



# Cullen

*The Name*



## *Cullinane - Cullin - Cullen*

Up until the nineteenth century, there were many surnames which were not 'fixed' in one definite form or spelling. This seems to be the case with the Cullen surname and was used as a synonym of a number of different, and distinctly lesser known Irish surnames, as a more convenient version of the name - easier to pronounce and easier to spell.

The Cullinane surname is often spelt Cullin (dropping the 'ane') and Cullen, especially in America and Canada, according to various sources connected with the Cullinane and Cullinan family genealogy project website. Many with that name immigrated to the U.S. and in particular, Boston, Massachusetts in the 19th century.

Much of this change and variation in surnames has to do with the English language taking over from Irish during the nineteenth century. For example - you will often find in the early part of that period, parish registers listing a family of children being baptised with different variations of the spelling of their name being recorded.

The language of the people was Irish, the official language was English and the church registers were kept in Latin. So it's little wonder there were so many discrepancies and inconsistencies in the recording of surnames.

Parishes in different counties often spelt the surnames of many families differently and when the clergy were transferred from one county to another, the surnames were sometimes recorded in parish registers incorrectly. These inconsistencies were only revealed in later years when birth certificates were requested by the family in question.

Perhaps Dominick Cullen also changed his name by degrees from Cullinane, to Cullin and eventually to Cullen while in the U.S. It's only a theory of course but some Cullinane families also used the surname Cullen interchangeably.





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*The Cullen family are related in that the parent family was originally located in County Wexford, prior to about 1600. At the time, the Cullens were evicted from their lands there due to the Penal Laws. Some relocated to other areas and later returned, some crossed the channel, but most settled throughout various parts of Ireland.*

*The Cullens of County Wexford are commonly referred to as Norman, having originated in Wales or Flanders. The O'Cuilleans are found to be descended from a Cuílin who was a descendant of Brian Boru.*

*Many Cullens, now living in Leitrim, are descendants from that original clan and perhaps our Cullen ancestors just crossed the border to Roscommon. Dominick Cullen's father, Michael, was known as Cullinane, as clearly shown on his birth certificate, yet when Dominick erected the headstone in memory of his father and late wife, he inscribed his father's name as Cullen.*

