The Official Website of the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation (OCABR)

## **Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation**



Home Licensee DPL Boards Board of Professional Engineers null Surveyors Statutes & Regulations Rules and Regulations (EN)

## 250 CMR 6.00: Procedural and Technical Standards for the Practice of Land Surveying

## By the Division of Professional Licensure

- 6.01: Cadastral, Original and Retracement Surveys
- 6.02: <u>Data Accumulation Surveys (Topographic-Photogrammetric-Utilities-Site-Hydrographic)</u>
- 6.03: Construction Layout Surveys
- 6.04: Title Insurance Surveys
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## 6.01: Cadastral, Original and Retracement Surveys

- (1) Procedural Standards.
- (a) Research and Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- Obtain a legal description of property to be surveyed as well as a legal description of abutting properties.
- 2. Obtain copies of recorded documents affecting the survey.
- 3. Obtain from utility companies, public offices and Land Court copies of available plans, documents and field notes affecting the survey.
- Obtain from known private sources available copies of data affecting the survey.
- 5. Obtain copies of the applicable zoning by-laws that govern in the area in which the property is located.
- (b) Analysis of Research and Pre1iminary Conclusions. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Examine thoroughly and analyze data.
- 2. Test consistency of data by plotting and compiling available record information.
- 3. Form preliminary conclusions as to the completeness of data and reconcile any inconsistencies in the record information.
- 4. Plan procedure for performing the field surveys.
- (c) Field Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Search for physical monuments and weigh their reliability.

- 2. Search for and locate monuments and rea1 evidence which affect the survey.
- 3. Investigate possible parole (oral) and written evidence supporting positions of obliterated control monuments and have affidavits taken if necessary.
- 4. Make measurements to correlate all found evidence.
- 5. Whenever possible, connect the survey with proper adjustments to the Massachusetts Plane Coordinate System.
- 6. Take sufficient check measurements to verify the work.
- Locate physical occupation lines (e.g., fences, hedges, walls, etc.) between adjoiners; make comments on possible age of possession; verify age by parole and written evidence.
- 8. Record all information, preferably in a bound field notebook; incorrect data shall be crossed out not erased.
- 9. Set adequate monumentation for reestablishing property lines.
- (d) Computations, Conclusions and Publications of Results. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Compute and compare field information with record data.
- 2. In the event of substantial disagreement with the work of another surveyor, contact the other surveyor and investigate the disagreement.
- 3. Make interpretation of location in accordance with law and/or precedent, and finalize the establishment of the property lines.
- 4. Make final decisions and computations for determination of existing and new property lines.
- 5. Provide sufficient monumentation to enable the reproduction of the survey on the ground.
- 6. When applicable, e.g., parcels created by new subdivision, furnish the client, in addition to a plan, a metes and bounds description of the land, and make reference to the plan in the description.
- 7. Retain all records that may be used to substantiate conclusions reached in an indexed file.
- (2) Technical Standards.
- (a) Measurements.
- Measurements shall be taken to a precision compatible with the particular problem involved and with the size and geometric shape of the parcel involved.
- 2. All measurements made to establish property lines shall be taken with a minimum precision of 1 part in 12,000.
- All linear measurements shall be taken with a properly calibrated measuring device with a record of calibration maintained for future reference.

## (b) Monuments.

- 1. A substantial number of corners shall be marked with a physical monument and set in a manner providing a degree of permanency consistent with the terrain, physical features and desired use.
- 2. When conditions require setting a monument on an offset rather than at the true corner, the location shall be selected so the monument lies on a line of the survey or a prolongation of such line if possible. Offsets shall not be in fractional feet from the corner unless a physical obstruction affects their location. Offset monuments shall be marked as such.
- 3. It is desireable that monuments have the surveyor's name and license number affixed thereto.
- Monuments shall be witnessed in such a manner that they will be easily discoverable.
- (c) Field Notes. All pertinent information, measurements and observations made in the field during the course of the survey shall be recorded in an appropriate field note form and in a manner that is intelligible to other surveyors. All field notes shall indicate location, street names, client, party members in crew, instrument, measurement device, date and weather conditions affecting measurements.
- (d) Plans. The client shall be furnished a plan drawn to an appropriate scale in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Registers of Deeds dated June 19, 1975, the Massachusetts Land Court, the Subdivision Control Law and Local Requirements.
- A title block containing the political subdivision of the parcel surveyed, the
  owner's name, date, scale, meter and foot bar scale and name and address
  of the firm or surveyor responsible for the survey shall be shown. Revisions
  shall be noted near the title block with reference number, date, description
  and initials of the responsible surveyor.
- 2. The locus shall be referenced to the nearest physical monumentation. If necessary, a vicinity map shall be provided.
- 3. Meridian arrow and its origin shall be indicated.
- 4. All pertinent bearings, dimensions and areas shall be indicated. Source of information shall be shown for recorded data.
- 5. All monuments, whether found or set, shall be noted on the plan and identified as to character.
- The relation of all monuments to the property lines and corners shall be noted.
- When a planimetric or topographic feature controls the location of a line or point found or being created, the relationship of the feature to the line or point shall be shown.
- 8. Names of locus owners and abutting property owners shall be shown.

- 9. Sufficient data shall be shown on the plan to allow the retracement of all the created lines and points.
- 10. Parcels of land containing two acres or less shall not have a mathematical closure error of more than 0.03 feet. Parcels of land containing more than two acres shall not have a mathematical closure of more than 0.05 feet. Any parcel of land which has an irregular boundary shall have a closing tie line or lines in the general vicinity of said irregular boundary.
- The Registered Land Surveyor's seal, signature and date shall be affixed to the plan.

# 6.02: Data Accumulation Surveys (Topographic-Photogrammetric-Utilities-Site-Hydro-graphic)

- (1) Procedural Standards.
- (a) Research and Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Determine the purpose of the survey, the specific items of data to be accumulated and the degree of completeness and accuracy necessary.
- 2. Obtain from public agencies, Land Court, and Utility Companies copies of available deeds, maps and plans pertinent to the survey.
- 3. Obtain the available description of monuments referencing the horizontal and vertical datums upon which the work is to be based.
- (b) Analysis of Research and Preliminary Conclusions. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Examine thoroughly and analyze data.
- 2. Test consistency of data by plotting and compiling available record information.
- 3. Reconcile the data for any inconsistencies in the record information.
- 4. Plan procedure for performing the field surveys.
- (c) Field Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- Search for and verify monuments referencing horizontal and vertical datums.
- Establish, adjust and monument necessary control lines to which data accumulation surveys are to be referenced.
- 3. Take sufficient measurements to verify the work.
- 4. Extend survey a reasonable distance beyond the limits of the project to include any physical characteristics that may affect the locus.
- Record all information, prefereably in a bound field notebook; incorrect data shall be crossed out, not erased.
- 6. Plane table sheets may be used in place of field notebook.

- (d) Computations, Conclusions and Publication of Results. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Make any reductions and compilations necessary.
- 2. Make necessary computations to verify correctness of measurements.
- 3. Evaluate and edit collected data.
- 4. Prepare in an appropriate form the results of the survey in a clear concise manner to minimize misinterpretation.
- (2) Technical Standards.
- (a) Measurements.
- Measurements shall be taken to a precision compatible with the particular problem involved and with the size and geometric shape of the parcel involved.
- 2. All measurements made to establish property lines shall be taken with a minimum precision of 1 part in 12,000.
- 3. All linear measurements shall be taken with a properly calibrated measuring device with a record of calibration maintained for future reference.
- 4. Vertical.
  - a. Whenever possible, elevations shall be referenced to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 or some other locally recognized datum.
  - b. For the purpose of establishing bench marks, level loops shall close to a minimum accuracy of .05 feet times the square root of the length of the level run in miles.
  - A minimum of two permanent bench marks shall be established on each site, and their locations and elevations shall be shown on the final plan.

## 5. Topographic.

- a. Measurements shall be taken with a precision compatible with the detail being located.
- Linear measurements shall be taken to the nearest hundredth of a foot when locating such features as property lines, monuments and buildings when it is necessary.
- c. Linear measurements shall be taken to a precision of 1/40th of the plan scale when locating planimetric features e.g. poles, manholes, curbings, pavements, etc.
- d. Stadia measurements shall be taken to the nearest foot.
- e. Horizontal angles read in Stadia Surveys shall be taken to the nearest minute.
- f. Vertical angles shall be taken to the nearest minute of arc.

- g. Vertical measurements shall be taken to the nearest hundredth of a foot when locating such cultural features as building floor elevations, manholes, curbings, pipe inverts, pavements, etc.
- h. Vertical measurements shall be taken to the nearest tenth of a foot on natural ground, water levels, etc.
- (b) Monuments. The control lines or points to which the topographic surveys are referenced shall be marked with physical monuments set in a manner providing a degree of permanency consistent with the terrain, physical features and purpose of the survey.
- (c) Field Notes. All pertinent information, measurements, and observations made in the field during the course of the survey shall be recorded in an appropriate field note form and in a manner that is intelligible to other surveyors. All field notes shall indicate location, street names, client, party members in crew, instrument, measurement device, date and weather conditions affecting measurements.
- (d) Plans. The client shall be furnished the results of the survey in an appropriate form e.g., plans and sketches, cross-sections, diagrams, tabulations, etc. as follows:
- A title block containing the political subdivision of the parcel surveyed, the owner's name, the date, the scale, the name and address of the firm or surveyor responsible for the survey shall be included. Revisions shall be noted near the title block with reference number, date, description and initials of the responsible surveyor.
- 2. The locus shall be referenced to the nearest physical monumentation. If necessary, a vicinity map shall be provided.
- 3. A statement describing the survey technique used to accomplish the work (i.e., "This map was prepared by photogrammetric methods." "Topography by transit stadia method," etc.) shall be noted.
- Identification of the horizontal and vertical datums to which the work is referenced and specific descriptions of the monuments used to establish the reference shall be included.
- 5. Meridian arrow and its origins shall be indicated.
- 6. If property boundaries are required all property line bearings, dimensions and areas with sufficient notations to identify their source shall be provided.
- 7. All physical monuments, whether found or set, shall be noted on the plan and identified as to character.
- Sufficient information for all control lines or points to which the data accumulation surveys are referenced shall be shown to allow retracement of the work.
- 9. Any compiled data of an informational type shown shall indicate the source of the data and to what degree the information was verified.

- 10. The Registered Land Surveyor's seal and signature shall be affixed to the plan.
- 11. When the presentation consists of more than a single document, all material furnished shall be adequately indexed and cross-referenced.

## 6.03: Construction Layout Surveys

- (1) Procedural Standards.
- (a) Research and Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Obtain from the client the approved specifications and plans setting forth the project for which the layout survey is to be conducted.
- 2. Obtain from known private and public sources available copies of data affecting the project.
- Determine appropriate number of control points to be established and the relationship of said control points to construction lines, grades and offset grades.
- (b) Analysis of Research and Preliminary Conclusions. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Examine thoroughly and analyze data.
- Test consistency of data and bring any observed inconsistencies to the attention of the client.
- 3. Form the preliminary conclusions.
- 4. Plan the procedure for performing the construction layout.
- (c) Field Investigation and Layout Survey. The surveyor shall:
- Search for and verify monuments, lines or objects indicated by the construction documents as the intended references for the projects horizontal and vertical datums.
- 2. When appropriate, establish, adjust and monument control points and lines necessary as intermediate to the final layout surveys.
- Establish final layout control monuments in proper relationship to construction lines and grades.
- 4. Take sufficient check measurements to verify the work satisfactorily.
- 5. Record all information in an appropriate field note form.
- 6. Immediately bring to the attention of the client any inconsistencies disclosed by the survey or by examination of the plans.
- (d) Computations, Conclusions and Publication of Results. The surveyor shall:
- Make necessary computations to verify the correctness of measurements.
- 2. In the event of the discovery of any inconsistencies or disagreements with the work of others, notify the client in writing of the specific inconsistency or

- disagreement and the authorized corrective measures that were taken, if any.
- 3. If requested, prepare a plan or appropriate report showing the results of the survey.
- 4. Retain all records that may be used to substantiate conclusions reached in an indexed file.
- (2) Technical Standards.
- (a) Measurements.
- 1. Measurements shall be taken with a properly calibrated measuring device to a precision compatible with the construction tolerances.
- 2. Measurements shall be recorded and shown on the plan or report to a number of significant figures representative of the precision of the work.
- (b) Monuments.
- Construction layout monuments shall be of a type and character and set in a manner providing a degree of permanency consistent with the terrain, physical features and intended use.
- 2. Sufficient monuments and offset information shall be provided to enable the user to check the accuracy of any points or lines established therefrom.
- Monuments shall be witnessed in a manner that shall be easily
  discoverable. Any stakes that show offsets and/or cut and fill data shall also
  show sufficient information to identify the horizontal position of the
  referenced point.
- (c) Field Notes. All pertinent information, measurements and observations made in the field during the course of the survey shall be recorded in an appropriate field note form and in a manner that is intelligible to other surveyors. All field notes shall indicate location, street names, client, party members in crew, instrument, measurement device, date and weather conditions affecting measurements.
- (d) Presentation of Data. The client shall be furnished with the results of the survey in an appropriate plan, if requested, as follows:
- The client's name, the date of field work, the surveyor's file number and name, the address, the signature and registration number of the surveyor responsible for the work. Revisions shall be noted near the title block with reference number, date, description and initials of the responsible surveyor.
- 2. A location description of the project referenced to title description and political subdivision, or geographic location and, when appropriate, the specific description of the constructed facility surveyed, the identification of the construction documents used and a statement whether or not approved and the date of the latest revision shall be included.

- 3. Sufficient information to reference the layout to the construction documents shall be provided.
- 4. Identification of the horizontal and vertical datums on which the layout is based and specific description of the monuments used shall be noted.
- 5. North arrow and scale shall be included.
- Horizontal dimensions and directions shall include sufficient notations to indicate the source, such as, As per plans (Plans) Calculated from data shown on plans (Calc. Plans).
- All pertinent monuments identified as to character, with a notation whether found or set. Origin of found monuments shall be shown. When there is no available reference, this shall be so stated.
- 8. Sufficient information for all layout control lines and points to allow the easy retracement of the work shall be noted.
- Any discrepancies or inconsistencies between the construction documents and the layout as surveyed with statement of the surveyor's authority for deviating from the construction documents shall be noted.
- Reports prepared shall be signed by the supervising Registered Land Surveyor and the surveyor who performed the field work. The supervising Registered Land Surveyor shall affix his seal to the report.
- 11. Index and cross reference when the presentation consists of more than a single document shall be included.

## 6.04: Title Insurance Surveys

- (1 Procedural Standards.
- (a) Research and Investigation. The surveyor shall:
- Obtain a legal description of the property to be surveyed as well as a legal description of abutting properties. A title report shall be obtained by the surveyor from the client if available.
- 2. Obtain copies of recorded documents affecting the survey.
- 3. Obtain from utility companies, public offices and Land Court, copies of available plans, documents and field notes affecting the survey.
- Obtain from known private sources available copies of data affecting the survey.
- 5. Obtain copies of the applicable zoning by-laws that govern in the area in which the property is located.
- (b) Analysis of Research and Preliminary Conclusions. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Examine thoroughly and analyze data.
- 2. Test consistency of data by plotting and compiling available record information.

- 3. Reconcile the data for any inconsistencies in the record information.
- 4. Plan procedure for performing field survey.
- (c) Field Surveys. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Reconnoiter the area, recover existing monumentation and note all physical evidence of easements and encroachments affecting the site.
- 2. Establish control and make all necessary locations.
- Whenever possible, connect the survey with proper adjustments to the Massachusetts Plane Coordinate System.
- 4. Take sufficient check measurements to verify the work.
- 5. Record all information in appropriate field note form.
- (d) Computations and Publication of Results. The surveyor shall:
- 1. Compute and compare field information with record data.
- 2. Make final determination of property lines, easements and encroachments.
- 3. Prepare a plan showing the result of the survey.
- 4. Prepare a Surveyor's Report.
- (2) Technical Standards.
- (a) Measurements.
- Measurements shall be taken to a precision compatible with the particular problem involved and with the size and geometric shape of the parcel involved.
- 2. All measurements made to establish property lines shall be taken with a minimum precision of 1 part in 12,000.
- All linear measurements shall be taken with a properly calibrated measuring device with a record of calibration maintained for future reference.
- (b) Monuments.
- Unless specifically excluded from the contract or modified by agreement with the client, a substantial number of corners shall be marked with a physical monument and set in a manner providing a degree of permanency consistent with the terrain and physical features. If no monuments are set, a statement attesting to this fact shall be added to the plan.
- 2. When conditions require setting a monument on an offset rather than at the true corner, the location shall be selected so the monument lies on a line of the survey or a prolongation of such line if possible. Offsets shall not be in fractional feet from the corner unless a physical obstruction affects their location. Offset monuments shall be marked as such.
- It is desireable that monuments have the surveyor's license number affixed thereto.
- 4. Monuments shall be witnessed in a manner that will be easily discoverable.

- 5. All traverse points and monuments set shall be tied with a minimum of three tie points.
- (c) Field Notes.
- All pertinent information, measurements and observations made in the field during the course of the survey shall be recorded in an appropriate field note form and in a manner that is intelligible to other surveyors. All field notes shall indicate the locations, street names, client, party members in crew, instrument, measurement device, date and weather conditions affecting measurements.
- (d) Plans. The client shall be furnished a plan, suitable for recording and drawn to an appropriate scale showing the following:
- A title block containing the political subdivision of the parcel surveyed, owner's name, date, scale, a meter and foot bar scale and the name and address of the firm or surveyor responsible for the survey shall be included. Revisions shall be noted near the title block with reference number, date, description and initials of the responsible surveyor.
- 2. The locus shall be referenced to the nearest physical monument. If necessary, a vicinity map shall be provided.
- 3. Meridian arrow and its origin shall be indicated.
- 4. The perimeter as wel1 as the interior lines of a subdivision must contain all the data necessary to establish the correctness of the mathematical figure represented by said lines: i.e., all angles must be given directly or by bearing or by azimuths; minimum elements of curves must be shown, i.e., radius and arc length. The locus shall be tied by a distance to the nearest street intersection where conditions and layout permit. Distances along a highway line from the surveyed premises to the nearest highway monument must be shown, if available. Parcels within a larger tract must be related at least to one of the exterior lines.
- 5. Names of abutting owners as ascertained from the latest tax list must be shown on all plans.
- The character of all evidence of possession along the boundary 1ines, e.g., fences, walls, buildings, monuments, blazed trees, or otherwise, must be stated and the location of same shown in relation to reference or record description lines.
- 7. The character and location of all buildings upon the locus must be shown and their location referred to the boundary. Street numbers must be shown where available. Easements of all kinds, e.g., roads, brooks, drains, utility lines, etc., on or across the property must be shown.
- 8. All buildings and fences on abutting land within four feet of the property line must be shown, and all encroachments of eaves, cornices, blinds, etc., must be noted.

- 9. The nature, character, location of all building walls, independent, party or otherwise, at or near a boundary line must be shown. If a building on the locus has no independent wall but used the wall on the adjoining premises, this condition must be shown and explained. The same requirements apply when conditions are reversed. All structural appurtenances and projections, e.g., fire escapes, bay windows, windows that open outward, flue pipes, stoops, areas, steps, etc., encroaching by or on abutting property or on abutting streets must be indicated and the extent of such encroachments or projection.
- 10. The area or areas of the locus shall be shown.
- 11. The location of street lines shall be shown. Where streets and lots have not been properly defined by monuments or where monuments have been erroneously set or where record data and field measurements do not correspond, the nature of the discrepancies must be described and the possible affect of these discrepancies defined.
- 12. The Registered Land Surveyor's seal and signature shall be affixed to the plan and the Surveyor's Report.

## 6.05: Mortgage Loan Inspections

- (1) Procedural Standards.
- (a) Research and Investigation.
- 1. Obtain legal description(s), copies of recorded plans and documents affecting the inspection of the property.
- (b) Analysis of Research and Preliminary Conclusions.
- 1. The surveyor shall analyze and reconcile record information in order to plan field inspection procedure(s).
- (c) Field Inspection.
- 1. The surveyor shall identify or establish sufficient control from which reliable measurements can be made to locate improvements to the tract(s).
- (d) Computations and Publications of Results. The Surveyor shall:
- 1. Compute and compare field information with record data.
- Establish the relationship of improvements to the property lines with sufficient accuracy for the purpose of the inspection.
- 3. Prepare a plan showing the results of the inspection.
- (e) If the property lines cannot be sufficiently reestablished to identify possible encroachments, the surveyor shall recommend to the client that a property

survey be performed under the Standards governing Cadastral Original or Retracement Surveys.

- (2) Technical Standards.
- (a) Measurements. Measurements shall be taken to a precision compatible with the particular problem involved, the size and shape of the parcel involved and the particular detail being located.
- (b) Field Notes. All pertinent information, measurements and observations made in the field during the course of the inspection shall be recorded in an appropriate field note form and in a manner that is intelligible to other surveyors.
- (c) Plans. The client shall be furnished a plan entitled "Mortgage Inspection Plan" drawn to an appropriate scale showing the following:
- A title block showing the political subdivision of the parcel being inspected, the date, the scale, the name and address of the firm or surveyor responsible for the inspection shall be included.
- Location of tract boundary with relation to nearest street intersection or other suitable reference available to the layman shall be noted. If necessary, a vicinity map shall be provided.
- 3. Meridian arrow and its basis shall be indicated.
- 4. Boundary lines of the tract with deed or record plan data shall be noted.
- 5. Improvements to the tract(s) with proper offsets to permanent and accessory structures shall be shown with sufficient accuracy for the purpose of the inspection.
- Existing record easements and existing aboveground utilities requiring an
  easement (main pole lines, etc., but not house service lines) and any
  surface evidence of underground utilities requiring an easement, such as
  manholes, inlets and headwalls shall be noted.
- The relationship of the improvements to the property lines shall be shown by measurement with a precision compatible with the particular problem involved.
- 8. Recording data of description of subject property shall be included.
- A note shall be placed as to whether the property being inspected is affected by a Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development or successor.
- The Registered Land Surveyor's seal and signature shall be affixed to the plan.
- 11. All plans prepared under this section of the regulations shall be suitable for filing as an instrument with a recordable deed at the Registry of Deeds.

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## 6.90: Appendix A

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ways and specific repairs thereon

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#### PLAN REGULATIONS

- 1. Plan sizes shall be a minimum of 8½" x 11" and a maximum of 24" x 36".
- Plans being presented for recording shall be on linen or polyester film, single matte with a thickness of .004 mils, and must have an opacity so as to allow consistent diazo and microfilm reproduction.
- All plans shall be prepared using a compatible ink with excellent cohesiveness which will produce a permanent bond and result in a plan with long-term durability.
- 4. Linen or polyester reproduction shall be accepted for recording provided they contain original signatures and comply with the other requirements for the recording of plans.
- 5. Each plan shall have 3/4" borders.
- 6. The minimum letter size on plans presented for recording shall be \_".
- 7. Each plan presented for recording shall include a graphic scale.
- 8. Each plan shall have an area reserved to receive planning board recitation or contain a surveyors certification as per St. 1966 c. 380.
- 9. Each plan shall have a 3½" square reserved for Registry use.
- 10. Each plan must contain a certification clause signed by the preparer stating that he/she has conformed with the rules and regulations of the Registers of Deeds in preparing the plan.

#### II. SUPPLEMENTAL STANDARDS

- 1. Land Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Manual of Instructions
- Classification, Standards of Accuracy and General Specifications of Geodetic Control Surveys - National Geodetic Survey, NOAA

- 3. Definitions of Surveying and Association Terms, American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
- 4. Standards for the Practice of Surveying, American Congress of Surveying and Mapping (ACSM)

## **REGULATORY AUTHORTIY**

250 CMR 6.00: M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 81D through 81T.