

Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

N E W S L E T T E R



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF AMANDA THURSFIELD AS DIRECTOR

You have now completed ten successful years as Director – what are your feelings on passing this milestone?



My feelings are positive but there is still so much more to do! Success depends not on one person but on teamwork and co-operation. I am thankful to so many people, too many to mention here, who have given me personally and the Cemetery generally their help and support over the past decade.

Do you have any regrets?

The satisfaction of helping to conserve such a fascinating and important site outweighs any regrets I may have had.

What can someone expect who takes out a new concession today?

They would have a concession for thirty years in a beautiful and quiet historic cemetery in a well-maintained garden, and they will always be treated by staff and volunteers with consideration and respect.

In an earlier interview (see Newsletter 35) you explained your vision in managing this unusual place. Has it changed at all?

Not really. We must continue to ensure the Cemetery's financial health so as to achieve the goal of providing a dignified place of burial and allowing continued respectful commemoration of those who are buried here. We have tightened up our Visitor Management Strategy accordingly. We cannot control online sites such as TripAdvisor (where the Cemetery receives high ratings) but we deliberately do not advertise on mass tourism platforms or use social media.

Given that main goal, how can you manage group visits?

We now have a booking system for groups – they must book well in advance by email. Groups must not be more than 20 people and must rigorously observe the rules. In turn, we schedule the groups at specific time-slots which also ensures them a better experience.

How have group-leaders reacted?

Many of the schools and cultural groups visit every year. The vast

majority of them plan well in advance and respect the rules. But we no longer admit school groups with students under the age of 16 nor participants in photography courses. Individual photographers are welcome on the basis that, for privacy reasons, their photos are for personal use only and are not to be shown on social media or in exhibitions.

How is the Cemetery viewed by the city's majority population, i.e. Catholic Romans?

It has become much better known amongst Italians. Thanks to our website and our publications, particularly Nicholas Stanley-Price's history book of 2014, there is a better understanding of who is buried in the Cemetery and how it is run. Many local residents of Testaccio visit regularly. And, of course, many of our concession-holders are Italian, usually because of intermarriage with non-Catholics in earlier generations.

Are there any annual commemoration ceremonies?

Yes, many. For example, in February, poetry lovers place flowers on Keats's grave and then the Russians commemorate their diplomats buried here, followed in April by a ceremony marking Orthodox Easter. In late April Gramsci's death is commemorated with a mass of wreaths and red flowers. In May Norwegians mark their National Day in a ceremony at the tomb of the historian Peder Munch. Later in the year the German students and staff of the Hertziana Library gather in memory of its distinguished past Directors, and the Swedes sing wonderful songs around their national tomb. And of course the busiest time is All Saints' Day on 1st November, the public holiday when it is the custom to visit the graves of deceased family and friends.

The exhibition in 2016 celebrated 300 years as an operating cemetery. Are there other milestones coming up?

Yes, particularly the bicentenaries in 2021-2022 of the deaths of the poets Keats and Shelley. Their graves are among the most popular ones and, together with the Keats-Shelley House in Piazza di Spagna, we can expect even greater interest in the two poets.

What else do you plan for the next few years?

We hope to improve further what we offer our concession-holders and our visitors. We will continue to raise funds for tomb restoration and to adjust our care of the garden so as to cope with climate change. Essentially, we aim to keep it the beautiful and peaceful place that it is.



The cats get their own book

Uta Süße-Krause has produced a beautiful series of photographs of cats in the Cemetery. The book (*Cats in Rome at the Cimitero Acattolico*, Michael Imhof Verlag, 2018), with a charming foreword by Amanda Thursfield, is on sale in the Visitors' Centre. The perfect gift.



NEW DISCOVERIES

Thomas Crawford's monument (1841) to Francis Kinloch

On July 25, 1840, George W. Greene, the United States Consul at Rome, sadly informed Harriott Kinloch Middleton and her husband, Henry Augustus Middleton, in Charleston, South Carolina, that Harriott's brother, Francis Kinloch, had died on July 23 at his residence in Rome. Struck with "gastro-rheumatic fever" and dead within ten days, Kinloch had not written a will or made provision for disposition of his possessions or his remains. It was therefore Consul Greene who made funeral arrangements, secured the dead man's property, and wrote to the Middletons for instructions.

Three days later, Greene informed Harriott that her brother's funeral had occurred at 6 p.m. on Saturday the 25th. He had been interred with the prescribed Protestant rites "at the Protestant burying ground near the pyramid of Caius Cestius & within a few paces of the grave of Shelley." On August 20, 1840, he wrote to Henry Middleton that he had secured a death mask of his brother-in-law that could be used for a bust. The Middletons did not order a bust of Kinloch but they did ensure that he would be remembered in Rome with a monument erected over his grave (Zone V.10.7). For this they commissioned Thomas Crawford (1814-57) who had been settled in Rome for five years. When the monument was finished, Greene wrote: "every one whom I have heard speak of it, has declared it to be the best in the whole cemetery. I have had a little grass plot formed around it & planted with flowers."

Born on January 6, 1798, in South Carolina, Francis Kinloch was one of the many men and women who ventured to Florence, Venice, and Rome during the nineteenth century to study painting and sculpture in Italy. He was particularly keen to study sculpture, and his friends included the sculptors Thomas Crawford and Horatio Greenough (1805-1852).

Kinloch differed from most of his compatriots in that his wealth freed him from having to earn a living by copying Old Master works for patrons at home or for sale to Grand Tour travellers. He was a gentleman-amateur but, in the eyes of his contemporaries, possessed considerable potential. He rented and furnished well-appointed studios in

Florence and Rome for himself and fellow-artists, and even supported with funds younger, impoverished artists whom he befriended. One of these young men was Alfred George Stevens (1817-75), whose 'Portrait of a Man', whose 'Portrait of a Man' probably depicts Kinloch.

Francis Kinloch and his sister inherited from their father, Cleland Kinloch (1759-1823), income from profitable rice plantations in coastal South Carolina worked by enslaved African Americans. When Harriott wed Henry Augustus Middleton in 1819, she merged the Kinloch fortunes with those of an even wealthier, more distinguished South Carolina family. Among her husband's kinsmen were Arthur Middleton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Henry Middleton, state governor and United States Minister to Russia. Henry's brother, Thomas Middleton, was a Grand Tour veteran and a talented amateur artist.

In September 1840, when he learned of Kinloch's demise, Henry Middleton visited Florence and Rome to settle his brother-in-law's estate. While in Rome he commissioned Crawford to create the monument and Greene to manage the project. In the coming months Greene paid Crawford instalments and kept the Middletons informed of progress. Completed in May 1841, the monument cost 450 dollars, including an extra 30 dollars paid to Crawford after Greene had requested him to enlarge the monument's two bas-reliefs.



Alfred Stevens, *Portrait of a Man* (c.1839-40), Photo: © Tate, London



Photo: N. Stanley-Price



Photo: D. Jenkinson

Reminiscent of a truncated pyramid in shape, the monument bears a bas-relief medallion portrait of a bearded Francis Kinloch and, below it, another bas-relief, signed with Crawford's cipher, of an angel leading the deceased's soul heavenward. Of the many commissions that Crawford received in the United States, his sculptures for the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. are the best known. The Kinloch monument is a notable example of the early work of this famous American sculptor.

Contributed by Alexander Moore, a scholar of southern American art history, who thanks John F. McGuigan Jr for his comments and the Editor for drawing the monument to his attention. The main source for the text is the Francis Kinloch Estate Papers, 1731-1860 (Collection Number 1168.03.01.03), in the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

Four albumen photographs of the Cemetery by the Scottish photographer Robert Macpherson, 1864

Hundreds of professional and amateur photographers, both itinerant and resident, turned to Rome in the middle decades of the 19th century in pursuit of photogenic and marketable subject matter, from vestiges of classical antiquity and vignettes of daily life, to the abundant natural beauty of its southern clime. They became as characteristic of the contemporary city and its rural environs as the artists who painted and drew *en plein air* from the same repertoire in the grand tradition of Claude, Corot, and others. They were pioneering practitioners of the newly invented science of chemically binding light onto metal, paper, or glass plates. Unfortunately, and perhaps surprisingly



Fig. 1 Macpherson, R., *The Old and New Protestant Cemeteries*, c.1864 (McGuigan Collection)



Fig. 2. Macpherson, R., *View of the Pyramid of Caius Cestius and the Old Cemetery*, c.1864 (McGuigan Collection)



Fig. 3. Macpherson, R., *The monument to Aeneas Macbean in the New Protestant Cemetery*, c.1864 (McGuigan Collection)



Fig. 4. Macpherson, R., *The Protestant Cemetery at Testaccio*, c.1864 (McGuigan Collection)



The monument to Aeneas Macbean

to our modern sensibilities, many of them neither signed, stamped, nor otherwise asserted authorship of their work. Further complicating present-day efforts at attribution, their negatives sometimes were sold to others who continued to issue them well into the 20th century, and their names occasionally became confused or forgotten. In consequence, many of these important early images are today ascribed to "Photographer unknown."

Those readers familiar with the 2014 *History of the Non-Catholic Cemetery* have seen photographs of it taken by such pre-eminent masters of the genre as Gioacchino Altobelli, James Anderson,

an elevated perspective, and figures common to both, indicating that they were made by the same hand on the same day. The first (*Studium Urbis, Rome*) was included in the 2014 *History of the cemetery* (illus. 43, p. 46), while the second (McGuigan Collection) – which cleverly depicts the same two men seen at three different positions in the composition, perhaps as a result of either a very long or a multiple exposure – was reproduced in the 2016 tercentenary exhibition catalogue (fig. 3, p. 17). Despite their widespread circulation in these publications, who made these two images, and why, remained a mystery.

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Then, in May 2017, a vintage album of photographs surfaced on the Paris art market. It comprised thirty-one landscapes, including vignettes around the grounds of the Villa Doria Pamphili, panoramic scenes of Ceccano, Tivoli, and Civita Vecchia, and four consecutively numbered views of the Non-Catholic Cemetery. Incredibly, every photographic mount bore the same blind stamp, that of the esteemed Scottish artist-photographer Robert Macpherson (1814–72). Among the four cemetery views were the two published without attribution in 2014 (album no. 13; fig. 1 here) and 2016 (album no. 12; fig. 2 here), a previously unrecorded photograph depicting the New Cemetery (album no. 14; fig. 3 here), and one (album no. 15; fig. 4 here) which already had appeared as the work of Macpherson in Piero Becchetti and Carlo Pietrangeli's 1988 monograph on the artist (117). All four photographs are published here together for the first time as the work of Macpherson.

The key to understanding this idiosyncratic group of views of the cemetery may lie in the third picture (album no. 14), a view of the First Extension soon after it came into use, with the gravestones and cypresses of the main cemetery visible on the left. At the centre sits the imposing memorial to Aeneas Macbean (1819–64; Zone 1.14.38), a well-known Scottish banker in Rome whose premature death at the age of forty-five shook the expatriate community. Macpherson strategically positioned his photographic apparatus in order to silhouette the pristine white marble tomb, designed by Holme Cardwell, against the looming dark mass of the wall tower behind it, its pinecone finial enjoying a visually pleasing reciprocity with the crenellated outline. It seems perfectly logical that Macpherson paid tribute to his friend and compatriot in this way, while also exploiting the relatively quiet and open expanse afforded by the

cemetery to experiment with new equipment, which may have included a new panoramic camera and rotating lens. These would account for the novel appearance of the photos. Macpherson already had included a view of the pyramid and cemetery in his 1858 catalogue (Becchetti, 116), and he probably calculated that current, inventively composed scenes would find a ready market.

Since Macbean died in February 1864, the photograph showing his monument in fresh condition must have been taken several months later, after the tomb had been designed, carved, and erected. The latest identifiable tomb, at the extreme right, is that of Victor Garenfeldt who died in September 1864; none dated to 1865 can be recognized. Macpherson therefore probably visited the Cemetery towards the end of 1864. If indeed he took all four photos on the same day, we have a fairly precise date for all of them, a rare benchmark in the study of early photography in Rome.

John F. McGuigan Jr and Nicholas Stanley-Price

JFM would like to thank Alistair Crawford and Michael Kolster for their observations on Macpherson's possible equipment and processes.

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The “Gurlitt: Status Report” reveals a unique painting by Louis Gurlitt

In November 2013 the art world was stunned: the Bavarian Public Prosecutor's office had seized the art collection of Cornelius Gurlitt (1932–2014). The latter had inherited the 1500 works from his art dealer father, Hildebrand, who was known to have dealt with the Nazis. Could some of the 1500 works have been forcibly removed by the Nazis from their rightful owners?

The Bavarian authorities allocated a large budget to investigate; since then, six works (only) have been traced back to their owners. Last winter, two parallel, co-ordinated exhibitions put on display selected works from the collection, under the succinct if unappealing title of “Gurlitt: Status Report”. One, focusing on works of “Degenerate Art”, opened at the Art Museum in Berne which, to its surprise, had been bequeathed his collection by Cornelius Gurlitt (he died only six months after its seizure). The other, at the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn, had as its theme “Nazi art theft and its consequences.” Surprisingly, among the works on display there was an oil painting entitled “Pyramid of Cestius with funeral procession” by Louis Gurlitt (my thanks to both Maria Gazzetti and Laura Snook for spotting the painting in the exhibition).

This was one of some 30 paintings and 60 drawings by Louis Gurlitt (1812–1897) that were found in the collection of his great-grandson, Cornelius. They were probably part of a family estate handed down through the generations. Louis Gurlitt came from a

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Louis Gurlitt, *Pyramid of Cestius with Funeral Procession*, oil on canvas, Kunstmuseum Bern (photo: Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn)



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Protestant family of artists and composers. His birthplace in Altona, near Hamburg, was then under Danish rule and he studied in Copenhagen at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts where one of his teachers was C.W. Eckersberg. In 1840, as an established painter, he returned to Copenhagen and was admitted as a member of the same Academy. But the dispute between Prussia and Denmark over the Schleswig-Holstein question prompted his departure, with Gurlitt in future identifying himself as German rather than Danish. He is now widely appreciated, particularly for his landscapes from Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, Spain and Greece. He spent the years 1844-47 in Rome but this painting must date from a later visit.

It shows the cemetery with its extension that opened for burials in 1859. The cypresses planted at that time already appear mature and many monuments are visible. A date in the late 1860s or 1870s is

likely. Gurlitt was sitting on the low mounds that served a number of artists when taking this view, for instance another Dane, Thorald Læssøe, whose painting of c.1857 we included in the tercentenary exhibition catalogue (no.26). Gurlitt has caught beautifully the sunlight of a late afternoon shortly after a thunderstorm has passed, leaving a large pool of water on the grassy meadows.

Of exceptional interest is his depiction of a funeral cortège approaching the cemetery's entrance-gate. Behind a horse-drawn hearse there walks a couple, one with her head covered, followed by a dozen other mourners. Standing near the gate two other figures, colourfully dressed, await the procession. Several artists recorded night-time funerals at the Pyramid when the Old Cemetery was in use; but this is the only illustration known so far of a funeral cortège approaching the New Cemetery.

Nicholas Stanley-Price



NEWS FROM THE CEMETERY

Pruning of the pine trees...

The very tall pine trees need constantly to be monitored and pruned to keep them in a safe condition. The specialists from Alberando were at work in February; Stefano Raiano took some photos from the treetops for our benefit.



...by chance, just before the snow came

Rome experienced an unusually heavy fall of snow in the night of 26 February, only three days after the pruning was finished. No trees or branches fell but, for safety reasons, the Director closed the Cemetery to visitors for two days. She therefore had exclusive access for photographing the beautiful effects of the snow.





Hand-engraving of inscriptions

Lasers are commonly used nowadays but we still have all inscriptions engraved by hand. Here we show Marco Gattuso at work.



Photo: N. Stanley-Price



Photo: Paolo Ferrari



Photo: Paolo Ferrari

WHO THEY REALLY WERE

J. N. Byström, Swedish sculptor and house-builder in Rome

In early September 1810, the young Swedish sculptor Johan Niklas Byström (1783–1848) arrived in Rome. Entering through the Porta del Popolo and passing the *dogana* inside, little could he know that he would spend most of the rest of his life in this city. He came with the prospect of staying for three years with a travel grant from the Royal Academy of Arts in Stockholm. Armed with the usual letters of introduction, he soon visited Canova and Thorvaldsen, and obtained permission to study in their workshops.



J. N. Byström, portrait of the famous Swedish botanist Carl von Linné (1707–1778), 1827. Detail. Uppsala University Collection



A.C. Wetterling (1796–1858), Byström working in his studio about 1828–29. Watercolour and ink. Lund University Art Collection

As so many colleagues before him, Byström studied Greek and Roman sculpture in the Vatican collections and elsewhere. Soon he set up his own studio, began to work diligently in marble, and to send home sculptures for inspection by the Royal Academy and his main tutor, the famous Johan Tobias Sergel (who had himself studied in Rome in 1767–78). Byström worked in the Neoclassical style, typical for the period and the taste of his clients. He mainly produced sculptures on mythological themes but also full-figure portraits, portrait busts, reliefs and medallions.



Domenico Quaglio (1787–1837), *View of the Villa Malta in Rome*, 1830. Oil on canvas. Neue Pinakothek, Munich

Byström came to Rome in troubled times. The city was under French occupation and wars raged in Europe. The situation improved after the Vienna Congress of 1814–15 and the restoration of the Papal States to the Pope; from now on an increasing number of tourists and artists began to arrive. In 1813 Byström had his scholarship prolonged, and in 1814 was appointed Sculptor to the Royal Swedish Court. He now acquired his first house in Rome, a rather derelict building near the wall of the Mausoleum of Augustus. Here he furnished a sculptor's studio and rooms for himself and for Swedish fellow-artists whom he encouraged to visit. In 1818 Byström also purchased Villa Malta on the Via di Porta Pinciana, an estate of several buildings and gardens dominated by a high tower affording splendid views over the city. Here he lived with colleagues and also rented rooms to others, such as the Hannoverian diplomat August Kestner (*Newsletter* 41, p. 3). However, persuaded by the sculptor Martin Wagner, he sold the estate to the Bavarian King Ludwig I, and in 1828 moved back to the small house by the Mausoleum. Here he tried to recreate what he had lost by buying two adjacent houses for artists' studios, but he came to regret the sale of Villa Malta for the rest of his life.

Byström became one of his home country's most acclaimed and celebrated artists. For a number of years he was a sort of cultural ambassador in Rome, and long held a special position in the artistic community – mostly due to his acquisition of Villa Malta where colleagues from different countries could find lodgings during their stay in the eternal city.

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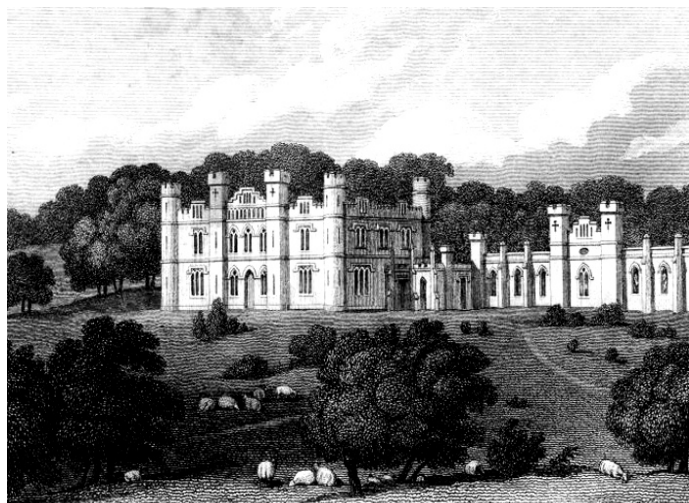
As a Protestant '*eretico*' Byström never married formally but he had an Italian family. In 1814 he was living at Piazza di Spagna with his *moglie* Lucia and two small children. Although the couple separated about 1818, the sculptor never ceased to keep in contact with his family in Rome.

But Byström had a dream: to create a museum for his and other artists' sculptures in Sweden. Therefore he moved back to Stockholm and there built a splendid villa (1844), decorated with murals in Pompeian style, columns and other details in Italian marble. The house was built (now owned by the Spanish embassy), but his project failed. A disillusioned Byström returned to Rome and immediately embarked on a new building project. Near the top of the Spanish Steps he acquired a lot which at the time was only a slippery slope down towards Piazza Mignanelli. He built a solid staircase (now the Rampa Mignanelli) down to the piazza, as the sale conditions required, and began to construct a large *palazzo* to house several studios. But it was only two or three storeys high when he suddenly died; eventually his son-in-law and daughter, Virginia, completed the building following the sculptor's designs. Byström was laid to rest under a modest gravestone in March 1848 (Zone 1.6.4; recently cleaned, see *Newsletter* 19, p. 4).

Annette Landen, art historian at the Swedish Institute of Classical Studies at Rome, working on a biography of Byström.

The man who invented 'Landscape architecture': Gilbert Laing Meason

The term 'Landscape architecture' appears first in the title of a book by a wealthy Scottish landowner, Gilbert Laing Meason (1769-1832). In *The landscape architecture of the great paintings of Italy* (London, 1828), he wrote about the relationships between buildings and their natural settings. One of the few printed copies reached John Claudius Loudon, a famous Scottish landscape gardener and the man behind the idea of 'garden cemeteries'. Loudon adopted Laing Meason's term which then spread to the United States and to Frederick Law Olmsted, considered there 'the father of landscape architecture'.



Lindertis House

Gilbert Laing was born in the very north of Scotland, in Kirkwall on Orkney. He added 'Meason' to his name after inheriting an estate. His interest in 'landscape architecture' must have derived from his experience in acquiring and re-building Lindertis House, set in extensive woodland near Forfar in Fife. His ambitious building project remained unfinished in his lifetime. On his death in 1832 his son Magnus Laing sold the house, probably in payment of death duties (it was demolished in 1987). Laing Meason is usually stated to have died in Venice, but his grave in the Cemetery (Zone 1.13.11) refutes that claim. The epitaph on this fine monument, recently restored, records that 'the owner of Lindertis House' died at Rome. Another good reason for landscape architects to visit us and pay homage to him.



The monument to Laing Meason

Jacques Auquier, a French silk-worker from Uzès

One of the young men buried in the Old Cemetery in 1819 was a French Protestant called Jacques Auquier. He has not been properly identified because the surname on his gravestone was wrongly read as 'Avovier' in the *'Parte Antica'* publication of 1989. The inscription, in French, states that he was born on 29 February 1779 "A [...]VZES DE[P]A[R]TE[...] DV GARD"; also, that his brother Simon erected the monument as a final expression of his everlasting fondness.

Jacques Auquier did indeed come from the small town of Uzès in the Gard department of France, nowadays a popular tourist destination some 25 kms north of Nîmes. The town at the time had a mainly Protestant population of around 6000. Together with other towns such as Toulouse and Nîmes, it was famous for its silk stocking production. The profession of *faiseur de bas* was highly respected, often passed within families from one generation to the next. Partly because of the cleanliness that working with silk demanded, silk stocking workers

were known for being in better health and less subject to illness than others.

The town archives in Uzès record that Jacques Auquier was born on 29 January (his stone gives 29 February) 1779 to Simon Auquier and Jeanne Hugues, both of them from silk-working families. His brother Simon, who was responsible for Jacques's gravestone, was a year younger, also a *faiseur de bas*, and eventually died at home, unmarried, in 1836. Jacques is listed in Uzès for military conscription when aged 20 but not in the census of 1807/8. He had probably left Uzès by then; but why and when he arrived in Rome before his death here is not known.

Nicholas Stanley-Price, with grateful thanks to Mme Mireille Olmière, archivist at the Uzès communal archives

HOW TO BECOME A FRIEND

This Newsletter is made possible by the contributions of the Friends of the Cemetery.

The Friends also help fund the care of the trees in the cemetery and the restoration of tombs. Please can you help us by becoming a Friend? You can find a membership form at:

www.cemeteryrome.it

THE NON-CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN ROME

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(last entrance 4.30pm)

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