
The Vaughan-Morgans of Glasbury

Their Tribulations and Triumphs



From a print at the Brecknock Museum.

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INTRODUCTORY

The County of Brecknock can boast of many families whose names have become household words by sheer continuity through the centuries and by the services they have rendered at both county and national level. Their estates, sometimes large but not invariably so, have passed without alienation through successive generations until the family name becomes identified with — and almost symbolic of — the county itself. The Vaughans of Tretower, the Herberts of Crickhowell, the Jeffreys of Llywel, to name only those that come almost unbidden to mind — do they not stand for Breconshire as much as the Beacons themselves? Others, less conspicuous but in no way inferior in antiquity or public spirit, led their unobtrusive lives content with local public duties and rural pursuits, while a few have left their native land to achieve distinction in fields undreamt of by their forefathers. To this latter class belongs the family of Vaughan-Morgan of Glasbury, whose sudden and dramatic fall from prosperity was eventually exceeded by their romantic restoration to wealth and political success. Added to all this, the family has the unique distinction of having provided the only Breconshire-born Lord Mayor of London.

THE MORGAN FAMILY

Of the early history of the family little can be ascertained, but it seems likely that they were originally farmers and only at a comparatively late date concentrated on the wool-stapling business that was to be the foundation of their prosperity. It has been suggested that farming was abandoned in favour of the wool trade as early as the seventeenth century, but there seems to be little evidence to support this view. In the parish of Glasbury itself it has been found impossible to identify the Morgan family with certainty until the eighteenth century, when in 1736, John Morgan of Pipton married Jane Parry. The Parry family had long been resident at Pipton in Glasbury and it seems possible that John Morgan was drawn to settle there by his marriage into an old established family. From early times the nearby township of Hay had been an important wool market and in the seventeenth century the production of woollen material was a principal trade of the town; by the early nineteenth century one factory there was employing seventy hands. With a flourishing market near at hand and a growing demand for wool from the great mills springing up in Yorkshire it is not unlikely that John Morgan saw great possibilities in wool-stapling and started what was to grow into a most flourishing business.

The only son of John and Jane Morgan was baptised John on 28th August, 1748; of the four daughters born to this couple only Anne outlived infancy and in 1767 married James Farr of Glasbury.

John Morgan II of Treblehill, Glasbury and his wife Anne had five sons and five daughters, most of whom died in infancy. The eldest surviving son was baptised James Williams in 1790, the second, John in 1794 and the third, Thomas in 1796. The only daughter to survive, Maria Williams, was born in 1785 and later married Joseph Hall of Bosbury in Herefordshire. It has been supposed that the eldest son, James, took Williams as a second name on marrying the heiress daughter of that family, but this is disproved by the Glasbury baptismal register. Furthermore, the fact that his sister — the eldest child of the family — was also given the same second name at baptism suggests that it was the family name of their mother, Ann, whose marriage has not been traced.

A FLOURISHING BUSINESS.

There can be little doubt that it was during the lifetime of John Morgan II, of Treblehill, Woolstapler, and his three sons that the

foundation of the family prosperity was firmly established. We know from existing indentures that the second son, John, was apprenticed to his father in 1809, and it is probable that his brothers were also. In 1810 their father was described as "Woolstapler", yet not many years later the sons were in affluent circumstances, occupied substantial houses, were accepted on terms of friendship by the county families and married daughters of the gentry. That distinguished daughter of Brecon, the late Miss Gwenllian Morgan, whose mother had received the greatest kindness as a girl from the family, has recorded not only the assured place they occupied in county circles but has paid tribute to their integrity of character, their high principles and generosity to their workmen.

JAMES WILLIAM MORGAN OF TREBLEHILL 1790-1860.

Not much is known of this eldest son, except that he married Joanna, the daughter of James Williams and Joanna, his wife, of Trebinshwn. This ancient house had been bought about 1780 by James Williams from the descendants of that Jenkin Jones of Llanddett who had achieved such notoriety in the county as a Parliamentarian during the Civil War. Joanna Morgan (whose mother had been Joanna Allen, one of the prominent county families) was — according to Gwenllian Morgan — "a very great lady, with all the manners, high principles and courtesy of a former age." She is thought to have been a considerable heiress, so that when disaster befell the Morgans her husband had little difficulty in avoiding its worse consequences. He died at Brecon in 1860, and in Glasbury church a memorial tablet records his own death and that of his wife in 1847. He lies in the graveyard there, among his wife's family, and a tombstone marks the spot. On both memorials he is styled "Esquire". They had no children.

JOHN MORGAN OF TIR UCHED 1794-1856.

Nothing is known of this son's early life beyond his being apprenticed to his father as woolstapler. The family business was flourishing, however, and he married while in his early twenties.



Tyruched House — Home of the Vaughan-Morgans.

"On the bank, near the bridge are Mr. Morgan's residence and extensive wool warehouse and near it a charming spot occupied by Mr. Morgan, Junr." (Page 415, Cambro-Briton, May, 1822).

Their first child was born to his wife Winifred in 1820 and was baptised John—by which time the father is described as "Gentleman". Two years later a daughter, Mary Ann, was born and in 1824 a second son, James, who died when nine years old. Their fourth child was born in 1828 and was baptised Thomas Henry Penn. It does not appear that either son married, but the daughter, Mary Ann, was to marry one James Mitchell, and later was to come to the aid of one of her cousins. In 1887 she placed a stained glass window in Glasbury church to the memory of her parents.

The youngest son died in 1864 and John, the eldest, in 1892; their father and mother had died in 1856 and 1868, respectively. All lie in Glasbury churchyard where a tombstone records their names, ages and dates. The youngest son had been only eight or nine years old when misfortune struck them, and it seems doubtful if they ever regained their former prosperity.

THOMAS MORGAN OF PIPTON 1796-1847.

This youngest son of John and Anne Morgan, described at one time as of Pipton Cottage but later as of Pipton Villa, was destined to father a family of sons who, despite their calamitous early years, were to rebuild the family fortunes and make their name known in commerce throughout the world.

In 1822 Thomas Morgan had married Mary Anne Vaughan of Brecon, daughter of William Vaughan, Surgeon (In the pedigree given by Theophilus Jones he is described as "Druggist"), and Sarah his wife. It strikes one as very odd that on the family grave at Glasbury and in such official publications as Burke's Peerage this lady is called Marianne, whereas in every entry in the Glasbury registers, in the Vaughan pedigree given by Theophilus Jones, and on family memorials in Brecon Cathedral she is Mary Anne. (It is relevant to note, too, that the only daughter of the marriage was baptised Mary Anne). Her family, long resident in Brecon, were of the Vaughans of Cathedine, a branch of the ancient house at Tretower, and Bredwardine in Herefordshire, and lineally descended from that Sir Roger Vaughan who fell at Agincourt. Thomas Morgan and his wife had a family of nine sons and one daughter; one son died in infancy, one at sixteen years of age, but the rest — after early separation — were to unite in founding a commercial undertaking of international status.

Their names were:—

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Thomas | Vaughan | Morgan, | born 1823. |
| 2. | John | do. | do. | died in infancy. |
| 3. | William | do. | do. | born 1826. |
| 4. | James | do. | do. | born 1827. |
| 5. | John | do. | do. | born 1829, died 1845. |
| 6. | Walter | do. | do. | born 1831. |
| 7. | Septimus | do. | do. | born 1832. |
| 8. | Octavius | do. | do. | born 1837. |
| 9. | Edward | do. | do. | born 1838. |
| 10. | Mary Anne | do. | do. | born 1834. |

THE FAMILY DISASTER

The prosperity of the family seems to have reached its height during the 1830's, when the three partners were established in large, comfortable houses, held an assured place in local society, spent freely, and appeared financially unassailable. Their business is thought to have been the largest of its kind in South Wales; the wool from the hills of mid-Wales was collected here, sorted and graded, before being sent to the Yorkshire mills by wagon and by pack-horse. How many people were employed we do not know, but the wool-sorters named in the parish registers must have been among them. For centuries woollen manufacture had been a domestic operation but had provided an outlet for only a small part of the wool produced

in the county. Strenuous efforts had been made in the 18th century by the Brecknockshire Agricultural Society to revitalise the declining industry, and the Society spoke of the "very great quantities of wool that are sold annually out of the county". By collecting the local product and organising its sale to distant mills, the Morgans showed a capacity for business and a commercial acumen that were to bring them considerable prosperity. Their enterprise called for more capital than they themselves could provide, and they raised additional funds by borrowing at interest. This has led to the belief that they were "bankers", but there seems to be no evidence to support this. When the crisis came, their liabilities overwhelmed them.

The three brothers, partners in the firm, were in no way responsible for the misfortune that befell them, and in adversity they acted with the same honesty and integrity that had characterised all their activities. The immediate cause of their ruin is thought to have been the failure of the country banks in Yorkshire added to the failure of the mills that had bought the Morgan wool; an additional embarrassment may have been the loss of markets owing to the growing imports of Australian wool. The result was complete ruin, and although James Williams Morgan, the eldest brother, was probably least affected because of his wife's wealth, and John, the next brother, was still able to maintain his wife and family in Glasbury by some means, for Thomas with his wife and nine small children it was a shattering disaster that drove them from home and scattered the family.

An order had been issued on 30th July, 1839, that the partners were to attend at the Castle Inn, Brecon, on 6th September and 11th October to make full disclosure of all their debts and assets, when their creditors must prove their claims, etc. If these meetings were ever held no account of them has been found, and on 5th November notice was given in the London Gazette that the order of 30th July was rescinded by order of the Court of Review. This could only mean that the liabilities of the firm had been discharged in full — though at the cost of the partners' private fortunes.

A FRESH START

It is an old saying that adversity brings out one's true friends and it is pleasant to record that when calamity drove Thomas Morgan and his large family out into the world he found he had many friends anxious to help him. He and his wife removed to Abergavenny where friends enabled him to take charge of that well-known hostelry, the Angel Hotel. The business prospered, but the crushing financial losses, domestic upheaval and dispersal of many of her children were more than Mary Anne Morgan could bear, and she died in July, 1840. She lies in the South transept of Brecon Cathedral and it is sad that she never knew the later successes of her sons.

Thomas Morgan was to remain in Abergavenny for the few remaining years of his life, and died there in 1847 in his 51st year. His youngest son was not yet nine years old, and the prospect facing the brothers — bereft alike of parents, home and fortune — must have appeared bleak indeed. How they overcame their daunting circumstances and remade their lost fortunes is a story as inspiring as it is romantic.

1. THOMAS VAUGHAN-MORGAN, 1823-1885.

This eldest of the brothers had first gone to school at Builth and later to Dr. Roy's school at Fulham. When misfortune befell the family he entered the service of the Post Office at St. Martin le Grand, London, but in 1846—perhaps because of his father's failing health—he returned to Abergavenny and took over from his father the farming and stabling side of the business. The next year on his father's death, he succeeded him at "The Angel," which he ran with outstanding success. He was once described by one of the family as "the handsomest of the ten and the most open-hearted," and earned a deserved reputation as the sportsman of the family.



T. V. MORGAN.

THOMAS VAUGHAN-MORGAN, 1823-1885.

From a pen and ink drawing by Finch Mason in "When Diamonds were Trumps."

2. WILLIAM VAUGHAN MORGAN, 1826-1892.

It was perhaps fortunate for Thomas that when he was "driven out" of Abergavenny he could join his brother William in London, where he had been established for several years. Like Thomas, he had been at Dr. Roy's school at Fulham when the family troubles occurred, and had been apprenticed to retail drapers in Regent Street. From there he moved to a firm of French silk merchants in the City.

At this time there was living in London a family named Halse, who were very old friends of the Vaughans of Brecon, and with whom William became a great favourite. The Halses, father and son, traded in the City as Edward Halse and Son, merchants, druggists, sundries-men, and hardware factors. In 1852 William was given the opportunity of acquiring the business on very favourable terms, and took as partner one Richard Rees, a friend from Abergavenny. They now traded as Morgan and Rees, and were soon joined by William's brother, Septimus. After about three years Rees returned to Abergavenny to manage family businesses there. The firm had already acquired a small factory in Battersea for making plumbago crucibles, and it was now that the two brothers were joined by Thomas. He lived in the works cottage at Battersea, where, it is said, manufacture was carried on by about five employees and a horse and cart, the horse doing the grinding at the mill and delivering the goods. For some time the Battersea enterprise was in difficulties, but the patent rights for the whole world (except U.S.A.) had been bought of the Dixon plumbago crucible, and the infant Morgan Crucible Company was formed. In 1889 this became a limited company, and from this almost insignificant beginning grew the present immense international undertaking. The factory at Battersea remained in Thomas's charge until 1867 when he decided to take a less active part in the business.

It seems to have been generally recognised that William was the ablest man of business in the whole family, full of initiative and quick to see and seize opportunities. He was virtually the founder of Morgan Brothers and of the Morgan Crucible Company, and one of his brothers considered that he was probably the only one of them who could have made a success of the crucible business. This was not by any means his only success, for the merchandizing business of Morgan Brothers in Jewin Crescent in the City was also flourishing. A long account of a visit to this establishment was published in 1856, and describes such a bewildering variety of articles from water-snails to bows and arrows that one marvels at the organisation required. It concludes: "We are informed that nine years since the firm employed only nine hands, and that now they find work for more than ninety."

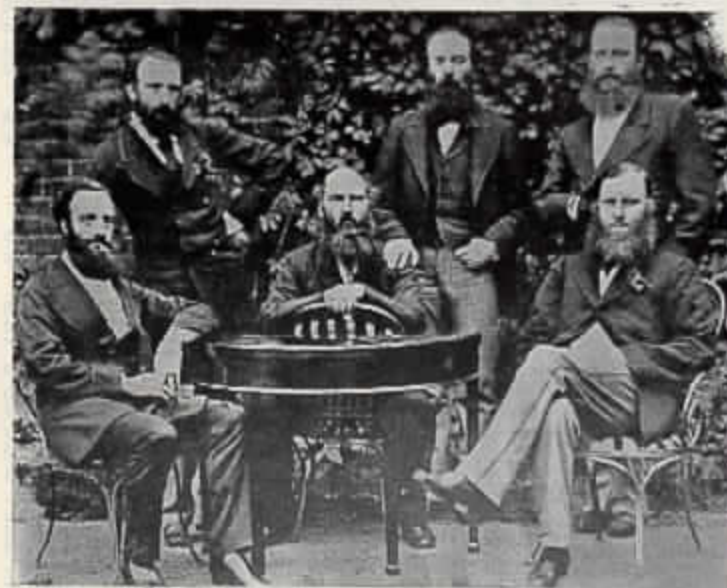
Besides being the moving spirit in these highly successful enterprises, William had several other interests one of which was the Middlesex infantry militia. He was promoted captain in 1866 and retired as major, by which title he was afterwards known. Of a most sociable disposition, he was — according to one writer — "a familiar figure in society." Nevertheless, this did not prevent his pursuing what was undoubtedly his main interest outside his business, and that was the promotion of homoeopathy, of which he was an ardent supporter. He was a munificent donor to the funds of the London Homoeopathic Hospital in Great Ormond Street, was made a director in 1864, Treasurer in 1875, and Chairman in 1885. In addition, he established the Homoeopathic convalescent home in Eastbourne in 1888, offered St. George's Hospital £1,000 a year for five years for a fair trial of Homoeopathy in the wards, and discussed its virtues in the pages of "The Times".

His energies, however, still sought further outlet, and when in 1873 it was suggested that he should stand in the Liberal interest as Member for the Borough of Brecon he eagerly accepted the invitation. This was the first active participation in politics by the family, a participation that has not only been maintained but has

increased over the years and brought additional distinction to the family. The organisation of the Liberals in Brecon had been allowed to run down, and the late Miss Gwenllian Morgan was one of those who strove valiantly to restore it. An election was called early in 1874 and William arrived in Brecon on 27th January and immediately started his canvass. His opponent was Mr. Gwynne Holford of Buckland. Despite the last minute rallying call, William was defeated by just 21 votes; but, said Miss Morgan, "if we had had another week we would have won."

He continued to nurse the constituency for the next four years, but with no election in sight he gave up the contest. He had revitalised the cause in Brecon, however, and when the election eventually came the new candidate won the seat. This was Cyril Flower, later Lord Battersea; but when Lady Battersea came to write her *Reminiscences* in 1922 she omitted any reference to the hard work of William in preparing the ground for her husband's success.

In 1857 William had married a widow, Mrs. Adams. For a number of years they lived in a fine old house at Chiswick, and later at The Boltons, South Kensington. There were no children of the marriage and William Vaughan Morgan died at Grasse in France in 1892 and was buried at Cannes. He is probably rightly regarded as the real founder of the family's fresh prosperity.



THE MORGAN BROTHERS, 1872.

Standing :	SEPTIMUS	EDWARD	OCTAVIUS
Seated :	WALTER	WILLIAM	THOMAS

3. JAMES VAUGHAN MORGAN, 1827-1891.

James was the fourth son but the third to reach manhood, and during the family troubles of 1839 had been cared for by his uncle James Williams Morgan. Later, he entered the service of Wilkins and Co., the family Bank of the de Wintons, who had several offices in South Wales. He has been considered the least satisfactory of the brothers and to have resembled his uncle James in his lack of energy and enterprise; his judgement of others was faulty, and he seems to have been easily imposed upon. Some accounts say that he took over the farming interest in Abergavenny while others say he moved to Manchester where his dilatory habits prevented his advancement. About the year 1860 he joined his brothers in London to learn something of the business before setting out for Canada, where an office was to be opened in Montreal. In this venture, too, he proved unsuccessful, but remained in Canada until 1877/8, when he returned to London and lived a life of leisure.

In 1885 the company decided to establish two trade papers in Australia and James was offered — and accepted — the financial control of their new enterprise in Melbourne. Here he remained until 1891 when he succumbed to an attack of pneumonia.

It seems clear that he had none of the drive and business capacity that distinguished his brothers, yet nevertheless always appeared to have had an exaggerated notion of his capabilities. One forms the impression that posts were found for him overseas to avoid his rather troublesome presence at home.

4. JOHN VAUGHAN MORGAN, 1829-1846.

The fifth son of Thomas and Mary Anne Morgan was the second to bear the name John, the first having died in infancy. The name had been bestowed on a son in each of the three previous generations but seems to have become ill-starred, for several of its bearers failed to survive infancy. This one, too, was destined to die young.

Having attended Rutherfords' School at Abergavenny he was apprenticed to retail drapers in St. Pauls' Churchyard where he developed tuberculosis. He died at Abergavenny in 1846, aged 17.

5. WALTER VAUGHAN MORGAN, 1831-1916.

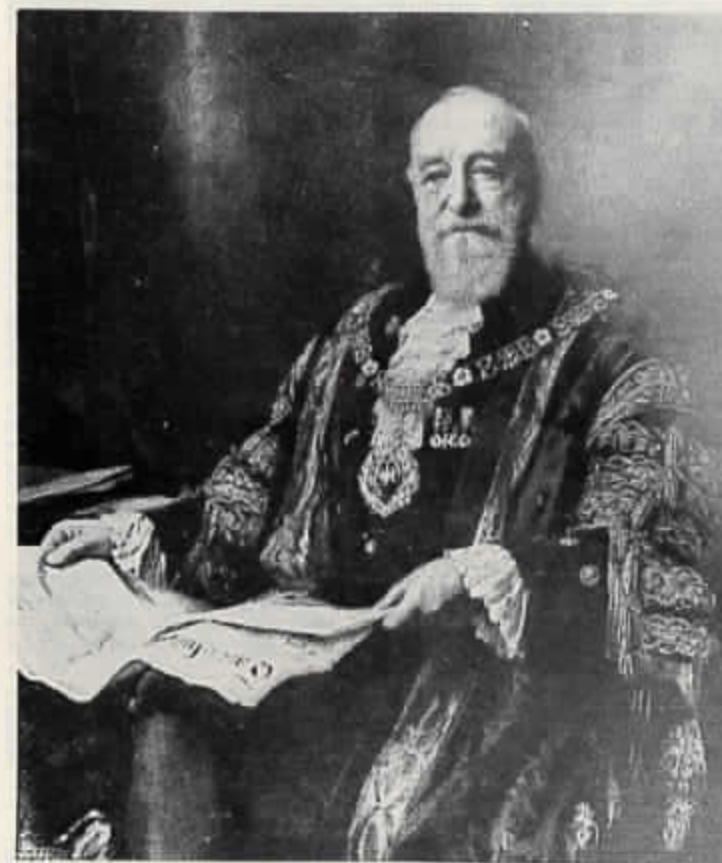
This son had, perhaps, the most distinguished career of any in the family and played an even more prominent part in public life than any of his brothers.

Born at Pipton Villa in 1831 he received his early education from a governess, but when misfortune came friends of the family obtained a presentation for him to Christ's Hospital, the famous "Blue Coat" school then still in its ancient quarters in the City of London. On the morning of 4th May, 1840 his father drove him to Abergavenny, and the next day he was sent by coach to Cirencester, where he was placed in charge of the guard of the London train to be handed over to friends at Paddington. He remained at Christ's Hospital until 1846, and seems to have attained a respectable standard without achieving any particular distinction.

His father wished him to enter the church, but this he declined to do, so his uncle, James Williams Morgan (then living in Brecon) obtained for him a post in the National Provincial Bank in that town. At the end of four years he was promoted to Machynlleth and to Manchester a year later. Here he made so favourable an impression that he was promoted to chief cashier over the heads of several senior staff. He remained in Manchester four years and then was invited to join his brothers in London to take charge of the financial side of the mercantile business in Jewin Street. The Morgan Crucible Company had just been formed, and the business was growing rapidly.

This invitation was given very full consideration before being accepted in 1856, when he moved to Jewin Street and lived over the premises for the next two or three years. The partnership now consisted of six brothers, and they remained together for the next thirty years. The business had not a great deal of capital, and it required all abilities and financial acumen to avoid serious difficulties. He remained "Financial Member" for the rest of his life.

In these activities, however, he found insufficient occupation for his energies which discovered further outlet in three main interests — his old school of Christ's Hospital, in civic duties in the City, and in Freemasonry. In 1873 he became a Governor of the school and in 1882 was chosen one of the Council of Almoners. So seriously did he take these duties that in 1891 he was unanimously elected Treasurer, and took up residence in the official Treasurer's house built by Sir Christopher Wren. It was a period when insistent demands were being made for the reform of many of our most ancient educational



ALDERMAN SIR WALTER VAUGHAN MORGAN, 1831-1916.
The only native of Breconshire to become Lord Mayor of London.

foundations and one of the first to be examined was Christ's Hospital. Very drastic alterations were demanded by the Charity Commissions and to the most objectionable of these he offered determined opposition for a long time. Finding further resistance useless he resigned his office, whereupon the Commissioners agreed to modify their proposals and a satisfactory compromise was reached. When the school left its ancient city home for Horsham, the arduous task of disposing of the city premises fell upon him as Treasurer — a post he continued to fill until 1910.

It has been said that he was never a prominent member of the Corporation, having associated himself with municipal activities too late in life for that to be possible, and being under the additional disadvantage of not having served an apprenticeship in the City. Despite these apparent drawbacks, he was invited to stand for election as Alderman of Cordwainer Ward in 1892 and was returned without opposition. In 1900 he was elected Sheriff of the City of London, for which service he was afterwards knighted, and in 1905 came his turn as Lord Mayor. His term in this exalted office does not appear to have been particularly eventful, and perhaps the most interesting occasion for readers of these notes was his visit to Brecon in September, 1906.

Accompanied by his niece, Mrs. Hornby Steer and her husband (she acted as Lady Mayoress during his term) and by various others, he arrived in Brecon on a Tuesday and took up quarters at the Castle Hotel. That evening he presided at a meeting of the Freemasons Lodge, the first Worshipful Master of which had been Theophilus Jones, and afterwards was entertained by the Freemasons to a banquet at the Castle Hotel. It might be said here that he was the first Worshipful Master of the Guildhall Lodge in the City of London.

The next day, through streets thronged with cheering crowds, he drove to Guildhall to be presented with the freedom of the Borough, and this was again the occasion for many speeches. "The casket containing the scroll was of oak and silver, the former taken from the ancient beams of the Priory at its restoration, and bore figures emblematic of the Principality — a goat, the Red Dragon, the Prince of Wales feathers, and feet in the form of leeks. It was further embellished with four views in enamel:— the Priory, the Castle, London Mansion House, and Christ's Hospital. In the course of his reply the Lord Mayor said "The firm of Morgan Brothers is unique in its history. In 1856 six brothers joined hands in the City of London; they never quarrelled and were only separated by death." (It is true there was never any public disagreement, but in private the Lord Mayor was known to express his disagreement in pungent phrases).

On Thursday he and his party visited the Agricultural Show where the crowds were again enormous; by a very apt gesture a portion of his generous donation to the prize fund was used to augment the prizes for wool. During his visit he also found time to open a new laboratory at Christ's College.

All these varied activities were very fully reported in the "Brecon County Times" for 14th September, that journal not only allotting a whole page to a great deal about Brecon and very little about the distinguished guest, but also giving a full page of photographs in colour of the principal visitor and the presentation casket.

6. SEPTIMUS VAUGHAN MORGAN 1832-1913.

This seventh son received his earliest education at the Church school, Glasbury, but in 1841, at the age of nine, he received a presentation to Christ's Hospital like his elder brother Walter. Here

*The casket and documents, etc. relating to the family are at the Museum.

he seems to have applied himself very little to his lessons but, again like his brother, he was to become a Governor of his old school in 1873. He left in 1847 to become articled to a Dr. Marshall in Hertfordshire, but seems to have done little beyond dispensing medicine to the unsuspecting patients. In 1852 he joined his brother William in the firm of Morgan & Rees, and was paid ten shillings a week to help generally in the warehouse, his working day being from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The firm was not flourishing and conditions were depressing. It must have been a relief, therefore, when three months later he was taken by William on a journey to Northampton on behalf of the firm. He was to say later that he then got "an eye-opener in pushful ways," but it stood him in good stead, for when the senior traveller died soon afterwards Septimus was put in his place. This was the start of much travelling for the firm, on which he first used a little Whitechapel cart for his baggage and samples, but changing later to a four wheeled van. He would start at 6 a.m. and arrive at the next town for breakfast; while his man set out the samples he went round his customers, all the various orders being made out at night and posted to London. Business was increasing and before long Septimus was admitted as a partner.

It seems to have been due to his initiative that a totally new venture was undertaken — a venture that was to prove an outstanding success. It was Septimus who suggested to William the introduction of a monthly journal for the ironmongery department of Morgan Brothers to bring before their customers any new lines of goods and other items of trade news. The result was the publication in 1859 of the first number of "The Ironmonger" at 2/6d., a month. So immediate was its success that a few months later "The Chemist and Druggist" was launched in the same way, and achieved the same success. From these modest beginnings was to spring the brothers' vast publishing enterprises by which means they successfully produced a whole series of trade journals, and their City premises have been called "the home of trade journalism." "The Grocer" is still the property of the Reed family, descendants of Mary Anne, the only sister of the six brothers.

Septimus was to be one of the most widely travelled members of the family and made his first voyage to U.S.A. in 1858. Leaving New York in May 1859 he travelled extensively to Canada before reaching home in August, having worked for considerable connection in North America. That he was a man of boundless energy is clear from the routine he followed in the City, where he arrived each morning at 7.30 a.m. Having dealt with his correspondence he had breakfast at 9 and remained working in the City till 7 p.m.

His urge to travel, however, was irresistible and he seemed incapable of settling anywhere for very long. In 1866 he went out to Ceylon, and then on to India, Burma, Penang, Java, China and Japan, returning via Egypt to Paris. Similar extensive voyages were made for many years, one of the last commencing in 1891 and lasting almost two years.

Party politics made no strong appeal to him, but he was an ardent Imperialist, one of the founders of the Royal Colonial Institute and of the Imperial Federation League. In 1870 he had married and there were a son and a daughter of the marriage. His grandson, the late Sir Austin M. Hudson, Bart, was to maintain the family interest in politics by being elected to Parliament in 1922 and filling a number of political appointments. He was created a Baronet in 1942.

Maintaining a keen interest in business to the end, ever eager to improve efficiency, and particularly mindful of the welfare of the staff, his restless spirit found a haven eventually at Harrington Gardens and there he died in 1913, aged 81.

7. OCTAVIUS VAUGHAN MORGAN 1837-1896.

Octavius received his education at Rutherfords' School, Abergavenny, where — it will be recalled — his father was established at the "Angel Hotel". On leaving school he obtained a position in Wilkins Old Bank at Brecon, but about 1856 he joined the family business of Morgan brothers in London. He was soon travelling on behalf of the firm and was to prove a most able representative. Foreign travel was to appeal to him as strongly as to his brother Septimus and in 1865 he went to the West Indies where he met with only limited success. On his return he devoted most of his energies to the Morgan Crucible Co. in Battersea, and when this became a limited company in 1889 he became chairman of the board.

During the 1860's and 1870's he made many extensive journeys abroad visiting all the European countries in turn. In 1881 he undertook a world tour lasting eighteen months that took him to Australia, New Zealand, China and Japan. This trip was not solely in the interests of business but was used to increase his knowledge of foreign and colonial affairs, for like his brother William he was keenly interested in politics.

For a number of years he had taken a very active interest in local affairs in Battersea, and had become a magistrate for Wandsworth Division in 1873. In 1885, on the formation of Battersea as a separate Parliamentary constituency, he was invited to stand for election in the Liberal interest. In this he was successful and thus became the first Member for Battersea. In the next year he repeated this success, but complications arose. It appears that the Morgan Crucible Co. were government contractors, and sufficient notice of this had not been given; so he resigned the seat and stood for election again. He was now returned unopposed and became a very hard-working member of Committees, being equally popular on both sides of the House. He also successfully introduced a Private Bill in 1887 (The Metropolitan Management (Battersea and Westminster) Act 1887), and later was a member of a Parliamentary Delegation to America. Like Septimus, he was a firm believer in the Empire and was a member of the Imperial Federation League. When Lord Beaverbrook launched his Empire Free Trade Campaign it was from Octavius's pamphlet on Imperial Preference that he drew for some of his ideas. He, too, was keenly interested in the welfare of the firm's employees, and was one of the pioneers in introducing a system of pensions and bonuses and the eight hour day. A strong bond of sympathy existed between these two brothers, and this was enhanced when Octavius married the sister of Septimus's wife, two brothers thus marrying two sisters.

By the time of the next election his health had deteriorated to such an extent that he felt unable to contest it. There was a feeling, too, that a more Radical member was required. He was succeeded by John Burns. Some time later he consented, reluctantly, to contest Ashton-under-Lyne, where he was narrowly defeated. From this time his health continued to decline and he died in February 1896.

It is interesting to find that his great interest in politics is maintained by his descendants, his great-grandson being Mr. Marcus Worsley, M.P., and his grandson, Sir Felix Brunner, is still a prominent member of the Liberal Party. His great-grand-daughter is the present Duchess of Kent.

8. EDWARD VAUGHAN MORGAN 1838-1922.

This youngest son of Thomas and Mary Anne Morgan was barely a year old when the family at Glasbury suffered catastrophe and moved to Abergavenny. His early education was at the Priory School there, but later he was sent to Ottery St. Mary and remained there until 1853. It will be recalled that his cousin Mary Anne Morgan, daughter of John Morgan of Tir Uched, had married a James Mitchell, papermaker, of Birmingham, and it was to these cousins that young Edward was sent on leaving school in 1853. Starting on wages of fifteen shillings a week, he remained in Birmingham until 1856, his only holiday being one week in London. His eldest brother, Thomas, had paid for his education and supported him in his early days, and the young man never ceased to be grateful for his brother's help.

On joining the family business in 1856 he first lived with William in Jewin Crescent but soon moved with brother Thomas to the works cottage at Battersea. Here he became largely responsible for the making and for the home trade, leaving the foreign side in the hands of Octavius. Periodically he travelled through England, Scotland and Ireland, and a large business had developed in the Midlands from samples being held at the Michell's works in Birmingham. In 1867 he made extensive journeys throughout Europe, but foreign travel had not the strong appeal to him as to his brother. The sole control of the Battersea factory and of the home trade generally was now in his hands, and in 1870 he married Emma, daughter of John Irving Pascoe. They had a large family of ten children, and to accommodate them he built a special house in Harrington Gardens, designed by his friend Sir Ernest George. It is now listed as a building of architectural interest.

Edward was above all a family man, and at his happiest when surrounded by his children and grandchildren who all adored him. With no political ambitions himself, the family's traditional interest in politics was ably maintained by his son Kenyon Pascoe Vaughan Morgan who was Member for East Fulham; and carried still further by his grandson, John Kenyon Vaughan Morgan, Member for Reigate 1950-1970, holder of numerous political appointments, created a Baronet in 1906, and Baron Reigate (Life Baron) in 1970.

Edward Vaughan Morgan retired from the Morgan Crucible Co. through ill health in 1901 and took no active part thereafter in any family enterprises. He died in May, 1922.

1. MARY ANNE VAUGHAN MORGAN 1834-1915.

Nothing seems to be known of the early life of the only sister of the seven brothers, or even where her early years were spent; but in 1860 she married William Reed who held a senior position in the publishing business of Morgan Brothers. The flourishing trade journal "The Grocer" was made over to them and this is now the only journal still wholly owned by the descendants of the original proprietors. Of the other businesses founded by the brothers, the Morgan Crucible Co. became a public company in 1948, and the publishing business is now merged in Morgan Grampian. Lord Reigate remains a director of the former while his Hudson cousins are concerned with the latter.

FAMILY HERALDY.

The question of a family coat of arms does not appear to have arisen until Walter Vaughan Morgan was created a Baronet in 1906. The Morgans of Glasbury have not claimed descent from any of the old established armigerous families of that name in South Wales, and the College of Arms provided a new coat for the Baronet, viz:— Per chevron sable and argent, in chief two boys' heads couped at the shoulders having snakes about their necks, proper, and in base a cock gules, combed and wattled or. Crest:— a cock as in the arms charged with a fleur-de-lys or and resting the dexter claw on a spear head or. Motto:— Undeb.

The boys' heads are clearly taken from the Vaughan arms, which many families were proud to include in their escutcheon, while the chevron form of the field and the cock in the arms and crest are strongly reminiscent of the coat of the Williams of Gwernyfed, and elsewhere. This family were near neighbours of the Morgans of Glasbury but there seems to be no evidence that they were related. Miss Gwenllian Morgan was critical of the arms assigned to Sir Walter, and it has been stated that the Cathedine branch of the Vaughans, from whom he was descended, had obtained a fresh grant of arms which included the spear-heads of Bleddin ap Maenarch. Miss Morgan also pointed out that Mary Anne Vaughan was an heiress and therefore the Vaughan coat should have been quartered by her descendants. Some doubt has also been cast on the propriety of choosing a cock as a charge in the Morgan arms, but it is possible the family had been tenants of the Gwernyfed family for generations before reaching their later prosperity, and it was well established practice for a tenant to take a charge from the arms of his overlord when granted arms.

The somewhat unsatisfactory nature of the Lord Mayor's arms seems to have interested his nephew Kenyon Pascoe Vaughan Morgan more than any other member of the family, and as his uncle had left no children to inherit his arms, he decided to apply for a fresh grant of a more appropriate coat. This resulted in the issue of the following arms:—

Quarterly:— 1 and 4 Or five lozenges conjoined in fesse gules between three lymphads sails furred sable colours flying for Morgan.
2 and 3 Sable on a chevron or between three boys' heads couped at the shoulder proper crined or wrapped about the neck with a snake three spear heads embued proper.

In this new coat the arms of Morgan and Vaughan are now shown quarterly, and the former make no claim on any of the arms of ancient Welsh families but are quite original, and clearly allude to the overseas trading activities of the family. The Vaughan arms are those borne by the Cathedine branch of the family.

CONCLUSION

This brief account of an ancient Breconshire family that has earned distinction in such varied fields of activity could not have been compiled without the full co-operation of Lord Reigate, and I am grateful for his permission to draw so freely on the information he has provided. It is most gratifying, too, to see carried into the present day that active interest in politics and public affairs first displayed when William Vaughan Morgan contested the seat for the Borough of Brecon. Hand in hand with this interest has always gone their affection for the county they were forced to leave one hundred and thirty years ago — an affection to which both the Cathedral and the parish of Glasbury can bear witness.

Other publications by the same author on sale at the
Brecknock Museum are as follows :

"DOYLES OF PENDARREN," 10p.

"CWRT-Y-GOLLEN AND ITS FAMILIES," 12½p.

This appendage is by courtesy of Morgan Advanced Materials

History

In 1856 the Morgan brothers founded the Patent Plumbago Crucible Company, making crucibles in a small factory in Battersea, London. The company's success came from their use of graphite (plumbago) in the clay mix to produce a crucible that melted metal faster and lasted longer than anything else available in Europe at the time. So much so that the Patent Plumbago 'melting pots' were said to offer metal smelters 'a saving of more than 50 per cent in time, labour, fuel and waste'* and were soon selling well all around the world.



Since then, through 160 years of industrial history, the global company we now know as Morgan Advanced Materials has continued to grow, change and adapt. However, its focus remains where it started; on the engineering of high-performance materials and specialised products that offer reliable solutions to technical challenges and help customers achieve more with less.

In 1881 the company changed its name to The Morgan Crucible Company and, following a successful floatation in 1890, started making commutator brushes to meet the needs of a growing market in industrial electrical equipment. In particular, the ability of its technical team to engineer superior performance carbon brushes to meet the specific needs of electricity generators and rail and tram networks around the world led to steady global expansion through the early 1900s, with new manufacturing sites established in UK, USA, Russia and Germany.

From there the company went on to develop a wide range of highly specialist products exploiting the properties of carbon in components for search lights, cinematic equipment, pantographs for high speed trains, cars, telegraph equipment and DC motors. It also made carbon coatings, rings, seals, bearings, as well as graphite crucibles. During the second half of the 20th century it grew further organically and by acquisition so that by the early 1990s the Morgan Group comprised 200 companies in 80 countries, with a strong capability in technical ceramics, carbon and composites. By then the Group was supplying a wide range of advanced materials, products and components for specialist applications in the automotive, defence, electronics, medical, industrial and transport sectors.

Since the turn of the 21st century Morgan has consolidated and re-organised its activities to continue to meet the needs of its dynamic global markets. In 2013 the name was changed to Morgan Advanced Materials to better reflect the company's world-leading competencies in materials science, specialist manufacturing and applications engineering.

Key Historical Dates

1856: The Morgan brothers founded the Patent Plumbago Crucible Company as a private partnership making graphite crucibles for metals furnaces at its factory in Battersea, London.

1881: The Patent Plumbago Crucible Company was renamed The Morgan Crucible Company.

1890: Shares were floated and Morgan became a public limited company.

1907: Morgan started making commutator brushes at its factory in Battersea, London, and established a sales office in Germany.

1909: Morgan opened a crucible factory in Russia and appointed an agent in Japan.

1920: Morgan opened an office in New York, USA

1925: Morgan established a brush factory in New York, USA

1946: The Morgan Crucible Company was listed on the London Stock Exchange.

1964: Morgan acquired the industrial ceramics firm Steatite & Porcelain Products, based at Stourport-on-Severn, UK.

1971-6: Morgan's brush manufacturing was re-located from Battersea, London to a new site in Morriston, South Wales.

1987-2001: The Morgan Group continued to expand with a series of global acquisitions including Alberox, WESGO, Haldenwanger and Diamonex.

2006: Morgan celebrated its 150th anniversary.

2008: Morgan acquired composite materials company NP Aerospace.

2008: Morgan established the Material Centre of Excellence for thermal insulation products in Bromborough, UK.

2013: The company was renamed Morgan Advanced Materials.

2015: Morgan established the Material Centre of Excellence for Structural Ceramics in Stourport-on-Severn, UK.

2016: Morgan opens two new R&D Centres of Excellence; one for Carbon Science at Penn State University, Pennsylvania, US and one for Metals and Joining in Hayward, California, US.

2017: Morgan sells UK ElectroCeramics business and Rotary business.