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A PROPOSED ENGLISH ANCESTRY FOR HENRY² BALL (circa 1676–1735) OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

By Rachal M. Lennon, CGRS

(concluded from p. 172)

HENRY BALL OF ENGLAND, 1630s-1700

Given the name of an immigrant on transportation headright lists of the 1660s, with no place of birth suggested in any record, how does one determine origin? Clearly, in that time and place, the odds are overwhelming that a man of his name was English. Upon that premise (possibly faulty, but likely not), one typically begins with the International Genealogical Index [IGI] of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, which includes extracts of a significant number of early English parish records. Although this database is not comprehensive for any area, it permits researchers to focus attention upon specific parishes in which certain clusters of names are found and certain surnames predominate.

In this case, subsequent research in the original English parish registers included not only the name *Henry Ball* but also the names of all other Balls within Tidewater Virginia and all known Ball associates. The microfilmed originals—which in many cases require page-by-page readings—include apprenticeship records, marriage licenses, parish registers, and files of various archdeaconry, consistory, dean and chapter, and prerogative courts.

Initial research focused on parish registers, in an effort to identify all Henry Balls baptized at an appropriate time to have been the Virginia immigrant. Work then concentrated on each of these Henrys, to determine whether he married in the parish of his baptism, fathered children there, or died there—especially after 1661. (Because English burial records are far less completely extracted into the IGI than are the other parish records, the question of burial can seldom be definitively resolved.) Any of these three events might eliminate that man as the Virginia immigrant. This process of elimination typically reduces the field of candidates, on whom research then extends into probate and civil records.

The task was not small. The results are rewarding but, at best, they support only a hypothesis. Ten men fit the profile established for Henry of Middlesex that is, birth before 1650 (likely before 1640) and migration before the end of 1661:

NAME	BIRTH/BAPTISM	PARISH	FATHER
Henry Balle	1632	Cruwys–Morchard, Devon	Walter ⁶⁹
Henry Ball	1633	St. Bride, Fleet Street, London	Henry ⁷⁰
Henry Ball	1637	Mancetter, Warwickshire	Richard ⁷¹
Henry Ball	1638	Uffculme, Devon	Henry ⁷²
Henry Balls	1638	St. Paul, Norwich, Norfolk	John ⁷³
Henry Balls	1641	St. Margaret, Middlesex	Thomas ⁷⁴
Henry Ball	1641	North Meols, Lancashire	Richard ⁷⁵
Henry Balls	1641	Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk	John ⁷⁶
Henry Ball	1644	St. Leonard, Colchester, Essex	Henry ⁷⁷
Henry Balls	1649	Runham, Norfolk	Thomas ⁷⁸

Of these ten men, the following six could be eliminated by subsequent records:

NAME	PARISH	REASON FOR ELIMINATION
Henry Balle Henry Ball Henry Balls Henry Ball Henry Ball Henry Ball	Cruwys-Morchard Mancetter St. Margaret North Meols St. Leonard Runham	married 1659 and died 1697 ⁷⁹ buried the day after his baptism ⁸⁰ buried in 1642 ⁸¹ apparently married by 1661 and buried 1668 ⁸² buried in 1666/7 ⁸³ apparently married Elizabeth Yallop at
		Caistor on Sea in 1674 ⁸⁴

⁶⁹ Cruwys-Morchard Parish Register, 1572-1812, p. 23 [FHL film #917,187].

⁷⁰ St. Bride, Fleet Street, Parish Register, pt. I; Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths, 1587–1673, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, baptisms 1633 [FHL film #s 380,154–55].

⁷² Uffculme Parish Register, 1538–1875, p. 48 [FHL film #917,548].

⁷³ Parish Register, St. Paul, Norwich, 1614–1738, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, baptisms 1638 [FHL film #1,305,938].

⁷⁴ Arthur Meredyth Burke, ed., *Memorials of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster: The Par*ish Registers, 1539–1660 (London, 1914), 172 (hereafter cited as Burke, St. Margaret's ... Parish Registers).

⁷⁵ Henry Brierly, *The Parish Registers of North Meols* (Preston, 1929), 19 (hereafter cited as Brierly, *North Meols Parish Registers*).

⁷⁶ Transcripts, Registers, Bury St. Edmunds Parish, vol. 54, Baptisms, 1558–1800, p. 124 [FHL film #993,230].

⁷⁷ St. Leonard Parish Registers, 1539–1800, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, baptisms 1644 [FHL film #1,565,421].

⁷⁸ Runham Parish Registers, 1539–1812, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, baptisms 1649 [FHL film #1,596,368].

⁷¹ Mancetter Parish Register, 1577–1777, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, baptisms 1637 [FHL film #555,355].

⁷⁹ Cruwys-Morchard Parish Register, marriages, p. 7; burial, p. 34.

⁸⁰ Mancetter Parish Registers, unpaginated, unnumbered entry, burials 1637.

⁸¹ Burke, St. Margaret's ... Parish Registers, 601.

⁸² Brierly, North Meols Parish Registers, 20, 93.

⁸³ St. Leonard Parish Registers, burial 27 Feb. 1666/7.

⁸⁴ Transcripts, Caister-on-Sea Parish Registers [FHL film #s 1,911,618-19].

NAME	BIRTH/BAPTISM	PARISH	PARENT
Henry Ball	1633	St. Bride, Fleet Street, London	Henry
Henry Ball	1638	Uffculme, Devon	Henry
Henry Balls	1638	St. Paul, Norwich, Norfolk	John
Henry Balls	1641	Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk	John

The field of candidates was thereby reduced to four:

Of these, three offered no evidence to support or deny a proposal that he might be Henry of Middlesex County, Virginia:

Henry Ball of Uffculme, Devon: Significant destruction of records during World War II renders exhaustive research in this county impossible. Extant records produced no further information.

Henry Balls of St. Paul, Norwich: Nothing found in Prerogative Court of Canterbury, the Consistory Court of Norwich, or the Archdeaconry Court of Norwich. The surname's spelling, *Balls*, *might* indicate he is of a different family than the immigrant to Middlesex.

Henry Balles of Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk: Nothing found in the records of the Archdeaconry Court of Sudbury, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, or the Consistory Court of Norwich. Again, the spelling *Balles might* indicate a different family.

Numerous pieces of both positive and negative evidence, however, suggest the possibility that the remaining candidate—Henry Ball Jr. of St. Bride, Fleet Street, London—was Henry of Middlesex County. To summarize:

Balls of St. Bride and St. Andrew Holborn

On 7 October 1629, one Henry Ball wed Mary Turner in St. Bride's Parish. Over the next four years, they presented three children for baptism: Nathaniel on 15 August 1630, who was buried ten days later; Elizabeth on 5 February 1631[/2], who was buried on 25 April 1632; and *Henry* on 12 May 1633.⁸⁵ Although burial records continue for the parish, there is no subsequent burial of the child Henry. Christening records also continue, but the couple presented no more children at the baptismal font. No further records of children for them have been found during the remainder of the 1630s or the 1640s.

On 29 March 1649, administration on the estate of "Henry Ball late of the parish of St. Andrew Holborn in County Middlesex" was granted by the Archdeaconry Court of London to "Mary Ball his relict"; the estate was valued at £142 2s. $8d.^{86}$ (St. Andrew Holborn and St. Bride are within walking distance of one another.) Parish registers exist for St. Andrew Holborn during the sixteen years in which the couple are absent from the St. Bride register, but those records offer no

⁸⁵ St. Bride Parish Registers, baptisms, 15 Aug. 1630, 5 Feb. 1631[/2], and 12 May 1633; burials 25 Aug. 1630, 25 April 1632.

⁸⁶ Act Books of Archdeaconry Court of London, 8:38 [29 March 1649]. The quoted passages have been translated from the Latin.

trace of this family. Nor has there been found any further record of the settlement of the 1649 estate of Henry Sr. Similarly, records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and the Archdeaconry, Commissary, and Consistory Courts of London failed to produce any other information on an individual who can be identified as Henry of St. Bride.

Associational Context

Any case of identity that is based solely on the elimination process and similarity of name is tenuous at best. Certainly this caveat applies to seventeenthcentury England, for which countless records are lost and many vital records remain unprocessed and difficult to access. Arguments for identity, however, can be strengthened if associational ties are found. In the present case, a reasonable number do exist:

General Context

1. The name *Henry Ball* is quite rare in colonial Virginia, and it is comparatively uncommon in England.

2. Scholars agree that early Middlesex Co., Va., was settled primarily by London emigrants;⁸⁷ Middlesex Co., in fact, was named for the county that surrounded London.

3. Extant passenger lists and servant contracts from London have been lost. All that are known to survive for England come from other cities, primarily Bristol; and no Henry Ball appears among them who might be the Henry of Virginia in the 1660s.⁸⁸

Specific Context

1. The 1661/2 headright list on which Henry Ball appears includes 36 other whites. One of these names seems particularly coincidental—Mary Turner, the maiden name of the wife and widow of Henry Ball Sr. of St. Bride and St. Andrew Holborn.

2. For three other names on the headright list, corresponding candidates also appear in appropriately dated baptismal entries of St. Bride: William Chapman (1634), Elizabeth Clarke

⁸⁷ For discussions of London origins of colonial settlers to the Middlesex area, see James Horn, *Adapting to a New World*, cited above, and Darrett B. and Anita H. Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, 1650–1750* (New York, 1984).

⁸⁸ For emigration lists, see N. Dermott Harding and R. Hargreaves-Mawdsley, eds., Bristol and America: A Record of the First Settlers in the Colonies of North America, 1654-1685 (London, 1929); Michael Ghirelli, A List of Emigrants from England to America, 1682-1692 (Baltimore, 1968); C. D. P. Nicholson, "Some Early Emigrants to America," Genealogists' Magazine 12(1955-58), 13(1959-61); John Wareing, "Some Early Emigrants to America, 1683-84, A Supplementary List," Genealogists' Magazine 18(1975-76):239-46; Peter Wilson Coldham, The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607-1660 (Baltimore, 1987). Lists of convict deportations exist for Middlesex and London, but they include no Henry Ball (Peter Wilson Coldham, English Convicts in Colonial America, vol. 1, Middlesex: 1617-1775 [New Orleans, 1974], vol. 2: City of London 1656-1775 [New Orleans, 1976]).

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(1628), and John Morgan (1633).⁸⁹ Perhaps coincidentally, the names *Elizabeth Clarke* and *John Morgan* are actually cited *consecutively* on the headright list.

3. St. Andrew Holborn's registers offer even more candidates for the remaining individuals whose headrights were held by Robert Smith: George Davis (bp. 1650), John Godfrey (1634), William Hill (1629), Peter James (1629), Abraham Lawes (1631), and Robert Lee (1631). (Lawes, to add to the "coincidence," fathered Elizabeth Clarke's child in the colonies.)⁹⁰ As with Henry Ball of St. Bride, none of these other same-name infants of St. Bride and St. Andrew Holborn can be accounted for in those registers during or after 1661.

4. Thomas Radley of Ball's Neck/Burnham Creek offers several "coincidences" to consider. When he died a bachelor in 1686, Radley left a bequest to one Dorothy Ball,⁹¹ who remains unidentified and unmentioned in any other colonial document.⁹² He appears on two separate claims for transportation rights. With one Dorothy Jones and John Morgan, he is consecutively listed on a 1657 land claim by a William Wildy about whom nothing else is known. All three immigrants were subsequently claimed by individuals connected to Henry Ball of the 1660s—Radley by Col. Cuthbert Potter, Jones by Robert Chowning, and Morgan by Col. Robert Smith, who claimed Ball himself.⁹³

5. Although Radley was in the colony by 1657, 15 years passed before he became a landowner. Even then, he was clearly of limited means, having to take a partner for the purchase of a mere 20 acres.⁹⁴ The long delay implies that he arrived as a child, spent his youth in servitude, and came of age after land became difficult for freed servants to obtain. He is specifically identified in Virginia records as a native of London, although the parish remains unspecified.⁹⁵ Meanwhile, St. Bride's registers include the baptism of one Thomas Radley in 1647, a child for whom no other record has been found in that or any other London parish.⁹⁶ In age and other characteristics, he fits the criteria to be the individual of Ball's Neck.

6. In 1680 one Elizabeth Ball of the Sunderland Creek area of Middlesex—for whom no parentage seems identifiable—m. one Michael Musgrove,⁹⁷ an immigrant who had at least occasional business ties with Col. Robert Smith.⁹⁸ After her death, Musgrove returned to London with their one daughter and subsequently d. at St. Sepulchre,⁹⁹ a parish that also adjoins St. Bride; and Balls are also found contemporaneously in St. Sepulchre.¹⁰⁰

In sum, over a hundred parishes sprawled across the city of London in the 1600s, at least a dozen individuals connected to the Balls of Ball's Neck appear to have London roots, and all fall within three adjacent parishes on the west side of the city: St. Bride Fleet Street, St. Andrew Holborn, and St. Sepulchre. Mean-

⁸⁹ St. Bride Parish Registers, baptisms 1628, 1633, 1634.

⁹⁰ St. Andrew Holborn Parish Registers, baptisms 1629, 1631, 1650 [FHL film #s 374,348-49].

⁹¹ William Lindsey Hopkins, *Middlesex County, Virginia, Wills and Inventories, 1673–1812, and Other Court Papers* (Richmond, 1989), 51 (hereafter cited as Hopkins, *Middlesex Co. Wills).*

⁹² Possibly she is the Dorothy Ball of Covent Garden, discussed in note 67.

⁹³ Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, 1:359, citing Wm. Wildy, 1000 acres, 27 Jan. 1657; Sparacio, Order Book Abstracts of Lancaster, 1666–1669, 8, citing certificate granted Cuthbert Potter; Lancaster Co. Order Book 3:81, for certificate to Robert Chowning.

⁹⁴ Middlesex Co., Va., Deeds, 2:476–78.

⁹⁵ For best available copy of Radley's will, see Hopkins, Middlesex Co. Wills, 51.

⁹⁶ St. Bride, Fleet Street, Parish Register, baptisms 1647/8.

⁹⁷ Christ Church Parish Registers, 24.

⁹⁸ Middlesex Co. Orders, 1:53.

⁹⁹ Middlesex Co. Deeds, 1694-1703, pp. 255-57; Middlesex Co. Deeds, 1703-1709, p. 88; Withington, Virginia Gleanings, 676.

¹⁰⁰ St. Sepulchre, Newgate, Parish Registers [FHL film #s 374,998-99].

Hester, bp. 13 Jan. 1661/2, bur. 22 Aug. 1663. John, bp. 24 Jan. 1672/3 [apparently a delayed baptism]. Ann, wife of Henry Ball, bur. 4 March 1671/2.

Set Two

Henry, bp. 29 March 1680, bur. 23 Sept. 1680. Judith, bp. 10 Oct. 1682, bur. 11 Jan. 1684/5. Henry, bur. 27 June 1684. Robert, bur. 28 April 1685. Mary, bp. 15 Feb. 1684/5, bur. 19 July 1685. Robert, bp. 16 Oct. 1687. William, bp. 8 Feb. 1690/1, bur. 27 May 1694. John, bp. 16 Oct. 1992. Henry, bur. 10 July 1693.

On 27 July 1693, the Archdeaconry Court of London granted administration on the estate of Henry Ball to his widow Ann.¹⁰⁴ Neither this record nor the church registers cites an occupation for him. The probate record does not identify heirs. No marriage of a Henry and Ann between 1650 and the 1680s can be found in Clerkenwell's parish registers or among IGI entries for other English parishes. The origin of this Henry—presuming that the above represent a single man with two wives—is unknown. Two circumstantial reasons warrant a consideration that he may be Henry Jr. of St. Bride and the elder Henry of Virginia; but one significant element weighs against it.

In Favor

A marriage about 1656 and a death about 1693 would be a comfortable fit for the Henry bp. at St. Bride in 1633. (The dates would be a less-appropriate but still-possible fit for the Uffculme and St. Paul Henrys, bp. 1638, whose fates remain uncertain.)

The two large gaps in the baptisms of children exactly coincide with the colonial sojourn of the first Henry in Virginia (ca. 1661–70); and the birth about 1676 of Henry "H."

Against

No associates in common have been identified between the Balls of St. James Clerkenwell and either of the Henry Balls of Burnham's Creek/Ball's Neck, Va.

SUMMATION

English research thus far has produced only one strong candidate for the first Henry Ball in Virginia: the Henry Jr. baptized in 1633 at Fleet Street, London; and it has failed to produce any evidence to discredit that theory. If this hypothesis withstands future tests, then parents of the Virginia immigrant may be identified as Henry Sr. and Mary (Turner) Ball who emerge in 1629 in the parish of St. Bride and last appear on record in 1649 in the adjacent parish of St. Andrew Holborn. The death of the Henry Sr. in that year, leaving an estate of only £142 2s. 8d., would have left his 16-year-old son with fewer ties to home, little fortune, and a plausible motivation to seek both adventure and fortune in the New World—a motivation likely encouraged by other emigrating members of his London community.

¹⁰⁴ Archdeaconry Court of London, Act Book 16:91; research by Dr. Thompson.

ADDENDA

Summary details for eight other early Virginians—six Balls and two Bells—follow:

FRANCIS BALL. On 16 Aug. 1654, he recorded the ownership of an earmarked cow. His name has not been found again in colonial Virginia. For this record, see Lancaster Co. Deed & Will Abstracts, 1652–57, p. 89.

JOSEPH BALL. Called *Mr.*, Joseph was the son of Col. William Ball of Lancaster who arrived before 1653. See particularly Lancaster Co. Order Book 1666–1680, pp. 198, 211, 221 [which identifies him as William's son], 243. No record associates him with anyone connected to the Balls of Ball's Neck.

RICHARD BALL. The probable brother of Col. William, who was not only his contemporary but also acted as his surety, Richard appears in Lancaster records from 1651–58 but removed to Potapsco in Maryland before 1665. See Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 1:135; Lancaster Co. Orders 4:101–2; Sparacio, *Deed & Will Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia*, 1654–1661, 81, 95.

THOMAS BALL, mariner. Thomas appears sporadically in the records of Northampton and Lancaster between 1653 and 1700. His daughter Catharine (born of his first known wife, Sarah) was a major beneficiary of the 1695 will of Henry *Bell* of Lancaster. That bequest and the subsequent settlement of Thomas's estate in Northampton resulted in the creation of several documents naming Thomas's widow (Elizabeth, later wife of John Bourne) and surviving children (Catherine, wife of Abraham Bledsoe; and Margaret, wife of Richard Harrold). See Lancaster Co. Deeds, Wills', & Settlements of Estates, 1652–57, p. 149; Sparacio, *Deed & Will Abstracts of Lancaster*, *1654–1661*, p. 10; Lancaster Co. Deeds and Wills, 7:36; Lancaster Co. Wills, 8:49–50; Lancaster Co. Orders, 4:42–44, 724; Lancaster Co. Deeds, Etc., 11:67–68; Northumberland Co. Orders, 5:114–15, 127, 130, 196, 243; and the set of unpaginated loose papers labeled "Deed Book, 1660–1759," reel 236, Mary Ball Washington Museum, Lancaster, Va.

THOMAS BALL, servant. This man appears but once in the region; a 1675 court order states that he had newly arrived without an indenture and he was to serve John Morris of Lancaster for eight years; see Lancaster Co. Orders, 1666–80, p. 339. During his indentureship, Thomas would not have been legally permitted to marry. Although servants did sometimes produce illegitimate children, nothing places him in Middlesex, which had been cut away from Lancaster prior to his arrival, or amid the associates of Henry "H" Ball.

Col. WILLIAM BALL. This founder of the Ball family that was ancestral to Martha (Ball) (Custis) Washington settled the Corotoman River area of Lancaster Co. by 1653, enjoyed extreme prominence, and left a will naming his children. For the latter, see Sparacio, *Will Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia, 1675–1689,* 48–49.

JOHN BELL. A resident of Barbecue Creek near Store Point along the Pianketank between 1659 and 1678, Bell was a neighbor of two men associated with Henry Ball and Henry "H" Ball: Thomas Williams and Edmund Mickleborough. On 26 Feb. 1659, as John *Bell*, he patented 150 acres that he subsequently sold to the adjacent landowner, Thomas Williams. A 1705 deed for that land and Williams's adjacent tract, a document that cites the chain of title back to the original patent, calls him *Ball*; but in all other documents he consistently appears as *Bell*. The *Ball* spelling is almost certainly a copying error. See particularly Lancaster Co. Orders &c, no. 1, 1666–80, pp. 4, 19, 52, 61, 87, 92, 100, 132; and Lancaster Co. Deeds, Wills, Settlements of Estates, 1661–1702, pp. 342–43, 387–88. For the one *Ball* spelling, see Middlesex Co. Deed Book 3(4 Oct. 1703–6 Dec. 1709): 98–100.

HENRY BELL. A Lancaster planter from 1670, Henry presented a serious red herring. His 1695 will names two minor sons, *Henry* and William (to receive 1s. each), left his land to his daughter Rebecca, and named "Katherine Ball, the Daughter of Thomas and Sarah Ball" as the residual heir to his land in case Rebecca died without heirs of her body. Moreover, Henry Bell was intimately involved with one Francis Manuell [Emanuell], an apparent kinsman of the Middlesex Manuells

with whom Henry "H" Ball was associated. However, all documents dealing with Henry Bell of Lancaster consistently render his name as *Bell*, nothing directly associates him with any of the Middlesex Balls, and his son Henry can be otherwise accounted for under the surname *Bell*. In fact, old Henry's exclusion of his son from heirship appears to have been due to some physical or mental handicap on the part of the son that left him dependent on others. Young Henry appears on the tithe roll the year following his father's death but was dropped thereafter, and family members apparently provided for him. On 16 March 1711, he put his X to a deed between Peter Kilgore and Thomas Pinson; and in 1723 a list of expenses in the estate settlement of his brother-in-law Francis Hathaway (Hattaway, Hadaway) included the cost of a pair of shoes provided to him. See Lancaster Co. Wills, 8:49–50; Lancaster Co. Deeds, Etc., 9:432–34, 11:230; and a 9 April 1712 assignment by Peter Kilgore to Thomas Pinson (unpaginated loose papers labeled "Deed Book 1660–1759," reel 236, Mary Ball Washington Museum).

Unplaced Balls:

Of the other young Balls who emerge in Middlesex after 1680, two were definitely transportees and one was said to be colonial-born, although her parentage was not stated. No evidence is known for the birthplaces of the other two. These five unplaced Balls are:

Transportees

ELIZABETH BALL (1681): servant of Oswald Carey, who claimed her headright. She is likely the Elizabeth Ball who m. Oswald's associate, John Tidbury, in Christ Church Parish in 1682/3. For Elizabeth's connection to Carey, see Middlesex Co. Orders, 2:39. For her marriage, see Christ Church Parish Register, Middlesex Co., Va., 22 [FHL film #30,821]. For Tidbury's association with Carey, see Middlesex Co. Deeds, 1679–88, p. 35.

WILLIAM BALL (1687): claimed as a headright by Oswald Carey; no further information. For the Carey connection, see Middlesex Co. Orders, 2:39.

Others

ANN BALL (1687): She m. John Bloss (a man connected to many members of the Henry "H" Ball community) in Christ Church Parish; that record called her a "native." See Christ Church Parish Register, 36.

DOROTHY BALL (1686/7): She received a bequest by the will of Thomas Radley, a resident of the Henry "H" Ball neighborhood. Radley's will is practically illegible; for the best abstract, see Hopkins, *Middlesex Co. Wills*, 51.

ELIZABETH BALL (1680): She m. the well-connected Michael Musgrove and d. before 1697. For her marriage, see Christ Church Parish Register, 24. Neither Musgrove's will, written in England on 21 Dec. 1697 and proved 26 Jan. 1697/8, nor the subsequent estate proceedings mentioned Elizabeth, but they did name one daughter. See Lothrop Withington, *Virginia Gleanings in England*, 676; and Middlesex Co. Deeds & Wills, 1694–1703, pp. 255–57.

(concluded)

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