Christian/Given/First Name Variations (based on Matheson, Robert. *Official Varieties and Synonymes of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland.* See references)

- Nicknames are often not obvious:
  - Criddy for Christian, Moss for Maurice
  - Nancy or Nanny for Anne, Polly or Molly for Mary

- Synonym names were used interchangeably:
  - Owen vs Eugene, Peter vs Pierce, Connor vs Cornelius
  - Bridget vs Bedelia or Delia, Johanna or Joanna vs Jane

- Irish equivalents for English names:

English	Anglicized Irish
Bernard	Bryan
John	Shane
James	Shemus, Shamus
Bridget	Brideen, Breeda
Mary	Maura, Maureen, Moira, Moya

[When researching, you will often come across alternate forms of given names (first names, middle names, etc.) many of which are not obvious. As you know, people can be referred to by different names in different times and places. Searching the file below for a "strange" name may lead to names used in other records. I've included abbreviations (ex: Jno. for John), nicknames (ex: Nabby for Abigail), Synonyms (ex: Delia for Bridget), Irish (ex: Alaois for Aloysius) and Latin (ex: Ioannes for John). Given Name Alternatives for Irish Research]

Middle Names

- Middle names are a relatively recent development, having begun in the 1700s. Prior to the mid-1800's a middle name indicated upper class or illegitimacy (alleged father's surname). Note that 10 of the first 13 US presidents did not have middle names.
- We often know 1 given name for an ancestor, but is that a first name or middle name? People often were known by their middle name, but records might only include their first name.

Surnames (based on MacLysaght, Edward. *The Surnames of Ireland.* See references)

o Hereditary surnames were generally used in Ireland beginning in the 11th century.
o The first surnames all were prefixed by Mac or O and were patronymic – indicating "son of" or "grandson of" a male ancestor.
   o Both Mac and Mc are legitimate prefixes for Irish and Scottish surnames. Mc is merely an abbreviation for Mac, as is M' or M.
o Later some surnames indicated follower, devotee or servant by using giolla or maol while still using the Mac/O prefixes:
   o *Mac Giolla Mhártain* which became Gilmartin for "follower of St. Martin"
   o *Ó Maoil bhreanainn* which became Mulrennan for "follower of St. Brendan"
   o So the current prefixes Gil and Mul indicate follower or servant
o Types of surnames:
   o Ancestral/Patronymic
   o Placename
   o   Occupational:
   o *Ó hÍceadha* which became Hickey for doctor or healer.
   o   Characteristic:
   o *Mac Dubhghaill* which became MacDowell for black stranger.

- The Mac and O prefixes were dropped in the early 17th century although Mac names tended to be more resistant to change. A resurgence in the usage of prefixes began in the 1880's.
  - Statistics from birth registrations and voter's lists for the usage of the O prefix with Sullivan:

Year	% using the O prefix
1866	4
1890	13
1914	20
1944	60

- Resumption of usage of the O prefix has been inconsistent across names. Many common O names rarely use the prefix today: Murphy, Kelly, Donnelly, Doyle, Foley, Hogan, Kennedy, Nolan, Quinn and Sheridan.
- There are cases where the wrong prefix has been adopted: MacGorman resumed as O'Gorman.
- Other ways names were changed,
  - Translation: *Mac an Ghabhann* (son of smith) >> MacGowan or Smith
  - Mistranslation: *Mac Giolla Eoin* >> MacAloon >> Monday,
       because Aloon sounds like *Luain*, the Irish word for Monday
  - Abbreviation: *Mac Giolla Iasachta* >> Macgillysaghta >> MacLysaght >> Lysaght
  - Distortion: *Mac Giolla Íosa* >> MacAleese >> MacLice
  - Absorption: Sullahan changed to Sullivan, Griffey to Griffin, Blowick to Blake
- MacLysaght found 38 variant spellings for MacEnaney including tombstones for a family of 6 with 6 different spellings: McEneaney, McAneaney, McAneny, McEnaney, McEneany and Bird. [*éan* is Irish for bird.]
- A single name doesn't necessarily have one origin. In County Cavan, Smith derives from MacGowan, but in other locations, Smith has English origins. Clifford in County Kerry is from O'Cluvanes, but may have other origins in other locations. Some names are still predominately found in 1 or 2 counties while others are found throughout the country.   The *Irish Times* site, includes alternate spellings and name usage by county: http://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/index.htm (based on 1847-64 data) .

Surname Variations (based on Matheson, Robert. *Official Varieties and Synonymes of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland.* See references)

- Some Prefixes and Affixes are "relative"
  - Prefix Mc, Mac, Fitz = son of, O' = son or grandson of, Gil and Mul = follower or servant of
  - Affix s, son = son of
- Some Prefixes and Affixes served to differentiate families with common surnames

- Prefixes - 3 forms:

without prefix	with prefix	prefix incorporated
Guinness	McGuinness	Maginnis
Reilly	O'Reilly	
Harris	FitzHarris	Feeharry
Hunt	De La Hunt	Delahunt
Clair	St. Clair	Sinclair

- Prefixes – Replacing the Surname:

without prefix	with prefix	prefix as surname
Lavery	Baun-Lavery	Baun
Lavery	Roe-Lavery	Roe
Lavery	Hard-Lavery	Hardy
Xxx	McXxx/MacXxx	Mack
Xxx	FitzXxx	Fitz

- Affixes – Replacing the Surname:

without affix	with affix	affix as surname
Ryan	Ryan (Magrath)	Magrath

- The prefix/affix was often the father's or mother's Christian name, the mother's maiden name or the grandfather's Christian name. Other additions were related to personal characteristics, locality or occupation.

	First name	Surname	Father's name
(prefix)	John	Daniel Murphy	Daniel Murphy
(affix)	Tom	Joyce (Martin)	Martin Joyce
(sometimes omit common surname)	Johnny	O'John	John Sullivan
	John	Williams	William Sullivan

- Names used interchangeably
  - Trin-Lavery vs Armstrong (-language translation)
  - Johnson (son of John) vs McShane (son of Shane - Irish for John)
  - Edmundson (son of Edmond) vs McAimon (son of Aimon - Irish for Edmond)
  - Hewson vs McHugh

- Names used interchangeably - English and Irish Names

English Form	Anglicized Irish Form	Irish Words
Bird	Heany, Henehan, McEneany	ean = bird
Smith	Gow, Gowan, McGowan	gobha = a smith

- **Initial Letter Variations** — name1 / name2

	name1	name2
Dropped following prefix	McClure	McLure
Substitution following prefix	McIllmoyle	McElmoyle
Transposed following prefix	McElroy	McLeroy
Repeat C after Mc	McArdle	McCardle
Substitution	Carr	Kerr
	Phelan	Whelan
Dropped	Ahearn	Hearn
Added	Hammond	Whammond

- **Second Letter Variations**

	name1	name2
Vowel change	Laughlin	Loughlin
	Mulligan	Milligan
Vowel dropped	Eagan	Egan

- **2nd/3rd Letter Variations**

	name1	name2
Vowel change	Reid	Read
	Rorke	Rourke
Vowel transposition	Reilly	Rielly

- **Other Letter Variations**

	name1	name2
Consonants dropped	Thompson	Thomson
Consonants repeated	Mathews	Matthews
Interchangeable consonants	Fraser	Frazer
Interchangeable syllables	Doherty	Dougherty
Syllables omitted/contracted	Donnellan	Donlan

- **Terminal Letter Variations**

	name1	name2
Interchangeable, y for ey	Mahony	Mahoney
Dropped	Boland	Bolan
Added	Sloan	Sloane
Added final s	Connor	Connors

Why can't I find Uncle Brendan in the xyz database?

Of course he may not be there. However, he may be there but under a name or spelling that you haven't anticipated. How could that be?

Uncle Brendan
• "misspelled" his name accidentally or because of illiteracy
• consciously changed the spelling
• used an unexpected name
• nick name: JP, Jack for John
• synonyms: Polly for Mary, Delia for Bridget
• middle name: instead of first name or vice versa
• anglicized/americanized: John for Sean, White for Ban
• …or maybe Brendan wasn't around, so a relative or neighbor gave incorrect info

Recorder (recorded what Uncle Brendan told them verbally)
• misspelled the name
• assumed a certain spelling of the name (assumed Kelly instead of Kelley)
• spelt the name phonetically (Araphady for O'Rafferty)
• misinterpreted Uncle Brendan's accent

Transcriber (transcribed hand written records for printed or online indexes or databases)
• made a typo or transposed characters or combined middle initial with last name
• made a mistake because of the poor quality of the source document
• made a mistake because of the period handwriting

Generally,
• uncommon names have more variants than common names
• longer names have more variants than shorter names
• See http://rwguide.rootsweb.com/lesson8.htm "Why U Can't Find Your Ancestors, Misspeld Knames"

• Name Issues
o Before 1900, dates & spelling were not as rigorously followed as today
o For O names & Mc/Mac names must search indexes with & without the prefix
o Ma is another variation on Mc/Mac. Magory instead of McGory
o Inconsistent punctuation in indexes: O' Flynn, OFlynn, O Flynn, O_Flynn, O.Flynn,
 McGrath, MacGrath, Mc Grath, M'Grath, Mgrath, Magrath
o Note that married women from "Catholic countries" often used their maiden names, (both in
   the old country & in the US). In Ireland, women tended to sign their maiden name to birth
   certificates and widows used their maiden names.
o Naming Patterns
****

Sons' Names

First Son Named for paternal grandfather
Second Son Named for maternal grandfather
Third Son Named for father
Fourth Son Named for father's oldest brother
Fifth Son Named for mother's eldest brother
Sixth Son Named for father's second oldest brother

****

Daughters' Names

First Daughter Named after maternal grandmother
Second Daughter Named after paternal grandmother
Third Daughter Named after mother
Fourth Daughter Named after mother's oldest sister
Fifth Daughter Named after father's eldest sister
Sixth Daughter Named after mother's second oldest sister

Any additional children continue the pattern, following the order of father's and mother's
brothers and sisters.
One other common practice was to name a child after a child who had died within the family.

   (Southern New England Irish - www.rootsweb.com/~ussnei/IrishNaming.htm)

When using a search engine (like Google) or other tool that accepts multiple surnames: search using both the husband's
surname and the wife's maiden name. If at least one of the names is relatively uncommon, this search will likely yield
useful results.

Search Tips/Techniques - Different databases provide different search options - some offer one way to search while others offer multiple techniques. To maximize your success, read the search instructions for each database you use. Common search techniques are described below.

• **Exact Search**

An exact search only finds instances of the exact same string of characters that you enter. If you are searching for a name that has 10 spelling variations, you must do 10 individual exact searches. Exact searching may be a user choice or it might be the default option.

• **Non-Exact Search**

If a non-exact search is offered, some sort of "smarts" are built into the search engine to find the string that you enter plus other "similar strings". Generally you don't have to do as many searches when non-exact is offered. The catch is understanding what "similar strings" will be included.

• **Soundex**

Soundex is also intended to find more names than just the one you have entered. Each surname is given a 4 character code, where 1 code represents multiple similar names. The soundex code H250 represents Hogan and Hagan among others. A soundex search for Hogan will return all names it finds which are represented by H250 including Hogan and Hagan.

Soundex Coding Chart:

Code	Letters	
1	B,P,F,V	The letters A, E, I, O, U, Y, W, and H are not coded.
2	C, S, K, G, J, Q, X, Z	When two consecutive letters have the same code
3	D,T	number, treat as one letter.
4	L	
5	M,N	
6	R	

To form a soundex code:

Take the first letter of the surname followed by 3 digits representing the remaining letters of the surname from left to right following the rules above.

If there are not 3 codable letters, then add zeroes to make 3 digits.

If there are more than 3 codable letters, only use the first 3.

Example: Greenwood = G653, G for G/6 for r/5 for n/3 for d

A "correct" Soundex converter (not all internet converters do it totally correctly!) http://www.eogn.com/soundex/

Note: Sound-alike names with different codes, Knowles - K542 vs Nolles - N420.
        Prefix vs no prefix.

• **Wildcards**

Wildcard search lets you find multiple name variations by entering part of a name. Rules for wildcard searches vary from site to site, so read the instructions for each site. Here are some examples of typical usage.

* represents a string of zero to many characters
? represents a string of exactly 1 character

Entering N*L* would yield names including NEIL, NEILL, NEAL, NIEL, NEALL
Entering NE?L would yield names including NEIL and NEAL but not NEILL, NIEL, NEALL

• **Search Strategy,** from "Genealogy Jackpots" by Rick Crume, *Family Tree Magazine,* December 2003
o   first, middle, last name
o   first, middle initial, last name
o   first, last name
o   soundex or non-exact
o   **if last name is optional, try first name only plus date and/or place of birth**
o   specific year or range of years only
o   US state or Canadian province only
o   town or county only
o   parent's, spouse's, or sibling's names

Google Techniques

- Google searches are not case sensitive (even inside quotes), so don't worry about capitalization.
- To find an exact phrase, enclose in quotes, *"John Hogan"*. Does not find John J. Hogan or John James Hogan or Jno. Hogan or Hogan, John.
- Using *"John * Hogan"* will find John J. Hogan, John James Hogan, but not John Hogan.
- To search for a person in a locality: *"John Hogan" "Ontario County" "New York"*
- To search for a couple: *"John Hogan" "Mary Murphy"*
- Searching on *Hogan* returns not just Hogan, but also Hogans, Hogann, Hoganopolis – anything related to the "stem" of the search term. To avoid "stemming" place a plus sign immediately in front of the search term: "*Hogan*"
- Minus sign: *McCartney – Paul* will return McCartney's but not the Beatle (or any other Paul!)
- The OR operator is useful for searching for spelling variations, *"John Hogan" OR "John J. Hogan" OR "Hogan John"*
- Google requires "Boolean" operators to be capitalized (AND, OR)
- Compound clauses: (John OR "John J" OR "John James") AND (Hogan OR Hagan)
- Besides searching on full names, try abbreviations, such as JJ Hogan or J. J. Hogan
- The tilde (~) will find synonyms (~ genealogy)
- *Site:* followed by any domain name enables a google search of that site. To search all RootsWeb pages for military, include *military site:rootsweb.ancestry.com* in search string. Another example, *site:www.facebook.com Hogan*
- We've all clicked on a link in the Google results and gotten "File Not Found" or something similar. Return back to the google results page and click on the "Cached" link. This will return the page's contents as they were when Google last indexed it.
- Maps: enter an address in the search box. *3280 Lake To Lake Rd, Stanley, NY*. When the map is displayed, click on More and then Street View to see an interactive photo of that address (not all addresses have photos).
- Click on the Images tab at top of the Google page. Then enter a name, place, or thing to bring up images.
- For reverse phone number searches: enter number in search box: *123 456-7890*
- Calculator: enter *1930 – 73* (for approximate birth year for someone who died in 1930 at the age of 73)
- Converter: enter *10 rods in miles* (to convert one unit of measure to another)
- Range of years: you can include a range of years on your search: *obituary 1903..1917* (that's 2 dots)
- Search Google Books http://books.google.com
- Google does not consider *Michigan* and *MI* to be equal – must search both. Plus prior to the 2-letter state abbreviations (which came into being ~1963), longer abbreviations were used, like *Mich*. Here's a Wiki that lists new and old state abbreviations. Google does not consider any word and its abbreviation to be equal.
- More detail on using Google can be found at Googling for Genealogy on my site.

Other Techniques

- Strategy: Start with a general search and then progress to more specific searches if necessary. (The same strategy works with non-Google searches like those that use forms. Begin by filling the fewest possible number of fields. The more fields you fill in, the fewer results you'll receive.)
- Prepare a list of spelling variations for names to be searched. See Spelling Substitution Tables for the United States and Canada
- As you develop search strings for spelling variations, you can save them in a text file (like *"John Hogan" OR "John J. Hogan" OR "John James Hogan"*). You might create a file, SpellingVariations.txt, with search strings for your most commonly searched names. When you want to search on a name, just cut and paste a search string into the search engine. Could also setup such a search string in Google Alerts.
- Google is not the only game in town. Every search engine uses a different strategy which yields different results. Yahoo.com may have indexed more pages than Google. Mega search engines use multiple engines, for example, dogpile.com returns results from google, yahoo, bing and ask.
- There are also genealogy-specific search engines. MyHeritage Research (free) will search over 1500 genealogy databases. Mocavo.com is a relatively new tool.

Resources

• Coghlan, Ronan. *Irish Christian Names: An A-Z of First Names,* (London: Cassell Ltd., 1979).
• MacLysaght, Edward. *The Surnames of Ireland.* 6th ed. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1985).
• Matheson, Robert. *Official Varieties and Synonymes of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland.* (1890,1901. Reprint, Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1995).
• Matheson, Robert. *Surnames in Ireland.* (1901,1909. Reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1994).
• Rose, Christine, *Nicknames Past and Present,* 5th ed. (San Jose: CR Publications, 2007).

• https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Ireland Ireland Research Wiki at FamilySearch
• http://rwguide.rootsweb.com/lesson8.htm "Why U Can't Find Your Ancestors, Misspeld Knames"
• http://www.archives.gov/research/census/soundex.html Info on Soundex from the National Archives
• http://www.ipa.net/~magreyn/#Record%20Interpreter Martin, Charles T. *The Record Interpreter: A Collection of Abbreviations, Latin Words and Names Used in English Historical Manuscripts and Records.* (London: Stevens and Sons, Ltd., 1910). Includes Latin forms of English given names and surnames, which is useful for interpreting Catholic Church records written in Latin.
• www.from-ireland.net/names/peop/latintoeng.htm Irish Parish Records – Latin to English name translations
• https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Latin_Genealogical_Word_List Latin Word List at FamilySearch

• A "correct" Soundex converter (not all internet converters do it totally correctly!) http://www.eogn.com/soundex/

Subscriptions made available by Monroe County Library System:
• Heritage Quest, Free at http://www3.libraryweb.org/subpage.aspx?id=795   with a Monroe County library card
• Ancestry.Com, Free at the Rochester Public Library, Rundel Bldg, Local History Room (also Brighton, Fairport, Henrietta, Ogden, Greece and Penfield Libraries) with Monroe County library card
• AmericanAncestors.org (for New England research), Free at the Rundel Bldg, Local History Room with a library card

Subscriptions available at Family History Centers (including Brockport, Rochester, Palmyra, Perinton – find locations)**:**
• US Research: Heritage Quest, Fold3.com, Godfrey Memorial Library, American Civil War
• UK Research: FindMyPast.co.uk, British Newspaper Archive, The Genealogist
• World Research: Historic Map Works, World Vital Records, genline.com (Swedish)
• NEW: Ancestry.com - FHC Version

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