

Are Thomas MacMorran and Robert MacMorran brothers? My guess is if they are brothers, they are half-brothers and here is why.

Here is what I have on the Henry MacMorran Family Tree. Of course, I am not documenting the Thomas MacMorran side, but I have searched it in the hopes it would help me locate more information on Henry's grandfather, Hugh MacMorran. I have been able to find nothing from Thomas' tree to help me or to prove Thomas and Robert were brothers.

1.

A. Exhibit A - Charlotte MacMorran's Family Tree (Port Huron Museum)

Charlotte MacMorran's family tree on her father, David Williams MacMorran (Exhibit A) states Robert William MacMorran was born Dec. 25, 1816 and died on Dec. 25, 1841. She states Hugh MacMorran lived in Edinburgh, Scotland and died in Charleston, N.C. She lists Hugh's death year as 1821. She lists Jean Gordon as Robert MacMorran's mother and Hugh's wife.

B. Charlotte MacMorran's Notes on the MacMorran Family (Port Huron Museum)

The notes made by Charlotte MacMorran were light in nature. I did take a scan of them, but I transcribed them when I was at the museum because the print is so faint.

Charlotte MacMorran's notes at the museum state the following:

MacMorran (McMorran)

"Hugh MacMorran was an owner of wollen mills in Lanark, Scotland. After residing a short time in Tipperery, Ireland, he came to S. Carolina where he died of yellow fever in 1821. His wife, Jean Gordon (Finley) returned to Edinburgh with her only son Robert William MacMorran and lived with her father.

Robert William MacMorran was educated at a private school in Edinburgh, but after running away to America he was brought back by his family to finish his education. On coming of age he returned to America, living in New York City, then came to Port Huron, Mich. in 1830. He married Isabella Kewley there and was an importer of fine woolens and a partner in a merchant tailor firm. He suffered a sunstroke and in the delirium before his death destroyed all personal and family records. Henry Gordon MacMorran was his only son."

MacMorran

"Hugh MacMorran: An owner of woolen mills in Lanark. Came to Charleston, S.C. where he died of yellow fever in 1821. His widow, Jean Gordon MacMorran returning to Edinburgh, Scotland (where she remarried) taking with her her son Robert William MacMorran.

Robert William MacMorran: b. Dec 25, 1816 d. 1855. After his return to Scotland he ran away back to America but being under age his family brought him back to Edinburgh. However, as soon as he was of

age he again sailed for America and lived for a time in New York, then came to Port Huron, Mich., where he imported fine woolens for the tailors from England and Scotland. He had a sun stroke a year before his death and in his delirium destroyed all family records.”

2. Research Based Upon Charlotte MacMorran’s Family Tree and Notes on the MacMorran Family

A. Hugh MacMorran

Research, Proof & Rationale

I had seen mention Hugh MacMorran was born in Douglas, Lanarkshire, Scotland on his page found at the website link at the end of this paragraph. I do not have any notes on a recorded date of birth from this website. However, this website is no longer running. I wish I had saved this website to my diigo.com account. I use diigo to bookmark websites now, but I did not years ago when I started my research. I have plugged this website into the waybackmachine, but I am not able to view any of the content it lists. Looks like this site ran from 2012 to 2018. I should have captured it myself. However, I am not sure this is accurate either. Here is the source: Mills, D. (2015). Early Families of St. Clair County, Michigan. Retrieved from: <http://dmgenealogy.info/StClairPioneers/index.htm>

Douglas

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas,_South_Lanarkshire

Lanarkshire

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lanarkshire>

Lanark

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lanark>

Lanark/Lanarkshire, Scotland Genealogy

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Lanark,_Lanarkshire,_Scotland_Genealogy

Douglas is a town in the old historic county of Lanarkshire, Scotland. I have no record of the actual year Hugh was born, so I have approximated his birth year as 1782, according to his age of 42 in 1824, at the time of his death. Charlotte states Hugh operated a woolen mill in Lanark. This does not mean Hugh was not born in Douglas. But if you look at the Douglas Wiki page you will see Douglas is about 12 miles SW of Lanark. So, it is conceivable Hugh was born in Douglas.

B. Exhibit B - Returns of Deaths for the City of Charleston, South Carolina

Research, Proof & Rationale

I estimated Hugh’s birth year as 1782 based on the info found in Return of Deaths for the City of Charleston, South Carolina on Ancestry (Exhibit B) (South Carolina Death Records, 1821-1965).

Charlotte has his death date as 1821 (Exhibit A)– but if you look at the Returns of Death document (Exhibit B) it would be easy to misread it. The “4” in 1824 does resemble a “1”.

I could not find any other death record for Hugh MacMorran on Ancestry. This led me to write to the Charleston County Public Library in South Carolina to see if they had any other information on Hugh MacMorran or his death. They sent me the same documentation that I retrieved from Ancestry on Hugh (death), Robert & Jean Gordon (ship manifests of them coming to South Carolina, I will get to this document shortly).

Here was the response I received from the library:

“Hi Ms. Williams,

A copy of the City of Charleston death register for 29 August to 5 September 1824 which contains the entry for Hugh MacMorran is attached. He's on the 4th line down from the top. The record unfortunately doesn't give any information about MacMorran's marital status or any further personal information about his origins than the note that he was born in Scotland. It seems from the other entries on the page that MacMorran died during a Yellow Fever epidemic, which may account for the lack of detail in the record regarding his marital status and occupation. I'm not 100% sure where the "Baptist" cemetery was in 1824, but it is possible that this entry refers to the First Baptist Cemetery located at 61 Church Street which was in use around the time of his death.

In case he might have been a recent immigrant, I checked Brent H. Holcomb's *Passenger Arrivals at the Port of Charleston, 1820-1829*. This book includes Holcomb's transcriptions of two sets of the same passenger records kept for the Port of Charleston during the decade when MacMorran died. While he is not listed in the index, I did notice that a Jane McMoran, a 43 year old woman, and a Robert McMoran, a 3 year old boy, came to Charleston in February 1823 on the brig Rosina, which set sail from Dundee. While there is no evidence to connect Hugh with Jane and Robert, I thought you'd like to know about them anyway since they are the only other individuals with a similar surname that I came across while searching.

We also checked the Charleston Courier, the City Gazette and Commercial Daily Advertiser, the Charleston Mercury, and the Southern Patriot newspapers in an attempt to find a reference to McMarron with no luck. There is no entry for anyone of the surname MacMorran/McMoran/Morran/Moran in the 1816, 1819, or 1822 city directories, the 1820 SC Census index, the Index to Wills for Charleston County, or the Estate Inventory Index.

We hope this helps. Let us know if you have any question or have trouble opening one of the files.”

It was nice to receive this information though, because it confirmed for me that I had found the same documentation they had. Always nice to have a second set of eyes.

C. Exhibit C – Hugh MacMorran Appeals Case and Tipperery Information

Research, Proof & Rationale

Charlotte states Hugh ran a woolen mill(s) in Lanark, Scotland. During the research phase for my book, I stumbled across an appeals case that had been brought against before the Scotland House of Lords by an insurance company against a Hugh MacMorran concerning a fire in his woolen mill. The business operated as MacMorran & Co. and was decided in 1815. I have no idea when the original case was filed by MacMorran & Co. against the insurance company, but it was decided in favor of MacMorran & Co. in 1810. A transcript of the appeals case can be found in Exhibit C.

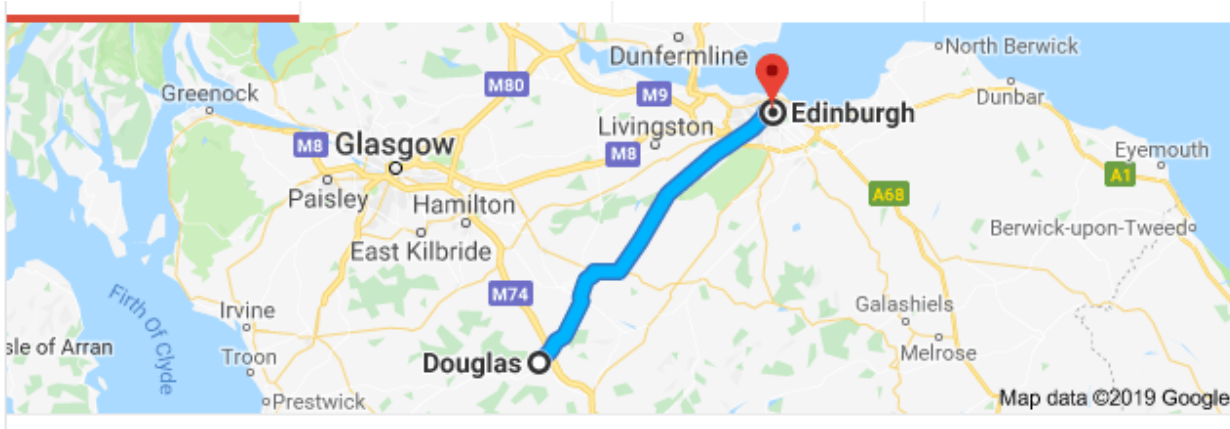
The facts contained within the appeals case include the following:

- 1) MacMorran and Co., cotton and wool spinners, operated a cotton and a wool mill as well as a clock making business in Garschew, Scotland;
- 2) MacMorran and Co. had signed an insurance policy against fire loss or damage with the Newcastle-upon-tyne Fire Insurance Company out of Glasgow, Scotland for the period April 1805 to June 1806;
- 3) Sometime between April 1805 to June 1806, the mill experienced a fire resulting in extensive damage to the place of business; and
- 4) MacMorran and Co. sued the Newcastle-upon-tyne insurance company to recover a sum of money to rebuild their business. The House of Lords decided in favor of MacMorran and Co; and
- 5) An appeal by the insurance company was filed in 1810.

In 1815, the appeal was heard, and the House of Lords rendered their decision in favor of the insurance company finding that the company had no right to recover based upon the fact the company mistakenly chose the wrong classification of their company for insurance coverage purposes and therefore the terms for the payout for the policy were considered null and void.

While the case lists the company as operating in Garschew, Scotland, documentation could not be found for a parish of that name in Scotland during that time. I am wondering if this name is Gaelic for Glasgow? I have done some research on old Scottish spelling, but I won't bore you with that. LOL The policy was purchased in the insurance office in Glasgow, Scotland. If my Hugh is the Hugh in this case, we can assume he operated his mill in 1805 to 1806.

Glasgow, Scotland is a parish located in the old county of Lanark (Lanarkshire), Scotland. Charlotte said he operated the mill in Lanark. Glasgow, being a parish in Lanark could validate her notes and her claim Hugh MacMorran was a woolen manufacturer.



D. Exhibit D – Marriage of Hugh MacMorrin & Jane Finlay

Research, Proof & Rationale

I found a marriage record on Ancestry for Hugh MacMorrin and Jane Finlay. Marriage date: February 14, 1811 in South Leith, Midlothian, Scotland. Film No. 1067773. (Exhibit D) The place of marriage is South Leith, Midlothian, Scotland. Leith is a borough of Edinburgh, Scotland that contains the South and North Leith parishes which are located 1 ½ miles northeast of Edinburgh.

Here is where things get interesting. If Hugh was operating a woolen mill in Glasgow in 1805, how did he conceive, Thomas McMorrin in Armagh, Scotland? It may be possible though. I doubt that George McMorrin (I read the same article you did) would say his father and Henry McMorrin were first cousins if they were not. It is conceivable after the fire at MacMorrin & Co., Hugh could have travelled to Ireland. Thomas was born in 1807. Hugh's initial case was not decided until 1810. Hugh did not marry Jane Finlay until 1811. I have absolutely no idea who Thomas' mother is, but we know it is not Jane.

Charlotte mentions Robert MacMorrin's mother was Jean (Gordon) Finlay. In Exhibit A it only says Jean Gordon, but in her notes from the museum she says Jean (Gordon) Finley. Charlotte also states Robert MacMorrin's birthdate as December 25, 1816. I believe his birthdate was 1819 and she could have made a typo in her typewritten notes. I also think it is entirely possible Robert could have been born in either Ireland or Scotland. I think the docs in Exhibit E explain all this.

E. Exhibit E – (1) Marriage of Jean Gordon and Andrew Finlay, (2) Birth Certificate of John Finlay, (3) Ship Manifest of the “Brig Rosina” (4) Marriage Certificate of Robert McMorrin and Isabella Kewley & (5) 1850 Census, Port Huron Michigan.

Research, Proof, Rationale

Hugh MacMorrin married a Jane Finlay. This could be Jean or Jane. Her maiden name was Gordon. I found a marriage certificate for a Jean Gordon and Andrew Finlay on Ancestry who were married on Nov. 13, 1793, in Midlothian, Edinburgh (Exhibit E(1)). I found a Birth Certificate for a John Finlay born to Andrew Finlay and Jean Gordon with a birthdate of March 6, 1801 in Edinburgh (Exhibit

E (2)). I believe John Finlay was Jean/Jane McMorran's son from her marriage to Andrew Findlay. His date of birth and his age on the ship manifest to South Carolina is about right.

While Charlotte has Robert being born on December 25, 1816, she does not state where he was born, just where he lived after returning from South Carolina. I believe after analyzing her notes and reviewing historical documentation, it is possible he was born on December 25, 1819 in Tipperery, Ireland.

Let's take Robert's presumed birthdate into account first. The documentation discovered relevant to Robert's date of birth include a ship manifest and his marriage certificate.

A ship manifest for the "Brig Rosina", which landed in Charleston, South Carolina in February of 1823, lists a Robert McMoran at the age of 3 (Exhibit E(3)). Robert was travelling with his mother and a merchant by the name of John Finlay, 21. On the manifest his mother is listed as Jane, not Jean. They came from Dundee, Britain. If Robert had been born in 1816, his age on the manifest would be 6 years old. The fact that he is listed as 3 years old would indicate he was born in 1819. In February of 1823, Robert would have been 3 that year turning 4 in December.

According to their marriage certificate, Robert and Isabella McMorran were married in Port Huron, Michigan on the 25th of December 1842 (Exhibit E(4)). At the time of his marriage Robert was 23 and Isabella was 18. This recorded document provides proof Robert was most likely born in 1819 and not 1816. If Robert had been born in 1816, he would have been 26 on his wedding day, not 23.

Being that no record to prove his birth has been found, for practical purposes, based upon other historical documentation, it would be reasonable to assume there was perhaps a typo made in Charlotte's typewritten notes and we can estimate Robert's birthdate as December 25, 1819.

Robert MacMorran states in the 1850 United States Census his place of birth is Ireland (Exhibit E(5)). While, Robert makes this statement, it is quite possible Robert was born in Edinburgh. A marriage record has been found for his parents, Hugh MacMorran and Jean (Gordon) Findley dated February 14, 1811. The place of marriage is South Leith, Midlothian, Scotland. From this record we can place his parents in the Edinburgh area, which would also fit alongside the family notes information that Robert and his mother, Jean returned to Edinburgh after Hugh's death in South Carolina. There is no doubt in my mind that Hugh and Jean once resided in Edinburgh, as there is the evidence of their marriage in Edinburgh, evidence of her former marriage to Andrew Finlay, and evidence her eldest son John Finlay was born there. What is a bit baffling is the fact that Robert states his place of birth as Ireland in the 1850 census record? While we can place his parents in Edinburgh in 1811, there is still a considerable amount of time between 1811 and the year of Robert's estimated birth year of 1819 for exploration into this question.

As previously mentioned, the family notes expound upon the facts that Hugh MacMorran was an owner of a woolen mill in Lanark, Scotland and that he spent a brief time in Tipperery, Ireland before moving to South Carolina.

Within the appellate case decision, there is no mention of when the fire took place at the mill. We only know the policy covered the period of April 1805 to June of 1806 and the mill was damaged and in need of repair before operations could continue. Given the time frame of the case, Hugh MacMorran could have made his way to Ireland and conceived Thomas. He also must have made his way to the Edinburgh area after 1810 and married Jean (Gordon) Findley in 1811, while he was waiting for his case to come up for appeal. The appeal was finalized in 1815. Hugh lost the appeal. If you look over Exhibit C, you will see there was a patent granted on May 12, 1819 and sealed at Edinburgh, June 21, 1819 to a Hugh MacMorran and Patten Smith, both of Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, Ireland included in Exhibit C. There is also informational links about Patten Smith and his distillery in Roscrea in that document.

Charlotte said Hugh resided for a short while in Tipperary, Ireland before going to South Carolina. We know his wife, Jane/Jean and her son, Robert McMorran travelled with John Findlay to South Carolina when Robert was 3 in 1823. I believe Jane/Jean stayed behind in Roscrea, Tipperary, Ireland to await Robert's birth on Dec. 1819 and Hugh left for South Carolina. This would explain why Jane/Jean and Robert came later without Hugh. It might also explain why Jane/Jean's son, John Findlay travelled with them. I do not believe John Findlay stayed in South Carolina. When I wrote the library in South Carolina, I also asked them to find me a John Findlay there. They could find nothing on John Findlay. I believe after Hugh's death in 1824, Jane/Jean and Robert went back to Edinburgh with John Findlay.

I have a suspicion that Hugh's name was a middle name and perhaps his first name was Robert or William. There is a huge family tree of McMorran's/MacMorran online compiled by Marcel Sarif. I have went through them all looking for an alternate name with the birth info I think I have right on Hugh, but have not been able to find Hugh's family in the mix. If you want me to I would be happy to scan them and send them to you as well.

I may be a little off with my rationale today. Work has been crazy, but I hope this all makes sense. Would love to hear your thoughts.