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General view of the Fort to the west of the Mackinaw City approach to the Mackinac Bridge.

Fort Michilimackinac

Authored by Richard C. Frank, AIA, of Lansing, this article provides an architectural note on the reconstruction of a part of Michigan history. Its publication, at a time when MSA members are preparing to convene at the 20th annual mid-summer conference at Mackinac Island, offers new glimpses of one of Michigan's major attractions.

Reconstructing 18th century buildings, about which almost nothing is known except their location and history, is an unusual but challenging experience. Strange as it may seem, the architect role in a project such as this, is much the same as it would be in many architectural projects today. However what must be done in adapting what was accomplished 200 years ago today, uncovers an entire new field of work and a re-evaluation of the fundamental aspects of architectural thought.

The step which led to historical reconstruction in Michigan was taken in 1959 by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, which that year obtaining authorization from the legislature for a $500,000 revenue bond issue to rebuild Fort Michilimackinac near Mackinaw City. It was a brave move, for no one was completely sure if this type of a venture would be a success. However, with its public accept-
The Palisade Walk and the N.E. Blockhouse overlooking the Straits.

ance, it became evident that this recreating of the past was sound, both financially and as a tourist attraction.

For 65 years, from 1715 to 1780, this frontier fort stood at the northernmost tip of Michigan's lower peninsula, the center of a huge fur trading industry, furnishing mink, muskrat, and beaver for the wealthy markets of Europe. Thru its gates passed Indians, trappers, soldiers, and missionaries to form a pattern of existence now being brought back to life.

Fort Michilimackinac was actually the second of three forts in the Straits area being predated by Fort de Baude at the site of what is now St. Ignace and followed by Fort Mackinac, still in existence at Mackinac Island. Construction first began in 1715 by the French who remained to control the area until 1761. In that year, as a result of the French and Indian War, the British took over the Fort. Except for a few months, in 1763, when Pontiac's uprising spurred the massacre of the British garrison, the English army manned Fort Michilimackinac until 1780-81, when the entire fort was moved to Mackinac Island. This move was made because the British feared increased American activity following the revolution and felt that the fortification on the mainland was too vulnerable to American attack.

And so Fort Michilimackinac was moved piece by piece, and what remained was soon obliterated by drifting sand and an era of historic activity was ended. Figuratively and literally the fort was buried in history. Fortunately for reconstruction purposes, this proved to be the best thing that could have happened. For in 1959 when the Commission began a program of archeological excavation on the site, it was found that the story of the Fort was right there, un molested for the most part. History had been preserved.

Of course, through its existence many changes occurred in buildings and fortifications. Foundations rotted, houses were torn down, and stockades were enlarged to enclose the ever expanding Fort. Therefore it was decided to reconstruct to the time span of 1765-1780 when more than 30 buildings stood within the stockade and when the fort probably was at its peak in size and activity.

To be absolutely certain that the finished product of reconstruction was as honest, historically correct, and accurate as at this date was humanly possible, and in order to present the story of Fort Michilimackinac for the visitor in the most interesting and understandable manner, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission gathered an impressive group of consultants to aid in the work. The group consisted of archeologists who each summer carry on a continuing archeological program at the site, historical research archivist, a curator of exhibits, and an artist. Under the very able coordination of Dr. Eugene T. Petersen, himself a prominent historian, this group made all decisions regarding the restoration program.

When the architect found himself thrown with these very learned people, it very quickly became apparent that to even understand what they were talking about, said architect had better acquaint himself with some basic Michigan history. So a program of self-education was launched, which, as an interesting sidelight, has been extremely enjoyable.

After this ground work was well underway, the project first presented itself as a typical architectural problem. It had its preliminary, preparation of contract documents, and construction stages. And as each building project an architect works on is peculiar unto itself. This one was no different. But it proved to be extremely interesting to see how within each stage, almost a "new world" had to be created. Also it was gratifying to see that within this "new world" of 200 years ago, all of the architectural principals which our pro-
fessors tried valiantly to ingrain in us a mere few years ago, stood up beautifully.

Probably the most fascinating aspects of the entire work has been the preliminary stage. After decisions were reached on which building was to be reconstructed, the archeologist and the historian collected and interpreted all field information and historical data possible. It was extremely interesting to see how this all began to fit together like the pieces of a huge puzzle. From the analysis of this material we have generally known when the building was built almost to the exact year, who lived in it, location of major features such as porches, windows, doors, chimneys, etc., and in general the type of construction. However, although the archeologist could tell amazing things from the ground, and the historian could turn up corroborating evidence, some of which, if we were lucky, describing general appearance, the bulk of the building above ground was left up to interpretation. With study of type of construction, date who built it, i.e. French or British, similar buildings at other locations, details of jointing, and other items too numerous to list, the puzzle would come closer and closer to completion.

But the really satisfying aspect of the entire preliminary procedure was logic. The same basic thought patterns which we use in designing today are applicable here. We attempt to create contemporary buildings which are logical, with their general form being derived from their intended use. We tend to strive for an essence of simplicity in construction and honesty in form. Arriving at the finishing product of what the French and British built 200 years ago at this fort, we needed only to think of how and why they built what they did. Of course they had no architect or plans to work from. But they were builders, and they built only for protection from the elements and the enemy, logically, the only way they knew how. With a thorough knowledge of their construction techniques and more or less putting yourself in their place, in the "other world", final pieces of the puzzle fell into place.

Plans and specifications, as in any project we work on today are merely an amplification of the preliminary design and decisions made. The only "other world" created here was that of drafting technique and an ability to describe in the specifications the final appearance of an adzed timber, a dovetail corner, a lap splice, or a mortise and tenon joint. Because of a very short construction period it was found necessary to draw shop drawings of practically every timber with its cuts and jointing locations carefully shown and dimensioned. This enabled contractors to prefabricate the members and assemble the building all at one time. This way it was possible to keep a much larger crew working and complete the work on time.

The construction was handled the first year on a cost plus basis, for it really was not known what we would get into when carpenters started adzing and using other tools with which they were not familiar. Also there was nothing which a contractor could look at as a finished product from which to judge his work. There were too many unknown quantities. However, after one year of experience on not only
our part, but also the workmen, and because we had a portion of the palisade and one building standing as a prototype, all work has been handled since on a competitive bid basis.

The final stage, that of actual construction brought forth many interesting aspects. For instance, it took no time at all for the carpenters to find that a hammer alone was useless. Because of the continual necessity for cutting wood was well as nailing it, all workmen were soon seen with hatchets hanging from their belts instead of the hammer.

The skillful use of unfamiliar tools came quite rapidly to a competent carpenter. An hour with an adze, and he became an expert. But after all, the original builders of these buildings had to learn the use of the tools in much the same way.

Because going through the procedure of construction exactly as it was done originally would have been prohibitively expensive, up to date techniques and methods were employed as often as possible. Instead of starting out with a tree at the building site as the French and British builders did and adzing it down to size, we had all timbers rough cut in a mill to predetermined dimension. On site cutting was for the most part done with chain saws, finish trimming being accomplished with an adze, a hatchet or an axe.

If foundations were built as they were in 1770, our buildings would soon fall to the ground from rot much as they did then. We therefore have taken great pains not only to treat all lumber, but to construct supports for the buildings with the most sound structural techniques possible. As these are not visible to the eye, it is felt that this must be done from an economic standpoint. The honesty sacrificed is not great, and the end result much more sound.

The 22' high palisade surrounding the fort was constructed by prefabricating 20' wide sections on the ground, complete with all stringers drilled and pegged with oak pins. As the logs for the palisade were all green when installed, drilling had to be done with compressed air drills. These 20' sections were then lifted by crane into place, tied to King posts, and the palisade walk built to them.

To date four buildings have been reconstructed within the completed palisade. These are the British Soldiers' Barracks, King's Store House, a portion of the northwest Row Houses which were occupied by traders, and the Commanding Officer's House. The church, probably the largest structure that was in the fort, is planned for construction in the near future. This leaves over 25 buildings which should be reconstructed in coming years. This type of work is a slow meticulous process, but only this way can we be sure that what is being built is as close to what stood in Fort Michilimackinac as is possible.

It is a real treat to be architecturally associated with a historical restoration program, and very much has been gained from it. The adaption of today's architectural principles to those of relatively primitive construction of years ago, gives credence to the realization that we are on the right track. You, too, will be in for a treat if you plan to visit Fort Michilimackinac next time you are in the area.
PROGRAM
Michigan Society of Architects
20th MID-SUMMER CONFERENCE
GRAND HOTEL, MACKINAC ISLAND
August 1, 2, 3, 1963

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:
Robert W. Hammerschmidt, A.I.A., Conference Chairman
S. A. Nurmi, A.I.A., Conference Vice Chairman
Mrs. Bruce H. Smith, Women’s Activities Chairman
Marvin Brokaw
Frank E. North
Charles J. Mock
James B. Hughes, A.I.A., Executive Director MSA

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1
10:00 to 5 P.M.  Registration Begins, Main Lobby
Men $15.00, Ladies Free
12:15 P.M.  Lunch, Main Dining Room
2:00 P.M.  Fun in the Sun
6:30 P.M.  Reception, West End Hotel Porch
Sponsor: Modu-Wall (and their Agents)
7:00 P.M.  Dinner, Main Dining Room
10:00 P.M.  Dancing, Terrace Room
12:00 to 2 A.M. Snack Bar, Golf Course

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2
8:00 A.M.  Breakfast, Main Dining Room
8:00 A.M.  MSA Board, Breakfast Meeting
10:00 A.M.  MSA Business Meeting
Club Room, President Charles H. MacMahon, presiding
10:00 A.M.  Registration Continues
10:50 A.M.  Ladies’ Get-Acquainted Coffee Hour
12:15 P.M.  Buffet Luncheon
Speaker: William J. Johnson
Landscape Architect
2:00 P.M.  Golf Tournament, Men and Women
Register at Registration Desk
6:30 P.M.  President’s Reception, Club Room
Sponsor: Portland Cement Association
Award, “Man of the Year” Trophy
7:00 P.M.  Dinner, Main Dining Room
10:00 P.M.  Dancing, Terrace Room
12:00 to 2 A.M. Snack Bar, Golf Course

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3
8:00 A.M.  Breakfast
10:00 A.M.  Golf Tournament Continues
10:00 to 12 A.M. Tour of Fort Mackinac conducted by Richard C. Frank, A.I.A.
12:15 P.M.  Lunch, Casino Room
Speaker: Glen Michaels
Architectural Sculptor and Muralist,
“Energy of Natural Forces As A Source Of Visual Realism”
Introduction of Honored Guests
3:00 to 4 P.M. Ladies’ Tea, Biddle House
6:00 P.M.  Reception, Club Room
Sponsor: Valley Metal Products Company
7:00 P.M.  20th Annual Mid-Summer Conference Banquet
Casino Room, Presiding: Charles H. MacMahon
Toastmaster: Roger Allen, F.A.I.A., Past President Michigan Society of Architects
Speaker: Montgomery Ferar, Industrial Designer, Sundberg-Ferar, Industrial Designers
10:00 P.M.  Dancing, Terrace Room
12:00 to 2 A.M. Snack Bar, Golf Course

Monthly Bulletin, MSA
Construction Starts
At Shopping Centers
Simultaneous blasts of dynamite thirty miles apart initiated construction of identical major shopping centers in Roseville and Livonia, Michigan, representing a total capital investment of $50 million. The signal for the ground breaking was given by remote control from downtown Detroit where more than 200 dignitaries, businessmen, tenants' representatives and members of the press were gathered.

Louis G. Redstone, Architects, Inc. is the architect at both locations. A feature of his plans is an all-weather, heated, air-conditioned, enclosed mall that will connect 60 buildings at each location. Shoppers will be able to check their wraps in inclement weather, and move from store to store via the mall which will be landscaped and decorated with fountains and sculpture. Target date for completion is Fall, 1964.

Sears, Roebuck and Co. and Crowley, Milner and Co. will be the principal tenants at both centers. Sears' plans call for the construction of identical 320 thousand square foot buildings. Crowley's will occupy twin stores covering 125 thousand square feet each.

Lopatin Opens Office
Irving Lopatin announces the opening of his office for the practice of architecture at 18805 West Eight Mile Road, Detroit 19, Michigan. The telephone number 532-7324. A native of Windsor, Ontario, Mr. Lopatin was graduated from the University of Detroit in 1930 with a degree in architectural engineering. Before starting his own firm he was in the Dearborn office of Kissing, Kampner & Holzhauser. He's also been associated with the architectural department of Ford Motor Company, Charles N. Agree, Inc., and King & Lewis, Inc.

Alden Dow Awarded U-M Honorary Degree
At its commencement on June 8, the University of Michigan bestowed the honorary degree "Doctor of Architecture" upon Alden Dow, Saginaw Valley AIA member. His citation included the following: "It is a happy reflection, in an age vexed by contraries, that the individual artist remains able to reconcile demands popularly supposed to be at variance. It is a peculiar pleasure to honor Alden Dow, who, in the many buildings which he has designed in this state and elsewhere, has united boldness with decorum, individuality with a loving concern for traditional values, and practical utility with aspiration toward the ideal. In conferring on him the degree Doctor of Architecture, the University pays tribute to his technical proficiency, his high sense of personal and civic duty, and to the unique combination of these which animates his work."

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Contest Registration
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Invitations have been circulated by the Federal Housing Administration to enter its 1963 Honor Awards Competition for Residential Design. Eligible are architects, landscape architects, designers, builders, and owners of an individual house, a multifamily housing project (rental, cooperative, condominium) a nursing home or a project of housing for the elderly which was completed on or after January 1, 1958 and had an FHA commitment before construction (whether or not a mortgage was eventually insured.

August 10, 1963 is the deadline for mailing registration cards. September 1, 1963 is the deadline for mailing submissions. Judging will take place on October 1, 1963, in Washington D.C. by a panel of outstanding architects, landscape architects, community planners and other specialists in private practice.

Properties that receive awards will be given wide publicity. This will be the first time that FHA has officially recognized specific homes and projects as outstanding in design. Professional and trade publications have expressed tremendous interest in the awards and can be expected to carry photographs and detailed accounts.

FHA will also prepare exhibits of awarded properties, with appropriate identification and credits, and will have them reproduced and made available for exhibition throughout the United States and in foreign countries by professional and trade groups, schools and colleges, financial institutions, civic organizations and in FHA offices.

Florida Association
Seeking Executive Director

The Florida Association of Architects is accepting applications for the position of Executive Director which is now vacant due to the death of Roger W. Sherman, AIA.

In brief, the Executive Director will serve as Chief Executive and Administrative Officer of the Association, be responsible for publications of the Association, maintain relationships with the Florida Legislature and the State Registration Board and coordinate legal and accounting functions of the Association.

Persons interested should apply at once to the chairman of the committee charged with hiring an Executive Director, stating time of availability and required starting salary and giving personal history, references and experience in this field.

Committee Chairman:
Francis R. Walton, AIA
211 North Ridgewood Avenue
Daytona Beach, Florida
Telephone: CL 3-5471

Further information may also be obtained by calling the Monthly Bulletin.

A new retail home furnishings store has been opened by Herman Miller, Inc., at 970 East Maple Road, Birmingham, Michigan.
ACI Chapter Tours
Levy Company Plants

The Edward C. Levy Company hosted a luncheon meeting of the Michigan Chapter, American Concrete Institute in Dearborn earlier this summer, followed by an interesting tour of the company plant facilities under the direction of Les Larkin and Dunc Bryan. Included on the tour was a visit at Ford Motor Company's blast furnace facilities where most of Levy's slag is obtained.

More than 30 of Levy's guests were able to take the complete tour. From their guides they learned the intricacies of gathering the slag at its source, transporting it to the processing plants and converting it to the high quality aggregate used in modern cement products.

Linn Smith Named To Accrediting Board

New member of the National Architectural Accrediting Board is Linn Smith, Detroit AIA Chapter, who was elected to a five-year term expiring in 1968. New president of the board is Fred L. Markham of Provo, Utah.

Company Change

Racine Foundry & Manufacturing Company has announced that its sculpture and architectural bronze and aluminum casting operations by the lost wax method will be carried on as a separate division under the name of Racine Art Foundry Company.

Pilot Program Tests
Asphalt Paving

Core tests of asphalt paving as part of a pilot program have been initiated by the National Bituminous Concrete Association to provide architects with positive proof of contractor performance and asphalt paving quality. Pilot tests are currently being conducted in Detroit, Pittsburgh and Chicago. Results of these programs will be used to establish a recommended testing procedure architects can follow.

In the Detroit area, the pilot testing program is being conducted by Cadillac Asphalt Paving Co. of Detroit. Further information can be obtained from the firm's vice president, S. W. Hayes.

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Lawrence Institute of Technology will enter a Casino design by James Ryan, 29860 Pleasant Trail, Southfield, in a national contest to be held next month in Detroit by the Illuminating Engineering Society. Mr. Ryan's entry was named best of fifteen in competition judged by Harold Binder, AIA, Ernest Dellar, AIA, and Robert G. Caughey, EE.

Runners up were James D. Dodge, 9065 Iowa, Livonia, and Ronald Lytle, 17322 Steel, Detroit. All three winners will receive cash awards.

The winning entry by Mr. Ryan will be judged again for an additional award at the National Technical Conference of the Illuminating Engineering Society to be held at the Sheraton-Cadillac, September 9 through 12, and will be on display during the conference. About 25 entries are expected for the national competition.

The contest is sponsored by the Allied Arts Committee of the I.E.S. Local chairman is Frank E. North, Detroit Edison architect coordinator.

---

"We didn't have an architect, We drew the plans ourselves," They told us proudly. That is why The ceiling has those shelves, And why the front door opens on The bathroom, also why The roof has little apertures Where you can see the sky.

Yes, that is why those uprights pierce The middle of the room, And why the kitchen, windowless, Is jolly as a tomb.

"We didn't have an architect," They said, and sounded sadder. The doors all being stuck, I left By climbing down a ladder

—RICHARD ARMOUR

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The West Bloomfield Township Library was one of ten public library buildings in the United States to receive an architectural award for distinguished accomplishment in this year's First Library Buildings Award Program. Joint sponsors were the American Institute of Architects, the American Library Association and the National Book Committee. Termed "a friendly place which reveals the resources within . . . inviting one to share its hospitality . . ." the library places special emphasis on adult interests, although it is geared to serve students from elementary through college levels. Service and reference areas are separated by free standing bookcases. Other facilities include: adult lounge, public meeting room, office, kitchenette, work room and staff lounge.
Nelson Towers  Jackson, Michigan

King & Lewis, Architects
Bentler Construction Company, Detroit, General Contractor

The initial problem in the overall building concept was how to successfully blend the building and its service facilities with the existing streetscape of 1920 estate-type residences. "It seemed unreasonable to impose a slick 'glass box' in such an environment," states the architect. "We attempted to create a 'building envelope' with a rhythmic bay expression and use materials compatible with the area." Continuous, vertically accentuated precast panels act as the exterior closure for heating and cooling risers. Projecting wing tips of the panels add to the chiaroscuro effect noticeable overall, especially at the balcony ends, which provide an unexcelled view of the city.

Typical Living Room Plan
First Federal Savings of Detroit
Farmington Branch

Karl Hans Greimel and Associates, Inc.
Jacob Strobl & Sons, Inc.,
Detroit, General Contractor

This branch bank represents a significant and original departure from the conventional architecture previously employed by First Federal Savings of Detroit in establishing its regional identity. In order to emphasize this reorientation, the structure was expressed as an open space invitingly presented to its suburban community through the means of its light steel framework and broad glass facade. To further dramatize the structure and as a relief from the encroaching parking lot, the building is set within a landscaped moat which sharply and delightfully sets the mood for the bank's customers as they enter through the bridge-like vestibule.
Surrounded by more than 1,000 acres of rolling land, Shanty Creek Lodge is located northeast of Traverse City, near Bellaire. The Lodge, now under construction, is situated at the highest point of the property and provides a spectacular view across Lake Bellaire and Torch Lake to Lake Michigan. It will have 108 rooms, each with a private balcony. There will be a large court area surrounding an outdoor heated swimming pool. The main dining room will have its entire northeast and southwest walls of glass so that the panorama of the seasons can be enjoyed to the fullest. Adjacent to this dining room will be a bi-level cocktail lounge. A separate convention banquet room will have a capacity to seat 500.
Royal Oak Public Library

Smith and Smith Architects
West Side Construction, Allen Park, General Contractor

In designing the new Royal Oak Public library, the architects had one overall objective in mind: "to create a building in the center of the city that would lift the hearts of all who might see it, a building that both young and old would want to use." Royal Oak's 85,000 residents are now served by a completely air-conditioned, carpeted building with seating for 260 readers and a book capacity of 225,000 volumes. Additions to the usual library features are the Story Hour Room enjoyed by 150 pre-school children each week, a meeting room for civic organizations, and a large exhibition space for art and historical displays and community service.
Manufacturers National Bank,  
Bloomfield Branch Office

Louis A. Redstone, Architects, Inc.  
R. E. Dailey & Co.,  
Southfield, General Contractor

This strategically located bank building was designed to bring bank services close to home in a rapidly growing community. Classical in character, it features open glass walls framed with aluminum and granite. The exterior wall facing the parking area is designed as a textured brick wall which is also carried to the inside. Inlaid granite strips in the walk under the canopies add interest and ties in the building material into the general scheme. The building is so situated on the site as to allow the maximum anticipated number of cars to line up for the two drive-up windows without interfering with the rapid traffic movement of the main road.
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August, 1963 | 21
A thirtieth anniversary dinner of Harley, Ellington, Cousin and Stirton, Inc., Detroit architectural and engineering firm, was combined with testimonial awards to the firm's founding architect and its founding engineer. Shown above, from left to right, are: Malcolm R. Stirton, vice president and secretary; Alvin E. Harley, F.A.I.A., retiring after nearly 60 years in architecture; Harold S. Ellington, ASCE, retiring after more than half a century of engineering work; and Julian R. Cousin, president. The firm's name was Harley & Ellington when it was formed in 1933.

Named Sales Manager

Pre-Cast Concrete Products Company has announced the appointment of Francis J. Hennecke as sales manager with the sales office at 15324 Mack Avenue, Detroit 24. He was formerly sales manager of American Prestressed Concrete, Inc.

Elected President

Abraham Waronoff has been elected president of the architectural and engineering firm Architectural-Engineering Services, Inc., located at 10205 West McNichols Road, Detroit 21, Michigan.

Morgan Opens Office

Announcement has been made of the opening of offices of John P. Morgan and Associates, Architects, at 187 South Woodward Avenue, Birmingham, Michigan. A graduate of the University of Detroit, with a degree in architectural engineering, Mr. Morgan has been associated with James W. Conn, Swanson Associates, Minoru Yamasaki and Associates, Glen Paulsen and Associates, and O'Dell, Hewlett and Luckenback.

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Award Presented By Concrete Board

Winners of the 1963 Outstanding Achievement Award of the Concrete Improvement Board are Joseph A. Kauer and Robert L. Freeman, both of Detroit. They were honored for their research study—"The Effect of Carbon Dioxide on Fresh Concrete." The paper by Mr. Kauer, technical service director of Huron Portland Cement Company, and Mr. Freeman, chief engineer of Harris Concrete & Supply Company, was published originally in the American Concrete Institute Journal. Since that time, more than 4,000 reprints also have been distributed. In all, the work has been sent to 91 countries throughout the world. The award was presented by James Hampton, CIB chairman.

Detroit Honor Awards Jury Announced

Three prominent Chicago architects have agreed to act as jurors for the Detroit Chapter Honor Awards program. It has been announced by Jay S. Pettit that Bertrand Goldberg, Walter N. Netsch, Jr., and Harry M. Weese will judge the entries in Chicago in September.

Goldberg is the architect for Marina City, the twin-tower, circular apartment building now nearing completion along the Chicago River. Netsch is well known as a designer and is a partner in the office of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Weese has received many awards and achieved recent recognition for his Arena Stage Theater in Washington, D.C.
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