

The Origins of the Morton Family (*names changed*)

We are looking for the origins in England of William Morton senior who was, according to sources in the US born on 7th April 1803 and his son William Morton junior who again, according to sources in the US was born on 22nd November 1825.

They were apparently from Leicestershire. The detailed biography of John Griffin Morton (son of William Morton senior and half brother of William Morton junior) states:

"He is the son of William and Elinor (Sweet) Morton and in the paternal line [the family] is of English extraction, his father [ie, William Morton senior] having been a native of Leicestershire, England. The latter was an ornamental carver of wood, bone and ivory who came to this country where he married a lady [Mrs Elinor Humphrey nee Sweet] who was a native of Herkimer County, New York."

The description of the occupation of William Morton senior accurately describes the work of a turner.

William Morton senior has been identified as arriving in the US on board the "John and Elizabeth" on 19th June 1832 with his first wife Mary and four children: John (8), William (6), Margaret (3) and George (1) alongside his putative brother Richard Morton (29), a carpenter and his wife Lucy and their four children: Jerusha (8), Rachel (5), Lucy (4), Richard (1). Richard's daughter Eliza aged 2 is noted as having died on the voyage. William was described on arrival in the US as a 32 year old bricklayer.

William Morton senior and William Morton junior were at the time of the 1850 Federal census living in the town of Somonauk, De Kalb County, Illinois. [This detail is confirmed by the biography of John Griffin Morton.] William Morton senior is stated to be a 47 year old innkeeper and a native of England. William Morton junior is stated to be a 24 year old farmer and also a native of England. The census for Somonauk was taken on 12-14 October 1850.

With William Morton senior was a lady named Margaret Morton who was stated to be 70 and also from England. It is presumed (not unreasonably) that this is his mother.

There is a Margaret Morton found living in Leicester on the 1841 census taken (for the whole of England) on 6th June 1841.

She was said to be upwards of 60 years of age and was described as 'Margaret Morton senior'. With her was a pipe maker named Francis Morton who was upwards of 30 years of age. They are living in the household of one John Morton, a turner of upwards of 35 years of age, Sarah Morton upwards of 30 and children John Morton (11) and Elizabeth Morton (9). We would assume that John Morton senior was another son of Margaret Morton.

Later that same year, on 11th August 1841 it has been noted that Margaret Morton (64), Francis Morton (30), pipe maker, Thomas Morton (27) framework knitter, Elizabeth Morton (27) and children William (3) and John (1) sailed from Liverpool to New York.

In the circumstances and in particular with reference to the unusual details of the occupation of Francis Morton it seems clear enough that this is the family from Leicester. Thomas Morton must be another son. He has been identified by Mrs Clare as living in Leicester with his family in 1841.

Given that this is the only Margaret Morton of this age living in Leicester at this date one would have to assume that this is the Margaret Morton found living with William Morton senior in 1850 and that John, Francis and Thomas were his brothers.

Returning now to William and Richard Morton who arrived in the US in 1832. The client has identified the family of Richard Morton as being born in the parish of Boughton Malherbe in Kent. This is some distance from Leicester. Despite this, it is clear that this is indeed his family as the details from the parish register are a perfect match to the details of the family emigrating in 1832. In particular the name of the eldest child "Jerusha(h)" (a girl) is extremely rare and it is really not conceivable that there could be

two contemporary families using these same names:
Boughton Malherbe parish registers (roughly):

Jerushah daughter of Lucy Crump bap 25 April 1824
Richard Morton married Lucy Crump 17th October 1826
Rachel daughter of Richard and Lucy Morton bap 13 May 1827
Lucy daughter of Richard and Lucy Morton bap 24 Sep 1828
Eliza daughter of Richard and Lucy Morton bap 6 Jun 1830
Richard son of Richard and Lucy Morton bap 14 Aug 1831

There are (unsurprisingly) no further records of this family in Kent.

So what then of William Morton and his family? In Leicester there is (on the IGI) a single baptism of John son of one William and Mary Morton taking place at St Margaret's on 26th November 1825. Unfortunately, the burial of this child took place on 23rd May 1826 in St Margaret's. This is not the emigree William and Mary's child John Morton, who is believed to have been born (from records in the US) in December 1823.

I can confirm that there are no records of William and Mary's children being born in Leicester.

In view of our lack of success in this matter I decided to check the IGI again. Of the four names of William and Mary's known children (John, William jr, Margaret and George) Margaret was by far the least common in central and southern England at this date and so if a match was found there would be a greater possibility that this was the right one. But nevertheless we are just speculating here.

There was a single match:

Lenham (Independent chapel), Kent:
Margaret daughter of William and Mary Morton born 17th Feb, bap 5 Apr 1829.

This was intriguing, particularly as this was Kent, where we know Richard was living at this time, so I extended the search, focusing on Lenham. This

produced the following from Lenham's Independent chapel:

John son of William and Mary Morton bn 14th Dec, bp 9 Mar 1824

William son of William and Mary Morton bn 12th Nov, bp 7 Apr 1826

Margaret dau of William and Mary Morton bn 17th Feb, bp 5 Apr 1829

George son of William and Mary Morton bn 24th Apr 1831, bp 16 Jun 1831

There are no further records of this family in Kent after 1831. These are a perfect match to the family that sailed with Richard and Lucy in 1832. What is also notable is that Lenham is a neighbouring parish of Boughton Malherbe.

There is really no doubt that this is the same family.

Nonconformists were at this date required to marry in the Church of England and William and Mary's marriage was found in Lenham:

William Morton and Mary Fullagar married 3rd February 1823.

This is fine, so we have solved this mystery at least, but what of the origins of the Morton family in Leicester?

I was informed that there was a lead to Syston, now a small town lying just outside of Leicester. The census indicated that there were bricklayers surnamed Morton living in Syston on the census, so as William in 1832 was noted as a bricklayer this seemed promising.

Some considerable effort was made to tie William (b c1800) and Richard (b c1804) to Syston, but this was not successful.

The Poor Law index for Leicestershire did indicate some connections of persons named William Morton from Syston to the Borough of Leicester:

4 April 1818:

William Morton aged 12 son of William and Elizabeth Morton of Syston apprenticed to William Morton of Humberstone Gate, parish of St Margaret, Leicester, Chairmaker. [Syston 1D57/35/74]

This child was baptised in Syston on 3rd January 1805. The date is wrong and name of his mother is wrong and while he has a brother named Richard, he was not born until 1813, a little too late. In fact this William was one of 12 children. Their names do not match the names of the family we are looking for. He was, on the census of 1851 back in Syston, married to a woman named Hannah and working as a chair maker.

16th June 1810:

William Morton aged 11 of Syston apprenticed to Joseph Smith of St Margaret's Leicester, Framework Knitter. [Syston 1D57/35/65]

No christening could be found for this child in Syston and at first it was thought that this might be the person we were looking for. However, the occupation of the apprentice master was wrong and there was no evidence of any siblings of this child.

My belief in the end was that this child might perhaps have been the William Morton born in St Margaret's, Leicester on 10th May 1799 and baptised on 12th May 1799, the son of John Morton and Mary Ferring married at St Margaret's on 16th July 1798 and that the father may have been a native of Syston.

The parish register of Syston notes that 'John son of William morton, Bricklayer' was buried on 11th February 1802. This individual was without question baptised at Syston on 22nd July 1777, the son of 'William morton, a mason (ie, a bricklayer) and Mary his wife' and as such he could have been married. Two burials for widows of men named John morton were noted in Syston one on 10th June 1802 and the other on 24th January 1809. As there is only one couple of these names (John and Mary Morton) living in Syston in the mid to late 18th century it seemed again to be a possibility that the couple from Leicester were the other one.

In other words, John Morton (b 1777) from Syston may have moved to Leicester, married and had a son born in 1799 and then died in 1802. The mother soon followed her husband and their infant son William was then raised by his grandparents (who were certainly still alive in 1802) in

Syston.

This however, is speculation.

There is only one other William Morton born in Syston at around the right date. This is William son of (a third) John and Mary Morton who was baptised on 31st December 1803 in Syston. Again the name of his mother is wrong, he has no brother named Richard and the names of his other siblings do not match the ones we are looking for.

There were two wills of Mortons from Syston:

Joseph Morton, lately a maltster dated 1 Jun 1799 and proved 21st October 1803. This man was in his earlier life (as noted from the christenings of his children in Syston) a glazier. He was presumably quite prosperous as his son Methuselah Morton became an attorney in Syston. Again this is his description on the christenings of his children.

The will of John Morton of Syston dated 8th June 1793 and proved 28th October 1793 [1793/120] was more promising as he was noted as a 'Turner and Carpenter'. However no meaningful connections could be found in his family to the family from Leicester that we were looking for.

There is more that could be said about this family from Syston, but nothing leads us to any connections to any of the people we have been looking for. This was certainly very disappointing.

More efforts were now made to find out about the family of Margaret Morton living in Leicester. I can confirm that there is no record of any of her children being born in Leicester and that this would tend to indicate nonconformity.

What was more perplexing, however was the fact that there was no marriage of any man surnamed Morton to any woman named Margaret anywhere either in the city or county of Leicester. Nonconformists (much to their annoyance) were still required by law to be married in the Church of England at this time. Quakers and Jews were excepted, but these groups were relatively insignificant minorities in England at this date. Certainly

there is nothing to suggest any connections there.
In view of this I focused on the children.

There are two indexes of marriage for 1801-1837 in Leicestershire. One for the city and one for the county. The county indexes are huge volumes and one might be forgiven for assuming that they include the city. The city volumes (four small books) included the following, which was checked:

St Margaret's, Leicester:

Thomas Morton bachelor and Elizabeth Illston spinster married 8th November 1835 after banns.

Interestingly there were three witnesses. There are usually only two. The first was not noted as his surname was neither Morton nor Illston and it was usual at the time for a parish official to sign the register. The latter two witnesses by contrast appeared to be a couple. They were Henry Cooper and Sarah Cooper.

I checked the marriage indexes again and found the following:

St Margaret's, Leicester:

Henry Cooper bachelor and Sarah Morton spinster married 20th July 1829.
Witnesses: John Morton and Sarah Unwin.

This Sarah must be a previously unidentified daughter of Margaret Morton. What is especially nice is that the witnesses to her wedding to Henry Cooper were John Morton and Sarah Unwin who have been previously identified as members of this family and who were themselves married in St Margaret's on 22nd March 1830. This John Morton is the turner in whose household Margaret was living in 1841.

The clear and explicit gravestone of 'Thomas Morton' and 'Elizabeth Illston' has been identified in the USA by the client. This gravestone gives his date of birth as 20th June 1814.

Efforts were now made to locate the Coopers. They could not be found on the 1841 or 1851 census in England. They may have died of course. However in view of the fact that most of the members of this family emigrated to the USA I decided to check for Henry Cooper and Sarah Morton on the Public Member Trees of Ancestry.

Remarkably, there was a match. Included were details from the 1850 census. A contemporary couple of these names from England were on 9th September 1850 (a month before the census was taken in Somonauk) living at Bristol, Kendall County, Illinois. This settlement is less than 20 miles from Somonauk. Included in this household was a 74 year old Margaret Morton from England!

Clearly this is the right family! William has rounded his mothers age down to 70. Margaret would appear to have been dividing her time between her son William and daughter Sarah in Illinois.

Other records from the US (included in this public member tree) indicated that Sarah Morton was born on 10th October 1805 and died on 15th August 1892 in Illinois.

Returning to William and Richard, I checked the source of the apparent connection to Syston.

It came from a handwritten transcript of the marriage of Richard Morton to Lucy Crump from the parish register of Boughton Malherbe. Alarm bells began to ring, especially as I could not read the handwriting. I was not sure that it said 'Syston' and certainly there was no mention of Leicestershire. Boughton Malherbe is a long way from Syston (about 150 miles) and England is very densely populated.

There are hundreds of settlements between these two places and there is no way that the register would be so vague as just to state 'Richard Morton of Syston'. Most people in Kent would never have even heard of the place.

I telephoned Kent Archives in Maidstone and asked them if they could

check this for me.

They confirmed that the register reads, "Richard Morton of Egerton". Egerton is a village situated just a few miles from Boughton Malherbe and Lenham.

The records for this parish were now checked. These are secondary sources, but of course can easily be checked to the original records in Kent, but this seems unnecessary in this instance:

There was one couple resident in Egerton around 1800 surnamed Morton:

Richard Morton and Ann Coppins married 30th October 1793

John son of Richard and Ann Morton born 5 Feb, bp 1 Mar 1795

John Morton married Ann Gladwich 13 Nov 1820

Elizabeth dau of Richard and Ann Morton bp 5 Mar 1797

William son of Richard and Ann Morton bp 1 Jun 1800

Richard son of Richard and Ann Morton bp 3 Jun 1804

Sarah Ann dau of Richard and Ann Morton bn 3 Feb, bp 19 Apr 1812

Sarah Ann Morton married John Roberts 24 Jul 1834

Richard Morton senior apparently died in 1849 and his wife Ann in 1842, so they should be found on the 1841 census, which they are:

Stonebridge Green, Egerton, Kent [HO 107/472/16 f20 p3] :

John Morton 45 Carpenter Y (ie, born in Kent)

Ann Morton 45 Y

(plus several children)

Richard Morton 70 Carpenter Y

Ann Morton 70 Y

Note: both Richard Morton senior and his eldest son John Morton (b 1795) are carpenters as was Richard Morton junior (b 1804) who emigrated with his brother William Morton (b 1800) in 1832.

I thought it was now time to find out for myself what had become of Richard Morton junior. On the 1850 census taken on 15th September 1850 he was resident in Van Vorst, Hudson County, New Jersey. His wife's

daughter Jerusha was a neighbour and now married to an Irishman. Richard was said to be a 46 year old carpenter and native of England.

Living in the same place and enumerated on 4th October 1850 was a 50 year old mason (ie bricklayer) from England named William Morton. He is clearly the brother of Richard Morton, though now married to a woman from Massachusetts. His four elder children would appear either to have died or left home as they were not living with him at this date.

So, one of the most important things I will have to say in my report is this:

THE WILLIAM Morton WHO ARRIVED IN NEW YORK ON THE 'JOHN AND ELIZABETH' IN 1832 IS A DIFFERENT WILLIAM Morton TOTALLY UNCONNECTED TO WILLIAM Morton FROM LEICESTER.

So we can now forget completely about our Kentish brothers William Morton (b1800), bricklayer and Richard Morton (b 1804), carpenter and also about Syston.

Instead we can now focus on William Morton (b 1803), a turner from Leicester and his son William Morton (b 1825).

What is striking is that we now realise that we do not even know the name of the first wife of William Morton senior. It may be Mary, but not necessarily. Indeed, there is a strong possibility that her name was *not* Mary and this may be why we have so far been unsuccessful in locating this family in England.

Let's just remind ourselves of the description of the occupation of William Morton senior in the biography of JG Morton:

[William Morton senior] "was an ornamental carver of wood, bone and ivory"

This is the description of a man who works as a turner. A turner uses a special lathe to 'turn' (hence the name) strips of wood in order to make for example chair legs with ornate curves in them. Clearly bone and ivory

could also be used in place of wood.

Okay, so what do we know. We believe that William Morton junior was born on 22nd November 1825. He was probably born in Leicester, so are there any possible matches. The first port of call is the IGI. Does that provide any possible leads?

There is recorded a William son of William and Elizabeth Morton baptised at St Margaret's on 30th December 1825. That is certainly a pretty good match.

There is also something else. I had noted on the client's Public Member Tree on Ancestry a possible daughter of William senior named Elizabeth Morton. At first I was highly skeptical about this as the passenger records for 1832 listed no Elizabeth, but now of course we know that this was not our William.

Again, the IGI gives an intriguing record, suggesting that the Elizabeth Morton who married John Wesley Hough in 1850 was born in Leicester on 16th April 1824 and was the daughter of William and Elizabeth Morton.

This certainly required checking! There were a small number of children baptised or born in Leicester between 1820 and 1830 in Leicester to a couple or couples named William and Elizabeth Morton and listed by the Mormons. These were:

Christopher Morris Morton bap 12 Jun 1822 St Margaret's
Elizabeth Morton born 16th April 1824 – the IGI did not record a baptism for this child.

William Morton bap 30 Dec 1825 St Margaret's
Sarah Morton bap 29 Jun 1827 'Leicester' – the parish was not stated
Hesikiah Morton bap 29 Aug 1828 St Margaret's

The elder of these five I knew would not be a sibling as he was the youngest of several children born in Leicestershire between 1813 and 1822 and all of whom were given the middle name 'Morris'. Nevertheless for reference purposes I also decided to check him.

It turned out that all of these children were christened in St Margaret's. The details from the parish register are as follows:

Christopher Morris (son of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) London Road (occupation of father:) Lace Maker, bapt 12 Jun 1822

Elizabeth (dau of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) Belgrave Gate (occupation of father:) Turner, bapt 21st May 1824

Eliza (dau of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) Belgrave Gate (occupation of father:) Turner, bapt 21st May 1824 ("born 5th Jan")

William (son of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) Belgrave Gate (occupation of father:) Turner, bapt 30th Dec 1825

Sarah (dau of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) Belgrave Gate (occupation of father:) Turner, bapt 29th Jun 1827

Hesikiah (son of) William and Elizabeth Morton (of) Belgrave Gate (occupation of father:) Turner, bapt 29th August 1828

As expected, Christopher Morris Morton belongs to a different family, but the remaining five children are all clearly siblings and are the children of a turner named William Morton living on Belgrave Gate.

We are of course looking for a turner named William Morton.

The christening of Elizabeth Morton took place on 24th May 1824, a little over a month after the birth on 16th April in Leicester of Elizabeth Morton of De Kalb County, Illinois and whose parents were apparently named William and Elizabeth Morton.

Similarly, the baptism of William Morton took place on 30th December 1825 a little over a month after the birth of William Morton of De Kalb County Illinois (and who was also from Leicester) on 22nd November 1825. Clearly this is the right family!

Elizabeth was one of two Morton children baptised on 24th May 1824. The other child, Eliza was apparently born on "5th Jan". Although the year is not stated, it must have been 1823 as for her to have been born that date in 1824 would have been physically impossible. We will see why it could

have been no earlier than 1823 in a moment.

The Leicester Borough burial indexes were checked and it was confirmed that none of these children were buried in Leicester. Nor was the mother buried in Leicester.

I think we can be confident that this family left Leicester circa 1829 and after the christening of Heseekiah Morton in 1828. Note that William Morton junior has named his eldest son "Smith Heseekiah Morton" clearly in part after his brother.

I see no reason to suppose that there was not a daughter Margaret Morton born to William and Elizabeth perhaps circa 1830, and probably in the US, especially as William Morton senior's mother Margaret Morton is described on the 1841 census as Margaret Morton "senior". No daughter of hers has been identified other than Sarah, Mrs Cooper.

The Leicester Borough marriage indexes were consulted to check for a marriage of William Morton to Elizabeth. There was a single marriage and it was at the right date:

St Martin's, Leicester:

William Morton (sig) of this parish and Elizabeth Hughes (x) of this parish with the consent of parents 21st October 1822 after Banns. Witnesses: John Smith (sig) and G Rowley (sig)

Note: this marriage took place with the consent of parents indicating that the couple were under 21. William Morton senior we know from records in the US was born on 7th April 1803 and would have been 19 at this time.

Note also that this is why Eliza Morton could have been born no earlier than 5th January 1823.

This marriage took place in St Martin's – not St Margaret's. St Martin's is today the Church of England Cathedral church of the City of Leicester.

So that is this generation of the family dealt with. Onto the next. We have already noted that there are no christenings or contemporary birth records of any of the children of Margaret Morton. What we do know partly from records in the US is as follows:

William Morton was born 7th April 1803

Sarah Morton was born 10th Oct 1805

John Morton was born circa 1807

Francis Morton was born 21st Sept 1809

Thomas Morton was born 20th June 1814

The birthdate of John Morton I have estimated as circa 1807 as this seems more likely from later census records in Leicester.

So we are looking for the marriage of a Mr Morton to a Margaret no later than 1802 and no earlier (given that Margaret was born c1775-1780) than 1795. That at least narrows things down a bit. There is no record of any possible marriage in Leicester or Leicestershire at all.

Okay, so maybe they were not married in Leicestershire. I looked again at the IGI for any possible matches, noting that Margaret as has been said before is not a very common name at this date in central and southern England.

One match was found at Welford in Northamptonshire. The marriage of Thomas 'morton' to Margaret Palmer took place on 20th January 1802. This is the right date. Welford is a parish situated to the south of Leicester and just outside of the county boundary. This seemed worth checking.

Another online index the 'freereg' was checked and it was found that they had transcribed this marriage. The register stated that Thomas Morton a bachelor of Arnesby in Leicestershire was married to Margaret Palmer a spinster of this parish on 20th January 1802 by license. The witnesses were Samuel Morton and William Wright.

The freereg showed no christening for Margaret or Thomas in Welford and

the IGI recorded no children born or christened to this couple, however Margaret's baptism was noted as occurring in Welford's Independent (ie, nonconformist chapel). She was born on 26th November 1778 and baptised on 9th December 1778.

Similarly there was a baptism for a Thomas 'More' in the Independent chapel at Welford. He was born on 21st August 1780 and baptised on 16th October 1780. His parents were Richard Morton and Sarah West, married at Welford in 1777. This Thomas had a brother Samuel born in 1782, which would tend to suggest that this is him, despite his being resident in Arnesby at the time of his wedding.

So we have a nonconformist couple being married by license in 1802, no doubt to avoid the embarrassment of having the banns read by the Church of England authorities. They may have lived in Arnesby for a while at least, but then where might they then have gone? There is no sign of them in Arnesby at all.

Samuel Morton of Welford, who was born in 1782 and who was the brother of Thomas Morton was living in the city of Leicester in 1851 as was one John Morton born c1784 in Welford and who might have been another brother.

They could certainly gone to Leicester after living in Arnesby. Margaret Palmer is also the right age to be the Margaret we are looking for. While I suspected that this could be the couple we were looking for it would nevertheless be nice to find some stronger evidence.

With this in mind and now no longer distracted by the possibilities of connections to Syston I decided to check again in the Leicestershire Poor Law indexes. What I found is detailed in full below:

SETTLEMENT EXAMINATION OF THOMAS Morton, APRIL 1837

Borough of Leicester. The several examinations of Thomas Morton the younger to wit. residing in Denman Street in the parish of Leicester FWK [Framework Knitter] and of Margaret Morton of Archdeacon Lane in the same parish, wife to Thomas Morton the elder touching the place of the last legal settlement of Thomas Morton and his wife. Taken on oath the 21st day of April 1837 before J Paget and Thos Stokes.

The same Thomas Morton says, "I am now about 22 years old and was born in York Street in the parish of St Margaret's in Leicester as I have been informed and believe I have resided in the parish of St Margaret's all my life time, but have done no act to gain settlement in my own right. I was lawfully married by Banns at St Margaret's church in Lester (*sic*) on the 8th November 1835 to Elizabeth Ilston my present wife and I and my said wife are now actually chargeable to the parish of St Margaret aforesaid."

The said Margaret Morton says, "I am the mother of the said Thomas Morton the younger. I was lawfully married by license to his father Thomas Morton about 35 years ago at Welford in the County of Northampton. The said Thomas Morton was then living at Arnesby (my maiden name was 'Mary Ann' (*sic - this is a clerical error!*) Palmer) where he had served his apprenticeship. After he was out of his apprenticeship he went to reside at Welford in one of the houses which belonged to him situate in what is called the Back Street. He remained there a few months and then sold his houses and went back to Arnesby. We lived at Arnesby for about a year after we had married and then we came to Leicester and I have lived here ever since except for about 10 months when we lived at Welford which was about 25 years ago. My husband and I received relief about 25 years ago at Welford. We had 5/ per week for several months together. I also received relief from Welford about 9 months ago and three of my sons named William, John and Samuel have been put out as apprentices by Welford parish. My husband has done no act to gain settlement since he acquired a settlement at Welford before our marriage. My son Thomas Morton was born at Leicester in York Street on 20th June 1814." Thomas Morton (sig), Margaret Morton(x)

Taken and sworn before a[fore]s[aid] J Paget, Thomas Stokes

The above examination with a form of Notice was sent to the Churchwardens & Overseers of Welford on the 24th day of April 1837.

Signed and Witnessed: J Mallett(sig), Saml Howe (sig), J Windram (sig). By post 24th April 1837.

[ref: 18D62/15 p69]

It really doesn't get any better than that. This examination was made in order to determine whether Thomas and Elizabeth had any right to reside in and claim relief (benefits) in Leicester. Despite being born in and living in Leicester all his life there still it seems were possible grounds to refuse Thomas relief in times of need, and possible grounds to force him to leave the city. It was probably these sort of shenanigans with the authorities which finally resulted in the family leaving the country altogether in 1841.

Margaret names her sons William and John and also a son Samuel who we have not come across before. I would estimate his date of birth at circa 1811, between Francis and Thomas.

There is no indication on this document that Thomas Morton senior was dead at this time. His burial was not recorded in the Borough burial indexes, presumably because of his nonconformity, but April 1837 is only a few weeks before the commencement of Civil Registration in England and Wales which began on 1st July 1837. There is one single death registration of a Thomas Morton in Leicester between 1837 and 1841:

Thomas Morton December quarter 1839 ref 15 78

It is a reasonable possibility that this is him, though it will be necessary to purchase a death certificate in order to verify it.

In order to trace the origins of this family further it will now be necessary to conduct research at Northamptonshire Record Office.