



NOTES FROM THE FARMS

THE JOURNAL OF THE CRAFTSMAN FARMS FOUNDATION



From the Director's Chair

—Vonda K. Givens

Our current docent training course is nearing its end, which meant that last week, it was time for the one session I teach. Before this session much of training is, necessarily, devoted to learning historic facts related to Gustav Stickley and Craftsman Farms. In this session, trainees are encouraged to think more broadly about giving tours. While new docents need time to absorb facts, eventually it's important to switch from the minutiae to the big picture.

I looked forward to meeting the six trainees who had committed to this intensive undertaking, which requires weeks of preparation. Among them is a high school teacher, a recent empty-nester and a recent retiree. Another potential docent is in actuarial school.

Meeting these potential docents made me think back to my beginning as a docent, when I was a freshman in college and my sister suggested I apply for a part-time docent job at a plantation house—a position that would eventually change the course of

Continued on page 2

A TALE OF TWO TABLES

Two Gustav Stickley tables, a No. 410-L hexagonal library table and a No. 634 dining table, have recently arrived at The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms and are on view in the Log House. Their arrival has prompted a resurgence of appreciation for the examples of Stickley table design on display throughout the Log House, inspiring an upcoming exhibition setting its sights on, under, and around the tables at Craftsman Farms. Entitled *Live, Play, Eat: Around the Table at Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms* and curated by Peter K. Mars, this six-month exhibition, beginning September 5, will employ multi-sensory vignettes throughout the Log House spotlighting the intentional and inextricable link between design and function in Stickley furnishings. Using design as a starting point, the exhibition will explore the literal and symbolic function of tables within the Stickley household, demonstrating how these "hubs" of activity—for entertaining, eating, recreation and more—support a broader understanding of early 20th century American history and Craftsman Farms' context within it.

See page 9 for programs related to this exhibition and read on to learn more about the newly arrived tables inspiring it.



Photo by Peter K. Mars

The only known No. 410-L with flat hammered tacks.

No. 410-L

Debuting in 1901, Gustav Stickley's No. 410-L hexagonal library table is a highly regarded example of his "structural style," with exposed keyed-tenon joints, trumpet shaped stacked stretchers and large, domed nails securing the hard leather top. Mr. Stickley chose the No. 410-L (L=leather top) for the living room of his homes in Syracuse and at Craftsman Farms. Craftsman Farms' original 410-L table is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Over the years, generous loans have enabled the museum to consistently display a Stickley No. 410-L. The recently acquired table, which is American white oak with the original factory finish, is a gift to the permanent collection. This table is the only known example with flat, hand-forged iron

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Director's Chair continued from page 1

my career path. I was young for the job, but I suspect that a childhood well-steeped in visits to historic houses, battlefield parks, and monuments of any kind was key preparation. I was hooked early on by this unique teaching experience and still am.

Near the end of the training session, I asked the group to do an exercise that's useful for shaping presentations, from a full-hour tour to a 1-minute "elevator speech"—a technique I learned from a minister years ago. It works! In the exercise each person answers three questions about Craftsman Farms: "What? So what? And now what?" Effective presentations "light a spark" of interest and effective speakers should then "fan the flame" with specific action steps. In other words, a tour must address what Craftsman Farms is, but it should also address why Craftsman Farms is important and what visitors can do to join us in preserving it.

As we worked through the exercise and got to the "Now what?" section, I asked the group, "Now that we've sparked an interest in Craftsman Farms, what do we want to ask visitors to do with this interest?" The group proposed great options from reading books to becoming a member, but a specific suggestion from one trainee really made me smile: "Do something. Make something," he said.

Perfect! I've led this exercise many times, and while now this seems like an obvious suggestion, I'm not sure anyone has made it before.

As much as I love reading and as much as we value new members, encouraging people to do something, and more specifically to make something, is perfectly aligned with Gustav Stickley's vision. The act of making something engages our hands and minds and disengages us from screens, and these experiences, even if unsuccessful, tend to foster appreciation for these activities. To wit, I'm hopeless with tools, but I'm fascinated by woodworking!

Taking this suggestion to heart, I've decided to put it into use with a challenge to you (and to myself). If you're reading this report, you likely already know what Craftsman Farms is and you know why it matters. Now take an action step. Do something. Make something. Spring is the perfect time. Plant, build, hammer, shape, stitch, craft, create. Any of the above. Or all of them. And while you're at it, why not set aside an afternoon to visit Craftsman Farms? You might be lucky enough to catch a tour led by one of our new docents. I know firsthand that they're a savvy group! I can assure you that you'll be in good hands.

Tale of Two Tables continued from page 1

upholstery nails affixing the leather top. Written in large script under the tabletop is 410-L 54"x 48" designating the model number and tabletop size. These details may indicate that this was a new model or that it was part of Mr. Stickley's practice of fine-tuning individual designs.



The Log House dining room in 1911.

No. 634

In a sunny corner of the dining room, the Stickley family shared meals at a large custom-built round table with four substantial square-cut legs, most likely made of American chestnut like the corner cabinets that flanked it. The whereabouts of the table, seen in the 1911 photo above, are unknown, but thanks to a loan from the Stickley Museum of Fayetteville, New York, another fine example of a Stickley dining table stands in its place. This Stickley No. 634 five-leg dining table is 60-inches wide with broad, stretcher-connected legs. This wonderful example of Craftsman Workshops design has great visual strength, bringing the room into a close approximation of Mr. Stickley's original design intent.



Photo by Peter K. Mars

No. 634 five-leg dining table.



WE'RE GOING ON A ROYCROFT RETREAT: JULY 8-11

The Roycroft Retreat, our next Farms Afield takes us to charming East Aurora, home to the historic Roycroft Campus, and Buffalo, NY – the big city with an Arts & Crafts heart! We're excited to host this special summer retreat, packed with exciting opportunities.

We'll meet up in East Aurora for a delicious opening night dinner at the historic Roycroft Inn, where we'll stay for three nights (with daily breakfast included) immersed in the unique style of the Roycroft artisans.

Highlights of the trip include a behind-the-scenes tour of the Roycroft Campus, the turn-of-the-century community of craftsman founded by Elbert Hubbard. Today the Campus is the best preserved and most complete complex of buildings or "guilds" that evolved in the United States at that time.



Templeton Landing

One evening, we'll tour Frank Lloyd Wright's Graycliff Estate. Set high on a cliff with sweeping views of Lake Erie, Graycliff is one of Wright's most significant creations of the 1920s. As twilight descends, we'll enjoy a relaxing wine and cheese reception on the terrace. In Buffalo, we'll visit Wright's Darwin Martin House Complex, considered one of the finest achievements of his Prairie period. We'll also visit the private workshop of Steve Oubre, master cabinetmaker for the Darwin Martin House Restoration Corporation.



Darwin Martin House, Courtesy of Martin House Restoration Corporation

While in Buffalo, we'll enjoy a delicious lunch at Templeton Landing, overlooking Buffalo Harbor, and a bus tour, designed especially for Arts and Crafts enthusiasts, of the wonderful architectural and historic sites in the city.

Among other delights, we've made sure to set aside time for relaxing. Linger on the porch of the Roycroft Inn or explore charming East Aurora. Spend an hour catching up with friends or making new ones. We'd be delighted for you to join us!

Roycroft Retreat, East Aurora & Buffalo, NY
Wednesday - Saturday, July 8 -11, 2015
\$1050 per person; \$150 supplement for a single room.
Member Exclusive.
Transportation to East Aurora is not provided.

At press time, availability is very limited. Please call 973.540.0311 for the latest information.



MR. STICKLEY'S CRAFTSMAN FARMS: THE ESSENTIAL TOUR PLUS

This summer, we're pleased to offer an extended tour of Craftsman Farms with the Essential Tour PLUS. Like our regularly offered "Essential Tour," this tour takes visitors through the Log House, the heart of the property and the Stickley family home; plus, taking full advantage of the summer season, it includes an extended tour of the historic landscape and a rare opportunity to visit the interior of the two bedroom North Cottage, one of the first buildings constructed on the property. We'll visit some of the oft-overlooked far-reaches of the property by beginning on the original entry road, and consider the full scope of Stickley's vision, as along the way your docent expands on Stickley's story to provide a fuller context for his architectural masterpiece, the Log House.

Saturdays, July 25 and August 1 at 10:30 a.m.

\$5 Members; \$15 Non Members

For more information or to purchase tickets call 973.540.0311 or visit StickleyMuseum.org.

GIRL SCOUTS EARN BOOK ARTIST BADGE

Last year we introduced a new badge-earning workshop for Cadette Girl Scouts (in the sixth to eighth grades), and we're thrilled to offer it again in 2015. Led by Trustee Julie Peterson, the "Be a Book Artist" workshop is a hands-on program that explores book making as a craft and an art form.



On a tour of the Stickley Museum, girls learn about early book making and illuminated manuscripts and the development of the printing press, which made books more widely available and facilitated the spread of ideas and stories, before discussing how Arts and Crafts designers, like William Morris with his Kelmscott Press imbued utilitarian objects, like books, with meaning through the time and effort spent in making them. The workshop gives Scouts the opportunity to make several books using different binding techniques, including a simple folded binding, Japanese binding, and a simple book from a single sheet of paper.

FAMILY FUN!



The Stickley Museum hosts its annual Family Fun & Games Day on Saturday, May 9, from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m., made possible in part by a generous grant from the Kiwanis Club of Greater Parsippany Foundation. The day's activities are built around the theme "My Home." Children of all ages are invited to explore and learn about homes of all kinds, including the Stickley family's home, the Log House at Craftsman Farms, the homes of many kinds of animals, and the natural world, which is home to us all. Activities include storytime, scavenger hunts, crafts, games, and the chance to get up close and personal with amazing live animals from Animal Experiences, an outreach program developed by the Happy Tales Animal Sanctuary.

Family Fun & Games Day

Saturday, May 9, 2015

Noon – 4:00 p.m.

Rain or Shine.

FREE to Members at the Dual/Family level and above
Non Members: \$10 each for first two Children; \$5 each additional Child; \$5 Adults

No reservations necessary.



Rain in the forecast? No problem!

Most of our Family Day activities are indoors, including Animal Experiences and Storytime!

ONE-DAY-ONLY STICKLEY POP-UP SHOP!



Hand-stitched embroidery based on Gustav Stickley's original designs.



Matte green tea set in a pinecone motif.



The seedpod design is perfect for spring!

For one special evening in May, we will open a "Pop-Up Shop" in the Paramus Stickley Audi & Co store. If you haven't yet visited their newest showroom, this is an opportunity you won't want to miss. Guests are welcomed for an evening of shopping, socializing, and the chance to win a Harvey Ellis Rocker!

The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms' Pop-Up Shop features branded items, and a selection from the remaining stock of United Crafts textiles and stoneware (at left). The exquisite and colorful handmade textiles are based on Gustav Stickley's original designs. The beautiful stoneware in a pinecone motif, made by Bennington Potters, is finished in a matte green glaze. As always, our members will receive 40% off all United Crafts items.



You could win a Harvey Ellis Rocker!

While their Mission line is particularly appealing to Arts and Crafts fans, the Stickley Audi Paramus showroom has gorgeous furniture and furnishings to fit anyone's style. Join us for refreshments, a giveaway and special Stickley offers for those in attendance.

For your chance to go home with a Harvey Ellis Rocker (no inlay) make sure to RSVP for the event to Susan.Cane@Stickley.com or call 201.845.4649. Entrants need not be present to win, and the winner can customize wood species, finish and fabric of their choice.

Pop-Up Shop!

at the Stickley Audi & Co. Paramus Showroom

55 Route 4 West, Paramus, NJ

Thursday, May 28 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

FREE with RSVP to Susan.Cane@Stickley.com or 201.845.4649.

For more information visit StickleyMuseum.org or call 973.540.0311.

FROM UNIQUE TO CONCOMITANT: THE EVOLUTION OF THE FURNITURE PRODUCED

If you missed it, Part 1 of "From Unique to Concomitant" ran in the Winter 2014 - 2015 issue of Notes from the Farms.

PART II

In Part I of this article we saw how Gustav Stickley and Stickley Brothers developed their Arts and Crafts furniture designs that were innovative and unique. Each company developed their own vocabulary of interpreting the Arts and Crafts movement in the design of furniture. In 1904, L. & J.G. Stickley began producing Arts and Crafts furniture under the Onondaga Shops name¹ and Charles soon followed with his Arts and Crafts line in 1909.



Figure 1.

Around 1904 to 1905 it becomes obvious that the two companies designs began an evolution away from unique to almost a standard and common set of designs. It can be argued that the newly formed L. & J.G. Stickley Company's Arts and Crafts

designs never exhibited the uniqueness of the earliest Gustav Stickley and Stickley Brothers designs, but channeled the designs that were being offered by the two firms in 1904. At that time, the designs of Gustav Stickley and Stickley Brothers were becoming lighter, less detailed, and simplified from a design as well as manufacturing perspective than their earlier products. In the 1904 to 1906 and later period, I refer to the product of all three firms as *Standard Stickley*.² The late entry of Charles to the Arts and Crafts style in 1909 continued the channeling of the designs of Gustav's and Albert's firms and can be characterized as *Standard Stickley* as well. Prior to 1909 Charles sold Gustav's furniture in his retail store in Binghamton and therefore was well acquainted with Gustav's design vocabulary. Charles Stickley's furniture at times had Gustav's hardware on it, which he had purchased from Gustav.

It is unknown what caused the movement from innovative designs to *Standard Stickley*, and why they all appear to have caught the simplification fever at the same time. Each firm retained designers on their staff and at times came up with an interesting new design, such as L. & J.G. Stickley's prairie settle and Charles Stickley's cut out chairs, but in general the trend of design and manufacturing simplification continued unabated until around 1915 when they either went bankrupt or moved away from Arts and Crafts, coincident with the declining interest in Arts and Crafts furni-



Figure 2.

ture. This much is apparent and may partially answer the question of why they moved away from the unique to the standard. There were economic conditions impacting the cost of producing the furniture. The rate of inflation in the United States fluctuated wildly, but in 1903 it was almost 10%, and in 1910 it was over 10%. There was a bank panic in 1907 that negatively impacted the economy. White oak, the primary wood used in Arts and Crafts Furniture, rose 34% in price from 1900 to 1912. There were also criticisms of the early designs, at least for Gustav's products. Those designs were criticized as being too bulky and in some cases too busy. The purchasing habits of consumers also dictated the movement to lighter designs and that may have predicated a common set of designs between the firms. Another probable contributing factor was that the later designs were less labor intensive to manufacture and thus reduced the cost of production. It has been and continues to be argued that Gustav's designs were unique

BY THE STICKLEY FIRMS — W. MICHAEL MCCrackEN

and they were copied or adapted by the other Stickley firms. It appears that as Gustav's designs evolved, the other three Stickley firms followed his lead and maybe the argument is at least partially correct. The other Stickley firms did not merely follow his lead but they were also able to quickly adapt their lines in response to Gustav's design changes. The rapidity of adapting their lines raises the question of how did they know what Gustav was going to intro-



Figure 3.

duce so they were able to respond to those changes so quickly? Recall that Gustav's company and Stickley Brothers designs evolved at almost the same rate from 1902 to 1904, Charles Stickley's designs were primarily imitative of Gustav's designs, and L. & J.G. Stickley's designs were often imitative or derivative of Gustav's designs.

For example, the standardization of the designs among the firms can be seen by comparing Morris chairs produced by each firm. Figure 1

is the Number 332 by Gustav and was originally introduced in 1901. Figure 2 is the Stickley Brothers version. Figure 3 is the L. & J.G. Stickley version and Figure 4 is Charles Stickley's version. They are all essentially identical. They have the flat arms with corbels underneath, the through tenons through the arms, slats under the arms and the through tenons on the legs. There are subtle differences in the designs such as the back support, the size of the through tenons, the shape of the corbels, etc. Collectors love to discuss these differences ad nauseum, but essentially the chairs are all the same. Would a buyer in 1906 be concerned that a rail versus pegs supported the seat back? The example given is not an exception, but an example of the common, or almost shared designs, among the firms.

We can only speculate on why all four firms essentially made the same or quite similar furniture. Gustav railed at those who used the name Stickley or Craftsman for the furniture they were selling. It might not have been an issue if the other Stickley firm's designs were not so similar or in some cases almost identical to his. They each preached the tenets of quality and craftsmanship in hopes of differentiating their product from their competitors, since their designs were so similar. To the average person in those days, it, in all likelihood, looked the same, cost about the same and it had the same name, so it must have been good whoever made it.



Figure 4.

¹Prior to 1904, L. & J. G. Stickley produced contract furniture for the Tobey Furniture Company and other retailers.

²*Standard Stickley* is a term used by David Cathers to describe the evolution of Gustav's designs in his seminal work, "Gustav Stickley," Phaidon, 2003. Cathers found the term, *Standard Stickley*, was used to describe Gustav Stickley's design evolution by a writer in the Furniture Trade Review in 1904. I have taken license with the term to use it to describe the furniture of all of the Stickley firms that evolved in a concomitant form after 1904.

About the Author:

Michael McCracken has studied and collected objects of the Arts and Crafts movement for over 40 years. He and his wife Je' live in Atlanta, and he recently retired from Georgia Tech as the Director of OnLine Course Development and Innovation for the Center for 21st Century Universities. He is also a member of the Collections Committee of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms.

THE CRAFTSMAN GUILD

January 1 to December 31, 2014

We are extremely grateful to the members of the 2014 Craftsman Guild Donor Circle whose generous support had a significant impact on the operations of the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms. The name Craftsman Guild was chosen because Gustav Stickley deeply admired the medieval practice in which artisans worked cooperatively within a guild. Our Guild is an alliance of advocates working together to further the mission of the Craftsman Farms Foundation.

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John Toomey Gallery

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**Spring Family Day:
Family Fun & Games**
Saturday, May 9, Noon – 4 p.m.

**Pop-Up Shop! at the Stickley, Audi &
Co. Paramus Showroom**
Thursday, May 28
from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Farms Afield: Roycroft Retreat
East Aurora & Buffalo, NY
Wednesday – Saturday, July 8 - 11

**Mr. Stickley's Craftsman Farms:
The Essential Tour PLUS**
Saturdays, July 25 and August 1 at
10:30 a.m.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION!

***Live, Play, Eat:* Around the Table at
Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms**
Saturday, September 5, 2015 – Sunday,
March 6, 2016

Fall Family Day
Saturday, September 19, Noon – 4 p.m.

"CRAFTING THE FUTURE" WEEKEND

**5th Annual Emerging Scholars
Symposium**
with Amy Stahl Memorial Lecturer:
Glen Adamson, Director, Museum
of Art and Design
Saturday, October 17 at 9:00 a.m.

"Crafting the Future" Gala
at the Mountain Lakes Club,
Mountain Lakes, NJ
Saturday, October 17 at 6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION!

***Live, Play, Eat* Exhibition Open
House**
Sunday, October 18, Noon – 4 p.m.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION!

**Curator's Tour of *Live, Play, Eat*
with Exhibition Curator, Pete Mars**
Saturdays, at 11:00 a.m.
September 12, October 10, November
14, and December 12, 2015, and
January 23 and February 13, 2016.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION!

"Under the Table" Tour
Saturday, October 3 at 11:00 a.m. and
4:30 p.m.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION!

**"On the Table: Supporting the Legacy of
Gustav Stickley and Craftsman Farms"**
Lecture by Vonda Givens, Executive
Director
Saturday, October 3 at 6:00 p.m.

All Hallows' Eve Open House
Saturday, October 31, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**Craftsman Farms and Craft Beer
Event with Brooklyn Brewery**
Special Guest Garrett Oliver
at the Mountain Lakes Club,
Mountain Lakes, NJ
Friday, November 20

**Programs are all at the Stickley
Museum unless otherwise noted.**
**For more details call 973.540.0311
or visit StickleyMuseum.org.**

STICKLEY SUSTAINERS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

Have you ever wondered why more and more organizations have begun "monthly giving" programs? It's not just an idea whose time has come; it actually makes sense for both the donor and the organization. Donors no longer have to worry about when or how to contribute. They don't receive renewal notices or reminder phone calls, but they do have the satisfaction of providing critical support to an organization they value. The organization saves money on postage and printing and receives a steady, reliable stream of support which allows it to plan throughout the year.

Have you ever thought about becoming a monthly donor to the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms? "Stickley Sustainers" support the Museum with a contribution each month; over time even small gifts add up to significant support for the Museum and impact our ability to fulfill our mission each and every day. Sustainers can contribute as little as \$5.00/month to join the program.

Dawn Domans, a retiree, active community volunteer and Museum shopkeeper, became a Sustainer just last year. "I decided to become a monthly donor because I knew my own spending habits and found monthly contributions an easier way to support an organization that has impacted my life and which is meaningful to me. Just as my volunteering helps the Museum, my financial contributions will help to sustain the Museum for the future. My monthly gifts are manageable for me but, over time, they add up and make me feel that I have made a difference."

To join Dawn as a monthly donor, please call 973-540-0311. Every monthly donor plays a critical role in helping to support the Museum.



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THE CRAFTSMAN GUILD

January 1 to December 31, 2014

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Craftsman Farms is located at
2352 Route 10 West
Morris Plains, New Jersey 07950

The entrance is located on Route 10
West at Manor Lane, about 3 miles
west of I-287 in Parsippany-Troy Hills,
New Jersey (mailing address is Morris
Plains). Driving directions are available
at StickleyMuseum.org.

Free to members and children under 2
Adults: \$10; Seniors & Students \$5

Closed on Major Holidays.

MUSEUM TOUR SCHEDULE

HOURS:

Thursday through Sunday, year-round
Tours depart hourly 12:15 to 3:15 p.m.

Group Tours available by reservation.

Call 973.540.0311

MUSEUM SHOP HOURS

Thursday through Sunday Noon to 4 p.m.

CONTACT US

Offices: 973.540.0311

Museum Shop: 973.540.1165

Email: info@StickleyMuseum.org

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**The Stickley
Museum at
Craftsman**

**Farms is committed to
assuring that all individuals
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use of assistive listening
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Craftsman Farms, the former home of noted designer Gustav Stickley, is owned by the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills and is operated as The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms by The Craftsman Farms Foundation, Inc. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New Jersey. Restoration of the National Historic Landmark, Craftsman Farms, is made possible, in part, by a Save America's Treasures Grant administered by the National Parks Service, Department of the Interior, and by support from Morris County Preservation Trust, The New Jersey Historic Trust, and individual members. The Craftsman Farms Foundation received an operating grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission. The Craftsman Farms Foundation gratefully acknowledges a grant from the New Jersey Cultural Trust. Educational programs are funded, in part, by grants from the Arts & Crafts Research Fund.



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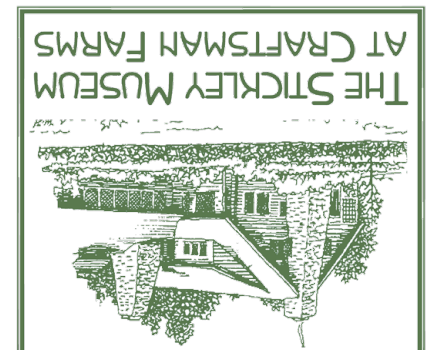


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