

# Church of God Historian

Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson IN) Vol 2 No 3 Spring 2002



## Important New Acquisitions by Church of God Archives

In the photo above, Merle Strege and Douglas Welch examine a copy of the Minutes of the General Ministerial Assembly of the Church of God (Anderson), established in 1917. The Minutes are dated June 14, 1917. Chairman of the Assembly was E.A. Reardon and C.E. Brown was the Recording Secretary. This photo was taken in the Archives by Society member Trish Janutolo.

On the left in the photo are three large boxes containing General Ministerial Assembly Minutes from 1917-1981. These Minutes were, for many years, held by the Executive Council/Leadership Council. With the recent formation of Church of God Ministries, the Minutes were put in

temporary storage, then just recently moved to Church of God Archives for permanent preservation and storage.

At the same time, the Archives also acquired microfilm copies of the Minutes from 1917-1974 (the white boxes on the desk in the photo). These will be copied and a copy placed in Nicholson Library at Anderson University for the use of researchers and others who may be interested.

The microfilm collection also contains rolls of Church of God Ministerial Lists and Yearbooks from 1902-1974 and Executive Council Minutes from 1932-1974 as well. These will be held in Church of God Archives on the campus of Anderson University and

made available for research—within the Archives—upon request.

These are indeed important “finds” for the Archives. Our historians will be well pleased.

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THE J. FRANK SHAW I KNEW  
(In Tune With the Past)

I remember . . . the little green house nestled on the southern slope of Portland, Oregon's Mt. Taber where Warner Pacific College makes its home. In 1954, the school was called Pacific Bible College (PBC). In 1955, my new bride, Wilma Jean, and I moved into a house on the campus surrounded by trees. I remember that it had served as a temporary residence for a man named **J. Frank Shaw** and his spouse, Susan. They had been commissioned as missionaries to a territory overseas known then as the British West Indies.

I remember . . . (like it was yesterday) that on the southwest corner of the house **Missionary J. Frank Shaw** offered to me (the tenant-to-be) a few unneeded items, among which was a wood-cased radio. I still possess it. Recently, I plugged it into the power outlet in hopes of hearing a voice, or some melody. Instead, I heard nothing but **static**!

It would be great to hear the voice of **J. Frank Shaw** again—to see him again! He was a man of few material things and like many who, as the Bible reports of others of like dedication “...loved not their lives unto death.” If our time could be tuned, wired for sound and eternity, I would love to dialogue with the **J. Frank Shaw** I knew. (Among other things I would tell him the radio he gave me needs fixing.) Yes, I remember **J. Frank Shaw**, pioneer missionary.

—Wilfred Jordan





## Church of God Historian

Newsletter of the Historical  
Society of the Church of God  
(Anderson)

Vol 2 No 3 Spring 2002

This newsletter is published three times a year: Fall; Winter; and Spring. It is published by the Society on behalf of its members and is printed at Anderson University, Anderson IN 46012.

All correspondence should be addressed to: The Editor, Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson), 1612 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Anderson IN 46012. Or email: [wiljordan@msn.com](mailto:wiljordan@msn.com).

Church of God Historian is managed by the Executive Committee of the Society: Merle Strege, President; David Markle, Vice-President; Douglas Welch, Secretary-Treasurer; and Wilfred Jordan, Editor.

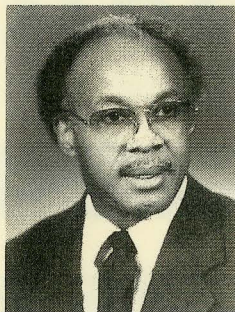
### The Historical Society . . .

The Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson) exists: to encourage within the Church of God (Anderson) interest in Church of God history; to help facilitate the collection and preservation of Church of God books, historical documents (letters, diaries, journals, minutes, reports) and photographs; to assist members whenever and where ever possible with historical research and writing; and to provide for those concerned with Church of God history and heritage association with others of like mind.

Membership is open to all who are vitally interested in what the Society desires to accomplish. Membership dues are \$25 per year (\$10 for students). The Society's "year" runs from Annual Meeting to Annual Meeting (held at the Annual Convention of the Church of God in North America in Anderson, Indiana in the month of June). Checks should be mailed to:

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# From the Editor



## PIONEERING:

### Definition/Adventure?

Traditionally, the Church of God's definition of the word "pioneering" has been a term of endearment. The word *pioneer* is found in the Bible in Hebrews 12:2 and is from the Greek term *ton achegon*, "one leading off, leader, trail blazer, pioneer."

Well, an alternative definition, perhaps, might be one suggested years ago by Dr. Harold Phillips, former Editor-in-Chief of *Vital Christianity*. "Pioneering is being adventuresome in one's own generation." I like that! The definition is not only "workable," but also quite descriptive and best understood.

This Spring, 2002 issue of the *Church of God Historian* refers to several leaders once named among us historically, whose lives and ministry qualify them as authentic pioneers worthy of honor. They were some of the church's trail blazers/pioneers. They "*lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved.*" \*

Look for some of the names of brothers and sisters *named in this issue.* \*\*

Elsie Egermeier, D.S. Warner,  
J.E. Forrest, Ophelia Griffin,  
Patrick Heard, H.B. Mitchell,

George W. Dixon, R.R. Byrum,  
Eugene Garrett, J.D. Smoot,  
A.T. Rowe, S.R. Blake,  
F.G. Smith, Jennie C. Rutty,  
A.F. Gray, C.W. Naylor,  
S.P. Dunn, P.C. Cathie,  
H.M. Riddle, Kenneth Jones,  
Sarah E. Killen, R.S. Jackson,  
Emma Crosswhite, J.W. Butler  
Nora Hunter, B.E. Warren,  
J.W. Butler.

Finally, we do thank God for the opportunity to be servant-pioneers in the Kingdom of God. As the English poet, Thomas Gray wrote so eloquently in his *Elegy In a Country Churchyard*:

*Full many a flower is  
born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on  
the desert air.*

To be "a pioneer in one's own generation" is not a waste; it is joyous adventure of the highest kind. We must faithfully continue the tradition!

—Wilfred Jordan

\* Verse from *Flanders Fields* by John McCrae, Canadian Physician/Soldier/Poet in World War I. ("*We are the dead, Short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved . . .*")

\*\* The emphasis is on "in this issue."

## ANNUAL DUES

In a recent meeting, the Executive Committee of the Society decided to seek to encourage student membership in the Society by reducing the membership dues to \$10 for any student who would like to join. Membership forms will be available at the annual meeting.



# ELSIE EGERMEIER: THEOLOGIAN PAR EXCELLENCE <sup>1</sup>



Elsie Egermeier (1890-1986)

Mention the word "theology" in Church of God circles and name most likely to emerge is Russell Byrum of *Christian Theology* fame. Nearly twenty years later, A.F. Gray, founding president of Pacific Bible College (now Warner Pacific College) and long-term chairperson of the General Ministerial Assembly, also produced a systematic theology under the same title.

However, Byrum's work has served as the movement's theological textbook, despite the fact that its writer was tried (but acquitted) in 1929 for heresy. Something of a theological renaissance occurred in the 1990s, with new systematic theologies published by Barry Callen, Kenneth Jones, and Gilbert Stafford. Notice that so far only masculine names have been mentioned.

Women also wrote theology early in the life of the Church of God movement. For example, Jennie Carpenter Rutty published several books that addressed theology and, especially, the ethics of young people. Rutty also frequently contributed articles to the *Gospel Trumpet* on a range of theological topics. But the most influential female theological writer in the Church of God wrote a single volume that may very well be the most influential book to shape theology across the movement's entire history.

That volume was titled *Bible Story Book* and its author was a diminutive woman named Elsie Egermeier. Born and raised on an Iowa farm, it was after her family moved to Oklahoma City that Egermeier became acquainted with the Church of God. This introduction came through the ministry of Lena Shofner Mattheson. At age eighteen, Egermeier joined the Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company in Anderson and was put to work editing children's literature. E.E. Byrum asked her to prepare a Bible story book for children and, in 1923, *Egermeier's Bible Story Book* was published. It became the all-time best seller among Gospel Trumpet/Warner Press publications. By 1953, the company sold its one millionth copy and by 1986 well beyond two million copies had been printed.

Twice revised, Elsie Egermeier's book provided a reliable study pony ridden by many a theological student at Anderson School of Theology preparing for the Bible content exam. But its theological influence extends well beyond its enduring popularity and utility. More than any other book in the theological history of the Church of God, *Egermeier's Bible Story Book* reinforced the tendency of an experientialist group like the Church of God through a narrative reading of the Bible, and it introduced successive generations to a practice of Bible reading that was fundamentally narrative in nature.

"There is no more fundamental way to talk to God than in a story." <sup>2</sup> So says theologian Stanley Hauerwas, an observation endorsed in the work of biblical theologian Walter Brueggemann. <sup>3</sup> On Hauerwas' view, the Bible is fundamentally a long narrative containing the stories of God, Israel, Jesus, and the church. The Bible is not first of all a book of doctrine or systematic theology, but narrative that, broadly speaking, testifies to the redemptive activity of God in the world of human affairs. Narrative is thus the Bible's first-order language. Christian

groups like the Church of God instinctively read the Bible narratively, trained to see the Bible in this light by their experientialist epistemology.

Out of its Pietist heritage, the Church of God has regarded the experience of God as the primary means through which God is known. When it is believed that through experience one comes to a knowledge of God testimony then becomes a primary form of theology. On Wednesday nights as well as in other meetings, Church of God people testified to God's presence in their lives and God's activity in their behalf. Such testimonies narrated experience.

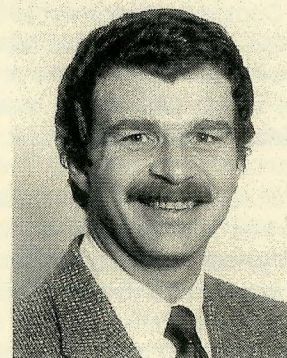
In the same way, Church of God people read the Bible as the narrative of the experience of the people of God. And it was Elsie Egermeier who trained them in this narrative reading style from the moment that their parents first opened her book to read to the children.

<sup>1</sup> From Merle D. Strege, *I Saw the Church: The Life of the Church of God Told Theologically* (Anderson: Warner Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983) p.5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), pp. 43-44, n. 126.

—Merle D. Strege





# Jottings

From the Archives

## Legacies and Litigation

In archiving early Gospel Trumpet Company documents (letters, account records, legal papers) I have been impressed by the amount of litigation the Company was involved in. In the first generation, quite a few property cases were filed against them.

From the beginning, it seems, the "saints" voluntarily gave real estate, money, and personal possessions (such as jewelry) to the Company (or were encouraged to do so by one means or another). Sometimes money was loaned to the Company by individuals and a promissory note given. I have seen copies of such notes in the records.

And, on a few occasions at least, family members objected or took legal steps to recover the money or property on the death of the donor. In some cases, this led to extensive litigation over many months and surely involved the Company in considerable legal expense.

Two cases, both from the early years in Anderson, stand out in the records. The first concerns a pending suit filed in Pennsylvania against the Gospel Trumpet Company by the heirs of Sarah E. Killen, who had loaned the Company a considerable amount of money—perhaps on more than one occasion—and notes (plural) given. I infer from the language used by the Company's Attorney at Law in Pittsburgh that the agreement may have been that in the event of Sister Killian's death, the notes would be cancelled. He writes as follows:

*"The attorney for the estate says that they will defend against the notes on the ground of insanity. They will desire to examine you as to the doctrines that are being spread by the Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company and will endeavor to show that Mrs. Killen was insane upon the subject of these doctrines. They say that they*

*will be able to show that she had insane ideas particularly upon the subject of faith cure. . . . No doubt the other side will produce one or more alienists to give expert testimony upon the subject. In such case, it would be advisable for us to be ready with some expert testimony"* (Letter date May 11, 1907).

This must indeed have involved a considerable sum of money if the heirs would go to so much trouble and expense—even to the extent of hiring "alienists" (the term used then for a psychiatrist, particularly one who testifies in a court of law.) Heavy stuff! Big guns arrayed against the saints!

So far I've found no clue as to how the case was resolved. The attorney certainly took it all very seriously (even nervously?) and advised the Company that they may have to counter with "expert testimony." More alienists? My curiosity is at a high itch. Would that I had the time and money to search out public court records.

The second case, this time very complex and prolonged, concerns the gift of a farm in North Dakota. It involved a good deal of legal correspondence. What has been preserved in the archival records is only the correspondence from attorneys—one each in Indiana, North Dakota, and Washington—about 30 letters in all. The correspondence began in May 1910 and continued until January, 1912.

As best I can understand it all at this point, a saint named Charles B. Goss, feeling the call of God to engage in Gospel work, turned over his farm in Barlow, North Dakota, to the Gospel Trumpet Company and departed for "Europe." The Company attempted to sell the farm, but discovered that the title was encumbered (a fact most likely unknown to the donor). Thus a plaintiff emerged, claiming legal title to the farm.

After considerable legal wrangling, the plaintiff lost, but appealed the case to the State Supreme Court. When it eventually became apparent to the plaintiff's attorneys that they could not win the case on appeal, they agreed to "quieten" the title out of court.

The "quieting" cost the Company considerable—but not nearly as much as all the attorneys' fees and court costs. One attorney's final bill for legal fees alone was about \$900 (a small

fortune in those days). And he had already gotten some expense money early in the process. While the Company won the case, it seems to have been a Pyrrhic victory. The cost of the litigation was probably nearly as much as the value of the land.

Perhaps more. After all, it was only "a quarter section," or 160 acres and no buildings. (In November, 1911, a letter was received from a farmer in the Barlow area "in reply to your last letter" offering \$500 down and a three to five year mortgage "at your rate of interest for the balance." No small fortune there.)

I remained curious about Bro. Goss, whose good intentions and charitable gesture had led to the whole problem in the first place. More digging yielded a lengthy hand-written letter from him to Bro. Byrum. It was written from Perth, Australia and dated June 25, 1910. He may, he says, "decide to stay permanently as I like the climate and the country quite well." He expresses deep regret that the land case has not been settled due to the appeal to the Supreme Court. But he feels he cannot help, "for I am not fixed in a financial way" to engage in an extended lawsuit. "I hope it will turn out all right," he concludes.

The letter goes on to speak of his desire to sell Gospel Trumpet literature in Perth and surrounding areas and hopes that some can be provided for him. In the meantime, he will work at whatever he can to make a living.

He would also like to know, so he writes, "how the work is progressing on the new building" (presumably the publishing plant—and perhaps the reason he gave the farm in the first place) and hopes that "all are remaining faithful to the Lord and that prosperity will not make any to be failures."

If many "gifts" to the Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company ended up in litigation of this kind, prosperity was probably the least of their worries. It seems that only the attorneys profited much.

On the other hand, without such gifts and legacies, the Company quite possibly may not have survived. And given the radical nature of the early movement, it is not surprising that some family members and heirs protested those gifts as due to "insanity".

—Douglas E. Welch





Ozie G. Wattleton

In response to Editor Jordan's request for an article concerning what I view to have been the vision, perspectives, hopes, and dreams of the leaders of the Church of God pioneers, I am writing as a second-generation (1910-1940) pioneer minister of the Reformation Movement of the Church of God.

My father, Rev. Eugene Garrett, was saved under the ministry of a member of D.S. Warner's evangelistic team in the late 1800s. He was a first generation (1880-1910) pioneer minister of the Church of God Reformation Movement in the state of Mississippi. He was preaching the everlasting gospel of the kingdom before my birth 86 years ago. I was taught Church of God doctrine from my earliest years.

Saved as a teenager, the Lord called me into the ministry in 1933 and I have been in full-time ministry since 1947. As a second generation pioneer minister, my years of experience enable me to speak the language of a pioneer minister of the Church of God. As such, I am writing from a point of personal knowledge of the visions, priorities, perspectives, hopes, and dreams of the Church of God pioneer leaders.

The hopes and dreams of these pioneer leaders were based on the Bible. The word of God was their only reliable source of righteousness and source of truth. The reformation vision and the divine revelation of the church that Jesus built exceeded the human wisdom and knowledge of men.

## Historical Reflections of a Pioneer Minister of the Church of God

The first generation of pioneer leaders was not a band of polished, intellectual hirelings, clamoring for titles, salaries, positions, and recognition. These leaders were men and women strong in faith, committed to revealed truth at the peril of their lives in the formative years. They were willing to live sacrificially. The revelation of truth concerning unity, holiness, and the one church was at the very center of their lives and message. It motivated and influenced their every decision.

The gospel of Jesus Christ as contained in God's eternal word was the theological foundation upon which they earnestly contended for the faith. They may not have been intellectually polished, but they had wisdom from above with power from on high. They embraced the common salvation and simply preached the word fearlessly.

The early church had great light, love, and unity. Great grace was upon them all (Acts 4:33) for the first 30 years. This first generation (A.D. 30 - A.D. 60) witnessed and labored in one accord until the satanic spirits of apostasy, compromise, worldliness, and false teachers invaded the local churches of Asia. This lured the majority of pastors and members into a state of apostasy (Rev. 2 - 3).

Likewise, the early evening Church of God had great light, love, and unity for the first 30 years (1880-1910). This first generation of pioneer ministers witnessed and labored in one accord until the monster of racism divided the leaders and muzzled the message of love Christ commanded and the unity he prayed for.

The tragedy of racial segregation divided the reformation movement and left the majority of the leaders unable to practice and preach the full gospel. The heart of God was grieved then and now over the segregated apostate church system that is operating in his name. Keep in mind the fact that there was no segregation in the first generation of the evening light Church of God Reformation Movement. There must come a final restoration of the true church before the end of time.

The bride of Christ must be adorned in all her glory for the soon return of the bridegroom.

Fifteen years after God gave Daniel Sidney Warner a vision of the one true church and the truth of the full gospel, God sent this pioneer leader and his evangelistic gospel team into the deep south: Mississippi; Alabama; and Georgia. They entered right into the hotbed of slavery, lynching, and religious apostasy, into the very middle of racism to people fresh up from slavery. This brave and courageous man of God was wounded almost unto death in Mississippi for practicing and preaching the gospel to every creature. He wrote the song, "Who Will Suffer With the Savior?"

*O for consecrated service  
Mid the din of Babel strife!  
Who will dare the truth to herald  
At the peril of his life?*

Now, concerning the question, where, if so, do we seem to be falling short of the early vision? A majority of the late evening church leaders do not know the doctrine that was embraced and preached by the pioneer ministers of the faith once delivered to the saints. Another reason for the shortage of practicing and proclaiming sound New Testament doctrine is, great numbers do not see the one true church. Jesus commissioned and sent Spirit filled ministers to practice and preach the unity of believers and freedom from sin.

The need to beware of the spirits of apostasy and division that invaded the second generation (1910-1940) of the evening light reformation movement and the generations following down to the present is very real and relevant now. The late evening Church of God generations are struggling for moral and spiritual survival.

Jesus is calling to the attention of late evening local church leaders and people God's complete and unchang-

(Cont'd on Page 6)



(Cont'd from Page 5)

-ed new Testament schedule that was made before the foundation of the world.

This Reformation Movement of the Church of God must return to the foundational truths that brought it into existence under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Again the glorious truths of unity in one body and holiness of life must be heralded through deliberate practice and faithful proclamation. This must be done through teaching, preaching, and singing the doctrinal truths of God's eternal Word.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, pioneer song writers wrote songs proclaiming the truths revealed concerning the church. Members of local congregations in this 21<sup>st</sup> century must be exposed to and taught to sing Zion's songs as a part of the heritage of the Church of God Reformation Movement.

The last area that the editor asked me to address is who were some of the esteemed and faithful leaders during my life and ministry. This recalling of many faithful pioneers has been very meaningful to me because my own father, Rev. Eugene Garrett, is truly one of the esteemed and faithful early leaders who had great influence in my life. Other leaders are Rev. Raymond S. Jackson, Rev. J.E. Forrest, Rev. Emma A. Crosswhite, Rev. George S. Dixon, Sr., Rev. J.D. Smoot, Rev. H.B. Mitchell, Rev. Ophelia Griffin, Rev. A.T. Rowe, Rev. S.P. Dunn, Rev. J.W. Butler, Rev. Patrick Heard, Rev. S.R. Blake, Rev. Major Anderson, Rev. P.C. Cathie, and Rev. Nora Hunter.

The faithful leaders are esteemed because they were true reformers. They gave themselves to the cause of restoring the church to the New Testament pattern. They saw the church that Jesus built beyond the present dual church system. They earnestly contended for the faith that was once delivered to the saints in all ages.

God blessed me to know and minister with most of these esteemed and faithful men and women of God. The opportunity to hear A.T. Rowe and F.G. Smith preach was a moving experience. It was a wonderful privilege for me to see H.M. Riggle, a great preacher, and Barney Warren, a pioneer songwriter at the Anderson

campmeeting in their declining years. During the years of C.W. Naylor's illness, it was my pleasure along with a group of saints to visit this great pioneer songwriter at his bedside.

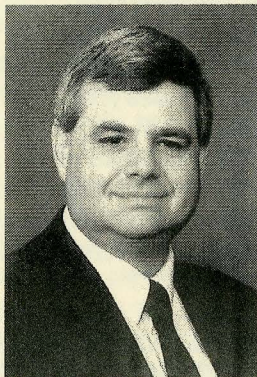
*The evening sun is shining  
The cloudy day is past;  
The time of our repining is at  
an end at last.  
The voice of God is calling  
to unity again;  
With all the creeds of men.*

*Back to the one foundation  
From sects and creeds made free  
Come saints of every nation  
To blessed unity  
Once more the ancient glory  
Shines as in days of old,  
And tells the wonderous story—  
One God, one faith, one fold.*

—C.W. Naylor

In closing, I trust that this article will inform, inspire, warn, and encourage all who read it. The challenge to all of us is to stay on track in keeping with the vision of the New Testament pioneers of the one true Church of God both in the early morning and in the late evening church that Jesus built.

—Ozie G. Wattleton  
Evangelist



**Kenneth R. Tippin**, 47, of Marshall, MI, died suddenly December 7, 2001. Pastor Tippin had been very involved in his local as well as his [wider] church communities. Since 1988 Rev. Tippin had served as the pastor of Marshall Community Church of God. Prior to his service in Marshall, he had

also served as pastor in Pennsylvania, Akron, IN, and Benton Harbor, MI. He helped with the Sumtor coalition of cell churches. He was a founding member of the weekly Marshall ministers prayer group and had recently completed writing a book entitled *Powerful Words*. Rev. Tippin earned degrees from Anderson University, the School of Theology, and Fuller Theological Seminary. He is survived by his wife, Betty, a son, and a daughter; his parents; and a brother. Those who wish may make memorial contributions to Betty Tippin for their children's college fund. (Reprinted with permission from COMMUNION).

**Dr. Tippin was an eager and devoted member of the Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson). We miss his constant friendly interest and encouragement, his probing historical questions, and his commitment to historical truthfulness. He showed unusual promise as a historian and teacher of the Church of God. We are all impoverished by his untimely passing.**

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

**The third Annual Meeting of the Historical Society will take place in Anderson during the 2002 Annual Convention of the Church of God in North America. Please note the following information:**

**Date: Saturday, June 15**

**Time: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

**Place: Room 169 Fine Arts**

**We hope you will be able to attend this important meeting. (And remember, annual fees are due!)**





**GOSPEL TRUMPET EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT ABOUT 1911 OR 1912**

**Front Row** (left to right): Elsie Egermeier; Erla Kempfer; Bessie Hittle Byrum; (unknown).

**Second Row:** Floyd Heinly; Hazel D. Soules; D.O. Teasley; (unknown); E.E. Byrum; Eva Johnson; A.L. Byers.

**Back Row:** (unknown); Amy Phillips; S.L. Morgan; John Lowder; Adelaine Babel (Mrs. Herman Babel); Richard Meier; Herman Babel; (unknown); S.L. Springer.

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