



# The Old Mancunian

Easter 2005

Edition 19

## The High Master Writes

Although scholarship remains at the very heart of this School, good learning requires firm educational foundations: respecting the individual and individuality; the welfare and pastoral care of our boys; the selfless commitment to others; and the encouragement given to each to develop and to follow his own passions and enthusiasms. Happiness, in an Aristotelian sense, is our goal: developing the well-balanced person prepared for what life may bring in all its guises.

*I have noted with interest the correspondence from some OMs concerning their ill treatment in earlier and less enlightened days. The pain and humiliation involved in any form of bullying, psychological as well as physical, are unacceptable. It is especially repellent when those in a position of power over others are the perpetrators. The time is long gone when any High Master might be insulated from the individual concerns of boys. We can only regret and apologise for the problems of our past; but I know that we now do our very best to protect the young men in the School. When any issue is drawn to my attention, then I deal with it.*

Christopher Ray

## The Hugh Oldham Lecture

On a happier note, towards the end of the Summer Term, the inaugural Hugh Oldham Lecture will take place in the Memorial Hall at 5.30 pm on Monday 4 July. This first lecture will be delivered by Professor Sir Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal and Master of Trinity College Cambridge. He will be talking about recent developments in and the future

prospects for his own area of astronomy and cosmology – particularly relevant in this ‘Einstein Year’ celebrating 100 years since the first publication of Einstein’s ideas concerning Relativity and Quantum Theory.

Our own sixth form pupils, together with students from other schools in the Manchester area, will attend seminars and workshops prior to the lecture itself to help them prepare to get the best out of Sir Martin’s address. We will be delighted to extend a warm welcome to any OMs who might wish to join us at the School for this first Hugh Oldham Lecture. Please let Ian Thorpe in the Development Office ([i.thorpe@mgs.org](mailto:i.thorpe@mgs.org); 0161 225 0298) know of your intention to attend.

## Trek Archive

I am building up an archive of trek photos and currently have

pictures from some 66 treks - number growing by the week.

Old B&W glass slides (now converted to digital format) give quite good coverage of the years from 1910 to the outbreak of the 2nd WW - more good quality pictures would be welcome however. The past 25 years are largely covered by current staff, but the 50s, 60s and early 70s are very thin. There must be Old Mancunians out there who could fill some of the gaps.

If they could loan prints or, better still, original negatives and slides to the school I would be most obliged. They will then be scanned and the originals will be returned to the owner. In due course (say about 12 months time). The complete collection will be made available on CD Rom or DVD to anyone interested.

All such materials should be sent to Carole Pemberton in the Development Office at school. Roger Hand

[rogerhandathome@aol.com](mailto:rogerhandathome@aol.com)

## MGS Parents Summer Extravaganza

The Parents Society are holding a “**Summer Extravaganza**” which will be held at the School on Sunday July 3rd, from 11am to 2pm. This will include a number of special features. They are having a 'Birds of Prey' flying display, various inflatable games, food available, 5 a side football and driving taster lessons for all ages! Everyone will be made most welcome. Please come along and support your old School.

For further details please contact either the Chairman, or Social Secretary. Their details are as follow:

**Laura Evans**  
12 Brookwood Avenue  
SALE Cheshire  
M33 5BZ

0161 973 2084 (H)  
07976 894419 (M)

[naattvflo@hotmail.com](mailto:naattvflo@hotmail.com)

**Fiona Lloyd**  
01625 524019 (H)  
07801 930205 (M)

10 Greenway WILMSLOW  
Cheshire SK91LU  
[lloydic@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lloydic@yahoo.co.uk)

As part of the MGS Parents' Society event at school on Sunday 3 July I would be happy to arrange for Old Boys and their families to have access to look around the School buildings if they contact me via

[i.thorpe@mgs.org](mailto:i.thorpe@mgs.org)

## The 2005 Old Boys' Dinner

Please make a note in your diary now. The OBD will be held at the Freemason's Hall Bridge Street Manchester on Saturday 12th November. For more details write or speak to **Paul M A Rose**  
63 Moss Lane, SALE  
Cheshire M33 5AP

## Three Year Reunion

More than a dozen young OMs from the leaving class of 2002 met up at School on January 4 with two of their old teachers, Rodger Alderson and Ian Thorpe. Representing a variety of universities and fledgling careers, they swapped email addresses and phone numbers, enjoying the opportunity for a couple of drinks in the newly refurbished 'Butty Bar'.

We had many messages from OMs unable to attend - and resolved to try next year to avoid a clash with a Manchester United home game!

## Ian Thorpe Smith Square Concert

The MGS Showcase Concert held at St John’s, Smith Square on Friday 4 March was a great success. An audience of over 200 enjoyed a varied programme of music, including James Callaghan’s Chamber Concerto (first movement) with which he won the 2004 Composition Prize, sponsored by the London Section of the OMA. He was presented with his £500 prize by Clive Garston, partner in the law firm Halliwells, who sponsored the concert. More than 50 pupils enjoyed the experience of performing in one of London’s foremost concert venues, and provided the audience with a most enjoyable evening.

## Hair Cut!

As a pupil my thoughts were more soccer orientated than University directed, but after a few disappointments and a discussion with Mr Brierly (another big influence on my career) the life of a PE teacher was contemplated. An ‘interview’ with Mr Welsby was organised, where he told (cont page 3 column 4) .

## Old Boys Return to School

Two Old Mancs, both having achieved eminence in their respective fields, paid visits to School in February to meet staff and pupils.

**Jim White (1969/77)**, a busy journalist on radio and TV and with *The Daily Telegraph*, spoke to the English Group about his profession. He read English at Bristol University. **Mark Chilton (1988/95)**, takes over the captaincy of Lancashire County Cricket Club this season. Mark went to Durham University and read Business and Economics. He and Gary Yates fly the MGS flag at LCCC since Mark and John Crawley and Mike Atherton moved on. Mark had lunch with some of the staff who coach our cricket teams, and then met a large number of boys for a question-and-answer session.

## MCC Cricket Match

Over the past few years a group of Old Mancunian cricketers organised by **Gordon McKenna (1944/49)** have met over lunch at the MCC match at School.

The MCC Match this year is on Tuesday 17th May – any Old Mancunians who would like an invitation to this match are asked to contact Master i/c Cricket, **David Moss at School on 0161 224 7201 or by email D.Moss@mgs.org**

## Non-critical Staff Story!

I trust your decision to draw a line under critical comments on staff will allow non-critical comments to continue to be published in the Old Mancunian.

Before a line is drawn under everything, I would like to make you aware of a story concerning **Billy Hulme** which very few people know about.

One day after school about 1948, "**Billy**" Hulme was supervising the shot putt heats

on the school field. There were very few boys in this particular heat. I can only remember Iain Forsyth and myself being involved.

Iain's eyesight was such that he wore "bottle" glasses. (He became a dentist - ouch!) I putt my shot, and Billy bent right down to the ground to make the measurement. Not realising this (yes, I am quite confident of that), Iain putt his shot, which matched the trajectory of mine, missing the back of Billy's head by a whisker. There was a surprisingly low level of reaction by both parties, but certainly one of relief.

So, just a matter of a few inches prevented the demise of a member of staff, in a manner which would have been recorded in the annals of MGS history. (I know, I know, there will be those who insist the shot would have bounced off his head!)

**Ken Gorman (1945-52)**

**(I am sorry if I appeared to be banning all criticism of staff, or School. That was not my intention. The policy is to try to tell the truth at all times, I just thought that story had run long enough. See correspondence reported in full below Ed)**

Dear Editor,

You have suggested that we now draw a line beneath the accounts of life at MGS in the immediate post-war period. Before we do so, may I point out that *The Old Mancunian* has performed a great service by drawing attention to abuses to which many boys were subjected during that time? Our anger does not fade as the years go by. As parents, we find it difficult to understand how a minority of masters could treat small boys so appallingly.

There are many good things to remember about MGS life at that time. But we shall not forget the abuse. It has been beneficial for us to have shared those memories of the bad times. One thing we shall never know is why the High Master and the Governors sat on their hands for so long. They did

nothing to get rid of that small group of staff whose behaviour

## Easter 2005

was so harmful to the interests of a very fine generation of boys.

**Michael Leach (1947-54)**  
[mj\\_smleach@compuserve.com](mailto:mj_smleach@compuserve.com)  
Dear Michael,

As an overlapping contemporary of yours at School, I am deeply sympathetic to all those who suffered. I watched two terrible beatings of **Ike Barraclough** and **Bernard Sloan** both in gym shorts, which were savage in the extreme. Those images will be with me forever. Unfortunately, in those days there were not the safety mechanisms which one hopes are in place in a modern and well run institution such as MGS today.

I doubt if the real knowledge, or even a fraction of it, filtered up to the top, perhaps until it was too late. I doubt if the Governors would have known anything at all - remember in the main they were very old men who came into School for Governors' meetings, exhibition days and shows. I never remember seeing Eric James in the Gymnasium end of the buildings. He could have been "protected" from the truth by others, who perhaps might have known, but again, who might have thought reports greatly exaggerated.

We the pupils were in real fear of those masters who administered corporal punishment; and I think most parents would have taken the line "Well, you must have deserved it!" They probably would not have believed the severity of some of the beatings.

**Don Isherwood (1945/52)**

Dear Don,  
Many thanks for your message and for your interesting comments. Yes, please do use my e-mail with your reflections. You may well be right that the High Master was insulated from some of the harsher realities of school life. But he should have made it his business to know what was going on. I think the whole issue of discipline and

punishment was probably swept under the carpet.

Many of us are of the National Service generation. I went straight from MGS into the Royal Navy at the age of 18. Much of my first year was spent as a junior rating in a warship at sea. Discipline was tight but infinitely less harsh than the lower and middle school regime at MGS. I began to see that you achieve results not by beating people but by guiding them, by encouraging them and by giving them the self-confidence to believe they can achieve anything they might set their mind to.

Yet all was not gloom and doom at school and life in the Sixth Form was a redeeming aspect of MGS at this time. For me, it was such a pleasure to move from the bleak steppes of the middle school into the sunlit uplands of the Lower History Sixth. Ours was an excellent form and we had the pleasure and good fortune to be taught by men like **A.J.V.Roberts, R.W.Young and P.A.Gardiner.**

All good wishes, **Michael**

## To Be Fair

Although you suggested the correspondence be closed, I feel that in the interests of balance and fairness I should ask that you publish that **James Cuggy** was always very kind to the disabled boy who suffered from polio at the age of three. The person least sympathetic to my situation was the man who seems, to most people a paragon of virtue, **John Lingard.** We speak as we find!

**James Snowdon (1945/54)**

## A Good Read

Just out in paperback - *The Disastrous History of London* by John Withington, the first ever comprehensive history of disasters in the capital. Publisher - Sutton Publishing. Price £8.99. "A tale of epic proportions" - The Good Book Guide. For more information please contact

**John Withington (1958/65)**  
[john.withington@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:john.withington@blueyonder.co.uk)

## OMA Executive

Following discussions at the AGM on the question of updating the Constitution relating particularly to Sections of the OMA proposed revisions will be discussed at the next meeting to enable the final version to be placed before the General Meeting in November. Documents will be circulated to the Section Secretaries for their input prior to each stage.

## London Section

**The London & South East Dinner** will be held at **St Stephen's Club, 34 Queen Anne's Gate** on Wednesday 13th April, 2005 7.00pm for 7.30pm.

The toast to "The School" will be proposed by Maurice Watkins. **Members are invited to bring wives/partners.** Dress: Formal (Black Tie) Price £53 per person, includes table wines and coffee. Extra drinks will be available at a cash bar. Please reply to me, by Tuesday 5th April 2005. Late applications will be acknowledged by telephone, subject to availability of places.

**Ian Shepherd (Hon Steward)**  
35 Elizabeth Road,  
Hanley RG9 1RA  
Tel 01491 572393

[ian.shepherd@soci.org](mailto:ian.shepherd@soci.org) (not for urgent matters)  
[Nicholas.gartside@schroders.com](mailto:Nicholas.gartside@schroders.com)

(Please note email address)

## Golf at Knole Park

Contact Alec Elmer  
[alecelmer@supanet.com](mailto:alecelmer@supanet.com)

## Midlands Section

The Summer Luncheon will be held on Saturday 21 May 2005, at the usual venue, The Anchor Inn at Eckington when the speaker will be David Walker, the Bishop of Dudley.

Later in the year, the Autumn Luncheon and Annual General Meeting will be held again at the Forest Hotel, Dorridge, Solihull on Saturday 19 November 2005. Members are asked to make a note of the above dates. Further details of each function will be circulated to members about one month in advance.

The informal luncheons for members and their ladies continue to be held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Old Royal Hotel, Church Street, in the centre of Birmingham. Visitors and prospective new members will be made more than welcome, for details please contact me.

**Dan Binnion, Hon Secretary**  
(Please note his new telephone number: 01902 756894)

## Oxford Section

On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, the Old Mancunians Oxford Branch met for the annual black-tie dinner at Freud's Café in Oxford. Organised by Stephen Whittaker and Paul Stuart (both 1996-2003), it was a great success, attended by 23 old boys as well as the High Master, Ian Thorpe and Len Rix. Having been dormant for several years until resuscitated by Phil Hanson last year, it is hoped that the OMA in Oxford will continue to go from strength to strength.

For any further information, please e-mail  
[Stephen.whittaker@keble.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Stephen.whittaker@keble.ox.ac.uk) or  
[Paul.stuart@merton.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Paul.stuart@merton.ox.ac.uk),

or visit the website,  
<http://oldmancs.tripod.com/>

## South West Section

The Section's Committee Meeting took place at Chairman **Derek Andrew's** house at the end of February. The past year was reviewed and was regarded as a success in both social and financial terms.

The coming year's events were agreed upon. Firstly, the Hugh Oldham Commemorative Service and Lunch, to which **ALL Old Mancunians and guests are invited**, will take place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June. It will be a special occasion as we will be joined for the first time by both **Christopher Ray** and the newly appointed Dean of Exeter, **Jonathan Meyrick**.

The second event will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> November in Bristol. We plan to have a conducted tour of the **SS Great Britain**, which by then will have completed a major refurbishment.

Following the tour we intend to catch the ferry across the harbour to have lunch in a floating restaurant. Contact **Ed Bridge, Hon. Secretary**  
Tel: 01934 834521

## MGS Railway Society

In your report on the 200th Old Boys' Dinner, Dr Christopher Ray was reported as saying that "Train Spotting" was no longer available in the choice of societies for boys to join. If this means that the MGS Railway Society is no more, then that is a very sad loss, because it was much more than a train spotters club. The Railway Society had its own rooms in the basement of the Chemistry Laboratories, and I spent most of my lunch breaks there throughout my time at the school. There were two model railway layouts and an extensive library including volumes of The Railway

Magazine over a 50 year period. The whole set up was run entirely by the boys - I don't remember seeing a master down there at all often. We organised trips by train and by hired bus to preserved railways and industrial lines as well as the more obvious engine shed and works visits. The stations and locomotives on the model railway were named after benefactors mentioned in the Founders' Prayer. For school open days parts of the model railway were transported elsewhere in the school for public exhibition, and we also demonstrated a rather lethal mains powered linear induction motor which had been constructed by the Physics department in the early 1960s. So please - no disparaging remarks about "Train Spotters". The MGS Railway Society taught me practical and organisational skills that were not otherwise on the curriculum, and gave me a background of knowledge which I still call upon 30 years into my career in the railway industry. If it is true that the society has been disbanded, then I hope that at least a good home was found for the library.

**Ian Mitchell (1965-1972)**  
[ihmitchell@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:ihmitchell@ukonline.co.uk)  
(Reports on the Old Boys Dinners are published in the ANNUAL REPORT of the OMA)

## Black Forest Trek

I wonder if there are any OMs who went on, and remember, the Black Forest Trek in 1937 led by T W H Holland which also included visits to Cologne, Frankfurt, Eisenbach and Hanover? We stayed at magnificent hostels built for the Hitler Youth and occasionally in private accommodation where I had my first experience of a Continental bed cover.

I used a metal frame rucksack for the first time and found the trek very hard going. In fact at one stage I was given a lift by a sympathetic motor cyclist. I can think of several people who might have been a member of the party, but the only one I can really remember is the late Bob Hamer. Unfortunately I cannot find any photographs,  
**Donald F Dean (1931/39)**  
4 Trafalgar House, 34  
Trafalgar Road  
Birkdale, Southport  
PR8 2HE

## Sol's Chemistry Mnemonic

With reference to the latest issue of the OM's Newsletter

Page 3  
and Mr.Griffiths' poem which provided a memory jogger for the value of pi, I remember even after some 55 years Sol Clynes mnemonic for remembering the electrochemical potential order for the common metals. Viz. "Never ask Zombies for supper, poor fellows hate coffee afterwards" which gives Na, Al, Zn, Fe(++) , Sn, Pb, Fe(+++),H, Cu, Ag.

I'll bet many other of Sol's chemistry will have remembered it too. What a fabulous teacher he was.  
**Dr.R.D.Hill (1940/50).**  
[robert.hill@tesco.net](mailto:robert.hill@tesco.net)

## School Song & Hymn Books

Is either of these still available? I sang from a small pocket version of the Hymn book when I was in the choir, and the Song book for Speech Day.

**Donald Mills (1943/51)**  
23 Warrender Ave, Islington  
ONTARIO Canada M9b 5Z5  
**Free Enterprise?**

You have understandably drawn a line under reports of magisterial abuse of corporal punishment, but instances of this were in my experience, exceptional. Indeed such disciplinary measures could on occasion have a lighter side. I recall one enterprising youth who for the outlay of 1d per week offered the princely sum of 6d in compensation for such misfortune. Sadly, one master got wind of the scheme, and albeit more in sorrow than anger slipped all participants. Bankruptcy ensued!

**Robert (Bob) Heys (1940/46)**  
53 Bar lane, Ripponden  
Halifax HX6 4EX

## Hair Cut! From page 1

me to get my hair cut, and to remove my earring as he had arranged an interview for myself and Mike Ward at the prestigious College of Physical Education. I loved it, the earring went forever, the hair never longer than a grade 4 and my life as a PE teacher has been a most fulfilling one. I am now Head of PE and Sport at Wanganui. Any information on Mr Brierly and Mr Humpage would be most appreciated.  
**David Edmonson (1983/90)**  
[davide@wanganui-city.school.nz](mailto:davide@wanganui-city.school.nz)

## Obituaries

**Alan Christopher Holt** (1971/78) died on 16 November 2004 aged 44, after a brave struggle with cancer. He was a well respected banker and had been a keen sportsman. He was always very proud of MGS. His widow is making a collection of memories of Alan for his two young sons to read when they are older. If any readers have any recollections of him that they could offer, she would be grateful if they could be sent to: [mail@gillholt.co.uk](mailto:mail@gillholt.co.uk)  
**Gill Holt, 8 Streatley Road Upper Sundon, Bedfordshire, LU3 3PQ**

**Frederick Michael Hall** (1946/53) Trinity College, Cambridge. Died on 24th February 2005 aged 69. Taught maths at Dulwich College, he was Head of Mathematics at Shrewsbury School.

**J Barry Horsfield** (1944-50) At his home in Prestbury on Thursday 24th February 2005 aged 71.

**Dennis Richards OBE** (Staff List 1931/39) Died on November 25 2004 aged 94. He is survived by his wife and four daughters.

**Eric Watson** (1914-1920) Died on 30 December 2004 aged 101. Read Chemistry at Manchester University.

## Literary & Debating Society

What happened to this Society? During my time at MGS it was a very active and serious debating society. Despite its title it never had much of a literary element, and I always wondered whether that part of it had just faded away. It was completely run by sixth formers, with no member of staff having any part in it, though Lord James would on occasion give a presidential style address. I recall some first class debaters such as Bodmer, Caff, Whitby, & Mellor. I wonder if it was killed off by some over officious members of staff who wanted to run a rival operation? I would welcome

fellow OMs comment and information.

**John Horsfield** (1947/54) and **Staff List 1961/66)**

## The Golden Age?

After the sad letter from **R J Westrop** in Edition 10, my spirits sank when I started to read Edition 11 and found **Ian Thorpe** a pupil of the 60s, writing about "The Artistically rather arid days at MGS prior to the 60s". (What about Bert Parnaby's great drama productions?) Then **Michael Leach** had a go at a narrow curriculum in "One of the darker periods of MGS history", and **Stan Nield** followed with an attack on the largely "uninspiring teaching, particularly of mathematics".

Fortunately there was **P D Wood** to bring some common sense to the debate. Like him I found **Bert Parnaby** inspiring, but also many others such as **Albert Hyslop, Alec Wilson, Roger Stone** and above all **Eric James**, whose stand-in chemistry lessons for **Sol Clynes** and weekly divinity in the sixth were unforgettable.

**Eric Hodge** gave me a thorough grounding in maths. Yes, there were faults, particularly the lack of biology, but given the short working week, 30 three quarter hour periods per week, we covered a vast amount of ground.

Did MGS have a wider curriculum before the War, or was that the dark ages too? Did other schools in the late 1940s and 50s have a much superior curriculum? I doubt it. Like **P D Wood** I am grateful for the splendid education I received and for having been taught to think for myself and to know what scholarship means.

I trust there are many more of my persuasion out there. I only wish entrance to MGS was still available to all regardless of income as it was in that Golden Age but despite all the best efforts of those who have raised so much money, is no longer.

**Alan West 1948/55)**  
[AWest1937@aol.com](mailto:AWest1937@aol.com)

## OMs News

**Edmund Aldhouse** (1992/97) reported in a local paper about the 1400th anniversary celebrations at Rochester Cathedral. Edmund is Sub-Organist at the Cathedral

**Paul Duncan** (1970/76) advises us he is spearheading a drive to forge business links between Manchester and the USA. He launched the initiative in partnership with Manchester Investment and Development Agency Service to promote trade and links particularly with Minnesota. Minnesota has much in common with Manchester on the industrial and technical fronts – both are strong in healthcare, cancer research and IT.

**Julian Land** (1987/94) is one of the UK's most exciting up-and-coming design consultants. Formerly of David Collins Architecture and Design, Land has accomplished a wide diversity of creative projects for some of the world's most prestigious and recognisable brands including Cartier, Penhaligon's, American Express and David Linley. Personal commissions have included projects for David Linley, Jeff Leatham and Nigella Lawson. A specialist in the demands and trends of the international luxury market, Land's expertise includes interiors, art direction, styling, marketing, party and floral design.

Contact **Julian 07867 553732**

## Congratulations!

**Neil Buckley** (1979/85) who has been appointed the Moscow Correspondent for the *Financial Times*. Neil went to University College Oxford where he read for a BA Hons in French & Russian. He has also been Brussels Correspondent for the FT.

**Flat 11, 12/24 Sadovaya-Samotechnaya ulitsa 103051 Moscow, Russia**  
[Neil.Buckley@mail.dn.ru](mailto:Neil.Buckley@mail.dn.ru)

**Martin Woolacott** (1950/57) has been appointed Editor of *The Guardian*. Martin went to Merton College,

Oxford to read History. As a reporter he was once nominated

"International Reporter of the Year" at the British Press Awards.

## A Clerihew

Clerihews were the brainchild of Edmund Clerihew Bentley a journalist and artist who also supplied the illustrations. One of my personal war-time favourites was:

"Karl Marx and Herr Himmler  
 Are very dissimilar  
 But I'd like to see Harpo  
 Run the Gestapo."

The Saturday book published in 1956 two years after his death, featured clerihews composed by Nicholas Bentley (possibly his son) and using a six line format which seemed rather less pithy.

I too possess a poker (circa 1934) with an unintentional but artistic embellishment due to leaving the lathe running too long!

**J R Anderson** (1934/38)  
 4 Vardon Drive Wilmslow  
 Cheshire SK9 2AQ

## Apologies

In the September issue 17 of *The Old Mancunian* I inadvertently shortened **Gordon Harris's** service as a Master from 35 years to 5 years! His correct years as a master were **1953/88** not **1958**.  
 Ed.

## Editorial

In view of the duplication of reporting the OMA Executive has recommended that obituaries in future should be restricted normally to a brief notice. The full details of all known obituaries will continue to be published as before in *Ulula*.

Please address all correspondence to Mrs Carole Pemberton  
[c.m.pemberton@mgs.org](mailto:c.m.pemberton@mgs.org)  
 or to The Editor

*'The Old Mancunian'*  
 To register on internet go to  
[www.Oldmancunians.org](http://www.Oldmancunians.org)  
 Closing Date for *The Old Mancunian* Edition 20 is Friday 2nd September 2005.

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