

F. C. Morgan of Hereford (1878–1978): Collector and Benefactor

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This paper is based on my recently completed PhD thesis investigating the collector, librarian and antiquarian F. C. Morgan (1878–1978), who lived in England all his life but donated his substantial collection of historical English children’s books to the University of Melbourne in 1954 (Figure 1).¹ It will discuss why and how Morgan came to donate his collection to the University of Melbourne and his relationship with the University. By looking at Morgan’s life it will then examine how he became a collector, what kind of collector he was, how he collected and the role of his daughter Penelope in his life as a collector.



Figure 1: F. C. Morgan ca. 1955. Black and white photograph. Courtesy of Roger Morgan.

¹ Merete Colding Smith, “Never Any Work but All Joy: F. C. and Penelope Morgan and the Morgan Collection of Children’s Books in the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne, Australia” (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 2011). I would like to acknowledge the generous assistance of Morgan’s nephew, Paul Morgan, his wife Rosemary and their son Roger Morgan in my work for the thesis, as well as staff of Special Collections, Baillieu Library, The University of Melbourne for support in many ways, including photography of most of the images for this paper.

The Morgan Collection of Children's Books at the University of Melbourne at the time of the donation consisted of just over 1000 mainly English children's books published between 1708 and the early part of the twentieth century. It has since grown to several times that size. An image of the earliest book in the collection, an ABC from 1708, will give an indication of the nature of the collection (Figure 2). The Morgan Collection was one of many under my care as former Curator of Rare Books at the University of Melbourne. It became one of my favourites from among the many wonderful special collections then in my care, because it allows a glimpse into childhood and what children read in earlier centuries, not least because inscriptions in the books themselves may frequently lead to the identification of early child owners.

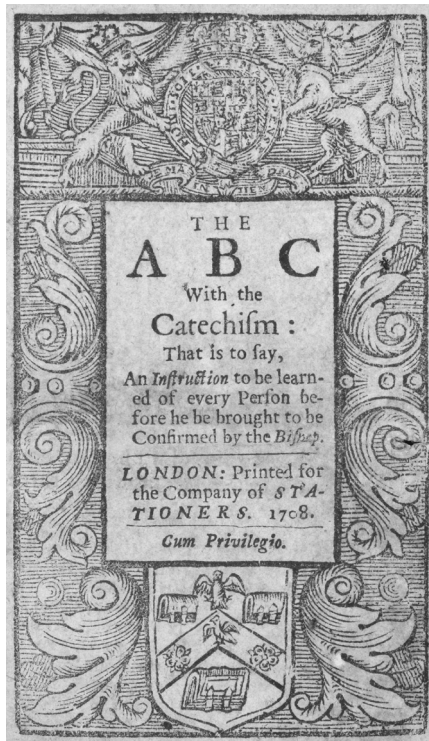


Figure 2: The ABC with the Catechism: That Is to Say an Introduction to Be Learned of Every Person before He Be Brought to Be Confirmed by the Bishop, (London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1708), Title page. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 244/18.

Morgan collected in his immediate local area, and pristine condition was not a primary criterion. Before entering the adult Morgan's collection, most of the books had been owned by identifiable, local children, including Morgan himself, rather than by adult collectors. The Morgan Collection therefore functions as a social document of childhood in the West Midlands of England between the

eighteenth and early twentieth century. Much information about Morgan's life is found in his two published autobiographical works.²

One question that intrigued me was why Morgan had chosen to donate his collection of children's books to Melbourne. Morgan had apparently no connections with Australia, which he had certainly never visited. New Zealand might have been a more logical destination, as his youngest brother had migrated there before the First World War, during which he fought with the New Zealand contingent in France, where he was killed in action.³ Once I started investigating the University files the answer became obvious rather quickly. But it led to some interesting insights into the emotional bonds between England and Australia at the personal level in the 1950s, as well as some understanding of an unusual and interesting character, his position in British society and the development of book collecting and librarianship in Britain, including that of children's librarianship.

The straightforward explanation for the donation to Melbourne was that Morgan, at that stage living in Hereford in England, was in poor health (he could not know that he would live for another 24 years) and was looking for a good home for his children's books, collected as a personal hobby over a lifetime. He was acquainted with Edgar Osborne, another English librarian, who had donated his own, larger, collection (The Osborne Collection) to Toronto a few years earlier (in 1949).⁴ Morgan wanted to do something similar, to donate his collection to one of the "newer countries of the Commonwealth," which lacked the riches in this area found in England.⁵ His intention was therefore very much to educate and benefit far-away Englishmen.

Australia became the chosen destination for Morgan's collection of children's books as a consequence of his great interest in local Hereford history and archaeology and of his very active involvement with the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, the local Herefordshire natural history and archaeological society.⁶ Here he met and became friendly with a fellow English local-history lover, Lord Rennell of Rodd, a British peer with a career as diplomat, merchant banker and explorer.⁷ Rennell was also a friend of John Medley, then recently retired from

² F. C. Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences of Old Stratford-Upon-Avon, the Morgan Family, and Seventy-Two Years in Libraries*. 2 vols. ([Hereford: F. C. Morgan], 1968–1969); *Stratford-Upon-Avon: A 19th Century Library and My Reading from the Age of 4 to 20 Years* (Hereford: Morgan, 1977).

³ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 81.

⁴ Edgar Osborne (1890–1978); Toronto Public Library, "The Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books," <http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/>; *The Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, 1566–1910: A Catalogue. Prepared at Boys and Girls House by Judith St. John*. With an Introduction by Edgar Osborne, Reprinted ... with additional corrections (Toronto: Toronto Public Library, 1975).

⁵ Francis Rennell of Rodd to G. W. Paton, 9 March 1954. MS letter in The University of Melbourne. Registrar's Correspondence, 1958, no. 982. Folder named "Morgan Collection of Children's Books."

⁶ "The Woolhope Club," <http://www.woolhopeclub.org.uk>.

⁷ Kathleen Burk, "Rodd, Francis James Rennell, Second Baron Rennell (1895–1978)," *Oxford*

the Vice-Chancellorship of the University of Melbourne, a position which he had held from 1938 to 1951. Medley had migrated to Australia in 1919, but, as was common for the period, with continued strong ties to his native Britain.⁸ Rennell was aware that Medley was a serious book collector with many interests in common with Morgan, such as their great love of Shakespeare.⁹ Rennell therefore wrote a letter to his friend Medley, which Medley immediately forwarded to his close friend, the new Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, G. W. Paton, outlining the details of the proposed donation.¹⁰ Paton from then on corresponded directly with Morgan, and eventually, after a long sea journey and lengthy customs delays, the collection arrived five months after its dispatch from England at the University, where it was housed as a separate collection in locked cases in the Library.¹¹

The close political and emotional relationship between Australia and Britain at the time was a significant factor in both Morgan's decision to donate and the University's delight to receive the collection. The books arrived in 1954, when pro-Commonwealth feeling in both Britain and Australia was at its height and trading links between Britain and Australia were still strong.¹² At the time Morgan donated his collection, the Coronation of the young Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 and her subsequent tour of Australasia in 1953–1954 brought on a rush of patriotic, royalist feeling in Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Britain.¹³ The Morgan Collection with its focus on the British background common to the majority of Australians at the time was therefore particularly welcome in Australia.

The correspondence between Morgan and the University of Melbourne lasted throughout Morgan's life and was maintained by his daughter, Penelope Morgan

Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31623>. He is listed under "Rodd," but I here follow Morgan's use of "Lord Rennell."

⁸ Geoffrey Serle, *Sir John Medley: A Memoir. Together with a Selection of His Verse Edited by Ray Marginson* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1993).

⁹ Ibid; Geoffrey Serle, "Medley, Sir John Dudley Gibbs (Jack) (1891–1962)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/medley-sir-john-dudley-gibbs-jack-11101/text19763>.

¹⁰ G. W. Paton (1902–1985) was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne 1951–1968. University of Melbourne, "Former Office Bearers," <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/calendar/formoffi.html>.

¹¹ K. A. Lodewycks, "University of Melbourne Library. Restricted Library Materials [Draft], dated 11 March 1965" in University of Melbourne Archives. (Karel) Axel Lodewycks Collection. Acc. No. 64/1. Box 2, Folder 7, 1965–1966 (Melbourne, 1965).

¹² See for instance, A. W. Martin, "Menzies, Sir Robert Gordon (Bob) (1894–1978)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/menzies-sir-robert-gordon-bob-11111/text19783>.

¹³ This contrasts with later visits, where the crowds have been ever diminishing. See, for instance, Stuart Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal* (Carlton South, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2001), 239 for the contrast between the 1954 and later royal tours.

(1916–1990), until her death. But gradually relations between the Morgans and the University were assumed by the University Librarian rather than the Vice Chancellor from about 1960 onwards, and then from the mid-1970s finally by the Rare Book Librarian directly in charge of the collection.¹⁴

There was much more to Morgan's life than his collection of children's books. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1878 and lived for a full century, to 1978. He was virtually born in a library, as he grew up as one of 13 children (of whom 12 survived to adulthood) above his father's bookshop and subscription lending library in the centre of Stratford. Morgan was a book collector almost from birth, but from his beginnings in a middle-class family he came a long way during his long life both as a collector and as a librarian. Towards the end of his life, in 1975, at the age of 97, he was appointed Chief Steward of Hereford. He had his portrait painted by a protégé of his, John Ward, a portrait painter and book illustrator, originally from Hereford.¹⁵

During his childhood years Morgan spent much time in his father's bookshop and library. Many of the books donated to Melbourne had supposedly been preserved from his childhood collection or from his father's lending library, although further research shows that he often substituted a better copy for books tattered from use by his many siblings. The books from Morgan's own early childhood were mainly contemporary children's books, in particular nineteenth-century picture books for young children, such as nearly all of those by Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott (Figure 3) and Kate Greenaway published in the 1870s and 1880s. Translations of Heinrich Hoffman's outrageously funny *Struwelpeter*, also known as "Shock Headed Peter," became another lasting favourite with Morgan—always known as Peter in the family because he was born on St. Peter's Day, 29 June (see front cover).

Although the Morgan siblings enjoyed the fairy tales illustrated by Crane, probably the most cherished of Crane's books, frequently mentioned by him, was *Chattering Jack's Picture Book*. It is a story of a young boy who annoys his mother with his incessant talking. He is punished by being carried away to live with a family of magpies, with Jack treated to the same menu and discipline as the magpie young. However, to Jack's relief he wakes up at home in his own bed, now cured of his troublesome behaviour (Figure 4). In spite of his love of children's

¹⁴ F. C. Morgan, to K. A. Lodewycks, 22 April 1963. MS letter, Library Morgan File; W. D. Richardson, to Merete Colding Smith 20 December 2003, MS letter; Mary Lugton to Merete Colding Smith, 21 August 2004, MS letter; Mary Lugton, personal communication, 2 February 2005.

¹⁵ John Ward, *Portrait of F. C. Morgan in Robes as Chief Steward of Hereford* (1975). Now owned by Roger Morgan. For John Ward (1917–2007) see Simon Fenwick, "John Ward: Prolific Establishment Artist Who Quit the Royal Academy in a Row over Modern 'Ghastly Muck'," *The Guardian*, 21 June 2007.

books, Morgan placed a strong emphasis on discipline for children all his life, sometimes referring to this book.¹⁶



Figure 3: Randolph Caldecott (1846–1886). *Hey Diddle-Diddle and Baby Bunting*. London: Routledge, [1882]. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 760.3/38.

Morgan's two autobiographical publications provide information about books of importance to him during his early years that stayed in his memory. Both autobiographies are highly anecdotal, but although dates and facts need to be verified the general impression remains of a happy English provincial childhood in which books played an unusually large part. Morgan continued to collect children's picture books throughout his life.

Morgan's interest in children's books developed further when in January 1888, at the age of nine and a half, he went to the Stratford King Edward VI Grammar School, which had supposedly also been attended by Shakespeare.¹⁷ However, his time at the Grammar School ended barely two years later, at age eleven, when his father pulled all his sons out of the school after a disagreement with the principal.¹⁸ After another two years at a local commercial school, which he hated,

¹⁶ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 78.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 26.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 25

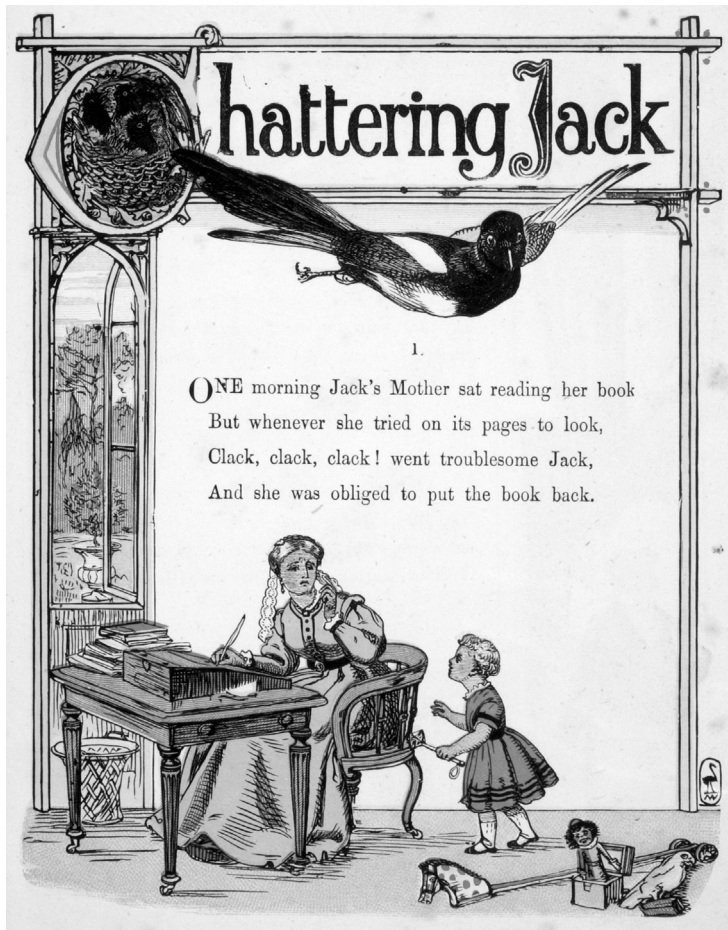


Figure 4: Walter Crane (1845–1915), *Chattering Jack's Picture Book: Containing Chattering Jack, How Jessie Was Lost, Grammar in Rhyme, Annie and Jack in London. With thirty-two pages of illustrations by Walter Crane; Printed in colours by Edmund Evans (London: Routledge, [187-?]). UniM Bail SpC/Morg 760.3/51.*

Morgan's formal schooling ended at age thirteen.¹⁹ He had loved the Grammar School and its traditions and regretted his lack of further education for the rest of his life. The school library was progressive for its time, and Morgan found and read many contemporary boys' adventure stories there.²⁰ These nineteenth-century boys' stories were mainly about young British boys involved as heroes in

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 11, I, ii. However, Morgan carried out formal training in librarianship in his own time and passed his examinations as one of the first in Britain to do so, subsequent to having been elected Fellow of the Library Association (FLA) in 1910. Philip Whiteman, "Eighty-One Years a Librarian," *Library Association Record* 79 (1977), 537.

²⁰ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, II, 5.

conflicts all over the world, often accompanying actual historical figures, and they were important sources for teaching British boys about history and the Empire. Though Morgan did not own many of these as a child, as an adult collector he acquired both those he remembered and many other nineteenth-century boys' books, often in spectacular "pictorial cloth," by authors such as Henry Kingston and George Henty, now in the Morgan Collection.

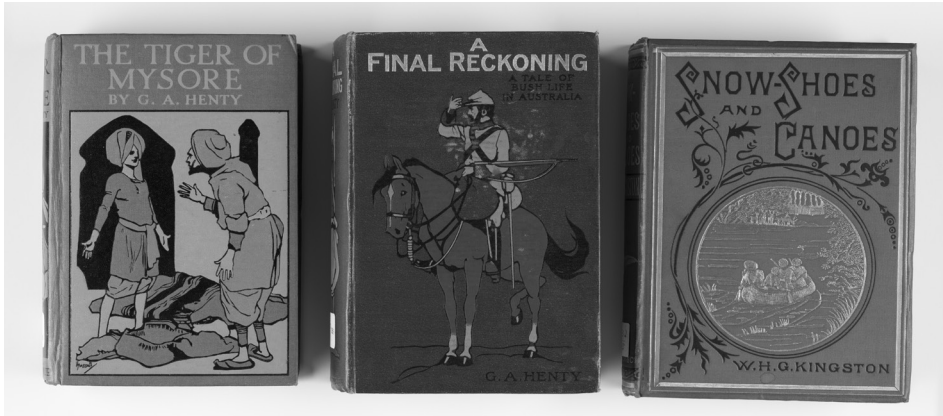


Figure 5: Pictorial cloth boys' books from the Morgan Collection. Covers of: W. H. G. Kingston, *Snow-Shoes and Canoes, or, the Early Days of a Fur-Trader in the Hudson's Bay Territory*. 2nd ed. London: S. Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1877. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 823.2/55; G. A. Henty, *A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia*. Ill. W. B. Wollen. New ed. London: Blackie and Son, 1910. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 823.2/265; G. A. Henty, *The Tiger of Mysore: A Story of the War with Tippoo Saib*. New ed. London: Blackie, [191-?]. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 823.2/318.

Morgan's career as a librarian and book collector developed slowly. After apprenticeship as a draper to a relative on his mother's side of the family and a brief stint working in the trade, he returned to his family home and worked for many years in his father's bookshop and subscription library.²¹ A deciding factor in his further career was his meeting in his early youth in Stratford with W. Salt Brassington (1859–1939), gentleman scholar, antiquarian and book collector. Salt Brassington was Librarian of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford, and Morgan became his amanuensis. He spent much of his free time with Salt Brassington and his wife, who did not have children of their own, and on Salt Brassington's death in 1939 Morgan inherited all the older man's books and a sum of money sufficient to buy a car.²²

²¹ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 41, 79.

²² *Ibid.*, I, 83, 31, 47; Paul Morgan, "Frederick Charles Morgan," *Library History* [Great Britain] Vol. 4, No. 5 (1978), 137–40.

When, in 1904, Salt Brassington became honorary librarian of the newly established Carnegie Public Library in Stratford, he nominated Morgan as executive librarian – that is, the person to do all the practical work – and the first paid librarian in Stratford.²³ Unfortunately, this appointment caused an estrangement between Morgan and his father, as the father viewed his son's appointment to the new free public library as a desertion from his old-fashioned subscription library, but without this appointment Morgan might never have been able to leave Stratford.²⁴

Morgan was in his thirties when he left Stratford in 1910 to take up the post as librarian of Malvern Public Library. The Malvern years, until 1925, became decisive for the rest of his life as a book collector and as a professional librarian. One of his initiatives as a librarian was to set up a Children's Room (a similar initiative was taken in Dunedin Public Library at much the same time).²⁵ Morgan met his future wife, Emma, there and married in 1914, immediately before the outbreak of World War I. Their only child, a daughter, Penelope, was born in 1916, just as Morgan went off to war service in France and Germany. He was badly wounded but re-joined his family in Malvern after the war, in 1919.²⁶

In Malvern Morgan became influenced by a number of serious book collectors who had an interest in the library and were active members of the library committee. A book collector and philanthropist of world-class importance and of particular significance for Morgan was C. W. Dyson Perrins (1864–1958). For Morgan, as a developing book collector, the influence and friendship of Dyson Perrins was seminal.²⁷ Dyson Perrins was wealthy, his father being one of the original partners in the firm of Lea and Perrins, the makers of Worcestershire Sauce, but he was by all accounts a singularly kind and unassuming man. He is still considered one of the most significant collectors of medieval illuminated manuscripts and early printed books illustrated with woodcuts ever to have lived in England. One instance of his great generosity was the sale of his collection of early printed woodcut books at auction in 1946 in order to save the Royal Worcester porcelain factory from financial ruin and to preserve jobs for local workers. The sale became the first major auction to be held in England after World War II.²⁸

²³ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 89. The first public library in Dunedin, opened 1908, was also a Carnegie library. See Mary Ronnie, *Freedom to Read: A Centennial History of Dunedin Public Library* (Dunedin: Dunedin Public Libraries, 2008), 14–53.

²⁴ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 73.

²⁵ Ronnie, *Freedom to Read*, 100–117.

²⁶ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, II, 15; Roger Morgan to Merete Colding Smith. Emails, August–September 2011.

²⁷ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, i, 91 and II, 18.

²⁸ Paul Needham, "Lessing J. Rosenwald and the 'Magnificent Library' of C. W. Dyson Perrins," in *A Heavenly Craft: The Woodcut in Early Printed Books, Illustrated Books Purchased by Lessing J. Rosenwald at the Sale of the Library of C. W. Dyson Perrins*, ed. Daniel De Simone (New York: George Braziller, 2004).

From 1908 to his death Dyson Perrins was a member of the exclusive Roxburghe Club.²⁹ He was an extremely active collector, especially between 1900 and 1920, during much of which period Morgan was in Malvern.³⁰

Dyson Perrins was one of the most influential supporters and certainly the most important benefactor of the Malvern Public Library. He contributed enough money to add a lecture hall much used for functions and local community activities.³¹ Although as a collector Morgan was in a completely different league, his friendship with Dyson Perrins contributed greatly to his becoming a serious book collector and art connoisseur. As one of his parting gifts from the Malvern Library Morgan very much appreciated being given the last remaining copy of the catalogue of Dyson Perrins's collection of early printed books.³²

Children's books were not generally regarded as collectible objects until well after World War II, but in Malvern Morgan came under the influence of a member of the local gentry, Mrs Mildred Berkeley of Cotteridge Hall, who owned a very substantial collection of pre-1830 children's books. Soon after Morgan took up the position as Librarian in Malvern he was persuaded to stage what became the earliest exhibition of children's books in Britain. This occurred in 1911, and apparently no similar exhibition was held in Britain until 1932. It was a huge exhibition of both historical and contemporary books and must have taken most of Morgan's time for the first year he was in Malvern. Most of the early books in the exhibition came from Mrs Berkeley's collection, but Morgan himself appears to have become a collector of historical children's books from that time on. Many of the contemporary children's books were Morgan's own, or borrowed from friends and family, and some retain the original exhibition labels. There was no catalogue at the time, but Morgan never gave up the idea of publishing one, and finally succeeded in 1976, 65 years after the exhibition had closed, in publishing a catalogue of the pre-1830 books in the exhibition.³³ This must surely hold the record for the longest delay between an exhibition and its catalogue. A true indication of Morgan's persistence!

In 1925 Morgan became Librarian and Museum Curator in Hereford, where he stayed for the rest of his life. He soon became involved with the Hereford

²⁹ The Roxburghe Club, founded in 1812, is the oldest and most prestigious society of book collectors in the world, limited at any one time of 40 members. "The Roxburghe Club," <http://www.roxburghclub.org.uk/>.

³⁰ Rogers, "Perrins, (Charles William) Dyson (1864–1958)."

³¹ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 91; Paul Morgan, "Frederick Charles Morgan", 37; Whiteman, "Eighty-One Years a Librarian", 536; Brian S. Smith, *A History of Malvern* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1964), 254.

³² A. W. Pollard, *Italian Book-Illustrations and Early Printing: Catalogue of Early Italian Books in the Library of C. W. D. Perrins* (London: Quaritch, 1914); Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, II, 18.

³³ F. C. Morgan, ed. *Children's Books Published before 1830 Exhibited at Malvern Public Library in 1911*. Hereford: F. C. Morgan, 1976. Cover. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 010/53.

Cathedral, and after retirement in 1945 became Honorary Librarian there. From 1958, Morgan was allowed to occupy a house in the Vicar's Choral Cloisters of Hereford Cathedral, in recognition of his work for the Cathedral.³⁴ Here he lived with his family from 1958 until his death in 1978, having been joined by daughter Penelope after she returned to Hereford to become City Librarian there in 1949.³⁵

The period between 1925 and 1954 was Morgan's most active as a collector. He did not spend money lightly and did not collect from book auctions or book dealers but collected what came his way. Morgan acquired mainly books that were given to him rather than by purchase. Therefore, although he was compulsive about recording his expenses (all his account books have been preserved) hardly any of his acquisitions are listed there, as he did not pay for them.³⁶ During this period, Morgan collected a wide range of children's books. The 450 pre-1850 books in the Collection deserve special mention. Of these, 221 are storybooks, some by well-known authors such as Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743–1825) and Mary Martha Sherwood (1775–1851), but many were published anonymously or are by unknown authors. The prominent publishing firms of the Newberys and John Harris are well represented. In particular, a group of 35 titles in 55 volumes stand out. They were all acquired by a Gloucestershire family in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century and signed by or for the children in the family. It is rare to find a sizeable collection of children's books from before 1850 that can be traced back to their original child owners.³⁷

Another strength in Morgan's collection is the 150 or so early British Sunday School Reward Books. These small booklets with brightly coloured card covers were produced cheaply by a wide range of publishers between the late 1820s and about 1860 for the growing number of poor, mostly rural, children who attended Sunday school. They were exceedingly common at the time. Many have perished, and those that survive are difficult to identify in library catalogues, as they were not usually dated. Their titles and descriptions do not distinguish them from other types of publications, especially the later, more substantial, Sunday School Reward Books, published for the growing number of literate children as a result of the 1870 and later Education Acts. Only by looking at the books themselves is the difference obvious.³⁸ Many are illustrated with charming wood engravings

³⁴ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 84.

³⁵ F. C. Morgan to G. W. Paton, 30 September 1958. MS letter in The University of Melbourne. Registrar's Correspondence, 1958, no. 982. Folder named "Morgan Collection of Children's Books".

³⁶ The Penelope Morgan Archive, containing all the family papers, is housed in the Hereford Cathedral Library and Archives.

³⁷ One such example is Mrs. Sarah Trimmer, *A Description of a Set of Prints Taken from the New Testament: Contained in a Set of Easy Lessons* (London: Printed and sold by John Marshall, 1796), inscribed by a young Isabella Broome.

³⁸ Examples of early Sunday School Reward Books are *Bible Happiness* (Birmingham: Edwards, 1828), UniM Bail SpC/Morg 268/11, [George Stokes], *The Vine* (London: Religious Tract Society,

depicting realistic situations. In *Ruth at Service*, a young servant girl from the country is shown reading her bible in the sparse attic room that she shares with the family's food stores.³⁹

Morgan's wife, Emma, died in 1967 after more than 50 years of marriage.⁴⁰ Her contribution to Morgan's work was very significant and he constantly acknowledged and thanked her in his writings. Nevertheless, as was not uncommon during the first half of the twentieth century, she appeared content to be his wife and helper. It is therefore impossible to evaluate the extent and precise nature of her contributions.

After his wife's death Morgan continued to work at the Cathedral along with Penelope, who, after her own early retirement due to a serious illness, in 1953 took on the role as his constant helper until his death. Penelope Morgan played a major role in her parents' life. She was devoted to them and, in spite of considerable talent, gave up her own career as a librarian to care for them.⁴¹ Particularly after her mother's death Penelope "looked after [her father] sharing to the full his absorption in the cathedral chained library & manuscripts."⁴² She helped him with much of his research and correspondence so unobtrusively that her contribution can be difficult to distinguish from his work. Penelope had a keen interest in children's books, and her papers about this subject, particularly the Sunday School Reward Books in her father's collection, were pioneering efforts.⁴³

Morgan collected not just children's books but everything that might be in danger of being discarded. He thus founded one of the largest costume collections in Britain (still flourishing) as well as one of agricultural machinery (much to the irritation of local government, who had to house it). He also explored local history, and as honorary librarians of Hereford Cathedral he and Penelope documented its entire archive, going back to about the year 1000, and in the process collected words for incorporation into the *Middle English Dictionary*.⁴⁴ The promotion of

[1827?]), UniM Bail SpC/Morg 268/20/4, and Mary Gray, *The Sunday Scholar* (London: Religious Tract Society, [18—]), UniM Bail SpC/Morg 268/20/11. Early Sunday School Reward Books are generally just over 10 cm. tall, about 7 cm. wide and between 16 and 32 pages long, in flimsy, coloured card covers. The later, post-1870 Sunday School Reward Books are generally about 19 cm. tall, 14 cm. wide and between 300 and 400 pages long, in heavy, often beautifully decorated covers (similar to the books in Figure 5).

³⁹ *Ruth at Service* (London: James Burns, 1841), p. [3]. UniM Bail SpC/Morg 268/5/3.

⁴⁰ Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, ii.

⁴¹ Paul and Rosemary Morgan to Merete Colding Smith, 31 May and 2 June 2003. Personal communication.

⁴² John Ward to Merete Colding Smith "12 August" [actually 12 October] 2004. MS letter.

⁴³ Penelope E. Morgan, "A Few Notes on the Production of Children's Books to 1860," *Notes and Queries* vol. 190, no. 5 (1946), 93–96; Penelope E. Morgan "Reward Books," *Notes and Queries*, vol. 185, no. 3 (1943), 70–74.

⁴⁴ *Middle English Dictionary*, edited by Hans Kurath and Sherman M. Kuhn, 21 vols. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1952–1999); Morgan, *Trivial Reminiscences*, I, 101.

the Chained Library, open to visitors from 1950, was largely due to the Morgans, who would proudly show visitors around.⁴⁵

Morgan received many honours in recognition of his work, including in 1952 a much-treasured honorary MA from Birmingham University.⁴⁶ As well as his appointment as Chief Steward of Hereford in 1975, in 1977, to mark his 99th birthday, a street in Hereford was named in his honour, “F. C. Morgan Close.”⁴⁷ A special copy of the issue of the *Library Association Record*, as well as a booklet produced by Melbourne University about the Morgan Collection, was among the many presents given to Morgan for his 100th birthday in 1978.⁴⁸ Just before this event the City Council awarded to him the greatest honour of all, Freedom of the City of Hereford.⁴⁹ Although the decision was made in time for Morgan to appreciate the honour, the ceremony had to be postponed. It was held in Hereford’s Council Chamber the February following his death, being received by Penelope on her father’s behalf.⁵⁰

Morgan’s influence can still be detected all over Hereford, including in the Art Collection and the Museum as well as in the Library and the Cathedral. But apart from in the Costume Collection and the Cathedral this inveterate collector, celebrated with one hundred peals of the Cathedral bells each year on the anniversary of his death, is now largely forgotten. His children’s book collection was largely gathered in and around Hereford, and many books were donated by Hereford Cathedral acquaintances—in the words of the Hereford Cathedral Archivist, he “virtually vacuumed the cathedral for children’s books.”⁵¹ It is therefore particularly remarkable that he chose to donate the collection to Australia.

⁴⁵ Joan Williams, “The Library,” in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, ed. Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller (London: Hambledon Press, 2000). F. C. Morgan contributed all the photographs for Burnett Hillman Streeter, *The Chained Library: A Survey of Four Centuries in the Evolution of the English Library*, Essays in Literature and Criticism; 56 (London: Macmillan, 1931. Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970). The Mappa Mundi is a unique thirteenth-century map of the world. P. D. A. Harvey, “Mappa Mundi,” in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, 557–62.

⁴⁶ Birmingham University, [Note to Accompany the Award of an Honorary MA From Birmingham University]. Library Morgan File; Milligan, “Obituary”: in 1952 he was awarded the honorary degree of MA by Birmingham University “for his long and devoted service to the Midland Region with valuable contributions in historical and antiquarian research.”

⁴⁷ “His Very Own Street!” [Hereford] *Evening News*, 30 June 1977.

⁴⁸ “Library History Honours Him,” *Library Association Record*, August 1978; Walter McVitty, *The Morgan Collection of Children’s Book: An Appreciation*. (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press [for University of Melbourne Library], 1978).

⁴⁹ “Thanks,” *The Hereford Times*, 16 June 1978.

⁵⁰ “Triple Ceremony with a Surprise Ending,” *Hereford Times*, 23 Feb. 1979. The event was reported widely in Hereford papers, but also in Malvern, where Morgan was still remembered, “Town Clerk, Chief Steward to Be Given City Freedom,” *Malvern Gazette*, 15 June 1978.

⁵¹ Rosalind Caird, personal communication, 2008.

Penelope Morgan's role in Hereford far transcended that of unpaid carer for her parents. She came to be highly respected as an authority on the history of the Cathedral and of Hereford itself. After her father's death she became Honorary Librarian of Hereford Cathedral Library in her own right and remained in the house in the Cathedral Close. She donated her father's collection of rare books and local history material to the Cathedral in 1982.⁵²

In Hereford Cathedral circles Penelope is especially remembered for her spirited resistance to the proposed sale of one of the Cathedral Library's greatest treasures, the medieval map of the world, the "Mappa Mundi," in 1988–89.⁵³ As the "Mappa Mundi" was being prepared for auction by Sotheby's there were widespread protests, both nationally and internationally, and the map had to be withdrawn from auction and returned to Hereford Cathedral. For Hereford Cathedral this meant the establishment of the Mappa Mundi Trust to which ownership of the map was transferred along with the Chained Library.⁵⁴

It is impossible to say how much of the work attributed to Morgan was in reality carried out by Penelope. Feminism was not a force at the time, and Penelope Morgan was happy for her father to be given the full credit for their joint work, much of which would probably have been almost exclusively her own. She played a vital part as her father's diligent assistant, always at his side, typing lists and writing letters; after his death she maintained the relationship with the University of Melbourne by letter and by further donations. Penelope Morgan died after a long illness at the age of 74 on 17 September 1990.⁵⁵

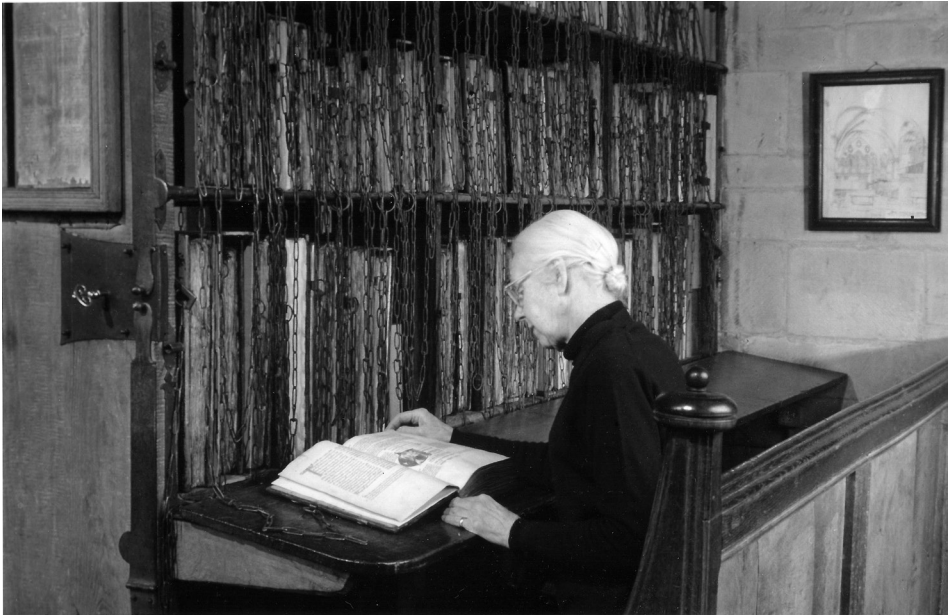
The Morgan Collection of Children's Books at the University of Melbourne was founded as the result of a lifetime of collecting by F. C. Morgan and his subsequent generosity towards Australia, in particular the University of Melbourne. Morgan was a book collector for nearly a century. As a librarian he held a central place in society and developed friendships with a large number of people far above the class he was born into, such as Rennell of Rodd, who facilitated the donation to Melbourne. His many friendships and contacts with a wide range of people contributed greatly to his book collecting.

⁵² Canon John Tiller and David Baynes-Cope, "Penelope E. Morgan, MA, FLA., FR.HIST. S.," in Cuttings, etc. about F. C. and Penelope E. Morgan donated by Paul Morgan. UniM Bail SpC/Morg f027.142446 CUTT.

⁵³ Gerald Aylmer and John Tiller, eds., *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, xxxi; Harvey, "Mappa Mundi."

⁵⁴ John Tiller, "The Closing Years of the Second Millenium," *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, 190; Harvey, "Mappa Mundi," 562.

⁵⁵ Tiller and Baynes-Cope, "Penelope E. Morgan."



*Figure 6: Penelope Morgan in the Chained Library of Hereford Cathedral, late 1980s.
Courtesy of Roger Morgan.*

The Morgan Collection is particularly interesting as a historical collection because it has been kept together as an entity to form the core of a larger collection. In spite of many later significant additions it still bears the strong stamp of its collector, as well as of the original owners of the books, many of whom can be identified. They were chiefly from Hereford, but also from a general area in the middle of England, stretching from Warwickshire to Gloucestershire. The Morgan Collection can therefore say much about which books children in that part of England owned from the eighteenth century onwards, if not necessarily what they read. In a relatively small collection housed separately, connections and discoveries can be made which would be almost impossible in a large institutional collection.

The University of Melbourne

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