

Procter Cemetery History

On a peaceful hill overlooking the North Branch of the Clinton River rests over 500 individuals some of whom were the first to settle in the area nearly 200 years ago.

According to land records, **Edmund Stewart** (1782-1866) purchased 65.08 acres on February 1, 1826 encompassing the parcel that would later become the Procter Cemetery. The Township of Ray was formally established on April 12, 1827 with Edmund serving as the Ray Township Clerk from 1827-1829. Census data from 1830 shows Edmund living in Ray Township, in one of only 30 households, with his wife, **Clarry** (1790-1867), two boys and three girls, as well as one teenage male, two teenage females, and three adult males, possibly many generations of the same family. Edmund and Clarry are buried plot # 065 in the Procter Cemetery with **Marshall** (1832-1882) and **Philecta** (1838-1907) **Stewart**. Many markers in the family plot have toppled over and are now overgrown making the inscriptions illegible.

Clarry Stewart was one of **Joseph** (1767-1845) and **Silva** (1769-1831) **Freeman's** eleven children. Joseph was the son of Moses and Susan Freeman. According to information in the historical book, The History of Macomb County, Moses, a sea captain, perished in a shipwreck and his wife, Susan, died soon afterwards leaving Joseph and his siblings to become separated and raised by different families.

Another of Joseph and Silva's daughters, **Cynthia Freeman** (1798-1881) married **Asahel Bailey** (1789-1862) in New York in 1819 and together they made the difficult journey to Michigan crossing Lake Erie on the first steamer named Walk-in-the-Water. They arrived in Detroit on September 14th and tried to reach Mt. Clemens in a small boat that sprung a leak causing them to land and seek assistance from French settlers. Fortunately, Judge Clemens arrived and directed the Frenchmen to take the family to his home riding in an oxcart. In January of 1822, Asahel and Cynthia arrived in Indian Village (today, Romeo) and traded \$50 worth of boots and shoes for the only home in the area, a log cabin belonging to Jeremiah Allen. On December 19, 1822, their daughter **Prudence Cynthia** (1822-1872) was born and so began the pioneering life of the Bailey family in Romeo. Asahel and Cynthia planted the first orchard on the north side of East St. Clair Street, and then another on the west side of Main Street. In addition to farming, Asahel surveyed the first public roads in the county, platted the village of Romeo, donated the land for the first schoolhouse and Congregational church, and was instrumental in developing the Romeo & Mt. Clemens Railroad and the Romeo Academy in 1833. The first burial in the Procter Cemetery was one of their nine children, four-year-old **Emeline** (1823-1828), who died on May 6, 1828.

The Freeman's son, **Benjamin** (1791-1854) with his wife, **Hannah Green** (1798-1853), were the first to purchase land in Ray Township in 1824, eventually totally over 240 acres. They built the first house and barn in Ray Township on Indian Trail (now 32 Mile Road) near where his sister, Clarry Stewart, would also build a home sometime before 1830. The 1830 census shows Benjamin and Hannah raising 6 boys and one girl with three other children soon after. Their son, **Edgar**, was the first male child born in Ray Township in 1826.

Benjamin and Hannah's son, **Arad Freeman** (1815-1897), who married **Catherine Jewell** (1819-1886), built the first house and barn in Section 16 of Ray Township and eventually donated the land for the District #1 Schoolhouse (fondly named the Mill School after the nearby Wolcott Mill and today serving

as the Ray Township Public Library), as well as the Ray Union Church for the First Religious Society of Ray (today housing the Ray Township Offices).

Another of Benjamin and Hannah's sons, **Oran Freeman** (1816-1896), married **Catherine N. Miller** (1812-1896) and served the community as the Ray Township Clerk from 1844-45 and 1857-58. Oran was also a member of the Masonic Lodge and a teacher.

Other notable children of Joseph and Silva Newman, include **Phoebe Freeman** (1796-1865) who married **Job Howell** (1791-1862), the First Commissioner of Ray in 1827; **Moses** (1801-1871), Ray Township Treasurer in 1827, constable, and collector; and **Sarah** (1805-1862) who married **General John L. Procter** (1799-1860) the patriarch of the Procter Family for whom the Procter Cemetery is named.

Luther Procter (1830-1916) married **Harriet L. Sterling** (1836-1884). Their only child, **Charles S.** (1867-1904), died in Silver City, New Mexico and his remains were returned to Romeo for burial in the Procter Cemetery. To the east of the cemetery, the Procter family owned a grist mill and a saw mill which burnt down on the Fourth of July, 1875.

Farther east of the Procter Cemetery was Selleck's Corners (32 Mile Road and Romeo Plank, aka Armada's Corners) so named for "Uncle" **John N. Selleck** (1808-1883). Beginning in 1852, for 25 years Uncle John ran a public house with a dance hall and hotel on the southeast corner. He was a postmaster for six years, the Chairman of Committee on Bread, Butter, and Cheese at Macomb Agricultural Fair for over twenty years, Justice of the Peace, carpenter, and Master Joiner. After his first wife, **Lucinda M. Davis** (1816-1844), died in 1844, he married **A. Delia Perry** (1826-1886), who was noted in historical books as the first child born east of Romeo.

- The prominent "Selleck" grave marker seen from the 32 Mile Road has often fueled speculation around town as to whether or not the famous actor, Tom Selleck, is related to the Selleck families of Ray Township. Although the actor's family roots are in Lapeer, Michigan, beginning in the 1800's, a connection between these two families does exist. The family offshoot began with John Selleck Sr. (b. Jan 3, 1706 or 1707) and Abigail Seymour's children. Their children, John Jr. and Elizabeth, is where the family lineage splits to the Ray Township and Lapeer families.
- John Jr. (born Aug 18, 1730) and Sarah (born circa 1730) Selleck's son, **Jonas Selleck** (1770-1841), married **Rhoda Nichols** (1782-1839) and together they traveled to Ray Township. John N. Selleck is one of their three known children who lived in Ray Township and are buried in the Procter Cemetery, including **Lyman** (1791-1879) and **Ira** (1805-1844).
- John Jr.'s sister, Elizabeth (born about 1747) married her cousin, Edward Selleck (born about 1746). They are the fourth great grandparents of Tom Selleck. There may be other connections as Edward may also be related and the Society is unsure about all the lineages of some of the Selleck's in Ray Township, such as **Milo Selleck** (1822-1877).

Delia Selleck's parents, **Lt. Col. Norman** (1796-1880) and **Susan** (1802-1894) **Perry** were important contributors to the community. Norman served as a First Commissioner of Ray in 1827, Ray Township Treasurer in 1828-29 and 1833, and the State Militia. He was also instrumental in the development of The Romeo and Mt. Clemens Railroad and the Romeo Academy in 1833.

Oscar Chamberlain (1840-1920) enlisted in Company A of the Ninth Michigan Infantry on August 13, 1861 when he was 20 years old. He was promoted from Private to Corporal then to Sargent in 1862 and suffered a gunshot wound to the left leg. He was on duty with the Eleventh Michigan Infantry until March 24, 1864. Nearly a year later on March 1, 1865, he married **Julia Shattuck** (1838-1913). He was the Ray Postmaster and Director of the District #6 School, Ray Center School, from 1881-1882. He eventually moved from Ray Center to Selleck's Corners and became the grocer in the old Selleck's public house with the help of his son, Eugene. Oscar's parents were **Charles W. Chamberlain Sr.** (1811-1844) and **Dorothy Thompson** (1814-1898). The death of Charles W. Sr. in 1844 occurred three months before the birth of his son, **Charles W. Jr.** (1844-1919), leaving Dorothy with two small sons to raise. Most likely, she would have moved in with a relative, however, both of her parents, **Isaac** (1787-1838) and **Jane** (1788-1837) **Thompson Sr.** were deceased. She may have found help with the same relatives who raised her and her siblings, **Charity** (1817-1903), **Abbie** (1820-1908), **Jane** (1823-1837), **Isaac Jr.** (1827-1906), and **James** (1830-1906) when they became orphaned in 1838.

Charity Thompson married **Deliverance S. Priest** (1814-1888) on September 23, 1841. Deliverance was a Michigan State Representative from 1869-1873, Ray Township Supervisor from 1858-59 and 1862-70, Justice of the Peace, and Director of the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He helped build the Ray Union Church and it was for this family that the Priest School received its name although it was located on farm of **James H. Sutton** (1804-1883).

Thomas Earnest Read Sr. (1805-1892) and his second wife, **Ann Bottomley** (1806-1897), were another notable couple to become early settlers in the area. Thomas was one of the individuals to sign the petition asking Congress to admit Michigan as a State. Locally, he helped build the Ray Union Church with his son, **Thomas Jr.** (1844-1894) who also served as a private in the Civil War.

Daughter, **Sarah Read** (1841-1931), married Nicholas Smith and lived in Illinois for a time before returning to Ray Township. The 1900 census shows Sarah widowed and living with her son, **Charles R.** (1874-1949), who served as Ray Township Treasurer from 1912-1913 and 1939-49 and Clerk in 1923. After Charles' death in 1949, his wife, **Harriet A. Patch** (1877-1960), followed in her husband's footsteps serving as Ray Township Treasurer from 1950-1958, possibly the first woman to hold office in the Township.

Calvin L. Smith (1789-1853) was another important pioneer in Macomb County. He most likely traveled to the area with his wife, **Mary McNary** (1794-1872), after serving in the War of 1812 and receiving a land grant as payment for his service. Calvin's son, **David**, is probably named in honor of his grandfather, David Smith, who served in the Revolutionary War.

The Sutherland (or Southerland) Families were also early settlers in Ray Township. **Andrew Sr.** (1783-1861) and **Dorotha** (1784-1864) **Sutherland** purchased land in Ray Township in 1833. According to the 1840 census, they probably had their married children, **Robert** (1811-1859) with wife, **Polly** (1816-

1899), and **Andrew Jr.** (1828-?) with wife, **Jane** (1827-1857) living with them on their 400 acre farm as there were ten individuals living under one roof. Census records also showed that besides farming, the Sutherland men were coopers. Robert Southerland was also Ray Township Treasurer from 1852-53.

Dr. Benjamin C. (1810-1867) and **Phebe B.** (1822-1856) **Sutherland** settled in Ray Township by 1850 although were living in the area by 1841 as their first son, **Andrew C.** (1841-1866) was born in Michigan as well as their other seven children, Abigail, **Carroll** (1845-1855), Charles, Hannah, and **C. M.** (1852-1855). After Phebe's death in 1856, Benjamin married Mandana C. and had two more children, Addison, and Lewis.

Joseph Sutherland (1817-1855) married **Hannah Thompson** (1820-1855) on July 24, 1839. For sixteen years, they farmed their land together while Joseph served as Ray Township Treasurer in 1843 and Clerk in 1846 and Hannah tended to their children, **Andrew J.** (died 1845), Robert N., Susan M., and Aldis M. The children were all between 6 and 14 years of age when their parents died.

Needless to say, there are many others buried in the Procter Cemetery who made a significant contribution to the area from the early 1800's until the last burial in 1993. **Captain Frank Zochowski Jr. (1949-1993)**, who worked for Delta Airlines, was exposed to flying at an early age as his parents, **Frank Sr. (1917-1983)** and **Geraldine Zochowski** owned the Romeo Airport from 1946-1988 across from their home on 32 Mile Road. They donated the land on the far west portion of the cemetery for their burial plots.

Charles Marble Jr. (1797-1861) served as Ray Township Supervisor 1839-40 and 1851-52 and Justice of the Peace. He is buried next to his 18 year old daughter, **Caroline (1833-1852)**.

John M. Crawford (1811-1864) served as Ray Township Supervisor from 1848-1854 and again in 1862-63. John's marriage to Polly (Mary) Miller was performed by Noah Webster on August 19, 1832 in Ray Township. John is buried in Procter Cemetery next to his two daughters, **Mary Jane (1835-1849)** and **Emily (1840-1846)**. Polly eventually moved to Nebraska with her son, Albert W. Crawford, and is buried there. John's grandfather, also named John Crawford, was a Lieutenant in the Levies of 1791; Captain in the Infantry 1792; 4th Sublegion 1792, served in the War of 1812, and is buried in the Meade Cemetery.

Veterans buried in the Procter Cemetery

War 1812	Smith, Calvin L – Sargent
State Militia	Perry, Norman Sr.
Unknown	Procter, John L Sr. – General Wilson, William
Civil War	
Co A 5 th Cavalry	Churchill, John P – Corporal

Robinson, Isaac (Chadwick) – Blacksmith

Co A 9th MI Infantry Chamberlain, Oscar – Corporal, Sergeant

Fillmore, Lemuel – Private, Burial - National Cemetery in Nashville, Tennessee, #2362, Section E

Sutherland, Gilbert M. – Private, died at Granville, KY. Burial - The Cave Hill National Cemetery in Louisville KY #23 range 7, Sec C

Co B 13th MI Infantry Fillmore, Isaac S. – Private, Burial - National Cemetery Nashville, TN #2362 Sec E

Hathaway, Hiron J. – Private

Co C 12th MI Infantry Read, Thomas Jr. - Private

Co D 9th MI Infantry Jefferds, George A. - Private

Co H 4th MI Infantry Cade, Peter B – Private

Co I 9th MI Infantry Smith, James S – Corporal, Major

Co K 26th NY Cavalry Ritter, Jacob M - Private

5th Indep Co Ohio Sharpshooters Hancock, John – Private, Corporal. Burial - National Cemetery in Nashville, Tennessee, #174, Sec E

CW – Engineer Corp Green, Roswell

WWI 1631 Service Unit Hicks, William Moses – Private

Procter Cemetery Board and Members

President: Luther Procter (1893-1895), C. W. Chamberlain (1897-1917), Dilbert Priest (1956)

Vice President: Chester S. Priest (1893-1895), Jerome Priest (1916-1918)

Secretary/Treasurer: Oran Freeman (1893-1895), Chester S. Priest (1897-1898), C. S. Selleck (1899-1916), E. J. Procter (1917-1918)

Director: C. S. Priest (1899), A. Freeman (1900-1918), O. Chamberlain (1901-1916), Reed Procter (1902-1917), C. W. Chamberlain (1916-17), Ellen W. Perry (1916-1917), Susan Jerome (1916-1917), E. J. Procter (1916), William Rowley (1916), Jerome Priest (1916), Chas. S. Selleck (1916)

Trustees: Norman Perry (1897-98, B. Procter (1897-98), J. Thompson (1897), O. Chamberlain (1898-1901), B. F. Procter (1898-1902), 1956 - Hazel Saliard, Florence B. Taft, L. D. Priest, Rena Priest, and

possibly Florence Hermann or Harman.

Sexton: Charles Selleck (1893-1914), Neal Farley (1915-1916), George Farley (1917-1918)

Members: Thomas Reed Jr. (1893), 1956 - Hazel Saliard, Leon Macklem, Florence Taft, Bryce Taft, Lawrence Priest, George Whiting, Ward and Orville Tewksbury, and Rena Priest

Procter Cemetery Timeline

February 1, 1826	Edmund Stewart purchased 65.08 acres
Sept 15, 1885	George Hamblin reimbursed for printing, portals, posts for fence
1885-1886	Dr. Lo - building fence
1892	G. Harleigh and C. S. Selleck - maintenance
May 21, 1898	Board accepted as a gift from John McCafferty a strip of land on west side 21 feet wide to be fenced and plotted to the Cemetery Society
1898	Revenues: George Whiting – for lot, Stephen McFadden – for lot #113, John Churchill – for lot, Lillian Brown – for lot Expenses: A. Kennedy & Son – Lumber, Procter Bros. – posts, M. B. Smith – postal cards & printing, August Feriday – mowing cemetery, Geo. W. Brabb & Co. – oil
May 20, 1899	Board voted to build a fence around the North End of the Cemetery Expenses: L. D. Coe – oil, Geo. W. Brabb & Co. – paint, Selleck & Farley – mowing
May 12, 1900	Board voted to change the name of the “Branch Cemetery Society” to the “Procter Cemetery Society”. Revenue: E. D. Robinson – lot #118, S. McFadden, Wm. Tank? - lot Expenses: C. S. Selleck – mowing, J. R. Warelang & Son – paint
1901	Expenses: C. S. Selleck – mowing
May 24, 1902	Voted to accept from C. F. & R. Rood land on the west side of the cemetery. 40 feet North & South and 58 feet East & West. They to receive the proceeds of the sale of four lots.
1902	Revenue: John Ball – lot #122, William Peters – W ½ of lot #61, R. D. Robinson –

lot #51, E. J. Procter – lot #119, C. S. Selleck – lot #121

Expenses: C. S. Selleck – mowing, P. Millet – fencing, J. R. Moreland & Sons – hinges, L. G. Coe and Sons – paint

1903 Revenue: Mrs. A. Stranahan – lot #19

Expenses: E. J. Procter – mowing

May 21, 1904 Board voted to make an assessment of \$1.00 for each lot

1904 Revenue: S. McFadden – lot # 113, Jacob Ritter – lot #123

Expenses: M. B. Smith – painting, C. S. Selleck – mowing, E. J. Procter – mowing, C. F. & R. Rood – received for lot 123, W. B. Smith – printing and postal work

May 20, 1905 Voted to appoint Luther Procter, John Procter, and Robert Rood Sr. to raise money to build an iron fence on the front side of the cemetery.

1905 Revenue: Clark A. Hicks – lot #114

Expenses: John McCafferty – received funds for lot #114, E. J. Procter – mowing, C. S. Selleck – mowing, Farley – mowing

1905 Fence Fund

Oscar Chamberlain

Judson Wisman

Chas Flint

R. Sutherland

Will Thompson

Mrs. A. Stranahan

Mrs. James Smith

Andrew Sutherland

R. S. Rood and Wife

T. & M. Bennett

P. B. Cade

Mrs. C. Hathaway

Mrs. Susan Rowley

Miss Harriet Selleck

William Wilkinson

Allen Hazelton

Mrs. Elias Lee

James & Isaac Thompson

Reed Procter

Norman Freeman

George Carter

Gustin Patch

Rodney Robinson

John M. Hall

Jonas Bodell

C. S. Selleck

Frank W. Perry

D. D. Bennett

William Peters

Daniel E. Cole

Jacob Ritter

George Whiting

Wells Rowley

Czar Thompson

Mrs. Susan Jerome

Mrs. T. Lyons
Arch Freeman
Fred Wolcott
Earnest Reade
Arthur Flint
Robert Miller
George Young
C. S. Priest
C. W. Chamberlain
E. D. Robinson
E. J. Procter
Horace Newbury
Seward Ingalsbe
John Ball
Luther Procter
John Procter
C. F. & R. Rood
Susan Frantz
Mrs. Ellen M. Perry
Mrs. M. Richards
Harne Selleck
Clack A. Hicks
Mrs. Ellen Mellen
F. P. Richardson

R. Sutherland
Mrs. B. F. Procter
Elvira A. Freeman
Mrs. C. A. Newman?
Mrs. A. Freeman
Mrs. Sarah Smith
G. Himns?
Mrs. Robert Austin
B. J. Sutherland
Milton Thompson
Andrew Sutherland
Mrs. King
J. G. Sutherland
Ed Tewksbury
M. L. King
Mrs. E. D. Lathrop
Mrs. P. Cade
Alonzo Brown
James Mason Estate

May 5, 1906 Accepted report by R. S. Rood Sr. as Chairman of committee to raise funds to build a new fence on the south side of the Cemetery. Any used funds to go into general fund.

1906 Received \$300 for fence. Paid out \$269.30 with \$30.70 remaining.

Expenses: George Jersey – sand & stone, W. Fetter – sand & stone

Revenue: William Straublo – lot #126, James Mason estate for fence, Adanaria? Jewell – lot #120, C. S. Selleck – mowing, Barthelenna & Bliss – cement, H. H.

Moreland – paint

1907 Expenses: Selleck – mowing, Straublo - mowing

1908 Expenses: Cole – mowing, Rood & Perry – paint, H. & C. S. Selleck – mowing & painting

1909 Expenses: Charles Cohrs – mowing, H. & C. S. Selleck - mowing

1910 Revenue: Fred Jewell – lot #116, Roswell Green – lot #120 E ½

Expenses: C. F. Rood – received funds from lot #120, H. & C. S. Selleck – mowing, M. Smith – cards

1911 Expenses: C. Cohrs - mowing

1912 Expenses: Ray Yax – mowing, Neal Farley – mowing, painting, H.H. Moreland – paint/brushes

1914 Expenses: Luther Procter – paint fence

1915 Expenses: M. B. Smith – postal cards, C. H. Coe – ledger, Jack Tisdly – mowing, H. & C. S. Selleck – mowing

1916 Expenses: Joseph Strasberg – mowing, Mrs. C. S. Selleck – copying bylaws, H. & C. S. Selleck – steel posts, B. H. Seaman – papers

Aug 10, 1920 Transfer Lot #54 from J. Bodell to Sarah Bodell of St. Clair, MI

Apr 7, 1948 Fred Diener moved supported by Nellis Clark to donate \$25 to Procter Cemetery.

May 15, 1948 Minutes – decided to ask Ray Township to care for Procter cemetery, as the Society could not find a sexton to care for it.

Apr 11, 1949 Motion supported for Fred Diener and Orville Tewksbury investigate Twp liability in regards to cemeteries within twp. Nellis Clark, clerk

Jun 6, 1949 J. H. Penzien, Road Commission, told progress of cleaning up cemetery. Nellis Clark and C. R. Smith moved that Mr. Penzien get a mower.

July 6, 1949 Purchase mower by Township Road Commission.

May 1, 1950 Albert Steinbrink & Harriet Smith requested new fence and paint front. Fred Diener, clerk.

April 2, 1951 New cemetery fence erected in Procter Cemetery.

June 2, 1952	Ray Township paid Jack Clark and Frank Dayak \$65 for work on Procter Cemetery.
May 4, 1953	Road Commission instructed to get aluminum & apply paint for Procter.
April 11, 1955	Ernest Eisenhardt paid \$291.11 for work at cemetery
May 7, 1956	Charles Myers to take care of cemeteries.
May 25, 1956	Motion made by George Whiting supported by Lawrence Priest to dissolve the Procter Cemetery Assoc. Jewell West obtained to take care of legal work -per Rena Priest, Sec. Total finances \$1,012.75 Members present: Dilbert Priest – President, Hazel Saliard, Leon Macklem, Florence Taft, Bryce Taft, Lawrence Priest, George Whiting, Ward and Orville Tewksbury, and Rena Priest
Oct 31, 1956	Warranty Deed between Procter Cemetery Association and Ray Township for \$1.00. Signed by Procter Cemetery Association Trustees – Hazel Saliard, Florence B. Taft, L. D. Priest, Rena Priest, and possibly Florence Hermann or Harman.
Jan 7, 1957	Procter Cemetery deeded to Ray Township
April 1, 1957	Decided to create 2 new funds, one for street lighting and one for Procter.
April 7, 1957	Motion by John Grader and Orville Tewksbury to transfer \$300 for care of Procter Cemetery in 1958.
May 6, 1957	George Whiting & John Grader moved that Edison stock be purchased with money from Procter cemetery.
June 3, 1963	Earl Masters and O. Tewksbury motion that the 2 cemeteries are taken care of by Ray Township. O. Tewksbury to have signs made.
June 1, 1964	General fund \$200 for Procter Cemetery.
1964	Wayne Saliard buried in Procter Cemetery.
Sept 13, 1965	\$200 for Procter Cemetery
May 16, 1966	A new sign for Procter Cemetery ordered.
Dec 5, 1966	\$200 for Procter Cemetery
June 6, 1967	\$200 for Procter Cemetery - \$1,681.00 spent up til now.

1967	Col. Bert Cooley buried in Procter Cemetery
Sept 11, 1967	Masters and Christoff moved to spend \$100 for Procter Cemetery
March 15, 1983	The Zochowski family donated land to Procter Cemetery.
July 18, 1993	Last burial – Captain Frank F. Zochowski, Jr.

Sources:

1. **Civil War Veterans - Robert and Cherie Allen**
2. **Procter Cemetery Grave Locator May 1, 2007 - Bernard H. Pearl**
3. **Cemeteries of Macomb County, Michigan v.1 2011-05-12-012**
4. **Cemetery Records: Macomb County, MI 1943 R929.377439 Mac Mich. Coll.**
5. **Past and Present of Macomb County**
6. **History of Macomb County – M. A. Leeson**
7. **Procter Cemetery Association – copies of handwritten documents in RTHS archives**
8. **Township of Ray – copies of handwritten notes or minutes in RTHS archives**

Information in this document was compiled by the members of the Ray Township Historical Society. Any discrepancies are inadvertent and corrections should be directed to the Ray Township Historical Society.

2015 Ray Township Historical Society Board Members

Terry Goike, President

Camille Grabb, Vice-President

Janet Dempsey, Secretary/Treasurer

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March 15, 2015