war eagle auburn history

War Eagle Auburn History: The Spirit and Legacy Behind Auburn's Iconic Battle Cry

war eagle auburn history is a fascinating tale that weaves tradition, legend, and school pride into one of college football's most enduring and beloved symbols. For Auburn University fans and alumni, "War Eagle" is much more than a simple phrase—it's a rallying cry that ignites passion, unity, and respect for the school's rich heritage. But where did this iconic slogan come from? How did it become synonymous with Auburn University's identity? Let's dive deep into the origins, stories, and cultural significance behind war eagle auburn history.

The Origins of War Eagle: More Than Just a Chant

The phrase "War Eagle" has been associated with Auburn University for well over a century, but its exact origin is somewhat shrouded in mystery, with several compelling stories competing for authenticity. Despite this ambiguity, what is clear is that "War Eagle" has grown into a symbol of fierce determination and loyalty.

Multiple Legends Behind the Battle Cry

One of the most popular tales dates back to the late 1800s when a Civil War veteran attended an Auburn football game. According to the story, the veteran had a pet eagle that he released before games. This eagle supposedly soared over the field during the match, inspiring Auburn players and fans alike. When the eagle finally landed, the crowd erupted, and the phrase "War Eagle!" was born as a salute to the bird's spirit and resilience.

Another narrative suggests that the term originated from a game in 1892, where Auburn was playing against the University of Georgia. An Auburn player was said to have yelled "War Eagle!" as a battle cry to rally his teammates. This phrase quickly caught on, becoming a tradition ever since.

The Evolution of the War Eagle Tradition

As years passed, "War Eagle" evolved from being just a chant to a full-fledged symbol of the Auburn spirit. The eagle itself became a live mascot, carried onto the field during games, thrilling fans and reinforcing the powerful connection between the university and its emblematic bird.

The tradition also extended beyond sports, representing Auburn's values of courage, excellence, and perseverance. Today, "War Eagle" is not only a cheer but a way of life for Auburn students, alumni, and supporters.

The Living Mascot: Auburn's War Eagle Soars

One of the most unique aspects of war eagle auburn history is the presence of a live eagle at games and university events. This tradition adds a tangible and awe-inspiring element to the school's identity.

The Role of the Live War Eagle

Since the 1930s, Auburn has maintained a live eagle mascot that makes appearances during football games, especially at Jordan-Hare Stadium. The eagle is released to fly around the stadium before games, a spectacle that captivates fans and players alike.

This live mascot reinforces the connection between Auburn's heritage and the animal that embodies their fighting spirit. It's a reminder of the school's history and a symbol of freedom and strength.

Meet the Eagles: Names and Stories

Over the years, Auburn's live eagles have had names such as "War Eagle I," "War Eagle II," and so on, each with its own story and personality. The current eagle mascot is cared for by the Southeastern Raptor Center at Auburn University, ensuring the bird's well-being while maintaining the tradition.

Fans eagerly await the eagle's flight every season, making it a highlight of the Auburn game day experience.

War Eagle in Auburn Culture and Community

The phrase "War Eagle" transcends the football field—it permeates Auburn's culture, from academic achievements to community events. Understanding how war eagle auburn history impacts the broader Auburn community offers insight into why this tradition remains vibrant.

A Salute Beyond Sports

While "War Eagle" is most commonly heard during football games, it is also

used as a greeting among Auburn students and alumni. It's a way to express solidarity, pride, and mutual respect. Walking around Auburn's campus or attending alumni gatherings, you'll often hear "War Eagle" exchanged warmly.

This simple phrase bonds generations of Tigers, creating an invisible thread that links past, present, and future members of the Auburn family.

War Eagle and Auburn's Academic Excellence

Auburn University prides itself on academic rigor and innovation, and the "War Eagle" spirit is often invoked to encourage perseverance and achievement in classrooms and research labs. Faculty and students alike embrace the motto as a reminder to tackle challenges head-on, embodying the eagle's sharp vision and tenacity.

How War Eagle Auburn History Shapes Game Day Traditions

Game day at Auburn University is a spectacle filled with rituals and traditions steeped in the school's history. The "War Eagle" chant and the flight of the eagle mascot play central roles in creating an electric atmosphere.

The War Eagle Chant: A Unifying Force

Before kickoff, the stadium reverberates with the collective roar of "War Eagle!" It's a unifying moment where thousands come together, energized and ready to support their team. This chant is more than just words; it's a call to arms, a declaration of Auburn pride that uplifts players and fans alike.

Pre-Game Rituals and the Eagle's Flight

The eagle's flight before the game is a breathtaking sight. As the eagle soars overhead, it symbolizes freedom and fierce competition. This ritual serves as a prelude to the battle on the field and a reminder of the university's legacy.

Fans often participate in tailgating, decked out in Auburn colors, sharing stories of past games and traditions. The entire experience is steeped in the ethos captured by "War Eagle."

Why War Eagle Auburn History Continues to Inspire

The staying power of "War Eagle" lies in its ability to adapt and resonate with each new generation of Auburn fans. It's a tradition that honors the past while inspiring future achievements.

Unifying a Diverse Community

Auburn's student body is diverse, with people from all walks of life coming together under the banner of "War Eagle." This shared identity fosters a sense of belonging and pride, breaking down barriers and creating lifelong connections.

Lessons from the War Eagle Spirit

Beyond sports and celebration, the "War Eagle" motto teaches valuable lessons about resilience, courage, and loyalty. Whether facing academic challenges or personal obstacles, embracing the War Eagle spirit encourages individuals to persevere and soar above difficulties.

Exploring Auburn's War Eagle Symbolism in Merchandise and Media

The influence of war eagle auburn history extends into Auburn's branding, merchandise, and media presence, reflecting the deep-rooted connection fans have with this iconic phrase.

Auburn Merchandise: Wearing War Eagle with Pride

From t-shirts and hats to flags and decals, "War Eagle" emblazoned merchandise allows fans to showcase their Auburn pride wherever they go. These items serve as conversation starters and a way to spread Auburn's culture beyond campus borders.

Media and Popular Culture References

The phrase "War Eagle" frequently appears in sports broadcasts, commercials, and even local businesses, highlighting how ingrained it is in the Auburn

community's identity. Its recognizability helps foster wider appreciation and respect for Auburn University's traditions.

Tips for New Auburn Fans: Embracing the War Eagle Tradition

If you're new to Auburn fandom, learning the war eagle auburn history is a great way to connect with the community and fully enjoy the game day experience.

- Learn the Chant: Join in with fellow fans by practicing the "War Eagle" cheer—it's simple, spirited, and contagious.
- Attend a Game: Witness the live eagle flight and immerse yourself in the traditions that make Auburn unique.
- Wear Auburn Colors: Blue and orange gear helps you feel part of the family and shows your support.
- **Understand the Stories:** Read up on the various legends behind "War Eagle" to appreciate the depth of its meaning.

By embracing these practices, new fans can quickly become part of the tight-knit Auburn community, carrying on the legacy of "War Eagle" for years to come.

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War Eagle Auburn history is a testament to the power of tradition and community spirit. Whether it's the thrilling flight of the eagle before kickoff, the passionate chants echoing through Jordan-Hare Stadium, or the camaraderie felt among Auburn Tiger fans, "War Eagle" is a symbol that continues to soar. As new generations discover and celebrate this unique heritage, the war eagle spirit remains a vibrant and unifying force at Auburn University.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the origin of the 'War Eagle' chant at Auburn University?

The 'War Eagle' chant originated from a legendary Civil War-era story about a soldier who carried an eagle to battle, inspiring Auburn athletes and fans.

Over time, it evolved into a battle cry symbolizing Auburn's spirit and pride.

How did the 'War Eagle' become Auburn University's battle cry?

The phrase 'War Eagle' became Auburn's battle cry due to a combination of historical accounts and traditions involving an eagle mascot and the fighting spirit of Auburn teams, first popularized in the early 20th century during Auburn football games.

Is the 'War Eagle' mascot a real eagle or a symbolic figure?

Auburn's 'War Eagle' mascot is represented both symbolically and by a live golden eagle that flies over the football field before games, embodying the school's traditions and spirit.

When did the tradition of the live War Eagle flight begin at Auburn football games?

The tradition of the live War Eagle flight began in the 1950s and has since become a cherished part of Auburn football games, where a golden eagle soars over the stadium to energize fans and players.

What are some key moments in Auburn's history linked to the 'War Eagle' tradition?

Key moments include the establishment of the War Eagle chant in the early 1900s, the introduction of the live eagle flight in the 1950s, and various championship celebrations where the War Eagle symbolizes Auburn's competitive spirit.

How does the 'War Eagle' tradition influence Auburn University's culture and identity?

The 'War Eagle' tradition is central to Auburn University's culture, fostering unity, pride, and a sense of heritage among students, alumni, and fans. It represents resilience, loyalty, and the fighting spirit of the Auburn community.

Additional Resources

War Eagle Auburn History: Tracing the Origins and Legacy of a Timeless Tradition

war eagle auburn history is a topic steeped in rich tradition, pride, and a sense of identity that transcends generations of Auburn University fans and alumni. The phrase "War Eagle" is more than just a battle cry or a mascot; it is a symbol that embodies the spirit of Auburn, its athletic prowess, and its community's unwavering loyalty. Understanding the origins and evolution of War Eagle provides valuable insight into how this emblematic phrase became a cornerstone of Auburn's culture and collegiate sports.

The Origins of War Eagle: Myth and Reality

The story behind the War Eagle is a blend of legend, historical events, and cultural significance that has sparked numerous theories and debates. Unlike many college mascots or slogans with clear-cut beginnings, War Eagle's history is layered with multiple narratives, each contributing to its mystique.

Legendary Accounts

One popular version dates back to the American Civil War era. According to this tale, an eagle was found by a Union soldier during a battle in the South, and this eagle became a symbol of courage and fighting spirit. After the war, the eagle supposedly flew over Auburn's battlefield grounds, inspiring soldiers and later students to adopt the phrase "War Eagle" as a rallying cry.

Another widely accepted legend involves a battle between Auburn and the University of Georgia in 1892. The story goes that an eagle was released during the game, soaring above the field and igniting the crowd's enthusiasm. Auburn won the game that day, and the eagle became a symbol of victory and perseverance.

Historical Context and Early Usage

Despite the colorful stories, the first documented use of "War Eagle" at Auburn dates to the early 20th century. Historical records show that the phrase was used as a battle cry by Auburn's football team and fans by the 1910s. However, the official adoption of the eagle as the university's mascot and the consistent use of the War Eagle chant took several more decades to solidify.

This gradual adoption highlights how War Eagle transitioned from an informal expression of school spirit to a formal emblem representing Auburn's identity. The eagle itself, a powerful bird of prey, symbolizes strength, freedom, and vigilance—qualities that resonate well with the ethos of collegiate athletics.

The Evolution of the War Eagle Tradition

Over time, War Eagle evolved beyond a simple phrase or mascot. It became a multifaceted tradition that includes the live eagle flights at football games, the War Eagle chant, and a symbol of unity among Auburn's community.

War Eagle Flight: A Living Symbol

One of the most iconic aspects of the War Eagle tradition is the live eagle flight that takes place during Auburn football games. This event features a trained golden eagle soaring around the Jordan-Hare Stadium before kickoff, rallying fans and players alike. The flight is not only a spectacular display but also a reverent nod to the heritage and spirit that War Eagle represents.

The practice of flying a live eagle dates back to the mid-20th century, with the first official flights becoming a regular part of Auburn football games in the 1950s and 1960s. Today, the live eagle is cared for by dedicated handlers who ensure the bird's well-being, reflecting Auburn's commitment to honoring the tradition responsibly.

The War Eagle Chant and Its Cultural Impact

The chant "War Eagle" has become synonymous with Auburn pride. It is shouted loudly by students, alumni, and fans during sporting events, rallies, and university gatherings. The chant serves as a unifying call, evoking a sense of belonging and shared history.

The cultural impact of War Eagle extends beyond athletics. It appears in Auburn's branding, merchandise, and promotional materials, reinforcing its role as a symbol of excellence and community spirit. The chant and the eagle emblem also foster a connection among Auburn alumni worldwide, creating a lasting bond that transcends generations.

Comparative Perspectives: War Eagle and Other Collegiate Mascots

When examining War Eagle Auburn history in the broader context of collegiate mascots, several distinctive features emerge that set it apart.

• **Historical Depth:** Unlike some mascots designed purely for marketing or entertainment, War Eagle's origin is deeply rooted in historical events and legends related to the university's region and ethos.

- Live Animal Tradition: The live eagle flight is a rare and powerful tradition that adds a dynamic, living element to Auburn's game-day experience, contrasting with schools that rely solely on costumed mascots.
- **Symbolic Resonance:** The eagle, as a symbol of power and freedom, aligns with American iconography while also representing Auburn's unique identity.

These features contribute to why the War Eagle tradition has endured and grown in significance, symbolizing more than just a team mascot but a deeply embedded cultural emblem.

Challenges and Controversies

No longstanding tradition is without its challenges. The use of a live eagle has raised questions about animal welfare and ethical treatment, prompting Auburn to implement stringent care standards and transparency. Additionally, the ambiguous origins of the War Eagle chant have sparked debates among historians and fans alike, with no single narrative universally accepted.

Despite these issues, Auburn has maintained the tradition by adapting to modern sensibilities while preserving the core elements that make War Eagle unique.

The Role of War Eagle in Auburn's Identity and Branding

War Eagle is integral to Auburn University's brand identity. It encapsulates the university's values of courage, excellence, and community. The phrase is used extensively in marketing campaigns, merchandise, and social media, enhancing Auburn's visibility and fostering school pride.

The branding around War Eagle is carefully managed to respect tradition while appealing to contemporary audiences, including prospective students, athletes, and supporters. This balance between honoring heritage and embracing modernity is a key factor in Auburn's sustained success in athletics and beyond.

War Eagle in Athletics

In athletics, War Eagle serves as a rallying cry that motivates athletes and fans. The tradition is most visible during football season, where the chant,

live eagle flight, and War Eagle flags create an electrifying atmosphere. The phrase is chanted not only at games but also in practices and pep rallies, reinforcing team spirit.

The psychological impact of such a tradition on players and fans is significant, contributing to Auburn's reputation as a formidable competitor in collegiate sports.

War Eagle Beyond Sports

While primarily associated with athletics, War Eagle's influence extends into academic and community realms. It appears in university mottos, alumni networks, and fundraising campaigns, symbolizing commitment and resilience. The tradition serves as a narrative thread that connects Auburn's past, present, and future.

The enduring appeal of War Eagle underscores the power of symbols in shaping institutional identity and fostering a sense of belonging.

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War Eagle Auburn history is a testament to how tradition, legend, and community spirit intertwine to create a lasting emblem of pride and resilience. From its murky origins to its prominent role in Auburn's culture today, War Eagle continues to inspire and unite those connected to the university. This storied tradition, balancing myth and reality, live spectacle and symbolic power, remains a defining feature of Auburn's identity in collegiate athletics and beyond.

War Eagle Auburn History

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Hidden History of Auburn is an unprecedented collection that unearths the long-buried stories of this Alabama treasure.

war eagle auburn history: 100 Things Auburn Fans Should Know and Do Before They Die Evan Woodbery, 2012-09 Drawing insight from many former players, coaches, and others directly tied to the storied and revered football program of Auburn University, this resource for fans places firsthand accounts alongside essential team history for a one-of-a-kind guide to Tigers football. With more than a century of history, two National Championship victories, and three Heisman Trophy winners distilled into the greatest highlights, the book serves as the ultimate compendium of everything that is special about the football program and includes the stories and memories of everyone from Ralph Shug Jordan andPat Dye to Bo Jackson and Tracy Rocker. Taking Tigers fandom outside of Jordan-Hare stadium and into everyday life, the book also includes beloved landmarks and top hangouts on the Auburn campus and in the Montgomery area. Updated to include the 2011 season, this revised edition includes Heisman Trophy winner Cam Newton and the 2010 National Championship team coached by Gene Chizik.

war eagle auburn history: Eerie Alabama: Chilling Tales from the Heart of Dixie Alan Brown, 2019 Known for antebellum mansions and sunny beaches, Alabama also claims an abundance of fascinating mysteries and legends. The White Thang is a Sasquatch-like creature that has terrorized Alabamians for generations. For a brief period in the 1980s, Needham gained national attention because of its crying pecan tree. In 1854, a farmer named Orion Williamson simply vanished in a field in Selma. From the aquatic beast known as the Coosa River Monster to the story of the Leprechaun of Mobile, these stories have evolved over generations. Author Alan Brown presents some of the strangest stories from this collective tradition.

war eagle auburn history: Deep South's Oldest Rivalry, The: Auburn vs. Georgia Douglas Stutsman, 2017 The rivalry between Auburn University and the University of Georgia began in 1892 and has largely been a competition more brotherly than bitter. According to one legend, Auburn's War Eagle battle cry originated at the first game between the two schools. The first overtime game in SEC history occurred in 1996, when Georgia topped the heavily favored Tigers, 56-49, in four extra periods. Renowned UGA coach Vince Dooley graduated from Auburn, while Auburn coach Pat Dye was an All-American at UGA. Join award-winning journalist Doug Stutsman as he recounts the unforgettable games, moments and personalities on the 125th anniversary of the Deep South's Oldest Rivalry.

war eagle auburn history: Iron in the Blood Jay Busbee, 2025-08-26 The story of college football in Alabama is the story of the South itself. This behind-the-scenes account of the Alabama vs. Auburn rivalry, one of the fiercest in American sports, details its rich history, celebrates the triumphs of both teams, and showcases the larger-than-life power of football to break down barriers and shape an entire culture. For Alabama and Auburn, football isn't life. It's much more important than that. Their rivalry is a multigenerational one, fueled by rage and redemption, and they clash every autumn with ferocity and defiance. But the shockwaves of their feud have transcended the football field, entering into politics, advancing civil rights, energizing millions, and opening up eyes and hearts in a way even religion never could. Yahoo Sports senior writer Jay Busbee traces the perpetual impact of football in Alabama, from the days of Reconstruction, through the Civil Rights era, to the hyper-partisan climate of the 2020s. From Bear to Bo, from Cam to Nick, from Toomer's Corner to Denny Chimes, Iron in the Blood revels in the victories of both schools and dives deep into the iconic figures connected with both programs. Iron in the Blood is an up-close look at one of America's most colorful sports rivalries, but it's also a glimpse into the joy and agony of being a die-hard football fan. It's the dramatic history of how football has defined a state, inside and outside its stadiums. And it's the story of how Alabama understands that football is both a magnificent way to celebrate its brightest days and a welcome path to climb out of its darkest ones.

war eagle auburn history: *Auburn* Elizabeth D. Shafer, 2003-10 Auburn. The name resonates among generations who have studied, taught, or worked on the campus. No matter what the university has been formally named over the years-from East Alabama Male College to Alabama

Polytechnic Institute-people have fondly called it Auburn since it was chartered in 1856. Professor George Petrie's Auburn Creed emphasizes the refrain I believe, which the Auburn family of Plainsmen, Tigers, and War Eagles have embraced. In this fitting tribute to a landmark Southern institution, vintage photographs depict people, places, experiences, and traditions beloved by the Auburn community. Virtues such as loyalty, patriotism, service, and hard work have been encouraged on the campus from the school's inception. With a cooperative spirit, students and faculty alike applaud each other's successes in the classrooms and laboratories as well as in stadiums and on athletic fields. Numerous significant accomplishments in both academics and athletics are associated with Auburn and they are celebrated within these pages. Images of the campus as it has evolved over the years; memorable students, faculty, staff, and alumni; and unforgettable events have been gathered and preserved in this keepsake volume.

war eagle auburn history: Tales from Auburn's 2004 Championship Season Richard Scott, 2005 After a 13-0 record 2004 season, an SEC championship and a Sugar Bowl victory the Auburn tigers and their fans see themselves as national champions even if the coaches' and media polls dispute their status.

war eagle auburn history: I Love Alabama/I Hate Auburn Donald F. Staffo, 2012-08-01 The ultimate University of Alabama fan guide to the passionate and historic rivalry between the Auburn Tigers and the Crimson Tide, this book is presented in a unique reversible-book format. Full of interesting trivia, hilarious history, and inside scoops, the book relates the fantastic stories of legendary 'Bama coaches and star players, as well as the numerous villains and their even worse fans who have represented the Tigers over the years. Like two books in one, this completely biased account of the rivalry shows there really is no fine line between love and hate; rather, it's as wide as the drive from Tuscaloosa to Auburn. This is the defining book on the Alabama&-Auburn rivalry and is a must-read for every true Crimson Tide fan.

war eagle auburn history: The History of College Nicknames, Mascots and School Colors Gary Hudson, 2019-11-24 This book explains the history behind how colleges derived their nicknames, mascots, and school colors. Gary Hudson chose to focus the attention of his book on schools that have Division 1A Football programs, because all the athletic programs at those schools will also compete in Division 1A sports. Consequently, those schools tend to get more exposure in the media, thereby drawing more attention and curiosity to the college sports fan.

war eagle auburn history: Auburn Football Elizabeth D. Schafer, 2004 Football is one of Auburn's oldest and most beloved institutions. Formally established as a varsity sport by Dr. George Petrie in 1891, Auburn's football team has proudly represented the school for over a century. The team shares some of the South's oldest college football rivalries with the University of Georgia and the University of Alabama-a rivalry tested annually in the Iron Bowl. Throughout their history, the Tigers have earned the honor of SEC Champions and a national championship and have been featured on the cover of Sports Illustrated; the team has produced many professional players and Hall of Fame inductees. Auburn football also boasts a very dedicated legion of fans, who love to cheer on their Tigers, both at home and away. The images contained within Auburn Football illustrate the team's impressive history, filled with legendary coaches such as Shug Jordan and John Heisman, and Heisman trophy-winning players Pat Sullivan and Bo Jackson. Auburn's football tradition will continue to delight fans and attract players for decades to come.

war eagle auburn history: American Social and Political Movements, 1945-2000 Robert J. Allison, Benjamin Frankel, 2000 This guide presents differing perspectives on the Cold War drawn from all parts of the world.

war eagle auburn history: Lindale, Lint and Leather 1825-2001 Randall McCord, 2024-02-07 Lindale, Lint, and Leather is Randall McCord's third published work. Beginning in 2015, he and former player Tommy Moon wrote 739 pages about The Cotton Picking Centre Warriors, which was a hundred-year history of their high school football team located in Cherokee County, Alabama. Six years later, he authored a semibiographical book about a journey from Roy Hill's cotton fields to US Navy duty on the island of Oahu set in Hawaii's last year as a territory and first

as the fiftieth state. Both have been well received by casual readers and historians. The eighty-three-year-old has experienced a varied career as a farm boy, athlete, Navy petty officer, college student, and later high school teacher and coach. Yet for the past four decades, he has owned and operated a forest products company with wife, Joyce Anne, in Rome, Georgia, near their home on Rockmart Road in Silver Creek.

war eagle auburn history: <u>Congressional Record</u> United States. Congress, 1980 The Congressional Record is the official record of the proceedings and debates of the United States Congress. It is published daily when Congress is in session. The Congressional Record began publication in 1873. Debates for sessions prior to 1873 are recorded in The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States (1789-1824), the Register of Debates in Congress (1824-1837), and the Congressional Globe (1833-1873)

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war eagle auburn history: *Auburn Tigers* Brian Howell, 2013-08-01 Fight on, you orange and blue! Much like a safety blitz, Auburn Tigers readies and pounces the reader with colorful, fact-filled storytelling. You may feel like a quarterback under pressure, as the information detailing the history and legacy of Auburn's century old college football program comes rushing in. Aligned to Common Core Standards and correlated to state standards. SportsZone is an imprint of Abdo Publishing, a division of ABDO.

war eagle auburn history: Lost Auburn Ralph Draughon, 2012-06-01 Lost Auburn: A Village Remembered in Period Photographs offers a dynamic record of the buildings that once stood in Auburn, Alabama, which have fallen to natural disaster, war, poverty, and neglect, and to what some would call progress. More than two hundred photographs of lost buildings give three historians the opportunity to relate stories of those who once worshipped, learned, and lived in Auburn. Together, these photographs and the accompanying text vividly convey the uniqueness of the village of Auburn that was. Lost Auburn is more than just a document about the lost architectural fabric of a charming village. It is both a volume of insightful commentary and an opportunity to reflect on the role of community in the life of a Southern town.

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