

Newsheet No 111

Dear Member,

We are pleased to present our 111th Newsheet and to provide an update of our recent activities since our March edition where I commented on Caroline Stanford's excellent Third Thursday Talk on Calverley Old Hall. I am pleased to report that much restoration building work has been progressing at the Hall. In recent months the solar wing has gained a new first floor that had been missing since I did my listed building survey nearly forty years ago. The building has been totally re-roofed, and the boarded underside of the chapel roof is looking good, having been carefully restored. Photo below by courtesy of YVBSG member Mark Womersley who was involved in this recent work. We hope to arrange a visit for our members in due course following the completion of works.



The chapel at Calverley Old Hall

This would appear to be a good year for historic building restoration. In our previous Newsheet we featured a digitised photograph of the recently revealed timber-framed front of the Black Swan in Wakefield. Paul Gwilliam has sent me the photo on the right showing the progress of the new oak repair work of some of the chevron framing of the second-floor jetty.

Also in the last Newsheet I outlined my Third Thursday Talk on the Vernacular Buildings of the Doncaster Area that I gave in April – a recording of it is available to view via the Members' Area of our website. We were able to record

Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group

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June 2023



Knabbe's Hall, Silkstone, Barnsley

some of these buildings at our recent Annual Recording Conference based in Doncaster, for which some twenty people signed up. Sadly the minimum number for a group booking at the hotel was twenty-five, so we had to pay an excess for the shortfall in bookings from our funds.

With recording in mind, I recently paid a visit to the amazing Knabbe's Hall to see if I could persuade the owner to let us survey it, which we failed to do in 2017 when we recorded buildings in the Barnsley District. The building is constructed of superbly cut sandstone ashlar, as fine as any I have ever seen, and exhibits a three-room plan with three front-facing gables with two-light attic windows, and a fine two-and-a-half storey gabled porch decorated with a cast-iron fireback featuring the Royal Arms dated 1674 above the open entrance door. To the right of the porch are decorative hopper heads to the down-pipes cast with the initials 'WW 1662' and, at the right-hand end, 'EW 1662'. These are the initials of William Wood and his wife Elizabeth, marking the date of the completion of the first phase of the rebuilding of the house, after the previous timber-framed mansion house had been burned down

during the Civil War as a reprisal for sheltering the twenty-one year old King Charles II (crowned in Scotland in 1651) when he was a fugitive from Parliamentary forces. Rumour has it that the king escaped via an underground tunnel that led away from the house. On the king's return in 1662 William Wood felt confident to begin rebuilding his ruined home, which took another four more years to complete - for on the other side of the porch are two similar initialled hoppers that are dated 1666. These and the fireback were almost certainly made by William Wood who was the forge master at Wortlev Forge. I thought this story appropriate to relate following the recent Coronation of Charles III. God Save the King!

Peter Thornborrow



Repairs underway at the Black Swan

Future YVBSG events: dates for your diary

Vernacular Buildings of the Todmorden Countryside part three

Saturday 8 July 2023

A third walk led by Kevin Illingworth to see more of the fascinating buildings in this part of the county. There are 330 listed buildings (entries) in Todmorden. Many of these are in the countryside – so that more walks are possible in future. This will be a leisurely walk using public footpaths through fields and sometimes on roads, up on the hills on the south side of the Calder Valley, as in the afternoon of our walk in June 2022.

We expect to start at Croft Gate, Lumbutts (doorhead 1598), then Croft Farm (late sixteenth century) with round-headed mullion windows and an added aisled barn. The owner will show us the barn interior if he is available that day. Then westwards along the Calderdale Way to farmhouses and cottages in the hamlet of Longfield, where Lower Longfield has a two-



Porch at Lower Longfield

Annual Day School

Autumn 2023

We hope to resume our live day schools with an event later in the year. Details to follow.

Third Thursday Talks

We intend to continue our online talks during 2023 although none are scheduled at present. These normally take place by Zoom at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month and there will be the opportunity for questions after each talk. The talks are open to all (including non-members) and are free of charge. Members will be notified by email when booking is open for each talk, or you can keep an eye on the 'Events' page of our website.

We are still looking for volunteers to give future talks and if you are interested in doing so, please contact Mary Cook on secretary@yvbsg.org.uk.

Recordings of previous talks can be watched online by going to our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@yvbsg.



Croft Farm, Lumbutts

storied jettied porch dated 1684. Middle Longfield is mid seventeenth century with a single storeyed porch dated 1700, with attached aisled barn.

We'll meet at 10.30am at Lob Mill Car Park (free) on the north side of the A646 (Halifax Road), between Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, near the railway viaduct. Two yellow height barriers indicate the maximum height of 2.1 metres. Maximum 20 members.



Datestone on porch at Middle Longfield

If you'd like to come, please email Kevin on j.k.illingworth@btinternet.com or telephone 01422 844941, leaving your telephone number slowly and clearly. Please state if you want lunch, which could be at The Shepherd's Rest Inn. Bring your bus pass if you have one! You can leave the walk whenever you wish.

For a flavour of what this area has to offer, short videos showing highlights from Kevin's previous two walks can be found on the YVBSG YouTube channel.

Committee news

At the AGM on 18 March 2023, the officers and committee members were re-elected as follows:

- Chair: Peter Thornborrow
- Honorary Secretary: Mary Cook
- Treasurer: Sue Southwell
- Membership Secretary: Pat Leggett
- Archivist: David Cook
- Yorkshire Buildings Editorial Team Liaison: Tony Robinson
- Newsheet/website/social media: Lorraine Moor
- Committee Members: Kevin Illingworth, Nick Nelson, Gunhild Wilcock

The minutes of the AGM are available on the Members' Area of the website (you'll need the username and password which were included in your membership renewal letter).

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Saturday 15 July 2023. If you'd like to raise any matters, or have ideas for future events, please contact the Secretary, Mary Cook.

YVBSG Annual Recording Conference held on 9-11 June 2023

Despite a shortfall in numbers, members had a most enjoyable weekend and successfully recorded five buildings during the Doncaster-based conference: Fullwood Hall near Sheffield; 41 and 42 Hickleton; Austerfield Manor House; Home Farm at Hooton Pagnell; and Low Grange at Thurnscoe. Drawing up and report-writing began in earnest on Sunday morning and a full account of the conference will appear in *Yorkshire Buildings* in due course. We thank David Cook and Peter Thornborrow for organising the weekend, and Kevin Illingworth for his input to the many pre-conference recces. We are very

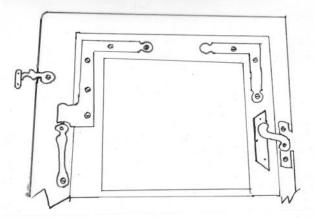
grateful to Peter Burton for leading an excellent tour of Conisbrough Castle on Sunday afternoon and for getting us thinking about the possible original purpose of the seemingly non-defensive keep: was it, as Peter speculated, perhaps intended for the childbirth-related confinement of the lady of the house?

Vernacular houses for workers near Berlin

On the European route of industrial heritage, 30 kilometres east of central Berlin lies Ruedersdorf, site of the largest limestone quarry in Northern Germany. Its history goes back for at least 750 years. From the early seventeenth century the stone quarried there was used as building material for Berlin, most famously for the construction of the Brandenburger Tor and Sanssouci palace.

On the site (which is now Germany's largest industrial museum park covering 17 hectares – www.museumspark.de) are also workers' houses of a vernacular nature.

As the kilns were burning round the clock, some workers' presence was required on site full-time. A row of four dwellings is incorporated in one of larger storage buildings dating to 1917. The craftsmanship of the window hinges and other fittings, as well as the generous size of the dwellings, is evidence of how much the skills and dedication of the workforce was valued.



Fittings on top half of windows in workers' dwelling



Workers' dwellings in range of storage buildings

A short distance from the production site stands a row of limestone cottages comprising two semis and ten houses accommodating four families each. Built in 1865/66 these dwellings for miners are of generous proportion as each consisted of a 19 square metre parlour, a 9 square metre bedroom, a 6 square metre kitchen, a 9 square metre cellar, an attic measuring between 6 and 9 square metres and a large drying attic. Across the yard an outbuilding had a 4 square metre stable for a goat, a 3.5 square metre pigsty, storage for fodder and fuel measuring 19.5 square metres and a privy. There is also a front garden, two wells provided water and, typical for the area, a communal bakehouse. Known as the 'Landhofsiedlung', these houses became listed buildings in 1993. They are now in private ownership and unfortunately only their exterior is visible. The building materials, sourced on site, are of high quality and again bear witness to the value the mining company placed on their workforce.

Gunhild Wilcock



Miners' cottages



Range of outbuildings belonging to the workers' cottages

How times have changed: getting access to vernacular houses

Something that our Chairman, Peter, said at the AGM in March, and emphasised in his Third Thursday lecture, gave me cause for reflection on the way in which we, as recorders, gain access to houses of interest. Peter was talking about arranging buildings for the recording weekend in the Doncaster area, and he mentioned how difficult it now is in the age of electronic gates and heightened concern about security to actually make contact with owners and occupiers to explain our purpose. This has prompted thoughts about why circumstances have changed, sometimes making it harder to gain access, sometimes easier.

When I was doing fieldwork in West Yorkshire, from 1978 to 1981, the world was a different place. The reason that I was doing work at all was the need for information about and understanding of the vernacular houses of the county in a period during which many were in a state of neglect, due in part to costs of maintenance and in part to a low appreciation in society generally of their interest and value. Furthermore, informed conservation of historic fabric was in its early stages of development in West Yorkshire: much insensitive change had been permitted that today would be refused. I remember the newly appointed County Archaeologist, arriving from Essex, being horrified and offended at what he saw in the county. Social issues, too, had an influence. Some large houses, thought too big for a single family, had been subdivided into tenanted cottages, often with a consequent lack of investment in their upkeep. Many houses were still farmhouses - yes, the centre of working farms! - and care of the fabric was not uppermost in many farmers' priorities.



Above and right: From working farm kitchen (1978) to beautiful dining room (2023). The transformation illustrates changed appreciation of vernacular houses.

What was it like gaining access to houses? It all seems a bit primitive now. I produced a tatty bit of photocopied A5 paper explaining to occupiers the purpose of recording, dropping these off on one visit and revisiting, either to gauge a reaction or to record if they were content. I always showed some form of identification. In some ways it helped that houses were tenanted: the occupiers did not worry about any implications of recording for the future of the building. They might have been bemused at my interest, but were happy to humour me, generally giving access throughout, even into the roof through narrow hatches. Generally speaking, it was possible to speak personally to the occupiers, and this was very important as a means of persuasion: on working farms, there was always someone in or around the house, and in tenanted houses there was very often someone who would answer a knock on the door. Owners often had valuable information about the history of their house and took pride and interest in their building. There were some outstanding examples of care, and the first stirrings of wider appreciation were evident.

My reception was in the large majority of cases very welcoming and I had few absolute refusals, about which I am still rueful. I soon got to know when to abandon an attempt to record. One Pennine farmer told me, smiling, that 'I have young lads like you for breakfast'. I beat a retreat. The principal reason for refusal was suspicion about the purpose of recording. Of course, owners and occupiers received a copy of my report, initially hand-written in script that became legendary for its obscurity.

What has changed since then? There are perhaps three major changes. First, the practice of conservation is now much more sensitive to historic fabric, a development partly permitted by the greater amount of information and understanding available to those involved in planning change, from owners and architects to local authorities. Second, and partly as a result of better care, there is now a much greater general awareness of the interest and importance and a consequent heightened appreciation of old houses. There developed, too, a perception that, despite potential increased costs, historic houses represent significant assets. Refurbishment, restoration and exposure of original features make a property attractive and add value, so care can be paired with gain. And, third, the threat of new listing hampering owners has largely been removed. The relisting survey of the 1980s, while not being definitive, vastly increased protection, including many previously unlisted buildings, and provided better information, with some re-grading, on others already protected. The 'threat' of listing has, therefore, largely been removed. All these things mean that the climate in relation to historic houses has changed markedly, which in some senses makes it easier to persuade owners and occupiers to open their buildings for the purposes of making a record.

Other aspects of change make the task of recording more onerous today. Many houses in scenic areas are second homes and rarely occupied, making it difficult to contact owners and arrange access. This was less common in the 1970s. Secondly, there is a heightened level of security and, to some extent, suspicion of invasions of privacy. Peter's electronic gates are just one manifestation of this. Quite



understandably, owners do not want to think that, in the age of secure behind locked gates or living elsewhere for much of social media, information about their houses, many containing items of value, might be accessible globally and used for purposes other than those which lay behind their compilation. The Group's policy limiting access to the records can be explained, but perhaps not everyone will be satisfied with our assurances.

What, on balance, is the situation today? The world is a changed place, to an astonishing extent: the 1970s now appear a remote era, almost the last vestige of an industrial-age Britain. Great changes to society and to landscapes, both urban and rural, have transformed the country. Instead of a tractor outside the house, now a Mercedes blocks the view. Some things are better for the recorder. We can now assume both a considerable pride on the part of owners in their houses and a shared interest and desire to learn more from experts in the field. This eases considerably the task of persuasion. The promise of high quality reports is also an incentive for owners. The working from home movement may make it easier to catch people in on a first visit to make contact, although in other cases the main problem now may be actually getting to speak to owners and occupiers, Houses of West Yorkshire 1400-1830 (1986), RCHME.

the time. Providing advance information to local people, perhaps through an introductory presentation or through keving into community social media, could be important in making contacts. Perhaps the revival of the Group's village profiles might be offered as an inducement. Of continuing importance is the production of literature such as the Group's 'Guidance for Householders', which clearly explains the purpose of recording, either for general interest or as part of a research project.

The fact that the Group has had such an outstanding record of success is testament to members' dedication and their respect for householders. There will always be some houses that get away, despite our best efforts. The task of gaining access remains the same in essence, but the way in which this is achieved has to adapt with the times.

Colum Giles

Editor's note: amonast his many achievements during his career in historic buildings. Colum is the author of Rural

YVBSG resources updated

Interactive map

Our interactive map of reports on the YVBSG website has recently been updated by Archivist David Cook. Several buildings recorded recently in South Yorkshire have been added, and locations of other buildings around the county which were previously estimated have now been confirmed. Do explore the map by following the link on the website if you haven't already done so - to read the reports you'll just need to enter the password for the Members' Area which was printed on your membership renewal letter.

Online photo album

You might also like to browse through the YVBSG online photo album of buildings for which reports have been produced. Over 800 photos are now available here, and they illustrate the huge variety of Yorkshire's vernacular architecture. Just login to the Members' Area and follow the link to 'Building photos online'. A link to the relevant YVBSG report can be found on each photograph.

Pinnacles for sale!

Might you be tempted to buy an oak roof beam from Beverley Minster? If so, you'll have the opportunity on Saturday 8 July when Beverley Minster Old Fund is holding an fundraising auction of items from the Minster and St Mary's Church, including medieval pinnacles said to date back to 1250 (weighing a quarter of a tonne), oak beams, nineteenth century pews and iron gates, together with other items being donated by the public.

The sale will take place in the Minster's south transept at 10am with viewing beforehand. For further details, see beverleyminster.org.uk/charity-auction.

Architectural history prize 2023

Stephen Croad was an author, researcher and archivist of architectural history and during his career and in his voluntary roles made a profound impact on our knowledge of the UK's architectural history. In Stephen's memory, Historic Buildings & Places now runs an annual competition with a prize award of £500, to encourage new architectural research and writing. The 2023 Prize is now open for submissions. In the spirit of Stephen's own research and practice, the essay should be on factually verifiable, documented, new discoveries on the historic buildings of England and Wales. The closing date is 31 July 2023. For the full details please see hbap.org.uk/newsevents/2023-stephen-croad-prize/.

The Buildings Stones Database

Historic England has launched The Building Stones Database for England at historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/building-stonesengland/.

This valuable and user-friendly resource brings together information on local building stones, their uses and sources as an online interactive GIS (Geographical Information System) map. The Map Explorer lets you explore building stones and their sources throughout England, as well as the bedrock and superficial geology.



Cobble and limestone at Turner's Farm, Skelton on Ure (YVBSG 1076).

You can browse the geological map, as well as search for a building stone, stone source or structure, or search by postcode, address or place name.

In addition, useful county and area guides can be downloaded in booklet form from the website above, giving descriptions of local stone and its use in vernacular and other buildings. Guides are available for East, North, South and West Yorkshire.

From the archive: Romaldkirk

Romaldkirk is located in Teesdale, in south-west County Durham, formerly the North Riding of Yorkshire. It is a picturesque village with buildings surrounding the village green. The wooded areas and river walks add to the attraction for visitors. If you are inclined to visit the area, make sure you book ahead for meals and accommodation. The reports referred to below are available online in the YVBSG archive.

Mary Cook



Kirkstyle (YVBSG 600). This two-storey cottage adjacent to the churchyard has a door lintel inscribed A.D 1720. However, there are a number of earlier features in the property.



High Green, Mickleton (YVBSG 753). An inscription over the front doors reads: John and Mary Dent 1752. At the time of the recording (1981) the building was still in the ownership of the Dent family. This had a stone staircase which was replaced by a wooden one.



No. 2 High Green (YVBSG 639). At one time this cottage had a stone staircase in the rear outshut. The report suggests that this was part of a larger house that was split into two.



Right: The Cottage (YVBSG 1206). This building has been altered considerably over time. The roof has been raised and extensions added. However, the inside features suggest it once had a stair turret.



Rose Cottage (YVBSG 614). This house also has an inscribed lintel above the front door: 17 I.W.P. 32. On the east end gable is a semi-circular bread oven.



Collingwood House (YVBSG 1149). This building, adjacent to the River Tees, once accommodated a water mill but all traces of machinery have long since been removed. Prior to being a mill, the original building was a chapel. An altar was found embedded in the west wall of the west wing. A blocked door is pictured left.



Futtocks! Genuine ships' timbers discovered in Yorkshire ...

on a mission to dispel the myths surrounding old buildings which include secret tunnels, dating pitfalls, and the use of ships' timbers. Members might remember the Third Thursday Talk on mythbusting which he gave to the Group in 2021.

However, James recently reported that to his absolute amazement, he had discovered four genuine examples of ships' timbers in Whitby whilst surveying Wynd Cottage, 45 Cliff Street the first he had ever spotted during a survey in his twenty-plus year career. He states that:

Buildings archaeologist James Wright is 'Although the practice is generally assumed to have been widespread (virtually every timber-framed structure is rumoured to have come from a ship), it's actually quite rare to identify marine timbers archaeologically. Given the proximity of Whitby Harbour, with its tradition of ship building and breaking, it looks like occasionally ship timbers did find their way into houses.

> 'They have been confirmed as futtocks - part of the framing of the hull - by historic carpentry and shipbuilding expert Dr Damian Goodburn. Subsequently reused as lintels, bracket

and collar in a post-mediaeval cottage within sight of the harbour.'

James' photos of the timbers are included below but if you want to see them for yourselves the property is available to book as a holiday cottage: www.idostuff.org/whitby-cottage/.

More stories of ships' timbers, old pubs, markings on stonework and other topics can be found on James' website at triskeleheritage.triskelepublishing.com/ mediaeval-mythbusting-blog/, and his book on mythbusting is due to be published next year.



Publications

Yorkshire: the North Riding by Jane Grenville and Nikolaus Pevsner. The Buildings of England series, 2023, £45 or less. The invaluable and very welcome expanded edition of the 1966 Pevsner volume. Good to see a number of YVBSG members mentioned in the acknowledgements, including David Cook for leading the initiative to digitise our reports. If you missed Jane's talk about revising the volume, it's available to watch on the YVBSG YouTube channel.

Beverley book price rise

Readers are advised that the price of David Cook's publication, Beverley's Timber-Framed Buildings (2002) is likely to increase from 20 June 2023 because Amazon are passing on the rising costs of printing. If you'd like to take advantage of the current price of £19.95, you are recommended to do so before this date.

Other events of possible interest ...

We recommend that you check for any updated information if you plan to attend an event, in case of late changes to schedules.

Open Gardens

Various dates

It's summer, and visiting open gardens is often a good way to see buildings! Gardens open under Open Gardens (www.opengardens.co.uk) will include: Gargrave on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 June 2023 – 20 gardens open; Austwick on Saturday 8 July - 15 gardens open; and Thornton, Bradford, on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 June - 20 gardens open. Under the National Gardens Scheme (ngs.org.uk) are: Shandy Hall, Coxwold on Friday 23 June; and Low Hall, Dacre Banks on Sunday 9 July. See the websites for many more openings. In addition the garden at Townhead, Slaidburn is open on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 June from 1pm to 5pm as part of Festival Bowland (www.forestofbowland.com), cost £5. In the garden is a huge slate tank, a barn dated 1699, and many stone troughs, a mounting block, pigsties, and more.

House History on tour

Various dates

If you missed North Yorkshire County Record Office's recent *House History* exhibition there is a second chance to view it when it tours North Yorkshire's libraries visiting Ripon in June, Scarborough in July, Whitby in August, Great Ayton in September, Pickering in October and Northallerton in November. Look out for further details to be advertised locally. Don't forget to take a look at the accompanying online house history guide at nycroblog.com.

Calderdale Heritage Walks

Various dates

The summer programme is underway and includes 'Outlaws & Nuns' on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 July (two walks on the private Kirklees Estate, Clifton), and a walk to Dobroyd Castle, Todmorden on Sunday 16 July. Details at calderdaleheritagewalks.org.uk.

Kirkby Lonsdale

Saturday 17 June 2023

Guided tour of Kirkby Lonsdale with Ingleborough Archaeology Group, £5. www.ingleborougharchaeologygroup .org.uk.

What's in a name?

Monday 26 June 2023

A talk by David Mason to Silsden Local History Society on the origins of the names of some of Silsden Moor's farmsteads. 7.30pm at Silsden Methodist Church, Kirkgate, £2. Details at silsdenhistorygroup.co.uk.

York Handmade Bricks

Friday 30 June 2023

An afternoon visit with SPAB Yorkshire to York Handmade Brick in Alne near York to see process of hand making traditional clay bricks including discussion on sourcing clay, moulding bricks and the firing process. £5. Details from spabyorkshire@gmail.com or see www.spab.org.uk/members/regionalgroups/yorkshire.



Brick moulds at the Alne brickworks

To The Dabbin Houses

Saturday 1 July 2023

An exploration around the Solway's vernacular architecture. Includes talks by Peter Messenger and Alex Gibbons on the history and restoration of clay dabbins, and a walk led by Peter Messenger, with music in the evening. Book at www.eventbrite.com/e/to-the-dabbin-houses-tickets-589746998147.

Earby and its Corn Mill

Tuesday 18 July 2023

A walk with Friends of Pendle Heritage. 1.30-3.30pm. Details at www.foph.co.uk.

Visit to Blaydes House, Hull

Friday 21 July 2023

A visit organised by East Yorkshire Local History Society, led by Dr Martin Wilcox. www.eylhs.org.uk.

Tour of Kiplin Hall

Saturday 29 July 2023

A visit to Grade I listed Kiplin Hall, situated between Northallerton and Richmond, with Cleveland & Teesside Local History Society, £15. ctlhs.co.uk.

Stonyhurst College

Thursday 3 August 2023

The Friends of Pendle Heritage are visiting Stonyhurst College (c.1590s) and the nearby sixteenth century cruck-framed barn with six trusses. The tour is open to non-members. Cost £15, book by email on info@foph.co.uk or telephone 07787 631078. www.foph.co.uk.

Haworth

Saturday 12 August 2023

A visit with SPAB Yorkshire to include a tour of Haworth's eighteenth century Manor House which is under restoration. £5. Details from SPAB Yorkshire as above.

Calverley Old Hall

Wednesday 20 September 2023

A SPAB Yorkshire site tour of Calverley Old Hall which will be nearing its completion of repair and conversion to a Landmark Trust property. Details from SPAB Yorkshire as above.

Historic Farm Buildings Group

23 and 24 September 2023

The next HFBG conference will be held in Westmorland and will be organised by HFBG Secretary Hannah Kingsbury. Based in the Westmorland Dales area (roughly between Tebay and Kirkby Stephen), which became part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park in 2016. The HFBG website is currently being revised so please email Hannah on hannahhfbg@gmail.com for details.

Next Newsheet

The next Newsheet will be in August 2023 – please send any contributions to the editor at newsheet@yvbsg.org.uk by 31 July 2023. Short articles on buildings or features would be appreciated, as well as details of publications or events of interest to other members.

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