

**FREE**



**THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**

# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 1982

CIRCULATION 4500

NUMBER 47

## QUICK ONES

### If you're glad you live round here

In response to Martyn Cornell's comments on their new advertising poster (pictured below) Mr J.P.S. Jamieson of Greene King has very kindly offered to send miniature reproductions of the Breughel print to the first 50 newsletter readers who send him a large stamped addressed envelope. Send your requests to him at the Westgate Brewery, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.



Don't you wish your local sold Greene King IPA bitter?

### Full Houses

— or rather the lack of them, seems to be prompting a rash of promotions amongst the big brewers to boost flagging beer sales. One of the latest was a pub bingo contest run by Benskins and Ind Coope during December. The Company has also run its Benskins Redskins competition earlier this year and is running a scheme in connection with Watford Football Club. Meanwhile Courage have been struggling through the year with several offerings ranging from 1/2-price beer to raffles and fruit-machine cards. Bass Charrington are advertising their (rather laughable I think) Beer Festival offering such delights as Worthington E and Toby bitter alongside Bass and IPA. Not only can you buy pub games and an engraved pewter tankard (at only £11.50 they are obviously aiming to make up sagging profits this way!), but you are encouraged to send in your judgements on their beer. Their facts sheet gives you advice on "How the Experts taste beer". The winner of this particular part of the "festival" stands to get a free pint a day for a year. That's certainly one way to get rid of the stuff if you can't sell it.

### True men

Five Truman's landlords in Stevenage have banded together and squeezed out of their brewery that almost unheard-of thing — a reduction in beer prices.

The landlords were angry that Truman's were making them charge London prices, and driving their customers to other, and considerably cheaper, pubs just down the road. After hearing their evidence, the brewery cut 4p a pint off draught beer in the Stevenage pubs, and even when, shortly afterwards, Truman prices everywhere went up by 4p, Stevenage Truman pubs only went up by 2p a pint.

Meanwhile, even more interesting things are happening in Stevenage Truman pubs. At the Gamekeeper, Bedwell, a big new signboard has gone up showing the old Truman eagle trademark, and when alterations

to the interior are completed a proper handpump for Truman's Tap will be replacing the present air-pressure one.

More than £75,000 has been spent completely renovating the Pyramid pub, Pin Green, which now has both Truman's real ales, including the new bitter, on handpump.

This is the first time in North Herts for the new bitter, rather sweeter, and slightly cheaper, than Tap. This is also the first appearance of real ale in Pin Green.

At the Swan in Chells there is hope, too, that a handpump may appear when interior alterations take place there, while the Man in the Moon, Marymead, of course, already has a handpump following its own renovation. Only the joint Truman-McMullen pub in Stevenage, the Almond Tree, Pin Green, appears to be missing out on the boom — perhaps McMullen themselves ought to show the way here.

### Grin and chronic

Not to be outdone by the examples of superb wit printed in the Christmas newsletter, Martyn Cornell, our resident columnist, passed on this little snippet: Why do ghouls and demons get on so well together? Well — demons are a ghoul's best friend. Ugh.

### Wrong again!

*2 Down in last month's crossword should have read:*

*Kind of vision with light at its end  
and not "King ..." as printed.*

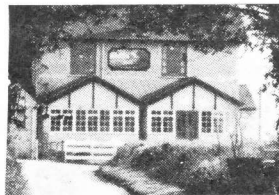
*20 down should read:*

*Rapid succession of notes made by a pig-fifteen*

*Apologies for those two errors. You still have until January 15th to get those entries in!*

## THE BARLEY MOW

**VARIETY IS  
THE SPICE  
OF LIFE**



**TRY OUR  
15 REAL  
ALES**

### TYTTENHANGER GREEN

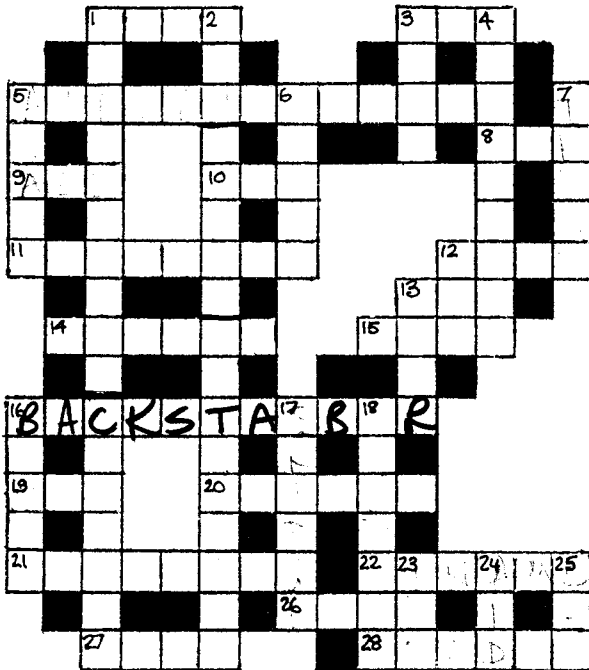
**In addition to our normal range there will always be a cask on the bar from our range of guest beers which could be one of the following: Eldridge Pope, Bourne Valley, Donnington, Arkell, Archers, St Austell or Brakspear's 6X.**

Our new room is bookable for functions, individual tables may be booked for lunches Monday to Friday. The room is used for games in the evening and children are allowed in, *if accompanied*, on Saturday and Sunday lunchtime. We now also have a dartboard in the main bar.

**PLEASE NOTE — NO COACHES  
INCLUDING MINIBUSES, EXCEPT BY  
APPOINTMENT**

# COMPETITION

The prize for this month's crossword will be two books of crossword puzzles, and it will be sent to the sender of the first correct solution opened on February 12th. All entries must be marked JANUARY COMPETITION.



## Across

- 1 Journey's end about middle of April (4)
- 3 It grips some cardboard (3)
- 5 What we hope for ourselves and wish others (1,5,3,4)
- 8 One in alternative row (3)
- 9 By right, it could (and should) be real (3)
- 10 Part of a school table is wooden (3)
- 11 Central Samoan girls are very sweet (8)
- 12  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 1 = 36 (4)
- 13 Shelter from sleet (3)
- 14 Non-U pub fare cooked in temporary premises (6)
- 15 Sweet drink found in some 22 pubs (4)
- 16 Support bouncing breast with top of bra tucked in: one would do for another (11)
- 19 I'm attracted to the Ram Brewery: that's where I'll be found (3)
- 20 Losing head, a frenzied session produces them (6)
- 21 Knock-about, knocking back c-crazy gin cocktail (8)
- 22 Man has sad misconception of Suffolk brewery (6)
- 26 Part of incompatible Ireland? (4)
- 27 Short drinks served up – by *The Cricketers*? (4)
- 28 Lead mixture in outskirts of Derby could be (6)

## Down

- 1 Tourists – East European, we hear – find them useful (10, 7)
- 2 Settle by army command: listen carefully (3,5,9)
- 3 Ingredients of Double Diamond were extortionate (4)
- 4 Degenerated, caused by a-drinking Luton keg? (9)
- 5 You'd be aroused by this fire? (5)
- 6 Moves slowly in measured gesture (5)
- 7 T-tear flow in Stoke? (5)
- 12 It stops you wetting your whistle (3)
- 16 What beer does sounds painful (5)
- 17 One over seven (8)
- 18 You wouldn't like this Tiger in a tank (7)
- 23 Endless deep river (3)
- 24 Relief obtained in Maidenhead (3)
- 25 Notice what I do for child's play (3)

There were no completely correct answers sent in to November's crossword, even though every entrant managed to guess correctly the answer to the missing clue, 18 down. The solution was as follows:

**Across:** Gunpowder plot, Indeterminately, Western, Ensure, Bridge, Kelly, Goitre, Elgood, Webster, Sail near the wind, One sided fight.

**Down:** Underestimation, Wards, Elite, Planner, Over and done with, Fiddle, Gyrate, Tower, Taylors, Eke, Bye, Grassy, Rewinds, Large, Deride, Beard, Toted.

# LETTERS

From Mr P.W. England of Ware, who took exception to Martyn Cornell's article "Innsulting Names" in November's newsletter. The main points of his letter are reprinted below:

Mr. Cornell has all of his facts wrong; the date displayed on the building does not relate to the old Star Public House, but to the adjoining Public House, which is now a jewelers. The former Star Public House, which he has chosen to name "Bernies Bistro", is now called Ben's Brasserie. And if there were a worthy cause for the "campaign for real eating", I am sure they would make this excellent eating house their headquarters. Unfortunately Mr. Cornell's feelings on the survival of English Inns are quite ill conceived, for we, the developers, gave CAMRA first option to buy or rent this building but your office in Cambridge turned down the offer. Since then five different brewers have viewed the building, but due to inherent problems of planning restriction imposed on the permission and the lack of a proper access for a brewers dray, they all refused the chance of purchasing or leasing. Perhaps, as Mr. Cornell feels so strongly about this building, he should have taken the same financial risk as the present Lessess have and then he could display his own silly sign outside the building.

With regards to the beautiful old green tiling to the front of the Star, this of course was left over from its Taylor Walker days, and whilst we were removing a defective floor within the building, the whole front collapsed and fortunately our over designed proping and suring held the rest of the building in position without the loss of life or even injury to our workmen. We have managed to retain some of the old green tiling and it is possible similar tiles will be manufactured and placed back on the building. Since the collapse of this wall, we have taken the opportunity, as I am sure Mr. Cornell should, of checking our facts before making the current application to East Herts. District Council for the building remaining with its present facade of green and white tile reading Taylor Walker and the first floor dado remaining rendered. Photographs of this building 100 years ago show stone mullioned windows and rendered front – to name just one finish the front elevation of this building has employed.

It is quite amazing that having carried out a major refurbishment and rebuilding on buildings blighted by bad planning we now find silly and badly informed over educated purists attempting to kick us in the teeth.

Yours faithfully,

P.W. England (Slavland Properties Ltd)

**Next a letter in a slightly different vein from Mr Neil Powell of Baldock:**

In his interesting article 'Home of the Brews', Martyn Cornell rightly mentioned James Ind of Baldock (described in the 1791 *Universal British Directory* as 'Farmer, Maltster, & Brewer') and his brewery in White Horse Street. Ind's name is preserved in Baldock's churchyard rather than its pubs, but a derelict brewery (presumably his) still exists off White Horse Street on land apparently owned by the District Council. I wonder if at least part of these buildings, behind the present Victoria pub, mightn't be restored as a local craft museum – perhaps with special emphasis on the area's once-prolific breweries – since they are in a conservation area which is being steadily renovated. Is this an idea which might be appropriately pursued by CAMRA?

On a separate matter of Baldock informtion, I expect you will have noted that the town's real ale outlets have increased significantly in the past month with Greene King handpumps at The Engine and Adnams at the Vintage Wine Bar. Perhaps the latter will at last nudge Greene King into installing the much-requested handpumps in the nearby White Hart.

Yours sincerely

Neil Powell

John and Tess

invite you to the

**ROYAL OAK**

Bushey

for the best in food and real ale

free house

01-950 2865

## Imperial preference

Mystery, as the saying goes, currently surrounds Courage's famed Imperial Russian Stout, strongest beer brewed by any of the Big Six brewers and a unique survivor.

It was brewed at Courage's Horsleydown brewery in London, and when the Anchor brewery closed last year the company said it would transfer production of the 1101.8 OG, bottle-conditioned stout first brewed for the Empress Catherine of Russia, to the Bristol brewery.

Now a report has appeared that Russian Stout is being brewed at, of all places, Worton Grange, Courage's giant new fizz-factory on the M4 at Reading. The report is quite specific – the stout, it says, is being produced at the small test brewery at Worton Grange, to a slightly lower gravity of 1110.4 – which wouldn't make much difference to its alcohol content of 10.5 per cent, more than three times as strong as your average bitter.

However, the PR department at Reading say they know nothing at all about Russian Stout being brewed there, although they confirm that the company has no plans to kill it off.

CAMRA's brewery liaison man with Courage at Reading, Laurie Hansford, says he too has heard nothing specific about the future of the stout, and certainly nothing about it being brewed at Worton Grange. However, he says that the company made a big last brewing of Imperial Russian at Horsleydown, and they have plenty of stocks left, maturing away – the beer is conditioned for two months in the cask, and a further year in the bottle, and every bottle has the year of its brewing on the neck label.

Whatever is happening, Courage do at least seem to realise their responsibility for keeping Russian Stout alive – it celebrated its 200th birthday last year, for it was first recorded in 1781 – and one can understand they might well want to keep quiet until they perfect the brewing of this important part of our beery heritage in a new home.

## Stout fellow

Talking of stout, there is a tradition that the beer got its name from a Hertfordshire man, one Henry Stout.

Henry was a Quaker maltster in Hertford from the 1660s to the 1690s, and stout is first mentioned as a drink in 1677. Hertfordshire maltsters were the acknowledged experts at this time in the production of brown malt, essential for giving stout its colour.

Brewing historian Peter Mathias suggests that porter, an even darker drink, was first made after some anonymous Hertfordshire maltster accidentally browned his malt too long and sold it to a brewer who found the highly roasted grains made a beer that tasted very nice.

It certainly seems possible that even before this brewers were naming a particular sort of brown beer after the maltster who supplied the brown malt for it, if, indeed, Henry Stout was doing that sort of business.

Though it's a nice story, it does have an awful lot of "ifs" in it, and no-one has ever been able to find a scrap of hard evidence to back it. Henry already has a place in history, however. The mysterious death of his daughter, Sarah, in 1699 led to the only occasion in history when a future High Court judge – Spencer Cowper – was tried for murder.

## Green movement

Strange things are happening at Whitbread over in Luton. One Luton pub

has been renamed the Bitter End (urgh!), and turned into a sort of Whitbread free house, with all four Wethered beers, and Flowers Original, on sale from handpumps. Another, the Wellington, has been redecorated completely as a Flowers house, with reproductions of old Flowers bottle labels all over the outside, and no sign of the Whitbread name or logo anywhere.

Now full page advertisements have started appearing in local newspapers which not only advertise a mild – though admittedly a keg one, BB – but which also fail to mention Whitbread's name, anywhere. Instead they refer to J.W. Green, the brewery which stood where Whitbread London's headquarters now are in Park Street West Luton, and who owned nearly 200 Herts pubs.

What does it all mean? Could it be that "J.W.'s", like Benskins, is going to be a born-again brewery, with pubs going back to the old Green's name and colour scheme? After all, Whitbread have already resurrected Fremlins and Flowers. Watch this space.

## BRANCH CONTACTS

**Hertfordshire North Branch** Martyn Cornell ☎ Stevenage 60675  
**Hertfordshire South Branch** Eric Sim ☎ Hatfield 60647  
**Herts-Essex Borders Branch** Terry Smith ☎ Epping 73677

### THE RED LION, OFFLEY For reservations telephone Offley 281 MENU

#### To start

<i>Frogs legs cooked in wine, parsley, garlic and mixed herbs</i>	£1.95
<i>Deep fried seafood platter</i>	£1.25
<i>Rough French pâté</i>	£1.10
<i>Scallops in butter, lemon juice and mixed herbs</i>	£2.20
<i>Scampi soup with brandy</i>	£1.10
<i>Smoked trout</i>	£1.60
<i>Homemade soup</i>	£0.75

#### For the main course

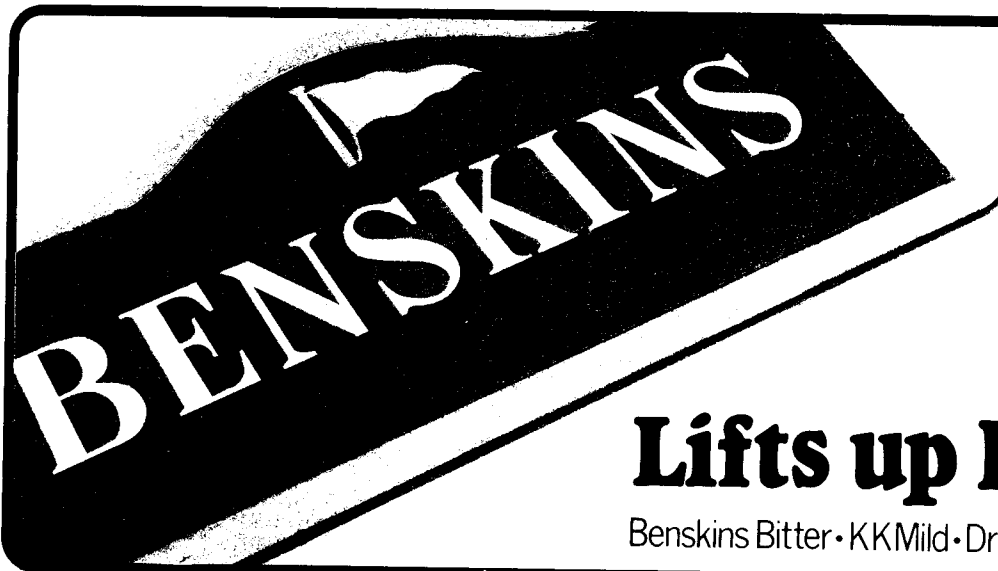
<i>Fillet steak – with garlic</i>	£5.35
– with cream and brandy	£5.95
– plain	£5.10
<i>Cœq au Vin</i>	£4.45
<i>Beef Stroganof</i>	£4.85
<i>Grilled halibut with lemon and butter sauce</i>	£4.35
<i>Guinea fowl cooked in red wine</i>	£5.35

All dishes served with peas, french fried croquettes or new potatoes.  
*Extra vegetables: Celery hearts 70p; Asparagus £1.10; Broccoli 65p;  
 Ratatouille 70p; Salad 65p*

#### Desserts

<i>Chocolate gateau</i>	80p
<i>Apple pie and cream</i>	70p
<i>Ice cream</i>	55p
<i>Cheese board</i>	85p
<i>Special coffee from £1.20 Coffee 40p</i>	

All prices inclusive of VAT



## Lifts up Herts.

Benskins Bitter • KKMild • Draught Burton Ale

Some good news from one of the county's beer deserts, Baldock. Thirteen out of fifteen of the town's pubs are owned by Greene King, and only two of these have always sold real ale (the **Rose and Crown** in the town centre and the **George IV** out on the London Road). On top of this, the only gain for real ale drinkers in the last seven years was when the **George and Dragon** was leased by Greene King to Schooner Inns to become a steak house, four years ago. Now, in the space of a fortnight two new outlets for real ale have appeared! The **Engine**, in Station Road, has had handpumps installed for XX mild, IPA bitter and Abbot, at a very reasonable price despite a recent increase by Greene King. Also, just before going to press, it has been reported that the **Vintage Wine Bar** in Hitchin Street has opened a new cellar bar where Adnams bitter and Old are available.

While the news is extremely welcome, it still leaves Baldock worse off for real ale than probably any other Hertfordshire town. Will Greene King install any more handpumps or even swap some pubs? Will Whitbread put Wethereds in either of their pubs? We can only hope . . .

Our correspondent last month was obviously a little tired and emotional when he went into the **Cromwell Hotel** in Stevenage. He was right about the change of name, it is now officially the **Stevenage Moat House**, but wrong about the price of the beer. Wethered's bitter is 70 pence a pint, hefty even by Wethered's standards. We may forgive him though, as he was right about the **Marquis of Lorne** further down the High Street, where Greene King KK, IPA and Abbot are now flowing from the new handpumps. Also in the Old Town, the **Post Office Club** is reported to be selling handpumped Wells IPA. As well as the Christmas brews from Greene King, McMullens and Victoria mentioned last month, Whitbread have made Wethered's strong winter beer, Winter Royal, available in a few local pubs. Reported outlets include the **Buck's Head** at Little Wymondley, the **Sailor Boy**, Walsworth, Hitchin and the **White Hart**, Welwyn.

The first outlet for Victoria bitter in North Hertfordshire is the **Highlander**, Hitchin, where it is proving very popular despite the competition of Adnams bitter and Greene King IPA and Abbot. A few miles away, the **Motte and Bailey** at Pirton has replaced Adnams bitter with mild for a trial period. Over to the west and the **King's Arms** at Tring is selling Charles Wells bitter and Bombardier and another new brew for the area, Phillips Heritage Ale. Moving south to Watford, and **Blakes Wine Bar** in Queen's Road is selling Wadworth's 6X (at 72 pence a pint) and Cotswold cider. They also have a 'Happy Hour' between 5.30 and 6.30 with prices cut by 25%. Still in Watford, and handpumps have been spotted on the bar of the **Wellington** but we have no information regarding beers at press time. Down in Oxhey, the **Happy Hour** has stopped serving its Charrington's bitter due to low sales. It is possible, however, that Bass may make an appearance there in the near future.

Potters Bar is now a step nearer being an all real town with the introduction of Wethered's bitter to the **Bridge House** in Mutton Lane.

At Stoneyhills, near Ware, the **Three Harts**, a former Ind Coope house, has reopened after extensive renovation work as a free house. Courage Directors and Watney's London bitters are available on handpumps. Just down the road, the **Woodman** in Chapmore End is due for some work, although it's not known if it is intended to alter the pub structurally.

The number of off licenses selling traditional draught beer to take home is swelling. Latest addition in the area is **Pints 'n' Litres** in Forbes Avenue, Potters Bar. Take along your own container, or buy a barrel or polybin. With more such off licences and pubs selling proper beer to take away, perhaps something can be done to stem the tide of insipid, plastic tinned and bottled beer in supermarkets, which not only tastes inferior but leaves us with a terrible problem of litter and wasteful non-returnable containers.

A welcome to a new landlord and landlady. Stewart and Anne Willett have recently taken over the **White Horse**, Mill Lane, Welwyn. At the moment Ind Coope bitter and Burton Ale are on sale, although Stewart promises to give KK mild a try, which is receiving quite a bit of promotion from the brewery at the moment. Certainly the beer has been very consistent and very pleasant to drink of late.

Another outlet for KK mild is the **Three Horseshoes** at Great Parndon which also sells Ind Coope East Anglia bitter on handpump as well as Burton Ale on gravity.

The **Bell** in Ongar is now a free house, purchased from Charringtons in November. It is selling Adnams bitter and Youngs Special in addition to Charrington's IPA and also intends to stock a winter ale by the time this newsletter is printed.

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

### Friday January 8th

9th annual New Year Party. Contact Nigel Meadows on Potters Bar 50498 for tickets - hurry, there aren't many left!

### Tuesday January 19th

BRANCH MEETING at the Wheatsheaf, Watford with a speaker from Whitbread. 8.00pm (Benskins)

### Friday February 19th to Sunday 21st

Branch weekend trip to Eldridge Pope Brewery (Friday) and a cider farm (Saturday), stopping 2 nights in Shaftesbury. Cost, less than £40. For details ring or send £5 deposit to Nigel Meadows, Potters Bar 50498.

## HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

### Wednesday January 6th

BRANCH MEETING at the Three Horseshoes, Norton, near Letchworth. Election of Pub of the Year. 8.00pm start. (Bass, Charringtons, Paines)

### Tuesday January 12th

Social at the Engine, Baldock, a new Greene King outlet. 8.00pm.

### Monday January 18th

McMullen's Brewery visit (Highly recommended if you haven't already been - Ed). Meet 10.00am at the brewery - all welcome. Ring Martin Connelly on Hitchin 52907 for details.

### Wednesday January 20th

Social at the Fox, Pirton. 8.00pm. (Wethereds)

### Wednesday February 3rd

BRANCH MEETING at the Station Hotel, Knebworth. 8.00pm start. (Wethereds)

## HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

### Monday January 4th

Start of Essex darts league against S.W. Essex at the Coach and Horses, Nazeing. All members welcome. 8.00pm start. (Ind Coope East Anglia)

### Monday January 18th

BRANCH MEETING at the Bell, Ongar - a recent free house. 8.00pm. (Youngs and Adnams)

### Monday January 25th

League darts match against N.W. Essex at the Green Man, Widford. All members welcome. 8.00pm. (McMullens)

### Monday February 15th

BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at the Bull, Theydon Bois. 8.00pm prompt start. (Ind Coope)

## Pints 'n' Litres

**FULL FREE OFF LICENCE**  
 ★ Real Ales to take away ★  
 from the Cask  
**GREENE KING - ADNAMS - EVERARDS**  
 ★ & GUEST BEERS ★  
 from 49p per pint  
 Also large range of trad.  
 ales in bottles and cans.

at 6 Eastfield Parade, Forbes Avenue, Potters Bar.  
 Tel: Potters Bar 55585  
 How to find us:

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