

CITATION

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CHURCH

The church was given to Butley priory (Suff.) before 1230, presumably by one of the Stutevilles; Robert of Stuteville gave or confirmed the advowson to the priory in 1262. (fn. 1) The priory appropriated the rectory and, although Gilbert Dedham of Overhall tried to present in 1333, retained the advowson of a vicarage until the Dissolution when both rectory and advowson passed to the Crown. (fn. 2) A grant to Edmund Bonner, bishop of London, in 1558 was presumably nullified on his forfeiture in 1559, and the Crown retained the advowson, annexing it to the duchy of Lancaster. (fn. 3) A separate lectureship, established c. 1577, was endowed between 1699 and 1705. In 1908, by Order in Council, the alternate right of presentation was conveyed to the lectureship trustees. (fn. 4) The trustees and the duchy of Lancaster were joint patrons in 2000.

The vicarage, which in 1562 comprised the small tithes and a house with 1 r. of land in High Street, was worth 3 marks in 1254, £1 10s. in 1291, and £10 0s. 2d. in 1535. (fn. 5) In 1650 the yearly value of the glebe, presumably the house and garden, was £10, and that of the vicarial tithes £34. (fn. 6) In 1699 the trustees of the will of William Clarke, dean of Winchester, augmented the vicarage with £30 a year, stipulating that, if there was no vicar approved by the parish, the money should go to the lecturer. (fn. 7) In 1734 the reduced income of £13 was divided between the vicar and the lecturer. (fn. 8) The vicar seems to have received the whole benefaction in 1814, when the total value of the vicarage was £232 15s. (fn. 9) In 1835 the average income was only £179 gross, £170 net, (fn. 10) and in 1839 the poverty of the living caused the vicar to consider resigning. (fn. 11) When the tithe was commuted in 1841 a rent charge of £130 was assigned to the vicar. (fn. 12) By 1851 the gross income of the living had risen to £192, although the tithe rent charge had fallen to £120. (fn. 13) Before 1887 the ecclesiastical commissioners granted to the living the dividends on £1,355 19s. 3d. In 1897 £3,333 6s. 8d. of the endowment of the rectory of Methley (Yorks. W. R.) was transferred to Dedham, raising its value by £100 a year. (fn. 14)

The vicarage house was recorded in 1562. (fn. 15) In 1610 it had a hall with a parlour and chamber at one end and a shop and chamber at the other; to the east, extending in front of the west end of the church, was a row of four shops with upper rooms and another, smaller, house. In the mid 18th century all the buildings were let to tradesmen, and in 1810 they were let as three houses. (fn. 16) The house was rebuilt in 1815, in a vaguely gothic style, to designs by M. G. Thompson. (fn. 17) The red-brick house, of two storeys with attics at the rear, was extended to the south-west before 1841 and to the south-east in the late 19th century.

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The Puritan lectureship established c. 1577 was supported by voluntary contributions. (fn. 18) By the 1690s the impoverished parish found it hard to continue the payments, and William Burkitt, lecturer and vicar 1692-1703, raised an endowment by public subscription and established a lectureship trust. By his will, proved in 1703, Burkitt settled on the trustees his house, later Lecture House, and land in Dedham. In 1705 his trustees completed the purchase of the impropriate rectory from Mary, widow of Anthony Bokenham, and her son-in-law, Humphrey Prideaux. (fn. 19) In 1699 the trustees of the grammar school made a new settlement of their land in Great Bromley assigning the income to the lecturer if there were no scholars from the school at St. John's College, Cambridge. By 1833 the income was regularly paid to the lecturer. (fn. 20) From 1834 attempts were made to unite the lectureship and the vicarage, and in 1908 a Charity Commissioners' Scheme and an Order in Council provided that, after the resignation of the then lecturer, the lectureship should be held by the vicar for the time being. The lecturer resigned in 1918, and Lecture House was sold that year. (fn. 21) The income of the lectureship was used to augment the vicar's stipend, raising it above the diocesan minimum until the 1970s, when the original trust was deemed to have failed. Under a Scheme of 1979 the income of the lectureship was to be used to pay pensions to former lecturers, to pay fees to the lecturer or his delegate, to augment William Burkitt's educational charity, to maintain the church, or to pay the vicar's expenses, provided that not more than one third of the income might be used for the last two purposes. (fn. 22)



Figure 30: Dedham church and street in the early 19th century

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The old Lecture House appears to have been a late-medieval courtyard house whose main range, of two storeys with attics, was rebuilt or remodelled in the earlier 17th century. It was replaced in 1872 by a new house on the same site. (fn. 23)

Vicars are known from 1367. (fn. 24) In 1373 the vicar had a licence to visit Rome. (fn. 25) Six of the nine vicars between 1450 and 1550 had degrees in theology or canon law, and two others, Bartholomew Judy (1445-79) and Thomas Webb (1516-23) were probably members of prominent Dedham families. (fn. 26)

A St. Nicholas's guild, endowed by John de la Pole (d. 1492), duke of Suffolk, continued in 1510, when there was a St. Nicholas's light. (fn. 27) The Jesus altar and the altar of St. Mary of Pity may have been a single altar in the north aisle, flanked by statues of Jesus and of St. Mary, as at Long Melford (Suff.); 'Our Lady of Pity' was painted in 1510. In 1523 John Webb left money for a temporary chantry, perhaps at the Jesus altar to which he bequeathed money, and the following year his executor obtained licence for a chantry at the altar of St. Mary of Pity. (fn. 28) The All Hallows before which a parishioner requested burial in 1526 was perhaps a light. (fn. 29) The hermit of Dedham was recorded in 1512, as were priests, presumably chantry priests, in the 1520s and 1530s. The tabernacle of St. John the Evangelist, recorded in 1487, may have been associated with St. John's chapel near Stratford bridge. (fn. 30)

In 1532 three Dedham iconoclasts helped to destroy the Dovercourt rood, and another pulled down a cross and statues in or near a chapel in Stoke park. (fn. 31) Thomas Upcher made his strong protestant beliefs clear in his will of 1539, but William Clark in 1540 and his widow Joan in 1541 both provided for temporary chantries. (fn. 32) About 1542 the churchwardens sold most of the church plate to help build a grammar school and a bridge. They pulled down altars and made a new font to replace the ornate medieval one, but they repaired the organ. In 1552 the church still possessed a vestment, a blue cope, a cross, five 'stained' linen banners, and a pair of organs; a parishioner was looking after a canopy cloth. (fn. 33) The itinerant protestant preacher George Eagles or Trudgeover was at Dedham in 1556, and about the same time another preacher lived at Dedham Heath. (fn. 34) John Worth, vicar from 1541, was deprived of the living in 1555, but was presented again in 1565 on the death of the Marian vicar who had conformed to the Elizabethan settlement. (fn. 35)

The church was served in the late 16th century and the early 17th by a succession of vicars, most of them graduates, who, perhaps because of the growing poverty of the living, stayed only a few years. (fn. 36) Puritan tendencies were clear by 1569 when the vicar, presumably John Worth, did not use the sign of the cross in baptism. His successor, John Keltridge (1577-8) was a noted, orthodox, preacher. (fn. 37) Richard Parker (vicar 1582-90) was suspended and threatened with deprivation in 1586 for failing to subscribe to the 39 Articles and refusing to wear the surplice; he still would not use the surplice in 1589. (fn. 38) In 1590 the Prayer Book was not used and, perhaps between Parker's departure and his successor's institution, services were taken by 'strange ministers'. (fn. 39)

In 1582 Edmund Chapman, the first lecturer, set up a private 'classis' or conference of clergy, attended by up to 16 ministers from surrounding parishes in Essex and Suffolk. Regular meetings were held to discuss matters of doctrine and church discipline. The bishop of London's opposition and the removal or death of many members, as well, perhaps, as accusations of immorality against Richard Parker, its secretary, ended the meetings in 1589. In the 1580s Chapman and

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Parker drew up rules of conduct for Dedham, attempting to enforce such puritan practices as strict sabbath observance, regular attendance at church services and lectures, and monthly communion; they also required all children to be taught to read English. (fn. 40)

Chapman remained lecturer until his death in 1602. His successor, John Rogers (d. 1636), was known as 'roaring Rogers' from the force of his sermons, which drew people from as far away as Ipswich and Cambridge. (fn. 41) In 1607 there was no surplice, and the vicar was accused of administering communion to those who would not kneel. A surplice had been provided by 1618, but in 1630 Rogers and in 1632 the vicar did not always wear one. (fn. 42) Thomas Hooker, then lecturer at Chelmsford, preached between 1629 and 1631, while Rogers was suspended. (fn. 43) Matthew Newcomen, lecturer 1636-62, was one of authors of the puritan 'Smectymnuus' manifesto. At Dedham he was valued as a persuasive rather than a fiery preacher with a gift for prayer. (fn. 44)

Both Newcomen and the vicar were ejected in 1662, (fn. 45) and the church seems to have been poorly served until the institution of Thomas Grey in 1679. (fn. 46) Grey (d. 1692) was a popular preacher, known for his charity, but he seems to have clashed with some farmers whose puritanism and control of the vicar's income had, he believed, made Dedham 'the greatest nursery for faction' in the neighbourhood. (fn. 47) His successor William Burkitt, who endowed the lectureship, wrote books of instruction for his parishioners, as well as a much-used bible commentary. (fn. 48) It may have been either puritanism or poverty which caused the church to need a new surplice and a new communion table in 1705. (fn. 49) For much of the earlier 18th century the church was served by curates, between 1745 and 1759 by Thomas Grimwood, master of the grammar school. (fn. 50) Grimwood's son-in-law, Samuel Newman, was vicar and lecturer 1750-80; his son, T. L. Grimwood, was lecturer 1784-1801, and his grandson, T. G. Taylor, was lecturer 1802-18 and vicar 1809-18. (fn. 51) From the late 17th century to the mid 19th the usual pattern of services was that advocated by Chapman in the 1580s: two Sunday services with the lecture at the afternoon one, another service and lecture on Tuesdays, and holy communion every six to eight weeks. In 1767 there was a service on Friday afternoons before communion services. In 1778 Samuel Newman claimed there were 200 communicants. (fn. 52) In 1851 the vicar reported large, but average, attendances of 500 in the morning and 700 in the afternoon, with 200 Sunday school children at each service. (fn. 53) By 1859 communion was celebrated monthly. (fn. 54) A Sunday evening service was introduced in the 1860s. (fn. 55) C. A. Jones, vicar 1885-1906, was popular in the parish, and developed good relations with the Congregationalists. He took most church services, but the lecturer usually conducted the Sunday afternoon and Tuesday morning services. (fn. 56) The Tuesday lecture was discontinued in 1906 or 1907, but a Tuesday service continued until the lecturer retired in 1918. (fn. 57) A school and mission room at Dedham Heath, given by the lecturer George Taylor in 1858, was used for weekday services until 1978. (fn. 58)

Church life declined towards the end of the long incumbency of F. G. Given-Wilson (vicar 1906-50), but revived under his successor. In the 1950s and 1960s festivals, including the harvest festival, drew large congregations, and the church was used for concerts and for nativity and mystery plays. The vicar then preached special Lenten weekday sermons as something specific to the lectureship. (fn. 59) In 1985 the lectureship trustees started to sponsor four or five special lectures a year. (fn. 60)

The church of ST. MARY (fn. 61) was rebuilt in the later 15th century and the early 16th, creating a tall aisled nave with clerestorey, two storeyed north and south porches, a large chancel, and a tall west tower which has a north-south passageway through the lowest stage. The church is flint-

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faced but all flint surfaces have been rendered except the plinth, elements of the north porch, and the tower, where decorative flushwork is still exposed. Only a burial vault, (fn. 62) fragments of masonry at the west end of the nave, a small part of the former south aisle wall (now within the south porch), the mid 14th-century south door and reset porch opening, and a contemporary pier base re-used in the 19th century for the font, remain from an earlier church.

The design is coherent though built in stages. The chancel was apparently rebuilt in the later 15th century, followed by the six-bayed nave, probably from c. 1491. (fn. 63) The north aisle was added c. 1504, with money bequeathed by John Gurdon, (fn. 64) to match the south aisle's arcade, which has tall piers each with four narrow shafts alternating with deep hollow mouldings. The roofs are largely original, the nave roof resting on wall shafts springing from the arcades. The traceried altar tomb of Thomas Webb (d. 1506), (fn. 65) erected by his son John, stands below the north-east nave window, probably not its original position.

Work was in progress on the tower in 1494, and on its battlements in 1518. (fn. 66) The passage vault bears Tudor roses, portcullises, heraldic shields, and the initials I.W. and T.W. for John and Thomas Webb, with their merchant's mark. The initials I.H., perhaps for a member of the Hawke family, were added later. (fn. 67)

A gallery was built in 1629 and the church was regularly repaired in the 1630s. (fn. 68) In 1684 windows of the 'middle aisle', presumably the clerestorey, and some in the chancel, which had been blocked up, were ordered to be opened and glazed. (fn. 69) Major repairs seem to have been carried out in 1704; in 1717 brick buttresses were built against the south wall, and in 1774-5 the roof was extensively repaired. (fn. 70) Between 1784 and 1789, under the direction of T. Aldis of Woodbridge (Suff.), the church was repewed, and a new, semicircular, gallery was built. (fn. 71) A visitor in 1844 found the gallery ugly and complained that the central pulpit hid the altar. (fn. 72)

The church was restored in 1862-3, to plans by James Mackenzie Roberts, a local architect. (fn. 73) The gallery was removed; the chancel floor was raised, and the Perpendicular-style piscina and sedilia were inserted in its wall. During the work the medieval font, and the 14th-century pier base on which it was later placed, were discovered under the nave floor. (fn. 74) The chancel was re-ordered and repaired c. 1881, apparently to plans by H. Woodyer, but in 1896 the interior of the church badly needed 'judicious decoration'. (fn. 75) By 1866 the tower was so cracked that the bells could not safely be rung, but it was not repaired, under the direction of R. Reynold Rowe, until 1881-2. The clerestorey, aisles, porches, and tower were further repaired between 1886 and 1896. (fn. 76) The chancel was restored, at the expense of W. W. and Sophia Hewitt, in 1909; the work including opening four blocked windows and filling them with stained glass, largely by Kempe and Kempe & Tower. (fn. 77) A choir vestry was created at the west end of the north aisle in 1916. (fn. 78) In 1959 the east end of the south aisle was furnished as a chapel, (fn. 79) and the church was repewed in the early 1970s. Between 1980 and 1990 the roofs, pinnacles, and tower were repaired, the first phase of another major restoration. (fn. 80)

The silver communion cup and paten in the church in 1618, and another cup and paten given by George Dunne of London in 1631, had both presumably been lost by 1784 when the surviving plate was made. (fn. 81) The eight 18th-century bells are hung for chiming. (fn. 82)

The churchyard was extended southwards by c. ¼ a. in 1853, by c. ½ a. in 1882, and by a further c. ¼ a. in 1923. (fn. 83)

FOOTNOTES

1. B. L. Royal MS. 11 C VII, f. 5v.; Feet of F. Essex, i. 246. The grant to Butley may be explained by the marriage of William of Stuteville to Berta, niece of Ranulf of Glanville, the priory's founder: Jones, *Hist. Dedham*, 18; D.N.B. s.v. William of Stuteville; above, this par., Manors.
2. Feet of F. Essex, iv. 220; Arch. Jnl. xc. 189-90; V.C.H. Suff. ii. 96 (where Dedham is wrongly spelled Debenham).
3. Cal. Pat. 1557-8, 400; Newcourt, *Repertorium*, ii. 209.
4. E.R.O., D/CPc 119; for the lectureship, see below, this section.
5. E.A.T. n.s. xviii. 122; Tax. Eccl. (Rec. Com.), 23; Valor Eccl. (Rec. Com.), i. 444; P.R.O., E 337/4/44.
6. Smith, *Eccl. Hist. Essex*, 310.
7. E.R.O., D/P 26/25/10.
8. *Ibid.* D/P 26/25/13; *ibid.* T/P 195/11.
9. Guildhall MS. 9628A.
10. Rep. Com. Eccl. Revenues [67], pp. 644-5, H.C. (1835), xxii.
11. E.R.O., D/DU 261/8.
12. *Ibid.* D/CT 113.
13. P.R.O., HO 129/8/205.
14. E.R.O., T/A 645; *ibid.* D/CPc 77: Order in Council of 1889.
15. P.R.O., E 337/4/44; Guildhall MS. 9628A.
16. Guildhall MSS. 9628, box 3; 9628A; E.R.O., T/P 195/11.
17. Guildhall MS. 9628A; E.R.O., D/P 26/5/1; H. M. Colvin, *Biog. Dict. Brit. Architects* (3rd edn.), 975.
18. V.C.H. Essex, ii. 51. The first lecturer, Edmund Chapman, was in London diocese in 1577, and in Dedham by Apr. 1579: J. Strype, *Life and Acts of John Aylmer*, 36; E.R.O., D/P 26/1/1.
19. E.R.O., D/P 26/25/7, pp. 41, 124; D/P 26/25/12; D/P 26/25/15A; E.R. iv. 58; Dedham ch. mun. room, vol. of transcripts relating to the school etc; above, this par., Manors.
20. E.R.O., D/P 26/25/7, p. 72; D/P 26/25/12; V.C.H. Essex, ii. 540.
21. E.R.O., D/DU 216/8; *ibid.* D/CPc 119; *ibid.* D/Q 23/16/7; E.R. xviii. 44-9; xxviii. 83; C. A. Brooks, *Dedham Lectureship*, 17.
22. Dedham ch. mun. room, Char. Com. Scheme, 1979.
23. Description based on the painting by John Constable, reproduced in Brooks, *Dedham Lectureship*.
24. Newcourt, *Repertorium*, ii. 209; E.R.O., T/A 547/1.
25. Reg. Sudbury, i. 221.
26. Guildhall MS. 9531/6, f. 85; Newcourt, *Repertorium*, ii. 210, which has Indy for Judy.
27. E.R.O., D/ACR 1, ff. 163v., 169; L. & P. Hen. VIII, iv (3), p. 2732.
28. L. & P. Hen. VIII, iv (1), p. 230; P.R.O., PROB 11/21, ff. 43-4; E.R.O., T/G 15; *ibid.* D/ACR 1, f. 169; E.R. xxix. 7.
29. E.R.O., D/ACR 2, f. 195.
30. *Ibid.* D/ACR 1, f. 208v.; D/ACR 2, ff. 183-4, 232, 26IV.; *ibid.* T/G 15; C. A. Jones, *Hist. Dedham*, 45; above, this par., Intro.
31. Davids, *Nonconf. in Essex*, 11-12.
32. E.R.O., D/ACR 3, f. 53; D/ACR 4, ff. 9, 42v., 74v., 160v., 202.
33. E.A.T. n.s. iii. 50; xiii. 167; J. E. Oxley, *Reformation in Essex*, 170.
34. E.R.O., Q/SR 2/15; V.C.H. Essex, ix. 123; Davids, *Nonconf. in Essex*, 53.
35. Newcourt, *Repertorium*, ii. 210; E.R.O., D/ABW 25/180.
36. Pennie, 'Evolution of Puritan Mentality', 47-8; P.R.O., E 337/4/44.
37. V.C.H. Essex, ii. 42; Strype, *Life and Acts of John Aylmer*, 22.

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38. *Second Parte of a Register*, ed. A. Peel, ii. 164; P. Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 223; Emmison, *Elizabethan Life: Ch. Courts*, 221; E.R. xlv. 38-9, 213, 307.
39. Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 364.
40. *Presbyterian Movement in Reign of Queen Eliz.* (Camden 3rd ser. viii), 27-43, 99-100; Pennie, 'Evolution of Puritan Mentality', 53-4, 64-6.
41. V.C.H. Essex, ii. 51; E.R. xxviii. 145; Davids, *Nonconf. in Essex*, 146; Pennie, 'Evolution of Puritan Mentality', 69-95.
42. Guildhall MS. 9537/10; E.R.O., D/P 26/5/1; *ibid.* D/ACA 47, f. 97v.; Smith, *Eccl. Hist. Essex*, 39; Rendall, *Dedham in Hist.* 103.
43. W. Hunt, *Puritan Moment*, 255; D.N.B. s.v. Hooker.
44. V.C.H. Essex, ii. 51; D.N.B.; funeral sermon, copy in Dedham ch. mun. room.
45. Davids, *Nonconf. in Essex*, 380-4; Smith, *Eccl. Hist. Essex*, 392.
46. E.R.O., D/P 26/1/2; Calamy Revised, ed. Matthews, 126.
47. Bodl. MS. Rawl. D 792, f. 15; E.R.O., T/P 195/11; *ibid.* D/P 26/5/1, p. 41.
48. N. Parkhurst, *Life of W. Burkitt (1704)*: copy in E.R.O.; D.N.B.; above, this section.
49. E.R.O., D/ACV 9A, f. 68v.
50. Guildhall MSS. 25752/2; 25753/1; 25755/1; E.R.O., D/P 26/1/3; Dedham Ch. mun. room, MS. book of notes on school etc.: death of William Sherman, schoolmaster and curate, 1721; Brooks, *Dedham Lectureship*, 13.
51. TS. addition to E.R.O. copy of Brooks, *Dedham Lectureship*.
52. Guildhall MSS. 25750/1; 25752/2; 25753/1; Lamb. Pal. Libr., Terrick papers 14; Lowth papers 4; Porteous papers 26; Randolph papers 10.
53. P.R.O., HO 129/8/205.
54. E.R.O., D/AZ 7/1, p. 160.
55. E.R. xviii. 45.
56. *Dedham Par. Mag.* esp. July 1902, Mar., Apr. 1906; E.R.O., Acc. C957 (uncat.), service regs.
57. E.R.O., Acc. C292 (uncat.), statistical returns; Acc. C458 (uncat.), service regs.
58. *Ibid.* D/P 26/8/7; *ibid.* Acc. C292 (uncat.), service regs.; Acc. C957 (uncat.), service regs.; Jones, *Hist. Dedham*, 161-2.
59. E.R.O., Acc. C458 (uncat.), service regs.; Brooks, *Dedham Lectureship*, 20; photographs in ch. mun. room.
60. Advertisements in R. Heinze, *Dedham and the Puritans*, 15-23.
61. Invocation recorded in 1457: P.R.O., PROB 11/4, f. 78v.
62. E.R. xxviii. 139.
63. P.R.O., PROB 11/9, ff. 75, 102v.; above, plate 10.
64. *Ibid.* PROB 11/14, f. 38v.
65. *Ibid.* PROB 11/15, f. 76.
66. *Ibid.* PROB 11/10, f. 162v.; PROB 11/19, f. 52.
67. *Ibid.* PROB 11/15, f. 76; cf. PROB 11/16, ff. 253v.-54; PROB 11/21, f. 43.
68. E.R.O., D/ACA 47. ff. 34v., 97v.; D/P 26/5/1; *ibid.* D/ACV 5, f. 37v.
69. *Ibid.* D/ACV 9B, pp. 58-9.
70. *Ibid.* D/P 26/8/1; 26/5/1; date on buttress.
71. E.R.O., D/P 26/5/1.
72. *Ibid.* T/A 641/4, p. 132.
73. E.J. xxxiv. 12-14.
74. E.R.O., D/AZ 7/1, p. 160; *ibid.* Acc. C292 (uncat.); printed sheet in E.R.O. pamph. box D2; E.R. xxviii. 140.
75. *Ch. Monthly*, July 1895, p. 201; E.R.O., D/CF 18/3.
76. E.R.O., D/AZ 7/1, pp. 160-1; *ibid.* Acc. C458 (uncat.); *Ch. Monthly*, July 1895, p. 201; *Dedham Par. Mag.* 1886-96.

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77. E.R.O., Acc. C292 (uncat.); E.R. xviii. 217-18.
78. E.R. xxviii. 139.
79. Dedham ch. mun. room, faculty 1959.
80. E.C.S. 16 Feb. 1990.
81. E.R.O., D/P 26/5/1; *ibid.* D/ACV 9B, p. 59; Ch. Plate Essex, 207.
82. Inf. from the vicar, the Revd. G. Moate.
83. E.R.O., D/CC 4/1, 34/4, 74/3.