

The moat at Carew Manor, Beddington

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CAREW MANOR at Beddington near Croydon (TQ 2960 6530) is a former country house which belonged to the Carew family and their successors from the mid 14th to the mid 19th centuries. The core of the existing buildings dates from the late 15th and early 16th centuries. It was modified and refaced at the beginning of the 18th century, and there was a further refacing and partial rebuilding when it was converted into an orphanage in the mid 19th century. The house is best known for the hammer-beam roof in the great hall, which probably dates from c 1500¹.

In 1979 the Sutton and District Water Company dug a trench for a water-main which ran roughly parallel to the east side of the house at a distance of about 17.5m (57ft). The trench cut through a culvert which appeared to have been laid in the southern arm of the former moat. The discovery was recorded by Clive Orton² and subsequent investigation by Douglas Cluett and Barry Weston led to the formation of the Carew Manor Group in 1981. The investigation of the moat has consisted of an examination of the culvert; the recording of a contractor's trench which was dug on the north side of the building in 1983; and a small excavation in 1988 to locate and investigate the north-east corner of the moat island. Some additional information has been found during documentary research into the site. This paper is intended to summarise the Carew Manor Group's findings to date.

The culvert

The culvert runs around the south and west sides of the house (see Fig. 1). It consists of a brick vault 2.7m (8ft 10in) wide and about 1.27m (4ft 2in) high, which was probably constructed in the early 18th century.

The water-main trench cut across the culvert and exposed a wall of dressed stone blocks 0.63m (2ft 1in) north of the inner face of the culvert wall. It was backed by a mass of hard off-white mortar and flint. The trench continued north through this, and after a

slight change of direction to the east, passed out of the flint and mortar, through another stone facing, and into loose rubble (1 on Fig. 1). The trench therefore appeared to have cut through the south-east corner of the moat island. The eastern arm of the moat was filled with loose rubble, while the culvert had been constructed in the southern arm and then covered with rubble and earth. The outer sides of the moat were not seen.

A few small sections of stonework are visible on the island side of the southern culvert. A square shaft rises from the north side of the culvert about 26.8m (87ft) from the south-east corner of the island³ (3 on Fig. 1). The north side of this, which is aligned with the stone wall seen in the water-main trench, is constructed in three horizontal bands. The lowest 1.2m (4ft) is of neatly-dressed blocks of a hard dark grey stone which is either a limestone or a fine-grained sandstone. The band above this is 0.71m (2ft 4in) thick and is of roughly-squared blocks of Reigate Stone, while the top band, which is 0.44m (1ft 5in) thick, is of red brick. The last continues straight upwards to form the outer wall of the house. This part of the building was totally reconstructed in the 19th century. Before that date it was the main kitchen which, judging by its appearance in early 19th century drawings and prints, dated from the first half of the 16th century⁴.

A drain enters the bottom of the culvert 33.26m (109ft) from the south-east corner (4 on Fig. 1). Where it cuts through the culvert wall it is 0.38m (1ft 3in) high by 0.4m (1ft 4in) wide. It continues under a stone lintel 0.71m (2ft 4in) from the entrance which appears to be part of the moat wall. Beyond this the drain becomes larger, slopes upwards, and terminates in a small triangular chamber which has three lead pipes entering through the vaulted roof. The total length of the drain is about 6.2m (20ft 4in). It is composed of a patchwork of different materials, and appears to have had a complex history which is not presently understood.

1. B. Weston, D. Cluett and J. Phillips 'Carew Manor, Beddington: new light on the house and its garden' *London Archaeol* 4 no. 9 (1982) 227-33.
2. B. Richardson 'Excavation Round-Up 1979' *London Archaeol* 3 no. 14 (1980) 388; C. Orton *Interim report on the discoveries at Carew Manor, Beddington* typescript in Sutton Central Library.

3. Measurements in the culvert are to the centre of features and are from either the south-east corner of the island or the south-west corner of the culvert.

4. The best drawing is BL ADD 36388.

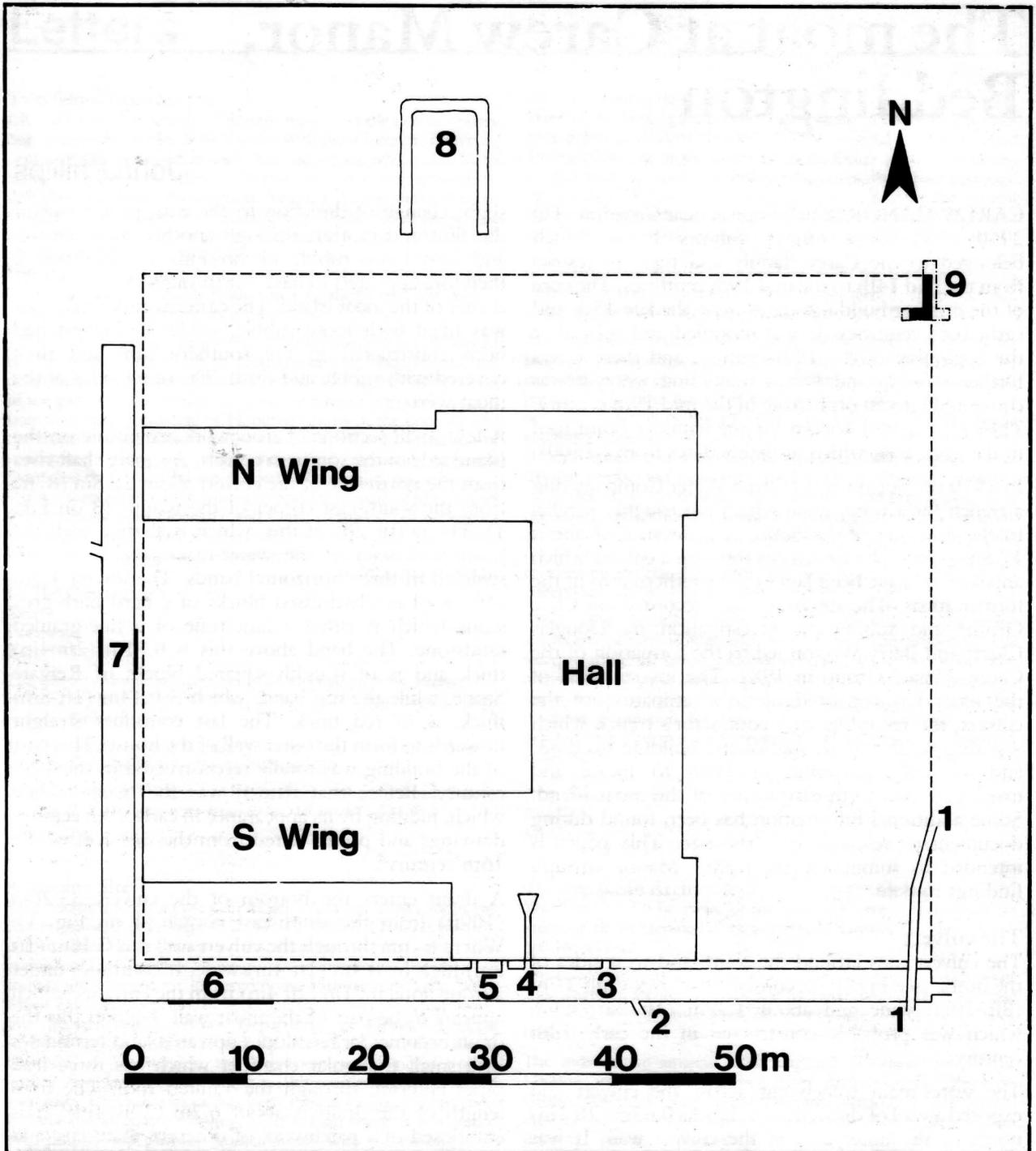


Fig. 1: the culvert with selected features; the projected line of the moat island (broken line); and the outline of the Tudor house based on a plan of 1717 by Colen Campbell.

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| 1. The Water Company trench. | 6. Course of stone on the south side of the culvert. |
| 2. Brick arched side drain. | 7. Probable drawbridge abutments. |
| 3. Shaft by the former kitchen. | 8. Contractor's trench. |
| 4. Drain leading to chamber. | 9. Moat wall exposed by excavation. |
| 5. Privy tower. | |

Further along the culvert there are two openings in the brickwork on the inner side of the moat (5 on Fig. 1). They appear to have been built along the sides of a stone structure which was 36.35m (119ft) from the south-east corner of the island. It projected 0.61m (2ft) into the moat and was 2.06m (6ft 9in) wide, and consists of squared blocks of stone. There are blocked openings in the bottoms of both sides, suggesting that it was the base of a privy.

There is less evidence for the moat wall on the outer side. A brick-arched side drain enters 24.38m (80ft) from the south-east corner of the island (2 on Fig. 1), but it appears to be an addition to the culvert and does not contain any stonework. Near the western end of the culvert the vault rests on a course of squared stone blocks (6 on Fig. 1). They start 54.04m (177ft) from the south-east corner and extend westwards for 8.69m (28ft 6in). It is not clear whether this is part of the outer face of the moat *in situ* or simply a course of re-used stone.

In the western culvert a stone structure projects slightly forward of the brickwork on the island side of the culvert (7 on Fig. 1). It is 25.91m (85ft) from the south-west corner and is 3.66m (12ft) wide. Some of the stone blocks are finished with a horizontal band of punch-marks across the centre, and some of these carry one or other of two types of masons' marks shown in Fig. 2. There is a course of stone lying flush with the brickwork on the opposite or outer side. This structure is below the centre of the west front of the present house. The existing west wing is Victorian, but it is on the side of the courtyard opposite the great hall, and is therefore in a likely position for the Tudor gate, so the projection is likely to have been for the drawbridge. The abutment is not in the centre of the western culvert, which has a length of 51.2m (168ft) and ends at a blocking wall of yellow stock-bricks which is obviously of 19th or 20th century date.

Features in the contractor's trench

The contractor's trench on the north side of the house (8 on Fig. 1) was dug to make new foundations for an outbuilding which was subsiding and had to be reconstructed. The trench was about 2m (6ft 7in) deep. At the bottom was a layer of Greensand which had been penetrated by many fine roots. Its character and position were consistent with its being the glauconitic beds at the base of the Thanet Sand and it may therefore be natural. It was overlaid by 0.3m (1ft) of dark smelly gravel, which was in turn covered with very fine dark smelly silt with a maximum thickness of 0.14m (5½in). These layers appear to have formed the bed of a watercourse. They extended for a distance of at least 8m (26ft 3in) at right angles to the probable direction of flow but neither bank was

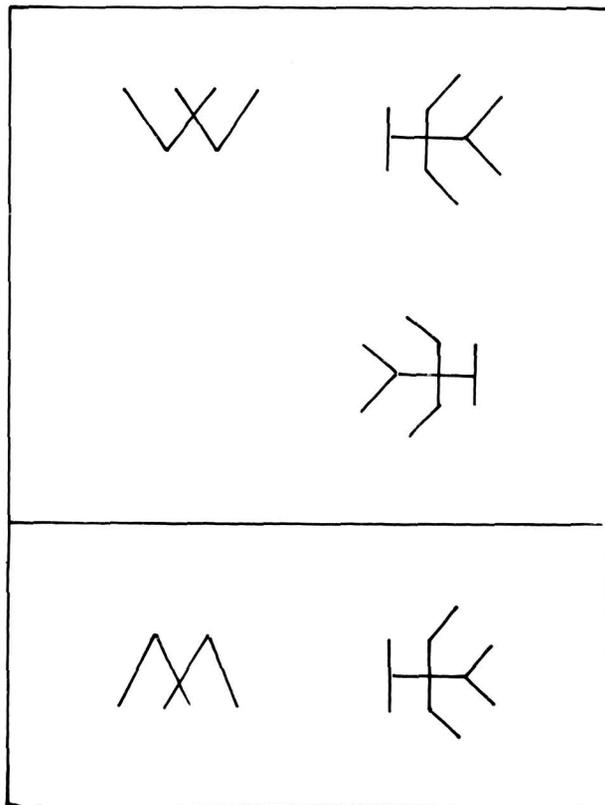


Fig. 2: the masons' marks on the wall at the north-east corner of the moat island (top) and on the drawbridge abutments (below). Not to scale.

exposed. When the channel was abandoned a brick culvert with an internal width of 0.47m (1ft 6½in) was laid in the bottom and this was covered with a number of layers of earth, Greensand and rubble. A few stratified finds suggested that this had taken place in the first half of the 18th century.

The north-east corner of the island

In 1988 a small excavation (9 on Fig. 1) was undertaken to locate the north-east corner of the moat island and to attempt to determine the line of the north bank. The corner was located 56.38m (185ft) north of the south-east corner. The full thickness of wall of the island was exposed in a 1m (3ft 3in) wide section 2.78m (9ft 1in) south of the corner. The western or inner edge of the wall had been constructed against the side of a trench which had been dug through a thick deposit of brown sand and flint. The wall was mostly of flint bonded with grey mortar, although creamy-coloured mortar had been used in a few places. The moat side of the wall was faced with at least six courses of squared stone (see Fig. 3) which had a total height of 1.6m (5ft 3in). There may have been a seventh (or more) course of stone below those seen, but the sides of the trench were too unstable to

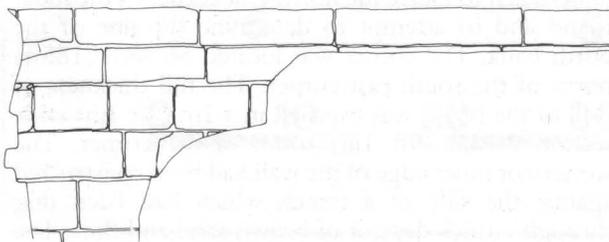
allow further excavation. Some of the blocks were of Reigate Stone and others were of Kentish Rag. Many of the latter had a horizontal band of punch-marks across the centre (see Fig. 4) and had masons' marks similar to those on the drawbridge abutment (see Fig. 2). The top of the wall was a rough surface which appeared to have been left by demolition. The adjoining moat had been filled with a mixture of rubble, Greensand and earth, and the finds suggested that infilling had probably taken place in the first half of the 18th century.

Documentary evidence

The surviving 16th and early 17th century accounts and inventories contain a number of references to the moat, but the only substantial information about it comes from an account of November 1560 when two men were paid for "serchyng the ij slewcis to the mote"⁵. In the middle of the 17th century the house was let to the Earl of Warwick for several years, and an account survives for repairs which include payments for work carried out on the moat in 1650⁶. Between the 25 March and the 27 May, from two to four men were employed for a total of 107½ days bailing and scouring the moat. Twelve loads of stone (832ft) costing £52 were brought in from London, and another £52 was paid for cutting and squaring 804ft of it. A team of masons, whose numbers varied from three to five, were paid for a total of 142 days, which were presumably spent stone-laying. One thousand bricks were also bought, and two bricklayers were paid for a total of 22 days to "mend the brickworks by the side of the moat", and a carpenter was paid for a new drawbridge.

Discussion

Extrapolation from the known sections of moat wall suggest the island was about 65m (213ft) by 56.4m (185ft), enclosing an area of 0.36ha (0.9 acres). If the stonework on the south side of the southern culvert is part of the original counterscarp then the southern



0 1 2 3m

Fig. 3: the eastern side of the island side of the moat near the north-east corner (9 on Fig. 1).

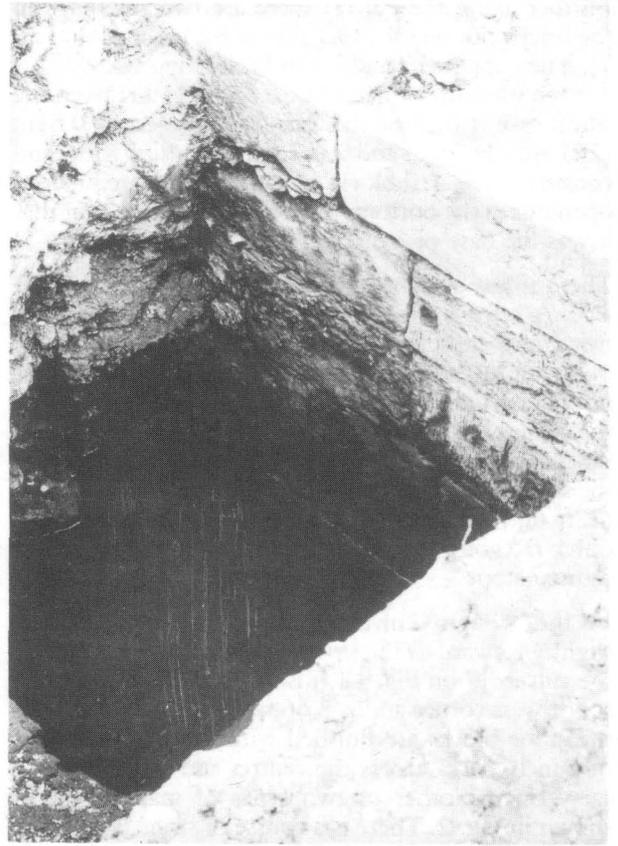


Fig. 4: the moat wall of Fig. 3. Note the punch-marked finish on some blocks.

arm was about 3.35m (11ft) wide and the western arm might have been similar. The width of the eastern arm is unknown. The northern arm was much wider, as the water-laid deposits in the contractor's trench extend 13.95m (45ft 9in) outwards from the projected edge of the island. This channel would easily carry the present flow of the river Wandle which today runs a little over 100m (330ft) north of the house. At the point the river is predominantly spring-fed and a small number of 19th century gaugings suggest that the flow was greater before the large-scale abstraction of ground water in the late 19th and 20th centuries⁷. However, the channel on the north side of the house is at least twice the width of the existing river so it may have carried the main stream of the Wandle when the moat was open. The sluices mentioned in the household accounts of 1560 were presumably located near the north-west corner of the house, where the river would have flowed away from the site. The very fine silt in the contractor's trench suggests that the

5. SRO 281/4/1 p. 1.

6. SRO 2152/1.

7. F. Braithwaite 'On the rise and fall of the river Wandle' *Proc Inst Civil Engineers* 20 (1861) 191-258.

water was deep and slow-moving in the years preceding infilling, which would be consistent with a position just upstream of a sluice.

The deposits on the inner side of the moat wall at the north-east corner of the island were stratigraphically older than the wall, but the section excavated did not contain any datable finds. The southern wall of the moat island almost certainly underlaid the Tudor kitchen, but the moat is in any case likely to be older than this. If the section exposed at the north-east corner is representative, the wall around the island may have required about 100 cu.m (3530 cu.ft) of stone, and there may have been as much or more on the counterscarp side. A great deal of the stone came from the Reigate area about 15km (9 miles) to the south. The wall also contains many large, carefully selected blocks of Kentish Ragstone. Some or all of this may be the 832ft of stone which was brought from London for the repairs carried out in 1650. There would be no point in carrying Reigate Stone to London and bringing it back again, but Kentish Rag could easily be shipped to London from the Medway.

The moat was obviously a fairly expensive structure. It could have been made in the building campaign of c 1500, when the great hall was probably constructed. Some building accounts of this period survive, but they appear to relate to work on the north wing and

8. SRO 281/2/4.

9. H. E. Jean Le Patourel and B. K. Roberts 'The significance of moated sites' in F. A. Aberg (ed.) *Medieval moated sites* CBA Res. Rep. 17 (1978) 46-55.

do not mention the moat⁸. However, the main period of moat construction in England was over by the late 15th century, so an earlier date is quite likely⁹. Medieval Beddington was divided into a number of small manors, but the house probably stood within one which is generally known as Home Beddington¹⁰. Among the earlier owners the most likely moat builder is probably the first Nicholas Carew of Beddington, who died in 1390. He leased the manor of Home Beddington in 1352 and later acquired it, and made it into his principal seat. He was a successful royal official, who was keeper of the Privy Seal from 1371 to 1377, and is therefore likely to have had the money for a substantial country house. Very little is known about the owners of Home Beddington before the Carews, but they seem to have been of lower social status and probably had less money. The Carews who followed the first Nicholas in the early 15th century did not occupy any major offices, and in the second half of the century there was a long minority followed by a legal battle for control of the estate. It is therefore possible that the moat was constructed in the second half of the 14th century, although this dating is very tentative and may well need revision when further evidence is found.

Acknowledgements

This paper is based on work by members of the Carew Manor Group. Particular thanks are due to Douglas Cluett and Andrew Skelton for help in preparing it.

10. Domesday shows that the church, which adjoins the house, was in this manor. The descent of the manor is given in *VCH Surrey* vol. 4 (1912) 169-70.

Excavations & Post-Excavation Work

City, by Museum of London, Department of Urban Archaeology. A series of long term excavations. Enquiries to DUA, Museum of London, London Wall, EC2Y 5HN (01-600 3699).

Croydon & District, processing and cataloguing of excavated and museum collections every Tuesday throughout the year. Archaeological reference collection of fabric types, domestic animal bones, clay tobacco pipes and glass ware also available for comparative work. Enquiries to Mrs Muriel Shaw, 28 Lismore Road, South Croydon, CR2 7QA (01-688 2720).

Greater London (except north-east and south-east London), by Museum of London, Department of Greater London Archaeology. Excavations and processing in all areas. General enquiries to DGLA, Museum of London (01-600 3699 x241).

Local enquiries to:

North London: 3-7 Ray Street, London EC1R 3DJ (01-837 8363).

South-west London: St. Luke's House, Sandycroft Road, Kew, Surrey (01-940 5989).

Southwark and Lambeth: 6-8 Cole Street, London SE1 4YH (01-407 1989 or 403 2920 - office - and 407 1258 - warehouse).

West London: Town Mission Hall, Mission Square, Pottery Road, Brentford, Middlesex (01-560 3880).

Hammersmith & Fulham, by Fulham Archaeological Rescue Group. Processing of material from Fulham Palace. Tuesdays, 7.45 p.m.-10 p.m. at Fulham Palace, Bishop's Avenue, Fulham

Palace Road, SW6. Contact Keith Whitehouse, 86 Clancarty Road, SW6 (01-731 4498).

Kingston, by Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society. Rescue sites in the town centre. Enquiries to Marion Shipley, Kingston Heritage Centre, Fairfield Road, Kingston (01-546 5386).

North-east London, by Passmore Edwards Museum. Enquiries to Pat Wilkinson, Passmore Edwards Museum, Romford Road, E15 4LW (01-534 4545).

Surrey, by Surrey Archaeological Unit. Enquiries to David Bird, County Archaeological Officer, Planning Department, County Hall, Kingston, Surrey (01-541 8911).

Vauxhall Pottery, by Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society. Processing of excavated material continues three nights a week. Enquiries to S.L.A.S., c/o Cuming Museum, 155 Walworth Road, SE17 (01-703 3324).

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