

MORGAN—LEAVITT

Our ancestor, William Morgan of Cilfynydd, was born in Llanvapon, Wales in 1571, where the earliest Morgans lived. The name Morgan means "one born of the sea."

The fourth child, James Morgan, who was born in 1607 sailed from Bristol to Boston, Mass., in 1636, and married Margery Hill in Roxbury, Mass. They lived in Roxbury, Groton, and New London, Conn. About 1792, Thomas Morgan moved to Cayuga County, New York where his son, Jedediah lived for some time. His son, Amos, moved to Elyria, Illinois in 1869 and our grandfather, David Pierce Morgan, son of Amos, was born August 4, 1831 in Tecumseh, Michigan. He married Carolyn Fellowes in 1858 and moved to New York City where he became an eminent banker and acquired a large fortune.

He and Grandma traveled abroad considerably and at one time took a house in Germany where the Leavitts visited them. They also lived in Paris and then in Washington on Scott Circle where they had a large house with a ball room. About 1878 they moved "up town" in New York and built on Fifth Avenue right opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral, then surrounded by open fields and goat shacks. After Grandpa died in 1886 of diabetes, Grandma lived most of the time at 70 Park Avenue until she died in 1914.

Grandma Morgan was Carolyn Fellowes, daughter of William Fellowes and of Caroline Davis. The latter died of cholera in 1852 at Louisville, Kentucky. The old Fellowes family home was at Mt. Pleasant, Henderson, Kentucky and in the summer they lived at Sunny Lawn, Clifton, Staten Island, where my father was born. After his children grew up, William Fellowes bought a home at 570 Fifth Avenue. In 1855 he took Grandma Carolyn and her sister Clara to Europe for six months and they were in Paris when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited Napoleon III and Eugenie and they attended the Ball at Versailles and other festivities.

My father, William Fellowes Morgan, was born on Staten Island at the home of his mother's parents on September 24, 1860. He went to school in Rugby, England, St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire, Heidelberg University in Germany, and graduated from Columbia in 1880 and the School of Mines in 1884. He and mother were married at St. Thomas Church in New York in January 1885 and went to West

Point on their honeymoon. Mother threw a snowball at him which hit him in the head and gave him a bad earache! Father was very strong, a good athlete and was on one of the first Columbia football teams and a tug of war team, and once won a tennis championship in Germany.

When they were first married, father had a seat on the Stock Exchange but after the financial crash in 1887, he went into the cold storage business and was President of the Brooklyn Bridge Freezing and Cold Storage Company and Chairman of the Merchants Refrigerating Company. It was then that they bought a house and moved to Short Hills, New Jersey, where they lived until 1919. They also rented a house in New York at 39th Street. Pops became interested in New Jersey politics with Mr. Everett Colby in trying to clean up the state and was in the Assembly for a couple of years. He was active in Christ Church in Short Hills and in the Y.M.C.A. in New York, serving as its President from 1905 to 1919. At this time when he had to attend evening Y.M.C.A. meetings in New York, he often spent the night at 90 Park Avenue with his close friend, Cleveland H. Dodge.

During the first World War, as President of the Merchants Association, father presided at many large luncheons and dinners given for such people as Marshall Joffre, General Foch, Viviani, General Smuts, Diaz, the Bishop of Canterbury, and other notables, often addressing them in French or Italian, the latter carefully memorized. As a presiding toastmaster, he was very popular because he said little himself and kept people to schedule, sometimes even pulling them by the coat tails. One dinner at which he presided was for President Butler of Columbia University on his 80th birthday.

Pops had a keen sense of humor, loved sports, played every game for all it was worth and did not like to be beaten, especially by his wife. He was handsome, had great charm, was a most gracious and affable host, but very occasionally had a healthy temper. He had great ability, was most conscientious in civic duties and responsibilities, and was on countless boards. For many years he was a vestryman and warden at St. Georges Church, which he attended regularly. As Chairman of the Episcopal Church Pensions Fund, he worked with Bishop Lawrence in raising the money to establish it. He was also President of the National Association for the Prevention of Blindness and was for several years Secretary of the United States Golf Association.

Several times Moms and Pops went out to South Africa to spend the winter with mother's sister, the Bryant Lindleys, where they took ex-

tended trips. In their later years they went to Jekyl Island, where they played much golf, bridge and backgammon, especially with Mr. J. P. Morgan, a very distant cousin, but close friend of long years' standing.

For several years mother and father lived at 70 Park Ave., then bought an apartment at 510 Park Ave. After father's death mother moved to 45 East 62nd St., where she lived until she died at the age of 91.

Our Leavitt ancestor, John, was born in England in 1608 and married Mary Lovett in 1637. Shortly after, they came to this country and lived in Hingham, Mass. The Leavitt family settled in New England, where they produced a family of many well-known preachers and public servants. Our great-grandfather, David Leavitt, a successful banker in New York, once prevented a financial panic by standing on the steps of the Treasury Building in New York and assuring people they need have no fear. Such was their confidence in his integrity that panic was averted.

My grandfather, Henry Sheldon Leavitt, was born in Brooklyn in 1825 and married my grandmother, Martha Ann Young, there in 1846, after which they moved to New York and subsequently lived for many years at 1 East 40th Street. According to newspaper clippings, the wedding of this "handsome young couple," held in the Presbyterian Church, was a great social event. The Leavitt family summer home was Brookside, Great Barrington, where mother was born and spent many years of her childhood.

In the 1880's Grandma and Grandpa moved out to Short Hills, New Jersey where they spent their latter years. Grandpa Leavitt lived comfortably and well. He did all the marketing and had the best of everything. The number of courses at big dinners often ran up into the tens. Fishing was his greatest joy, which took him eventually to the "River."

Grandma Leavitt was descended from the Hydes and Youngs, a long line of distinguished ancestry. She was a small, plump person, dark eyed and pretty, always cheerful and laughing with a keen sense of humor. She loved children, her garden, her home and family, her Church and Sunday School work and was a fastidious housekeeper. Her knowledge of finances, however, was limited, as evidenced by her drawing a check to the same bank for deposit when notified she had overdrawn her account!

My mother, Emma Leavitt, was born in Great Barrington, Mass., on

May 22, 1865, and lived there and at 1 East 40th Street until she was married. She went to a small private school in New York but sports were a greater interest to her than education which she took lightly. At an early age she was captain of a boys' baseball team which played on an open field near 40th Street and of which Fred Vanderbilt was a member. At 16 she went to the Vanderbilt Ball in a hussar costume, the big social event of the season. Athletics were her greatest interest and she did them all well. She loved horses, skated beautifully, was one of the top golfers and in 1895 won the national tennis championship in doubles. In amateur dramatics she was almost professional and was once in an amateur play with Faversham. There are pictures of her in the Colony Club in several of the Club's dramatics. St. Georges Church was another of her chief interests. Later in life when her children became older and they lived in New York, mother became very active in the Y.W.C.A. She and father worked together and headed up the first big financial campaign in New York City in 1913 when one million was raised for the Y.M.C.A. and three for the Y.W.C.A. Into this work she put all the enthusiasm and energy formerly given to sports. She was President of the New York City Association during the war work period, 1917-1923. Her great interest in this work continued to the day of her death.

Mother's friends were legion and included all kinds and ages, especially young people. Her big warm heart, her interest and concern in other peoples' joys, sorrows, and afflictions, endeared her to all. Through her extreme loyalty to her friends and family, she saw and brought out the best in everyone. She had a great sense of humor, a loving, fighting spirit, a strong will, endless energy and enthusiasm, was full of plans and loved to fix things but was never bossy. She had a lot of style and dressed with great care in extremely good taste. In spite of her regal demeanor as "of a queen on vacation," as expressed of her by a great nephew, she was sincere and genuine, simple in her tastes, a truly democratic lady in the best sense. Her home was most attractive and well run and her food excellent, but domesticity was not her forte and she could scarcely sew on a button or boil an egg. In the truest sense of the word she was a dynamic Christian and her faith and love were contagious.

From Grandpa Leavitt Moms inherited a love of fishing which doubtless was the reason we all landed at the "River," as the Thousand Islands have been subsequently and lovingly called by the two families.

In the 1870's, mother's cousin married Christopher Wolfe, an arch-

itect who had built a house on "Whiskey Island." They invited Aunt Louise Thacher and Uncle Heyward Leavitt to visit them and when Grandpa Leavitt heard there was good fishing up there, he and Grandma went up to a Clayton hotel, taking Moms with them, who was only about 15 at the time. Aunt Louise and Uncle Heyward persuaded their parents to buy Watch Island, where they camped in a tent and subsequently built a house. Pops and his brothers came up to stay with them and so fell in love with the place that they bought Rum Point and about 1883, before Moms and Pops were even engaged, Pops bought Hen Island and asked Moms to rename it which she did, calling it "Papoose." After they were married, Chris Wolfe built them a house on it and they moved into it in 1886 when my sister, Beatrice, was a month old. Neither Moms nor Pops missed a summer thereafter until they died.

The friendship between the two families dates back to the early 1870's and has become inexorably intertwined ever since. The family tree shows six intermarriages between the two families who settled on the various Islands. It was inevitable that matrimonial alliances should result. A friend of ours, studying this chart, once remarked, "Don't you people ever get to the mainland?"

At this writing the fifth generation is coming to the "River" every summer in ever increasing numbers so that more intermarriages may be expected in the future. I only hope they may be as happy as those already existing and that Mom's and Pop's wonderful spirit and influence may continue to be felt during the years to come.