

Oxford Reference

The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland

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Cowan

Variants: COWEN, COWIN, COWANS, COWENS, COEN, COAN, COYNE, COWING

- **Current frequencies:** GB 10238, Ireland 1167
- **GB frequency 1881:** 6087
- **Main GB location 1881:** widespread in Scotland and N England
- **Main Irish location 1847–64:** E Ulster: esp. Down; also Galway

Scottish, Manx: (i) relationship name reduced form of McOWEN and McKEOWN, see McEWAN. (ii) relationship name Manx, and Scottish, from a reduced form of Irish *Ó Comhdhain* and *Mac Comhdhain* 'descendant or son of *Comhdan*' or Gaelic *Mac Comhghain* 'son of *Comhghan* ('the twin')'. Pronounced to rhyme with *Owen*, the name sometimes appears as *Coan* and COHEN in Down, and has been used interchangeably with Irish COYNE in Connacht and McLHONE in Tyrone. In IoM the name is pronounced /'kauən/ (with *Cow-* as in English *cow*). (iii) locative name sometimes a variant of COLQUHOUN, pronounced *Cohoon* in Scotland and *Cahoon* in Ulster.

Early bearers

IoM:

Mac Cowyn, 1408, Mac Owen, 1422, Mac Cowen, 1429, Mac Cowne, 1511, Cawne, 1603, Cowin, 1611, Cown, 1651, Cowen, 1685, Coune, 1703, 1721, Couin, 1781 in Kneen; Patrick Cowne, 1575 in Kneen (Castle Rushen).

England:

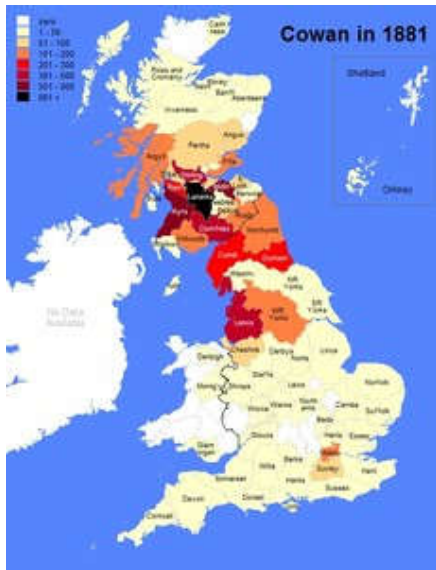
Willm. Cowan, 1594 in IGI (Wintringham, ER Yorks); Ricardi Cowen, 1601 in IGI (Kirkby Lonsdale, Westm); Collin Cowan, 1615 in IGI (Horncastle, Lincs).

Ireland:

John Cowan, chancellor of Christ Church, 1582 in Fiants Elizabeth §3897 (Waterford); Cormock O'Cowan, 1582 in Fiants Elizabeth §4075 (Kyltevan, Roscommon); Connor O'Cowghane, husbandman, 1585 in Fiants Elizabeth §4678 (Rosidnellan, Roscommon); Teig McDonogho O'Cowan, husbandman, 1590 in Fiants Elizabeth §5438 (Ardkiern, Roscommon); Moriertagh O'Cowane, husbandman, 1593 in Fiants Elizabeth §5808 (Baslik, Roscommon).

References

Black; MacLysaght; Ulster Surnames; Kneen.



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Cowan, 1881 frequency.

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