GREEK INSCRIPTIONS
FROM THE ATHENIAN AGORA: BUILDING RECORDS
(Plates 63 and 64)

THIS ARTICLE deals with a group of unpublished inscription fragments, found in the
excavations of the Athenian Agora between 1933 and 1937,¹ that all seem to be
concerned with building operations and may derive from the same document or series of
documents. I believe that all belong to the series of inscriptions that record the reconstruction
of the walls of Athens in the latter part of the first decade of the 4th century B.C.²

At the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404 B.C., the fortifications of Athens and Peiraeus
were dismantled and thereafter lay in disrepair until 394 B.C., when the Athenian admirals
Konon, with help from the Persians, defeated a Spartan fleet at Knidos. Athenian fortunes
revived, and a program of reconstruction of the defensive walls commenced (Xenophon,
Hellenika 4.8.9; Diodoros 14.85), starting, it would seem, with the fortifications of Peiraeus,
whose repair had, in fact, begun a little earlier, in the final month of the year 395/4.³

As work progressed, both in Peiraeus and in Athens, inscriptions were set up, probably
on the walls, recording the progress achieved. These inscriptions fall into three categories:
the earliest (IG II² 1656, 395/4, and IG II² 1657, 394/3 B.C.) were engraved on the ends
of wall blocks in the fortifications on the Eetion Peninsula in Peiraeus. Both these stones are
now lost, but descriptions of their discovery indicate that they were inscribed adjacent to
one another, only 1.5 m. apart.⁴ The information provided in these records is very brief:
merely a date and a summary description of the work done.

In the second category, beginning in 394/3 B.C., a change ensued in the physical form of
the records and in the method of recording the work done: henceforth, it would appear,
a cache of roof tiles from a demolished Archaic temple was made available to provide
standard-sized plaques, probably to be set into the appropriate sections of the walls as the
project progressed. These tiles were roughly rectangular, about 0.25 m. on the long axis and
0.19 m. on the short, and about 0.04–0.06 m. thick; one long side was actually a flattened
triangle, rather than straight. These tiles may have been selected for these records not merely
because of the quality of the stone from which they were made (a fine, white, small-crystaled
marble, probably of Cycladic Island origin) and their uniform size but also because, in form,

¹ I am grateful to Professor Homer A. Thompson, the Director Emeritus of the Agora Excavations of the
American School of Classical Studies at Athens, for permission to study and to publish these documents, and to
Mrs. C. Peppas-Delmousou, the Director of the Epigraphic Museum in Athens, for permission to study and
re-publish material in the Epigraphic Museum. I am also very grateful to Professor Christian Habicht for
making it possible for me to study and make use of the extensive collection of squeezes at the Institute for
Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., particularly during 1987, when he made it possible for me to be a Summer
Visitor at the Institute, and to Professor T. L. Shear, Jr., for allowing me to work in the Agora in 1988 and 1990.
² IG II² 1656–1664; SEG XIX 145 and XXXII 165.
³ See IG II² 1656.
⁴ See Foucart 1887, pp. 130–131, and IG II² 1656.

Hesperia 64.3, 1995
they resembled miniature pedimental stelai. Plaques of this kind were engraved from 394/3 through 392/1 B.C., but the form of the records varied over the years. In all, six such plaques recording the rebuilding of the walls have been found. They were set up both in Athens (IG II² 1660, 393/2 B.C., found on the Akropolis; IG II² 1661, 393/2 B.C., found on the south slope of the Akropolis; and SEG XXXII 165, 393/2 B.C., found in the Athenian Agora) and in Peiraeus (IG II² 1658, 394/3 B.C.; IG II² 1659, 394/3 B.C.; and IG II² 1662, 392/1 B.C.): I believe that the documents to be discussed below also belong to this series, and thus are likely also to be dated between 394 and 391 B.C.\(^5\)

Four of the six published plaques are all laid out in the same way, on the long axis of the tile, using the triangular edge to form a pseudo-pedimental top for the stele (IG II² 1658, 1659, 1661, 1662, as also is 1 below); the other two are engraved on the short axis of the tile (IG II² 1660 and SEG XXXII 165). The two earliest (IG II² 1660 and IG II² 1661), like the two wall blocks from Peiraeus, are records of the work of a single month; the remainder, whose surviving texts are variously dated but which perhaps were all inscribed in 392/1 B.C., contain summary records, necessarily very brief, of two or more years of work.

A third category of records of this project exists, of which two stelai survive: IG II² 1664, 392/1 B.C., said to have been found in Peiraeus, and SEG XIX 145, not securely dated but in my opinion likely also to be from 392/1; this was found in excavations on the north slope of the Akropolis. They differ from the other records in several respects. Each employs a different method of laying out the details of work done, with a column of numerals in the left margin and matching rubrics in a second column at the right. This system, I believe, was adopted because these stelai represent summations of all the work done over several years, unlike the others, which, I think, represent work done on specific sections of the walls in individual months or years. Thus, these two stelai contain rather more information, albeit summary, and were clearly much bigger originally, although both now are fragmentary. Apart from the way in which they are laid out, there is no common element in their texts, but I believe that they may represent different copies of the same document, one to be set up in Athens, the other in Peiraeus, both engraved at the same time after the completion of the entire project. I have not seen either of them, but both are said to be made from Pentelic, not Island, marble (this description is not necessarily a good guide, since the other published fragments, too, were described by their excavators as being of Pentelic marble). Given the greater size of these two stelai in their original form, however, the apparent difference in marble type is not of significance here, since the amount of information recorded, in any case, would have been far too much to fit on a small roof tile of the type employed for the records of the second category.

The plaques edited below may belong to the second category, the series of reused Archaic roof tiles inscribed with brief records of work done on a specific section of the walls. They are of the same Island-type marble and may have had dimensions similar to those of the other plaques. 1 differs in some respects, both textually and physically: unlike the others,

\(^5\) At least three other such plaques are recorded: a mid-5th-century horos (I 6070, Thompson 1948, pl. 46:2), a 4th-century horos, also from the Agora and from near the site of the Tholos (E.M. 620, IG II² 4975), and an unrelated fragment of a dedicatory catalogue of the 2nd century B.C. (I 3988, Meritt 1960, no. 80, p. 56). I owe the first of these examples to Professor Homer Thompson and the second to the anonymous referee for this article.
it was engraved stoichedon; moreover, part of the text may have been inscribed upon the left lateral of the stone, indicating that it may have been set up on a corner of a wall, so that both its faces could be seen and read, not placed in the middle of a wall, as I believe may have been the case with the rest of these records. Despite these differences, there are enough points of similarity between it and the other plaques to suggest that it, too, may record work done on the repair of the walls of Athens in the period 394/3 to 392/1 b.c.  

1. Fragments of a building record  

Pls. 63, 64

Five non-joining fragments of faintly bluish white, finely crystallized marble (perhaps of Island origin), with greenish mica intrusions.

Fragment a. I 4779 c. Found on May 12, 1937, in a disturbed context dated 5th century B.C. to 5th century after Christ, northeast of the Tholos (H 10–11). The top of the stele is preserved, stipple dressed, with a drafted edge at the front 0.01 m. wide. It is otherwise broken all around and at the back. The top is not at right angles to the vertical axis of the stone but slopes up slightly to the right, and its back is higher than its front.

P.H. 0.05 m.; p.W. 0.084 m.; p.Th. 0.017 m.

Fragment b. I 4779 d. Found at the same time and place as fragment a. A small part of the left side is preserved, with a margin of 0.05 m. There are traces of red paint in the letters.

P.H. 0.066 m.; p.W. 0.107 m.; p.Th. 0.024 m.

Fragment c. I 729. Found on April 29, 1933, in a Late Roman context in a pit east of the Tholos (H 11). The right side is preserved, stipple dressed with a drafted edge at the front 0.015 m. wide, and slopes back at slightly more than a right angle from the face. There is a vertical uninscribed space of 0.013 m. above the first line. The top is not preserved.

P.H. 0.062 m.; p.W. 0.062 m.; p.Th. 0.035 m.

Fragment d. I 4779 e. Found at the same time and place as fragments a and b. It is broken all around and at the back.

P.H. 0.041 m.; p.W. 0.064 m.; p.Th. 0.019 m.

Fragment e. I 4779 a. Found on April 29, 1937, in the same area as fragments a, b, and d. The top of the stele is preserved, but it does not join fragment a. The top, as in fragment a, slopes up but to the left, rather than to the right, and its back is higher than its front. For reasons that will appear below, I tentatively assign it to the top of the left lateral.

P.H. 0.036 m.; p.W. 0.046 m.; p.Th. 0.02 m.

All fragments: L.H. 0.008 m.; stoichedon, with a horizontal checker of 0.009–0.01 m. and a vertical checker of 0.013–0.0135 m.

6 For photographs of IG II² 1657, 1658, 1659, 1660, 1661, and 1663, see Maier 1959, pls. 5, 6; for photographs of SEG XIX 145 and XXXII 165, see Meritt 1960, pl. 5:31, and Walbank 1982, pl. 19:2, respectively. IG II² 1656 and IG II² 1662 are now lost, but a squeeze of the latter exists at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. IG II² 1664 is now in Brussels: a photograph of it was published by Nachmanson (1905, Tafel XIV).
init. s. IV a.  

**OBVERSE**  
ΣΤΟΙΧ. ca. 24–25?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>δήμο: 'Αλα[--------------]</td>
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<td>[--------------] χι[--------------]</td>
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<td><strong>lacuna</strong></td>
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*Line 1*: The bottom of a vertical survives; the traces suggest an upsilon, since there appears also to be a diagonal cut in the upper right corner of this stoichos (see the commentary on line 1, p. 320 below). After the pi another vertical could be an iota, or else, to judge from faint traces in the broken area at top of the stoichos, rho.

*Line 2*: There is uncut stone at the right and at the bottom of the space to the left of eta.
Line 3: The bottom of the second hasta of nu and perhaps the bottom of the diagonal survive before the interpunct, which is cut, as elsewhere on the stone, between stoichoi. The foot of the vertical and a little bit of the lower curve of the loop of rho survive; the upper tips of the diagonals of chi are preserved, as is the top of the omicron.

Line 4: The top of a slightly sloping vertical survives, which I restore as the fourth stroke of a mu.

Line 5: The bottoms of these letters survive. The letter after sigma is more likely a kappa than any other letter, since the vertical stroke is set quite far to the left in its stoichos and there is no trace of any letter stroke in the space at bottom right of this stoichos. The lower dot of an interpunct is preserved between iota and sigma.

Line 9: The upper left corner of epsilon survives.

Line 12: The stone appears to break on a diagonal mark that looks like the bar of an alpha, but no other alpha in this document has so sharply diagonal a bar; thus, I believe that this letter is more likely to be a lambda.

Line 14: The left tip of the horizontal of either a tau or a zeta survives. Before this is the top dot of an interpunct and, to left of this, the tip of a diagonal: from its angle and position, this seems to be a sigma, rather than a kappa.

Line 15: Before omicron there is a mark that suggests the bottom of a circular letter, perhaps the lower loop of a beta or an omicron or theta, but no suitable restoration comes to mind if this be so. If, instead, this mark is an illusion, then the dative [π]δκει comes to mind. To the right of the iota, the lower dot is visible of what may be an interpunct, but it is quite unlike any other interpunct dot in this document, and I believe that it should be rejected as a deliberate mark.

Line 16: The tip of the upper diagonal of kappa survives.

Line 17: The upper right part of a circular letter survives, with the upper dot of an interpunct to its right: probably a patronymic followed by a demotic. The stone seems to break on a curve.

Line 20: The tip of a diagonal survives, most likely of a kappa, although sigma or upsilon is also possible.

The arrangement shown above is based on slight differences among individual letter forms and on the physical details of the fragments. Fragments a and e each preserve part of the top: the peculiar angle at which the top is cut means that if they are assigned to the same face, they must derive from opposite ends of the stone, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the texts one with the other, and so I have placed e on the left lateral (or perhaps the reverse) of the stone. Fragment a seems to preserve part of a preambular formula, and so I have assumed that it represents the beginning of the document. Fragment b preserves the left edge, and the angle at which it is broken matches that at which the upper left side of a breaks, so that these two are likely to lie fairly close to one another but without a join. Fragment c preserves blank stone above the first line, but it cannot represent part of a prescript, as, for instance, does a. Thus, I have placed it to the right of and below fragment a. The texts, so far as they can be reconstructed, suggest a document similar in many respects to the series of plagues on which the work of rebuilding the walls of Athens was recorded, but there is no precise parallel.

Although the marble used in the case of the records of rebuilding of the walls is of the same type and apparent provenance as the document discussed here, deriving from reused tiles of the Archaic era having a flattish triangular top, the letters in these inscriptions are a little larger and are cut non-stoichedon, rather than stoichedon. It is possible, nevertheless, to arrive at some sort of estimate of the length of this text from the dimensions of the other tiles, which all seem to be about 0.25 m. wide and 0.047–0.06 m. thick (the exceptions are IG II² 1660 and SEG XXXII 165), which differ from the rest in that they seem to have been inscribed across the short rather than the long way of the tile: both edges as well as the

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7 See note 2 above.
top of SEG XXX 165 are preserved, but its full width is only 0.188 m.). Thus, the original dimensions of the present document may be estimated as having been approximately 0.25 m. wide, 0.188 m. high, and 0.047–0.06 m. thick. This would provide a line length in line 1 of ca. 24–25 letters. If the original thickness was only ca. 0.047–0.06 m., there would be room for only about 4–5 letters in each line on the left lateral, which suggests that the entire document may have proved a little longer than the letter cutter expected and that he was forced to carve some sort of appendix to the main document on the side. There does not seem to be any discernible continuity between the text on the obverse and that on the left lateral (fragment e), so that this should be read as if it lay below the text of the obverse, as my numbering of the lines indicates. If this text does indeed derive from the left lateral, the stone must have been set up at a corner of the structure to which it was attached, not set in the middle of a wall.

Although the physical details of the stone suggest that the document discussed here may come from the same series of reused Archaic tiles as those on which the repair of the City walls is recorded, it is not necessarily from the same series of documents, since there are epigraphical inconsistencies. Moreover, the findspots, near the Tholos and thus at the political center of the City, do not tally with the notion of rebuilt city walls; thus I wonder whether the Tholos, rather than the rebuilt city walls, may in fact be the subject of these records, since there is evidence that it was rebuilt early in the 4th century B.C.\(^8\) Again, the restoration proposed below for lines 1–2 is based on the rubric of lines 4–5 of IG II\(^2\) 1655 (= IG I\(^3\) 477), the inscription recording work done on the Erechtheion late in the 5th century B.C., which not only is inscribed in Ionic script but also was found near the Tholos; neither the marble type nor the letter forms and sizes correspond to those of IG II\(^2\) 1655, however, and any suggestion of a connection between it and the present document should probably be rejected.

**Line 1:** The rubric could be, for instance, \[εις ιωθοργ\] [\ αν. If it is not, then whatever the letter, it seems likely that an abbreviated word should be restored here, but I am hesitant to restore, for instance, the name of the month Pyanopson, \[Π\] \[α\] \[ν\] (σφικώνος), still less the phyle name \[Α\] \[α\] \[ν\] (τιδος). If this letter is in fact an upsilon, since the vertical stroke and the diagonal cut, if it exists, are clearly not part of a sigma, a verb such as [\έτεύχ\] \[σ\] \[α\] is ruled out. After the interpunct, I suggest that the next three letters are likely, in the context of the beginning of a document, to derive from either an archon formula or a prytany date: \[επι [--- \δρχοντος], or \[επρ[\υτάνευ\] (\υτάνευ\] or, as in IG II\(^2\) 1655, lines 4–5, \[επι [της prytany name, number, πρετανευ\] \[όσ\] \[ης]. If I am correct in assuming a 24–25-letter line, this last seems the best choice, and so I restore tentatively: \[επι [της [--- [\δος] --- --- [\ης πρεμα[νευ\] \[όσ\] \[ης]. Less likely, I believe, is πρεμα[ν\] \[ι\] in line 2.

**Line 2:** A numeral is required here, so that a tau or an omicron can be inferred (\-τ\) \[ης or \-ό[\] \[ης). This phrase will probably have been followed by a description of work done or supplies produced, followed by a rubric beginning with \[μο\] (contractor) and the name, patronymic, and abbreviated demotic of this contractor.

**Line 3:** I assume that the word following the interpunct is a patronymic, such as \[Δημάρχο\] (for the orthography see line 7); a formula involving a demarch (\[δημαρχ\] \[ντο\]) is

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\(^8\) See Thompson 1940, pp. 48, 77, 128, 154.
less likely, I believe. The rest of this line will have been taken up with a short description of the work or product.

Line 4: The name is probably in the nominative, for instance [Δη]μητρ[το]ς, preceded by the abbreviation [μως]: and will have been followed by a patronymic and demotic.

Line 5: If this iota represents the end of an abbreviated demotic, it is unlikely that the next word is a personal name, such as Skopas, but rather it is the beginning of a short description of the work or product.

Line 6: Since the letters βολη are followed by an interpunct and numerals, I assume that this is the ending of the word [ἀνα]βολη or, less likely, [κατα]βολη.9

Line 7: The demotic Αλξ[ευς] is likely to be abbreviated and will have been followed by an interpunct.

Line 8: Most likely the personal name Πολυκλητης; less likely, a patronymic Πολυκλης[ευς]. It will have been followed by an interpunct and a demotic.

Line 9: A personal name, such as [Με]νεξε[νος], or, less likely, the patronymic; it will have been followed by an interpunct and a demotic.

Line 10: The uninscribed space at the end of this line indicates, I believe, that a new series of service or product descriptions or else a new dating rubric began here. From what follows in line 11, I suggest that the subject is the provision of building blocks, as in IG II² 1659, lines 6–7: τελνθων ἀριθμος—number— ἀμ[το]υς ἔθαλοντο αἱ χάλας Δὴ [. . .].

Line 12: If my interpretation is correct, these letters will have been part of the name of the contractor, and from their position in the line, I am inclined to restore the demotic [Κολ]λυτ(ευς) here.

Line 13: The rho may be the end of an abbreviated demotic, for instance [Πε]ρ(αευς), in which case the chi is the beginning of a new service or product description.

Line 14: The reading is likely to be a name followed by a patronymic, or a patronymic such as Πολυκλης[ευς], and will have been followed by a demotic.

Line 15: The omega may be the beginning of the word ω[ντης]; if correct, this would identify this document as a record of sales, a contract for public works, or a mine lease. More likely, if the supposed interpunct does not exist, this omega is merely a continuation of the rubric describing a service or product.

Line 16: The demotic is abbreviated. Whatever was cut in the stoichos after alpha was either a circular or a triangular letter, since the upper left corner of this stoichos is uninscribed: if a lambda, some form of the word χαλαμος could be restored here (cf. IG II² 1663, line 1).

Line 17: One might restore, for instance, Σ[ουνι(ευς)] or Σφ[ουνι(ευς)].

Fragment e: The letter height and horizontal spacing match those of the obverse face, but no restoration placing it on the obverse face comes to mind that accounts satisfactorily for what is found in line 2 of fragment a. Thus, I think that this fragment belongs to the top of the left lateral, where I have tentatively assigned it, or else either to an otherwise lost reverse face or to a different stone altogether.

Line 18: The nu may be the end of an abbreviated demotic. The letters ΙΞ suggest the restoration Ιξ[ν] (a sticky substance or glue; cf. IG II² 1673, line 63).

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9 See SEG XXXII 161, Stele II, line 7 (= IG II² 1659).
Line 19: Probably the end of a verb [---]ατο, followed by the beginning of a word such as τείχος or τειχοποιός.

Line 20: This could be part of a word such as [ο]ξι[α] or else of a name or demotic, such as, for instance, Κι[κυνν(eύς)].

Another fragment found at the same time and place as 1, fragments a, b, d, and e, appears to derive from a different stele, since its vertical spacing is markedly different, but the coincidence of findspots suggests that it may derive from a similar document and that it, too, was inscribed upon a reused Archaic roof tile:

2. Fragments of a building record

A fragment of white, probably Island, marble (I 4779 b), found on May 12, 1937, in a disturbed context dated 5th century B.C. to 5th century after Christ northeast of the Tholos (H 10–11). The inscribed face and left lateral are preserved. It has been mended from two fragments bearing the same inventory number.

P.H. 0.104 m.; p.W. (obverse) 0.017 m.; p.Th. (left lateral) 0.034 m.

Obverse: L.H. 0.008 m.; stoichedon(?), with a vertical checker of 0.013–0.0135 m.; left lateral: L.H., 0.009–0.01 m.; stoichedon, with a horizontal checker of 0.0115 m. and a vertical checker of 0.0113 m.

init. s. IV a. OBVERSE ΣΤΟΙΧ.(?) ca. 24–25?

lacuna

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{η[-----------------------------]}\\
\text{σ[-----------------------------]}\\
\text{ε[-----------------------------]}\\
\text{5 σ[-----------------------------]}\\
\text{α[-----------------------------]}\\
\text{λ[-----------------------------]}\\
\end{array}
\]

lacuna

LEFT LATERAL

lacuna

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[-----------------------------.]ytt}\\
\text{[-----------------------------.]εκα}\\
\text{10 [-----------------------------.]επ}\\
\text{[-----------------------------.]ης}\\
\end{array}
\]

lacuna
**Line 1:** Although no letter trace is preserved here, the survival of a line on the left lateral at this level indicates that this space was once occupied by a line of text.

**Line 2:** The left vertical and part of the horizontal of either an eta or a drachma sign survive.

**Line 7:** The apex of a triangular letter is preserved.

**Lines 8–12:** A different hand has been at work on this face: the letters are larger and less well cut, and the vertical spacing is different from that found on the adjacent face.

**Line 12:** The sigma is barely discernible although the surface is badly abraded; the top of the left hasta of eta survives.

The similarity of the findspots suggests that this fragment might be linked to the fragments of 1, but its vertical spacing indicates that it probably derives from a different stele; thus, the findspot may merely be coincidence. No satisfactory restorations come to mind.

Yet one more fragment may belong to the series recording the rebuilding of the walls, although its findspot and context are different from those of 1 and 2, and it is engraved non-stoichedon, so that, if it belongs to this series, it presumably derives from a different stele:

**3. Fragment of a building record (?)**

A fragment of white, fine-crystaled marble (I 3994), probably of Island origin, found on April 7, 1936, in a mixed Hellenistic and Late Roman context in a well on Kolonos Agoraios (D 11). It is broken all around and at the back.

P.H. 0.084 m.; p.W. 0.03 m.; p.Th. 0.048 m.
L.H. 0.007–0.008 m.; non-stoichedon, with a vertical checker of 0.0014 m.

c.a. 394/3–392/1 a.? NON-ΣΤΟΙΧ.

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\begin{array}{l}
\text{lacuna} \\
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\dot{\nu}\dot{\nu} & \pi \mid \hline
\dot{\nu}\dot{\nu} & \lambda \mid \hline
\dot{\nu}\dot{\nu} & \tau \mid \hline
\dot{\nu}\dot{\nu} & \lambda \mid \\
\text{lacuna}
\end{array}
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**Line 2:** The foot of a diagonal is preserved in the break at right.

**Line 3:** The right tip of a tau or gamma survives at the left edge.

Apart from the marble type and its findspot, there is not much to justify linking this fragment with any other plaques in the series, although its letter size and vertical spacing are close to those of IG II² 1661. No satisfactory restorations come to mind.

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The University of Calgary
Department of Greek, Latin and Ancient History
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4
Canada
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