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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

EDINBURGH CASTLE – FOOG'S GATE AREA OF UPPER WARD



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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

EDINBURGH CASTLE: FOOG'S GATE AREA OF UPPER WARD

Note

For an overview of the significance of the whole Edinburgh Castle site, please see the Edinburgh Castle Overview Statement of Significance.

The Castle is a complex multi-period site so individual statements, such as this one for Foog's Gate area, are in production to address key aspects and character zones of the site. All should be read in the context of the main Edinburgh Castle Overview Statement.

CONTENTS

1	Summary	2
1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Statement of significance	2
2	Assessment of values	3
2.1	Background	3
2.2	Evidential values	4
2.3	Historical values	7
2.4	Architectural and artistic values	8
2.5	Landscape and aesthetic values	11
2.6	Natural heritage values	11
2.7	Contemporary/use values	12
3	Major gaps in understanding	12
4	Associated properties	12
5	Keywords	12
	Bibliography	12

1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

Edinburgh Castle, perched on Castle Rock in the heart of the city of Edinburgh, has a proven 3000-year history of human settlement, reaching from at least as early as the late Bronze Age (c 900 BC) to the present day. It is therefore one of the longest continuously inhabited places in the UK. The Castle has become an icon of Scotland housing the Honours of Scotland, while providing the stage for ceremonial State events and international gatherings. It is also the country's leading paying visitor attraction, attracting well in excess of one million visitors annually.

The Castle site comprises a major complex of buildings, fortifications, spaces and national treasures. The topmost part, the "citadel", is likely to have been the persistent site of the earliest and most important structures, with St Margaret's Chapel (dated to around 1130) being the most ancient of these to survive.

While the individual structures discussed within this Statement are of much later date, it is important that they are appreciated within the historical context and character of the upper ward which forms the ancient citadel. Foog's Gate now serves as the main entrance to the citadel and the summit of the castle rock, forming part of the inner defensive circuit. Within Foog's Gate and to the east, two masonry buildings housed water tanks which (from the later 19th century) contained the castle's principal water supply. Further east stands the Fire Station, now housing a shop.

1.2 Statement of significance

The area comprising Foog's Gate and the Water Towers is a key component of the upper ward of Edinburgh Castle. While none of the individual structures can be counted among the most important in the internationally significant Castle site, together they represent a visually coherent group which demonstrates important aspects of the late medieval and modern use of the site. Key features of their significance are:

- That the development of the Foog's Gate access route, possibly from as early as the 1400s, had a major influence on the shaping of the upper ward as it became more focussed on its incarnation as artillery fortress.
- That the area contains high potential for survival of significant archaeological evidence to inform our understanding of how this part of the site developed. The location near the summit implies the potential for very early remains or evidence, e.g. through the working of bedrock, as well as buried traces.
- That the aesthetics of the grouping of structures, though of different ages, forms an important part of the dramatic and iconic skyline.

- The form of the architecture helps reveal understandings about access, defence, as well as living on the Rock related to the ever-present challenges of water supply.

The above short statement encapsulates our current understanding of the main significances of this site. A broader overview of the cultural and natural heritage values of the place is given below.

2 Assessment of values

2.1 Summary chronology

1300s	Excavation ¹ uncovered the presence of surfaced causeway which may have connected to the pre-Foog access to the upper ward; the line of the causeway would have accessed the upper ward at a point between the two later water towers. There is high potential for significant buried archaeological remains in this area.
	Original medieval entrances are known on the E front through David's Tower, and on the line of the Lang Stair.
1314	St Margaret's Chapel spared demolition after Scots retake the castle, but the keep it formed part of is demolished.
Late 1400s	Likely origin of current ("Foog's") access route into Citadel.
1544-52	Documentary reference to works undertaken to improve defences of Castle, following English siege of May 1544. Likely to have included the roadway to allow cannon and ammunition to be hauled up to the citadel, likely to be the route through Foog's Gate. This is linked to the eventual conversion of St Mary's Church and St Margaret's chapel as munitions stores.
C16th/early C17th	<p>Map evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holinshed's Chronicle illustration, (believed surveyed 1573 and publ 1577), shows an arched gateway at site of later Foog's Gate, flanked by defensive walls or earthworks. This may have been known at the time as St Margaret's Postern • A structure which can be interpreted as Foog's Gate is shown in stylised form on Georg Braun's depiction of the castle, published 1582. http://maps.nls.uk/towns/detail.cfm?id=1022 <p>The above sources indicate that there was a routeway, inner walls and a gateway forming the inner defences of the citadel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, this formula is not depicted on Gordon of Rothiemay's perspective view of 1647, which shows only the enlarged garrison chapel on the summit of the rock, which is otherwise curiously devoid of buildings. http://maps.nls.uk/towns/detail.cfm?id=211 The reason for this is uncertain as it is extremely unlikely that this part of the site was a "clear" area at this date.
C 1675	Oldest plan of the Castle, appears to show the footprint of a building/tower just inside Foog's Gate to the N, which may have been destroyed in the 1689 siege. This tower may be seen in the 16 th century

¹ S Driscoll and P Yeoman 1997, Excavations in Edinburgh Castle 1988-91, p 45.

	illustrations, and may be the one referred to in documents as St Margaret's Tower.
C 1700	Castle drawn by John Slezer (BL K Top XLix. 74) showing Foog's Gate and flanking walls much as existing, see para 2.4 below, but no structure just inside to N. Once through the gate, friends or foe were tightly contained within a narrow pend-like barbican.
C1736/7	Area to N of Foogs Gate enclosed as shot yard; this equates to the walled enclosure shown on plans e.g. Romer dated 1742 (surveyed 1737) Skinner's dated 1750; roughly equating to the area which later housed Water Tower 1. Skinner's map shows the yard fully enclosed with central formal entrance http://maps.nls.uk/view/00002620
Early 1800s	Straw Store, and (Fire) Engine House added to N of Shot yard.
1829	Mons Meg returned from London and sited on battery to N of St Margaret's Chapel.
c1847	1852 OS plan (surveyed 1847) shows area of Shot Yard now houses Water Tank 1 (later rebuilt with enlarged cylinder) Cylinder is shown contained within the walls.
1851-52	Light-touch restoration of St Margaret's Chapel, with addition of neo-Romanesque doorpiece, and demolition of later accretions.
1907	W T Oldrieve (H M Office of Works) Proposed Plans and Elevations for New Water Tower (Tank 2) and alterations to masonry required for new cylinder at Tower 1. This includes the shifting of the 18 th cent gateway into the Shot Yard/Tower 1, to the E to its present (uncomfortable) position.
1911	Alterations to Water Tower 1 and building of Water Tower 2 complete by this date: shown for first time on OS map, surveyed 1912. Kew archives list 1911 bill for Water Tank for Edinburgh Castle; this may be for the same structure; http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/Details?uri=C2134780
c 1950	Fire engine house rebuilt to present form, with crow-stepped gables
	Water tank 2 replaced on new brick bearers.
1990	Construction of Vehicle Tunnel.
1995/6	Tank and roof removed from Water Tower 1.
1999	Fire Station converted to shop.
2013	Archaeological evaluation and excavation at Water Towers.

2.2 Evidential values

As with the whole of the Castle site, the area around Foog's Gate including the Water Towers, provides rich archaeological evidence of the changing phases of building and usage, which can help piece together the complex development of the castle site in more detail.

Below ground archaeology

As the summit was always the symbolic and functional heart of the place, archaeological evidence has the potential to shed light upon early use, which may include scarping and working of the bedrock, as well as buried remains. The area now occupied by the water towers and fire station has the potential to contain buried deposits which may help interpretation of the functioning of the upper ward prior to the Foog's Gate route. This is supported by the discovery in 1989 of a medieval stone causeway in front of the Mills Mount

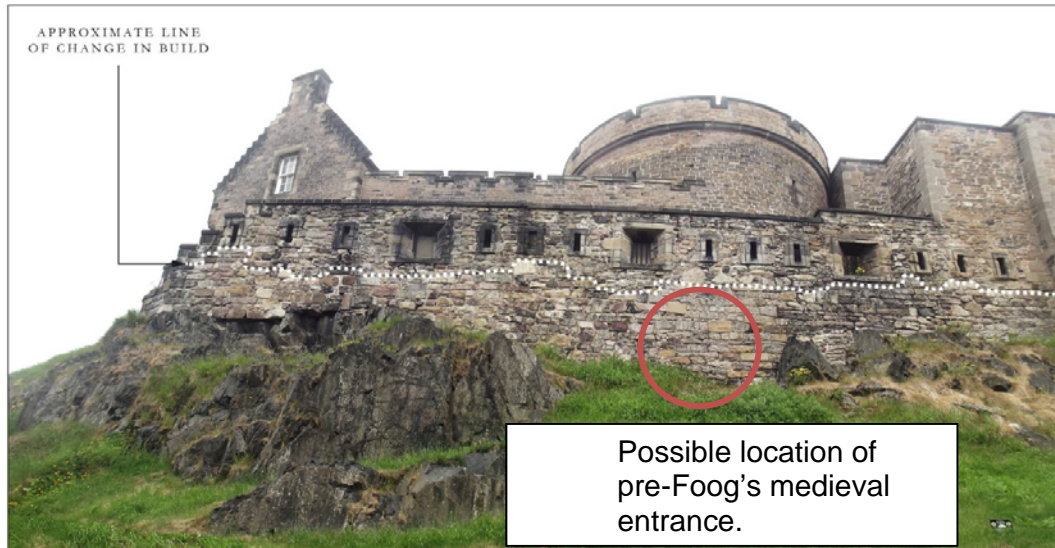
Cart Sheds, heading uphill and possibly indicating an earlier route up to the citadel, terminating at a point between the two water towers. This may imply the location of an earlier gateway, pre-dating the Foog's location.

The presence of St Margaret's Chapel confirms the early use of stone for high status structures in the citadel, comparable to the Old Chapel at Stirling Castle. A pair of orientated human skeletons/burials were found during works to the Fire Station, possibly in the early 1900s. It is possible that other burials exist between here and the W end of St Margaret's Chapel.

Documentary sources indicate at least one other tower (St Margaret's?) in this vicinity, of which no above ground traces have been noted; there is therefore potential for below ground evidence. There is also potential for evidence of earlier, predominantly timber, defences and buildings to survive. Evidence of modification of bedrock is also an important aspect of interpreting the early uses of the site.

Trial excavations within the footprint of the two water towers in 2013 revealed that across much of the area bedrock is close to the surface. Indeed this is confirmed by visual inspection of the area of the narrow barbican on the inner side of Foog's Gate where the rock has been excavated to as much as a metre in depth to accommodate this entrance. However, the existing 17th century enclosing musketry wall was found to have been built forward of the rock face, and the intervening space filled with midden and soil. This may indicate that the line of the earlier curtain wall may still exist, set-back 2-3m from the later wall line.

A further strand of evidential value relates to the 19th century civil engineering feat of piped water supply provision for this topmost part of the Crag, and which also served the upper part of the Royal Mile. This links the Castle to the history of the public water supply within the town. While one cylinder has been removed, and the other may be removed if re-development progresses, there may remain below ground pipe runs relating to the 19th and early 20th century work.



16th cent(?) citadel wall lower down, rebuilt above with Slezer's musketry wall of later 1600s.

Above ground - buildings archaeology

The area covered by this statement presents evidence of many different building phases. Initial findings from the 2013 investigation indicate that the wall extending W from Foog's Gate contains 16th century fabric interpreted as a survival of the citadel wall depicted in the 1582 drawing. It is possible that relics of the putative St Margaret's Tower are also incorporated here. Above the 16th century walling are identified four phases of construction, from the late 17th century through to the early 20th century work of the water tower walls.

To the E of Foog's, the musketry wall wall overlies worked bedrock consisting of a series of crude squared cuts, slots and a drain, which do not appear to tie-in with later phases of work, and therefore are interpreted as representing evidence of pre-16th century structures; the date of these features is currently uncertain.

St Margaret's Chapel

Having served from the 1130s for private worship by the royal family, the chapel was put over to utilitarian munitions storage from the later 1500s until it was rediscovered in 1845 and subsequently restored. Between about 1650-70, rather ironically, a new garrison chapel was built onto the E end of the older redundant chapel. At the same time the battery to the N has a ramp built up to it to allow the movement of guns, from the W. It was bisected by a musketry wall (see Slezer's 1670s plan in Annexe A). By about 1725 the latter had been removed, but a building of uncertain function was placed aligned NE-SW to the N of the older chapel. This was short-lived, and by 1737 a blast-wall was added to the W end of St Margaret's/munitions store, while the drop on the W side of the battery was enclosed and reveted by a wall for the first time, the line of which exists to this day. Latterly this battery

housed mortars, until 1829 when Mons Meg was sited here following its return.

Rock outcrops and the ground on the E side of the Mons Meg battery have been much altered in recent times, to improve visitor access.

2.3 Historical values

Associational values

The derivation of the name “Foog's Gate” remains a mystery. It is identified on various maps as follows:

1735	Foggy Gate & Road	(White) MS 1645 Z 02/09
1737	Fog's Gate & Road	(Romer) MS 1645 Z 02/04D
1750	Foggs Gate & Road	(Skinner) MS 1645z 02/08a
1794	Foggs Gate & Road	(Rudyard) MS 1649 Z 03/54a
1893	Foogs Gate	OS large scale Town Plan,

From this evidence the name Foog seems to be a late attribution. The most important historical figure traditionally linked with Foog's Gate is Capt. John Slezer. Slezer was a surveyor and engineer, holding the offices of Chief Engineer for Scotland and 'Surveyor of his Majesties Stores and Magazines'. As well as surveying military subjects, chiefly Royal garrisons, he also produced *Theatrum Scotiae*, a series of topographical engravings which form the basis of much of our visual understanding of the buildings of late 17th century Scotland.

Slezer worked at Edinburgh Castle 1670s–1700 and several of his drawings survive, including for proposed new works. Slezer would have been responsible for the extensive rebuilding and repair required following the 1689 siege, which may have saw an end to St Margaret's Tower. He depicted Foog's Gate as part of a general birds eye sketch² of the whole castle dating from c 1700. Slezer is an important figure and relatively little actual architectural work can be attributed to him elsewhere, so this is a rare example. The only other upstanding works identified with Slezer in the castle are the Inner Barrier (mostly demolished) and the Sallyport at the Western Defences.

Illustrative values

The changing appearances and usages of this part of the upper ward are illustrative of the changing functions of the castle itself. The natural topography (tiers) of the Rock determined the inner defensive circuit and the access route to the citadel.

² British Library K Top XLIX.74, illustrated in Annexe A

The original main medieval access to this part of the site is thought to have been via the Lang Stairs. The development of the upper ward to form the Palace Yard from the late 1400s³ is likely to have required formalisation and improvement of roadway access and Foog's route is the most likely. The age of the masonry of the gateway itself is open to question and is discussed at 2.4 below.

The later history of this part of the site reflects how its role as royal residence was overtaken by its development as an artillery fortress after Holyroodhouse took on the "palace role". This can be seen in the demolition of high status structures (e.g. St Margaret's and St Mary's chapels converted to munitions stores) and increasing fortification, of which the work of the 1680s is particularly evident in the upper ward.

The development of the water towers over the area in the 18th century occupied by the Shot Yard, indicates the most practical of operational considerations - water supply and a fire station - had overtaken the active fortress role of the Castle in favour of its use as barracks and ceremonial HQ from the mid-19th century and through the early 20th century.

The water tanks are also illustrative of the important 19th century developments in water supply. From the mid-century new enlarged reservoirs were provided on Castlehill which greatly improved pressure and flow. This allowed not only an improved supply to the Royal Mile houses, but also enabled piped water to be provided to the barracks in the upper ward for the first time. The first tank was placed in the Shot Yard in 1851, replaced with a larger capacity in 1907, at which time a second tank was installed.

2.4 Architectural and artistic values

Foog's Gate and Flanking Walls

Foog's Gate and its flanking walls are generally interpreted as work of the 1680s, and attributed to Slezer. However, as noted at 2.1.2, there is evidence that there has been some form of gateway and walls on this alignment since at least the 15th century. The masonry flanking the gateway itself appears of different builds and the form and detail of the arch does not sit happily with what could be expected of late 17th or early 18th century military design⁴. The arch itself is a plain, slightly pointed-arch with a length of moulded drip course some way above it.

There is no dispute that the majority of the walling with its regular rectangular gunholes dates from Slezer's time, however the character of the masonry

³ Tied to development of the vaults, provision of level area for palace yard and building of St Mary's and Great Hall.

⁴ Comparable royal garrison gates of the 17th or early 18th century tend to have some form of embellishment, and a round arch with some classical detailing would be the norm. The Sallyport is the only other substantial surviving work attributed to Slezer. Therefore, there is at least a possibility that the arch predates Slezer and the walling to the left certainly incorporates an earlier oval gunloop.

around the gate in particular and incorporation of earlier cut stone indicates that Slezer was formalising and regularising a pre-existing gateway.

Area of the Shot Yard

The area now occupied by the south water tower was formerly a yard for storing solid munitions (e.g. cannon balls) as opposed to explosive shells. By the time of Skinner's plan of 1750 the yard is depicted as a fully walled quadrilateral with central entrance to its north wall. The re-set round-arched doorway with raised keystone and impost is likely to date from this time, and may be the original entry to the yard, reset at a later date in its current position. It is similar in style (though plainer) to the arched gateway leading from Dury's Battery to Butts Battery and stylistically could date circa 1690 - 1740.

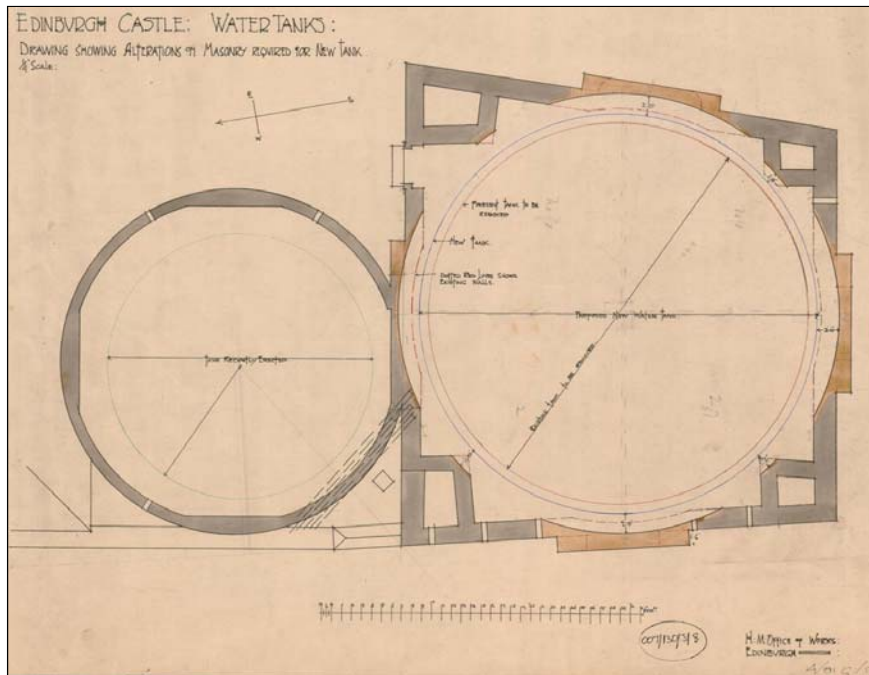


Water Towers and Fire Station:

The first Fire Engine House, rectangular on plan with double-leaf door to E, was constructed on its present site in the early 1800s. Water Tower 1 was first constructed c.1847, then modified c 1907-11 when Water Tower 2 was constructed, to increase capacity. The single storey Fire Station was modified at this time, with a pair of double-leaf doors and crow-stepped gables added, to create the present understated building with vernacular detailing. This and the two water towers present a simple, satisfactory unity when viewed from the W, albeit rather anonymous, with most visitors being drawn passed them to St Margaret's Chapel and Mons Meg, with some going into the Fire Station Shop.

Water Tower 1 consists of rubble masonry walls raised over the line of the former shot-yard walls, originally enclosing a large iron tank. The cylinder was supported on elaborate stone bearers formed of dressed ashlar laid in concentric circles. The original designer of Water Tower 1 is not known,

though it is possible that it is associated with Col Richard Moody⁵ (1813 – 87) of the Royal Engineers who was responsible for some restoration work within the castle. It should be remembered that around the mid-19th century, following the rediscovery of St Margaret's Chapel (1845), the upper ward of the castle became the subject of much antiquarian attention. There were elaborate schemes proposed for building around the chapel in neo-baronial style, and it is therefore likely that the aesthetic effect of the water tower structure was well considered.



MoWs drawing 1907 showing alterations required in Tower 1 to accommodate the new, larger tank, and water tower 2 added to N.

Around 1907, the first tank was replaced by a larger model and the masonry walls cleverly altered to accommodate this. An architectural drawing of 1907 shows this alteration, scarping out the inner face of the wall to fit around the curve of the cylinder, and this is quite evident in the masonry. Externally this required the walls to project slightly in line with the rebuilt areas resulting in a stepped profile for the walls in plan, particularly that to the W side which is carried down to road level giving a buttress effect (see illustration above). The drawing also shows small squarish mural chambers at each internal angle, which still survive. These seem to incorporate masonry of various dates and the drawing indicates they pre-date the 1907 work; it is possible that they served as sentry posts dating back to the 18th cent.

Water Tower 2 was designed by W T Oldrieve for HM Ministry of Works in 1907. It takes the form of a rubble masonry mock-castellated round tower.

⁵ Moody was an interesting figure who went on to play an important role in the history of British Columbia, Canada, overseeing many important civil engineering projects which allowed settlement to occur.

The original cylinder was replaced around 1950 with the current steel cylinder. This rests on brick and concrete piers, in sharp contrast to the high quality ashlar blocks provided in 1850 for Tower 1.



Sentry box(?) at SE corner of Shot Yard/Water Tower 1. Note blocked mural fireplace to left.

2.5 Landscape and aesthetic values

The approach through Foog's Gate and entry into the Upper Ward is an important part of the experience of visiting the Castle. From the down slope approach, the walls of the Water Towers rise sheer above bedrock continuing the dominant aesthetic of the castle – bedrock, sandstone, precipitous vertical planes.

On initial sighting, most visitors must be puzzled as to what these structures are. Tower 2 is more “architectural”, in its mock-castellated guise, though Tower 1 arguably offers more drama due to its corner position and in the contrast of light and shadow over its stepped elevations. It appears modern due to the unrelieved mass of masonry and flat roofline, and yet retains a monumentality appropriate to its location. Passing through Foog's Gate, the old walls to either side make the narrow “pend” entry seem like a dark tunnel. The view of St Margaret's is dramatically framed while going through the arch and this focuses attention upon it.

Both Tanks form part of the distinctive silhouette of the castle when viewed from Princes Street.

2.6 Natural heritage values

The steep slopes of the Castle Rock create a dramatic setting for the Castle. The area is designated as part of a composite Site of Special Scientific

Interest (Arthur's Seat Volcano SSSI) which includes Arthur's Seat and Calton Hill. The areas are linked by their complex geology and this is reflected in the richness of the plant communities that are present. The stark basalt faces and exposures, supporting the citadel musketry wall to the west, along with the partly worked rock exposures to the west of Foog's Gate, contribute greatly to the character of this part of the castle.

2.7 Contemporary/use values

Foog's Gate is important as a main visitor route into the upper Ward, as noted in 2.5 above, offering good photo opportunities. The Water Towers provide a limited contribution to the visitor experience although they have become a familiar and fairly substantial, albeit anonymous, component of the Castle landscape for over 100 years. Water Tank 2 still functions as part of the castle's Fire protection system (2014).

3 Major gaps in understanding

- What was on the site prior to the later 17th century? The location - near the summit of the castle rock - suggests that it may have been built upon from the earliest times.
- Was a tower (St Margaret's) built here as part of the inner ward curtain wall during the late 14th cent rebuilding of the Castle?
- The recent archaeological works imply that the line of the medieval citadel curtain wall in this area was set back 2-3m to the E of the existing line. Was this the case?
- Who or what was Foog/Fogg?

4 Associated properties

Stirling Castle, Linlithgow Palace.

5 Keywords

Iron Age fort; royal castle; medieval; towers; defences; Water Towers; royal chapel.

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