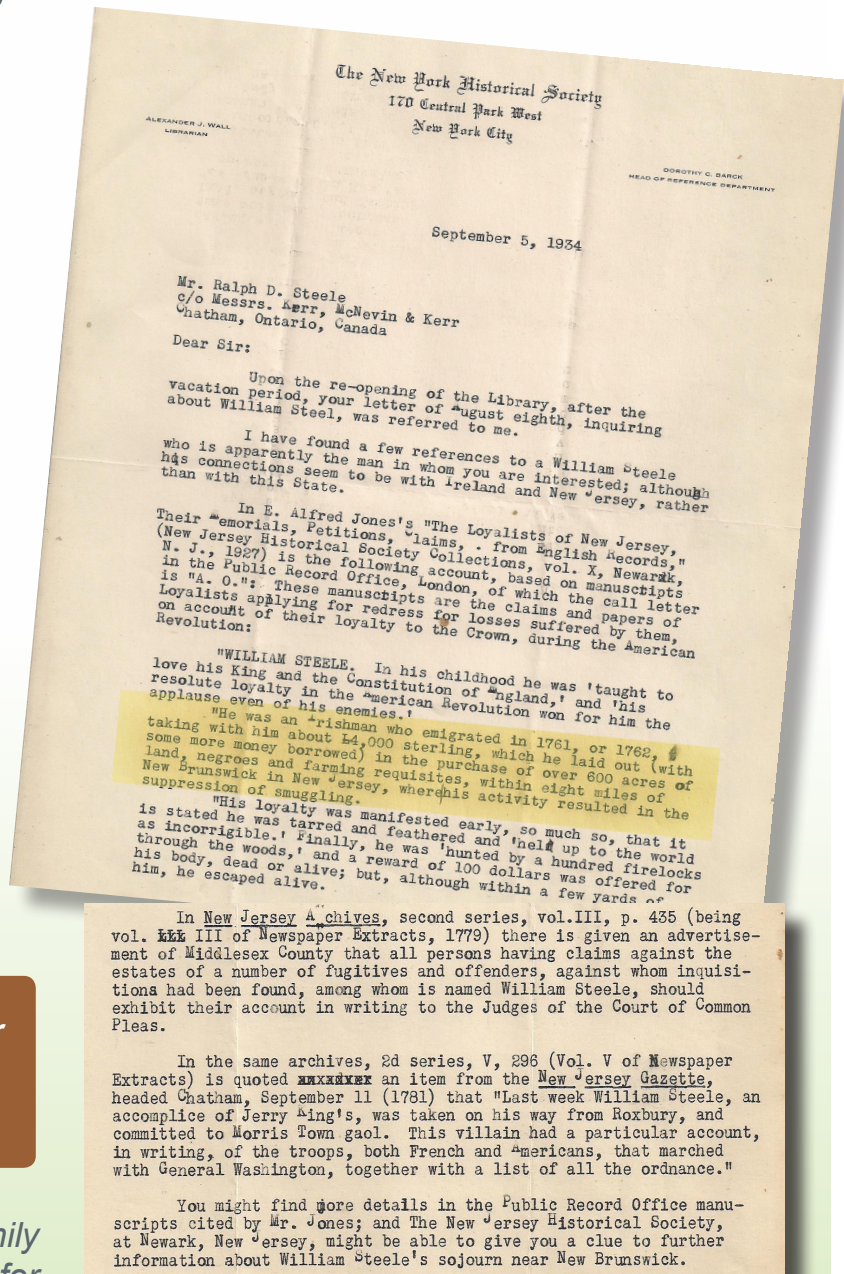
Amazing items surfaced, and destroyed several of my basic assumptions. The first Steele we can trace was William, who came to New York about 1760 with a son John. He was a weaver, originally from Tipperary, Ireland.

My assumption was that he arrived poor and had to struggle for a while. He was able to buy a sizeable farm, with equipment and slaves to make it profitable. He was not poor and struggling!

**Papers now show he arrived with over £4,000 sterling. Where does a weaver get that kind of money?**

A second assumption was concerning a family legend that William was arrested as a spy for the British, and jailed in chains in West Point Gaol until he escaped. A UEL researcher found no evidence of this, nor did I, but documents now prove it to be true.

It also states that during the American Revolution, he was tarred and feathered as a traitor for supporting the British. Little wonder that he & his sons were ready to defend their new homes in 1812, and again in 1837.



These items have been sitting in a box since 1971, moved from place to place, unwanted & in danger of being tossed out. I kept reminding the right person that these were wanted & it finally paid off.

**Speak to family members, gather or copy all you can now. Then, you can fit all the jigsaw pieces together later. If you don't, this chance may be lost forever.**

## 8 Events / Notices

### Only Five

There remains about 5 weeks of summer, according to the calendar. This is an excellent time to think about the things you 'had planned to do' this summer, but still haven't gotten around to.

Personally, I want a day trip out to the Comber & District Museum on Hwy 77. We went there as part of a bus trip some years back & was impressed with their exhibits. In particular, their WW 1 & 2 photos of local individuals who served made an impression. I want to return & take photos of some of them. Also featured is an old schoolroom recreation & the home of local craftsman Bob McCracken's Cinderella coach plus a half-scale stage coach. It's a little known & under-publicized destination, but I need to pick a date... **and GO.**

How about you? Will it be the Park Homestead? Fort Malden? The Historic Village on the Arner Town Line? The Boblo Blockhouse?

**Take advantage of the time left with good weather & (like me) make some of those memories you have been putting off!**



A promotional poster for the 'Rendez-Vous Voyageur' festival. The top left features a portrait of a man with long, curly hair. To his right is a map of the Louisiana Territory with labels for 'MISSOURI', 'ARKANSAS', 'LOUISIANE', 'GOLFE DU MEXIQUE', and 'RIVE'. A blue banner in the top right corner says 'Save the Date!'. The central text reads 'LaSalle RENEZ-VOUS VOYAGEUR' with a small logo of a beaver. Below this, a red ribbon contains the dates 'SEPTEMBER - 20 &amp; 21 - SEPTEMBRE 2019'. The bottom of the poster shows an illustration of a group of people in a canoe on a river. A blue banner at the bottom right says 'LIVING LaSalle'.

## RENEZ-VOUS VOYAGEUR

Come Experience Our Rich History And Explore Our Culture

Enjoy It All Along The Historic Shores Of The Detroit River

### THIS 2 DAY FESTIVAL WILL FEATURE

- Authentic Entertainment
- Re-Enactments
- Interactive Displays
- Voyageur Encampments
- Ancient Lacrosse Demonstrations
- Traditional Cuisine
- Unique Vendors & Merchants
- Pyro Musical Fireworks

Join us as we step back in time to the 1600-1700's in the Town of LaSalle to commemorate the history of the local Natives and French Voyageurs.

For more information visit:  
**WWW.LASALLE.CA**



**'Weather Predicting' As It Used to Was...***- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director*

*It seems to be the rainy season almost everywhere in the world. Rising water levels, more frequent rains and flooding has water on everyone's mind these days.*

*Let's look back on the weather forecasting of the mid-1800s, to see how they tried to predict what might be about to happen. Some of these hints are tried and true, while others need to be taken with a large grain of salt.*

*In their slower paced world of the 1800s, people had lots of time to watch the skies and the wildlife, and look for connections that might help them know what to expect weather-wise.*

*For example, rain was expected if wild rabbits, normally nocturnal, were feeding in the afternoon. Fish biting well was another sign of coming rain, as was cattle becoming restless in the evening. A water bucket or barrel that showed sweat on its outside was a sure sign that rain was approaching.*

*Turkeys selecting indoor roosts at night, which they did not do in good weather, or a rooster crowing at bedtime also signalled storms coming. Hens would head for shelter if a storm was on the way, but stayed out to scratch for food if it would be an all day rain. Swallows flying low, and extra noisy blue jays announced rain on the way.*

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**To easily remember these indicators, many were put into verse...**

**"Wind from the south has rain in its mouth"**

**"Rain before 7, sun before 11"**

**"Ring around the moon brings a storm soon"**

**"Wind in the east is good for  
neither man nor beast"**

**"Red sky at night, shepherd's delight.  
Red sky in the morning, sailors take warning."**

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*An early snowfall was a sign of an early winter coming; snow that swirled & seemed to come from several directions meant more to come, as did snowfall that clung to the trees.*

*Owls that hoot from the woods tells of rain coming, while hoots from the hill indicate dry weather for a few days. Robins were forecasters of rain too; they were often seen gathering food during rains, so if they gathered and sang extra noisily, a rain was coming, (and they were happy about it).*

*A shower while the sun is shining would bring a rainbow, & also bring more rain the next day at about the same time. In times of drought, these signs & omens were hoped for with much anxiety, as prairie fires were a real threat, as were crop failures & a long cold hungry winter.*

*Having some idea about the coming weather allowed these pioneers to decide what tasks to tackle that day & what to delay; when to stay close to home & when they might safely travel a distance. Being farmers in most cases, they depended on good weather & adequate rainfall for their crops. Rain provided full rain barrels for drinking, cooking & cleaning so not to haul water from a distant stream or river.*

**Rain helped to eliminate that long and strenuous daily job, freeing up some time to do one of any number of other tasks.**

# HEIRS RESOURCE CENTRE

**Open September - June** (December excepted)

Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM

Call to confirm Wednesday or other appointments.

## Newsletter

Published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, September to June, (December excepted).

Receive full colour newsletters by email, or a B&W print version by regular post. Simply provide your email or street address to our office.

## Memberships

\$25 CDN / U.S. per person or couple.

Memberships run May 1st - April 30th, annually.

## Send membership cheque to:

HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow  
ON, Canada N0R 1G0

Please include phone, postal address, email & family names you are now researching.

## Non-member using Research Library

\$5 per visit (+ photocopy costs).

## Mailing Address

243 McAfee St., PO Box 53,  
Harrow, ON Canada N0R 1G0

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**Email** [hheritage@bellnet.ca](mailto:hheritage@bellnet.ca)

**Website** [www.HEIRS.ca](http://www.HEIRS.ca)

Kudos go to Greg Harrison at The Computer Centre in Harrow, who provides HEIRS support for all things technical to help keep our office running smoothly.

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