



Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

March 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring will soon be here and there will be growing things around us that will bring much joy to each of us. The urge to get out of doors and look around at the beauty that spring brings us with green leaves on the trees and pretty, colorful flowers, birds and animals, along with the fresh smell of the new season. This will also awaken our genealogical spirit and inspire us to resume research of our families with spring fervency. We will now be able to get out to field laboratories, such as cemeteries, town halls, libraries, and relatives, and look for and find the hidden clues that will bring us to a better understanding of who we are and where we came from.

More and more doors are being opened, which makes our search so much easier. New Websites, advancements in technology, and social networking sites, such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, and others, let us keep in touch with those who can help us and also allow us to share what we have learned.

The digitizing and indexing of records have made lots of records quickly available online where we can research them at all hours of the day or night. Family Search.org and Ancestry.com are adding new resources every day. Our own society is offering patrons of Darien Library and people of the community help at the library from MGS members.

We have had some programs that tell us of the importance of using censuses as a prime source at the beginning of our quest for knowledge of our ancestors and where they came from. Ancestry.com has done wonders with the censuses. They have enhanced the images for the 1790 through 1900 censuses, improved many of the indexes, and are making them easier to access.

Spring and summer will provide even more opportunities for each of us to experience the joys of family history research, and I hope we will share these opportunities with one another, perhaps in the pages of this newsletter.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■

LIBRARY REPORT

by C. Scribner

MGS recently received a book titled *The Peckham Family*, which is a Peckham family history and genealogy dating back to the Normans. Mr. Charles W. Peckham of Lebanon, Ohio, sent it to us at the same time he also sent 200 other copies to national, state, local and regional libraries to make the book available to genealogical researchers. It was turned over to the library staff to be cataloged and is now on Row II Shelf 2, along with a separate booklet containing a corrected index. A letter of thanks and appreciation has been sent.

For members interested in Irish history, genealogy and culture, we are in receipt of a partial set of the periodical *EIREphile*, donor unknown. It is limited to two issues per year for three years with the first printed in 1987 and the last in 1990. Besides the three mentioned subjects, the periodicals contain many stories, poems, records, and much more. Judging by the shape they are in, it is apparent they have been well used. They are located on Row VI Shelf 3.

Another new book just received is *The Story of Darien Connecticut* by Kenneth M. Reiss. This book covers the earliest colonial days to the present and was researched and written by Mr Reiss. It is

(Continued on page 2)

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2009-2010 OFFICERS

Lloyd Sturges Jr.	President
Robert E. Kenyon III	Vice President
Dale Pollart	Treasurer
Joan Rinaldi	Secretary

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Jim Baker
Virginia Banerjee
Peter Biggins
Leonard Christie
Philip Morehouse

Donna Moughty	Past President
Charles Scribner	Librarian
Dorothy Shillinglaw	Newsletter Editor

Middlesex Genealogical Society was established for the purpose of helping those interested in genealogy to pursue the investigation of their family heritage and to provide guidance in research to that end. The society holds at least four meetings with a program and speaker during the year, has established a Genealogy Section at Darien Library and publishes a quarterly newsletter (ISSN 1936-3494). Annual membership dues are \$25 per individual and \$30 per couple or family.

Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the newsletter.

Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1111
Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820

Website: <http://mgs.darien.org>

UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, CONFERENCE ROOM (on the mezzanine, above the 2nd floor, elevator button "M"), AT DARIEN LIBRARY, 1441 POST ROAD. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND.

20 MARCH 2010. MAXIMIZING CENSUS RESEARCH will be presented by **VIRGINIA BANNERJEE**. Census records are a must for genealogical research. This program focuses on how to mine census records for all the data and clues they offer. It is vital to examine the entries for each of your ancestors for every census when they were alive. Going beyond once-over-lightly will often reveal valuable information and leads.

Virginia is a professional family historian with 40 years experience. She is a member of the MGS board and of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council. Virginia is also a member of the board of the Frisbie/Frisbee Family Association, and she has documented ancestry on both sides of her family. She recently completed a major archival project at the Connecticut State Library and Archives. Virginia also teaches and lectures frequently at local, regional and national levels, and has been published by several genealogical societies.

15 MAY 2010. To be announced ■

DARIEN LIBRARY GENEALOGY HELP

MGS board member Leonard Christie is now present on Tuesday mornings from 10 AM to 12 PM in the MGS section on the 2nd floor of Darien Library. He is there to offer genealogical assistance to anyone who requests it. Stop by, introduce yourselves, and discuss your conundrums with Leonard. He may have some useful suggestions for you. ■

LIBRARY

located on Row V Shelf 2.

(Continued from page 1).

There are now two computers on the table next to our book collection in the library. The one closest to the windows is the MGS computer and has Ancestry.com on it. The other one is for general use by any library patron. At times you may find the MGS computer being used for purposes other than genealogy. If there is a problem, speak to the librarian who is usually at the nearby staff desk. ■

USING ROOTSWEB INTERNATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SYMBOLS

by Mary Harrell-Sesniak

Sooner or later, your research may take you over an ocean, and when it does, be prepared—you may receive information formatted differently, and it may contain unfamiliar symbols.

For instance, what do an “*”, an “o”, and a “+” remind you of? Use your imagination to see an egg, a ring, and a sword, and you will understand why some of these symbols represent birth, engagement, and death in various countries. And these symbols, which are commonplace in parts of Europe and South Africa, are becoming more frequent in America.

And they are an efficient way to illustrate relationships. Why write more than you need!

One of my first encounters with genealogical symbols was when I received the following report from a German researcher, who assisted in transcribing German records regarding my Miesse family. Johann Daniel “Daniel” Miesse (né Müsse) was born in Elsoff (abbreviated as Els) in Wittgen-

stein, Germany, on 28 JAN 1743. The report read as follows:

- 1 Müsse, Daniel (Johann Daniel)
* Els, 28.01.1743
- 2 Müsse, Daniel (Johann Daniel)
* Els, 02.03.1694
+ Els, 28.01.1772
& Els, 21.02.1736
- 3 Gernand, Elisabeth (Anna Elizabeth)
* Els, 19.11.1708
+ Els, 03.12.1767

Notice that I used the common format of day/month/year to express Johann’s birthday, since the American month/day/year style is contrary to what is used in most parts of the world. This is an important nuance in the second item of the report, regarding Daniel’s father (also known as Johann Daniel). He was born on 2 MAR 1694—not FEB 3, as many Americans would tend to record.

Keep this difference in mind if you take any international trips. Many an American has gotten reservations mixed up, not realizing that the month/day/year format is the exception, and not the rule, in most countries.

Daniel’s mother was Anna Elisabeth Gernand;

GENEALOGICAL SYMBOLS

Status / Union	Symbol	Interpretation
Baptized	~ or ~~	Wave or waves (water)
Born or Birth	*	Egg
Born out of wedlock / illegitimate	(*)	Egg not from union
Buried	[] or []	Box or coffin
Buried (alternate)	#box or =B1	Box indicates a coffin
Comes after	>	greater than (e.g., birth, marriage)
Comes before	<	less than
Communion	Y	Communion cup
Died	+	Cross or dagger
Died – no further issue / line extinct	++	Line died out after person died
Died – stillborn	+*	Cross with an egg
Died in battle	X	Crossed swords
Died in battle from wounds	+X	Cross with crossed swords
Marital status – divorced	o/o, % or o o	Rings divided
Marital status – married	oo	Two rings
Marital status – married (alternate)	&	And or together
Marital status – married (South Africa, first or second marriage)	X or XX	And or together
Marital status – married, but separated	o o	Two rings separated
Marital status – unmarried, common law or illegitimate	o-o	Rings separated
Marital status – divorced (South Africa)	÷	Divided union
Marital status – engaged	o	Ring
Marital status – first or second	I oo or II oo	First or second rings

she was recorded in item three of the report. The marriage union on 21 FEB 1736 is designated by an "&" in her husband's record. And now that you can read this document, note that she died on 3 DEC 1767 and that her husband died on 28 JAN 1772—by coincidence, their son's birthday. The son ended up immigrating to America about this time and served in the American Revolution. One has to wonder if his father's passing was an influence.

In this report, only a few genealogical symbols were used, but occasionally you will spot others. For example, an engagement can be symbolized with two rings, or "oo", and if rings are separated ("o o"), it indicates that the couple has separated. A divorce can be illustrated with a line or slash between the rings, either as "%", "o/o", or "o|o".

Since symbols vary slightly from country to country, I constructed the chart on page 3 to help identify the more common ones. Some of them are quite creative.

Previously published in *RootsWeb Review*, 9 July 2008, Vol. 11, No. 17

THE LIFE AND LOVES OF A VICTORIAN CLERK: THE DIARY OF NATHANIEL BRYCESON, 1846

The diary of Nathaniel Bryceson, a young wharf clerk in Pimlico, is a rare insight into the lives and loves of a 19-year-old in the early Victorian era. A colorful character, Bryceson takes us through the year 1846, with details of his working life and of his relationship with Ann Fox, his mistress and closest companion. Having existed only in manuscript up until now, the diary will be serialised online throughout 2010 by City of Westminster Archives. Read it from 1 January 2010 at: <http://www.westminster.gov.uk/services/libraries/archives/victorian-clerk/>

Bryceson's diary enlivens an era that is too often portrayed as socially regimented. From financial affairs to affairs of the heart, the diary is a truly personal take on the life of a young Victorian in 1846.

Nathaniel kept a diary for many years, but only the entries for 1846 have survived.

UK'S 1939 REGISTER SERVICE

The UK's National Health Service Information Center has established a new service making the previously unreleased 1939 National Register publicly available for the first time. The register is essentially an emergency census taken as of 29 September 1939 throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Data collected included full name, gender, date of birth, profession, home address, marital status and whether the person was a member of the armed forces. Every citizen had to complete the questionnaire as national identity cards, ration books, and call lists for military service were based on it.

You can now request the data held on that register for England, Wales and Scotland. Please note that because of privacy considerations data will only be released for individuals who have died and are now recorded as deceased. For more information and the application form for requests relating to **England and Wales**, visit the NHS IC's Website at:

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/news-and-events/news/nhs-ic-launches-the-1939-register-service>

The mailing address is: The NHS Information Centre, The 1939 Register Team, Smedley Hydro Rm B108, Trafalgar Road, Birkdale Southport, PR8 2HH.

Although data from this register is potentially of great value, at £42 per inquiry it is very pricey.

For some reason the 1939 National Register records for **Scotland** can be requested for much less—£13 per inquiry. (Perhaps the Scottish records are in better shape and, therefore, easier to search.) Requests for Scottish information from the 1939 National Register should be addressed to: Extract Services, General Register Office for Scotland, New Register House, 3 West Register Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3YT, enclosing the £13 fee and evidence of the death of the person that is the subject of the inquiry. For more information visit the Scottish records Website at:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/press/news/2010/1939-identity-register.html>

The 1939 National Register records for **Northern Ireland** are very poorly organized and, therefore, not yet available.

FAMILY HISTORY CENTER PORTAL

Using the computer system at your local Family History Center, you can access the Family History Center Portal which provides free access to 10 genealogy subscription databases:

- **Footnote.com** (<http://www.footnote.com>): Through a unique partnership with the National Archives, Footnote allows you to find and share historic documents.
- **Godfrey Memorial Library** (<http://www.godfrey.org/>): A genealogy and history library located in Connecticut. Godfrey provides links to resources throughout the United States.
- **HeritageQuest** (<http://www.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/index>): Only available via a library subscription, HeritageQuest has U.S. census images, Revolutionary War pension records, Freedman records, digitized books and PERSI.
- **World Vital Records** (<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com/>): Has over 1.4 billion images for the United States and the world, including vital records, census images, newspapers, digitized books and more.
- **Alexander Street Press/American Civil War** (<http://alexanderstreet.com/products/cwld.htm>): Letters and diaries and resources about the American Civil War.
- **19th Century British Library Newspaper Digital Archives** (<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/news/newspdigproj/database/index.html>): A collection of newspapers to use for your English research.
- **Find My Past** (<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/home.jsp>): 650 million family history records from the U.K.
- **The Genealogist** (<http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>): UK census transcriptions, parish records, vital records, electoral rolls, directories and more.
- **Genline** (<http://www.genline.com/>): Swedish genealogy database site with over 17 million Swedish church record images.
- **Historic Mapworks Library Edition** (<http://www.proquest.com/en-US/catalogs/databases/detail/hmw.html>): Over 1 million historic maps that include property maps and directories.

The Family History Center Portal is only available through a Family History Center. You cannot

access it from home. There is a Family History Center at 682 South Avenue in New Canaan; telephone 203-966-8475. Unfortunately, this center is only open two hours a week, 7 PM to 9 PM on Tuesday evenings. ■

GENEALOGY TELEVISION PROGRAMS

Faces of America, Wednesdays on PBS, 8 PM EST:

What made America? What makes us? These two questions are at the heart of *Faces of America* with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The Harvard scholar turns to the latest tools of genealogy and genetics to explore the family histories of 12 renowned Americans: professor and poet Elizabeth Alexander, chef Mario Batali, comedian Stephen Colbert, novelist Louise Erdrich, journalist Malcom Gladwell, actress Eva Longoria, musician Yo-Yo Ma, director Mike Nichols, Her Majesty Queen Noor, television host/heart surgeon Dr. Mehmet Oz, actress Meryl Streep, and figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi.

In doing so, Professor Gates unravels the American tapestry, following the threads of his guests' lives back to their earliest origins around the globe. The many stories he uncovers—of displacement and homecoming, of material success and dispossession, of assimilation and discrimination—illuminate the American experience.

Who Do You Think You Are?, Fridays on NBC, 8 PM EST:

The television program *Who Do You Think You Are?* debuted in the U.S. Friday, 5 March 2010 at 8 PM EST. Share a journey through family history with Sarah Jessica Parker, Emmitt Smith, Lisa Kudrow, Matthew Broderick, Brooke Shields, Sarah Sarandon and Spike Lee as they discover the stories of their ancestors. *Who Do You Think You Are?* will also help people everywhere better understand how to discover their own family stories.

Watch one or both of these fine programs each week. ■

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Navigating FamilySearch.org Workshop will be presented by MGS president **Lloyd Sturges** on Tues., 23 March at the Greenwich Library, Computer Training Center, 101 West Putnam Ave. Greenwich CT 06830. The first workshop will begin at 10:30 AM. It will be repeated that afternoon at 1:00 PM. Space is limited and registration is required. To register call Carl White, local history librarian, at 203 622-7948.

Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc. (New York) will present **"Basics and Beyond: An Afternoon Family History Seminar"** on Sun., 11 April, 1-5 PM, at 130 East 59th St., Manhattan. Topics will include finding and interpreting census and vital records, passenger arrival and naturalization records; the latest in computer research; research organization, record-keeping and goal setting; and searching European records from your home. Intended for family historians of all backgrounds, presentations will follow two tracks: beginners, and more experienced. Advance registration is required. Further details and registration information are available on the JGS Website at www.jgsny.org

National Archives & Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20408-0001, has scheduled its **Sixth Annual Genealogy Fair** for Wed. and Thurs., 14-15 April at the Pennsylvania Avenue Plaza and Research Center. The fair showcases federal records located at the National Archives and also professional genealogy organizations' resources for doing research on family history. The fair will provide information and guidance for experienced genealogy professionals as well as beginners. Visit www.archives.gov/dc-metro/know-your-records/genealogy-fair/ for more information.

National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region:

Waltham, MA 02452-6399, 380 Trapelo Rd. Lectures are free, but space is limited. Register by calling 866-406-2379 or e-mailing waltham.archives@nara.gov

- Tues., 6 April, 2 PM, "Genealogy Research: What's Online; What's Not Online."

- Wed., 21 April, 10 AM, "Genealogy for Kids" (Gr. 3-8 and chaperones).
- Tues., 4 May, 2 PM, "Records Related to Military Service in the 18th, 19th & 20th Centuries."
- Tues., 1 June, 2 PM, "Finding Your Ancestors in Maritime Records."
- Tues., 6 July, 2 PM, "Census, Passenger Lists and Naturalization Records."
- Tues., 3 Aug., 2 PM, "Introduction to Genealogy."

Pittsfield, MA 01201-8230, 10 Conte Drive. Lectures are free and approximately one hour in length, but space is limited. Register by calling 413-236-3600. Email: pittsfield.archives@nara.gov

- 16 March, 10 AM, "Using Federal Census Records."
- 23 March, 10 AM, "Researching French Canadian Ancestors."
- 25 March, 10 AM, "Researching Irish American Ancestors."
- 8 April, 10 AM, "Researching Polish Ancestors."
- 9 April, 2 PM, "Beginning Your Genealogical Research at the National Archives."
- 16 April, 2 PM, "Using Federal Census Records."
- 23 April, 2 PM, "Using Military Records at the National Archives."
- 30 April, 10:30 AM, "Finding Italian Ancestors, Part 1." and 1:30 PM, "Finding Italian Ancestors, Part 2."

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 36 W. 44th Street, 7th floor, New York, NY 10036-8105; telephone 212-755-8532; FAX 212-754-4218. The Education Committee of the NYG&B again offers tours to the Municipal Archives and the New-York Historical Society.

- **New York City Municipal Archives**, Fri., 12 March, 1:30-4:30 PM. Introduction to the vital records, city directories, photographs, voters' records, etc. The otherwise closed archives will then be available for assisted research.
- **The New York Historical Society**, Wed., 18 March, 3-5 PM. Orientation on the genealogically pertinent holdings at the society. Registrants will have time for research on their own. Registration is required.

NYG&B, in partnership with the **Society of Mayflower Descendants**, is also offering

“Establishing Mayflower Ancestry” on 20 April at 5:30 PM in NYG&B’s new headquarters at 36 West 44th St., NYC. If you had an ancestor who was a Mayflower passenger and have an interest in joining the Society of Mayflower Descendants, Sarah Morse, Executive Director of the society in New York, will explain in detail the process for documenting your application and becoming part of that organization. Reservations are required. Book via NYG&B’s online store at: <http://secure.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?> or call 212-755-8532, ext. 211.

NYG&B and the New York Public Library are co-sponsoring a series of free lectures at 5:30 PM at the NYPL, 5th Ave, between 40th & 42nd Streets, in the South Court classrooms, first floor (off Astor Hall). Lectures will be accompanied by PowerPoint presentations, and will run about 50 minutes with time for questions afterwards. Registration is **not** required.

- **24 March: “Of City-Slickers and Strap-hangers: Researching Urban Ancestors.”** Dealing with large populations, multiple people with the same name, and the tendency of many city-dwellers to move frequently demands a unique approach to research and an understanding of which records will be most useful. Laura Murphy DeGrazia, CGSM, a member of the NYG&B Education Committee, and president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, will be the speaker.
- **13 April: “Trace Your Roots with DNA.”** DNA is the latest in a growing number of tools to find your family origins and connections. Learn how DNA testing may help advance your research. Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak, a member of the NYG&B, and Chief Genealogist for Ancestry.com, will be the speaker.

New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116:

- **Technology Seminar,** Fri., 26 Mar to Sat., 27 Mar., the relationship between technology and genealogy explored with NEHGS experts.
- **Spring Research Getaway,** Thurs, 8 April to Sat., 10 April, a guided program with one-on-one consultations and expert reviews of your research.
- **Irish Genealogy Research Tour,** Sun., 23

May to Sun., 30 May. This weeklong guided research tour will give you access to records in Dublin and the benefit of consultations with some of the foremost experts in Irish genealogy. The tour features guided research at various repositories in central Dublin, including the General Register Office, National Library, National Archives, and Registry of Deeds, among others. Daily programming includes tutorials, research tips and techniques lectures, personalized consultations and group dining events.

- **Come Home to New England I,** Mon., 14 June to Sat., 19 June. During a week of guided research, you’ll have access to personalized one-on-one consultations, morning lectures, and special participant-only admission hours. The week’s lectures include an orientation to the NEHGS collections, methodology seminars, and daily topical discussions of understanding record sources. The program includes group social events to meet other members, discuss research, and share stories.
- **Summer Research Getaway,** Thurs., 15 July to Sat., 17 July, a guided program with one-on-one consultations and expert reviews of your research.
- **Come Home to New England II,** Mon., 9 Aug., to Sat., 14 Aug. See description above.
- **Salt Lake City Research Tour,** Sun., 31 Oct. to Sun., 7 Nov., NEHGS’s 32nd annual research tour to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. This is an intensive week of guided research aided by the expert staff of NEHGS. Daily programming includes computer tutorials for accessing the library card catalog, research tips and techniques lectures, personalized consultations and group dining events.

For more information visit the NEHGS Website at www.newenglandancestors.org

Westchester County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 518, White Plains, NY 10601, presents speakers on genealogical subjects on the **second Saturday of each month** at 10 AM. (Premeeting networking starts at 9:30 AM.) Meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). A \$3 donation is asked of nonmembers. You can visit the society’s website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>

- **13 March, "Cemeteries of Westchester County"** by Patrick Raftery, Assistant Librarian at Westchester County Historical Society.
- **10 April, "What's Up Doc?"** by Jo Heffernan.
- **8 May, "Who Were the Parents of...?"** by Joe Lieby.
- **12 June, "Writing the Family Narrative"** by Tony Lauriano.

Genealogical Society of Bergen County, P.O. box 432, Midland Park, NJ 07432. Meetings are on Mondays at 7 PM, and are held in the auditorium of the Ridgewood Public Library, 125 North Maple Ave., Ridgewood, N.J. 07450.

- **22 March, "Irish Genealogy: Help! The Faerie Folk Hid My Ancestors"** will be presented by Deborah Large Fox. Topics include emigration, political and administrative divisions, records, and research strategies.
- **April 26, "How to Trace Your Italian Ancestors"** will be presented by Trish Mirarchi, C.G. How to obtain records in order to locate the ancestral town of origin, find microfilm for the town, translate the Italian records from the microfilm, and write to Italy for records will all

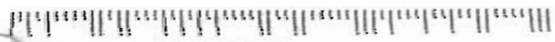
be covered.

- **24 May, "Genealogy-Related Records in the Brooklyn Diocesan Archives"** will be presented by Joseph Coen, archivist for the Diocese of Brooklyn for the last 15 years. Information on what is available and how to request it will be covered.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304, 800-473-0060, <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

The **2010 NGS Family History Conference, Follow Your Ancestral Trail**, will be held Wed.-Sat., 28 April, to 1 May, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conference program is available at <http://members.ngsgenealogy.org/Conferences/2010Program.cfm>. To register, visit the NGS Website, click on Conferences & Events, Annual Conference, and then Attendee Registration, or download the form, fill it in, and mail it to NGS. ■

**Deadline for next newsletter
20 April 2010**



068203625 0013

Peter Biggins
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Darien, CT 6820

**MEETING
20 MARCH 2010, 2 PM
DARIEN LIBRARY**

**Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111**

