

British Surnames – Origins

A) _____ **son** = son of

Examples: Williamson, Johnson, Erikson, Anderson (son of Andrew)

B) _____ **wright** = maker

Examples: Arkwright (maker of chests), Cartwright (maker of carts)

C) **Mc/Mac** _____ = son of (Scotland)

Examples: McGregor, McEwan, McDonald, MacFarlane, McLaren

D) **O'** _____ = descendant of (Ireland) (originally “of” - similar to “de” in Portuguese names)

Examples: O'Reilly, O'Leary, O'Brien

E) **Smith** = works with metal (the most common English surname)

F) **Jones** = son of John (the second most common English surname)

G) **Armstrong** = has a strong arm

H) **Carpenter** = works with wood

Some famous names:

Michael O'Leary (1961 -), Irish businessman, CEO of Ryan Air;

Ewan McGregor (1971 -), Scottish actor;

Richard and Maurice McDonald (1909-1988, 1902-1971), Founders of the hamburger chain;

Robert, James and Edward Johnson (1845-1910, 1856-1932, 1852-1934), Founders of Johnson & Johnson;

Jon Anderson (1944 -), English singer and songwriter;

Veronica Cartwright (1949 -), English-born American actress;

Louis Armstrong (1901-1971), American trumpeter, composer and singer;

Neil Armstrong (1930-2012), American astronaut and engineer. First person to walk on the moon;

Richard and Karen Carpenter (1946 - , 1950-1983), American pop musicians;

Will Smith (1968 -), American actor, producer, rapper, comedian, and songwriter;

Tommy Lee Jones (1946 -), American actor and producer.