



Guest Editors: Janet Olson and Kristin Jacobsen, WCTU Archives

Although it's always time for Archives in our little world, October is officially designated as American Archives Month, so we have co-opted this issue of the newsletter to strut our stuff!

Did someone say "What's in the WCTU Archives?" We're glad you asked! Our collections document the history and impact of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, with materials dating from the 1830s to the 2000s and including letters, documents, images, periodicals, biographical and subject files, and scrapbooks.

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Another Busy Year in the WCTU Archives

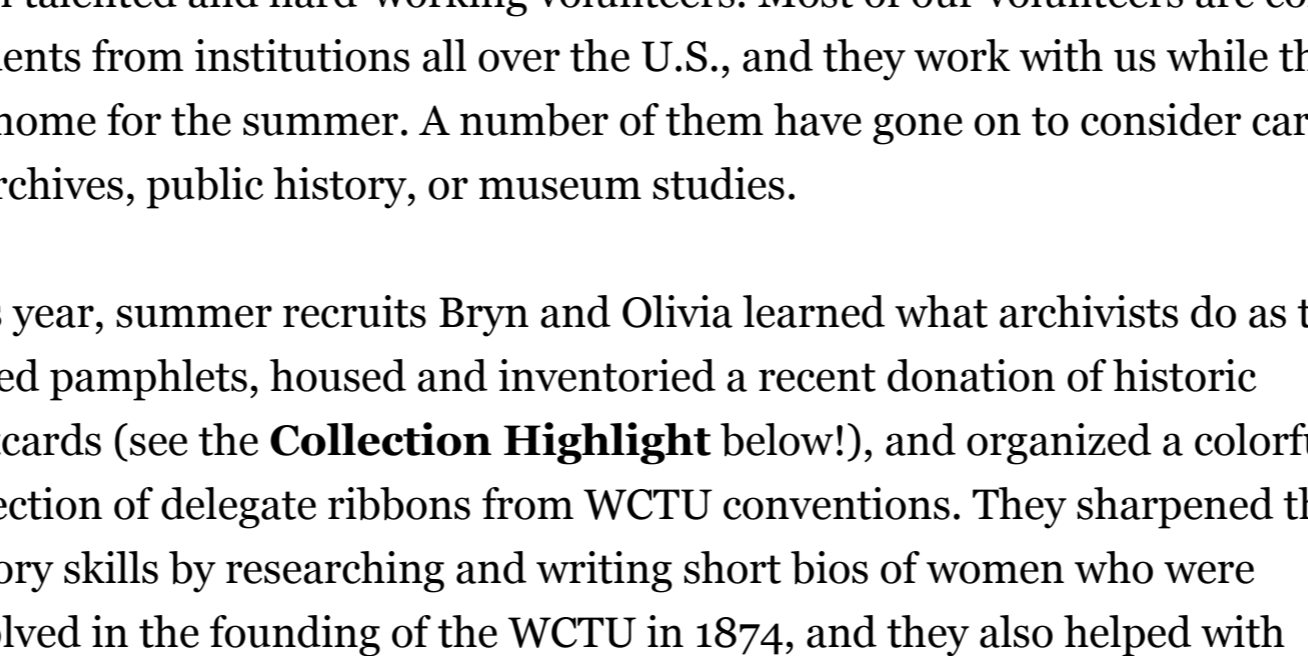
What kept us on our toes this year? In addition to an influx of on-site researchers and many off-site reference inquiries, the Archives was involved in:

Knowledge is Power: During the second "semester" of the Frances Willard House Museum and Archives 2022-2023 initiative, Knowledge is Power: Women and Education, the Archives staff continued to contribute information and images documenting Willard's role in higher education before she changed careers to lead the WCTU.



Willard's 17th annual education column from 1883, showing her place in this room's schoolhouse in Ansonville, NC (it has been restored and you can visit!)

Black Women of the WCTU: A Research Database: Work continues on this ongoing project to comb our records and document the under-studied involvement of Black women leaders in the WCTU, state by state. In April, Archives staff and project interns shared our work-in-progress with archival colleagues at the Midwest Archives Conference in Chicago.



Summer interns Mikala, Kenneth, and Chris.

Our Volunteer Staff

In addition to our graduate student interns, we are very fortunate to have help from talented and hard-working volunteers. Most of our volunteers are college students from institutions all over the U.S., and they work with us while they are home for the summer.

This year, summer recruits Bryn and Olivia learned what archivists do as they sorted pamphlets, housed and inventoried a recent donation of historic postcards (see the Collection Highlight below!), and organized a colorful collection of delegate ribbons from WCTU conventions.

Gemma, a recent graduate of DePaul University, created the new timeline on Frances Willard and education, mentioned above. She is now processing our large collection of Scientific Temperance Instruction materials, and she has begun leading tours at the Frances Willard House Museum.

Northwestern University senior Hannah C., who had volunteered with us in the summer of 2021, rejoined us as a temporary volunteer until June, when she graduated and moved to Dallas to start law school.

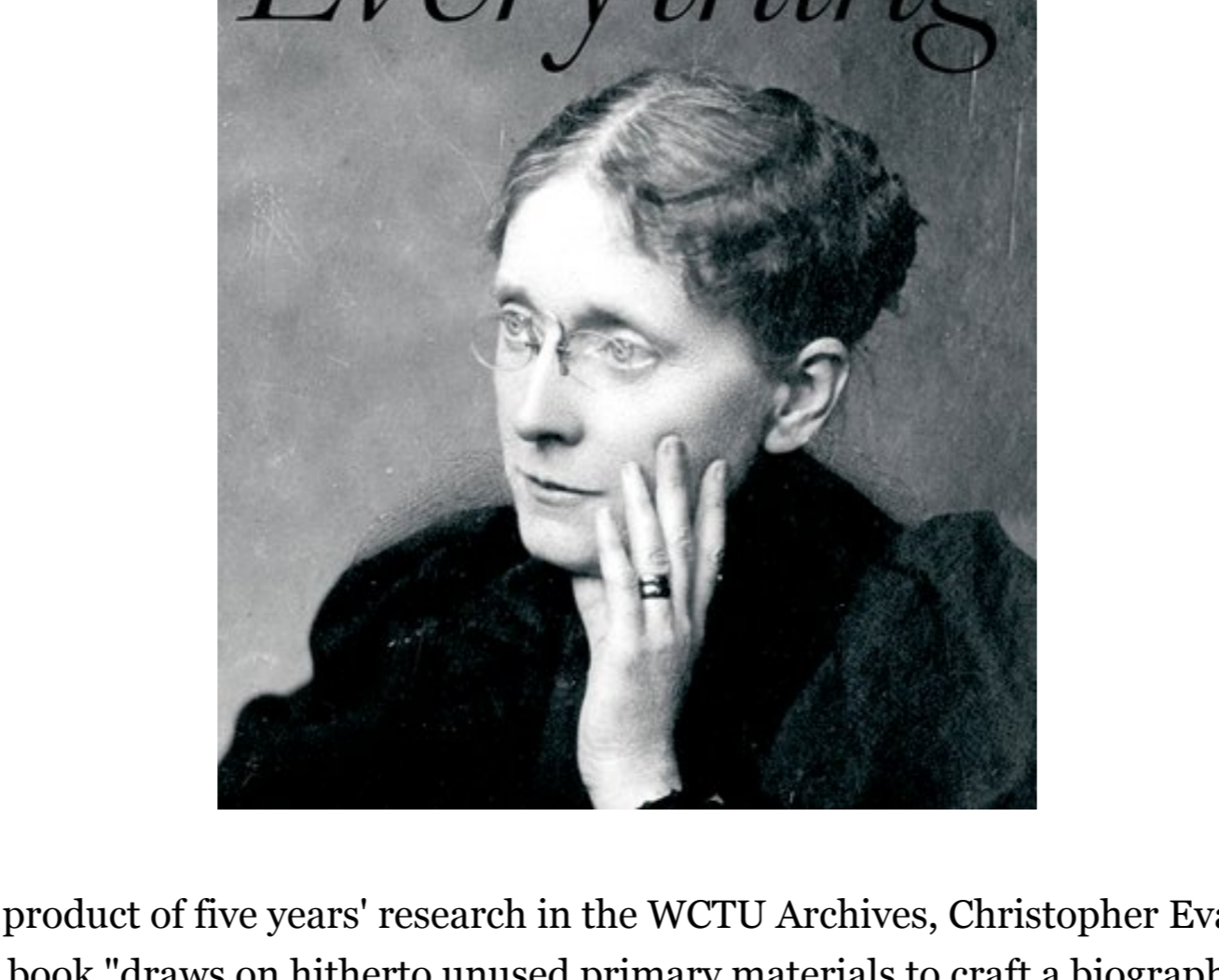
And last but not least, three local volunteers with full-time jobs generously give us part of their Saturdays all year round - we're looking at you with thanks, Hannah W. (a ten-year veteran!), Adam, and Liz!

Fun with Statistics

Our small archives has a very big reach. We know, because we keep statistics on our visitors, the topics they are interested in, and the materials they use. The stats help us stay up to date with trends and guide us as we prioritize the projects we work on.

Since January, we've entertained international requests or on-site visitors from Canada, the United Kingdom, Iceland, and Japan. From the U.S., we've had interactions from 21 states across the country. Researchers are most often affiliated with universities, but we've also had questions from independent scholars, History Day students, genealogists, and our archival colleagues, including from the Salvation Army Archives.

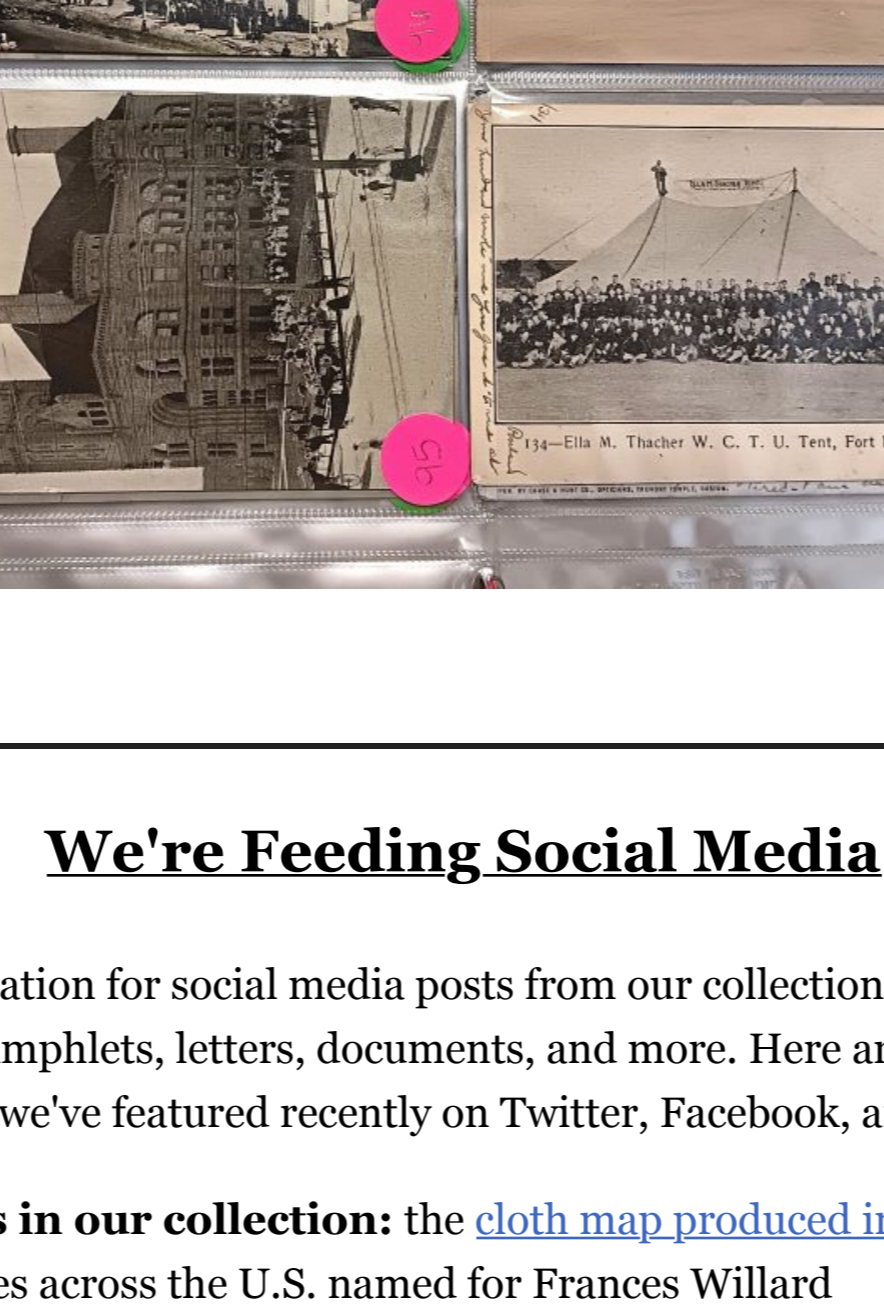
Our researchers have many interests, most frequently the WCTU, Frances Willard, women's history, and the temperance movement. Scholars of Black history often find our archives through the Truth Telling online exhibit or our project to build a database of Black WCTU leaders.



Archives as Data

The Archives - usually so very narrative-centric - is beginning to treat our resources - and even our registration forms - in a new way: as data. Considering our fondness for narrative and comparatively uneasy relationship with numbers, this has not been especially easy.

Must-Reads

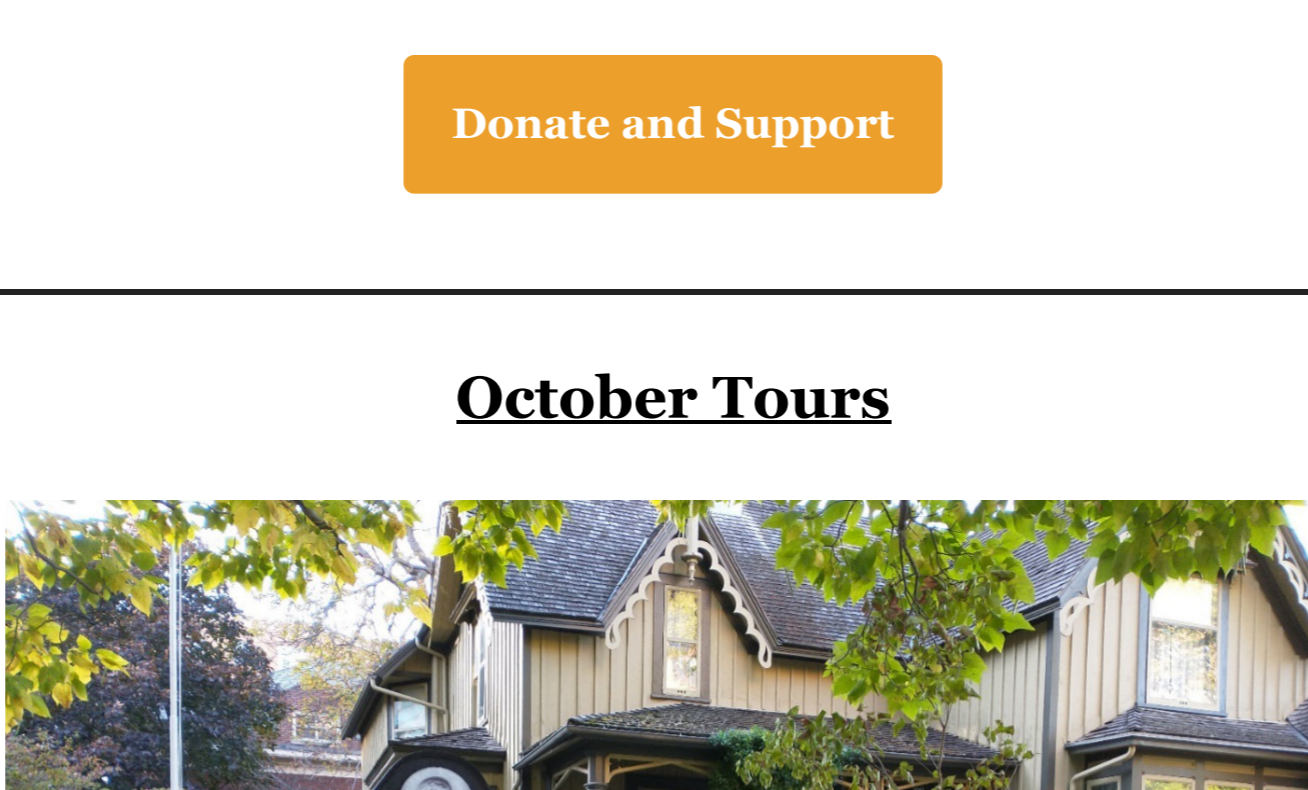


The product of five years' research in the WCTU Archives, Christopher Evans' new book "draws on hitherto unused primary materials to craft a biography of Frances Willard... Of interest to students and scholars of American religion, women's history, and social reform, this is now the standard biography of Willard. Highly recommended [for] undergraduates through faculty; general readers."

Quote from review of Do Everything: The Biography of Frances Willard by Christopher Evans (Oxford University Press, 2002). Reviewed by C. H. Lippy, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, for Choice Magazine.

Collection Highlight: We've Got Mail!

We were delighted to receive a new collection of WCTU-related postcards. Our summer volunteers had fun inventorying and organizing the 100+ postcards, which depict buildings, drinking fountains, people, and events from all over the U.S.



We're Feeding Social Media

We draw inspiration for social media posts from our collections of photos, newspapers, pamphlets, letters, documents, and more. Here are examples of Archives items we've featured recently on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram:

- Artifacts in our collection: the cloth map produced in 1939, which shows sites across the U.S. named for Frances Willard
Biographical files: stories about busy WCTU members like Agnes Slack, a WCTU around-the-world missionary who logged more than 200,000 miles across four continents
Excerpts from Frances Willard's digitized journals: her childhood hopes and dreams, her world travels, and of course her bicycling lessons!
Interesting items we find while organizing ephemera: our post from September 16 featured a testimonial pamphlet from Dale Evans, "Queen of the West" and wife of Roy Rogers
Postcards: our post from July 18 showed Eagle's Nest, Willard's vacation cottage in the Catskills
Commemoration of major events: the Woman's Crusade of 1873-1874, which led to the founding of the WCTU

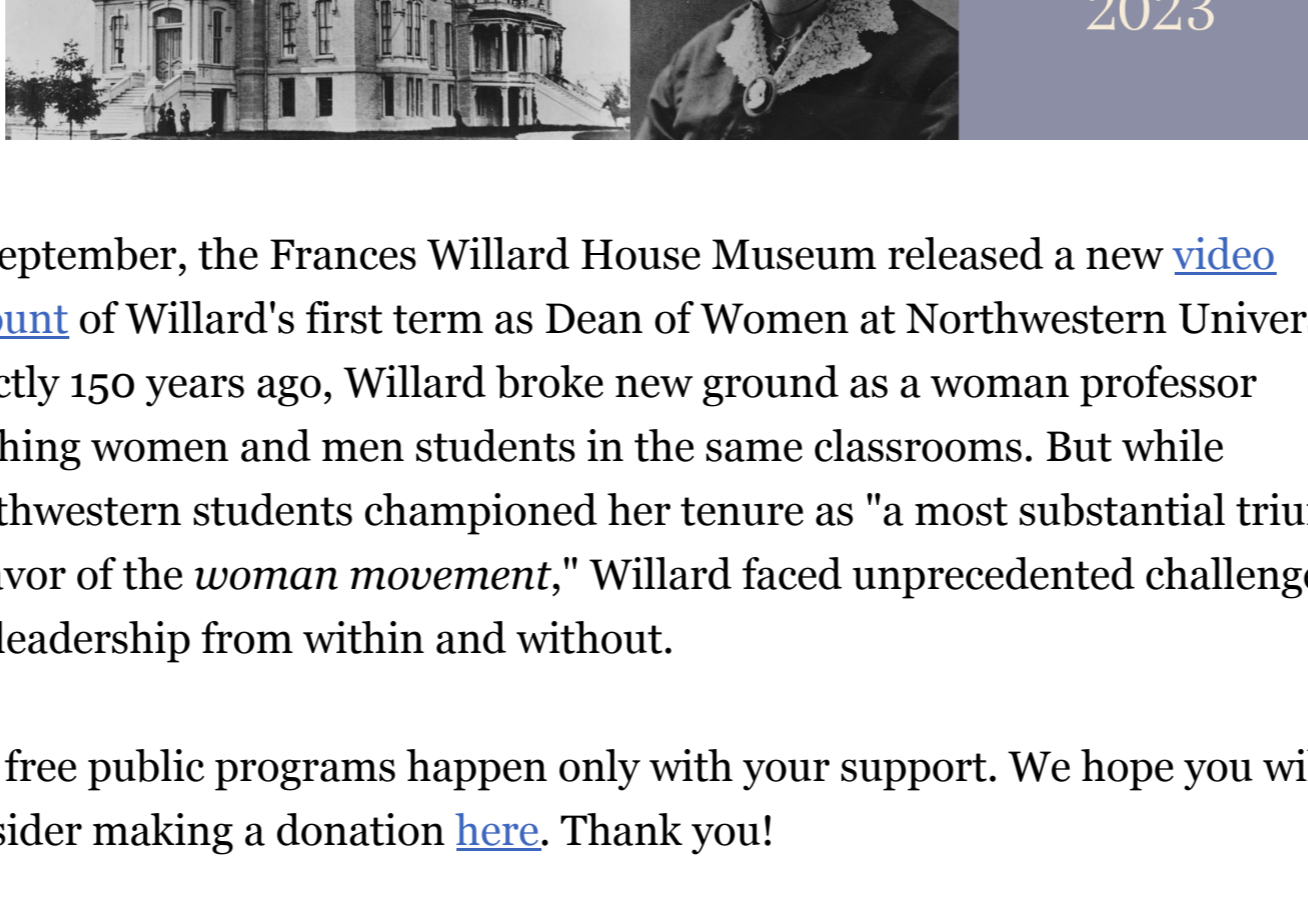
Follow us on any or all of these social media platforms to see what we're featuring! We love to see how many people read (and like or share) our posts. Find us on X/Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. And keep up with what else is new on the Frances Willard House Museum and Archives website, where you can read our blogs, explore our digital exhibits, and keep apprised of our upcoming programs!

Donate and Support

The Archives and Museum staff, all part-timers, work hard to provide access to our collections for visiting researchers, and reference services for those who can't visit in person. We juggle the tasks of organizing material, preparing digital exhibits, promoting our collections, and planning and producing public programs. We love what we do in preserving and interpreting this history, and we greatly appreciate our supporters whose donations make it possible for us to maintain our collections and services. Please visit our donation page for information on how to help us continue our work. And Happy Archives Month!

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October Tours



The final Frances Willard House Museum tours of the 2023 season will be held at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm on the following dates:
Thursdays, October 19 and 26
Sunday, October 22

Tours are available by reservation only. Masks are optional. Visitors should request a tour by emailing info@franceswillardhouse.org or calling (847) 328-7500. Tour fees are \$15 per person. Admission is free for students at all levels. Payment must be made online or over the phone once the tour day and time has been confirmed. We ask that reservations for Sunday tours be made by the preceding Friday at 5pm.

Coming Soon!

"An Exceeding Fondness for Books": The Libraries at the Willard House



Keep an eye out for the release of a new Collection Close-Up video, in which Museum Director Lori Osborne will share favorites from the book collections at the Willard House. Among some of the Willard family's oldest possessions, the books reveal much about who owned them, shared them, and cared for them over many years.

In Case You Missed It



In September, the Frances Willard House Museum released a new video account of Willard's first term as Dean of Women at Northwestern University. Exactly 150 years ago, Willard broke new ground as a woman professor teaching women and men students in the same classrooms. But while Northwestern students championed her tenure as "a most substantial triumph in favor of the woman movement," Willard faced unprecedented challenges to her leadership from within and without.

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