

The Crystal and Molecular Structure of a Spiro Triterpane Extracted from Crude Petroleum

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The crystal and molecular structure of the triterpane 1(10→5)-abeo-3β-methyl-24β-nor-25α-18-α-oleanane, C₃₀H₅₂, has been determined by three-dimensional X-ray analysis. The compound, which crystallizes in the monoclinic system, space group *C*2, possesses a novel spiro configuration of the *AB* ring junction, a feature not hitherto found in known naturally occurring triterpanes. Part of the structure was determined from a Patterson synthesis, which revealed the orientation of four chair rings *trans*-fused *B*-*E*, and the rest of the molecule was deduced by trial and error methods. Trial structures were refined by least-squares structure factors followed by Fourier and difference syntheses to confirm or reveal new atomic sites. The final *R* index for the carbon atoms only is 0.149.

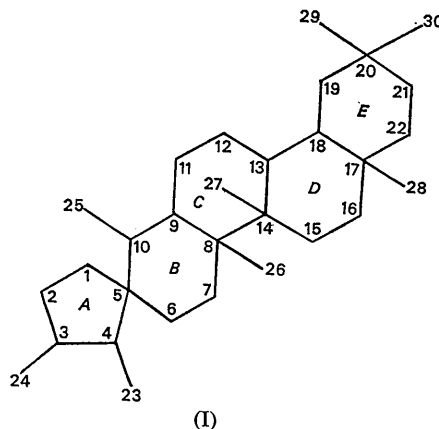
Introduction

It is commonly held by petroleum chemists and geologists that at least part of crude petroleum has a biological origin. Support for this theory is provided by the optical activity which has been observed in certain petroleum distillates. Hills & Whitehead (1966) have reported upon distillates, boiling in the range 340–550°C, from a number of crude oils with a particular emphasis on a Nigerian crude oil.

From their work they have shown by gas-liquid chromatography, high resolution mass spectrometry and nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometry that crude oils from different sources contain hydrocarbons belonging to the pentacyclic triterpane series C_nH_{2n-8}. Further work on several of the isolated compounds has shown them to be optically active and therefore they must contribute to the observed optical activity in the distillates.

Five compounds of sufficient purity and quantity for comparative examination with known triterpanes have been isolated from a Nigerian crude oil, and the results indicate that they are all skeletally related to naturally occurring triterpenoids through steps which involve removal of the oxygen-containing functional groups, acid isomerization and hydrogenation. All the compounds are fully saturated and as only small (milligram) quantities have been isolated, the introduction of a heavy atom either chemically into the molecule or by co-crystallization with a heavy atom solvent has not been attempted. However the positive identification of the molecular structure of these compounds could be useful in the greater understanding of the origin and formation of crude petroleum. To this end the structure determinations of these compounds have been attempted; of the five compounds so far isolated, the molecular structures of three have been determined. The determination of the remaining two is also being undertaken. This paper describes the structure of one of them, that labelled *E* (Hills &

Whitehead, 1966) which has been named 1(10→5)-abeo-3β-methyl-24β-nor-25α-18-α-oleanane (I).



(I)

Crystal data

Triterpane *E* crystallizes in the monoclinic system as thin transparent plates with the plate face (001), and with principal edges parallel to the *b* axis and [110]. The optic sign is positive as determined from an interference figure on the (001). The crystal density was obtained by flotation in aqueous potassium iodide solution. The cell constants were calculated by extrapolation of successive orders of the principal rows from zero-layer Weissenberg photographs about the principal axes using Cu *K*α and Cr *K*α radiations.

Triterpane *E*, C₃₀H₅₂, M.W. 412.407 (*C*=12), m.p. 260°C.

Monoclinic, space group *C*2, absences *hkl* for *h*+*k* odd.

$$a = 11.055 \pm 0.005 \text{ \AA}$$

$$b = 7.766 \pm 0.005 \text{ \AA}$$

$$c = 30.03 \pm 0.01 \text{ \AA}$$

$$\beta = 96^\circ 44' \pm 5'$$

$$U = 2560.4 \text{ \AA}^3$$

$$D_m = 1.066 \text{ g.cm}^{-3}$$

$$D_x = 1.070 \text{ g.cm}^{-3}$$

$$Z = 4$$

$$\mu (\text{Cu } K\alpha) = 5.1 \text{ cm}^{-1}$$

$$F(000) = 928$$

Optical data

The plate face of the crystal gave an interference figure with the positive acute bisectrix nearly perpendicular to it. The intermediate refractive index β was measured and another index α' close to the lower index α . The shape of the crystal prevented a measurement of γ . The interaxial angle $2V$ was also measured on a universal stage. The values obtained using the mean NaD line are

$$\alpha' = 1.559 \pm 0.001$$

$$\beta = 1.567 \pm 0.001$$

and $2V = 54.3^\circ \pm 0.1^\circ$ corrected for the refractive index of the glass hemisphere.

Experimental

The intensity data were recorded from a crystal of approximate dimensions $0.3 \times 0.2 \times 0.01$ mm on multiple-film equi-inclination Weissenberg photographs, about the b axis. Using Cu $K\alpha$ radiation, intensities were estimated visually by comparison with a calibrated scale. Initially a total of 898 independent hkl reflexions were measured from the zero to the fourth layer about the b axis and brought to an approximate common scale by comparison with $0kl$ and $hk0$ reflexions about the a and c axes and with hhl reflexions measured from the zero-layer photograph about $[1\bar{1}0]$. After correction for the Lorentz-polarization effect these limited data were used to solve the structure but later a larger set of data was collected, including the layers for $k=5$ and 6, with much extended exposures. This set, which contained 1727 reflexions, was corrected for the usual Lorentz-polarization effect and also for spot shape (Phillips, 1956). No correction for absorption was made to either set of data as μ is only ~ 5 . The scale factor and an overall temperature factor were obtained from a Wilson plot.

Determination of the structure

The difficulties inherent in solving structures of molecules entirely composed of light atoms especially in non-centrosymmetric space groups and particularly when the stereochemistry is unknown presented a daunting prospect. However, certain features of the diffraction pattern proved helpful in establishing the position and orientation of a large part of the molecular skeleton, although as will be described later these dominant features proved to be a hindrance in the use of superposition methods.

The evidence provided by high resolution mass spectrometry which gave an accurate molecular weight

of 412.406 and the presence of eight methyl groups per molecule as determined by nuclear magnetic resonance strongly indicated that the molecule must be pentacyclic with a formula of $C_{30}H_{52}$ and must therefore be a triterpane. The melting point of 260°C is high and is exceeded by only one other known triterpane, namely gammacerane (m.p. 300°C) (Hills, Whitehead, Anders, Cummins & Robinson, 1966). These facts led to the belief that triterpane E might be closely related to gammacerane and a large number of trial structures were investigated for molecules possessing five fused six-membered rings. When the spiro configuration in ring A , a feature not hitherto reported in naturally occurring triterpanes, was revealed, it came as a result of the steady elimination of possible atomic sites.

The $N(z)$ intensity statistics test (Howells, Phillips & Rogers, 1950) yielded a non-centric distribution for the three-dimensional and $0kl$ sets of data but gave a distribution lying between the centric and hypercentric cases for the $h0l$ set of data. The choice of space group $C2$ was therefore endorsed since the enantiomorphic space groups Cm and $C2/m$ could also be ruled out on packing considerations. The curve for the $h0l$ data suggested that the molecule was lying on an apparent false centre of symmetry with each half of the molecule having approximately the same arrangement, as indeed the final solution shows.

The Patterson map was calculated on sharpened and unsharpened data using a sharpening function based upon $1/f^2$ for carbon. This function approximated to a quadratic expression in $(\sin^2 \theta)$ and since the original short data did not extend beyond $\sin^2 \theta = 0.5$ where the weight of the function was about 50, no undue ripple caused by series termination effect was observed.

Inspection of the Patterson map showed numerous peaks along a line nearly parallel to the c axis at $u \sim 0$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ indicating the line of the length of the molecule. Furthermore the distribution of the peaks showed that the section at $v=6/20$ was almost identical with that at $v=0$ and that the sections at $v=3/20$ and $9/20$ were similarly related. Also the peaks in the section $v=3/20$ could be made coincident with those in the section $v=0$ by a small translation parallel to the c axis. A dominant peak in this latter section was readily identified as one of the C-C bonds of about 1.5 \AA and together with another large peak of about equal weight on the v axis in the $6/20$ section and other substantial peaks within 3 \AA of the origin it was established that the molecule did indeed possess a skeleton of fused rings. From the weights and position of these peaks it was possible to deduce that the molecule possessed four such fused rings and that at least three were in the all-chair all-*trans* configuration with the mean plane of the rings practically parallel to the b axis. The resolution of the Patterson map was such that it was possible to say that there existed in the molecule nine C-C distances of the type C(6)-C(7), ten distances of the type C(6)-C(10) and five axial vectors of 1.54 \AA . Numerous other vectors were identified, which while

confirming the arrangement of four fused rings, did not disclose the orientation of the fifth ring.

At this point the computer application of superposition methods would have been welcome but no program was available until after the structure had been solved. Instead hand tracings of the Patterson map were employed to create the sum function (Buerger, 1959), which gave surprisingly good resolution over a large part of the molecule.

The dominant 200 and 0,0,14 reflexions, which are the first and third strongest reflexions, were useful in deciding the approximate position of the molecule in the unit cell. For instance, from inspection of peaks in the Patterson map and from packing considerations it was certain that the sign of the 200 reflexion must be negative thus placing the molecule nearly in the plane $\frac{1}{2}yz$. Similarly, in order to accommodate a fused ring skeleton on the (100) plane the sign of the 0,0,14 had to be positive. As an initial trial structure, the structure factor calculation was made for the $0kl$ data using 24 atoms, 22 of which were in a ring system of five fused all-chair all-*trans* six membered rings such as gammacerane plus a methyl group at each end. This yielded an R of 0.57 but the phased F_o map clearly showed the first four rings and indicated the fifth ring roughly at right angles to the other four. The best of several other trial structures on this projection gave an R of 0.43. This structure had three rings all-chair all-*trans*, later identified as E D and C , ring B boat and ring A chair but *cis* to B .

Before attempting three-dimensional calculations some two-dimensional projections on (010) were calculated using the six strongest $h0l$ reflexions, including the 200 and 0,0,14 whose signs had already been deduced. The signs of the remainder were systematically varied, taking into account the arbitrary signs of a chosen pair of reflexions to fix the origin. The best looking map gave groups of density corresponding to the ring junction positions, which could be clearly seen for four rings. By estimating the x coordinates and taking the z coordinates from the best (100) trial structure, a structure factor calculation for all the $h0l$ data yielded $R \sim 0.60$. From the structure factor list a selection was made of 47 reflexions, whose signs were considered to be probably correct. The Fourier synthesis based on these 47 reflexions is shown in Fig. 1

in which most of the molecule is clearly visible. Moreover, the map not only indicated that one methyl group was wrongly placed at X , but also showed likely positions for other side groups at Y both of which were soon proved to be correct. The small peak on the 2_1 axis at $x = \frac{1}{4}$, $z = \frac{1}{2}$ was dismissed as Fourier noise although in the end it was shown that there were two methyl groups close to this axis. The distorted peak of the A - B ring junction (though at this stage the ends of the molecule could not be distinguished) compared with the other ring junction peaks was the result of the *cis*-junction of the trial structure, whilst the endmost peak of ring A appeared to contain perhaps three atom sites. Speculative interpretation suggested the existence of an isopropyl group but the high melting point of the compound could be taken as contrary evidence. The remaining atoms of ring A were not revealed.

Henceforward enough was known about the position of a major part of the ring skeleton to justify three-dimensional calculations. Suitable Harker vectors in the $P(u0w)$ Patterson section were selected to satisfy the $C(20)$ and $C(22)$ positions indicated in the (010) F_o projection and model building enabled a large part of the molecule to be assembled. Many trial structures were refined by least-squares methods, during the course of which the side methyl groups $C(27)$ and $C(23)$ were definitely established and the methyl group $C(26)$ confirmed. Furthermore the geminal methyl pair $C(29)$ and $C(30)$ and the lone methyl group $C(28)$ were also confirmed as true sites, making the first ring E and therefore the ring with unknown configuration, A . This choice was felt initially to be doubtful as most reported triterpanes showed that modifications were more likely in ring E than ring A . However changing the positions of the geminal methyl pair and the $C(28)$ methyl group to make the first ring A resulted in a marked rejection of the latter, *i.e.* very high temperature factor, but a much less marked rejection of the geminal pair. Additionally the overall R index for such trial structures was generally worse.

Trial structures were refined by three or four cycles of structure-factor least-squares procedures followed by F_o and difference maps. If a trial structure contained less than thirty atoms, the observed structure amplitudes were weighted by a method according to

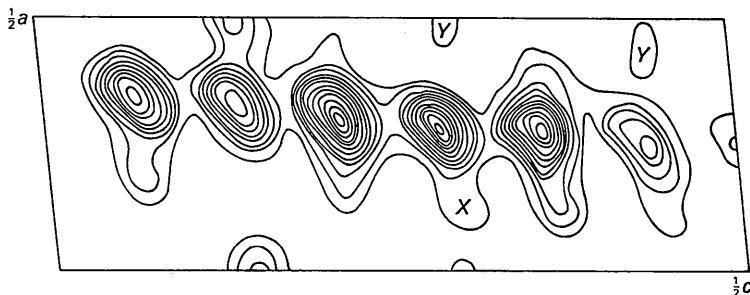


Fig. 1. F_o projection on (010) from the first trial structure using signs from 47 reflexions. Contours at arbitrary intervals.

Sim (1959) although the expected improvement in resolution did not materialize. The early trial structures were composed of *trans*-fused *C*, *D* and *E* rings,

B ring boat and fixed side methyl groups *C*(23), *C*(26), *C*(27), *C*(28), *C*(29) and *C*(30). This arrangement permitted ring *A* to be fused at *C*(5) with its

Table 1. *Observed and calculated structure factors*

Each column contains the running index *l*, *F*_{obs}, *F*_{calc} and α (in degrees). *F*_{obs} and *F*_{calc} are full scale.

<i>l</i>	<i>F</i> _{obs}	<i>F</i> _{calc}	α	<i>l</i>	<i>F</i> _{obs}	<i>F</i> _{calc}	α	<i>l</i>	<i>F</i> _{obs}	<i>F</i> _{calc}	α	<i>l</i>	<i>F</i> _{obs}	<i>F</i> _{calc}	α
1	1.00	1.00	0	101	0.00	0.00	0	201	0.00	0.00	0	301	0.00	0.00	0
2	0.99	0.99	0	102	0.01	0.01	0	202	0.01	0.01	0	302	0.01	0.01	0
3	0.98	0.98	0	103	0.02	0.02	0	203	0.02	0.02	0	303	0.02	0.02	0
4	0.97	0.97	0	104	0.03	0.03	0	204	0.03	0.03	0	304	0.03	0.03	0
5	0.96	0.96	0	105	0.04	0.04	0	205	0.04	0.04	0	305	0.04	0.04	0
6	0.95	0.95	0	106	0.05	0.05	0	206	0.05	0.05	0	306	0.05	0.05	0
7	0.94	0.94	0	107	0.06	0.06	0	207	0.06	0.06	0	307	0.06	0.06	0
8	0.93	0.93	0	108	0.07	0.07	0	208	0.07	0.07	0	308	0.07	0.07	0
9	0.92	0.92	0	109	0.08	0.08	0	209	0.08	0.08	0	309	0.08	0.08	0
10	0.91	0.91	0	110	0.09	0.09	0	210	0.09	0.09	0	310	0.09	0.09	0
11	0.90	0.90	0	111	0.10	0.10	0	211	0.10	0.10	0	311	0.10	0.10	0
12	0.89	0.89	0	112	0.11	0.11	0	212	0.11	0.11	0	312	0.11	0.11	0
13	0.88	0.88	0	113	0.12	0.12	0	213	0.12	0.12	0	313	0.12	0.12	0
14	0.87	0.87	0	114	0.13	0.13	0	214	0.13	0.13	0	314	0.13	0.13	0
15	0.86	0.86	0	115	0.14	0.14	0	215	0.14	0.14	0	315	0.14	0.14	0
16	0.85	0.85	0	116	0.15	0.15	0	216	0.15	0.15	0	316	0.15	0.15	0
17	0.84	0.84	0	117	0.16	0.16	0	217	0.16	0.16	0	317	0.16	0.16	0
18	0.83	0.83	0	118	0.17	0.17	0	218	0.17	0.17	0	318	0.17	0.17	0
19	0.82	0.82	0	119	0.18	0.18	0	219	0.18	0.18	0	319	0.18	0.18	0
20	0.81	0.81	0	120	0.19	0.19	0	220	0.19	0.19	0	320	0.19	0.19	0
21	0.80	0.80	0	121	0.20	0.20	0	221	0.20	0.20	0	321	0.20	0.20	0
22	0.79	0.79	0	122	0.21	0.21	0	222	0.21	0.21	0	322	0.21	0.21	0
23	0.78	0.78	0	123	0.22	0.22	0	223	0.22	0.22	0	323	0.22	0.22	0
24	0.77	0.77	0	124	0.23	0.23	0	224	0.23	0.23	0	324	0.23	0.23	0
25	0.76	0.76	0	125	0.24	0.24	0	225	0.24	0.24	0	325	0.24	0.24	0
26	0.75	0.75	0	126	0.25	0.25	0	226	0.25	0.25	0	326	0.25	0.25	0
27	0.74	0.74	0	127	0.26	0.26	0	227	0.26	0.26	0	327	0.26	0.26	0
28	0.73	0.73	0	128	0.27	0.27	0	228	0.27	0.27	0	328	0.27	0.27	0
29	0.72	0.72	0	129	0.28	0.28	0	229	0.28	0.28	0	329	0.28	0.28	0
30	0.71	0.71	0	130	0.29	0.29	0	230	0.29	0.29	0	330	0.29	0.29	0
31	0.70	0.70	0	131	0.30	0.30	0	231	0.30	0.30	0	331	0.30	0.30	0
32	0.69	0.69	0	132	0.31	0.31	0	232	0.31	0.31	0	332	0.31	0.31	0
33	0.68	0.68	0	133	0.32	0.32	0	233	0.32	0.32	0	333	0.32	0.32	0
34	0.67	0.67	0	134	0.33	0.33	0	234	0.33	0.33	0	334	0.33	0.33	0
35	0.66	0.66	0	135	0.34	0.34	0	235	0.34	0.34	0	335	0.34	0.34	0
36	0.65	0.65	0	136	0.35	0.35	0	236	0.35	0.35	0	336	0.35	0.35	0
37	0.64	0.64	0	137	0.36	0.36	0	237	0.36	0.36	0	337	0.36	0.36	0
38	0.63	0.63	0	138	0.37	0.37	0	238	0.37	0.37	0	338	0.37	0.37	0
39	0.62	0.62	0	139	0.38	0.38	0	239	0.38	0.38	0	339	0.38	0.38	0
40	0.61	0.61	0	140	0.39	0.39	0	240	0.39	0.39	0	340	0.39	0.39	0
41	0.60	0.60	0	141	0.40	0.40	0	241	0.40	0.40	0	341	0.40	0.40	0
42	0.59	0.59	0	142	0.41	0.41	0	242	0.41	0.41	0	342	0.41	0.41	0
43	0.58	0.58	0	143	0.42	0.42	0	243	0.42	0.42	0	343	0.42	0.42	0
44	0.57	0.57	0	144	0.43	0.43	0	244	0.43	0.43	0	344	0.43	0.43	0
45	0.56	0.56	0	145	0.44	0.44	0	245	0.44	0.44	0	345	0.44	0.44	0
46	0.55	0.55	0	146	0.45	0.45	0	246	0.45	0.45	0	346	0.45	0.45	0
47	0.54	0.54	0	147	0.46	0.46	0	247	0.46	0.46	0	347	0.46	0.46	0
48	0.53	0.53	0	148	0.47	0.47	0	248	0.47	0.47	0	348	0.47	0.47	0
49	0.52	0.52	0	149	0.48	0.48	0	249	0.48	0.48	0	349	0.48	0.48	0
50	0.51	0.51	0	150	0.49	0.49	0	250	0.49	0.49	0	350	0.49	0.49	0
51	0.50	0.50	0	151	0.50	0.50	0	251	0.50	0.50	0	351	0.50	0.50	0
52	0.49	0.49	0	152	0.51	0.51	0	252	0.51	0.51	0	352	0.51	0.51	0
53	0.48	0.48	0	153	0.52	0.52	0	253	0.52	0.52	0	353	0.52	0.52	0
54	0.47	0.47	0	154	0.53	0.53	0	254	0.53	0.53	0	354	0.53	0.53	0
55	0.46	0.46	0	155	0.54	0.54	0	255	0.54	0.54	0	355	0.54	0.54	0
56	0.45	0.45	0	156	0.55	0.55	0	256	0.55	0.55	0	356	0.55	0.55	0
57	0.44	0.44	0	157	0.56	0.56	0	257	0.56	0.56	0	357	0.56	0.56	0
58	0.43	0.43	0	158	0.57	0.57	0	258	0.57	0.57	0	358	0.57	0.57	0
59	0.42	0.42	0	159	0.58	0.58	0	259	0.58	0.58	0	359	0.58	0.58	0
60	0.41	0.41	0	160	0.59	0.59	0	260	0.59	0.59	0	360	0.59	0.59	0
61	0.40	0.40	0	161	0.60	0.60	0	261	0.60	0.60	0	361	0.60	0.60	0
62	0.39	0.39	0	162	0.61	0.61	0	262	0.61	0.61	0	362	0.61	0.61	0
63	0.38	0.38	0	163	0.62	0.62	0	263	0.62	0.62	0	363	0.62	0.62	0
64	0.37	0.37	0	164	0.63	0.63	0	264	0.63	0.63	0	364	0.63	0.63	0
65	0.36	0.36	0	165	0.64	0.64	0	265	0.64	0.64	0	365	0.64	0.64	0
66	0.35	0.35	0	166	0.65	0.65	0	266	0.65	0.65	0	366	0.65	0.65	0
67	0.34	0.34	0	167	0.66	0.66	0	267	0.66	0.66	0	367	0.66	0.66	0
68	0.33	0.33	0	168	0.67	0.67	0	268	0.67	0.67	0	368	0.67	0.67	0
69	0.32	0.32	0	169	0.68	0.68	0	269	0.68	0.68	0	369	0.68	0.68	0
70	0.31	0.31	0	170	0.69	0.69	0	270	0.69	0.69	0	370	0.69	0.69	0
71	0.30	0.30	0	171	0.70	0.70	0	271	0.70	0.70	0	371	0.70	0.70	0
72	0.29	0.29	0	172	0.71	0.71	0	272	0.71	0.71	0	372	0.71	0.71	0
73	0.28	0.28	0	173	0.72	0.72	0	273	0.72	0.72	0	373	0.72	0.72	0
74	0.27	0.27	0	174	0.73	0.73	0	274	0.73	0.73	0	374	0.73	0.73	0
75	0.26	0.26	0	175	0.74	0.74	0	275	0.74	0.74	0	375	0.74	0.74	0
76	0.25	0.25	0	176	0.75	0.75	0	276	0.75	0.75	0	376	0.75	0.75	0
77	0.24	0.24	0	177	0.76	0.76	0	277	0.76	0.76	0	377	0.76	0.76	0
78	0.23	0.23	0	178	0.77	0.77	0	278	0.77	0.77	0	378	0.77	0.77	0
79	0.22	0.22	0	179	0.78	0.78	0	279	0.78	0.78	0	379	0.78	0.78	0
80	0.21	0.21	0	180	0.79	0.79	0	280	0.79	0.79	0	380	0.79	0.79	0
81	0.20	0.20	0	181	0.80	0.80	0	281	0.80	0.80	0	381	0.80	0.80	0
82	0.19	0.19	0	182	0.81	0.81	0	282	0.81	0.81	0	382	0.81	0.81	0
83	0.18	0.18	0	183	0.82	0.82	0	283	0.82	0.82	0	383	0.82	0.82	0
84	0.17	0.17	0	184	0.83	0.83	0	284	0.83	0.83	0	384	0.83	0.83	0
85	0.16	0.16	0	185	0.84	0.84	0	285	0.84	0.84	0	385	0.84	0.84	0
86	0.15	0.15	0	186	0.85	0.85	0	286	0.85	0.85	0	386	0.85	0.85	0
87	0.14	0.14	0	187	0.86	0.86	0	287	0.86	0.86	0	387	0.86	0.86	0
88	0.13	0.13	0	188	0.87	0.87	0	288	0.87	0.87	0	388	0.87	0.87	0
89	0.12	0.12	0	189											

Table 1 (cont.)

6	7	4	538	-12	13	13	892	-85	5	5	355	5	3	3	201	17	3	2	169	18	7	6	161	-3	16	15	148	-17	7	5	17
7	7	7	93	-12	11	17	66	-84	4	4	349	4	3	4	249	16	3	8	284	11	14	16	201	-4	9	8	268	-17	6	8	8
8	5	5	291	-14	10	14	82	-87	7	7	144	7	3	8	189	-1	4	3	11	12	18	22	33	-5	7	7	242	-19	3	3	326
9	12	12	278	-15	19	21	211	-90	10	9	97	9	7	7	181	-2	4	3	15	12	17	19	312	-6	10	10	122	-12	2	2	175
10	7	7	143	-14	14	14	240	-89	7	7	6	9	4	4	106	-2	4	3	15	14	13	15	192	-7	3	4	119	-21	4	3	146
11	4	5	36	-17	7	9	159	-91	6	6	8	10	5	5	258	-4	4	3	12	11	12	10	101	-6	5	3	241	-22	5	3	94
12	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
13	10	17	94	-19	3	4	284	-93	9	9	10	8	14	16	109	-4	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-8	3	4	119	-22	5	3	146
14	4	5	36	-19	3	4	284	-93	9	9	10	8	14	16	109	-4	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-8	3	4	119	-22	5	3	146
15	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
16	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
17	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
18	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
19	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
20	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
21	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
22	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
23	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
24	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
25	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
26	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
27	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
28	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
29	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
30	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
31	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
32	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
33	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
34	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
35	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
36	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
37	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
38	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
39	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
40	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
41	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
42	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
43	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
44	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
45	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
46	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
47	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
48	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
49	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
50	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
51	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
52	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
53	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
54	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
55	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
56	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
57	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
58	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
59	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-22	7	4	223
60	4	4	126	-12	9	10	189	-92	8	8	10	11	3	4	450	-1	4	3	12	11	10	10	100	-7	4	4	120	-2			

scaling was carried out at intervals by a method due to Eichorn (1956).

At the end of the refinement all x and z positional shifts were less than one tenth and the y coordinate shifts less than one quarter of their standard deviations, with a tendency towards randomness. The standard deviations of the anisotropic temperature factors were not available as an output of the least-squares program but all shifts were small again tending towards randomness, the largest shifts being in β_{22} .

In the absence of a large enough program the 52 hydrogen atoms could not be included in the calculations, but since they represent about 60% of the structure and contribute about 25% of the scattering power of the molecule, their exclusion from the refinement must account in part for the relatively high final R value. Their omission could explain some of the large discrepancies which exist between F_o and F_c , e.g. the 0,0,14 reflexion. A very high proportion of the carbon atoms are very close to this plane so that the 28 hydrogen atoms associated with the ring skeleton atoms would be scattering approximately in phase. In addition, this reflexion also suffers from the Renninger double diffraction effect from the 2,0,21 and $\bar{2}0\bar{7}$ reflexions although this contribution must be small.

Final difference and F_o Fourier syntheses were calculated which revealed the sites of about 20 hydrogen atoms principally those belonging to the carbon atoms of rings B-E.

During the isotropic refinement it was found necessary to hold the coordinates of C(2) constant in order to prevent the C(1)-C(2) distance from increasing and the C(2)-C(3) distance from decreasing abnormally. The introduction of anisotropy stopped this

distortion but resulted in C(18) being displaced from an ideal position. The final list of positional parameters is given in Table 2 and the vibrational parameters in Table 3, which includes the isotropic B value from the last isotropic refinement cycle.

Table 2. *Fractional coordinates*

Standard deviations in brackets refer to last decimal place.

	x	y	z
C(1)	0.0989 (7)	0.2306 (13)	0.3691 (3)
C(2)	0.0687 (11)	0.1674 (22)	0.4148 (3)
C(3)	0.1926 (14)	0.1281 (14)	0.4445 (3)
C(4)	0.2807 (8)	0.2270 (12)	0.4216 (2)
C(5)	0.2401 (6)	0.2174 (10)	0.3710 (2)
C(6)	0.2731 (11)	0.0442 (12)	0.3485 (3)
C(7)	0.2410 (10)	0.0363 (11)	0.2992 (3)
C(8)	0.3018 (6)	0.1780 (9)	0.2742 (2)
C(9)	0.2644 (6)	0.3537 (9)	0.2936 (2)
C(10)	0.2927 (6)	0.3712 (10)	0.3441 (2)
C(11)	0.3132 (7)	0.5070 (9)	0.2683 (3)
C(12)	0.2815 (7)	0.5009 (9)	0.2179 (2)
C(13)	0.3163 (5)	0.3224 (9)	0.1982 (2)
C(14)	0.2559 (6)	0.1694 (9)	0.2227 (2)
C(15)	0.2934 (9)	-0.0022 (10)	0.2031 (2)
C(16)	0.2737 (10)	-0.0044 (10)	0.1514 (3)
C(17)	0.3419 (6)	0.1358 (10)	0.1299 (2)
C(18)	0.2963 (6)	0.3197 (9)	0.1462 (2)
C(19)	0.3448 (7)	0.4664 (10)	0.1232 (2)
C(20)	0.3241 (6)	0.4592 (10)	0.0714 (2)
C(21)	0.3633 (6)	0.2801 (11)	0.0542 (2)
C(22)	0.3141 (8)	0.1302 (11)	0.0791 (2)
C(23)	0.4133 (9)	0.1725 (23)	0.4372 (3)
C(24)	0.1909 (13)	0.1591 (16)	0.4938 (4)
C(25)	0.2563 (8)	0.5483 (12)	0.3613 (3)
C(26)	0.4414 (7)	0.1623 (13)	0.2839 (2)
C(27)	0.1172 (6)	0.1831 (11)	0.2127 (2)
C(28)	0.4831 (8)	0.1210 (13)	0.1428 (3)
C(29)	0.1899 (7)	0.4855 (12)	0.0546 (3)
C(30)	0.3988 (9)	0.5980 (12)	0.0518 (3)

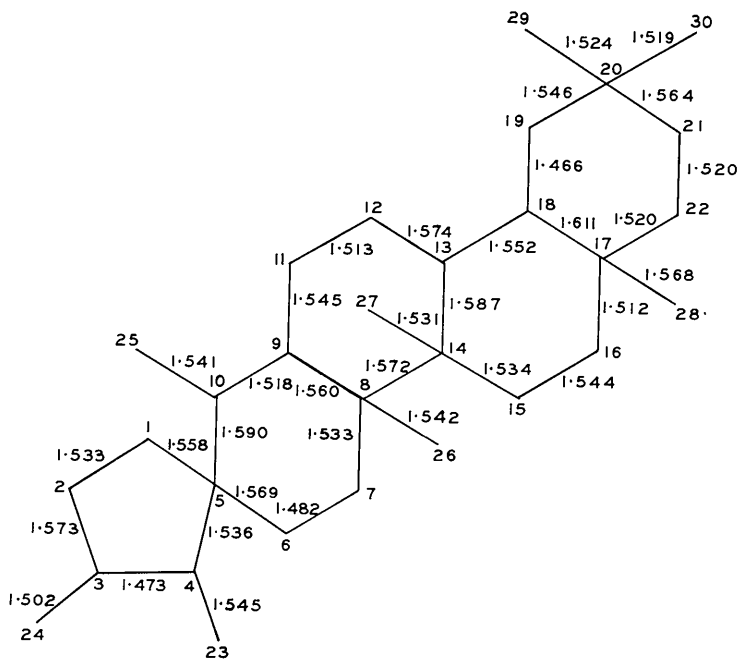


Fig. 2. Interatomic distances.

Discussion of the results

Fourier and difference maps were used extensively for the trial structures but in the absence of stereochemical knowledge of the molecule the location of some of the carbon atoms from these maps was difficult. In all the maps there appeared peaks in the background of approximately $0.6 \text{ e.}\text{\AA}^{-3}$, arising it would seem from

the large contribution of the (0,0,14) plane. Often such positions could have been interpreted as carbon atom sites, especially those near the ring junction atoms, but other positions such as those near the peripheral atoms of the ring skeleton, e.g. C(6), C(7), C(11), C(12), C(15), C(16), could only be associated with hydrogen atom sites. In retrospect – and our experience has been supported by the determination of the structures of two

Table 3. *Thermal parameters*

Anisotropic temperature factors are given by $\exp [-(h^2\beta_{11} + k^2\beta_{22} + l^2\beta_{33} + hl\beta_{13} + kl\beta_{23} + hk\beta_{12})]$.

B is the isotropic temperature factor at the end of the last isotropic refinement cycle

	B	β_{11}	β_{22}	β_{33}	β_{13}	β_{23}	β_{12}
C(1)	5.41 \AA^2	0.0135	0.0262	0.0018	0.0021	-0.0006	-0.0041
C(2)	8.43	0.0242	0.0633	0.0019	0.0070	0.0087	0.0015
C(3)	6.65	0.0224	0.0291	0.0015	0.0032	0.0016	0.0041
C(4)	5.57	0.0177	0.0306	0.0010	0.0013	0.0001	0.0030
C(5)	4.41	0.0141	0.0188	0.0011	-0.0003	0.0012	0.0023
C(6)	6.43	0.0306	0.0167	0.0013	0.0020	0.0016	0.0036
C(7)	6.44	0.0278	0.0129	0.0017	0.0026	0.0015	-0.0057
C(8)	4.05	0.0121	0.0177	0.0011	0.0009	-0.0015	0.0055
C(9)	3.78	0.0110	0.0167	0.0011	0.0011	0.0002	-0.0055
C(10)	3.82	0.0120	0.0173	0.0011	0.0002	0.0003	0.0003
C(11)	4.83	0.0139	0.0141	0.0017	0.0009	-0.0004	-0.0094
C(12)	4.05	0.0180	0.0133	0.0009	0.0015	-0.0017	0.0009
C(13)	3.15	0.0080	0.0141	0.0013	0.0012	-0.0017	0.0046
C(14)	4.16	0.0118	0.0148	0.0012	0.0009	0.0001	0.0029
C(15)	5.81	0.0275	0.0129	0.0010	0.0038	-0.0009	0.0108
C(16)	6.58	0.0290	0.0097	0.0017	0.0046	-0.0004	-0.0004
C(17)	3.98	0.0149	0.0135	0.0011	0.0016	-0.0013	0.0152
C(18)	4.12	0.0098	0.0164	0.0014	0.0013	-0.0014	0.0043
C(19)	4.44	0.0153	0.0142	0.0015	0.0023	-0.0012	-0.0010
C(20)	3.95	0.0142	0.0209	0.0008	0.0023	-0.0011	-0.0002
C(21)	4.13	0.0142	0.0194	0.0015	0.0025	-0.0009	0.0051
C(22)	5.64	0.0228	0.0188	0.0013	0.0008	-0.0012	-0.0016
C(23)	8.59	0.0177	0.0748	0.0018	-0.0021	0.0041	0.0139
C(24)	9.01	0.0378	0.0271	0.0024	0.0089	0.0050	-0.0002
C(25)	5.05	0.0203	0.0179	0.0016	0.0034	-0.0042	0.0005
C(26)	5.05	0.0175	0.0382	0.0011	0.0005	0.0011	0.0336
C(27)	4.01	0.0123	0.0239	0.0012	0.0019	-0.0013	-0.0136
C(28)	6.43	0.0178	0.0311	0.0018	0.0040	0.0005	0.0260
C(29)	4.99	0.0147	0.0277	0.0016	0.0032	0.0030	0.0112
C(30)	6.44	0.0209	0.0220	0.0021	0.0059	-0.0008	-0.0120

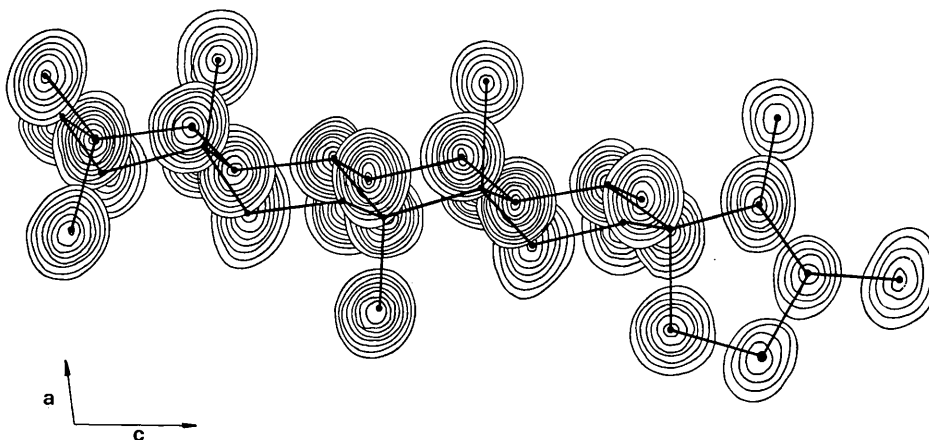


Fig. 3. Superimposed sections of the electron density parallel to (010). The sections have been displaced along the $+a$ axis corresponding to a 10° tilt away from the b axis to disperse atom centres. Contours start at $1 \text{ e.}\text{\AA}^{-3}$ and are drawn at intervals of $0.5 \text{ e.}\text{\AA}^{-3}$.

more triterpanes – the use of a shortened data list can reveal hydrogen atom sites even with $R \sim 0.35$. By contrast there was great difficulty in finding C(2) and C(24). Their residual peak heights never exceeded $0.6 \text{ e.}\text{\AA}^{-3}$ and in most cases were lost entirely in the background. It is noteworthy that these two atoms have high isotropic temperature factors.

After the refinement of each trial structure, atoms were accepted or rejected on the basis of temperature factor and molecular geometry. These criteria were not always strong enough to distinguish between true and false sites. Thus the decision on whether the unmodified end ring was *A* or *E* was made upon the rejection of C(28) when bonded to C(18) and much less so on the positions of the geminal methyl pair when attached to C(22) where both C(29) and C(30) were acceptable. The indeterminacy of the true coordinates of C(3) and C(5) was also difficult to overcome.

Fortunately the orientation of the molecule was clearly revealed in the Patterson function but the very regular and repetitive nature of the rings hindered, if not prevented, a complete successful determination by superposition methods. Hand tracings of the Patterson function were used in the early stages to produce a modified form of the sum function and although the discriminatory powers of this type of function are known to be poor, nevertheless the maps did show a surprising amount of the molecule. As a start, Harker peaks were identified in the section $P(u0w)$ corresponding to the symmetry vectors of C(17) and C(22) [or C(19), and C(20)] from which non-Harker peaks were found for many of the other ring atoms C(5)–C(21). Using the C(22) Harker peak as origin peak, tracings of the sections $v=0, 3/20, 6/20$ and $9/20$ of the Patterson function were superimposed and points plotted where overlap of peaks occurred. A concentration of points indicated a probable atomic centre, and if this position could be associated with a Harker peak and was stereochemically sound, then the process was continued with the new point as a superposition origin. In this way, the positions of all the ring atoms C(5)–C(22) were found as well as the methyl groups C(26)–C(30). However the vectors associated with the spiro ring *A* were masked and in this region the only discernible feature, comparatively ill determined, was a fifth ring in the same chair configuration as the other four. Many additional peaks similar to those in the F_o maps were also present especially associated with the ring junction atoms.

After the correct structure had been obtained, a computer program of the minimum function became available (Nordman, 1967) and two attempts at multiple superposition were made. In the first the positions of thirteen carbon atoms comprising the *D* and *E* rings and C(8), C(26) and C(27) were input and a 26-fold superposition calculated. The second attempt contained the rings, *B*, *C*, *D* and *E* plus C(1), C(4), C(26) and C(27) and a 44-fold superposition performed. The

resulting minimum functions were in each case little better than the hand traces of the sum function. Again the spiro ring was not revealed but ring *A* appeared as a fused chair ring and the usual spurious peaks were present. It would appear that for molecules made up of repetitive units in a regular fashion the likelihood of total success with the superposition method is not high.

The bond distances and bond angles with their standard deviations are listed in Tables 4 and 5 and Fig. 2. The average bond distance of 34 C–C bonds is 1.540 \AA with an overall standard deviation of 0.031 \AA , compared with the mean of the standard deviations of the individual bond lengths of 0.011 \AA . The mean value of 59 tetrahedral angles is 110.92° with an overall standard deviation of 3.29° . The mean of the standard deviations of the individual angles is 0.39° . Thus although the block-diagonal approximation gives lower standard deviations for individual bonds and angles, at the 3σ level for the overall standard deviations no bond distance or bond angle is significantly different from the mean value or indeed from the ideal values. As a result the molecular skeleton comprising rings *B*, *C*, *D* and *E* is very regular (Figs. 3 and 4). The greatest deviation occurs at C(18) which, as mentioned earlier, became displaced with the introduction of anisotropic temperature factors.

Table 4. *Interatomic distances*

Standard deviations in brackets refer to the last decimal positions.

C(1)–C(2)	1.533 (12) Å
C(1)–C(5)	1.558 (10)
C(2)–C(3)	1.573 (16)
C(3)–C(4)	1.473 (13)
C(3)–C(24)	1.502 (14)
C(4)–C(5)	1.536 (9)
C(4)–C(23)	1.545 (13)
C(5)–C(6)	1.569 (12)
C(5)–C(10)	1.590 (10)
C(6)–C(7)	1.482 (12)
C(7)–C(8)	1.533 (11)
C(8)–C(9)	1.560 (10)
C(8)–C(14)	1.572 (8)
C(8)–C(26)	1.542 (10)
C(9)–C(10)	1.518 (9)
C(9)–C(11)	1.545 (10)
C(10)–C(25)	1.541 (11)
C(11)–C(12)	1.513 (10)
C(12)–C(13)	1.574 (9)
C(13)–C(14)	1.587 (10)
C(13)–C(18)	1.552 (9)
C(14)–C(15)	1.534 (10)
C(14)–C(27)	1.531 (9)
C(15)–C(16)	1.544 (11)
C(16)–C(17)	1.512 (12)
C(17)–C(18)	1.611 (9)
C(17)–C(22)	1.520 (10)
C(17)–C(28)	1.568 (11)
C(18)–C(19)	1.466 (11)
C(19)–C(20)	1.546 (9)
C(20)–C(21)	1.564 (11)
C(20)–C(29)	1.524 (11)
C(20)–C(30)	1.519 (11)
C(21)–C(22)	1.520 (12)

Table 5. Bond angles

Standard deviations are given in brackets.

C(2)—C(1)—C(5)	105.6 (0.4)
C(1)—C(2)—C(3)	107.6 (0.5)
C(2)—C(3)—C(4)	102.4 (0.4)
C(2)—C(3)—C(24)	114.6 (0.7)
C(4)—C(3)—C(24)	117.4 (0.6)
C(3)—C(4)—C(5)	107.6 (0.5)
C(3)—C(4)—C(23)	111.8 (0.5)
C(5)—C(4)—C(23)	116.3 (0.4)
C(1)—C(5)—C(4)	102.1 (0.4)
C(1)—C(5)—C(6)	108.9 (0.5)
C(1)—C(5)—C(10)	110.9 (0.4)

Table 5 (cont.)

C(4)—C(5)—C(6)	114.4 (0.4)
C(4)—C(5)—C(10)	112.5 (0.4)
C(6)—C(5)—C(10)	108.0 (0.3)
C(5)—C(6)—C(7)	115.2 (0.2)
C(6)—C(7)—C(8)	113.1 (0.5)
C(7)—C(8)—C(9)	107.2 (0.3)
C(7)—C(8)—C(14)	110.0 (0.4)
C(7)—C(8)—C(26)	109.7 (0.4)
C(9)—C(8)—C(14)	109.7 (0.4)
C(9)—C(8)—C(26)	107.6 (0.4)
C(14)—C(8)—C(26)	112.5 (0.3)
C(8)—C(9)—C(10)	114.8 (0.4)
C(8)—C(9)—C(11)	111.6 (0.3)

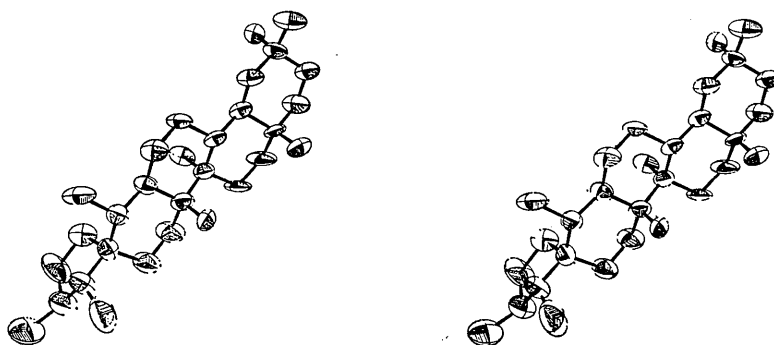
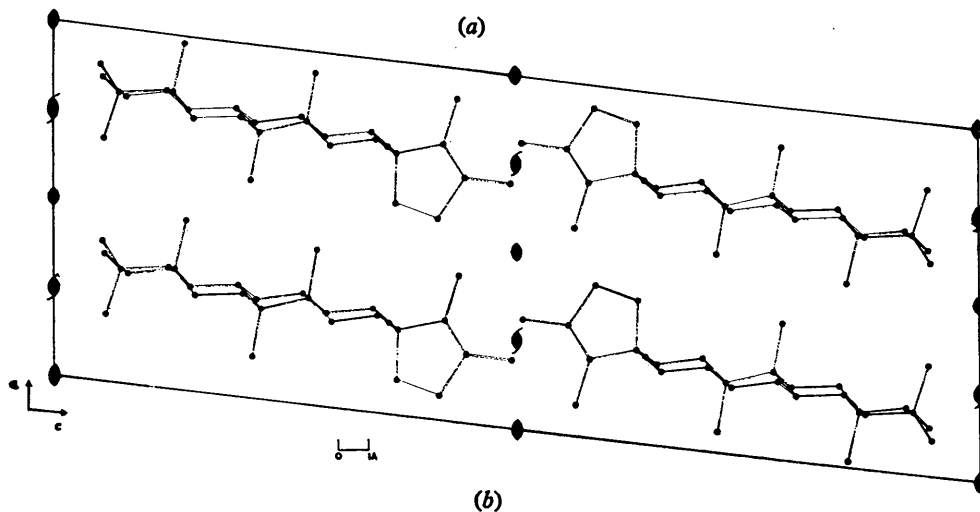
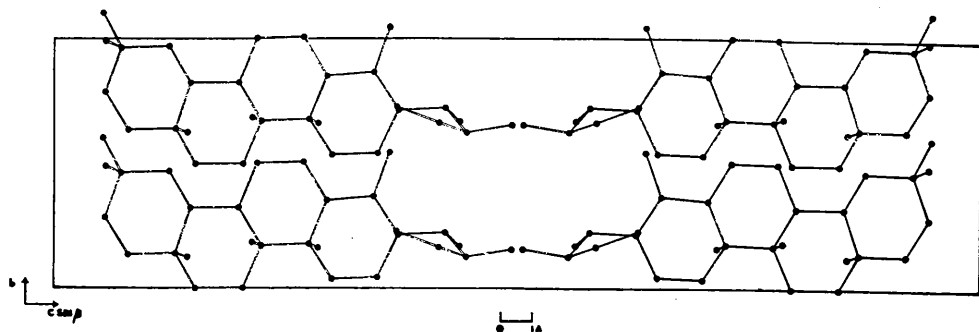
Fig. 4. Stereoscopic view of triterpane *E* (Johnson, 1965).

Fig. 5. Projection of one unit cell (a) on to the (100) plane (b) on to the (010) plane.

Table 5 (cont.)

C(10)–C(9)–C(11)	112.3 (0.4)
C(5)–C(10)–C(9)	113.2 (0.4)
C(5)–C(10)–C(25)	112.1 (0.3)
C(9)–C(10)–C(25)	112.6 (0.4)
C(9)–C(11)–C(12)	114.5 (0.4)
C(11)–C(12)–C(13)	111.4 (0.4)
C(12)–C(13)–C(14)	110.6 (0.3)
C(12)–C(13)–C(18)	112.2 (0.3)
C(14)–C(13)–C(18)	116.0 (0.4)
C(8)–C(14)–C(13)	108.6 (0.3)
C(8)–C(14)–C(15)	110.1 (0.3)
C(8)–C(14)–C(27)	113.0 (0.3)
C(13)–C(14)–C(15)	109.1 (0.3)
C(13)–C(14)–C(27)	108.9 (0.3)
C(15)–C(14)–C(27)	107.2 (0.4)
C(14)–C(15)–C(16)	112.5 (0.4)
C(15)–C(16)–C(17)	113.7 (0.5)
C(16)–C(17)–C(18)	108.7 (0.3)
C(16)–C(17)–C(22)	110.8 (0.5)
C(16)–C(17)–C(28)	111.9 (0.4)
C(18)–C(17)–C(22)	107.2 (0.4)
C(18)–C(17)–C(28)	109.1 (0.4)
C(22)–C(17)–C(28)	109.0 (0.3)
C(13)–C(18)–C(17)	107.7 (0.3)
C(13)–C(18)–C(19)	116.5 (0.4)
C(17)–C(18)–C(19)	113.8 (0.3)
C(18)–C(19)–C(20)	115.1 (0.4)
C(19)–C(20)–C(21)	110.6 (0.4)
C(19)–C(20)–C(29)	110.7 (0.4)
C(19)–C(20)–C(30)	110.0 (0.3)
C(21)–C(20)–C(29)	107.8 (0.4)
C(21)–C(20)–C(30)	108.6 (0.4)
C(29)–C(20)–C(30)	109.1 (0.4)
C(20)–C(21)–C(22)	112.9 (0.3)
C(17)–C(22)–C(21)	115.5 (0.5)

By contrast the spiro ring must be under some strain. Of the non-bonded intramolecular contacts around this ring, the C(1)–C(25) and C(4)–C(25) distances (3.04 and 3.07 Å respectively) compare favourably with similar distances within the molecule *e.g.* C(13)–C(26) and C(15)–C(26) which are both 3.04 Å. The methyl–methyl distances C(23)–C(24) (3.14 Å) and C(23)–C(25) (3.97 Å) are also reasonable. However the C(24)–C(25) separation of 5.11 Å is substantially greater than C(28)–C(29) (4.64 Å) indicating that these methyl groups are probably being forced apart by proton interaction and could therefore account for the flexed configuration of the spiro ring.

The molecule is sited in the unit cell with the mean plane of the rings parallel to the *b* axis and its long dimension nearly parallel to *c* [Fig. 5(a) and (b)]. Its packing is closely similar to that of the steroids (Bernal, Crowfoot & Fankuchen, 1940) and falls into the structure type *a*212. In this class, *a*, the symbol 212 corresponds to two molecular thicknesses along *a* sin β , one molecule width along *b* and two molecule lengths along *c*. Van der Waals contacts are normal and in the range 3.75–3.95 Å.

This triterpane has been tentatively named 1(10 \rightarrow 5) *abeo*-3 β -methyl-24 β -nor-25 α -18- α -oleanane. It bears a close relationship to the oleanene series of natural triterpenes which are known to occur in plants. However no naturally occurring triterpene has been re-

ported with a spiro *A*:*B* ring junction. Thus whilst it is possible that triterpenes have existed in early plant forms with this ring arrangement from which crude petroleum may have been derived, it is also possible for isomerization to have taken place during the process of petroleum formation. A more detailed discussion has already been published (Hills, Smith & Whitehead, 1968), describing the possible mechanisms whereby this molecular transformation could have arisen. Briefly it is suggested that processes, which are known to produce spiranization in steroid systems, may have occurred during the formation of petroleum to produce triterpane *E*. The transformation would include a 1:2 shift of the β (axial) methyl group at C(4) to the β (equatorial) position at C(3), at which position in natural triterpenes an oxygen group is often sited. Also included in transformation is the shift of the C(1)–C(10) bond to the C(5) position which implies the formation of one or more double bonds in the *A* or *B* rings, thus leaving the methyl group C(25) no longer at a ring junction.

The calculations were made upon the Elliott 803 computer using data reduction, structure factor and Fourier summation programs developed in these laboratories. The least-squares structure factor program was written by Dr G. Mair (Oxford University). The superposition maps were calculated on an IBM 7094 using programs provided by Dr C. E. Nordman.

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