RECOLLECTIONS OF 1939-45

I

"I know a word we are not allowed to say". Eagerly we quizzed the speaker - "What is it?, what is it?". "I'll have to whisper it", she replied. "It's WAR!"

The date - some time in 1938, the speaker, like myself, a member of the Kindergarten/Preparatory Department of West Ham High School for Girls, Stratford, London E.15. I can no longer remember the girl's name, nor have I any recollection of what she looked like, but I can clearly remember the occasion and the hushed tones in which the conversation was conducted. It was the first time I had ever heard of war and had no idea of what it meant, though clearly it was something bad.

Some time later I remember going one evening with my parents and my sister to another school in the area and standing outside in a very long queue, in torrential rain, waiting to be issued with gas masks. I don't recall anyone ever actually explaining to me exactly what was happening, or why we had to do this, but it seems that gradually the idea of impending trouble must have communicated itself even to those of us who were still very young and well protected.

I was born in Forest Gate, London E.7 - a district not far in distance by crow from the London docks. At the time of the outbreak of war I was seven years old and lived in a sizeable late nineteenth century house, typical of many in the area. It was double-fronted, set back from the road by a small front garden, with a glass-roofed verandah running the width of the house. Either side of the front door were French windows and one of these was the front end of a room which ran the whole length of the house - having a further set of French windows backing onto the rear garden. Beyond the back garden was the main railway line from Liverpool Street to the east, so between docks and railway we were only too close to likely bombers' targets. In the house lived my parents, sister Rona (older by six years) and myself, together with my invalid paternal grandmother and an aunt and uncle.

After the 1938 scare things appeared to settle down again, but once we returned to London from our annual summer holiday on the south coast in July 1939, it became clear that war was now really imminent and we should probably have to be evacuated to somewhere considered safer than the East End of London. The school issued instructions and we each had to be kitted out with a new haversack containing a change of clothes, a new blanket (mine was beige and green, my sister's was red). All the school was being packed up and sent away, though until the very last moment we knew neither where nor when.

Many of my companions from the preparatory school stayed with their parents or were sent away with their mothers, but as I had an older sister in the Seniors my parents considered it best for us to go together, while they stayed

behind in London.

Each morning we all assembled in the main hall of the Big School - a very fine old building on what was clearly a prime site in the Borough. There, we were split up into groups - which were called 'squadrons' - another new word! We were supposed to do lessons but, as most of the school books were packed up, all we had were notebooks in which to write.

The thing I remember most vividly about this time is that we had to write out and learn by heart the words of the hymn 'O God Our Help In Ages Past' and this we sang each and every morning at assembly. To this day I cannot bear to sing or even hear that particular hymn and always cover my ears when it is played.

I don't know how long this phase lasted - but it may well have been about a week. Each morning we left home, not knowing whether or not we would be returning that evening and it must have been extraordinarily difficult for our parents to remain calm and not worry us. Finally word came that we were going (31 August or 1 September - I cannot remember accurately). We set off for the station, marching in pairs, with two of the most senior girls at the head of the crocodile carrying a banner proudly bearing the words 'WEST HAM HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS'. Somehow a message seems to have reached some of the parents and I remember them arriving at the station just in time for them to wave us goodbye. Then we were off in the train - for all of about 15 miles as far as Brentwood in Essex!

When we arrived it became clear that no special arrangements had been made for us - we were assembled in a hall and local families came and looked us over. It appears that they had originally been told to expect troops billetted on them - and when they discovered we were not 'gallant lads' in khaki or blue, but only children - and from the East End at that - many of them just melted away. Gradually however homes were offered to this one and that, but needless to say no-one wanted <u>two</u> evacuees and eventually my sister and I were left almost alone. But she was not to be defeated and having been instructed not to let me out of her sight, held me firmly by the hand, refusing to allow us to be separated. In the end one lady, a Mrs Brooks, agreed to take us both and we set off with her, each clutching in addition to our haversacks and gas masks a carrier bag of 'iron rations', which included a tin of corned beef, biscuits and a packet of chocolate-covered nuts and raisins (the last item being the only one of interest to me at that time). The couple who offered us a home had two children of their own - a boy called Vernon, (known as 'Buddy') and a girl called Betty - both of whom seemed to be very spoilt. Although in their way the parents treated us quite kindly, we were always conscious of distinctions being made between us and their own.

A couple of days later we assembled in a school yard and an announcement was made that war had been declared. Almost at once the air raid warning sounded, but happily it was a false alarm.

Gradually life settled down into a new pattern. We shared a school with the local Convent; their pupils had lessons in the morning and we in the afternoon. Being the only real 'junior' in the school my education at that time became sketchy to say the least and it was just a question of whoever

happened to be free trying to find something for me to do. It must have been as irksome for them as it was disjointed for me. We had a long walk to school each day and it was very difficult to get our foster mother to get lunch ready early enough. We always had to run the whole way and even then were invariably late.

At the Convent the windows had all been painted over in a darkish blue which made the corridors all very gloomy and it was very disconcerting to meet a black-clad nun gliding along in the dim light. This was my first encounter with the 'sisters' and not one to endear me to them, though I am sure that they were really quite kind and generous to have had their lives totally disrupted by taking in another school. During the worst of the Blitz we had lessons in the cellars of the school.

At first there was little activity on the war front and happily we were able to have visits from our parents every second week-end (they alternated with the aunt and uncle who insisted on having their share of our time!). We were also fortunate in having close family friends living in Brentwood and they were very generous in opening their home to us all for these visits and at Christmas time. But despite this I was desperately home-sick. Life with the Brooks family was very strange - the parents were great whist players and frequently went to local halls to spend an evening playing. We could not be left at home, nor could we be included in the activity inside the hall, so we were taken along and left to play outside until the whist drive was over - long, tedious hours, often extremely chilly, which I recall with a sense of having been abandoned. Occasionally Rona would manage to scrape together enough pocket money to buy a bottle of Tizer which we would share, trying to cheer ourselves up. Staying 'outdoors' seems to have been a major part of our lives at that time, for when we got home from school we were not allowed to go into the house until tea-time - my sister did most of her homework then sitting on the back doorstep.

Then the war began in earnest - I have an abiding memory of everyone being in a state of appalled shock when France fell. Our French teacher, who loved Paris, was devastated at the news of the occupation of that city. All I could do was to keep looking up into the sky - being convinced that at any moment parachutists would literally drop on top of us.

My sister and I both recall one incident extremely vividly. One summer afternoon when the Battle of Britain was at its height, she was walking home from school when the air raid warning sounded. She looked round and realised that she had forgotten to collect me from my part of the school and started to run back for me. This had happened before several times - even before the war - so I was not surprised when it happened in Brentwood. She had always been responsible for taking me to school and bringing me home again; a chore she did not care for one bit.

On this occasion people in the street pulled her into a shop doorway and pointed up to the sky where a dog fight was in full swing between German and British planes - she kept saying "I must get back to my sister" but no-one would allow her to move and forced her to keep under cover. Meanwhile I, as usual, had been patiently waiting in the school cloakroom, knowing that eventually she would remember me and return. There I was found by one of the teachers who took me under her wing until we heard the All Clear.

When my sister came rushing in, she was of course in Great Trouble with the head mistress, though I think the teachers thought her fear had been sufficient punishment. (It did not, however, prevent her from forgetting me again on future occasions!).

The family with whom we were billetted had no air raid shelter of their own but we went to a house a few doors away which had a dug-out in the garden, incredibly damp and unpleasant. Here a most unlikely group of people assembled during raids and fear showed itself in various ways. I do not remember much about this myself but Rona recalls one man who came often to the shelter and who swore profusely. It was the first time she had ever heard language of this kind and she says she has probably never heard worse since.

About this time our foster father went away to work in a munitions factory in Bristol and the house began to fill up with yet more people. A couple came to live in one room downstairs and another girl from our school also appeared: we all three shared a bedroom and from this moment life began to liven up a lot. We had known her for years as she lived quite close to us at home. We used to dress up and act poems and plays in our room - The Highwayman was our favourite - giggle incessantly and generally break all the house rules, one of us being posted on the landing as lookout. But of course it couldn't last!

One night we looked out of the windows at the back of the house and saw that the sky was totally red and we realised that this was London burning. We had no idea of how our parents were faring, or whether they were in the midst of it, and this remains as one of my most vivid memories of the war. We were as a family very lucky, and everyone survived. On going through my mother's possessions after her death in 1983, I came across a letter I had written to her at that time saying how 'fritened' I was and would she please come to see us. (Just shows I wasn't getting many spelling lessons at that time!).

Mr Brooks was injured in a raid on Bristol and came home - and we were told we would have to leave. Our next door neighbour offered to take us in but on this occasion our foster mother really did take care of us, for the lady in question was of very doubtful morals and had a procession of late night visitors (mostly in uniform). Mrs Brooks contacted our school and told them this so that we should not get drawn in to whatever was going on. One of our teachers, whom we knew from our church at home, took us to live with her and as she was the domestic science mistress, life certainly improved from then on. We stayed with her for just a few months until 13 March 1941, when it was decided that the various parts of our school should be re-united (some girls had been sent to Faringdon and a few had stayed in London) and so we all set off once again - this time to a strange and foreign land - Cornwall.

Meanwhile, while we were away, the rest of the family remained in Forest Gate and what follows from this period I have pieced together from things they told me later.

My father continued to go to his office in Bow, E.3 each day, where he worked as a sales manager for a firm of wine importers. He, my mother and my uncle each undertook fire-watching duties locally and on occasion helped to put out small fires caused by incendiary devices. In addition, my father also took his turn at fire-watching at his firm. This was organised on a rota system and entailed spending all the hours of darkness manning a post on the roof of the building, spotting and dealing with any incendiary bombs which fell in the area. My father, who was more at home in a bowler hat and natty pin-stripe suit, also trained as a 'special' fireman, undergoing instruction in fire-fighting techniques with hoses and ladders etc. to enable him to tackle more serious incidents. I fear that when he talked about this in later years we used to laugh at him, but now I can see that at that time it was quite a difficult and public-spirited thing for him to have done.

There was, of course, little opportunity at that time for the firm to import much wine, but the company opened their cellars to local people to sleep there during the worst of the air-raids - in much the same way as the London underground stations.

As the Blitz gained in ferocity many bombs - both incendiary and high-explosive - fell in our area and many buildings were damaged or destroyed. Land mines too began to be dropped and one of these fell on our school in Stratford. I attach an account of this taken from our school magazine of 1941, which also mentions that the King and Queen visited the site. It describes far better than I could do what actually happened.

In Forest Gate our house needed some protection - against blast if nothing else - and the standard strips were criss-crossed over the windows. In addition, the French windows at either end of our big room were boarded up and sand-bags were piled up in front of them. Later on, during the time of the flying bombs, all the family slept in that room, but during the Blitz everyone slept upstairs until a raid began. Then everyone descended to the coal cellar. Coal was not in plentiful supply and did not take up much room, so the cellar had been tidied out and furnished as best as possible with chairs and cushions. In addition to the family, neighbours began to to come to seek shelter each night and another unlikely group of people assembled. One very elderly lady, a Miss Harding who was about 90 at the time and who had not been out of her house for many years, was among those who came. My father used to go to fetch her from her home and help her down the rather steep wooden stairs to the cellar. She was a lady of some substance and great dignity - who in normal circumstances would not have mixed socially with many people in the road, though she was not unfriendly. Each time she came to the cellar she was dressed immaculately, as if for making a social call or taking afternoon tea, and once established she would sit upright and seemingly unflustered throughout the raid. Many people rather let their hair down on these occasions, but she always maintained

her dignity. She survived the war and was immensely grateful to my parents for their concern for her. As a 'thank you' she gave my mother a beautiful blue cache-pot, which is probably of considerable value, and which is still in the family and much treasured.

Many of the raids lasted throughout the night - and at intervals one or other of the family would decide that they detected a lull in the proceedings, or that the planes above were 'some of ours' and would dash upstairs to make tea or large jugs of cocoa. In retrospect I am sure that the 'lulls' were imaginery and they just decided to take a chance.

We were fortunate and our house suffered very little structural damage* though many others in the same and adjoining roads were badly hit or completely flattened. Nor were any of our family injured, which seemed rather like a miracle in those days. One of the first land mines which fell in the area landed on or near a trolley bus in Leytonstone. The bus totally disintegrated with all its passengers - one of whom was known to our family and who just disappeared on her way home from work that day.

*(The roof of the verandah however was never the same again!).

III

The journey to Cornwall was the longest any of us had ever made by train and it seemed that it would never end. In those days the very name 'Cornwall' conjured up some mysterious and distant land and when we finally arrived that is how it seemed. The greatest excitement of the journey was going over the Tamar via Brunel's railway bridge at Saltash, which of course was a totally new experience for us all. Subsequently we crossed back and forth numerous times and although it was always a part of the journey we looked forward to, it never again had quite the same edge. Once across, the train seemed to slow its speed and we chugged through lots of small stations (or halts) - though of course there was nothing to tell us where we were. All the railway stations had removed their name boards "in order to confuse the enemy"! We stopped briefly at one little place and asked a passing porter where we were. "Parr", he replied, rolling his 'r's - and that was the first time I had ever heard a truly Cornish voice - we had to ask him several times to repeat the word but were little the wiser by the time the train drew out.

Our arrival in Truro was very different from that in Brentwood eighteen months before. Billets had been arranged in advance and we were taken immediately to the home of an immensely kind Cornish couple, Edith and Will Clemence who lived close to the railway station (so we straight away had a link with home). They had two sons who had not taken kindly to the idea of having two girls in the house and had stated firmly that they had no intention of cleaning our shoes for us! But, apart from teasing me a lot, constantly stealing my hair ribbons and hanging them from the light shades, they were good fun and we all got on well.

It took us some time to adjust to the voices - and in their turn the Cornish people referred to us as "they furriners from up London", but we gradually

settled down and were soon saying 'tis entin down rain' with the best of them. Will Clemence, who worked for the railways, had a wonderfully rich Cornish voice and to hear him say "I dare say I'm the 'andsomest man in Cornwall" in that accent was a source of constant delight to us. He hailed from Redruth which he always referred to as 'druth - considered by him to be Mecca. Whenever he had a half day off or any free time at all, his invariable remark was "Think I'll go down 'druth a bit". He could not understand my total dislike of and inability to drink tea and was constantly heard to mutter "Ow the turk doant ee av a cup of tea maid"?. I can still hear him saying it now, though he died many years ago.

Edith Clemence was born in Hayle and Christmas 1941 (the first we had spent without a visit from our parents) was spent with her family there - walking on Boxing Day over Hayle Towans when they were utterly bleak and deserted. She, too, was a superb cook and in her home we learnt the delights of saffron cake, heavy cake, potato cakes and of course genuine Cornish pasties. No commercially made pasty - however good - has ever come up to that standard and certainly I've never been able to make them myself - it must be handed down in the Cornish genes! Bread and splits were delivered to the door by the baker, Mr Tonkin, with a horse-drawn van. The splits were then spread with home-made jam and cream (the cream was skimmed from the milk each day by scalding it very slowly on the kitchen range - a magical process to me). Our foster brothers (Leslie and Vivien) vied with each other to fit a whole jam/cream covered split into their mouths at one go without being caught.

School now took on a much more organised pattern. We had been invited to share a building with the Truro County School for Girls and had our own classrooms, assembly times etc. though at first I went into a class in the County School in order to prepare for the Scholarship exam. For the first time since leaving London I had proper lessons with girls of my own age - and perhaps because of this return to 'normality' I don't have many vivid recollections of this time - two things only really spring to mind. The first is having to march out of assembly each morning to a variety of stirring tunes played on a gramophone and of these the R.A.F. March Past made the most impact. The other is my absolute misery at being confronted with one of the County School's great traditions - the annual Wild Flower competition. Specimens of one hundred wild flowers were arranged in jars in the science lab. and we were each issued with pencil and paper and required to identify them. Not many wild flowers grew in London E.7!

In contrast to Edith Clemence's superb cooking, school dinners were pretty disgusting - though in those days this was a fairly general complaint, not just confined to our particular school. Meat which was mostly fat and gristle, cabbage over-boiled to the point of colourless disintegration, bullet hard potatoes, followed by rice pudding made with water not milk. I can't really believe that despite all the catering difficulties of rationing it had to be that bad. We were constantly being exhorted to "remember the starving children of Europe". At that time we couldn't believe that anyone would want to eat what had been offered to us, though later I realised that for so many it would have been luxury. To cap it all we had to do the washing up on a rota system. In the days before washing-up liquid and with only washing soda to add to the water, cleaning dirty plates and cutlery for about 200 was a horrible task and we literally dreaded the days when it was our turn.

(My sister's recollection of the food is nothing like so bad as mine).

Apart from that I recall school days as being reasonably happy and I seem to have got through the exam safely, without really knowing what it was all about. On thinking about those days and writing this account, my impression is that I appear to have gone through life in a total fog of ignorance. I don't think children were anything like as much aware of the world then as they are now - or perhaps it was just me drifting around in my own incomprehension.

In due course one of the Clemence boys left school and took a job which involved him in shift work - so he really needed a separate room, and reluctantly Edith Clemence said we would have to look for a new home. As if by magic that very day our headmistress said a family had contacted her and would be happy to take two girls, so my sister immediately spoke up and we arranged to move.

It apparently seemed to Edith Clemence that we had been eager to go, though that was far from the case, and certainly Rona always felt that there were some hurt feelings - though she was only trying to do her best for us. However, we remained in touch with the Clemence family - Will Clemence eventually became station master at Lostwithiel and for many years he would always hold up the train to have a chat with us when we were passing through. We visited them there and later in Hayle over the years. In 1986 my sister and I went to tea with Edith a few months before she died and I hope and believe that by then she knew how very much we valued all she and her husband had done for us.

Our new family were the Davidsons - Stanley and Isobel - again, with two sons though these were much younger than the Clemence boys, Robin six and Anthony two. They hailed originally from Northumberland but Stanley had come south with his job as a land valuer for the Local Authority. Once more we were welcomed most kindly and made to feel at home, and thus began an association which persists to this day. Isobel had been a domestic science teacher and the household was run on amazingly efficient lines, she too of course was a splendid cook so once again we had fallen on our feet. In this household too the 'cleaning of shoes' was significant, though in a different way. Each night before going to bed, Stanley cleaned everyone's shoes for the next day, lining them up according to size in front of the fire guard before the kitchen Rayburn (a new and ultra modern piece of equipment to us, as also the albeit rather primitive washing machine which Isobel used).

In addition to everything else, Stanley had something almost unbelieveable in those days - a car! And, because of his job which took him out and about in the county, he also had a petrol allowance. Strictly against the rules, he would sometimes take us out with him, though we had to duck down in the back seat until we were well clear of the town. This way we saw much of Cornwall at its beautiful, unspoilt best - vast empty beaches, wonderful scenery and a profusion of wild flowers; in time I even learnt some of their names! Banks and banks of primroses, especially along the railway lines - and we hardly ever met another vehicle, or so it now seems. What a privilege for us. The School too took us on a variety of outings so we

got to know the county well - the most memorable was Sports Day 1942 which was held on a totally deserted Perranporth beach. I still love Cornwall and though I regret much of what has been developed there since the war, some things are still the same. One thing that impressed me, almost on Day 1 of our arrival in Truro, was the vast quantity of daffodils on sale in the shops - many just displayed in great buckets outside on the pavement, particularly in River Street. I had never seen them in such profusion and today it is just the same if one is lucky enough to be there in early spring.

Visits from parents now were few and far between of course - though they did brave the journey whenever they could. In theory, travelling by the 'Cornish Riviera' train it took seven hours, but with diversions to avoid bomb damage, packed with troops and with no restaurant car, it could take any number of uncomfortable hours. My mother had always been a very poor traveller, but these journeys cured her of that and enabled her to face many long and exciting trips abroad in years to come. Of course we had very few air raids down in Cornwall and the only one I can recall took place during one of these parental visits, when we all had to dive into the shelter which also served as the dining room table around which every meal was taken. My parents must have thought a bomber had followed them down from London.

Then suddenly we were allowed to go home for school holidays - my recollection is that Christmas 1942 was the first one. Of course we were delighted to be going home, if only for a short while, but we were very shocked at all the bomb damage around us and the sudden realisation of how close our house had been to the devastation.

Going back to Cornwall in time for the new term was very hard - saying goodbye to parents all over again - but we did this a couple of times, cheering with joy as we crossed the Saltash Bridge on the way to London, and groaning when we reached that point on the return journey. But really we had little to complain about: our foster parents were kindness itself and had assured our mother and father that if the worst happened and we were left homeless or parent-less, they would adopt us as their own children.

Early in 1943 Cornwall became a 'restricted zone' where troops (mostly American) and equipment were building up and being prepared prior to D Day. No-one could enter the zone without a permit so it seemed that even during their holidays our parents could not get down to see us. Nothing daunted, they set about finding a way and discovered that if they registered as FARM LABOURERS they would be allowed to travel. Stanley Dvaidson had a farming acquaintance who was prepared to take them on, so forms were filled in and permits obtained for them to work on a farm a few miles outside Truro. They arrived one evening and Stanley found enough petrol to take them out to the farm - where they were made welcome, albeit in rather primitive conditions, for the farm had no electricity, only oil lamps, and no indoor sanitation .... They turned to, however, and spent the next two weeks hoeing turnips by day and walking to Truro and back most evenings just to see us. It was many years later that I stopped to consider just what an odd experience this must have been for them and what reserves of stamina they must have had to draw on for those long days of physical labour in the sun. At the time we tended to treat it as a great joke - rather as we had done with Dad and the fire-fighting - but it must have been tough going for two confirmed townies.

By September 1943 it was considered safe enough for us to return to London for good - the Blitz being more or less over and only occasional bombers getting through. So we and the school packed up, said our farewells and left for home - grateful to those who had looked after us so kindly but delighted to be leaving nonetheless. By then the numbers on our school roll had fallen dramatically and at one time we were down to about 40 pupils, so few had joined during the evacuation period. It was in danger of being closed completely, but managed to survive I'm sure through the indomitable will and devotion to duty of our headmistress and the staff. One brick had been salvaged from the wreck of our old school and this we all signed as being the 'Pioneers' of the school's future. (Shades of 'Cold Comfort Farm' and the Pioneers O, though it was long after that that I made the connection). The song 'Pioneers, O Pioneers' became our school song, though I doubt it remains so nowadays. (In fact, I believe the school itself no longer exists, nor does Truro County School).

We always hoped and believed that we should have a new building on the site of the old, but local politics seems to have played its part and such a prime site was much coveted. Nowadays a hideous ziggurat style building, which I believe belongs to the local council, stands there. I think of the old school every time I drive past and find it hard to forgive the powers that were who did not keep their promise.

Once more we shared a building - another Convent, St Angela's in Upton Lane, Forest Gate. At least we had an area which was completely our own so the school could carry on reasonably smoothly - apart that is from the many hours we spent under our desks or in the shelters as bombing got under way again. The building was badly damaged by flying bombs in June 1944 and lessons were disrupted once more.

That summer I returned to the Davidsons while the flying bombs were at their height. My parents wrote to ask whether they would have me and were much comforted to receive an immediate telegram "Put her on the next train", so back I went, alone this time as my sister had left school and was at University.

Following the D Day landings, Stanley Davidson had pinned up a big map of Europe and each day we stuck in flags to mark the progress of the various armies. I remember the 'Falaise Gap' being an area of uncertainty for quite a long while, and also how exciting it was to hear the news as each town was liberated.

Once more my parents undertook the journey to spend their summer holiday down in Cornwall - travelling had not improved much as there were so many troops on the move, crowding into the trains. They arrived early one morning from the overnight train, to be greeted by a telephone call from my sister saying that our grandmother had had a fall and was very ill. Stopping only for a cup of tea, my father turned round and caught the next train home, leaving my mother to follow a couple of days later to arrange a funeral. I think their account of these days would have been much more dramatic than mine, but like so much else, I left it too late to get them to write it all down.

Back to school again and another move to yet another shared building - only a short distance from the Convent. Here we had just about settled into these very different premises, when in January 1945 a rocket (V2) fell close by and damaged the school badly. The Science Lab., Art and Domestic Science rooms were almost wiped out and we lost a lot of equipment - some of which had been salvaged with great effort after the original land mine. At that point we were 'adopted' by a school in Kidderminster who raised money for us to replace all the games equipment and crockery we had lost. Several of us wrote to the girls who had adopted us and I retain a friendship to this day with my pen-friend, who turned out to be the most inveterate letter-writer of all time. We still correspond and meet up from time to time.

Finally it was all over. Eventually we got a school building to ourselves and life gradually got back to normal. It was quite difficult to adjust to living at home permanently and I know it must have been just as hard for parents to pick up the threads of family life again and make up for the missed years. However, I don't think those experiences did us any harm and I certainly look back with gratitude to all the families who took care of us and whose friendship we have retained and valued ever since.