

James Fawns Mary Morgan

The confirmed facts about Elizabeth Fawn's ancestry are:

Her parents are given on her death certificate as James Fawns, Royal Artillery, and Mary Morgan.

From the 1861 census, the 1871 census and her death certificate it seems likely that Elizabeth had been born between 1820 and 1823.

From these censuses also, she was born in England yet at the birth of her first child, Isabella, in 1855, her birth-place is given as Arbroath.

No record of a marriage between James Fawns and Mary Morgan has been found although a couple with these names had a daughter, named Helen, at Woodside, in St Vigeans parish, near Arbroath, in March 1823. This Mary Morgan would probably be the twin daughter of James Morgan and Jane Kirkaldie of Grange of Connon, St. Vigeans. Is this the Arbroath connection mentioned above?

In the 1851 census for Lochee there is an Elizabeth Fawns, flax spinner, living at McLarens Land, Burnside. She is aged 29 (which would indicate her birth was about 1822) and was born in England. (District 282 Book 104 page 14). Ten years previously, at the same or a nearby address is an Elizabeth Fawns aged 15, born England. As ages in the 1841 census were rounded down to the nearest five years this would indicate a year of birth somewhere between 1822 and 1826. With this Elizabeth in 1841 is a Mary Fawns, flax preparer, aged 45, presumably Elizabeth's mother. (Mary Morgan from St. Vigeans would have been 43 at that time). Her birthplace is given as Ireland. (District 301, book 12 page 10). Irish ancestry, if correct, would be impossible to trace with the paucity of information. (One suggestion has been that the enumerator was told St. Vigeans and thought it was in Ireland).

It has been speculated that Mary Morgan, in St Vigeans, may have run off with soldier, James Fawns. This could explain the lack of marriage records, Elizabeth's birth in England, and could also explain why Mary is not mentioned in James Morgan's will, made in November 1821, perhaps made because had Mary run off.. (See Confirmation and Inventory Sc47/40/2 Oct 26 1824 p 422 where the children mentioned were David, Jane, William, Jean, Agnes. Estate £4898 – 9s– 3d). The names of Elizabeth Fawns children come predominantly from her husbands side of the family. Could this also indicate a family rift?

No trace of James Fawns has been found although the "Royal Artillery" connection might yield some information if it were followed up.

Using the number of people of marriageable age (taken as 10-50) from index to the 1851 census for Dundee and Angus and assuming that the proportion of each name in the population has remained constant since the 1820's gives the probability of **any** Fawns marrying **any** Morgan at 4.6×10^{-9} (that is around one in 215,000,000).

The probability of **James** Fawns marrying **Mary** Morgan must be much less even than this so the chances of two such marriages about the same time are slight.