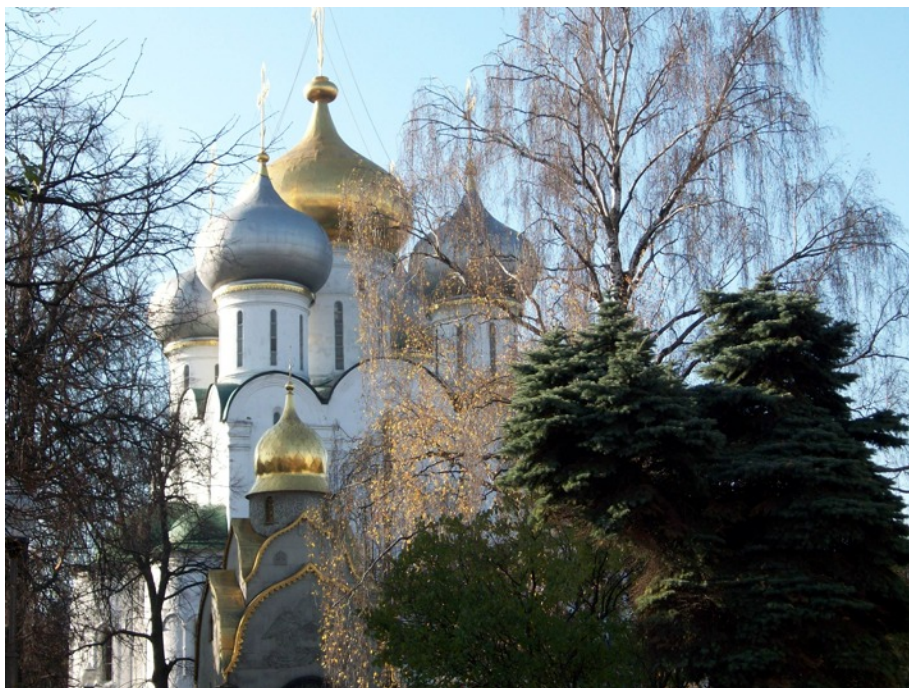


Derby & District Organists' *Registered Charity No. 510567* *Association*



A Russian Finale for 2011 *Chairman's Evening presented by Prof. James Muckle*

At the November meeting, our Chairman demonstrated that AGMs will never be the same again! Having reviewed a very successful 2011 programme of events for the DDOA and despatched the 'business' in a total of less than 45 minutes, James went on to fascinate us with the sights and sounds of worship in the Russian Orthodox tradition. The prelude was a mix of onion domes, clanging bells, glorious

frescos, sumptuous vestments and a profusion of rich furnishings and precious icons, all of which seem to be in huge contrast with the greyness one associates with the former Soviet culture. As a frequent and much travelled visitor to Russia, James conveyed many challenging impressions of Russian liturgy which he described as 'overwhelming' with 'so much going on' in services, not least the music. All-night vigils for vespers



DDOA Events 2012

15th February *(See page 6)*

Talk by Prof Philip Olleson:
Samuel Wesley's Organ Music.
St John's Heritage Centre, Belper. 7.30pm

19th March *(See page 6)*

Tom Leech (Leeds Cathedral):
Interpreting 19th century French Organ
Music on an English Organ.
St Werburgh's, Spondon. 7.30pm

23rd April

Laurence Rogers: 'A world of sound
through the eyes and ears of Physics'
Melbourne Parish Church. 7.30pm

19th May

Daytime visit to organs in Wollaton,
Nottingham

19th June

Annual dinner at Willersley Castle

24th July

Evening visit to local organs including Ed
Stow's rebuild at Holbrook.

22nd September

Annual full day outing, including Leeds
Cathedral and Armley PC

13th October

Members' Recital evening, Sudbury PC

21st November

Chairman's Event and AGM

Concerts & Recitals

Saturday 11th February, 12 noon

Lunchtime organ recital by Martyn Noble
at St. Andrew's Church Swanwick
Tickets £3.50 including light lunch,
available at the door or in advance by
calling 01773 605291 or contacting
w.butt291@btinternet.com

In 2009 Martyn became the Organ
Scholar at Liverpool Cathedral as well as
playing live on Radio 3 and Radio 4 and
has performed in Norwich, Chester and
Winchester Cathedrals and York
Minster. Martyn has invited requests for
his programme and if anyone has a
particular favourite – or favourites – we
will be happy to pass these on (in good
time please so that he can practise).

Photos: Cathedral Our Lady of Smolensk, Moscow
Festival at Sergiev Posad

and services lasting two hours or more are challenging thoughts, but considering that the spoken word is rare and that priests intone continuously, one has to marvel at their stamina and musical ability. Needless to say, an ability to sing is a compulsory qualification for clergy!



Rublev frescoes at Vladimir

However, such an emphasis on singing goes hand-in-hand with a total absence of musical instruments. There appear to be zero prospects for organists in the Russian Church! Thus church choirs are essential. These are usually small professional bodies, regularly tasked with providing two hours of music for a single service. It follows that there exists an enormous repertoire of church music which at present is generally unknown to Western ears. James gave us a taste of a daunting musical tradition stretching over several centuries. We sight-read a selection of scores, we heard excerpts from CDs and sang along with some of the recordings. Apart from a very small number of well known Russian composers we were baffled by the dozens of unfamiliar names of church composers. Our scores included works by Balakirev, Alyabiev, Bortnyansky, Tchaikovsky, Arkhangel'sky and L'vov. All the music we heard and tried was very singable, always sonorous, often slow, but with exciting outbursts. Although so much was new to our ears, this was a wonderful repertoire and, by general consent, we were very



Cathedral of the Nativity, Suzdal

grateful to James for introducing it to us, and with such enthusiasm.

If you missed the meeting, for a real treat, try this link to 'Lord, let me know mine end' (Psalm 39) by Bortnyansky (1751-1825):

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCKSkLAo6V4

Laurence Rogers

Recent Events

Composers' Workshop presented by Paul Fisher

Paul is an Anglican Priest and enthusiastic amateur musician. His early study of the organ and interest in composition led to him being offered a sabbatical from his parish to study for a year at the Birmingham Conservatoire of Music. Paul's compositions are deeply felt and have an improvisational quality conveying his fascination with the journey a melody can take especially when based on modal or "folksy" idioms.

Paul explained his interest in Germanic notation, (B.A.C.H etc) and the way in which past composers have exploited a 'musical spelling' method of generating tunes (Durufle, Alain, Liszt). He has dedicated several of his pieces to friends and acquaintances in this genre, and the Bradford Organist Association i.e. "B.O.A." have been presented with a specially commissioned work. Others of his compositions have been based on plainsong melodies and folk tunes. His compositions for voice always pay particular attention to the rhythmic pattern of syllables and aim to be accessible to singers without too many awkward intervals, at the same time preserving interest in each choral line. Paul illustrated his talk with rather brief examples on the organ, together with privately produced CDs.

The presentation concluded with an open forum, in which Laurence Rogers presented his setting of the Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus dei which have been sung at Melbourne for a number of years. Finally Tom



Paul Fisher with DDOA member, Trevor Morris

Corfield played two pieces from the set he composed for a recital in August at Derby Cathedral; each was a portrait of a personality at the cathedral; he combined the use of musical spelling and quotations of favourite anthems.

Altogether an evening of encouragement to us all, and our thanks to Paul Fisher, and also to our own David Shooter who kindly provided the technical support.

Terry Bennett

Historic Derbyshire Organs Update - Ed Stow

Perhaps I may be allowed to follow up on Rodney Tomkins's article in the July/August Newsletter, having undertaken (as readers may recollect from a brief statement in these columns rather more than two years ago) to produce an update to his book. From the silence which has ensued members may, understandably, have inferred that this was just another good intention that had come to nothing. I did in fact make a first attempt at it straight away (January 2009), and have tried ever since to keep it up to date, in as far as I become aware of developments, with the help of further contributions from Rodney himself. But what to do with it? It is hardly a saleable publication in itself, but at 20-odd A4 pages is too lengthy to be simply handed out 'gratis' to everyone.

I am glad now to be able to report that your Editor has succeeded in deciphering my obsolete disc and after much tedious tweaking is now in a position to send the current update electronically to anyone who would like it. Hard copies can also be supplied at a small charge - contact him if you are interested. Needless to say it will only be meaningful to those who have a copy of Rodney's original book (which is still available from Scarthin Books, Cromford www.scarthinbooks.com)

For the purposes of the present article, may I first comment on Rodney's list of losses, which perhaps makes slightly grimmer reading than it might. To the best of my knowledge the 16 organs can be divided up as follows:

Definitely lost, i.e. known to have been destroyed, perhaps subject to some salvage of pipe-work and other useful parts:

Blackwell Methodist,
Over Hackney SS Philip & James
Derby, Mackworth Methodist
Derby, Brook Street Wesley Chapel
Pinxton Wharf Methodist
Handley, St. John the Baptist PC

Probably lost, but full facts not yet discovered (can any member provide details?):

Alfreton Wycliffe URC
Chesterfield, Assemblies of God
Codnor, Waingroves Methodist
Matlock, Farley Hill Congregational
Denby, Street Lane Methodist (sold to a private purchaser - subsequent fate unknown).

To these may be added
Derby, St Maksymilian Kolbe RC

Still in existence:

Derby St Augustine - still *in situ*, minus the detached console.
Barrow-on-Trent St Wilfrid and Long Eaton Trinity Methodist - sold for use abroad.
Belper Convent - relocated at East Leake (Notts.) RC.
Middleton Main St. Methodist - relocated at Derby Grammar School.

Additionally:

Peak Dale Holy Trinity

Relocated at Litton Christ Church (parish of Tideswell)

Additional losses:

In addition, the following, which existed at the time that Rodney's book was published but were not known to the author, have to be added to the list of losses:

Ashbourne URC:

Keates 1899 2-man - mostly used in rebuilt organ at Osmaston St Martin

Cliff College Chapel, Calver:

Keates 1908 2-man - relocated to Norfolk

New Houghton Christ Church:

Kirkland c.1897 1-man - destroyed after closure



Ashbourne URC

Historic Addenda

Against all the negative developments, a more encouraging note can be struck in relation to organs qualifying for inclusion which were not listed in the book, and to those which have received sympathetic, and in some cases long-awaited, attention since 1998.

The following had eluded the author's researches up to the time of publication:

Buxworth St James:

Alexander Young c.1897 2-man

Dove Holes St Paul:

Richardson c1890 2-man

Elmton St Peter:

Brindley 1865 2-man

Melbourne Baptist:

Porritt c1890 2-man

Monyash Methodist:

Nicholson & Lord 1870's (probably) 2-man - now in store at Mackworth St Francis awaiting restoration and installation

Historic migrants:

A few qualifying organs have been moved *into* the county:

Alkmorton St John:

Wadsworth 1-man - from Mayfield Methodist

Allenton Methodist:

Conacher 1883 2-man from Castleton (Cardiff) Masonic Temple

Cromford Methodist:

Nicholson & Lord 1906 2-man - from Sedgley Tipton Street Methodist

Also the "Clatworthy" 1-man - currently in temporary use at **Derby St Osmund**



Melbourne Baptist

Renovations

As might be expected, in 13 years a proportion of the instruments listed have received at least a cleaning and overhaul, sometimes accompanied by minor alterations. The following list includes only those which the present writer considers to be of prime historic status and which have been subject to more than just routine attention:

Cromford, St Mary:

Hill 1859/Lloyd 1861 - full restoration with tonal and mechanical alterations aiming to restore Hill ethos (E R Stow)

Derby, St John:

Willis 1875 + later alterations - full restoration with further alterations aiming to restore Willis-like character (E R Stow)

Hayfield, St Matthew:

Kirtland & Jardine 1849 + later additions (the oldest 2-manual church organ in the county): restored without alteration (E R Stow)

Elmton, St Peter:

Brindley 1865 - full Lottery-funded historic restoration by Goetze & Gwynn

Matlock Bank, All Saints:

Forster & Andrews 1886: restoration by Henry Groves & Son

Middleton, Holy Trinity:

Lloyd - historic restoration by T W Fearn & Son

Morton, Holy Cross:

Brindley 1864 - full restoration inc. reinstatement of mechanical pedal action (E R Stow)

(Thanks to Rodney Tomkins for photographs. *Editor*)

The Gradians - Belper's Organ Building Family (Part 3) - Rodney Tomkins

The American Connection

It is a known fact that, by the end of the eighteenth century, Belper already had one American connection in the person of Samuel Slater who, while a trainee manager with mill magnate, Jedediah Strutt, had clandestinely left for America, taking with him sensitive industrial knowledge. Having in 1797 established a large textile mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, he is now generally regarded as a Father of the American Industrial Revolution.



Samuel Slater.

The youngest son of Joseph Gratian's first marriage – Joseph (junior) – made a similar move in 1857, though seemingly without the secrecy that had surrounded Slater's departure nearly seventy years earlier. Other than that he was baptized in Belper in 1830, having probably been born in 1829, we know nothing about his early years. It seems, though, that a certain "James" Gratian was active in Belper musical performances during the 1850s. Could it be that Joseph adopted the alternative name to avoid confusion with his father? Neither are we clear why (family disagreement perhaps?) he should, in 1857, leave his home town and his father's business to emigrate to United States.

Joseph's earlier use of the name, James, is further substantiated in "North American Organ Builders", by D. Fox, which clearly refers to him as "James Gratian 1829-1897, son of Joseph Gratian, who emigrated to America in 1857. However, by the time he had established his business at Alton,

Illinois, in 1858 he was quite definitely Joseph again. Here I can only continue with a quotation from the firm's lavishly illustrated 1922 publicity brochure, "The Gratian Organ Builders" :

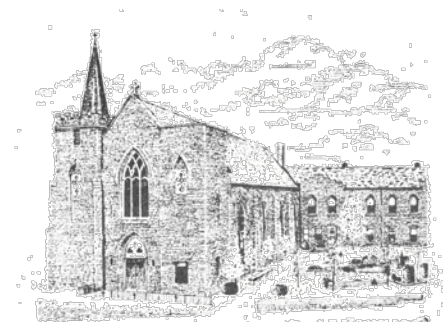
"Joseph Gratian established an enviable reputation as an organ builder during the trying years before and after the Civil War. He had the true pioneer spirit to cope with the difficulties of the time, the lack of machinery, the limited knowledge of the organ, and the chaotic financial conditions attending a war".

The same brochure also claims that his great-grandfather (i.e. Richard Gratian, who married Mary Yates in 1751) was "eminent in the musical world of England from 1740 to 1760" – a statement for which we have as yet no substantiating proof. This may, of course, just be an early example of American "spin-doctoring", perhaps to lend a bit of "Old World" prestige to the firm!

The Gratian Organ Builders of Alton, Illinois

The twenty seven years old Joseph Gratian (Junior), having arrived in America in 1857, was shortly to be joined from Belper by his young bride-to-be, Rachel Hartson (or, more likely, Hartshorn), two or three years his junior. He managed to set up his organ building business in Alton, Illinois, in 1858 and was promptly awarded a contract for that town's newly completed St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where he was also appointed organist. His earliest surviving instrument, it has "spiky" Gothic casework, typical of many early 19th century English examples (including the surviving Buckingham/Gratian organ at Awwsworth). The Alton instrument originally was of one manual, but it appears to have been rebuilt or enlarged by Gratian in 1871, still with mechanical action. The firm's 1922 brochure gives no specification, but the photograph clearly shows two manuals of 56 note compass; flat jambs with 10 drawstops on the left and nine on the right; the 30 note pedalboard appears to be flat and straight. Joseph's grandson, Warren Burke Gratian, who pumped the organ as a boy, recalled that it "contained mutations and mixtures". The only

further comment about it is that it continued (i.e. in 1922) to give good service. Since it now features on the Organ Historical Society of America database, we can assume that it still exists in its 1871 form.



St Paul's, Alton

From available information, all the organs built by Gratian appear to have been one or two manual instruments with mechanical action. An early specification – that of the c1875 tracker organ in St. Patrick's R.C. church in Kansas City – could, apart from the inclusion of the popular American "Melodia" stop, be by one of the English builders of that date. It is worth quoting the stop-list in full:

GREAT	
<i>Violone</i>	16
<i>Open Diapason</i>	8
<i>Melodia</i>	8
<i>Gamba</i>	8
<i>Dulciana</i>	8
<i>Principal</i>	4
<i>Flute Harmonic</i>	4
<i>Twelfth</i>	3
<i>Fifteenth</i>	2
<i>Mixture IV</i>	
<i>Trumpet</i>	8
SWELL	
<i>Bourdon</i>	16
<i>Diapason</i>	8
<i>Stopped Diapason</i>	8
<i>Salicional</i>	8
<i>Violin</i>	4
<i>Chimney Flute</i>	4
<i>Mixture III</i>	
<i>Cornopean</i>	8
<i>Oboe</i>	8
PEDAL	
<i>Double Diapason</i>	16
<i>Bourdon</i>	16
<i>Unison couplers</i>	
<i>Manuals</i>	58 notes
<i>Pedals</i>	27 notes



St Paul's Church, Alton, Illinois

By the mid-1870s Gratian was using terraced stop jambs and, in 1879, he patented a crescendo mechanism which consisted of a divided pedal, the right half controlling swell shutters, while the left half operated a stop-crescendo by which a cam, operated by the pedal, drew the sliders in succession. The two halves could be used independently, or together to produce a *sforzando* effect. His earlier organs had (as we see above) well developed choruses, but later ones began to reflect the taste for more foundational ranks, often with fanciful names. While remaining faithful to mechanical key actions, Joseph was, towards the end, experimenting with a pneumatic stop action.



Public Square, Alton

In 1896 Joseph Gratian suffered severe head injury from flying debris during a tornado. He never fully recovered and as a result suffered a stroke later that year. He died at his home in Alton on 11 June 1897 and was succeeded by his son, John William Gratian. His wife, Rachel, survived him until at least the 1920s.

For much of the information in this (and following) sections I am indebted to the following sources:

E. T. Schmitt, "The Organ : an encyclopedia" (Routledge, 2006)

Dr. Robert E. Coleberd, Jr., "Joseph Gratian A Pioneer Builder in the West" (in "The American Organist" journal, August 1965)

After Joseph

Joseph Gratian, son of the Belper organ builder, born in that town in 1829, died in Alton, U. S. A. in 1897. He was succeeded in the business by his son, John William, who was by now not only an experienced organ craftsman but also an accomplished organist. Born in St. Louis in 1861, he spent several years in Europe studying organs by the most notable builders prior to marrying a Canadian woman, Kate Warren, in 1890. He appears to have been particularly skilled in organ voicing. Following his father's death in 1897 the firm was styled "Gratian Organ Co."



Third Street, Alton

John William died in 1933, passing the business on to his son, Warren Burke Gratian (born 1891), following re-establishment of the firm in 1922 as "Gratian Organ Builders". Another son of John William also in the business, but only for a short while, was Elwood (or Edward) Gratian.

John William's particular interest was in the application of electricity to organ building. The early 20th century period saw the firm's development of what they called the "Gratian Electro-Pneumatic" system. This is described in the 1922 brochure as having the "improved Gratian type magnet and balanced valve, which is an exclusive and unique feature of Gratian construction". The general external appearance of the instruments is of rows of bare pipes above lower casework, with projecting or detached stop-key consoles – all much as we find over here between the wars. The lavishly illustrated brochure unfortunately gives no specification details, but certain press comments are included which allow us a little insight. Two such reports read as follows: "It

has fewer stops than some others, but it has more power", and: "an organ with the equivalent of 20 or 25 stops with an actual use of a much smaller number" – both suggestive of the use of high pressure ranks. Another source comments on their "smoothness of tone". One of the firm's largest organs (location unclear) had 2,413 pipes plus harp and chimes; it also had a small chancel organ. During the 1920s the firm also indulged in cinema organ installations.

Little is known of Warren Burke Gratian's marriage to Doris R----- though it does appear, from reports, that Mrs Gratian was adept at regulating pipework prior to her husband's voicing of the same. They had a son, Joseph Warren Gratian, who was born in 1918 and who died in New York in 2000. He does not appear to have been involved in any way with the organ business.

It seems that the firm, like many, had problems during the Depression. After bankruptcy Warren went to work for various other organ builders, eventually setting up on his own with a small service business in Bunker Hill. He retired from this in 1979 and died in 1980, thus ending the story of Belper's organ-building connection with the States. The business was bought up by the grandly titled "Schneider Orgelbau Werkstatt Inc" of Michigan.

Editor's note:

This is the final instalment of Rodney's history of the Gratiens of Belper. The complete story is now available as a 12-page booklet with colour illustrations. Copies costing £2.00, including postage, may be obtained by post from the editor. Please make cheques payable to Derby and District Organists' Association.

Notice

The Sitwell Singers Vacancy for an Assistant Conductor/Singer

Based in Derby, The Sitwell Singers are looking for an enthusiastic individual to join the group in the dual role as assistant conductor/singer: Further details available from their website www.sitwellsingers.org.uk or the choir secretary Sheila Spilling 01332 840574, pspilling@btinternet.com Auditions will take place on Saturday 14th Jan 2012.

DDOA - Your Association

Role of Chaplain to the DDOA

For over a year now the Association has been discussing the role of Chaplain. Our Constitution requires us to elect a chaplain, who does not, however, serve on the Committee. While DDOA is a secular organization, it is largely made up of members who are interested in the organ as an instrument used in church worship, and this situation is likely to continue. However, the current feeling is that as a constitutional requirement the position of Chaplain is an anachronism. Our present Chaplain, the Rev. John Bland, is unable to attend meetings, but he has stated that he accepts this view, and that if at any time in the future a pastoral need should arise, he would be happy to provide whatever help was appropriate, whether or not he were officially appointed Chaplain. The recent AGM voted to express the opinion that the Constitution should be changed to remove the requirement to elect a chaplain. *Formal notice is hereby given that at the next meeting of DDOA a proposal to this effect will be discussed and the matter decided.*

Organ teachers

As most of us know by now, there is an ever-growing concern about the future of organ playing in this country. The reasons for this need no repetition here but there are plenty of initiatives afoot to try and raise the profile of the organ. These include events organised by local associations like ours, the work of the St Giles Organ School and the RCO to name but a few. It occurred to me the other day that if I were asked who the teachers in our Association were I would be hard pressed to name more than a handful and that seems to me to be a pity. So, could I ask that if you teach the organ and are willing to let that be known, you contact me so that I can compile a list that would be of use to any 'would-be' player. We can then put names on our website. Many Associations already do this and it seems a very simple, obvious step we could take to support national initiatives.

Stephen Johns

Volunteer needed

For our meeting on 19th March, 19 cent. FRENCH ORGAN MUSIC WORKSHOP, the presenter, Tom Leech, has requested the help of a

volunteer to play pieces he will provide for discussion. The standard will probably vary from anything between ABRSM/TRINITY GUILDHALL Grades 4 - 7, so you can pick a piece to suit you and the music will be provided in advance. PLEASE DON'T BE SHY. Contact the Secretary (email and phone below.)

New Committee and Officers

At the AGM held on 22nd November, the following officers were elected for 2012:

Chairman	James Muckle
Vice-Chairman	Denis Littleton
Secretary	Stephen Johns
Treasurer	Chris Darrall
Gift Aid Secretary	Gillian Chatto
Newsletter Editor	Laurence Rogers
Website Manager	David Shooter
Auditor	D. Hall
Chaplain	Revd. John Bland
Committee:	Terry Bennett
	Peter Gould
	Peter Williams

Officers and committee members may be contacted by email:

mail@derbyorganists.co.uk

The Hon. Secretary may also be contacted by telephone 01332 764792.

Forthcoming DDOA Meeting

**The Organ Music of Samuel Wesley
Presented by Professor Philip Olleson
Wednesday 15th February, 7.30 pm at
Belper Heritage Centre**

Philip Olleson is Emeritus Professor of Historical Musicology at the University of Nottingham. In a long and distinguished career in university education he has pursued research interests in music in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His many publications include articles for the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. He is the author of three books on the life and work of Samuel Wesley and of numerous chapters on the Wesley family in scholarly books and journals. As the country's leading authority on Samuel Wesley, we are very fortunate that he has agreed to present our first meeting for 2012.



Items of news or articles for the March/April edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 20th February**, either via e-mail: DDOAnews@gmail.com or by post: Dr Laurence Rogers, 24 St. David's Crescent, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4SS. The Secretary, Stephen Johns, may be reached via mail@derbyorganists.co.uk. Please visit the DDOA Website www.derbyorganists.co.uk for information about Association activities, past editions of the newsletter, photo gallery and many special features of local interest.