

The West End of Red Lake

A Self Conducted Tour

Visit sights used during the Gold Rush of 1926-1940



Please leave artifacts intact and where you find them for others to enjoy.

Some sights will have non-native plants like poison ivy (at the lime kiln) brought in with horse feed .

On mine sites, watch for mine shafts which are vertical and usually filled with water.

You will find markers at many of the spots, made by Vito Tarantino and placed there by Brian Kreviazuk .

Please share pictures, stories and additional sites. History, vegetation of note, geology and wildlife can all be added.

Visit the museum website at <https://www.westredlakemuseum.ca/> for more information.

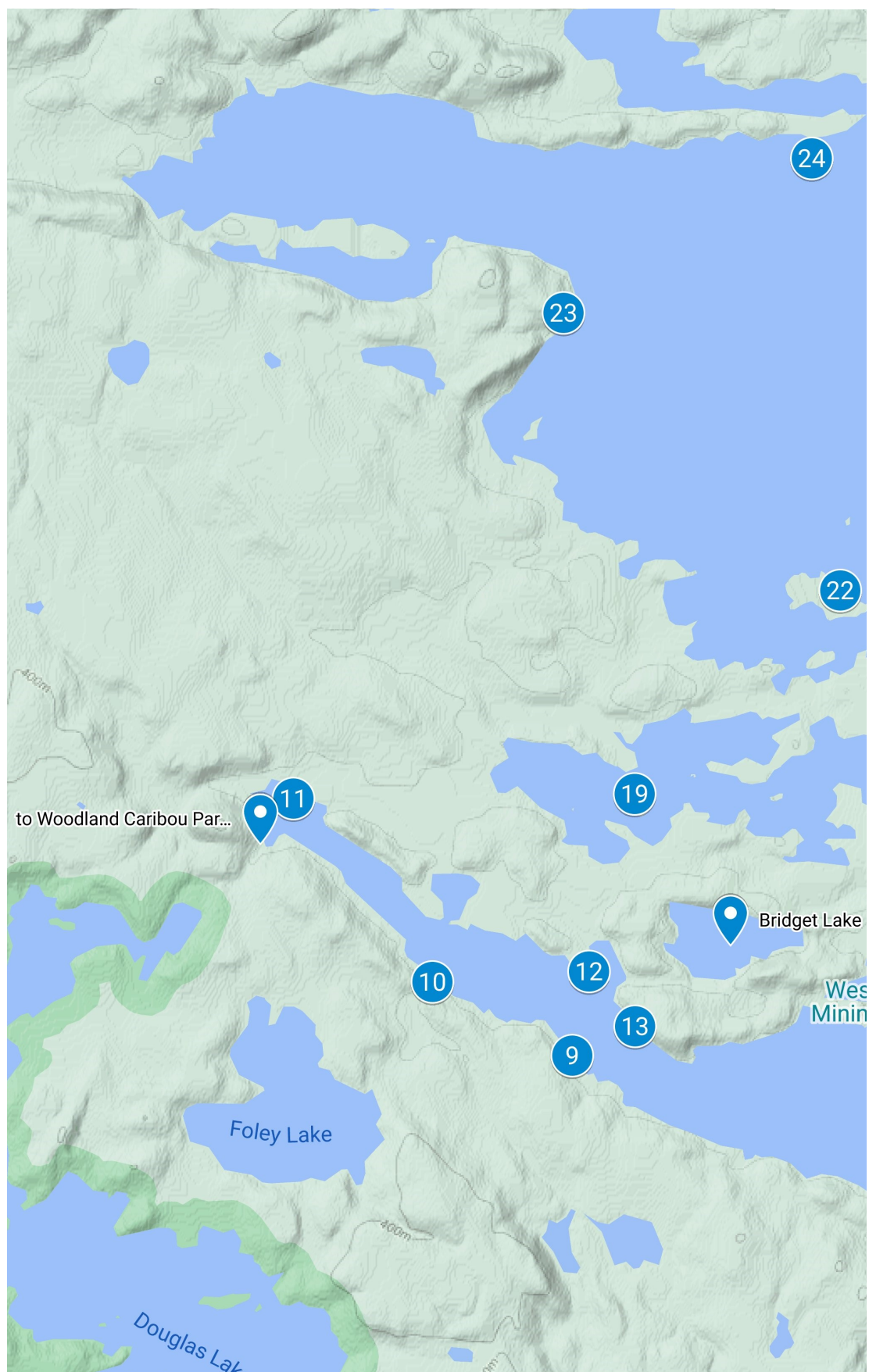
The Red Lake Heritage Center website at <https://www.redlakemuseum.com/> also has great information.

Please send corrections (they are welcome) and pictures and stories to enid@redlaker.ca

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The west end holds many stories of young men seeking adventure, characters escaping the outside world and pioneers building a new life. Just beneath the surface is evidence of a much longer history. First Nations people have lived here for thousands of years and the evidence is everywhere; shards of pottery, arrow heads and spears, and pictographs.







1

LAKE ROWAN MINE LANDING 51.05695, -94.10355

During the 1930's a small settlement existed here with houses built to the west of the landing. Sam Yee set up a secondary store. Stella Campbell, a long time resident of Ear Falls lived here. She tells of walking down to the lake alone and flagging down a plane when she went into labour. In the 1960's, Bill Quinton lived at the landing and George Miller lived on the mine site, both working as caretakers.

At the mine site in the 1990's, the headframe still stood and youngsters climbed it and etched their names in the beams.



2

RED CREST MINE LANDING 51.05695, -94.10355

With H. G. Young as a leader, this mine actually produced gold right away unlike most mines in the area. Arthur Carlson, Ernie Carlson and Ole Einarson were hired to sink the first shaft here. They did all the work manually with hand steel drills and a windless hoisting system with a steel bucket. They went 40 feet down. In the 1960's, a 2 storey house and a warehouse still stood at the landing.

Today, notice the remains of the warehouse built on top of pilings in the water. Look for indications of activity on the site. You can see the trail leading to the mine although it is overgrown.



3

THE CLAY BODY BANK 51.03405, -94.12511

This clay bank seems out of place. People say that in the 1930's, people were buried here. The wind, rain and snow worked at the bank and the bodies were soon exposed.

You can see the many layers and feel how the clay crumbles in your hands. You will find small holes in the top where birds have made their nests. Perhaps they are kingfishers.



4

LIME KILN 51.03525, -94.14602

Beware poison ivy here.

W. S. Hall built the kiln. The plant consisted of a 12 to 14 tons per day steel and concrete draw kiln with associated structures. The limestone was quarried on the southern shore of Hahn Lake. In 1939, it produced lime for the Howey, McKenzie Red Lake and Cochenour Williams Mines. The carbonate deposit, a marble belt of limestone and siliceous layers, extends from the west end of Hall Bay across Hahn Lake. Fresh carbonate rock is white to light grey in colour with dark grey siliceous layers. You can find samples of this rock below the kiln and along the shores of Hall Bay.



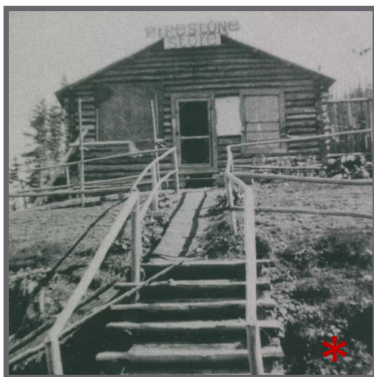
5

FRANK PAISHK'S CABIN 51.02265, -94.16671

In 1926, John Paishk lived here with his family. For hundreds of years, people passed this point as they travelled from east to west. First nations people gathered here for feasts. John was one of the last great drummers. His tayawaygun was made of moosehide stretched over a frame of hoops made of black ash. When in use, the drum hung from 4 pegs shaped like walking sticks and several men sat around drumming in unison.

There were several cabins here and some graves in 1920s. Most of the people moved to Forestry Point in the 1930's. Frank stayed here to trap and worked for Art Carlson at Viking Island in summer.



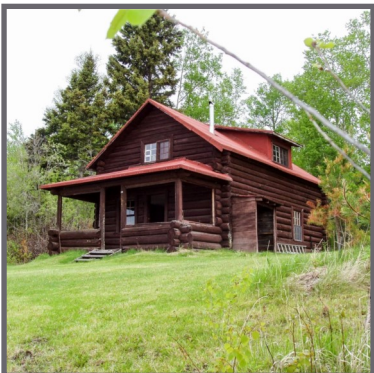


6

SAM YEE'S STORE 51.02633, -94.18718

Sam Yee was born in Canton, China. He came to Gold Pines to set up a laundry and later he ran Rex Café in Red Lake. When he went bankrupt, he bailed and moved to the West End and set up Pipestone Store. He married Agnes, a younger women from Ste. Eustache and they adopted a young boy, Billy.

Sam was very superstitious and was terrified of drowning. He was convinced that devils of the lake took one life by drowning each year. Each year Sam was proven right. Late in November of 1937, Sam took a dog team with supplies and 5 year old Billy to Golden Arm. They fell through the ice and all drowned but 1 dog.



7

WEST RED LAKE MINING MUSEUM 51.0244, -94.18729

Johnnie Drawson lived in this building situated on the Bow Narrows property. It was moved to this sight by volunteers. Johnnie may have been a bootlegger and the upper storey may have been a whore house though confirmation is hard to find.

The site of the museum now, was where Bill Brown and his family lived. Arthur and Ernie Carlson's first project was to build Bill Brown's cabin on the site where the museum sits today. Under the huge boulder, Bill and his wife buried a child.



8

BILL BROWN'S GRAVE 51.02618, -94.19167

Bill Brown had been the first postmaster of Red Lake. Bill was from England and an educated man. His family were wealthy owners of a factory. He had a poolroom and store in Red Lake and when it burned down in 1933, he moved to the West End.

He had a big garden, lived off the land and was a fisherman selling fish to the mines. He and his wife became alcoholics and their kids were wild. While drinking with friends in Golden Arm Bill rolled into the lake and drowned. Some believed at the time that his wife, who could be really rough, "helped" him.

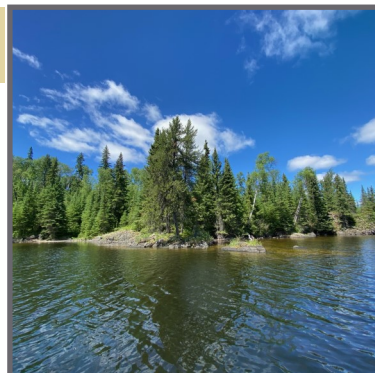


9

ART CARLSON'S CABIN 51.02273, -94.23118

Arthur Nelson and Ernie Berquist met in Winnipeg and were employed by Bill Kelly to stake claims at the West End. For a joke, they decided to be the brothers, Ernie and Art Carlson. The 'brothers' built a crude cabin here. It was a tough winter!

They picked up odd jobs ferrying goods, chopping wood and even baking bread. They staked 16 claims and formed Carricono Mines Ltd with Wes Dean and worked the property for awhile. Ernie left, but Art went on to build log cabins, help erect headframes, work in every mine at the west end, shoot moose for the mines and explore.

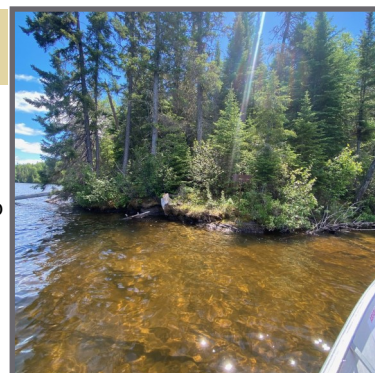


10

TOM MCVEIGH'S CABIN 51.0275, -94.24551

Tom McVeigh was from the Ottawa Valley. His family sent maple syrup in huge buckets each year. Tom could eat several bowls full of pure maple syrup. He was a prospector.

After Sam Yee died, Sam's wife, Agnes, married Tom. Agnes lived to 1957 and Tom died the next year. Agnes is the grandmother of Phil Vinet (former mayor of Red Lake)





11

MILES MINE LANDING 51.03932, -94.25978

From the Miles Landing, there is a good trail leading almost a mile to the old mine and other exploration sites. This is a great hike.

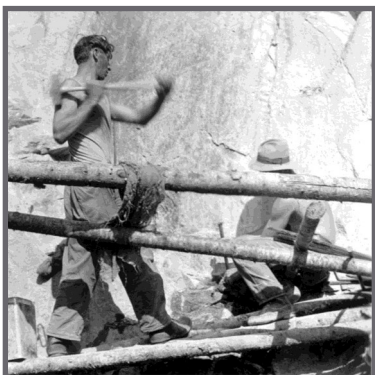
Miles Mine started in 1934, but major work started in 1945. A headframe and bunkhouses were built. A shaft was sunk to 296 feet. This was later than most mines in the area, so buildings and the headframe survived longer. Until recently the headframe still stood. In 1948, Art Carlson bought 2 buildings, dismantled them and carried the lumber across the portage to Douglas Lake where he began building Viking Island Lodge. In the 1960s kids dumped the ore cars down the shaft (I wonder who they were?)



12

ARCHER'S POINT 51.02816, -94.22949

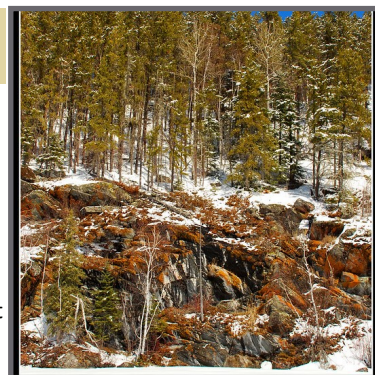
Charlie and Ethel Archer were from Hamilton, Ontario. He was an older man with emphysema due to exposure to mustard gas while overseas in the World War I. A doctor gave Charlie 6 months to live and Charlie asked, "How can I make it better for myself" The doctor advised, "go up north in the bush country". So Charlie and Ethel moved to this point and he lived 15 more years. He got a war pension of \$44.10 each month and they lived on that. Neighbours supplied them with meat and cut their wood. In return, they welcomed the young people to their cabin, kind of parents to many.



13

THE CLIFFS OF TROUT BAY 51.02463, -94.22477

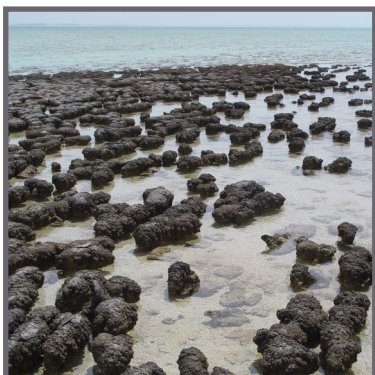
These cliffs look inhospitable and maybe spirits have claimed them. This area includes Bridgette Lake where prospectors in the 1930s felt uneasy. If you slowly troll close along these shores, they say you may hear rocks tumbling and brush cracking as though something is walking along the top of the cliff watching you. If you step ashore the going is tough. It is said that people have returned the following day to the same spot and found a large snake curled up blocking their way ashore or a huge boulder sits where their boat was the day before. The portage to Bridgette laboriously cut recently is now hard to find.



14

BILL STUPAK'S CABIN 51.02935, -94.19769

Bill left the family farm in Manitoba at age 15 and never returned. Bill was one of the first men hired to cut the trails into Red Lake in 1926. That fall Bill along with Otto May, Fritz Weaton and Saul Wygle went trapping together. They built a cabin on Musclow but trapping didn't go so well. One of the trappers moved to another lake. Later Wygle disappeared and was never found. Provincial police launched a search 2 years later. Suspicions of murder were whispered but never proven. In the spring of 1927 Bill and Otto May were muskrat trapping and while they were gone, someone burned down their tent, about 100 muskrat pelts and their dog. Bill was convinced it was his greedy, ex-partner seeking revenge.



15

STROMATOLITES 51.03111, -94.19021

Take a deep breath. Does it make you thankful for stromatolites? Well, it should because without them there wouldn't be anything to breathe. Stromatolites created the first oxygen on earth. Incredibly, some of the first stromatolites to appear on earth, a long, long time ago, were right at the west end of Red Lake. They are about 2.925 billion years old.

The picture to the left shows stromatolites growing today in Shark Bay, western Australia



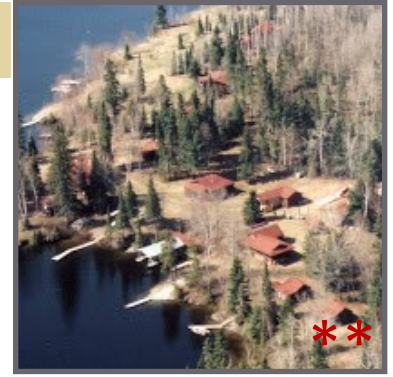


16

BOW NARROWS CAMP 51.0338, -94.18244

Bill Stupack began Bow Narrows camp after the road reached Red Lake in 1948. Bill and Arthur Carlson were planning to go into partnership but Arthur decided to begin his own camp on Douglas Lake. Bill was able to use some buildings left from the gold rush days and he already knew a few people wanting to fish. Bill tried to co-ordinate his camp business with his summer prospecting and the two occupations were often at odds.

When Don Baughman turned up, Bill realized he would rather be prospecting and trapping. Dan built a very successful business here employing many of the First Nations people from the West End.



17

GORDON SHEARN'S STORE 51.03489, -94.17975

Gordon Shearn came to Red Lake in 1926 from Bristol, England and never left. He brought his bride, Winnifred, back from England in 1932. He built a store here at the west end which included a Post Office and a pool table with an apartment upstairs.

In 1944, Dickenson mine was staked by Gordon Shearn.



18

WEST RED LAKE MINE 51.03864, -94.18226

In 1930 Lorne Howey staked 9 claims here. West Red Lake Gold Mine was incorporated in 1934 with 27 claims. They sank a 205 foot shaft in July and another 12 feet during the next 5 years. 2 more claims were picked up from Nelson Spiers in 1940. Nothing further was heard about the mine after 1941.

Today Robert Moninger lives on this site and takes an active interest in the museum and west end history. The present day West Red lake Gold Mines takes in the Mount Jamie, Lake Rowan and Red Crest (Red Summit) mine sites, but not this one.



19

MAY SPIERS MINE 51.03962, -94.22482

Nels Spiers was born in Huntsville, Ont in 1888. In 1927, he came to work as a mechanic at the Howey Gold Mine. In 1935, he became manager of his mine, the May-Spiers. For two years he constructed surface infrastructure, conducted exploration and sank a three-compartment shaft, hard expensive work. Then a fire burned the surface buildings and he couldn't recover.

He remained in Red Lake, managing Aiken Red Lake Mine and working at Madsen Mine as a mechanic. You can still visit the Spiers guest house in Red Lake (now owned by Curt Malinski).



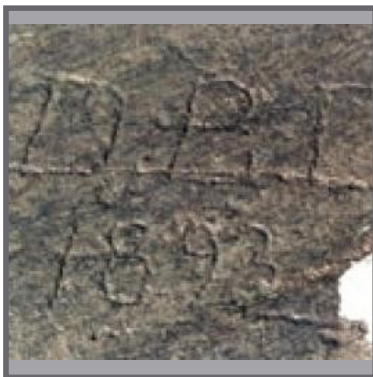
20

IGNATZ CORNELL'S CABIN 51.04789, -94.19649

Born in Poland, Ignatz wanted to come to Canada so he stole 2 horses from the army and sold them, saving the money to pay his way to Canada. He planned to bring his wife and kids when he "got on his feet". He staked many claims and became quite wealthy but his wife died in Poland.

After selling his claims, he switched to trapping. He died in Red Lake after suffering a stroke in the 60's.





21 PIPESTONE NARROWS 51.04925, -94.19423

D.B. Dowling of the Geological Survey of Canada carved his initials DBD with the date 1893 into the soapstone here. His map of Red Lake and a report by Robert Bell, also of the Geological Survey, would lead to the famous 1926 Red Lake Gold Rush.

Long before when the lake was shallower, first nations people built a fish weir here using rocks in order to spear fish. The flakes from making their spears and arrow heads are everywhere here. They carved pipes from the soapstone they found here. Their history here dates back thousands of years.



22 GARDEN ISLAND 51.05272, -94.20372

During the 1930's, a huge garden here supplied the West End with fresh produce. Enjoy the beach and look for non-native plants still growing here.



23 COLE MINE 51.0706, -94.2321

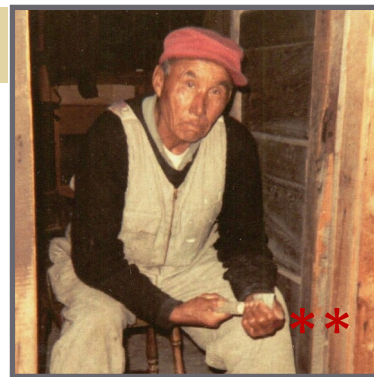
Not everyone got along at the West End. In 1926, Gus Dupont staked this property by cutting lines in the bush the proper way. Meanwhile John Y Cole, Jr. staked the same spot. He put the number one post in the northeast corner and went right to the mining recorder. A lawsuit was heard in the Supreme Court and Cole won. As the mine was built, John always had dynamite along the shore and as well as set traps because they were always afraid that Gus Dupont was going to get even. In 1950, John Cole visited Gus Dupont in hospital as Gus lay dying. He asked Gus, "Will you tell me where the other gold find is?" Gus wouldn't tell.



24 KEESIC SETTLEMENT 51.08056, -94.20664

Somewhere along the north shore of Pipestone lay the Keesic family settlement. The picture on the left shows the first medical team en route to Red Lake. Nataway Keesic is the guide second from the right.

The picture on the right is of Jimmy Paishk. He worked at Bow Narrows camps in the 1960s and Dan remembers him carving pipestone pipes. He spoke the pure form of their language and remembered first meeting a white man as a kid. He had a nickname of Peepsite. As a boy he shot at what he thought was a moose. It turned out to be his father's black hat, missing his dad.



25 FRONTIER MINE LANDING 51.07642, -94.16521

Claims were staked in 1928 and the mine was incorporated in 1934. A shaft was sunk to 244 ft. In 1939 Gold Frontier Mines took over and they extended the shaft to 500 ft with 2 levels and sank a second shaft by 1940. In 1942, World War II brought government restrictions and a much reduced workforce.

Frontier has continued on as Mount Jamie Mine and the property continues to be explored as part of the West Red Lake Gold Mines (66% owned by West Red Lake Gold and 34% owned by Evolution Mining).



26

Add your own sights here and feel free to send them to us.

27

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29

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