

Genealogical Society of Vermont

Newsletter

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Summer 2025

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DONATIONS

Barbara Thacker of McMinnville, Oregon

Alan and Valerie Rogers of Northfield, Massachusetts

> Roberta Barnes of Oakton, Virginia

Judith Letchworth of Poquoson, Virginia

Burt Nowers of Nashville, Tennessee



For Sale,

THE HOUSE & LOT where the subscribe now lives: also a Farm in

taining one hundred and forty acres of excellent and; and one other small Farm in the town of Panon, with several other pieces of land in and near the lace. He likewise wishes all persons indebred to call and make immediate settlement, as he is ends shortly to leave this place.

WILLIAM MEACHAM.

VERGENNES, Sept. 18, 1798

N. B. He has on hand, 17,000 Nails of different kinds, a quantity of Indigo, Soal Leather, Putry, Gentlemen's Hats, Salt, &c.

The Vergennes Gazette and Vermont and New York Advertiser (Vergennes, Vt.), Issue 1 Nov. 1798, p. 1.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The 18th New England Regional Genealogical Conference (NERGC) 2025: New Englanders Here, There, and Everywhere is fast approaching and will be October 29 through November 1, 2025 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 700 Elm St., Manchester, N.H. Be sure to look for any updates on the NERGC website www.nergc.org. The updated conference brochure is available for download www.nergc.org/wp-content/ uploads/2025/05/Brochure-for-2025-Conference.pdf GSV will produce the daily conference newsletter and have a booth in the Exhibit Hall. We will also hold our

annual business meeting at NERGC, as the conference coincides with date we would generally have a Fall Membership Meeting. This will be about 15 minutes in length and will be held in the evening between the regular sessions and the banquet on Saturday of the conference. The conference newsletter will contain room information and the exact time, etc.



GSV's sponsored speaker at NERGC will be Michael F. Dwyer, FASG, who will speak on "French-Canadian Names Lost in Vermont." Michael's presentation will be on Friday October, 31st at 9:45 a.m. Please note the change in day and time from the printed version of the brochure. For those of you who missed Michael's fascinating talk at our Spring Membership Meeting at the Rutland Historical Society on May 3rd, he will cover the same material. In the 1990 U.S. Census, 29% of Vermonters disclosed French-Canadian or French as an ethnicity. Early immigrants to Vermont often lost their original first and last names in the process of assimilation. As a result, research to ancestors born in Canada faced a brick wall. The presentation illustrates

dozens of case studies and the steps taken to discover hidden identities. It draws upon vital records, cemetery records, newspaper accounts, and extensively from the published church repertoires of the Vermont French Canadian Society which often provide the key to discovering the immigrant's original name. Michael Dwyer is a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, a longtime member of the Genealogical Society of Vermont and past editor of Vermont Genealogy. He has published many articles in journals including the Register, American Ancestors, Vermont Genealogy, The Maine Genealogist among others. Named Vermont Teacher of the Year in 2004, he retired from teaching in 2018 and now serves as the Pastor of the Pittsford Congregational Church. He also hosts a monthly television show, "Historically Speaking" on Rutland Regional Television.

Members should have received Vermont Genealogy Spring 2024 [29: 1], Special Publication No. 16, "The History of Fort Dummer and Its Soldiers." Editor, Drew Bartley is currently hard at work on the Fall 2024 [29: 2] issue. If you have the expertise to provide assistance in proofing and(or) indexing to help with the production of the journal, please let us know.

As always thank you to the members support GSV through your memberships, purchases and donations. Without your support we would not be able to keep the society running.

Jonathan W. Stevens, President

Expanded Access to Full-Text Search: Enhancing the Catalog and All-Collections Search

FamilySearch has been testing full-text search for over a year, making improvements that have increased its capability and effectiveness. Even while it is still in development, this powerful new search experience has already helped testers make genealogy discoveries and breakthroughs in their family history research.

With the great potential that full-text search has for uncovering hidden information, the feature is now going to be used to enhance a few key sections of the FamilySearch site, giving our users greater access to previously hard-to-find records. Learn more about full-text search below and how it is being used in the FamilySearch Catalog and in all-collections searching. The section in this article about using full-text search also gives helpful information about how to use this tool and the benefits it has to offer.

What Is Full-Text Search? While FamilySearch has billions of digitized historical records available to browse, only a small portion of them are indexed and searchable. Because of artificial intelligence and handwriting recognition technology, however, records are becoming searchable significantly faster. By searching AI-created transcripts of records, full-text search allows you to find results from unindexed record collections in seconds. Using keywords, names, places, and dates, you can search over 1 billion genealogically significant records in a full-text search that might have been available only as images before. Although searching full transcripts is not exactly the same as searching indexed records, full-text search allows users to find results from any part of the text in a record. This capability is helping thousands of people find relatives in documents they hadn't considered before and discover new evidence in previously unsearchable records.

Where Can I Find the Full-Text Search Tool? While it is still undergoing further improvements in FamilySearch Labs, full-text search is now also available in the all-collections search on the signed-in FamilySearch home page and in the FamilySearch Catalog.

Search for an Ancestor Using the All-Collections Search When you sign in to FamilySearch.org (with a free account), on the right side of your signed-in home page is a search feature with the heading "Search for an Ancestor." This tool looks for your search terms in historical records, family tree profiles, memories, and almost any other database on the FamilySearch website. (You can also go directly to the all-collections search experience here.) When looking at results from the all-collections search, you can choose "Full-Text Search" as one of the filter options in the left side bar. Find the option in the list, and click Full-Text Search. A new window or tab will open, showing results for your search that have become available through AI-generated transcripts. Note: You do have to click Full-Text Search in the sidebar to see results from this database. They do not appear in the main results of the all-collections search.

Full-Text Transcripts in the Catalog The FamilySearch Catalog is a guide to books, records, and other resources available both online and in the FamilySearch Library. Many of these resources are available to browse but still require manual searching for information. As FamilySearch uses AI tools to create full-text transcripts of collections in the catalog, these collections will also become full-text searchable. On FamilySearch.org, you can find the catalog by clicking Search in the top menu and then clicking Catalog. When browsing the catalog, if you find a promising collection, scroll down the page, and check the Film/Digital Notes section for format information. An icon of a document with a plus sign indicates that the collection is full-text searchable. Clicking this icon will bring up a list of all transcripts in that catalog collection and a search form on the right. Entering names and other keywords in the form will allow you to use full-text search on that particular collection instead of having to browse through each record to find names and other information. FamilySearch hopes to add this option to as many catalog collections as possible over time; researchers otherwise may have to look through hundreds of catalog images manually to find what they seek.

Try the Full Experience in FamilySearch Labs Full-text search is still available as an experiment in FamilySearch Labs as we improve features such as filtering results and integrating search results with the FamilySearch Family Tree. We invite you to continue to experiment with full-text search there and to continue to help us improve the experience through your feedback.

To try full-text search in FamilySearch Labs, follow these simple steps:

- 1. Go to <u>FamilySearch.org/labs</u>, and sign in with your FamilySearch account. (You can also navigate to FamilySearch Labs from the expanded footer on most pages on the FamilySearch site.)
- 2. On the <u>FamilySearch Labs</u> page, find the Expand Your Search with Full Text box, and click **Try It**. (Note that after the first time you use this tool, you may see "Go to Experiment" instead of "Try It.")
- 3. On the full-text search page, type a few details about an ancestor you would like to know more about, and click **Search**.

https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/full-text-search-experimental-ai

DEATHS.

Marriages and Deaths inserted FREE.

Naples, Florida - Mary Jane (MacFarland) Williams, 90, of Naples, Florida, passed on December 10, 2023, after being hospitalized for a short time. She was born November 28, 1933, in New Haven, Connecticut, to Douglas MacFarland and Hazel Armstrong (of Springfield, VT). During her parent's pending divorce in the mid-40s, she was sent to live with her aunt Florence, in Townshend, VT. Somewhat of a tomboy, she loved playing outdoors in all seasons, swimming in the brook, playing with her dogs, and farm animals. She attended Leland & Gray High School and earned many honors and awards, graduating with the class of 1951. She attended Castleton Teachers' College until a blind date led her to the love of her life, Leland Williams of Rutland, VT. She grabbed a hold of him and never let go, marrying a short time later in 1953. Soon after, they moved with several family members to San Diego, CA, where they had 3 children. As they grew, she became involved in many activities. She was President of P.T.A., Girl Scout Leader, Cub Scout Leader, and she taught swimming for the Red Cross. She was a great cook and enjoyed cooking for others. In 1968, the family moved to Borrego Springs, CA, and she began work at First California Bank. In 1975, she became homesick for Vermont and moved the family there to help run the Cooper Hill Lodge near Mt. Snow ski resort. Her next job was working at Vermont National Bank in Brattleboro, VT, where she enjoyed working until she retired. After visiting a favorite cousin, she decided to make the move to Naples, Florida, where she spent the rest of her life. She volunteered at the Naples Botanical Garden and became the volunteer with the second most hours. In the last few years of her life, she spent many hours in her beautiful garden. She loved giving her vegetables away to friends and neighbors.

After her 90th birthday, she experienced pain and after a visit to the emergency room, she was admitted. She was there for a week, had many tests, and in the end, she was too tired to fight anymore. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Mary Jane was preceded in death by her husband, Leland Williams, both parents and a brother, Andrew MacFarland.

Published by The Brattleboro Reformer on June 1, 2024

https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/brattleboro/name/mary-williams-obituary?id=55240921

Whiting, Vermont - Grace Ellen (Baker) Simonds, 85, passed away Monday, May 26, 2025. Grace was born in San Diego, CA, on August 15, 1939. She was the daughter of Cushman and Ellen (Gage) Baker. Her family moved back to Brandon in 1944 and graduated from Brandon High School in 1957. She earned her bachelor's degree from Caselton State College and then taught at Burr Pond School and kindergarten in Whiting. She served 33 years as the Whiting Town Clerk from 1983 until her retirement in 2014. She married Wilson (Bill) J. Simonds on March 10, 1962. They lived in Sudbury and later bought the longtime family home in Whiting where they raised their four children. Over the years she enjoyed family gatherings, reading, television, playing the organ, quilting, sewing, genealogy, showing old family photo albums, and socializing.

She is survived by three daughters and their spouses; Marie & Dan Berry, Michelle & Rick Lincoln, Marlene Alden and one son and spouse Mark & Tracy Simonds. Two sisters Carol & Dick Bird and Susan & Keith Puffenbarger. Ten grandchildren and spouses; Denise Berry, Adam (Heidi) Berry, Stephanie (Brandon) Mokris, Ross (Rania Jaber) Lincoln, Matthew (Juliette) Berry, Kirstyn (Mike) Mayhew, Kacey Scheuereman, Kaley (Kobe) Pinkham, Kira (Travis Hornbeck) Simonds and Rocco Alden. Nine greatgrandchildren; Emory, Callen, Finn, Hudson, Jace, Ellie, Maverick, Dudley & Maci. She was predeceased by her husband Bill in 2020 and her parents.

A Funeral Service were held on Friday, May 30, 2025 at 2 PM, at Miller & Ketcham Funeral Home in Brandon. The graveside committal service and burial was in the family lot at the Whiting Community Cemetery.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be given in her memory to the Whiting Volunteer Fire Department, Whiting, VT 05778.

https://www.millerandketchamfuneralhome.com/obituary/Grace-Simonds

Editors Note: Mary Jane Williams was a longtime GSV member, joining in 1978. We just learned of her passing. Grace Ellen Simonds was a past member of GSV.

EXPLORE

the History and Culture of Our **Brave Little State**









Visit the Green Mountain Digital Archive website:

VT.DP.LA



Photos provided via Green Mountain Digital Archive: "Julius Willard, banjo player" (circa 1900) and "Child with sled and teddy bear" (circa 1900) courtesy University of Vermont; "Hanford Hayes and his granddaughter" (circa 1930) and "Skiers on Hogback Mountain" Vermont Life (1948) courtesy Middlebury College

NOTICE.

This is to certify that I have given my son Charles Franklin Stevens, his time during the remainder of his minority, and I shall claim none of his earnings and pay no debts of his contracting after this date

HENRY A. STEVENS. Weston, Vt., Sept. 2, 1899. * 3w

> The Vermont Tribune (Ludlow, Vt.), Issue 22 Sept. 1899, p. 2.

New Members

Ruth Corum

2 Wedge Way Newport, NH 03773

email: ruthcorum@vahoo.com

researching: Kittredge, Hammond, Sykes, Slayton, Perkins

Michael Haas

1286 Hazen Notch Rd. Lowell, VT 05847

email:ihateokra88@gmail.com

researching: Curtis, Caldwell, Buxton, Woods, Harding

Jack Laflin

48 Della St. Apt 5 Manchester Center, VT 05255 email:laflin47@gmail.com researching: Potter, Carpenter

Roxanne Legreid

6801 S. Four Peaks Way Chandler, AZ 85249 email: rlegreidaz@aol.com

researching: Wait (Grand Isle & Franklin Counties), Morey

(Franklin Co.)

Angie Bautista

444 Firetown Rd. Simsbury, CT 06070 email: abautista@me.com

researching: Beebe, Tucker, Farnum, Watkins, Hazzard

NERGC HOTEL UPDATE

Residence Inn

Due to the high number of rooms already spoken for at the DoubleTree, we've arranged for a few more at the Residence Inn, which is about a 4-minute walk away.

There are still rooms available at the Residence Inn for Tuesday through Saturday at the rate of \$179 with \$12 a day parking. Check-in is at 5:00 p.m. and check-out time is 11:00 a.m. You can call them directly to make a reservation by dialing 603-314-0500. The deadline for reservations is September 28,2025.

The Residence Inn is part of the Marriott Bonvoy rewards program.

Residence Inn Manchester Downtown \$179.00 USD per night -

Last Day to Book: Sunday, September 28, 2025 **Book your group rate for NERGC**

18th New England Regional Genealogical Conference: New Englanders Here, There, and Everywhere October 29 - November 1, 2025 Manchester, New Hampshire

HOW TO REGISTER

Registration for NERGC 2025 is open!

The cost of Full Registration is \$200 before September 14 or \$230 September 14 and after. Online registration closes on October 17. Single day and two-day registrations are also available. Wednesday tracks of four one-hour sessions each are \$90, including a delicious lunch, and do not require conference registration.

Conference Brochure - Prior to registering, you can download the conference brochure, which includes the full program of the conference, at https://nergc.org/nergc-program-2025/; there is a button on this page so it can be downloaded. You may want to print it out and circle the sessions you want to attend and the events you want to participate in. With eight concurrent tracks of sessions, you may have some tough choices to make! To Register Online

You can register and pay by credit card at www.NERGC.org. Or by Mail - When you are ready to register you can fill out and mail in the last page of that brochure, along with your check, to the address given. Note: Those entitled to free admission, such as speakers, exhibitors, and award winners, will be emailed a discount code to be used during online registration to deduct the cost of their ticket. Those in these categories know who they are and should wait for that code before registering.

FRIDAY LUNCHEON

Friday's luncheon (F-220) is sponsored by the Massachusetts Genealogical Council, with a presentation by David Allen Lambert, "What Time Is It On Your Genealogical Clock?" The meal choice is: Roasted Stuffed Pork Tenderloin or Potato Crusted Cod. The cost for either meal is \$48, and both come with Caesar Salad, Mashed Potatoes, Broccoli, Rolls & Butter, Coffee & Tea and include Triple Chocolate Mousse Tort for dessert. Attendance at this presentation is only available with the purchase of the associated meal.

Have you ever asked what's the time on your Genealogical Clock? Not the Grandfather in your hall but rather the final disposition of your family papers and photos. Your genealogical efforts should have a final home. David Allen Lambert will help you to listen to the ticking and make a plan for the future of your own archives.

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist at American Ancestors, is the author of eleven books and many articles in the NEHGS Register and other genealogical society publications. His areas of expertise include New England and Atlantic Canada; military records; DNA research; and Native American and African American genealogical research.

FRIDAY BANQUET

Friday's Banquet (F-240) is sponsored by Essex Society of Genealogists and features Diahan Southard presenting "How DNA Influences Our Identity" Served meal choices are Grilled Chicken Champignon and Roasted Vegetable Wellington, both preceded by Elm Street Salad, and include rolls & butter, coffee & tea, and the Chef's selection of accompaniments. All followed by Warm Apple Tart for dessert. The cost for either meal is \$60. Attendance at this presentation is only available with the purchase of the associated meal. Optional Costumes are encouraged for a special Halloween Event.

Diahan Southard, one of the NERGC 2025 Featured Speakers, has been helping people use DNA to explore their roots for over 20 years. She started her career at the Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation, which created the DNA database that became AncestryDNA. After witnessing the power of DNA for family history—and the difficulties people face in using it effectively—she launched a pioneering career in DNA education.

Over the last 20 years Diahan has given hundreds of lectures on DNA from Burbank to Oslo, London to Seattle, to crowds of tens to thousands. Diahan's talents for making DNA accessible, exciting, and relevant are on full display as host of the PBS special, Your DNA Secrets Revealed. Diahan teaches on global platforms such as RootsTech, GenealogyTV and Legacy Tree Webinars. She appears on popular genealogy podcasts and is a DNA columnist for *Family Tree Magazine*.



GSV PUBLICATIONS

The society offers the following publications for purchase by our members and readers. GSV members receive a 10% discount on the purchase price. Postage and handling is extra—please add \$5.50 for the first item (*except where noted*) and \$1.00 for each additional item in the same order to the same address. Mail your checks payable to GSV, to:

Genealogical Society of Vermont, 57 East Shore North, Grand Isle, VT 05458

Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 1 is out of print.

Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 2. Scott A. Bartley, ed., 1997, 304 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 5; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 non-members. This second volume covers 107 families, has improved formatting and more complete information on the third generation of early Vermonters.

Vital Records of Putney, Vermont to the Year 1900. Compiled and edited by Ken Stevens, 1992, 406 pp. Item No. GSV 2; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 non-members. This is a complete compilation from all primary sources available in the town. This is augmented by the ministerial records of the pastors who served as early as 1776.

(Continued on page 7)

Item Number M 001	Description Digital Membership: New or Renewal \$25	Quantity X	Price = Subtotal	
M 002	Print Membership: Please Refer to Last Page for	Price		
Surnames Researching (for New Members):				
D 001	Donation			
			*There is no tax on GSV material.	
Name	Member	:#	Membership fees are listed on the back cover.	
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WANT TO CONTACT US?

Our website is at http://www.genealogyvermont.org/

News, articles and comments for the newsletter should be mailed to:

Genealogical Society of Vermont 57 East Shore North Grand Isle, VT 05458

stevens@vermontel.net

Newsletter deadlines are: April 15 — Spring issue July 15 — Summer issue Oct. 15 — Fall issue Dec. 15 — Winter issue

Vermont Genealogy, the GSV Journal contact information:
Scott Andrew Bartley
drew@yourgenealogist.com

Send copies of relevant books for journal review to: John A. Leppman Book Review Editor 20 Thwing Lane Bellows Falls, VT 05101-1640

Moving? Let Us Know

Please inform GSV if you move. Send notices to: Diantha Howard 57 East Shore North Grand Isle, VT 05458

ADVERTISING POLICY

The GSV Newsletter accepts paid advertising at \$3.00 per column inch. It must relate to genealogy, preferably Vermont, and must be received before the deadline listed above. Checks made out to GSV are sent to 2962 Vermont Route 12A, Braintree, VT 05060-8779 along with the exact wording for the ad. GSV offers no warranty on the services of advertisers.

A Quarterly Publication of the GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF VERMONT

ISSN 1087-4550 © 2025 Genealogical Society of Vermont Vital Records of Rockingham, Vermont and the Records of the First Church of Rockingham. Reprinted from the 1902 and 1908 first editions, newly indexed by Christopher T. Norris and Scott A. Bartley, 323 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 3; Sale Price \$20. Reprinted from the first editions of 1908 and 1902, this is an important source of one of Vermont's oldest towns. The town records extend to 1845 and church records from 1773 to 1839. New to this edition is an index of nearly 1,000 names.

Georgia, Vermont Vital Records. Peter S. Mallet, ed., 1995, hardbound. Item No. GSV 4; Sale Price \$15. This volume presents all births, baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials recorded in the town. All the civil books were transcribed as well as the records from the Georgia Plains Baptist Church, Congregational Church, and Methodist Church of Georgia and North Fairfax.

Windsor County, Vermont Probate Index, 1778-1899. Scott Andrew Bartley and Marjorie-J. Bartley, compilers, 2000, 560 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 6; is out of print. This is a comprehensive index of all files in the Windsor County Probate Court Districts —Windsor and Hartford. The records cover the period from the earliest 1778 records through the end of the nineteenth century, more than 20,000 probate files. The files are indexed by the name of the major party in the case, place of residence, probate district, type of record, year, and probate record volume.

Index to Branches & Twigs, 1972—1995. Robert M. Murphy, ed. 2000, 572 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 7; \$58.50 members, \$65.00 non-members. (Mail orders should add \$7.50 for postage and handling, not the \$5.50 normally charged.) This is the every-name index to GSV's Branches & Twigs, published for 24 years in 96 issues. The 180,000 entries include every genealogically important name mentioned in every issue. Separate sections of this work list the coverage of each Apple Orchard installment, and provide a full author and title index to book reviews. Branches & Twigs included large quantities of information of interest to family historians.

Sudbury, Vermont: Genealogies, Vital Records, and Census Records. Mary Ann Z. Wheeler, 2000, 416 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 8; **Sale Price \$20**. This book is a comprehensive transcription of census and vital records for Sudbury, plus carefully compiled genealogies of families. This book is among the very best genealogical resources about a Vermont town. This is a cooperative publication between GSV and Picton Press.

A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy, 2nd edition. John A. Leppman, 2005, soft-bound. Item No. GSV 11; **Sale Price \$5**. (Mail orders should add \$3.50 for postage and handling, not the \$5.50 normally charged.) This is a new edition of A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy was released in April 2005. It includes more listings than the first edition, most published since 2000. It is keyed to Scott Andrew Bartley's Genealogies Found in Vermont Histories (Vol. 10, No. 1 of Vermont Genealogy, also designated GSV publication number 10.).

Index to the History and Map of Danby, Vermont, Compiled by Joann H. Nichols. (1998), softbound, Item No. D1; \$3.50; *is out of print*. An index to J[*ohn*] C. Williams, History and Map of Danby, Vermont (Rutland, Vt., 1869; reprinted S.L. Griffith Library, 1976). Limited Number Available.

Vermont Genealogy Back Issues:

Issues 1: 1-13: 4, are available for \$5.00 each, except special issues 10: 1 and 11: 1 & 2, which are available for \$10.00 each. Issues 14: 1 & 2, 14: 3 & 4, 15: 1 - 27: 1, 28: 2, are available for \$10.00 each. There is a mailing fee of \$3.50 (\$5.50 to Canadian addresses). For multiple issue orders, please add \$1 for each additional 1 to 5 issues. 27:2/28:1 "Vermont Research Guide" Spiral Bound, \$35 non-members, \$30 GSV Members, postage \$7.00.

Note: issues 1: 4, 3: 3, 3: 4 and 4: 4 are out of print.

Genealogical Society of Vermont 57 East Shore North Grand Isle, VT 05458

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Dues Notice!

Please look at your address label for your membership expiration date. Your membership expires on the date shown on the top line of the address label.

Dues are \$30.00 for US addresses.

Canada and Mexico are \$40.00

All other foreign addresses are \$55.00 in US funds.

Membership includes our journal *Vermont Genealogy* and four issues of our newsletter. These publications will keep you abreast of genealogical news and present current articles on genealogical source material, conferences and meetings, techniques and queries. If you would like to receive a membership card, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your dues. Send membership dues and applications to Genealogical Society of Vermont at the address listed on page 6.

