

**Surnames and *dit* or *dite* Names:** The preservation of French-Canadian Catholic parish records allows those with French-Canadian ancestry to research most, if not all, of their ancestry back to the original ancestors who immigrated to New France. This is especially true if your ancestors settled in areas where Catholic parish records have been digitized or transcribed by Genealogical or Historical Societies, as well as Genealogical Dictionaries. See our Research Guides page for information on researching in these sources and our French-Canadian Links Page for links to French-Canadian Genealogical Societies. While researching in these records, some people encounter what they perceive as a “brick wall” because they cannot easily find a particular record. These “brick walls” can often be broken down if they understand three facts and consult the links that follow: 1. The spelling of surnames were not standardized in parish or civil records; 2. Many French-Canadians used *dit* or *dite* (the feminine form) names or nicknames in addition to a surname or in place of a surname; 3. After they moved to a community where the residents predominantly spoke English, some surnames were translated into English.

See the explanation of Names and *dit* or *dite* names offered by *Programme de recherche en démographie historique de l'Université de Montréal (PRDH) online*: <http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca/en/nomsPrenoms.htm> . On *PRDH*'s page you find links to two databases. After you have entered a surname into one database, *PRDH* will produce a list of the spellings found in their database through 1799. The second link allows you to enter a *dit* or *dite* name into the database, *PRDH* will then produce a list of the surnames associated with that *dit* or *dite* name. If you prefer consulting a list that can be printed, you can consult the excellent resources provided by the American-French Genealogical Society. Link for Surnames and *dit/dite* names: <http://www.afgs.org/ditnames/index1.html>. Links for French given names and the English and Latin forms of the names: <http://www.afgs.org/ditnames/givenname.html>

**Podcasts:** Please see episodes 2, 4, and 5 of Sandra Goodwin's website for her podcasts regarding *dit/dite* names and name variations: <http://maplestarsandstripes.com/about-maple-stars-and-stripes/>