

H O B B Y

Bandwagon

Vol. 6, No. 6—JULY, 1951

15c



In Memorium

HENRY L. SYMONS
WILLIAM N. PURTILL
WALTER L. MAIN
JAMES LIVINGSTON
HARRY BOWMAN
C. SPENCER CHAMBERS
JOHN CROWLEY

MAY THE "FATHER OF MERCIES, AND THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT,
WHO COMFORTETH US IN ALL OUR SORROWS" RICHLY COMFORT
AND SUSTAIN THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THUS BEREAVED.

HOBBY

Bandwagon

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JULY, 1951

Vol. 6

No. 6

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Harry M. Simpson, Camden, Ohio.
Mortgagee: None.

HARRY M. SIMPSON
Publisher

Subscribed and sworn before me this
25th day of September, 1950.

LOUISE SIMPSON,
Notary Public.

The Editor Says

Recently, at a conference, I heard a speaker say that there were so few places a family could go as a unit. He suggested church as one of these few, and I agreed with that, and thought that certainly the circus was another. How many of you are interesting the younger generation in the Circus? Who is going to carry on the traditions of the circus if the youngsters don't become acquainted with them? Maybe all of you do not have children or grandchildren to use as an excuse for going to the circus, but how about taking the boy next door or the girl from the other side of the tracks. Many times my pleasure in the circus is enhanced by the whole hearted enjoyment of some child near me in the audience. In these troubled times we need to keep the family together, and what better entertainment could the young people have than the circus. The spec, the lights, the thrills and the international flavor of a circus are appealing to all ages.

AGNES W. KING

NEW MEMBERS

John Boyle, No. 490
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Cleveland 3, Ohio

Dr. E. J. Bateman, No. 491
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Bill Biggerstaff, No. 492
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Names That Made Circus History

Written for The Bandwagon by Charlie Duble, Associate Editor

The billboards in Denver, Colorado, were ablaze with posters of the OTTO FLOTO DOG & PONY SHOW in May, 1902. This was the first appearance of this new organization backed by Tammen and Bonfils who were also owners of The Denver Post. The lot was at Colfax Street and Broadway near the State Capitol buildings where the show exhibited six days the last week in May. Needless to say, crowds turned out for the event and plenty of publicity was given by the newspaper. Some members of CHS and other collectors today have various photos of this circus, the 1902 season. I regret I do not have the complete roster of officials nor the seasons route which was confined to the Western States. Otto Floto was for years the sporting editor of The Denver Post and the writer well remembers his visits to the Sells-Floto Circus in 1918 and 1920.

The Otto Floto Dog & Pony Show made a decided hit the first season in towns and cities of the West and for the season of 1905 the show was enlarged quite a bit and the title now used was the GREAT FLOTO SHOWS. An elegant route book was printed at the close of the 1905 season and I am passing along some of the information contained therein for the benefit of readers of The Bandwagon. The circus left Denver in March, 1905 over the Colorado & Southern and the Denver and Forth Worth railroads, a distance of 803 miles for the opening stand at Fort Worth, Texas, March 22-23. Nine more stands were played in Texas, then into Arizona for three stands. The circus was at Hermosillo Sonora, Mexico, April 7 and at Guaymas, Mexico, April 8. Thirty-one towns and cities were made in California up to May 18 then into Nevada at Reno. An extensive tour of the Western states followed and the show remained west of the Mississippi river the entire season. The executive staff as named in the route book was Otto Floto; William Sells, Director General; George F. Heiser, Manager; Frank Tammen, Treasurer; "Punch" Wheeler, Press Agent back with show; John Carroll, Equestrian Director; Prof. Robt. Zierke, Bandmaster of big show band of 25 experienced musicians. Chris, Zeitz was in charge of the elephants. The book has many pictures of performers, some of the officials and a fine picture of the concert band. Fred Jewell, famous composer of band music that has been heard

around the world was with the show the season of 1905 playing baritone in the band and steam calliope in parade. His fine march "Floto's Triumph" (dedicated to Prof. Robt. Zierke, bandmaster Great Floto Shows) has been played by the bands far and wide and can still be had.

This was quite a big show having a 4-pole big top with a double row of quarter poles, a 4-pole menagerie, and 3-pole side show with long line of double deck banners. A photo of the entire spread of canvas taken at Wallace, Idaho, with the mountains in the background, appears in the book. The show was in Denver June 19 and 20. Fine business greeted the show here in the home city and countless thousands lined the streets to see the fine parade. The first stop in Canada was at Winnipeg, August 25-26, and twenty-three stands in all were made in Canada in the western provinces up to September 22. Some of these towns the writer visited again in 1947 with the Sparks 10-car circus. At Grinnell, Iowa, the show played day and date with Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show, and J. Lou Sampson will have story of this in a future issue of The Bandwagon.

The route book was compiled by the shows press agent, "Punch" Wheeler, and he did a fine job. The population is given for every town visited, the lot location, and various happenings of interest each day was recorded. The number of miles covered during the tour was 18,120. Days on road 210. Show days 178. Number of performances 356. Rainy days 14. The show visited 23 states, the closing date October 14 at Nampa, Idaho. A ticket covering the whole trip of the show that season would look like a roller towel. (Those were the words of the press agent).

The advertisements of ten firms in Denver that furnished supplies feed and printing for the Great Floto Shows appear on the last pages. On the back cover of the book is a beautiful reproduction of a lithograph in the original colors showing Otto Floto, and animals in a jungle scene. This being a masterpiece of the printers art. A full page calls attention to season 1906, the first year the Great Sells-Floto Shows name was before the public. Following is the exact wording all CHS members should enjoy reading:

(Continued on page 4)

NAMES THAT MADE CIRCUS HISTORY (Cont'd)

SEASON 1906

THE GREAT SELLS-FLOTO SHOWS

Circus Beautiful & Mammoth Menagerie Greeting

Under a mammoth canvas a new circus world is brought before you—a world of glitter, spangle, gold and color, gladness and melody. Its the Circus Beautiful.

It is midsummer's night dream of revelry, beauty and action, a fairyland of frills and silver gauze, of sylph-like fairies in silken tights. It's some enchanted dreamland where naught but beauty dwells and where all the inhabitants perform impossible feats. Queens of the air fly from heights to heights and the law of gravitation is set at naught. Ponderous elephants stand upon their heads and walk erect upon their hind feet, turn somersaults and perform other remarkable gymnastics—man and animals meet here upon a common plane of action, understanding and intelligence, the man, the most perfect of all animals, becomes a wizard, flying through space, leaping and turning over herds of elephants, horses and camels, and trained seals compete with the Oriental Japanese in their deft feats of jugglery and balancing.

A Quarter of a Million Dollars Expended In Additional Equipment and Display

* * *

Personally directed by William Sells, who alone represents a living forceful personality, all the celebrated skill and exclusive experience that makes the name of Sells synonymous with everything of success in the glittering record of the American Tented Arena and the invincible value of an actual personality. These enormous shows are the only shows possessing the actual personality of the famous name of Sells and its generation of success.

Barnum is only a name and Forepaugh is no more and Van Amburgh has passed from the scene, and the great Sells Brothers, who conquered the world of sawdust and spangle, have made their earthly exit; only William Sells remains to demonstrate, personally, the success of the glorious past with the greater triumphs of today.

The Great Sells-Floto Shows will visit every important city during the season 1906 and promises an exhibition that only a descriptive herald can do justice. Wait for the New Big Consolidated Sells-Floto Shows.

The writer was with Sells-Floto Circus seasons 1918 and 1920. In December, 1920, the circus still owned by Tammen and Bonfils was sold to Mugivan and Bowers, prominent circus owners. In September, 1929, the show passed into the hands of John Ringling along with the other circuses of the American Circus Corporation. Final year of the Sells-Floto Circus was 1932. One of the outstanding names in circus history, it recalls the days of the big baggage wagon and animal cages as they rumbled along from the unloading spot to some grassy circus lot in the early morning. The sleek four, six, and eight horse teams as they moved along were admired by the onlookers. The clanking of chains as the herd of elephants shuffled by followed by camels, ponies, water buffalo and other led stock, not forgetting the glittering street parade with the elaborate carved and mirrored band wagons, elegant tableau wagons, racing chariots, and the gilt and carved steam calliope bringing up the rear followed by a crowd of happy boys. Those, with all the other vanished glories of the circus parades have turned the last mile.

Charlie Duble
May 30, 1951.

Bob King spent three days with the Kelly-Miller Show in Indiana and Ohio. Others on the lot at various times were Clarence Shank, Mr. and Mrs. Chalmer Condon, George Piercy, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Townsend, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Chapman, M. W. Organ and his brother, Doc Cooper and his daughter Sharon, Col. Woodcock, Jimmy Hamiter and lone Stevens.

James Hamby saw the Beers-Barnes Circus in Rockwood, Tenn., on May 16th.

PROGRAM OF
Tom Pack's Circus --- 1951 Season

PROGRAM

1. **Opening Overture**
2. **Our National Anthem**
3. **Seven-Girl Cloudswing and Iron Jaw Ensemble**
4. **The Eddys** (Trampoline). **Miss Bronella** (Tight Wire). **The Kays** (Trampoline)
5. **The Aerial Vesses**
6. **Schmitt's Chimps. Hill's Dogs and Ponies. Tiebor's Seals**
7. **Clown Wedding Gag**
8. **The Martells** (Rola-Rola). **The Karrells** (Roman Ladders). **Freddor** (Juggling)
9. **Flying Zacchinis. Flying Voices**
10. **Will Hill's Elephants**
11. **Great Wallendas** (High Wire)

INTERMISSION

12. **Aerial Ballet and Marjorie Cordell**
13. **The Robert Cimse Company**
14. **Clown Walk-Around**
15. **Franklin & Astrid** (Equilibrists). **Four Angels** (Balancing).
The Sidneys (Cycling)
16. **The George Hanneford Company** (Bareback Riding)
17. **Miss Rietta** (High Pole and Slide)
18. **Fireworks**
19. **Exit Marches**

Musical Director—JACK CERVONE

Announcements—BOB WHITE

Vocal Soloist—MARCY EDWARDS

Program subject to change in the event of
unforeseen or uncontrollable circumstances

NOTICE

Some time ago, one of our members sent me a negative, and description of same. Through some unfortunate happening, I have lost the description—but the negative I still have, and am anxious to return it to the owner. The pictures have been printed for distribution to the members. The picture is a parade picture, showing a team with the name Cole Bros. on the collars. At the left side is a man in Spanish costume, mounted on a horse. Will the owner please let me know when and where it happened, and I'll return the negative at once.

ROBERT C. KING, Sec'y

1901 Skerbeck's Show

Furnished by Bill Kasiska

Skerbeck's Great One Ring R. R. Show, Dorchester, Wisconsin (Winter quarters).

Show opened its 1901 season May 11 at Medford, Wisc., with a large attendance despite cold and stormy weather. The show, traveling via rails, included among its roster: Anton Skerbeck and troupe of educated ponies and dogs; Prof. Burns and troupe of trick horses; Frank Holloway and Mrs. Frank Holloway, Prof. Childers, Fred Meier, Otto Miller, Prof. H. Payne and Mrs. Payne, Robbins and Childers, Ed. Danbruck, A. Robinson, Herman Kronschhahl, P. C. Bradford, F. W. Brooks, John Hanns, Col. A. Phillips, Prof. F. Burns, W. Pulford, Albert Garkoco, John Kole, Geor Kronschhahl, R. W. Herrick, Prof. Palo, E. E. Bersle, H. B. DeForest.

The show ran into a heavy snowstorm of nearly all day, May 12, then had good weather until it went into Minnesota where show encountered storms continuously for three weeks. But business was good—through the lumber and iron country. First Blow-down occurred May 15 at Twin Valleys, Minn., with the loss of the night show, but show was back in running order the next day.

The saddest of all was the death of Antonio Skerbeck, Manager Skerbeck's brother, who fell dead in the ring while doing his turn in the knockabout clown makeup.

The third accident occurred at Cloquet, Minn., June 23. A citizen had a shooting gallery near the grounds, and as Col. Phil Coup, the veteran soldier and showman was passing to the lot, a drunken man discharged a target gun; the ball struck Mr. Coup over the left eye and lodged against the bridge of the nose, making a painful but not dangerous wound.

At West Superior, Wisc., show lost a valuable trick pony. As of June 29, show in its ninth week entered the Lake Superior copper country. Side Show was under management of Frank Holloway. Reserved seats and lots was under supervision of Col. Phil Coup. The candy stand privilege was operated by Fred Brooks.

HAVE YOU HEARD !!

CHS CONVENTION
AUGUST 3-4-5, 1951
CINCINNATI, OHIO



Gus Sun Shows--1901

Sent in by Bill Kasiska

Gus Sun R. R. Shows opened its season May 25 in Ashland, Wisc., and worked its way gradually to Washington through Oregon and on into California, all the while encountering heavy opposition from Campbell Bros., Gentry, Jarbeau's Oriental Circus and Midway, Norris and Rowe, and Sells & Gray. Wiseacres had previously predicted that this show would "starve to death" through Montana and Idaho, but they reckoned without their host. At Billings, Logan, Butte, Anaconda, Missoula, and Wallace, the management turned people away at both performances. The Eichaus Family, six in number, and the Three Cerenos and Cancanto were among the acts that pleased the public. Clown comics under Sam Horner, producing clown, were real laugh evokers. After covering Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming, and after playing to the best business that Mr. Sun had seen in fifteen years of his show life (at many towns in Nevada, people came eighty miles to see the show and paid \$1.50 to see the performance), and without a losing week during the entire tour of sixteen weeks, Gus Sun's R. R. Shows closed Sept. 7 at Rawlins, Wyoming.

Upon the conclusion of the last performance, the lay out properties were packed away into winter quarters and the rolling stock of five cars was sent to the Union Pacific R. R. Shops, Omaha, Nebraska, for paint and repairs. Mr. Sun, accompanied by Mrs. Sun, Louise and Baby Sun, Fred D. Fowler, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Chipman, Sam Horner, Prof. Chas. Parreant, and James Nugent, left Sept. 8 for Council Bluffs, Iowa, for the first performance of the Gus Sun American Minstrels.

Several readers have written in to say how much they enjoyed the article on Millie-Christine which appeared in the May issue of the Bandwagon. Some of our members remember seeing this girl. I quote from a letter received from John Walker, of Coldwater, Mich.

"I was very interested in your last 'Bandwagon,' and in particular the story on Christine-Milly, who I remember sometimes used the name in reverse, Milly-Christine. I remember seeing her on exhibition along about the year 1906 or 1907. If I remember correctly, she was on the Dan Robinson Carnival, or it might have been the Monarch Carnival Company. At that time we thought she was an old woman (or women) although she was about 55 or 60 years of age. I also remember a song she used in their show. It was called 'Whippor-Will' and we kids had several back-yard shows of our own, doing a take-off on Milly-Christine. In my collection of photos I have an 8 x 10 picture of the above Show, taken while on a carnival years ago."

Circus Always in Town for Devotee: Works on Miniature Big Top

Reprinted from The Niagra Falls Gazette, June 2, 1951

There used to be a time when the words, "The circus is coming to town," would bring expressions of glee from the younger set and those young in heart. Today, the circus is in town and has been for a long time, although not many persons are aware of it.

It's in the living room of a home in Lockport street and performances go on at almost any time of the day. The owner, Ray Moreau, calls it a miniature circus, but like similar enterprises it has a distinct name—*Marbet Ray circus*; named after his daughter Margaret, wife Betty, and his own first name.

"I'm going in for a full-detail, miniature circus," Mr. Moreau says, "and I'm going to complete the circus. When it is finished there will be 300 wagons, 300 horses, 100 railroad cars, and 32 tents."

"Strictly A Hobby"

His aim is to keep the circus before the public eye, which also is the plan of the *Circus Model Builders and Owners* association. Mr. Moreau, a member of CMB and OA, decided in 1948 to construct a model circus, although he always has been fascinated by the circus and its personnel.

With him "it is strictly a hobby. I am willing to go anywhere and see anyone to show my circus. I'd be more than happy to take it to one small child sick in bed because I know what enjoyment a circus can bring."

A native of Auburn, Mr. Moreau came to this city eight years ago and is employed by a local factory. But, as he says, "I feel as though I'm a native Niagara Falls citizen."

His daughter, Margaret, 12, is a seventh-grader at Sacred Heart school and herself a circus enthusiast. Her brown eyes gleam when she recalls the time she rode an elephant at the age of three. "Sure, I still remember," she said.

26 Lions Running Loose

Mr. Moreau makes all the parts and the animals himself with a few exceptions. He uses crochet cotton for reins, Page 8—Hobby-Bandwagon, July, 1951

leather for harnesses, brass rings for horses' bits and pine-wood for his wagons.

"I have 26 lions running loose around here and I have to make some wagons for them," Mr. Moreau exclaimed, "and those wagons are made to perfect scale and minute details." All his wagons are numbered and take the same positions in all parades just as in a real "full-scale" circus.

He stated that the minimum cost for a large circus to perform today is \$5,000 a day and they are "wonderful entertainment and we should have more of them in this section." He is particularly partial to the menagerie and the elephants and is disappointed that Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey circus left 20 of the huge beasts in Sarasota, Fla., this season.

Mrs. Moreau prefers the aerialists, while daughter Margaret shares her father's interest in elephants.

Ranks Performers

In discussing the organization he belongs to, Mr. Moreau said the model builders (CMBandOA) is a nationwide organization with 500 members. It has a monthly newspaper and duly elected officers. Some members who live close to each other, he said, form "rings" and take names from famous circus performers.

And while speaking of performers, Mr. Moreau went on to mention the greatest of them all, in his estimation. Tops in animal training were Terrel Jacobs, Clyde Beatty, Mabel Stack and Dick Clemens; equestriene, Dorothy Herbert; and the greatest comedian of them all, George "Poodles" Hanneford.

At present, Mr. Moreau is building one of the old time circus favorites, the sword act, in which 20 to 30 swords are thrust through a coffin. He usually looks at his wife when questioned as to who will be inside the coffin.

"There is an open invitation for anyone at anytime to come here and see this miniature circus," Mr. Moreau concluded. "We'll be here at 1721 Lockport street for some time."

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AUGUST 3-4-5, 1951

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and Circus Fans
are Always
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view and complete list.

DYER M. REYNOLDS
197 East Ave. Pawtucket, R.I.

From Baldwin Park, California, I received a surprise and welcome letter from Jake Posey, who styles himself "Last of the Forty Horse Drivers." This is a well-deserved title. He is a member of the Circus Historical society with headquarters in Wichita, Kansas. Circus veteran Posey writes in acknowledgement of a clipping of Ye Old Timer's column in the Evening Chronicle of Feb. 9 sent to him by Robert D. Good of Allentown. Mr. Posey was driver of the famous "Two Hemisphere Bandwagon," so named because one side represented the eastern and the other side the western hemisphere. When driving this 40-horse hitch he carried reins weighing 72 pounds.

In his letter Mr. Posey "thinks" he can be classified as an old timer, having started in the show business in 1880 with the Van Amburg circus. He informs me he is "now retired, 88 years young, lost me wife Nov. 23, 1949, after 65 years happy wedded life, and lived alone ever since." He also informs me his father was boss hostler for the John Robinson show for 17 years. Mr. Posey can well lay claim to the title of old timer, particularly in show business, because his record shows that after leaving the Van Amburg outfit he went with Sells Brothers, 1888-93; H. H. Barrett, 1885-86, when he drove a six-horse billwagon ahead of the Stowe, Long and Gumbel wagon show; 1888, Miller & Fremar; 1889, Adam Forepaugh; 1890, John Robinson; 1891, Bob Hunting; 1893-95, Barnum and Bailey (in Europe); 1896, B. E. Wallace; 1897, Barnum and Bailey; 1897-02, Buffalo Bill's Wild West; 1903-07, Campbell Bros; 1910, Yankee Robinson; 1911-13, Hagenbeck-Wallace; 1914-16, Al G. Barnes; 1921, Sparks; 1923-30, Al G. Barnes; 1931-35, Hagenbeck-Wallace.

* * *

Robert D. Good, son of County Commissioner Robert F. Good, formerly with the Ringling Bros., Barnum and Bailey circuses and other shows of the big top, and Jake Posey, "Last of the Forty Horse Drivers," are old chums having been associated together for many years. Both have retired from the show business, Mr. Good is now with an Allentown pharmacy, while Mr. Posey is living at his California home. Mr. Good is in correspondence with Col. P. J. Palmer, an executive of Ringling Bros., Barnum-Bailey circus. They are all interested in final disposition of the glamorous Two Hemisphere bandwagon driven by 40 horses in circus parades with Jack Posey holding the reins. This glamorous band

chariot was constructed in 1902 and 1903 for James A. Bailey and headed street parades in America and Europe beginning in 1907. Because of its weight and because it destroyed much asphalt and brick paving, circus street parades were discontinued in 1918, according to the souvenir book published in Davenport, Iowa. Many suggestions were made for a final resting place for the glamorous bandwagon. According to Mr. Good, Colonel Palmer has "wisely decided to give his old bandwagon to the Ringling Museum of the American Circus at Sarasota, Florida, owned by the state, the mecca of all circus fans, and the proper place for the grand old bandwagon. This donation will be made in the next year or two after a suitable building is constructed to house the wagon just as it is now housed in Davenport, Iowa."

The golden chariot was first used by Barnum & Bailey in 1907. Phineas Taylor Barnum died in April, 1891, and James A. Bailey in 1906. The Circus Fans Tent of Iowa presented it to Jacob A. Wagner, who was president of the C. F. A. of Iowa. After his death it was presented to Zack Terrell of Cole Bros. Circus. April 8, 1944, Mr. Terrell presented it to Col. B. J. Palmer, president of Central Broadcasting Co., with the understanding that it be placed as memorial to Mr. Terrell's friend, the late Jacob A. Wagner. In 1944 the Iowa State Fair broke ground and as a result the Two Hemisphere chariot was taken from under cover and placed in the open weather where through three years of winter snows and summer rains it has taken an awful beating.

JOHN CROWLEY

John J. Crowley, former Secretary of the Circus Historical Society, died in Cambridge, Mass., on Wednesday, July 4, 1951. Mr. Crowley had had to resign as Secretary two years ago due to poor health, and at the time had a very serious operation. He is survived by the parents, Mr. and Mrs. John J. Crowley, Sr., and a brother, Joseph Crowley.

The sympathy of all CHS members goes to these survivors.

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Founded in 1939

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Titus.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

From TORONTO GLOBE Files

Sent in by Ed Cripps

Thursday, December 5th, 1850.

An affair occurred at the New York Exhibition on Tuesday which, but for the intrepidity of Van Amburgh, (Van Amburgh was the most famous lion trainer of his day), would certainly have resulted in the horrible death of our old friend, Signor Hydralgo. Hydralgo went into a cage in which had been placed our largest panther, the Bengal tiger, the African lioness, the spotted leopard, a cougar, and the hyena. Hydralgo seemed to have the animals completely under his control when for some unaccountable cause, the tiger became sulky and refused to leap. He struck him with a whip, which so enraged the furious beast, that with one bound and a yell of fury that terrified the audience he rushed upon Hydralgo and brought him to the floor of the cage. It would have been all up with poor H. had not Van Amburgh rushed to the spot. In an instant he was in the cage and had the enraged animal under his feet, in perfect subjection. For the time it lasted, about two or three minutes, it was the most exciting scene ever witnessed there.

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AUGUST 3-4-5



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