

SYNTHESIS OF A MEDIUM-SIZE CARBOCYCLIC SYSTEM

M. Akhtar and Susan Marsh

Department of Physiology and Biochemistry,*

The University,

Southampton.

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In a previous publication we have shown that a variety of steroidal alcohols react with mercuric oxide and iodine¹ in either heat or preferably light-induced reaction to give products which can be explained as having originated through alkoxy radical intermediates. This reaction is especially useful in functionalizing non-activated carbon atoms through a six membered transition state.² When such a transition state is forbidden then intermediate alkoxy radicals are consumed via intermolecular hydrogen abstraction, disproportionation, and decomposition by radical elimination.³ An example of the latter type is represented by the conversion of cyclo-pentanol to δ -iodovaleraldehyde.⁴

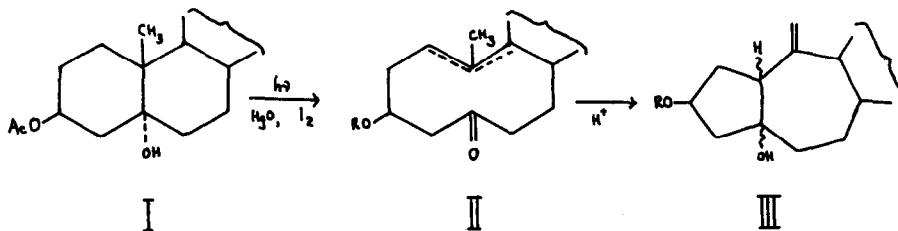
In this communication we report the extension of this principle to the synthesis of a medium-size carbocyclic system.⁵

*With the co-operation of the Chemistry Department.

Irradiation of cholestane-3 β ,5 α -diol 3-acetate (partial, I) with mercuric oxide and iodine gave in 40-45% yield a compound, ^{a,b} m.p. 128-130°, $[\alpha]_D^{+5}$ (in CHCl₃), $\nu_{\max}^{\text{CCl}_4}$ 1707 and 1743 cm⁻¹, the n.m.r. spectrum^c has peaks at 2.03 (singlet 3H; acetate methyl), 1.77 (singlet 3H; CH₃-C=C), 0.91, 0.80 and 0.70 (singlets; for remaining 4 methyl groups), p.p.m. down field from tetramethyl silane as an internal standard. Structure II (R = Ac) for this compound is based on the following evidence. The acetoxy ketone (II, R = Ac) on treatment with methanolic potassium hydroxide gave the alcohol (II, R = H), m.p. 155°-156°, $[\alpha]_D^{+21}$ (in CHCl₃), which could be reacylated to yield II (R = Ac). Treatment of the acetoxy ketone (II, R = Ac) with HCl-CHCl₃ at 0°C furnished in 60% yield an isomeric compound (B) m.p. 108-109°, $[\alpha]_D^{+44}$ (in CHCl₃), ν_{\max}^{KBr} 1620, 1745, 3500 and 3550 cm⁻¹. This acid rearrangement product (B) on hydrolysis yielded a diol m.p. 148-149°, $[\alpha]_D^{+45}$ (in CHCl₃) which on Jones oxidation was converted to a compound whose infrared spectrum showed peaks attributed to an hydroxyl group and a five membered ring ketone.⁶ On ozonolysis B gave formaldehyde isolated as its dimedone derivative in 40% yield. We therefore formulate B as III (R = Ac). Acid catalysed

a. Another compound m.p. 128-130°C, $[\alpha]_D^{+46}$ (in CHCl₃) was also isolated in 6% yield. b. A similar reaction using lead tetraacetate has recently been observed by M. Lj. Mihailovic, M. Stefanovic, Lj. Lorenc and M. Gasic, Tetrahedron Letters, **28**, 1867 (1964). c. We thank Mr. D.N. Henty and his staff for kindly determining the n.m.r. spectra.

rearrangement of II (R = Ac) to III (R = Ac) can be rationalized only if the double bond in II (R = Ac) is between C₁ and C₁₀. The possibility that under the cyclisation conditions shift of the double bond ($\Delta^{9(10)} \rightarrow \Delta^{10(1)}$) might have occurred although unlikely has not been eliminated. We may also point out that using a 60 Mc Varian instrument we were not able to see clearly an olefinic proton in II (R = Ac or H). Stereochemistry of II and III and other aspects of this problem will be discussed in the full paper.



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E.J. Corey and A.G. Hortmann, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 85, 4033 (1963); E.J. Corey and E. Hamanaka, ibid, 86, 1642 (1964).
6. We thank Dr. J. Hudec for helpful criticism