

The Peacham Patriot

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Peacham Historical Association

Summer 2013

Peacham Civil War Book Receives Prestigious National Award

The American Association for State and Local History (AASHL) Leadership in History Awards Committee has selected the Peacham Historical Association publication *A Vermont Hill Town in the Civil War: Peacham's Story* as a 2013 Award of Merit winner. The award will be presented at the AASHL Annual Meeting in September 2013. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards is the nation's most prestigious competition for recognition of achievement in state and local history.

Published in May 2012, A Vermont Hill Town in the Civil War: Peacham's Story vividly tells the story of the Peacham men who went to war and the families who endured life on the home front. The book features a historical overview of the units in which Peacham men served, soldiers' letters home, a diary, memories of Andersonville Prison Camp, postwar memoirs, biographies, the story of the town Civil War monument and a detailed examination of the home front.

The book is edited by Jutta R. Scott and Michelle Arnosky Sherburne and includes an essay by Lynn A. Bonfield. It is designed by Bodenweber Design. It is available for purchase at the Peacham Library, the Peacham Craft Guild, and online on PHA's website: peachamhistorical.org. Softcover is \$25 and the hardcover is \$35.

Building a Future for Peacham's Past

There is a lot to be excited about at PHA this spring. The PHA Board is taking the critical steps to ensure that Peacham's remarkable historical collections are preserved for generations to come. The Board is proposing to move the collections to a new facility from the current overcrowded space, which not only

endangers their long-term preservation but is also a barrier to public use of Peacham's historical records and violates access and fire codes.

Working with Black River Design, Architects, PHA has developed detailed plans for the design, mechanical requirements, and cost estimates for

building a new home for Peacham's valuable historical collections. The new archival and research facility will provide secure, temperatureand humidity-controlled storage for the collections and adequate space for volunteers processing items in the collection. The new building will not only improve PHA's ability to care for the collections. but will enhance visitor services, and provide access to people with disabilities. It will have a lasting benefit for our community. The new space will expand public access to the collections, better support genealogical and other research, and widen community interest in Peacham's history. The building would be constructed on a 100'x95' parcel of land leased from the Town of Peacham in back of the Historical House, PHA's museum, located at 153 Church Street. Although this would be a newly constructed facility, the Yankee-barnlike design would reflect and respect the historical integrity of our 19th century village.

This is an unequaled opportunity in the 92-year history of PHA, but we face a daunting fundraising challenge. At its March 2013 meeting, the PHA Board approved the plans for a capital campaign. The goal of the Capital Campaign "Building a Future for Peacham's Past" is to raise \$150,000 to finance the construction of the new facility. The newly appointed Capital Campaign Committee is responsible for planning the campaign, including charting a time-line with periodic goals; identifying prospective donors, including individuals, businesses, and foundations; and implementing an initial fund-raising strategy. John Marshall is chair of the Committee and its members include Susan

Chandler, Jutta Scott, and Dawn Wright. The Committee began its work in mid-April. PHA has taken the needed steps to plan for moving its collections to a new, secure and accessible home. Of course much remains to be done: meeting the Capital Campaign goal of raising \$150,000; completing the engineering work; obtaining permits; and the actual construction. With the community's support, the PHA Board believes that this project is on its way to become a reality.



President's Page – Jutta Scott As PHA embarks on its Capital Campaign "Building a Future for Peacham's Past", I will be stepping down as President in August to devote time to the Campaign. It has been an

honor to serve as PHA President since 2008. It has been challenging and busy five years, but most of all I feel great pride and enthusiasm for all that PHA accomplished. When I became President, PHA faced two major challenges. Foremost was the need to ensure a secure future for Peacham's collections. Equally important was strengthening PHA's financial resources.

The PHA Board worked hard to find the right solution to establishing a new facility with secure. accessible and environmentally protected space for housing PHA's remarkable historical collections. The Board also devoted many hours to lay the foundation for a capital campaign to finance the construction. PHA is now ready to take the needed steps. As described on the first page, PHA has completed the plan for building the Archival and Research Facility and has begun the capital campaign to finance the construction. During the past five years, PHA accomplished much. We offered many educational programs, including the annual Ghost Walks; showcased objects from PHA's remarkable collections in the annual exhibits at the Historical House; and added to the collections a rich array of donations, including a gift of historic quilts, the addition of Bickford/Kinerson papers, and most recently the gift of Martin and Parker family papers (described in Lorna Quimby's article). We republished in 2010 our town history, Ernest L. Bogart's Peacham: The History of a Vermont Hill Town. We received two

grants from the Vermont Humanities Council which supported conservation and documentation of Peacham's Civil War history. The first grant in May 2009 preserved Marcus Wheeler's harrowing memoir of his imprisonment at the Confederate prison at Andersonville and allowed us to make the transcript and digital images available on PHA's website: peachamhistorical.org. The second grant in 2011 supported conservation and digitization of PHA's 96 Civil War letters and made possible in 2012 the publication of our community's history during the Civil War: A Vermont Hill Town in the Civil War: Peacham's Story. In November 2012, the book received the Award of Excellence in Publications from the Vermont League of Local Historical Societies. In May 2013, the book was selected as a 2013 American Association for State and Local History Award of Merit winner. Over my five years as President, the accomplishments of PHA have been a collaborative effort of an enthusiastic Board and a tremendous group of committed volunteers. I thank all Board Officers and Trustees for their hard work and dedication over the past five years. I owe special thanks to our tireless Curator, Lorna F. Quimby, who works so many hours and sustains PHA's operations. She not only oversees the management of PHA's historical collections, but also organizes the annual exhibits at the Historical House and provides research assistance to visitors at PHA's Office and Reference Library. PHA could not offer the diverse range of programs without the help of the many other volunteers, who serve as docents at the Historical House, manage our website, process membership renewals, work in PHA's Office, tell Peacham's story as "Ghosts", and help with the myriad tasks of our active organization. Thank you all!

As I step down as President, I am proud of what our small, all-volunteer organization has accomplished and I look forward to the success of the Capital Campaign and the long-needed move of the collections to a safe and accessible facility.

Thaddeus Stevens Focus of Annual Meeting Presentation

The PHA Annual Meeting will be held at the Congregational Church on Wednesday, August 14, at 7pm. Our speaker will be Beverly Wilson Palmer, the editor of the two-volume Selected Papers of Thaddeus Stevens, who will discuss Thaddeus Stevens' life in Peacham. She will share her extensive knowledge of this famous Peacham Academy alumnus. Born in Danville on April 4, 1792. Thaddeus was the son of Joshua and Sarah Stevens. After his father deserted the family, Thaddeus' mother moved to Peacham with her four children around 1807. Thaddeus attended Peacham Academy and entered Dartmouth College as a sophomore in 1811 graduating in 1814. During the winter term of 1813-14 he served as Principal of the Peacham Academy. He briefly read law with John Mattocks, a lawyer in Peacham Corner, and then moved to York, Pennsylvania where he completed his law studies. Although he never again lived in Peacham, he returned for visits and donated funds to the Peacham Academy and Peacham Library. Please mark your calendar and join us for this exciting program!

Parker Family Letters By Lorna Quimby

On December 28, 2011, the Association received a packet of 83 letters from Jane White Demers. Most were addressed to Louisa Martin Parker, the wife of Dr. Luther Fletcher Parker, Peacham's long-time village doctor, from members of her family. Bearing dates from 1853 to 1890, some are from her husband, others from her children and other relatives.

Included in the collection are her husband's fifteen letters, which he began writing in November, 1888. He was sixty-seven and she, sixty-six. Fourteen of them were written between November, 1888 and March, 1889, when she was in Minneapolis with their son, Hazen Merrill Parker, and his wife, Julia Tilden Douglas. Luther and Louisa's grandson, Fletcher Douglas Parker, was born on July 30, 1888. Evidently Louisa went to help with the baby.

The doctor's letters to "Louise" or "My dear wife" paint a picture of a country doctor's life, the births and deaths, local scandals, the winter roads when the sledding was poor, the long hours (many times he wrote at 10:30 at night), and the Congregational minister who, in his opinion, was lazy and incompetent. He also expressed hope that his wife would get rested and would take time to visit relatives on her way home.

There are seven letters from their only surviving son, Hazen Merrill Parker, born in Peacham in 1842. He was a lawyer, educated at Middlebury College, and wrote to his mother before his wedding on December 6, 1882 in Middlebury, Vermont, to Julia Tilden Douglas. He was anxious that his family's gifts to his bride be lavish enough. There is one letter from Minneapolis written before 1873, in which he asks his father to lend him \$1,000 to invest. There are three letters that Merrill wrote to his sisters, Alma and Jennie.

The collection includes several letters from their four daughters: There are seven letter to or from Jennie (Jane) M. Parker, their oldest daughter: in 1867, to P. R. Kendell; from Hortense Cowles "Dear Friend"; n. d., from Lizzie Ann Parker; n.d. to Cousin Jennie from Louisa; n.d., to Sister Jennie from Nellie (Ellen); in 1862, to "My dear little niece" from Jane Briggs, Kenosha, Wisconsin; n.d., to My Dear Jennie from Mother (Louisa Martin Parker). Jane Parker Hardy wrote one letter to Sister Lizzie and four letters to her mother.

There are nine letters to and from their daughter Lizzie (Elizabeth Ann), born February 28, 1857, died December 20, 1932. Included are: an 1872 letter to Lizzie Walker; another 1872 letter from Alice McClary to Lizzie; and five letters from Lizzie to Mother, two with no date, one June 3, 1888 and another,1889. In 1876, she had a letter from Martha Parker; in 1882, a letter from S. W.; one from Jennie (Jane Parker Hardy); in 1885, one from Ned and Ada; in 1884, from Ada and Ned.

Only two letters from their daughter Nellie survived: one written to Mother dated December 18, 1888 and another, January 17, 1889. Ellen Louise (Nellie), born January 6, 1859, married December 23, 1879, Walter Holmes Bayley. She died December 17, 1935.

There were seven letters from their youngest daughter, Alma to her mother. Alma Arabella was born December 11, 1862 in Peacham and married, October 13, 1887, George Harvey.

The remainder of the collection includes a series of letters from relatives:

Louisa's half-sister Lib (Elizabeth Dana Martin Woodhull) wrote two letters from Mt. Holyoke, Massachusetts, February 19, 1853 and April 20, 1853. March 10, 1859, she wrote from Point Pleasant, Virginia. One of her letters, with no address, was sent June 10, 1860 and another has neither date nor address. February 9, 1862, Lib wrote Louisa a letter from Virginia. December 12, 1888 Lib wrote from Marlette (?), Michigan. Lib and her husband, George Woodhull, wrote a letter, no date, after the birth of a child.

October, 1857, Mrs. Woodhull received a letter from her sister, Almyra Martin. In 1882, Almyra Martin Shaw wrote to Sister Louise from Berkeley, California.

Moses M. Martin wrote five letters, 1852 to 1882, to Sister Louise and another brother, Ashbel, wrote in 1889. In 1859 Alma A. Ripley wrote to Brother and Sister. In 1864 there was a letter to Sister Louise from her sister-in-law Nancy and in 1888 a letter to Sister Louise from M. J. Parker. Her granddaughter, Louise Bayley (born 1880) wrote to Grandma in 1888. Flora and Mary Bickford wrote a letter to Louisa in 1889 as did Nellie Harvey. There is one letter, n.d., to My Valentine from Rick. Lastly, there is a letter to My Dear Mama from C. D. Gates. The envelope was addressed to Mrs. L. A. Parker.

The Parker Family



Louisa Martin, born June 10, 1822, was the only surviving child of Moses and Jane Adeline (Martin) Martin. After Jane died, Moses married Almyra Dana (October 15, 1826). They had six children. Luther and Louisa probably met while at the Academy. Louisa is

listed in its 1839 catalog. They both had ties to the Congregational Church. (Louisa Martin joined, #600, in 1839) Furthermore, Louisa's home in the South Part of Peacham was near Reuben Miner's, where Luther boarded.

Louisa was four when her father married her stepmother. She was six when her half-sister Elizabeth was born and twenty when Caroline was born in 1842. She was used to children and familiar with their ways. She showed a quiet humor in her remarks about her own children. A typical oldest sister, she was concerned that Elizabeth was so far away and that her brother Ashbel might succumb to temptations in the far gold fields. She mourned the break-up of her family as members married and moved away. She was a Sabbatarian. Both she and Luther taught Sunday school. She was adverse to change, whether it be a move to far California or a short one to Peacham



Luther Fletcher Parker, born in Coventry, Vermont, was the second of Isaac and Arabella Cobb Parker's eleven children. When Luther was nineteen (1840), he "took his worldly goods on his back" and walked about 40 miles from his native town of Coventry to Peacham

to get an education at the Caledonia County Grammar School (Peacham Academy). The catalogs for C. C. G. S. for 1840 and 1843 list Luther F. Parker of Coventry, boarding at Mr. Miner's. (In 1843, Luther is also listed as an Assistant.) In 1861, their catalog lists Luther Parker, M. D., on the Prudential Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Luther was not a complete stranger in Peacham. Gardner Wheeler Cobb, a local doctor, was his second cousin. Cobb had graduated from Dartmouth College, in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1840.

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¹ Maxine Long, letter of February 23, 2013.

² Family tradition. At age nineteen, he could not have had many "worldly goods." In 1849, according to the C. C. G. S. catalog for that year, Addison F. Parker and Jane E. Parker, both of Coventry, attended the school. They also boarded at Mr. Miner's.

Luther went to the University of Vermont for two years and then studied medicine at Dartmouth (1848-49). He completed his training with Dr. Cobb and Dr. Asahel Farr.

Luther and Louisa were married in Peacham June 6, 1850 by the Rev. David Merrill. He was twentynine, she was twenty-eight. Their first child, Jane, was born the following July. Two of their daughters and their second son died as infants. One son, Hazen Merrill and four girls, Jane, Lizzie, Nellie, and Alma, lived to grow up.

About 1850 he began the practice of medicine in Barnet. In the spring of 1854, after buying Dr. Farr's practice, Louisa and Luther moved to Peacham.3 As well as the practice, they bought Farr's house in the Corner in 1853. They paid \$2,600 "for a village house and thirteen acres" and gave Farr a mortgage.4 In 1861 they had one cow and twelve sheep. In 1864, they had eight horses,5 one cow, fifty-two sheep and one hog.6 In 1881, in a meeting held at Peacham by the State Board of Agriculture, Dr. L. F. Parker described a successful silo he had built for winter feeding his herd of ten cows. He was referred to in the meeting as a "practical farmer." In 1882, when their son Hazen Merrill was married, they had three horses, twelve cows, two swine and were credited with 150 acres of wood and pasture besides their thirteen-acre homestead. The listers also noted one piano, three watches, \$400 money and \$1,013 debt. In the last grand list to include personal property, 1885, they have seventeen cows, two horses, three swine, two watches, one piano and owed \$1,800.

Luther served the town as its representative to the State legislature in 1886 and 1889, "on both the

Ways and Means and Temperance Committees."8 One of his letters to Louisa in 1889 indicated he found this duty tiresome and questioned its value. Luther was president of the Board of Trustees of Peacham Academy from 1884 to 1891. Louisa died in 1896, aged seventy-four, "of paralysis."9 Luther died two years later, 1898, "of apoplexy with initial insufficiency of heart."10

Historical House Summer Displays

The Parker family, with photographs, letters and artifacts, will be on display at the Peacham Historical House during July, August and September. We will as well show information about some of Peacham's other doctors. There will also be a display of "Thaddeus Stevens, the Peacham Years."

In the Industries Room, we will focus on "An Indomitable Vermont Woman, Noreen Churchill Powers Crane."

The Historical House will be open on July Fourth all day and on Sundays from July 7 – September 29. Hours are from 2 to 4 on Sundays.

Explanation of Bylaws Changes

As part of its continuing effort to ensure that the Peacham Historical Association maintains an effective governance structure, the Executive Board recommends changes to the PHA Bylaws regarding the roles of the president and vice president, duties of officers, number of trustees, terms of officers and trustees, and the composition of the nominating committee.

The proposed changes are the result of the Board's review of not-for-profit governance best practices, and take into account the need for succession planning, for clarifying the responsibilities of officers, and for ensuring renewal in Board membership. We encourage you to review the brief explanations of proposed changes in the PHA

³ Ernest L. Bogart, *Peacham, the Story of a Vermont Hill Town*, Montpelier, Vermont, Vermont Historical Society, 1948, 235

⁴ Peacham Land Records, Volume 11, pages 399 and 400. ⁵ At least two horses would be needed by a physician who made house calls in a large practice, not only to the outlying farms but, as shown in one of his letters, to the boarding house beyond Devil Hill, where the cook was ill. There is a good reason why he mentioned the state of the roads in most of his letters.

⁶ Peacham Grand List for 1864. The Land Records indicate he bought 100 acres "in the Second Division" (no doubt for pasture for his animals).

Bogart, 359.

⁸ From Parker Notes by John Parker etc.

⁹ Peacham Vital Records.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Bylaws below. We have identified proposed additions with bold Italic script and proposed deletions with a line through them. A complete draft of the PHA Bylaws which details the various modifications will be available at the Annual Membership Meeting on August 14, 2013. The Meeting will provide members with the opportunity to vote on the proposed changes.

Changes to Article IV all sections

The changes take into consideration the need to describe board governance, to increase the size of the board, to detail the responsibilities of officers and trustees, and to propose a succession plan for filling the position of the president when a vacancy occurs in that office.

IV. Officers and Government Board Governance

The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by an executive board of nine (9) to eleven (11) members. The board shall consist of four (4) officers and five (5) to seven (7) trustees. The board develops and advances PHA's mission and goals. It ensures the Association is well managed, provides for adequate resources, approves and monitors the implementation of programs and policies, provides accountability, and promotes the preservation and protection of Peacham's heritage.

a. Officers

The officers of the association shall be president, vice-president, secretary, *and* treasurer. and five (5) trustees. The executive board shall consist of the officers and trustees.

a. Duties of Officers

b. The president shall have executive supervision over the activities of the Association within the scope provided by these bylaws. The president shall preside at the annual business meeting and the meetings of the executive board. The president shall call meetings of the membership and the executive board. In the case of a vacancy in the position of vice president or secretary or treasurer or trustee, the president, with the approval of the executive board, shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next election. The president shall appoint, with the approval of the executive board, the chair of standing committees. The president (or an individual from the executive board designated by the president) shall be an

ex-officio member of all standing committees, except the nominating committee and shall preside at all meetings.

b. The vice president shall assist the president in carrying out the responsibilities of managing the activities of the Association. The vice president is expected to serve as president-designate. In the event of the absence or disability of the president, or a vacancy in that office, the vice president shall assume perform the duties and functions of the president. when that officer is unable to act.

e. The secretary shall take minutes of the membership and executive board meetings. When requested, the secretary shall handle communications on behalf of the executive board. At the annual meeting, the secretary shall read present the minutes from the last membership meeting.

The treasurer shall be responsible for the safekeeping of Association funds, for maintaining adequate financial records, and for depositing all monies with a reliable banking company in the name of the Association. The treasurer shall collect dues, receive income from sales and events, deposit donations, pay bills, and prepare monthly budget reports for the executive board. maintain financial records and make banking arrangements for the Association's funds. At the annual meeting, the treasurer shall present the financial report.

b. Trustees

There shall be five (5) to seven (7) trustees. Trustees shall participate in the meetings of the executive board and shall serve on at least one board committee.

The executive board shall have charge of any business undertaken by the Association.

Changes to Article V, Sections a and b.

The Board consulted with Dave Edwards, Sutherland~Edwards, Consultants to Philanthropy, who recommended that the Board consider adopting two practices: instituting term limits on the board president, other officer positions and trustees, as well as designating the vice president as the president's successor. The Board accepted his recommendations. The proposed changes will provide better organizational continuity and will

strengthen the Board.

V. Elections of Officers and Terms of Office

a. Officers

The officers of the Association shall be elected at the annual business meeting. The nominee receiving a plurality of the votes cast for an office shall be elected to that position. Each officer, except the president, shall serve a term of one year beginning after the annual meeting. All officers are eligible to succeed themselves. The president shall serve for an initial three-year term. The executive board may recommend to the membership to renew the president's term for up to three additional years. The vice president serving in the last year of the president's term shall be nominated president. In the event of a vacancy in both the position of the president and the vice president, the executive board shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next election. Officers may serve in the same position for a maximum of six consecutive years.

b. Trustees

Five (5) to seven (7) trustees shall serve for various terms (one year, two years and three years) elected on a staggered basis. Two shall be elected at each annual business meeting. The nominee receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be elected to that position. Trustees serve for their elected term until their successors are elected. In the event of a vacancy, the president, with the approval of the executive board, shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next election. Trustees are eligible to succeed themselves but may only serve for a maximum of six consecutive years.

Changes to Article VII, Sections a, i.

The proposed change ensures that both the board and the larger community have input into the selection process.

i. Nominating – the Nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) members appointed by the executive board and shall include two (2) current Board members and one (1) community member. Members of the nominating committee shall present a slate of nominees to the membership at the annual meeting. Additional names may be placed in nomination from the floor at the annual business meeting but may be added to the slate only with the approval of the candidate.

The Board recommends that you vote at the Annual Meeting in favor of these changes. We are confident

that they ensure that PHA will continue to remain a strong organization.

Dawn Wright Appointed to PHA Board

In March 2013, PHA Trustee Karen Fitzhugh resigned from the PHA Board because of her heavy work schedule. Karen helped to organize the Ghost Walks and participated several times as a "Ghost". The Board expresses thanks to Karen for her contributions. The Board invited Dawn Wright to fill the vacancy. Dawn is a native of San Antonio, Texas moved to Peacham in July 2012 to follow in her Walbridge ancestors footsteps who were part of the Peacham community 180 years ago. She is married to retired Lt. Col Joel Wright, mother to two wonderful boys, Tyler and Garrett and has worked 20 plus years in support of Intelligence operations for the US government. Dawn has a strong interest in Peacham's history as well as extensive knowledge of the Revolutionary era and experience of serving on a local board.

Peacham Patriot Available Electronically

PHA now offers our members the option of receiving the *Peacham Patriot* electronically. For our small organization, email distribution saves printing and mailing costs. Many members already receive renewal notices for their PHA membership in their email box, and we hope that you will consider taking advantage of the electronic distribution of our newsletter. If you are interested in switching to email distribution, please send a message to scottjutta2@gmail.com. Future issues of the newsletter will then be sent to your email inbox as an attachment in the Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. Thank you for supporting PHA.

Peacham Historical Association Publications

A Vermont Hill Town in the Civil War: Peacham's Story. Jutta R. Scott and Michelle Arnosky Sherburne, eds. With an essay by Lynn A. Bonfield. Illustrated, maps, notes, bibliography. 218 pages, May 2012. Winner of the 2012 Vermont Local Historical Societies Achievement Award of

Excellence in Publications and 2013 American Association for State and Local History Award of Merit.

Hardcover \$35.00 and Softcover \$25.00

Peacham: The Story of a Vermont Hill Town.

By Ernest L. Bogart

A comprehensive history of Peacham from its first settlement in 1776 to the 1940s. First published in 1948, it was digitized and reissued in 2010.

\$35.00

Historic Homes of Peacham.

Compiled and edited by Jutta R. Scott.

In words and pictures the book surveys the rich legacy of 18th and 19th century houses in Peacham and documents with descriptions and photographs over 100 houses built before 1900. 2007. Winner of the 2008 Vermont Local Historical Societies Achievement Award of Excellence in Publications.

Hardcover \$40.00 and Softcover \$30.00

The Peacham Anthology

Compiled by Lynn A. Bonfield. 2003. **\$25.00**

\$25.00

A compilation of 40 articles and documents about the history of Peacham.

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Peacham Historical Association P.O. Box 101 Peacham, Vermont 05862 www.peachamhistorical.org Visit us on Facebook

The Peacham Patriot, published twice each year, is a benefit of membership in the PHA. The editor is Jutta Scott, with assistance from Mel Reis and Lorna Quimby.

PHA Board 2012-2013

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Dawn Wright*

*filled vacancy after Karen Fitzhugh's resignation

The Historical House will be open on Sundays from July 7 – September 29. Hours are from 2 to 4 on Sunday.