# THE HISTORY OF THE WAR MEMORIAL

Originally written by Steve Tazewell, now deceased, who was the president of the Goulburn and District Historical Society?

Some updates to the following history have recently been included.

# **Beginnings**

Goulburn set out on a number of schemes for a War Memorial in 1918.

In the early stages the public could not agree on any particular form of memorial and everything from an 8 foot wooden column in Belmore Park, an arch across Auburn Street or a memorial ward at the hospital were early suggestions.

At a public meeting in the Town Hall on July 27, 1920, a large majority of the townspeople voted that a "memorial arch be erected on the Auburn Street side of the Botanical Gardens", now known as Belmore Park.

The Mayor, Alderman E Rogers commented, "It is time that Goulburn took a definite step towards erecting a memorial to our soldiers. We have been talking about it for two and a half years, but even after that time we have got no further ahead." The Evening Post of July 29, 1920 applauded the decision, but guardedly suggested that Goulburn did not appear to be over enthusiastic over the project.

This was to prove correct for it was another two years before further progress was made. The Goulburn branch of the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League at their annual meeting on January 18, 1922 suggested sending a wreath to the Memorial Committee to erect on a post in Belmore Park. After this the Diggers let the matter drop.

At a public meeting on January 25, 1922 a unanimous decision was made to erect some sort of memorial in the south western corner of the Park.

A case was put forward in a forceful letter to the Evening Post on April 29, 1922 by "Hill 17" to erect a monument on Rocky Hill. It said "there is one place set before



all and this is the hill above the town to the east". The architect E C Manfred immediately advocated this site. Manfred said "my proposal was to build a rough stone monument on the apex of Rocky Hill, which would be seen for miles around... I am afraid however that the matter has now gone too far."

However, "Hill 17" was persistently suggested as the site in many letters through the Evening Post for several months.

On June 3, 1922 Mr W J Bartlett wrote very strongly on the matter. "What art of human sculpture could give us a pedestal a hundredth part as noble as Rocky Hill, in its grandeur of simplicity and unadorned massiveness?"

The Evening Post on July 20, 1922 reported: "Mr W J Bartlett has made arrangements to purchase Rocky Hill and dedicate it to the use of the people for all time, with the reservation of the right to erect on the eminence the Soldiers' Memorial."

At a public meeting in the Town Hall on August 8, 1922 all previous resolutions were rescinded and it was decided the memorial would be erected on Rocky Hill.

The hill was named Rocky Hill for all time and the meeting decided on the inscription for the memorial stone to read:

"In memory of those who fell, and of those who served in the Great War of 1914-18"

From then on the War Memorial Committee directed its activities to the raising of funds to meet the cost of erection. Donations and functions of various kinds were carried on extensively.

First a roadway had to be laid down to the summit and a memorial drive planted. The citizens of East Goulburn then planted the memorial drive with a tree for each soldier who served.

The 1923 Anzac Day celebrations were held on the highest peak on April 25 and drew much prominence to the project. For the first time the Australian flag was flown from the highest peak of Rocky Hill. A 30 foot pole was firmly placed in position and guyed to rocks by General McNicoll, Lieut C Ford, Lieut A J McShane, Ivan



Rocky Hill Dedication August 1923

Shows the rocky cairn on top of Rocky Hill, where the war memorial now stands. These rocks were brought to the site by Goulburn residents. Lily Divall shows how high the mound was.

Elliott and L B Audubon who were assisted by Lux Manfred and H L Manfred. At

5am on Anzac Day 1923, the flag was broken by Lieutenants Ford and McShane. The ensign dropped to half-mast until noon. Below the rocks on the upper slope the word ANZAC was outlined in white.

During the Anzac service people carried stones from the hill and placed them around the base of the flag pole. Mr W Bartlett then presented the hill to the people of Goulburn.

Finance was becoming a major problem. "Hill 17" alias Mary Gilmore, offered £20 if twenty more citizens would donate the same. By February 21, 1923 the total cash on hand was £2103/11/7. A sports gymkhana held at the old showground on February 27, 1923 which was attended by the Earl of Cassillis, raised a further £300.

At a meeting on April 3, the Committee resolved "That Mr W J Bartlett lay the foundation stone on Anzac day next April 25". By April 14, 1924 the Committee had £2795/12/4 in hand and when a bank was approached a further guarantee of £2000 was given. Mr Golding donated a silver plated trowel for presentation to Mr Bartlett for laying the foundation stone.

At a Memorial Committee meeting on May 14, 1923 it was resolved that the site of the memorial would be where the cairn was placed.

Considerable discussion took place as to what form the memorial should take. Three alternatives were proposed. A Tower, a Celtic cross or a column and it was suggested that the proposals be displayed in Goldings Jeweller's window. On May 24, 1923 Mr W J Bartlett's model of the column was displayed in P R D Hollis's window. This model is now on permanent display in the museum.

By May 26 Mr Sendall and Rev Ward's designs were submitted.

On May 29 an effort was made to come to a decision on the design of the memorial.

On June 7 Major McNicoll submitted a tower design.

On June 9 a Committee meeting was held and a tower design was selected.



Mr W J Bartlett's design
Picture courtesy Goulburn Post

E C Manfred and Son submitted a report on July 24 and at a special meeting on September 11 the Committee accepted Manfred's design.

At the meeting held on October 9, it was decided that the foundation stone was to be laid on Armistice Day, November 11, 1923. A week later E C Manfred had submitted a design to the War Memorial Advisory Board which was rejected. Manfred was commissioned to re-design the tower.

These delays prevented the laying of the foundation stone on Armistice Day as planned. On December 1 the Committee accepted Manfred's revised plans and they were accepted with modifications on December 4.

At this period the Mayor, Alderman Middlebrook was apparently ill and there had been quite some delay before a contract was signed for the building of the Memorial by well known Goulburn contractor and bridge builder Mr H E (Tom) Ibbotson whose own account of the building has been included in this booklet.

Mr Manfred suggested a working bee for the purpose of having stones which were lying about the hill, conveyed to the site with a view to reducing the cost. If a crowd of 3,000 people could assemble, a tremendous amount of work could be accomplished.

At a Committee meeting on April 15, 1924 Mr Ibbotson signed the contract and was to have the foundation stone in position ready for the ceremony.

### Laying the Foundation Stone

The foundation stone ceremony was conducted under a cloudy canopy to the accompaniment of a cold and driving wind.

After an excellent dinner, assembled by Mr Bartlett, the returned soldiers fully represented, fell in, in front of the Post Office.

Punctually at 2.30pm the Light Horse Band and the Diggers, the Mounted Light



Crowds making their way up to the Laying of the Foundation Stone. Anzac Day, 25 April 1924

Photo courtesy of Collection - S J Tazewell

Horse, the Citizen forces, Pipers, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides moved off in that order. The route was by Auburn and Clinton Street, under the railway subway along Park Road and the Memorial Avenue through Eastgrove and linking up with the new road at the hill top.

Following in the wake were scattered groups of people all with one destination, the top most peak of Rocky Hill. Poor weather prevented an attendance such as the magnitude of Anzac Day the previous year. Bands played selections throughout the afternoon.

The foundation stone, which was executed by J Turner and Sons was of polished granite and the inscription read:

This Foundation Stone was laid by Mr W J Bartlett

Donor of this Hill

The description of GOVENNING

To the citizens of GOULBURN

Anzac Day, April 25th, 1924



The Laying of the Foundation Stone Anzac Day, 25 April 1924. W J Bartlett, who performed the ceremony is seen alongside the flag standard. The Mayor, Alderman Middlebrook is standing on the right.

Photo courtesy of Ron Taylor.

The silver plated trowel, the donation of Mr Golding, (now on permanent display at the Museum) was inscribed: "Presented to W J Bartlett Esq., on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the City of Goulburn and District War Memorial April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1924". Mr. Bartlett then announced, "I now declare this stone well and truly laid," which was followed by enthusiastic cheers.

People gave donations and some gave war bonds, to swell the collection funds for the memorial. The collection made at the ceremony amounted to over £200. A L Faithful promised to give an additional £100 when the memorial was 10 feet high. The donation was reported in the Evening Post on August 2nd.

On May 13, 1924 Mr Ibbotson advised he was commencing work on the base that week. On May 24 a proposal for a shelter shed motion was defeated.

A new Memorial Road to cost £1200 was decided on and the contractor was B. Ginn. On August 21 the matter of the memorial road delays was discussed.

On September 11, 1925 the Committee fixed the day of the official opening, by the NSW Governor Sir Dudley de Chair, on December 15 at 3pm.

A Queen competition to raise funds was to be held, with the result to be declared at a Grand Ball on the opening night.

# Official Opening of the War Memorial

On December 15, 1925 the ceremony of the unveiling was brief but impressive. For an hour before, people had been slowly arriving and by 3pm the space between the gates of the memorial and the southern spur was dotted with people. Why the crowd was not greater cannot be explained, but the hundreds who scaled the rocky ramparts were well repaid.

Shortly after 3pm the big blue coach, the largest vehicle which had yet ascended the

memorial road, came into view along the ridge, preceded by the police escort. The Vice Regal party alighted, and accompanied by the Mayor and Mayoress, made their way to the base of the tower, where Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Bartlett and relatives of soldiers were presented.

Joan Hooper "Queen of Rocky Hill" presented Lady de Chair with a beautiful bouquet.



The Official Opening of the War Memorial,
15 December 1925

"The great day has come at last," said the Mayor, Alderman Middlebrook. "For nearly four years we have been striving to bring to completion this work of which we now see the consummation".

"Criticism had", he said, "been levelled at the Committee, but it was now generally admitted that this was the finest memorial in Australia. The architect Mr H G Manfred had designed a tower which, rough and rugged in its beauty, conformed to the surrounding hill whereon it stood and which reminded them of the sturdy bravery of our illustrious soldiers". He thanked his Excellency for coming to unveil the tower, but he knew that sir Dudley took pleasure in such a ceremony.

The Governor drew aside the Union Jack which hung above the doorway. The granite slab bearing the inscription, "To All who Served in the Great War 1914-1918" was revealed and Sir Dudley de Chair, standing on the topmost step of the plinth, spoke to the assembled citizens.



Mr William John Bartlett (left) and The Governor of NSW, Sir Dudley De Chair at the Official Opening of the War Memorial, 15 December 1925.

Photo courtesy of Ron Taylor.

"We are here today", said his Excellency, "to unveil this fine memorial as a lasting tribute to the gallant men of Goulburn and the district who came forward in answer to the call from the motherland in her hour of need. This memorial will stand here through many years long after we who are now here have passed away, and it will serve as a reminder to our children and our children's children of the deeds of those who helped to save the British Empire and Australia from the heel of the ruthless foe.

"It carries our memories back to those dark days, when our men stood shoulder to shoulder on the blood stained fields of France - when the gallant Anzacs stormed the Gallipoli heights, and the Australian Light Horse captured Jerusalem and drove the Turk back from Syria."

"So they created for themselves an imperishable renown on every battlefield on which they were engaged."

"Let us all remember what we owe to these gallant men, and see to it in our own small way, that they did not die in vain."

"The memorial", added his Excellency, "was a wonderful one and it was not only a monument to those who served, but to the energy of those who had laboured to erect it and to the generosity of Mr Bartlett, who had made it possible".

Sir Dudley added a word of commendation to those who made the road. "Goulburn should be proud of such citizens", he concluded. "My wife and I would not have missed this day for anything. This is not our first visit to Goulburn, and I hope we will be here on many future occasions".

"This fine tower, solid and strong will endure until this hill shall fall", said Mr W J Bartlett. "I am proud to be here today. I thank his Excellency for his kind words, but what I have done for the memorial has been a labour of love."

"I am pleased", added the veteran, "to see a worthy representative of our King perform such a ceremony. Emblematic of the men who made Australia glorious, this great tower will stand for ever. What is it, after all that I have done, compared with the work of those men who fought and died, that civilisation might live?"

Mr Bartlett concluded by reminding the gathering that tablets inscribed with the names of those who fell would be erected in the interior of the tower.

An appeal for donations to wipe off the total cost of the work met with a ready response.

Mrs Helen Maxwell, an elderly lady who had travelled from Sydney for the occasion, placed at the foot of the tower a wreath of laurel "in memory of my son Sgt. Maxwell and of his friends of the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion who fell in the Great War."

Another visitor was Mrs Anderson of Burwood, whose brother enlisted from Goulburn and who was also killed.

The Vice Regal party accompanied by the Mayor and Mayoress, Mr Bartlett and Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Perkins, then climbed the staircase and spent some time feasting their eyes on the splendid panorama spread out below them. Both the Governor and Lady de Chair agreed that it was the most magnificent memorial they had ever seen.

Prominent on the hill, as they had been throughout the movement, were the members of the Goulburn Red Cross. Though they were at a disadvantage working in the heat, they were as cheerful as ever, and Mrs Fuller was justly proud of her devoted band. If she had heard the Governor's quiet remark as he looked towards the tea tables she would have felt repaid.

"Those wonderful women", he said "have raised about £150 for the memorial fund."

"Also, those Diggers who served have done more for their own monument than had many of their fellow citizens. On Tuesday, members of the R.S. and S.I. League, put in the greater part of the day, assisting in transport and fatigue duty, the relatives of the soldiers being their special care".

The City band and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Band played music on the hill during the afternoon.

In the evening a Memorial Ball was held in the Arcadia Rink which brought the day's activities to a close. Miss Joan Hooper was crowned the Memorial Queen.

# A Description of the Memorial

This prominent landmark is a square stone conglomerate and concrete tower at the highest extremity of Rocky Hill towards the north eastern aspect of the city. It is indeed a landmark of prominence seen by road, rail and air travellers alike.

The overall height from the base is 64 feet (approximately 20 metres) and the base and chain railings measure 50 feet square. The base of the tower is 25 feet square and the top is 21 feet square with an overhanging cornice.

An easy grade staircase leads to the look-out galleries which provide excellent views from all four sides of the tower, especially the view of the main city. The main entrance gates to the tower are facing almost due south.

In the basement of the tower is a time capsule placed on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the building of the Memorial Tower. The war relics and memorabilia are now housed in a museum in the old caretakers cottage. The cottage was built in 1935 and had a series of caretakers until 1999. The new museum was opened on 16 December 2000. In it's earlier days the Memorial was flood lit and carried a rotating air beacon. With the introduction of radar the beacon and flood lighting were discontinued and it is only in recent years that it has again been floodlit during certain hours.



*The memorial under construction.* Photo courtesy of John Norris.

The memorial tablets in the building are inscribed with over 2500 names of enlistments from the surrounding district.

The memorial stone over the door reads: "To all who served in the Great War, 1914-18".

The inscription on the foundation stone is, "Laying the Foundation Stone".

The cost of the tower was approximately £4000 and the memorial road £1200.

The guns outside the entrance to the tower are both captured First World War guns and came to Goulburn in 1920 and were for some years in Belmore Park in the Auburn Street corners. One is a 150mm German Howitzer, captured by the 45<sup>th</sup> Battalion, AIF near Villiers Brittonneaux during an allied advance on August 8, 1918.

On the day after it was captured it was used by the 110<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Artillery against the retreating Germans. The other gun and the smaller of the two is a 150mm, captured by the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Light Horse Regiment at Mafrak, Palestine in September 1918.

Rocky Hill and its adjacent area comprises about 80 acres, the gift of W J Bartlett Esq. to the citizens of Goulburn.

Access is by way of the Memorial Avenue Road through East Goulburn or by the longer Memorial Road accessible from the Braidwood Road. From either entry an enjoyable sight can be seen while the round trip eventually finishes up on the Hume Highway again at North Goulburn. There is still a considerable amount of native trees and shrubs to be seen and in season the wild flowers are a delight.

#### The Contractor

At the time of the building of the memorial, Mr. H. C. Ibbotson was beset with considerable difficulties. One of the major ones was the fact there was no water on

Rocky Hill for mixing concrete, and one of the first requirements was to get the building materials to the site.

After unsuccessful negotiations with the Committee to obtain city water at the top of the hill, "Tom" Ibbotson set up an engine and pump on the river and filled the reserve tanks as required.

A good deal of blasting for rock and foundation was also necessary and at this particular period, Stephen Tazewell was in the hardware department of T.J. Lemon's Store, who supplied Mr. Ibbotson with many of his necessities. On one particular morning he required a package of detonators to be delivered as soon as possible.

Stephen Tazewell was deputised to deliver these detonators with the utmost of care. He was told, "Don't fall down when climbing the hill, or it will be the end of you!" In those days one literally climbed straight up the side of the hill from about the site of Stubbings Brick Works. Eventually he reached the summit and carefully handed the package to Mr. Ibbotson. Whilst he was pleased to receive the contents he said, "They ought to have better sense than to send a young fellow like you up here with this, one slip and you would have been blown to hell!"

The late Herbert Ernest "Tom" Ibbotson, came to Goulburn about the turn of the century from Tumut where he was born in 1880. "Tom" Ibbotson's father, Robert George, was a pioneer carrier settling with his family in Tumut in 1839. Mrs Ibbotson, like her late husband, came from pioneering stock, as her father Richard Sturt, was a nephew of Charles Sturt the explorer. She was also a native of Tumut.

"Tom" Ibbotson's active business took him to many parts of the State, as a builder and bridge contractor. His bridges span the Darling and Tumut Rivers, and many other creeks and rivers in the west of NSW. Nearer home, we have the Paddy's River Bridge and many buildings in Goulburn. The firm of Ibbotson and Portus occupied the site which was Thomas Williams Nursery and Produce Merchant in Auburn Street. Here they had their timber yard and workshops fronting onto Auburn Street. "Tom" Ibboston died in 1959.

# The Contractor's Story

As told to Steve Tazewell in his book of 1975.

"In the year of 1924, Bert Manfred, Architect, of Goulburn called tenders for the War Memorial Committee of Goulburn to erect the Monument on Rocky Hill.

At the time I was building paddy's River Bridge.

Bert brought the plans down to Paddy's River and asked if I was interested.

I explained that I was not keenly interested and pointed out the difficulty in getting material onto the site as there was no road of access and there was never a horse team or truck able to get to the site without making a road.

Anyhow, I went and explored the hill to see what I could do and decided to give him a tender, about £6,000 (in 1924).

Later the Committee accepted my tender and the contract was signed. I was then asked to attend a meeting in Market Street and there I was asked if I would give a price to take it up only 10 or 12 feet. I said, "Certainly not!"

After I had pioneered the place and built roads, etc., then some cove would come in and have the honour and glory of finishing it. Not likely.

A number of local and district people guaranteed the remainder of the money and I carried on with the job.

My first job was to get the foundation stone onto the site. I bought a couple of horses and dray and loaded the stone which was prepared by Jim Turner and sons of Verner Street, Goulburn.



The Memorial at about onethird construction – note small rail line for spawled stone conveyance on left, tool shed and water tanks used during construction.

I blazed a track via Landsdowne, about the same route as the present road, which was built afterwards.

Everything went all right until I got to the site of the present caretaker's residence.

I then capsized the dray, the stone went down the back of the hill and one of the horses broke its back and had to be shot.

I felt like chucking the job up. I thought it would be too tough a job.

Then, I plucked up courage, cut down a tree and built a sledge, hooked another couple of horses and landed the Foundation on the site.

You couldn't travel the ridge on the top as it was then a big cliff of rocks on the eastern side of where the caretaker's residence is now.

I put a cutting through this later and formed a road and used the stone in the monument. The next hurdle was getting the material to the site.

The stone was already there, only it had to be quarried and spawled into suitable sizes.

Scaffolding, 30 feet long, cement, sand and water all had to be delivered by horse-drawn vehicles, except water which was later pumped from the river and forced into 600 gallon tanks.

When the monument was 2/3rds built, the bodgies of the day, known as larrikins, used to climb on the scaffolding and throw big stones into the tanks.

More often, the stones went through the tanks and the water ran away. The police caught up with them and it ended in the Court House.

I got the job up to about ten feet high and then arranged with the committee to leave it for six months - I went away to Yass and built a bridge.

By the time the bridge was finished, the Committee had raised the balance of the money by further subscriptions and carnivals.

All of the materials were carried up by horse teams through Eastgrove, straight to the monument. After I put the cutting through the rock, near the residence, cars and trucks could get through there easily.

The late Mr Bartlett gave the Committee the land and one of the conditions was that the city side of the hill was not to be defaced in any way. I tried to get him to let me put a cutting through the rocks so that cars could be driven around the monument, similar to Albury, but of course, there is no rock at the Albury site. He wouldn't agree.

It was an awful place to work - cold winds all day long in winter. I reckon that they used to make the ice blocks at Grabben Gullen and fire them at Rocky Hill.

In conclusion, I would like to have a shot at the "Sunday" architects of the day, who reckoned that the stone in the monument would fall out - or the kids would pull them out.

The last visit I made up the Hill, I couldn't see one missing. One great pity is that a big room hadn't been excavated under the building to be used as a museum.

If I had thought of it, I would have done it for nothing just to get the stone, instead of scrambling all over the place for it. I just forget the quantity of concrete and stone which I used on the job.

"I think that is all I can remember	r."

# Lightning strikes

Since its construction the War Memorial Tower has been hit numerous times by lightning.

In 1993, after again being hit by lightning, it was decided to repair the structure and glass in the balconies to allow a greater degree of comfort during inclement weather.

In 1994 the tower was closed to the public to prevent further deterioration. It did not reopen again until 1998.

During this time extensive maintenance was carried out, both internally and externally, to the tower.

A mezzanine level was installed at the top of the stairs and the earlier 'glass pyramid' (see photo on page) was removed.

This new floor created a viewing platform capable of accommodating larger groups on tours or during services.

#### In more recent times...

The Goulburn War Memorial and Museum has undertaken some changes since this history was written in 1975.

The Memorial was later filled with relics from the First World War and two captured artillery pieces brought to Goulburn in 1920. After the last caretaker retired the caretakers cottage was converted into a small museum. This now houses a significant first allocation of WWI relics from The Australian War Memorial (then in Melbourne) as well as local history of all the conflicts in which Goulburn and district men and women have been involved.

Early on the Memorial was floodlit and carried a rotating air beacon this was used to assist the increasing traffic of aeroplanes involved in night flying. This assistance was no longer needed with the introduction of radar but the beacon still operates at night so the Memorial's imposing physical presence can still be seen at night as well as during the day.

The War Memorial celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 16 December 2000. To commemorate this occasion the caretaker's cottage, located at the car park near the War Memorial, was officially opened as the Goulburn War Memorial Museum by the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency the Honourable Gordon Samuels.

The official ceremony was conducted by Rev Rob Sutherland and along with the Governor of New South Wales was attended by Major General Peter Phillips, Alby Shultz, Member for Hume Mayor, and the Mayor, Max Hadlow.

The Memorial is still used each year for Anzac Day Services and the museum now hosts one major exhibition each year. Recently exhibitions have been held on the Boer War, Major Hazelton, a local of Goulburn for 40 years and his 'extraordinary vision of humanity' in Changi and experiences of local people in Gallipoli in WWI.

The Goulburn War Memorial has become one of the regions most significant monuments. Situated on the peak of Rocky Hill with views over the city of Goulburn it is often the first port of call for visitors to the region as well as being a local destination for recreation and Anzac Day.

#### Acknowledgements

In presenting this brief account of the first fifty years of Goulburn World War 1 Memorial, the Committee had a considerable amount of research to do in connection with anniversary celebrations and the unveiling of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary plaque.

The working Committee consisted of Mr. Fred Eccleston, R.S.L., Mr. Eric Sykes, Chairman of the Goulburn Tourist Committee and Alderman A. Lamarra of the Goulburn City Council.

The Committee especially wish to thank the Goulburn City Council for their assistance and the donation of the Commemoration Plaque, His Worship the Mayor, Mr. E.J. McDermott for his unveiling of the Commemoration Plaque, the Goulburn Tourist Committee, the Goulburn and District Historical Society, the R.S.L. Club and all who assisted in the organisation of the celebrations and the production of this booklet.

Our thanks to Mr. Norman Wilson and his family for some of the early photos of the Memorial progress.

Finally our thanks to Mr. Stephen Tazewell of the Goulburn and District Historical Society, without whose efforts the history of our Memorial may have never been written. We are also indebted to him for the reproduction of progressive War Memorial photographs from his extensive collection of historical Goulburn photographs.

Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is celebrated exactly 50 years to the day on 15 December, 1975.

Fred Eccleston.

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