

The Sternberg Centre  
80 East End Road  
London  
NW 2



Archaeological Evaluation



Oxford Archaeology

25th September 2002

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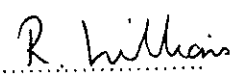
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**THE STERNBERG CENTRE, 80 EAST END ROAD, LONDON, NW2**

NGR TQ 2545 9000

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## SUMMARY

*In September 2002, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological recording action at the Sternberg Centre, Finchley. The evaluation comprised a single trench, measuring 4.5m by 4.5m, which revealed a post medieval NE-SW aligned boundary ditch and a redundant 20th century brick manhole.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 The site is situated at The Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road London NW2 (NGR TQ 2545 9000 (centred)). OA were commissioned by The Manor House Trust to carry out an archaeological recording action at the proposed burial site for the principal benefactor of The Sternberg Centre, Sir Sigmund Sternberg. The site occupies a small piece of land c. 20.25 m<sup>2</sup> within a line of trees along the south boundary of the Sternberg Centre, immediately south of the boundary of Scheduled Monument SAM No. 150, Greater London. The centre comprises a Grade II\* Listed Georgian Manor House, and various more recent buildings within a walled site of approximately 2.9 ha. The central part of the site constitutes a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Greater London 150) containing the remains of medieval moated house.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The geology of the site, as identified by the British Geological Survey (sheet 256 solid and drift edition 1:50,000), is chalky and sandy Till of the Anglian period. (BGS 1993).

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 There is no known archaeological evidence on or near the development area relating to settlement activity pre-dating the medieval period. The main focus of archaeological and historical evidence that may be affected by the proposed development concerns the remains of the medieval and later moated manor house (SMR 081886) and its environs.

1.3.2 The earliest house on the site was the medieval moated house of the submanor of Bibbesworth. This building was owned by the Bishop of London and leased from 1244. A lease record from 1504 lists the manor house, orchard and another building as being within the moat whilst a great barn and long stable as being adjacent to the moat. In 1622 the house and grounds were acquired from the family of Alexander Kinge by Edward Allen (whose family later had the house rebuilt on a new site). By 1664 the house was large enough to be paying tax on 19 hearths under the Hearth Tax. No records remain of the house until its demolition in 1723.

1.3.3 Site clearance in 1723 was associated with the rebuilding of Bibbesworth Manor house by the Allen family on a new site. On the original site a new house was erected (SMR 221706) (SAM No. 150, Greater London). This building is a NE

facing structure described as 'plain and dignified', and measured seven by three bays with three storeys over a basement.

- 1.3.4 During most of the 20th century additions were made to the building whilst occupied by the convent and school of St Marie Auxiliatrice, in residence from 1921-81.
- 1.3.5 The moat survives as an 'L' shaped feature west of the site of the house. Until the late 19th century the moat enclosed the grounds which included a Biblical garden. To the east of the house across the road a large formal canal was constructed around an island where fishponds were recorded at least as early as 1692.
- 1.3.6 Archaeological works have been carried out on the site on and off since the 1980s. In 1982 work within the cellar of the manor house (SMR 221706) proved that the flagstones were associated with the later rebuilding and not the earlier medieval house. Work has also focused on the moat, where a small section of the backfilled north west arm was excavated in 1991, showing that the moat was 10 m wide and 2.5 m deep. The excavation recovered pottery from the 17th century with some residual sherds from the 15th century.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS

### 2.1 General

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area.
- 2.1.2 To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present
- 2.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.4 To make available the results of the investigation.

## 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of a single 4.5m by 4.5m trench which was excavated to a depth of 1.5 m below the current ground surface.
- 3.1.2 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

### 3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 The trench was cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples.
- 3.2.2 The trench was planned at 1:50 and the section drawn at a scale of 1:20. The section were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992). Deposits are described stratigraphically, from the most recent to the earliest.

### 3.3 Finds

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

### 3.4 Presentation of results

3.4.1 The trenches, and the features/deposits identified within them, are described numerically below.

## 4 RESULTS: GENERAL

### 4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The site lies within the grounds of the Sternberg Centre and is currently a turf covered area within a row of trees which follow the line of the boundary wall (Fig. 2).

### 4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 The evaluation only comprised a single, 4.5m by 4.5m trench and consequently any attempt to characterise the deposits observed in the context of the site as a whole is problematic. The linear feature (5) seems likely to have been a boundary ditch given the proximity and alignment of the standing boundary wall (see below).

## 5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 5.1 Description of deposits

5.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence comprised a deposit of turf and topsoil (1) which was approximately 0.3 m thick where it overlay a compact, orange brown clay loam (2) 'garden soil'. At the northern end of the trench, deposit 2 had been truncated during the demolition of the redundant manhole (10), and a layer of brick rubble (9) associated with the demolition was recorded on Section 1 (Fig.4). This deposit (9) was covered by a thin layer of turf, which was presumably reinstated following the demolition of the upper courses of the manhole (see Fig. 4 - Section 1).

5.1.2 These deposits overlay the natural geology which comprised banded layers of clay and clay silt (6, 7 and 8). Cutting these layers was a NE-SW aligned ditch measuring 4.5m+ long by 3.3m wide by 1.1m deep (Figs 3 and 4). The lower fill (4) contained a significant quantity of ?post-medieval tile and a small quantity of shell fragments although no pottery was recovered. The upper fill (3) contained broken tile and brick rubble and is likely to represent a mixed spread of construction debris, presumably associated with the erection of the current brick boundary wall, 1.75 m to the south east.

### 5.2 Finds

5.2.1 Post-medieval Ceramic Building Material (CBM) was recovered from deposits 3 and 4. A small quantity of animal bone and shell was recovered from the same contexts,

but not in sufficient quantities to draw any significant conclusions.

### 5.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

5.3.1 No deposits suitable for sampling were identified.

## 6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 6.1 Overall interpretation

#### *Summary of results*

- 6.1.1 It seems highly likely that ditch 5 represents the pre-cursor to the existing boundary wall and has been backfilled during construction of the same.
- 6.1.2 Despite the good preservation of this feature, the limited nature of the recording action, and the fact that the trench was excavated on the periphery of the site (indeed, outside the S.A.M boundary) would suggest that the results do not necessarily give a clear indication of the degree of preservation across the rest of the site. Additionally, there appears to be a significant bank to the south-west of the Sternberg centre which may suggest a degree of landscaping that may have truncated any features or deposits which pre-date the current use of the site.
- 6.1.3 It is possible that the ditch observed during the recording action represents the original boundary ditch of the medieval site, which has been backfilled prior to the construction of the wall in the post-medieval period. However, as the segment of ditch excavated only produced post-medieval finds, attributing a medieval date to the feature can be no more than conjectural.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./ wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
	1	Deposit			turf/topsoil			
	2	Deposit			garden soil?			
	3	Fill			ditch fill	Animal Bone CBM	24g 424g	
	4	Fill			ditch fill	Shell CBM	16g 1178g	
	5	Cut			ditch cut			
	6	Layer			natural geology			
	7	Layer			natural geology			
	8	Layer			natural geology			
	9	Deposit			demolition deposit			
	10	Struct			brick manhole			

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- Musgrove, P 1982 *Excavation Round Up* HDAS NL N°133
- IFA 1992 *Standard Guidance for Field Evaluations*
- Pevsner, N 1999 *The Buildings of England: London 4: North* Penguin
- Wilkinson, D 1992 *OAU Fieldwork Manual*



## APPENDIX 3 GLSMR/RCHME NMR ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT FORM

## 1) TYPE OF RECORDING

Archaeological Recording Action

## 2) LOCATION

Borough: Finchley

Site address: 80 East End Road, NW2

Site Name: The Sternberg Centre Site Code: EENEV

Nat. grid Refs: TQ 2545 9000 centre of site: TQ 2545 9000

## 3) ORGANISATION

Oxford Archaeology

Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 OES

Site director/supervisor: Brian Matthews

Project manager: Jon Hiller

Funded by: The Manor House Trust

## 4) DURATION

Date fieldwork started: 11th September 2002 Date finished: 11th September 2002

Fieldwork previously notified? YES

Fieldwork will continue? NO

## 5) PERIODS REPRESENTED

?Medieval / Post-Medieval

## 6) PERIOD SUMMARIES

Possible medieval boundary ditch, backfilled during construction of current boundary wall

## 7) NATURAL

Type: Chalky and sandy till of the Anglian period

Height above Ordnance datum: c292.3m

## 8) LOCATION OF ARCHIVES

a) Please provide an estimate of the quantity of material in your possession for the following categories:

10	NOtes	3	PLans	11	PHotos
11	Ngatives	11	SLides		Correspondence
1	MScripts (reports, etc)			1642g	BULK finds
	SMAll finds		SOil samples		Other

- b) The archive has been prepared and stored in accordance with MGC standards and will be deposited in the following location: MOL
- c) Has a security copy of the archive been made?: TO BE ARRANGED

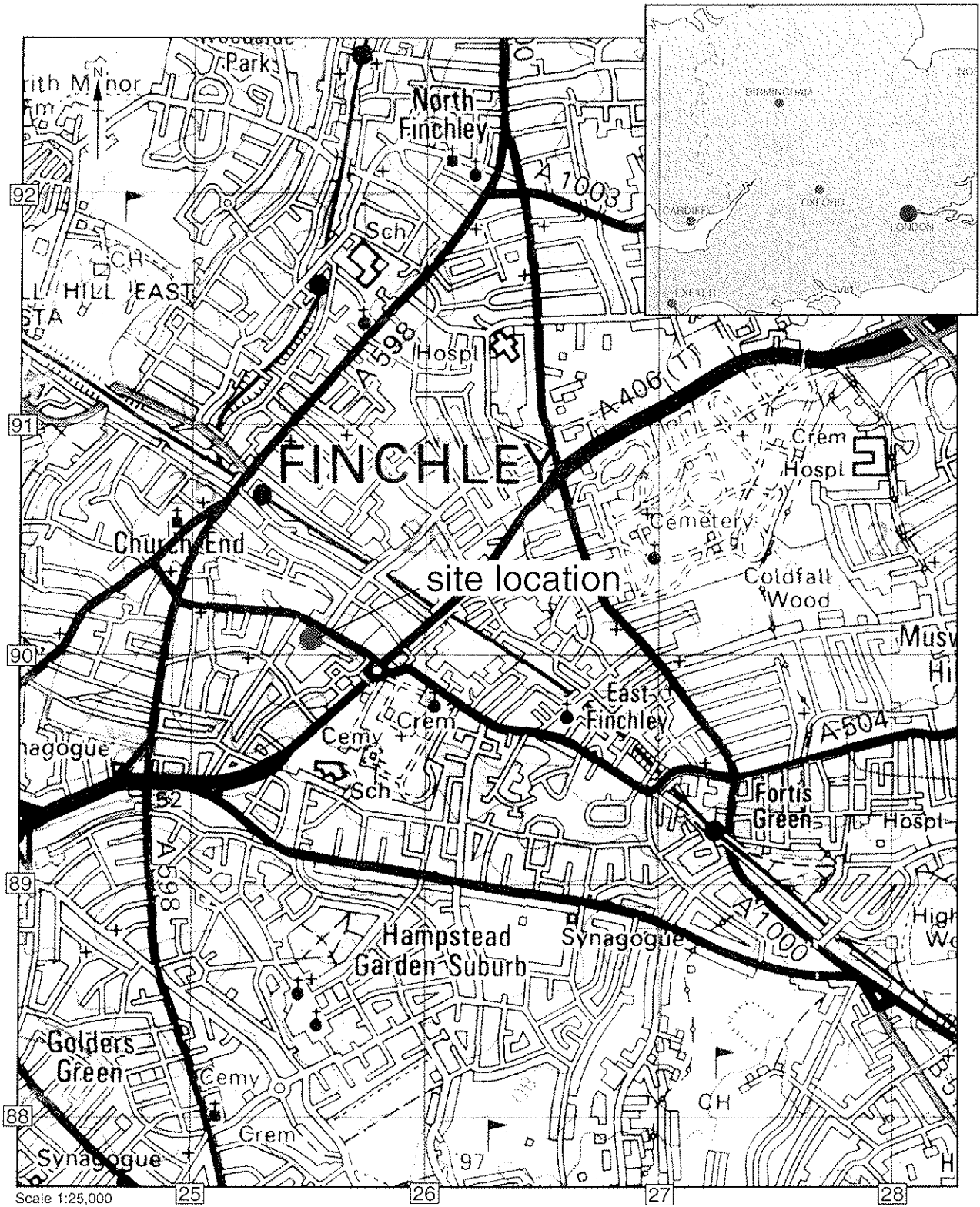
10) BIBLIOGRAPHY

See Appendix 2

SIGNED:

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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2 : Site Plan

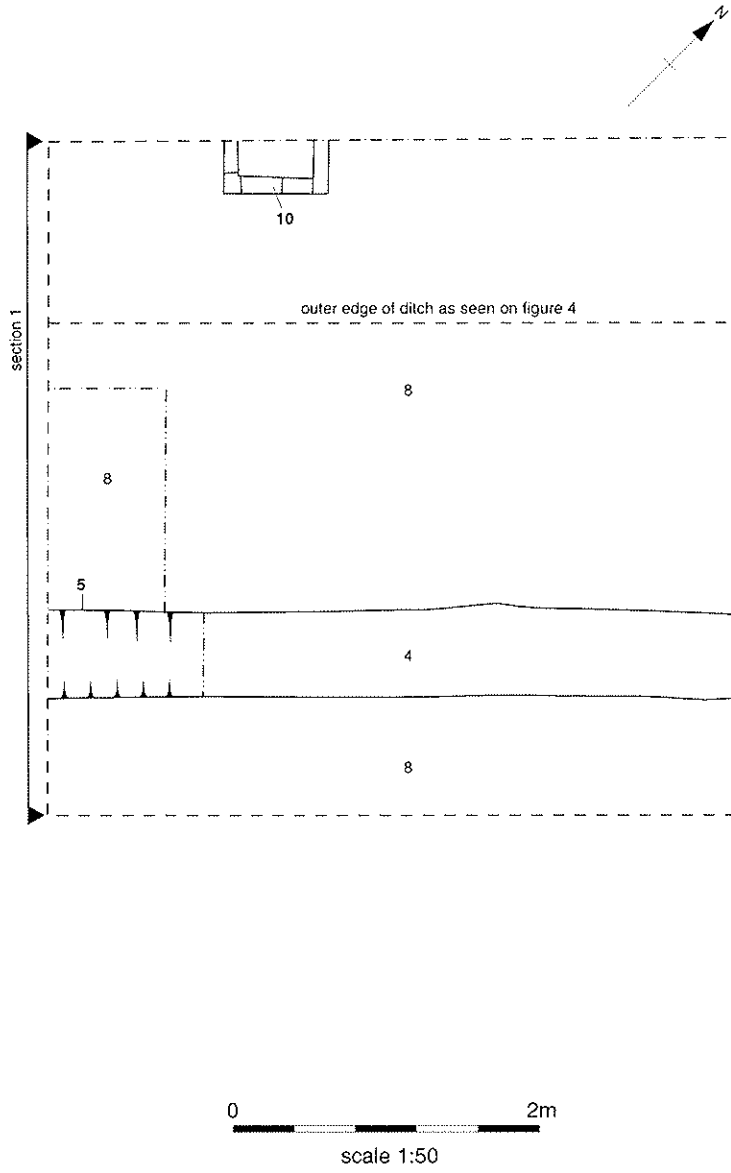


Figure 3 : Trench Plan

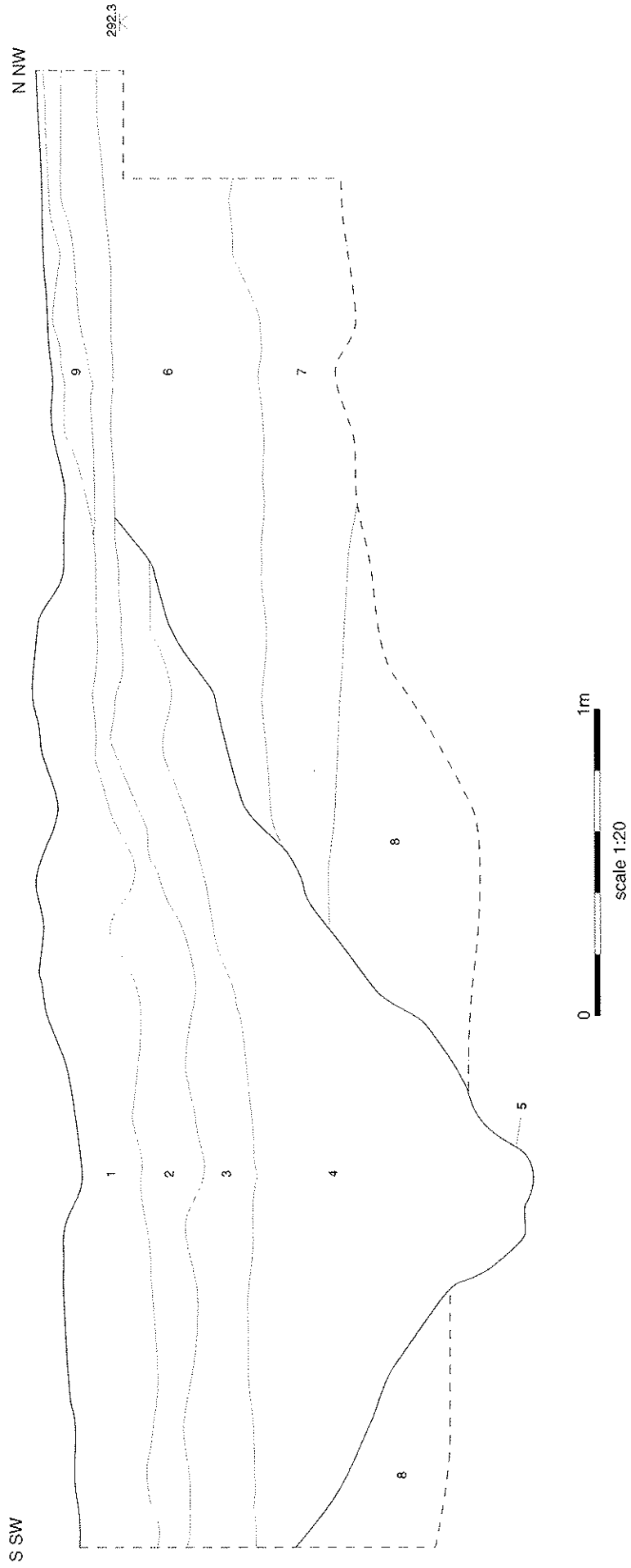


Figure 4 : Section I



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