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Legacy of Honor

Jame R. Cox

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LEGACY OF HONOR

James R. Cox, B.S.

A Culminating Project Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate
School of Lindenwood College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Art

1988

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James R. Cox
Mass Communications
Faculty Advisor, Peter Carlos

My culminating project, "Legacy of Honor," is a documentary about the family of General Daniel Bissell. It took approximately fourteen weeks to produce.

I researched most of the material from the Missouri Historical Society at Jefferson Memorial, a process which took about two weeks to complete. When I began the project, I intended to concentrate solely upon the life and historical contributions of General Bissell. After studying his legacy, however, I realized that his entire family was part of his career as well. To ignore their part in history by excluding them from the documentary would have been a grave injustice. Instead of focusing on his life alone, I decided to include his ancestry and composed a title to befit the content of the documentary.

Through my research, I discovered that many relatives of General Bissell's are living today. Because they are still living in the St. Louis area and are listed in the telephone directory, locating them became an easy task. Setting up the interview, however, proved extremely frustrating.

Coordinating the timing so that it would be convenient for everyone was most difficult. Prior engagements, busy and conflicting schedules, and the weather all forced me to postpone the interview at least three times. I had planned to borrow a camera to tape the interview, but that presented a problem when trying to work around his busy schedule and my own. In the end, I rented the equipment.

On the day of the interview, the cameraman failed to show, which forced me to recruit a replacement at the last minute. I also had to use equipment which offered less quality than what I had arranged to use. But fortunately, the equipment held together, and I was able to complete the interview.

Putting together any production requires a budget, and that can be costly. Since none of the participants were professional actors, I paid nothing for talent.

The interview went fairly well. I had the opportunity to meet the Bissells and to share some historical information with the relatives of the famous general. I made critical mistakes during the taping of the interview which I vow never to make again.

When videotaping an individual, make sure all horizontal lines are level. Nothing is more aggravating to an audience than to see a tilted picture.

Reflections (of interviewer and camera person) through windows can also be a source of annoyance. I observed a reflection of myself several times in the background in the window of the Bissell House, not knowing that those images were now part of the interview.

If the person who is answering questions is not directing his or her comments to the camera, a good interview can go sour. The personal touch of warmth and intimacy is lost if one is looking away from the camera while talking. One simple remedy is to have the interviewer sit in front (under the lens) of the camera. In this way, it appears that the interviewee is talking to the audience rather than ignoring them. Other than these three critical points, the interview went well.

Although I was able to shoot the interior of the Bissell House after the interview, the lighting was so poor, I had to arrange to come back another day to do the additional footage.

I used artificial lighting on the day of the actual shooting to ensure the quality of the videotaping. I used a camera attachment light kit in the poorly lit interiors.

After compiling the research, taping the Bissell family, and obtaining footage from inside the home, the area of the old fort, and the Bellefontaine Cemetery, it was time to write a script and edit the footage.

I decided to edit and complete the project with the finishing touches at the Double Helix facilities. Their on-line system appeared suitable to pull the project together.

With so many projects already going on in the studio, scheduling editing time was a problem. I scheduled some time in the studio when no other projects were in progress. The editing took about twelve hours to complete.

The main rallying point was to capture and hold the audience's attention. To set the tone immediately, the documentary opens with the bugle blowing and a shot of the Bissell Coat of Arms, which denotes royalty and nobility.

The Grass Valley switcher allowed me to cut a key window and to dissolve to different visual elements. Laying a foundation around the bottom of the key gives depth and dimension.

After setting the weighty tone of the piece, I appear on camera to lay the foundation for what the audience is about to see. I chose to wear a suit and tie to introduce the audience to the important Bissell family.

As human beings, one of the ways in which we learn about the world around us is through photographs. Certainly, photographs are valuable assets to historical documentaries, supplying the audience with visual proof that these people from the past were real, that they indeed lived on earth for a set number of years. I placed the photographs and edits at strategic points during the documentary's narration to hold the attention of the audience.

Using cutaways is one way to keep the audience interested in the narration. Having one shot on for too long proves tiring, and, in the end, boring for the viewers. The cross between shots from black and white to color did not pose any real problem so long as the camera movement was smooth.

Footage from the house offers insight into the life of General Bissell. We can only learn about him by viewing his worldly possessions. While touring each room of the house, I focused the camera as tightly as possible on a fixed object, then panned across the room and zoomed out. This method gives movement and feeling to an otherwise static picture.

I ended the documentary the same way it began, with Bissell's Coat of Arms. Like the beginning, it emphasizes the nobility of the family, and also gives the piece a sense of completeness.

I learned a great deal throughout this project. Overall, I was pleased with my piece and satisfied with the results.

Jim Cox
Student's Name

Date

Client: Peter Carlos

Title: "Legacy of Honor"

Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

FADE UP ON COAT OF ARMS
C.G.: "LEGACY OF HONOR"

DIS TO JIM ON CAMERA
C.G.: Jim Cox

DIS TO STILL OF GEN. BISSELL

DIS TO STILL OF LONDON

CUT TO STILL OF WAGON

CUT TO OVER SHOULDER ON BOOK

FADE UP THEME MUSIC... THEN UNDER.

(OC): St. Louis has been from the earliest point of it's history the scene of great military activity. Ft. Bellefontaine, and later Jefferson Barracks were important sites for the concentration of troops and the presents of United States Officers and their families. Among these, none left a more indelible impression upon St. Louis than the legacy of General Daniel Bissell...

MUSIC UP THEN UNDER

(VO): The Bissells were just a handful of French Huegenots who fled to England to escape the persecution following the masscre of Saint Bartholomew in 1572. Little is known of the history of the Bissells in England, but at least three members of the Bissell clan came to St. Louis prior to 1800, all desendants of emigrant John Bissell.

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VIDEO

AUDIO

CUT TO INTERVIEW W/ MARTHA
CUSTIS C.G.: Martha Custis
Great Great Granddaughter of Gen.
Bissell

CUT TO STILL OF YOUNG PATRIOT

CUT TO STILL OF WASHINGTON

CUT TO STILL OF JEFFERSON

DIS TO MAP OF TERRITORIES

DIS TO RACK THEN ZI OF
BISSELL PAINTING

SOUND BITE :39 IN CUE: "Well...

OUT CUE: ...Daniel Bissell"

MUSIC UNDER

Daniel Bissell, son of Ozias Bissell
a Revolutionary War veteran, was
born in Connecticut about the year
1768.

Gen. Bissell ardently embraced the
cause of the patriots, and rose, by
his bravery, from private to the
rank of Brigadier General.

In 1808, Gen. Bissell was appointed
by President Jefferson as military
Governor of "Upper Louisiana", now
including the states of Missouri and
Illinois, and Commander of
Bellefontaine Fort.

As military commander, he was
instructed with both military and
civil functions, and he left the
indelible impression of his strong
and honest character.

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VIDEO

AUDIO

DIS TO STILL OF DANIEL BOONE

He was a warm personal friend of Daniel Boone, and Generals Lewis and Clark, and it was at Ft. Bellefontain where the Lewis and Clark expedition landed on it's return.

CUT TO STILL OF RIVER BANK

He also extended the hospitality of the territory, aiding the great states of Missouri and Illinois by his ripe counsel and experience.

CUT TO STILL OF TOWN

After his retirement from the army, he was strongly urged to accept a prominent civil position under the government, but declined to do so.

CUT TO STILL OF LAND

He entered a large tract of land near St. Louis, on the Bellefontaine road, to which he added from time by purchases until his estate numbered two thousand three hundred acres.

CUT TO FARM

Gen. Bissell died of pneumonia at his farm on the 15th of December, 1833. His wife died November 15th, 1843.

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VIDEO

AUDIO

DIS TO BISSELL
C.G.: Gen. Daniel Bissell
1768-1833

CUT TO PAN OF FT. REMAINS

CUT TO PAN OF LAND

CUT TO ZI OF MONUMENT

MUSIC UNDER THEN OUT

No finer record of service by a single family can be shown that that of his father, brothers, and himself, whose military service mounted to one hundred and twenty years.

DIFFERENT MUSIC UNDER

The shifting of military headquarters from Ft. Bellefontaine to Jefferson Barracks left the old fort a mere memory, but the name of this famous general still lives in the history of St. Louis and the Bellefontaine Neighborhood.

James Russel Bissell, son of the General, transformed the woods into tillable soil until it became one of the most fertile farms in St. Louis County.

James Bissell Died January 3rd, 1887, at the age of 78, he had seven children, three sons and four daughters.

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VIDEO

AUDIO

CUT TO GENERAL'S HEADSTONE
THEN TO DEBORA'S

CUT TO RACK OF CEMETARY GATES

CUT TO TRUCK IN ON ROAD

General Daniel Bissell and Debora Seba were originally buried in the woods near the the house and reposed there for many years.

Then with the locating of Bellefontaine Cemetary, it was deemed fit that their bodies be moved there. The Bissell family plot is still intact in that burying ground.

The boundries of Bellefontaine Neighborhood drew its later lines along the Bellefontaine road from Larimore road on the north to St. Cyr road on the south, holding its name and identity by virtue of the nucleus built about Bellefontaine M. E. Church, south. The ground was given by James and Anna Bissell and the building made possible through the Bissells, the Larimores, the Redmonds, and others.

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Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

CUT TO FRONT OF BISSELL MANOR

CUT TO SIGN

CUT TO REAR OF HOUSE

CUT TO PAN OF REAR
OF HOUSE

DIS TO STILL OF FRONT OF
HOUSE

Nestled in a grove of stately old trees and rising above the surrounding terrain, the Bissell home at 10225 Bellefontaine Rd. typifies the Federal style of architecture popular in England about 1810.

The 142 year old white brick structure has withstood the ravages of time, weather, and five generations of Bissells to become one of the most important houses historically and architecturally in the country.

The style of the home has been altered through time so that it is an interpretation rather than a copy of the true Federal House. This old house gives rise to fanciful legends and stories, and has been maintained with care and devotion to authenticity, and therefore provides an interesting and reliable footnote to history.

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Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

CUT TO INTERIOR OF HOUSE

The inside of the Bissell home is virtually a treasure trove. It's spacious rooms are filled with furniture, portraits, books, lamps, chinaware, and other articles that were placed in there by the General when he and his wife moved from their quarters at Ft. Bellefontaine almost two centuries ago. Many of these articles were old when the General's family first used them.

CUT TO THE LIBRARY

As we look inside of this stately manor, some of the Bissell family's heirlooms can be found in the library. These include Gen. Bissell's oak secretary with an open Bible displayed upon it, an Empire piano with a gold leaf mirror and an oil painting of the son of the General, James Bissell. The fireplace is one of six in the original structure, but the Greek mantel was installed by James Bissell.

DIS TO STILL OF LIBRARY

Jim Cox
Student's Name

Date

Client: Peter Carlos

Title: "Legacy of Honor"

Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

DIS TO DRAWING ROOM STILL

DIS TO PAN INSIDE
DRAWING ROOM

DIS TO DINING ROOM STILL

DIS TO TILT DOWN
IN DINING ROOM

In the Drawing room you will find the portrait of Gen. Bissell done in 1802, which dominates this room furnished from pieces from the Federal period.

The original portrait of the general drawn in crayon now hangs in the Missouri Historical Society's collection at Jefferson Memorial.

The Drawing Room we are told, was the favorite room of the General because from its several windows he had a broad view of his estate.

The dining room furnishings include the bronze argand lamp with chandelier a cherry wood dining table, a worchester china, and a chipendale corner cupboard.

The dining room which one may imagine the old general was to take his leisurely meals, served by his slaves surrounded by his family. There was brought to him the smoking haunches of venison, roasted wild ducks fresh

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Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

DINING ROOM CON'T)

CUT TO SIDE BOARD

CUT TO STATUETTES

CUT TO THE NURSERY STILL

DIS TO PAN OF NURSERY

DIS TO STILL OF MASTER
BED ROOM

killed from the near-by ponds.

And if the General would have his port or claret or imported schnapps, there was a huge sideboard laden with ancient silver and chinaware which one may well believe contained in its time of greatest usefulness a cargo of choice vintages.

Upstairs you'll find the nursery still has the original black mantel which kept James Russel's seven children warm.

There's also this canon ball bed, trundle bed, posture high chair, and and early cradle which lends charm to the children's room.

The Master Bedroom is furnished mostly in the early Sheraton style.

Jim Cox
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Length: 10:52

VIDEO _____ AUDIO _____

DIS TO INSIDE OF MASTER
BEDROOM

The mantel is original to the house and was always painted black. A fireplace with its backlog of iron before which, no doubt the General took his ease as he warmed himself by the fire. A wonderfully carved canopied bed, in its proportions and elegance.

DIS TO STILL OF JAMES
BISSELL'S BEDRRROM

While the bed belongs to James Bissell, the bedroom contains many personal momentos of his father, General Bissell.

CUT TO KITCHEN STILL

The kitchen was added in 1870, replacing an earlier stone kitchen. All of the furnishings are of Missouri origin. The soapstone sink was fed by gravity flow from a cistern on the porch.

DIS TO SINK

Jim Cox
Student's Name

Date

Client: Peter Carlos

Title: "Legacy of Honor"

Length: 10:52

VIDEO

AUDIO

CUT TO STAIRWELL

Originally the home contained six large rooms. However in 1908 an addition of four rooms were built. But the old manor is exactly as it was ordered constructed by the General, and still intact.

DIS TO EXTERIOR OF HOUSE

Six huge rooms whose two-foot walls suggest a solidity unknown in this present age of house building.

DIS TO JIM ON CAMERA
C.G.: Jim Cox

MUSIC CHANGES UNDER

The Bissell Manor was donated to St. Louis County Parks and Recreation as a museum. It is open to the public every Wednesday and Saturday between the hours of twelve noon and four, located at 10225 Bellefontaine Rd. For a small admission fee of two dollars, you can take a trip back into time, and experience just a glimpse fo the legacy of General Daniel Bissell... I'm Jim Cox
Thank you for watching...

DIS TO COAT OF ARMS
C.G.: "Legacy of Honor"

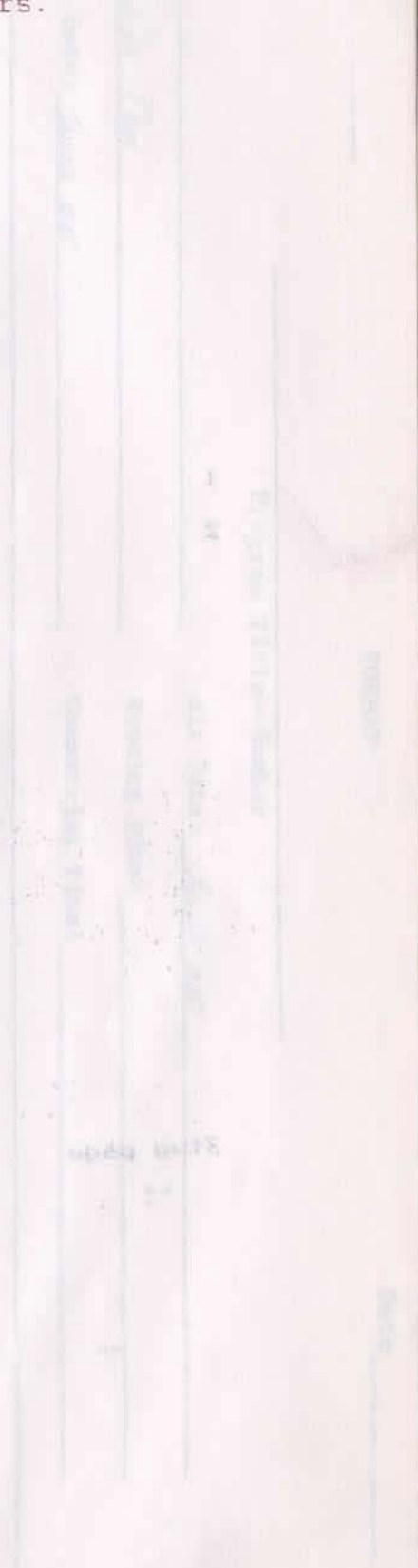
MUSIC UP FULL

DOCUMENTARY LOG

- 14-88, 3:00 PM., THURSDAY, CONTACTED VMI COMMUNICATIONS FOR 10 3/4 MINI TAPES TO BE USED IN THE DOCUMENTARY ENTITLED "THE BISSELL DYNASTY", A 20/20 PRODUCTION. DON BAGE FROM VMI ADVISED TO CONTACT ALEXIA BROTHERS HOSPITAL, FOR 4 INCH TAPES THEY WISH TO GET RID OF. ALEXIA BROTHERS DONATED 207 3/4 TAPES.
- 16-88, SATURDAY, 3:30 PM. JIM COX VISITED THE MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO RESEARCH THE HISTORY AND LIFE OF GENERAL BISSELL. MANY DOCUMENTS WERE VIEWED. BISSELL HAD QUITE A BACKGROUND.
- 17-88, SUNDAY, JIM COX CONTACTED FACULTY ADVISOR, PETER CARLOS TO DISCUSS THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON GENERAL BISSELL. CARLOS ALSO ADVISES HE HAD NOT REVIEWED THE RESEARCH PAPER.
- 18-88, MONDAY, CONTACTED BELLEFONTAINE CEMETARY TO ACQUIRE PERMISSION TO VIDEO TAPE THE GRAVE OF THE GENERAL. I WAS TOLD TO CALL BACK AND ASK FOR A MR. MEYER.
- 20-88, WEDNESDAY, 3:30 PM., CONTINUED WITH THE RESEARCH ON BISSELL. TIME SPENT RESEARCHING WAS ABOUT 1 1/2 HRS.
- 21-88, THURSDAY, 9:00 AM., CONTINUED WITH THE DOCUMENTARY. TIME SPENT 2 1/2 HRS.
- 25-88, MONDAY, 3:00PM., CONTACTED THE GREAT-GRAND-DAUGHTER OF GENERAL BISSELL TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN INTERVIEW. SHE WAS DELIGHTED.
- 26-88, TUESDAY, 9:00AM., CONTACTED PETER CARLOS TO GIVE HIM AN APPRAISAL ON THE RESEARCH PROJECT. I ALSO INDICATED THAT I NEEDED THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL'S EQUIPMENT FOR VIDEO TAPING. PETER ADVISED TO CONTACT JERRY BURSON FOR POSSIBLE USE, IN TURN FOR A FAVOR. JERRY WAS CONTACTED AND HE REPLIED HE COULD ASSIST ME IN THE EARLY PART OF MAY AND TO CONTACT HIM ABOUT THE 5TH OF MAY. I MET MR. RON BRUNNERT WHO IS CURRENTLY DOING RESEACH IN THE BELLEFONTAINE AREA TO WRITE A BOOK. WE BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE CONTENT OF OUR PROJECTS AND SAID GOOD-BYE. MR. BRUNNERT INDICATED THE INFORMATION HE POSSESSED CAME FROM ST. LOUIS U'S LIBRARY. HE ALSO SHOWED ME SOME INDIAN ARROW HEADS HE FOUND.
- 27-88, WEDNESDAY, 2:00 PM., CONTINUED WITH THE RESEARCH AND CONCLUDED THE FIRST PHASE. I WILL ATTEMPT TO USE THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. LOUIS FACILITIES TO CONTINUE MY RESEARCH. I VISITED THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING OF MO. HILLS AND VIEWED SOME OF THE ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE AREA IN THE EARLY 1800'S.
- 28-88, FRIDAY, 9:00 AM., CONTINUED RESEARCH AT ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY. VISITED THE GRAVE OF GENERAL DANIEL BISSELL.
- 29-88, MONDAY, 3:30 PM., VISITED THE ST. LOUIS LIBRARY AND FOUND A TEXT BOOK CONTAINING THE BISSELL COAT OF ARMS.
- 30-88, TUESDAY, 9:00 AM. CONTACTED THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO VIDEO TAPING: MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MRS STITH AND THE ST. LOUIS MAIN LIBRARY.
- 31-88, FRIDAY, 2:00 PM. ARRIVED AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND VIDEO TAPED THE ORIGINAL CRAYON PAINTING OF THE GENERAL.
- 1-88, SATURDAY, 2:00 PM., PHOTOGRAPHED THE BISSELL FAMILY'S COAT OF ARMS. VISITED THE CEMETARY AND VIDEO TAPED THE BURIAL SITE.
- 2-88, MONDAY, 7:30 PM., RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM BEVERLY KALISH, SHE STATED SHE WOULD LIKE TO BE INTERVIEWED ON 5-17-88 TUESDAY AT THE GENERAL BISSELL HOUSE, 10225 BELLEFONTAINE RD.

-88, VIDEO TAPE 1 CONSIST OF NINE PHOTOGRAPHS OF JAMES BISSELL HOUSE
D FATHER GENERAL BISSELL. LENGTH OF SEGMENT IS 126 meters.

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00:01	00:01	00:01	00:01
00:02	00:02	00:02	00:02
00:03	00:03	00:03	00:03
00:04	00:04	00:04	00:04
00:05	00:05	00:05	00:05
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00:53	00:53	00:53	00:53
00:54	00:54	00:54	00:54
00:55	00:55	00:55	00:55
00:56	00:56	00:56	00:56
00:57	00:57	00:57	00:57
00:58	00:58	00:58	00:58
00:59	00:59	00:59	00:59
01:00	01:00	01:00	01:00



 Program Title--Number

Producer: _____

Air Date: JUNE 25Director: JUD COX

Running Time: _____

Production Date: JUNE 25

Commercial Time: _____

Segment Time	Running Time	Segment	Video	Audio
		<u>TAPE # 1 0</u>		
<u>1</u>				
<u>223</u>	<u>223</u>	<u>PHOTOGRAPHS OF DANIEL BISSELL'S HOUSE</u>		
<u>223</u>	<u>(12.49.0)</u>			
<u>500</u>	<u>277</u>	<u>INTERVIEW OF BISSELL'S RELATIVES</u>		
<u>500</u>				
<u>520</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>OUTSIDE FOOTAGE</u>		
<u>520</u>				
<u>595</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>INSIDE BISSELL HOUSE</u>		
<u>595</u>		<u>END OF TAPE</u>		
<u>729</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>OUTSIDE BISSELL HOUSE 34.48.7</u>		
<u>1</u>		<u>TAPE 2</u>		
<u>111</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>GENERAL BISSELL'S PORTRAIT</u>		
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<u>145</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>JEFFERSON MEMORIAL</u>		
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