



OXFORDSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

NEWSLETTER 29 SPRING 2019



Light and shade cast by Plane trees in St Giles, Oxford

OGT Conference: Trees & Townscapes 16 & 17 March

Are you interested in trees, and their contribution to urban and historic environments? The Trust is offering a special study weekend on 16 and 17 March at St John's College, Oxford on the topic of *Trees and Townscapes: Past, Present & Future*. It is recommended that you book now for this event; it is excellent value for money (£90 to attend both days, excluding conference dinner) and has an impressive line-up of expert speakers. Bookings can be made and paid for on the Eventcube website <https://ogtevents.eventcube.io>. A booking form and the programme can also be downloaded from the OGT website http://ogt.org.uk/events_news.

A full day of presentations on Saturday 16 March will be chaired by Professor Laurent Chatel of the University of Lille and formerly Fellow of Maison Française in Oxford. There will be talks from leading tree practitioners, historians and policy makers. Their topics will range from the history of trees in towns to urban forestry policies, and from historic cemeteries to 20th-century parks. These will be illustrated by case studies from a variety of historic cities across England including London and Oxford. There will be a conference dinner (optional) on the Saturday night.

Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

TGT AGM and New Research Symposium	1 -2	Margaret Willes: Gardening Experiences	
Visit to Adwell	3	of John Evelyn & Samuel Pepys	5
Oliver Cox: Oxford University's work with heritage	3	External Events	6
Jane Bradney: Repton's Red Books	4	OGT Events	7
Trevor Rowley: Forests Parks and Woodland in early medieval England & Normandy	4	Committee Members Needed	8

Continued from page 1

A choice of guided walks will be available on Sunday 17 March, starting at 10am. They will include tours of the gardens of St John's and of Christ Church Meadows. Full details will be released nearer the time of the conference. OGT members can book to join one of the guided walks without attending the conference, at a cost of £10 per person. If you choose this option, please book and pay on the Eventcube website: <https://ogtevents.eventcube.io>

Credit for developing the conference programme lies with Bev and Michael Lear, who are supported by an organising committee consisting of Priscilla Frost, Marybeth Harasz, Sally Stradling, Sean Vassen and Will Holborow.

Will Holborow

TGT Annual General Meeting and New Research Symposium, 1–2 September 2018

The AGM and New Research Symposium was held at the University of Birmingham and Highbury, where 58 members enjoyed a varied programme of events as well as receiving the Report & Accounts and electing a new member of the Board. Although the Chairman, Dr James Bartos, reported the past year a successful one for the GT, he drew attention to falling membership and in response a new drive to recruit members both from the county GTs and elsewhere. A major part of the past year's activities, of course, has been the Celebrating Humphry Repton campaign, led by Linden Groves for the GT, and the Conservation Committee's publication of *Vulnerability Brown: Capability Brown Landscapes at Risk* in November 2017; it is now working on a similar report on Repton sites. It is a concern, however, Marion Harney reported, that the GT is no longer to be a 'recommended' organisation on the National Trust's reduced Council, thus losing its voice on the 250 historic landscapes in NT care. She encouraged GT members who are also members of the NT to use their vote to encourage that the GT remain on the NT Council. Among notable activities of the Education, Publication and Communications Committee is a new blog that comes out every Saturday; see <https://thegardenstrust.blog/>.

The 8th New Research Symposium took place in Highbury Hall, a magnificent Venetian Gothic Grade II* villa built 1878-9 for Joseph Chamberlain MP. It included presentations on A Landscape of Aspiration: Charles Tibbits, Humphry Repton and Barton Hall, Northamptonshire by Stephen Radley; The Three Cathedrals of Trees: Glencruitten, Whipsnade, Milton Keynes by Camilla Allen; The Restoration of the Garden in Berlin of the German Impressionist Painter, Max Liebermann by Elizabeth Michel; and Cassandra Funsten on The Monastery Garden of the Palermo Archaeological Museum created by Antonino Salinas. Members

were also told about the restoration of Highbury, and then taken in groups around the grounds, originally landscaped by Edward Milner, to see the progress achieved and plans in hand. Tours also included a visit to 'Joe Chamberlain's Look-Out', a stone structure from which he would make speeches to local people invited into the grounds on open days.

The principal lectures focused on Birmingham's estate landscapes: Professor Stephen Roberts spoke about the life of 'Brums' in 1889 - the year Birmingham town secured city status; Maureen Perry about Chamberlain's acquisition of land to build Highbury and his relationships with his neighbours, among them George Cadbury; Doctor Katy Layton-Jones on the urban context of public parks; while Carey Baff, Chair of the Birmingham Open Spaces Forum, which works with other organisations to promote and preserve green spaces in the city, highlighted the value of local community support. Following the lectures members went on a tour of the Edwardian Winterbourne House and Garden. Laid out by the Birmingham City industrialist and pioneer of town planning, John Nettlefold, beginning in 1903, the Arts & Crafts Garden has a series of rooms, a lawn bordered by a pergola and an avenue of limes, and a restored glasshouse as well as modern ones housing collections of cacti, succulents, orchids and carnivorous plants. For further details and pictures, see <http://thegardenstrust.org/birmingham-summer-conference-2018-reports/>.



Highbury Hall, Birmingham



The formal garden at Adwell (Felix Lam)

Visit to Adwell, 5 July 2018

On a summer's day, Colin Roberts, Head Gardener, led members and guests on a tour of the magnificent gardens at Adwell, near Thame. The gardens at Adwell were originally designed and laid out in the 18th century by ancestors of the current owners, who created pools and cataracts. The gardens were further developed by the Birch-Reynardson family in the 19th and 20th centuries. As well as planting trees, they established herbaceous borders, a walled garden with roses and a collection of salvias, a series of lakes, and more recently a flower garden. The Parish Church is also to be found within the grounds. David Bradley, OGT committee member, talked to those present about the water features, including the lakes and the springs which feed the garden. The accompanying pictures capture some of the delights to be found there; for those who missed the day, the garden will be open for a Rare Plant Fair on Sunday 1 September 2019.

Jaqueline Mitchell



The stream at Adwell (Felix Lam)

Oliver Cox: Oxford University's work with heritage, 7 September 2018

The main theme of Oliver Cox's talk was how to connect voluntary groups with academics in the heritage sector, and how to build bridges between different disciplines. He is ideally placed to do this as Heritage Engagement Fellow at the University of Oxford and a member of the Faculty of History. He initiated the Thames Valley Country House Partnership and co-ordinates a range of collaborative projects with the UK and international heritage sector, and is responsible for developing long-term strategic partnerships for the University. He highlighted the opportunities available for small voluntary organisations such as the Oxfordshire Gardens Trust to work with the University on research projects and through internships - food for thought indeed!

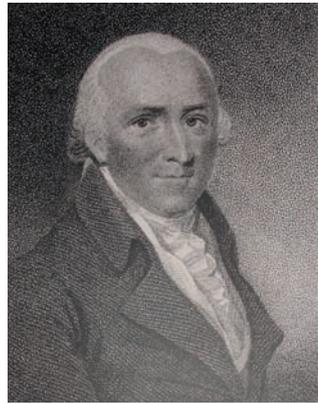
Oliver is clearly someone with a passion for making connections across boundaries, both within and without the heritage sector, and finding new ways of making heritage accessible and engaging. An important example is the research partnership between the University of Oxford and the National Trust. Another theme of the talk was the threat of nostalgia, and how to find new ways of interpreting heritage sites - Oliver gave numerous examples including the recent conference on the Jewish country house across Europe. Not afraid to be provocative, he questioned the relevance of 'garden history' as we have known it. He referred to the multiple ways of valuing historic landscapes - for example, their beneficial impact on mental welfare. We need to be aware too of the different ways in which they are perceived by individuals, including by the increasing numbers of overseas visitors. He gave examples of a new wave of dynamic scholarship around country houses - for instance, around links to empire and slavery.

Oliver's ambition is for Oxford to become an international leader in convening heritage research, and given his abundant energy and vision, this seems like an achievable goal. His talk challenged us to think about making new connections in our research activities and to explore partnerships with other organisations. It also prompted questions about the emphasis on 'elite' landscapes, and whether the National Trust pays too much attention to the interpretation of houses and not enough to their landscapes.

Will Holborow

Jane Bradney: Repton's Red Books: A Life in Landscape from Page to Garden, 26 October 2018

Jane's interesting and wide-ranging talk on Humphry Repton (1752-1818) and his Red Books started with his memorial stone against the wall of Aylsham church, Norfolk, which he designed with an epitaph he himself wrote. His autobiography was only published in 2005.



Destined for a career in the textile industry, which proved unsuccessful, he lived the life of a country squire on his limited inheritance before turning to a career in landscape design in 1788, moving with his growing family from Norfolk to Romford. Repton's red leather books were the usual way he promoted his landscape ideas to his clients, demonstrating before and after painted images with accompanying text. Initially quite small, and sometimes brown, after 1800 he produced twenty more substantial books

in portrait form, the first of which was for Magdalen College, Oxford. Jane later discussed the detail of these proposals, none of which were implemented.

Turning to Repton's other work in Oxfordshire Jane talked about his work at Sarsden for father and son John and James Haughton Langston, with some cottages designed by his second son, George Stanley. She mentioned the Red Book for Great Tew where the architectural drawings by his elder son, George Adney, were incorporated into the book.

Repton provided the artwork for William Peacock's *Polite Repository* (1790-1811) which raises the possibility that he worked at other sites in Oxfordshire depicted in the book, namely Brightwell Park and Shirburn Castle, and also Nuneham and Chastleton.

Finally, Jane drew comparisons between Repton's Red Books and the ten Green Books of Lewis Kennedy (1789-1877), one of which was for Middleton Park, Oxfordshire. Lewis Kennedy, of the Vineyard Nursery family fame, had a short but prominent career as a landscape designer and plantsman up until 1818. Although there is no evidence as yet, Jane raised the possibility that they may have collaborated, given that their individual skills and landscaping careers overlapped for several years

Ruth Todd

Trevor Rowley: Forests Parks and Woodland in early medieval England and Normandy, 16 November 2018

Landscape historian, archaeologist and Emeritus Fellow of Kellogg College, Trevor Rowley gave a fascinating talk on early English parks' development, their focus on hunting and their associations with Normandy. The first forests were created by the Roman emperors, with the first charter being awarded to the monastery of Stavelot-Malmedy in 648 on land set aside under the king's control. Carolingian forests and parks were the real origin of our own parks - for game - and forests, while in Normandy parks for hunting and woodlands were held by dukes, counts and lesser lords from 911 onwards. Here, as well as hunting, land was used for hives for honey, grain, wood - the Bayeux Tapestry shows a scene of the felling of trees for ships. The palace at Woodstock was first established by William the Conqueror, a lover of hunting, and it was he and his successors who introduced Forest Law, which was designed to protect venison and the animals of the chase - deer, wild boar, hare, wolf, fox, marten, coney



(rabbit), pheasant, partridge - as well as the vegetation that supported them, 'vert'. At this time, 'forest' could be extensive and include heathland and wetland as well as woodland: in 1200 around a fifth of England was designated as 'forest', but only 15 per cent was woodland. There were huge forests in Essex and Shropshire, where the erection of buildings and enclosure of pastures were forbidden. In medieval times deer parks, symbolic of status, proliferated so that by 1250 there were several thousand. Fallow deer were held as, being pack animals, they were more suitable for land bounded by palings than red or roe deer.



Buildings were built for the enjoyment of such sport. At Devizes, a Norman castle was sited in the middle of a park, looking down over the town. Broughton Castle, built c.1300, had a deer park in the 16th century, created mainly by Richard Fiennes, who added a roof terrace from which to watch deer and hare coursing. Another example is Windsor Little Park, which was emparked for deer hunting in 1368, with deer coursing added in the 15th century. At Woodstock a Saxon hunting lodge was taken over by the Normans who erected Woodstock Castle. Henry I was responsible for development of the Park, including a 'Sicilian Garden', while Henry II famously created Rosamund's Bower for his mistress's seclusion; other features included a menagerie and various wells. Eventually, as we know, most of these parks were swept away for the development of agriculture.

Jaqueline Mitchell

Margaret Willes: Parsley and Parmesan: the Gardening Experiences of John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys, 7 December 2018

The Mawby Room was packed to capacity for the last lecture of the year, given by Margaret Willes. This was an unusual topic, painstakingly researched and delivered with an engaging freshness and lightness of touch. John Evelyn (1620-1706) and Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) came from very different backgrounds and were brought together by chance when they worked together to relieve the suffering of sailors injured and impoverished by the Anglo-Dutch Wars. John Evelyn was best known for his book, *Sylva*, published in 1664 by the Royal Society. Samuel Pepys is famed for his Diary, first published in two volumes in 1825. John Evelyn's diary emerged in 1818, over a century after his death in 1706. Between the two diaries, there were first-hand accounts of life at the Stuart court in the second half of the seventeenth century, including the restoration of Charles II, the Great Plague, the 2nd Dutch War and the Great Fire of London. The talk touched on the writings and interests of these two 'curious' men including the famous gardens of the time they knew, among them Sayes Court and Vauxhall Gardens. At Sayes Court, an odd almost triangular garden by the River Thames, Evelyn explored his ideas in garden design, planting espalier fruit trees, evergreens such as holly and incorporating nursery-raised plants. He created Italianate-style gardens with echoes of the 'antique'. There was a kitchen garden and parterre divided into quadrants - the latter influenced by Pierre Morant. In 1663 King William visited Sayes Court and the royal gardeners reputedly helped themselves to elm trees! Evelyn created the Spring Garden north of Admiralty Arch, in Westminster, where people were able to exercise and partake of 'collations'. At the Interregnum,

under the orders of Cromwell, the gardens were closed.

Pepys was an administrator on the Navy Board and rose to become Chief Secretary to the Admiralty under Charles II and James II. A lover of food and wine, company and things musical, Pepys enjoyed Vauxhall Gardens - where in the 1660s it was possible to meet, walk and enjoy concerts and refreshments.

Evelyn compared his garden at Sayes with a cabinet of curiosities and Pepys helped to foster his enthusiasm through his naval connections by finding new plants, seeds, nuts and exotics and shipping them back from New England and Virginia. In 1683-4 the Thames froze and plants died in the extreme weather conditions. Evelyn complained 'the weather played the French King in my court'. He had to recreate the gardens at Sayes Court, including laying out good walks and hedges.

In 1692 John Evelyn became heir to the family estate at Wootton and he let Sayes Court to Tsar Peter the Great of Russia who was chronicled as the 'tenant from hell' with guests and entourage. For further insights into the life and times of these two men and their garden interests, Margaret Willes' book *The Curious World of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn* (Yale University Press, 2018) is a must!

Sally Stradling



John Evelyn (left) and Samuel Pepys (right)

Research inquiry: Madeline Agar

Leanne Newman is researching the life and work of the landscape gardener Madeline Agar (1874-1967) who was the Landscape Gardener of the Metropolitan Parks and Garden Association and a teacher at Swanley Horticultural College. She also designed many private gardens as well as the Richardson Evans War Memorial Landscape in Wimbledon. She describes her designs for gardens at Tusmore Park, Oxfordshire, as one of her most important commissions, although she does not give a date for it. Leanne would be grateful to receive any information members of the OGT

might have about this garden and Madeline's involvement in it; she can be contacted on lafnewman@gmail.com.



The sunken garden at Tusmore, 1938

EXTERNAL EVENTS

The events listed below may be of interest to our members. For a more comprehensive listing of external events, see www.thegardenstrust.org/events

Friday 8 February, 9.30am-6pm Ruskin, Science and the Environment, Oxford University Museum of Natural History

The Victorian art teacher and social reformer John Ruskin died in 1900, but his ideas remain deeply relevant today. In honour of his 200th birthday, the museum is hosting a symposium where experts on Ruskin, Victorian culture and the environment will discuss his views on science and natural history, and on the impact of industrialisation on people's health and the world around them. Tickets £20: <https://bit.ly/2q1Vzct>

Friday 8 February, 6-7pm, Ruskin's life-long love of trees, Oxford University Museum of Natural History Professor Fiona Stafford explores Ruskin's love of trees, from the idyllic garden at his family home in Herne Hill to his Lake District estate at Brantwood. Free: <https://bit.ly/2QowwKh>

Wednesday 1 May, 2pm-5pm, Visit to Hagley Park, Worcs

Guided tour by Head of Landscape Joe Hawkins of the restoration works in progress at Hagley Park including the restored 18th-century Palladian bridge; followed by a cream tea at Hagley Hall. Sturdy footwear recommended. Max 20. Bookings: <https://bit.ly/2AtPOJo>

Thursday 30 May, 10am-4.30pm, Secrets and scandal at West Wycombe Park

NT specialist in Garden History Richard Wheeler will give a short introduction in the Village Hall to the Dashwood family's Buckinghamshire estate, before conducting us around the Park, the Mausoleum (Grade I), the St Lawrence Church and the Hell Fire Caves. After lunch (at the Hall) the tour goes to West Wycombe Park where Richard will lead a walk through the landscape along the routes of the 18th-century paths and rides including the Temple of the Four Winds (Grade II*), the temples of Diana, Apollo and Round, Daphne's Temple, Kitty's Lodge, the lake and the Music Temple. £45-£65. Bookings: <https://bit.ly/2Szocti>

Friday 31 May-Sunday 2 June 2019 The Picturesque Garden in England

Oxford University Department of Continuing Education course looking at how the Picturesque relates to wider perceptions of the landscape, creation of Picturesque gardens, and how they are managed today. Further details: <https://bit.ly/2AA6Zc5>

Sunday 1 September, 11am-4pm Adwell House Gardens Rare Plant Fair, Thame, OX9 7DQ

5.00 per adult includes the Fair and Gardens. Further details: www.rareplantfair.co.uk

Friday 6 - Sunday 8 September. The Gardens Trust's Annual Conference and AGM, Oxford

TGT is currently finalising the programme, but the weekend conference, based at Queen's College, will include: talks and exclusive guided visits to private college gardens and private landscape parks and gardens around Oxford; revisiting some of Mavis Batey's work; a guided tour of Oxford Botanic Garden with its Director Professor Simon Hiscock; the GT New Research Symposium; a drinks reception and a gala dinner. More details and booking information soon on TGT website.

OGT LECTURES

All lectures are at Kellogg College, 60-62 Banbury Road, Oxford. Doors open 6.30pm, for lecture at 7pm. Pay at the door: members £5/guests £8, including a glass of wine or juice.

Friday 8 February Gavin Francis Stoneystreet: Kelmscott Manor: The legacy of a plantsman's garden
Botanist and garden historian Gavin Francis Stoneystreet talks about the lasting significance of the gardens of the Oxfordshire Manor House of William Morris.

Friday 12 April The History of the Morrell Estate in Oxford

OGT member Peter Edwards talks about the history of the estate and its transformation from neo-aristocratic park and garden to public education, parks and recreation.

OGT VISITS

Bookings for visits can now be made via Eventcube: <https://ogtevents.eventcube.io>; booking forms have been sent to those not on email.

Saturday 4 May, 10.30am-12.30pm, Visit to Turn End Garden, Townside, Haddenham, nr Aylesbury, HP17 8BG

Owners and designers Mr and Mrs Aldington introduce us to this Grade II-listed, post-war garden, after which you are free to explore its courtyards, pools, woodland, curved glade and series of garden rooms. Heather Hunter's print studio may also be open. Plants and book about Turn End for sale (cash/cheque only). min 10, max 50. £10 members, £15 guests.

Thursday 16 May, 10.30am-4.30pm Visit to Meadow Farm and Morton Hall Gardens, Worcs

10.30am-12.30pm Meadow Farm. Introduction from the owners, Rob and Diane Cole, followed by a tour of the garden, a walk in the meadow and the opportunity to buy plants.

2pm-4.30pm Morton Hall Gardens, Redditch B96 6SJ Guided tour of the Charles Cheshire-designed garden, which includes specimen trees, fritillary meadow, and garden rooms, by the owner, Mrs Olivieri, followed by tea and cake in the orangery. Min 20; max 28. £22 members, £27 guests.

Saturday 8 June, 10.00am-4pm AGM and Visit to Foxcombe Hall, Berkeley Road, Boars Hill, Oxford OX1 5HR

10am AGM (free). 11am: Talks from James Mackintosh, Heritage Consultant, on Foxcombe's history and Anthony Pettorino, architect for Peking University projects, on its restoration and expansion. Tours of the Grade II-listed Arts and Crafts manor house and Italianate garden with terrace and a woodland with an ornamental lake. Max 30. £15 members, £20 guests, inc. sandwich lunch + glass of wine/juice.

Friday 21 June, 6pm, Visit to Thame Park, Thame Park Road, Thame, OX9 3PU

A rare opportunity to see the beautifully restored gardens of this former Cistercian monastery, which incorporates a medieval deer park within the Old Park and 'Capability' Brown-landscaped gardens with 19th-century improvements. FULLY BOOKED; RESCHEDULED FROM 2018.

Tuesday 9 July, 2.30-4.30pm, Visit to Green and Gorgeous Cutting Garden, The Bothy, Little Stoke, Wallingford, OX10 6AX

Fabulous cutting garden, which in summer will be filled with roses, sweet peas, stocks, delphiniums and campanula, with meadow flowers in the field. Introductory talk, tea/cold drink and biscuits; plant and flower sales. £12 members, £17 guests.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GARDENS TRUST EVENTS

2.30pm £12 for GT members, £14 for guests. Booking: <http://www.bucksgardenstrust.org.uk>

Saturday 19 January: Paul Rabbitts on Bandstands

Saturday 23 February: Richard Mawrey QC on The Phantom of the Trianon

Saturday 30 March: Dr Gill Clarke on Stanley Spencer

Saturday 27 April: Kate Harwood on Geoffery Jellicoe

Committee Members Needed: Please Help!

In recent months we have lost three members of the committee for various personal reasons, so we are now seriously short of hands! The committee meets about every six weeks at Kellogg College to review progress in its various activities and to make strategic decisions. We are looking to recruit committee members who have experience of event planning, website or social media management skills and can spare about four hours a month. In addition, we are looking for volunteers to fill the following positions:

Chairperson. The position of Chair remains vacant. Our ideal candidate for Chair is someone who has organisation and leadership skills and can dedicate about two hours per week to OGT matters.

Planning Consultations Co-ordinator. We are still looking for someone to co-ordinate and respond on behalf of the Gardens Trust to planning applications affecting registered parks and gardens in Oxfordshire.

Events Co-ordinator. For personal reasons, Sarah Eaton has now stepped down from this role - we are very grateful for all her help over the past few years. We are looking for someone to replace her as the Events Co-ordinator. The events for each year are organised by a small team of us about a year in advance so that the events card can be sent out with the January Newsletter. Anybody who takes on this role will thus not be on their own, but will field queries on events, liaise with speakers prior to the event and afterwards, and coordinate dates with Kellogg College.

Newsletter Editor. After seven years editing the twice-yearly Newsletter, Jaqueline Mitchell is stepping down in order to make time for other activities. We are indebted to her for ensuring that our newsletters have been produced regularly and to a consistently high standard. So we now need a new Newsletter Editor. At present, the layout is done by Sean Vassen and Will Holborow, but if the new Editor has a Mac they could take on this element as well. The role comprises selection and co-ordination of content, commissioning write-ups of events and reminding people of deadlines, collating information on events for the last page of the Newsletter, and then, when the design has been done, proofing the Newsletter before it goes to print. This is a rewarding role for someone with an eye for detail and a flare for design.

If you could be interested in joining the committee in any capacity, or for more detail about any of these roles, please contact the Secretary: secretary@ogt.org.uk.

Changes to event bookings

We have now set up an OGT page online on Eventcube (see p.7), where bookings for visits can be made. Eventcube should help to streamline bookings; the majority of tickets will be allocated for members, but do make sure you book your visits in good time to ensure you have a place! Fees for talks at Kellogg College will continue to be taken as cash on the night (£5 for members; £8 for non-members). We are also sending out, as before, a booking form to all those who are not on email.

Oxfordshire Gardens Trust Contacts

Secretary: Marybeth Harasz, 3 The Square, Milton under Wychwood, OX7 6JN; secretary@ogt.org.uk
Other Committee Members: David Bradley, Vanessa Fell, Will Holborow (Treasurer), Beverley Lear (Research), Joanna Matthews, Sally Stradling, Ruth Todd.

Membership applications to: Vanessa Fell, c/o 30 West Street, Chipping Norton, Oxon, OX7 5ER.
membership@ogt.org.uk

Patrons: Charles and Angela Cottrell-Dormer, Lord and Lady Saye and Sele, Lady Camoys,
Professor Liam Dolan, Prue Leith

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