Transliteration of English Names Into Hebrew

In this note we give the principles by which English names can be transliterated into Hebrew in all the possible forms. The consonants are simple to transliterate. The table below shows the letter to letter correspondence.

English Letter	Hebrew Letter	English Letter	Hebrew Letter
B	ב	P	פ
C (*see* sound)	צ	Q	ק
C, ck (*kay* sound)	ק	R	ר
D	ד	S (ess sound)	ס
F	פ	S (zee sound)	ז, ס
G	ג	Sh	ש
H	ה	T	ט
J	ג	Ta	ת
K	ק	Th	ת
Kn	נ	V When appearing next to a long vowel	ב
Ks	קס	V When appearing next to a short vowel	ו
L	ל	W	ו
M	מ	X	קס
N	נ	Z	ז

The vowels are the place where there is some variability in the sense of putting the vowels in completely or incompletely or some vowels present and some vowels not present. The only exception to this is the long **I** vowel which has no way in Hebrew of being shown by nikud. Therefore, whenever the English word has a long **I** sound, either a **יי** must be used or a single **י**. The logic behind this is that the double **יי** is the modern Hebrew convention to show the long **I** sound. The single **י** is also possible because the English long **I** vowel is a dipthong. It is really a composition of and **Ah** sound with and **ee** sound. The **Ah** sound can be designated by a patach

nikud on the previous consonant and the **י** designates the **ee** sound. The next table gives the possible transliteration for the vowel sounds of English.

If the last sound of a name is a vowel, like Monroe, or McKinley, that vowel sound is always explicit in the Hebrew. All the other vowel sounds can be present or be not present to make the spelling variations.

We form spelling variations with the basic name with and with various vowel omissions and to these variations we add a set of variations of these spelling variations preceded by the first initial.

If a name has a double consonant, we form spelling variations with the consonant in Hebrew both in the doubled form and singular form. Names such as Jefferson, Fillmore, Kennedy, and Harrison are instances in which this rule applies.

If the Hebrew spelling of a last name with the vowels totals three characters, then we do not make a spelling variation without the vowel and if the personality is known with a first and middle initial we form variations with the first initial and the first and second initial preceding the last name.

English Vowel	Long Vowel Sound	Hebrew	English Short Vowel	Hebrew
A	cake **Rea**gen	א	**ca**t, first vowel of a long word: **Ma**dison	-
			the vowel of a stressed syllable in the middle of a word Buch**a**nan Eisenh**o**wer	א
	Hayes, **Tay**lor **Rea**gen	יי	at the beginning of a word: **A**dams **A**rthur	א

English Vowel	Long Vowel Sound	Hebrew	English Short Vowel	Hebrew
			first vowel of a short word (no more than 5 Hebrew characters) T**a**ft, Gr**a**nt, C**a**rter	א
E	s**ee**k, b**ea**d f**ie**ld, P**ie**rce	י	s**e**t, J**e**fferson	ֶ
I	b**i**ke T**y**ler	י, יי The vowel cannot be omitted since Hebrew has no way to make a long I sound by nikud.	b**i**t Mad**i**son W**i**lson Cl**i**nton N**i**xon F**i**llmore Harr**i**son	י
I	**Ei**senhower	אי,יי, א The vowel cannot be omitted since Hebrew has no way to make a long I sound by nikud.		
O	b**oa**t, r**o**se P**o**lk, R**oo**sevelt	ו	**o**range, d**o**t F**o**rd	ו
U	gl**ue** Tr**u**man H**oo**ver	ו	**u**mbrella, p**u**p, Roos**e**velt	ו
EU	b**eau**ty Van B**u**ren	יו		

Syllable	Example	Hebrew
ton	Washington Clinton	טון טו
son	Madison, Jefferson	סון סו
ing	Harding Washington	ינג נג
land	Cleveland	לנד
velt	Roosevelt	ולט