

My father was born William Sacheus Morgan on February 3, 1864 in Rhymney, County of Monmouthshire, South Wales, and attended Pontypool college in Pontypool. He was the eldest of thirteen children and his father was a miner in one of the many coalmines in South Wales. He sold life insurance to have enough money to go to college and didn't have a car so he had to walk to school from Rhymney, five miles away. He received his A.B. from Pontypool College in 1889 and came to the United States on a \$100 annual scholarship to Yale where he received his Ph.D. in 1895. But he never forgot his beginnings in Wales. He was proud of his Welsh ancestry and felt that his Celtic background enriched his spiritual life immensely. Years later, he even wrote a book about Wales.



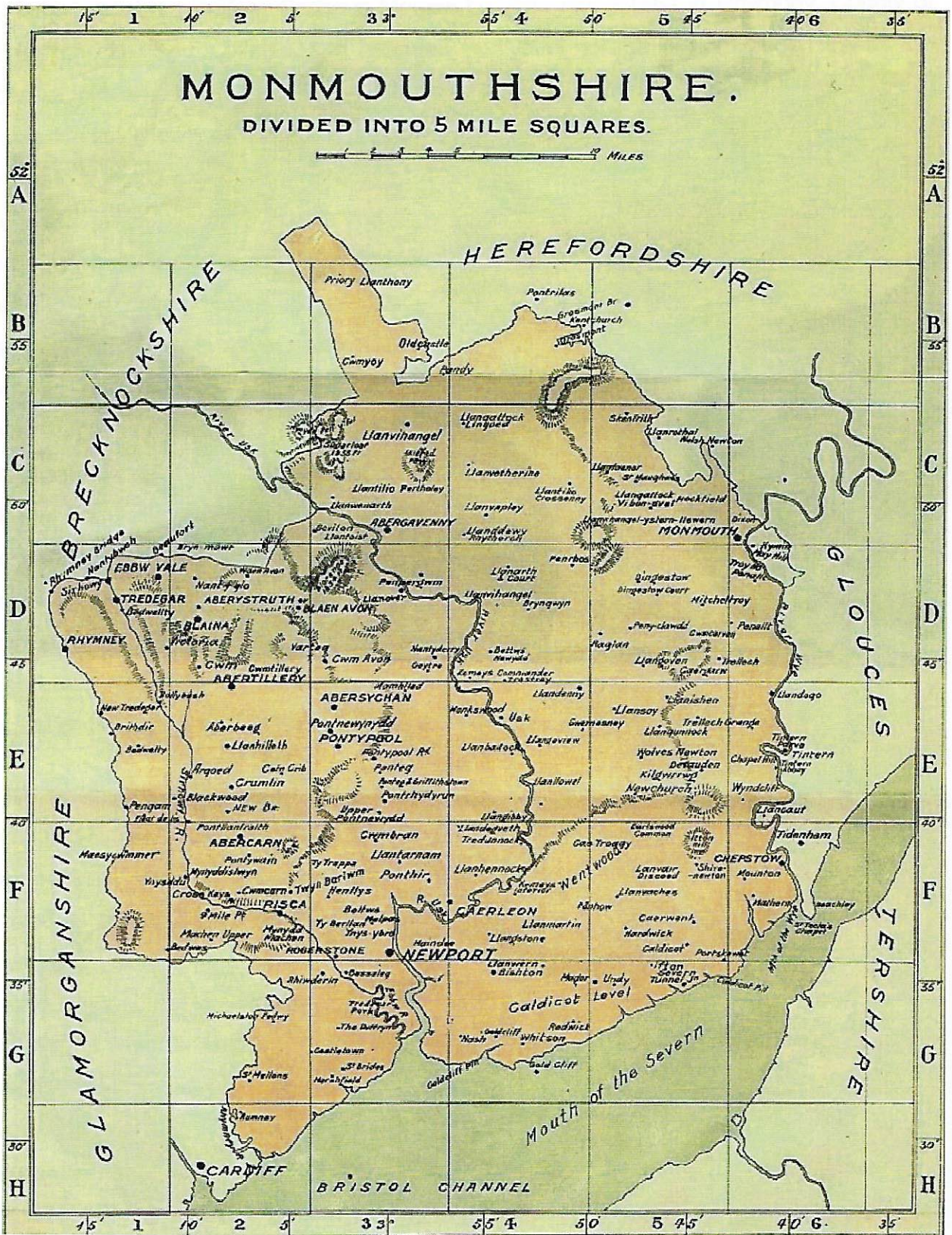
The town of Rhymney Wales as it looked in the 1800s

From 1895 to 1899, my dad served as minister of the Greenport Baptist Church in Long Island New York and was ordained a Baptist Minister. He was also assistant pastor of the Baptist church in New York City from 1899 to 1900.

That same year he became professor of logic and psychology at the Amity Theological School in New York. Then in 1900 he joined the Unitarian Church. For the next six years he was pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Derby, Connecticut. And from 1907 to 1910, he served as pastor of the First Church in Albany, New York. It was during this period that he was invited to deliver a sermon as guest minister at the Congregational Church in New Haven, Connecticut. After the sermon, he was invited by my mother's father, who was so impressed with his sermon, to join them for dinner at their home. It is there that he first became acquainted with my mother with whom he later corresponded when he came to Berkeley in 1910. In 1909 he was appointed chairman of a board of editors for the preparation of a "unique philosophy work" that was written up in the Albany newspaper and the following year he received another honor, which brought him to Berkeley.

Wales





The Times -Union

Martin H. Glynn. Editor
Albany, N.Y.

June 25, 1909

DR. Morgan Chairman

Of Board Of Editors of Unique Philosophical Work.

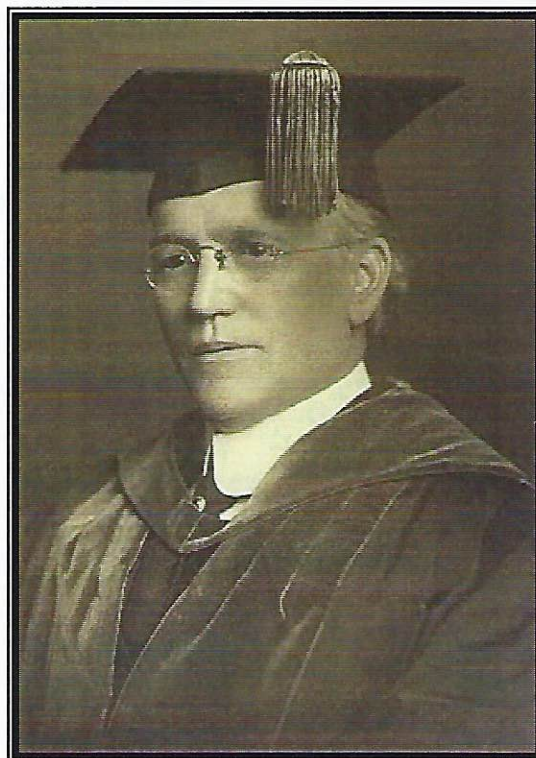
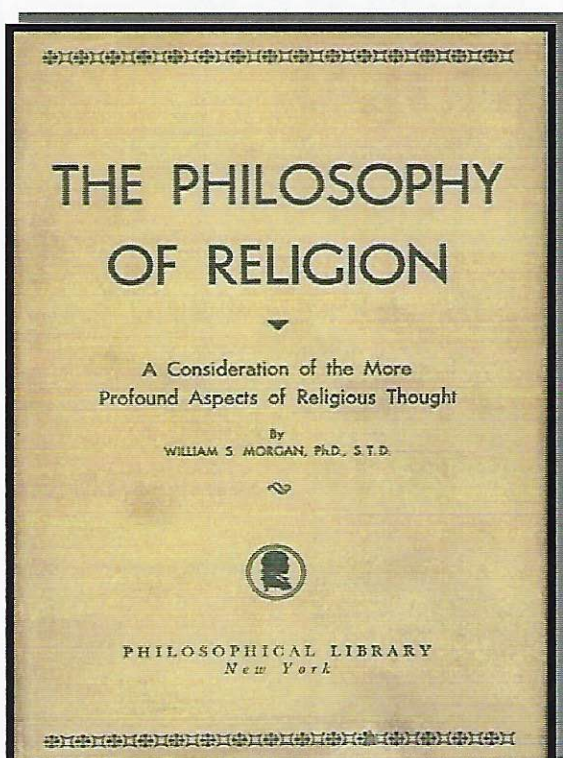
The Rev. Dr. William S. Morgan, minister of the First Unitarian church, has been appointed chairman of a board of editors for the preparation of a very unique philosophical work. It will be a complimentary volume to Professor George Trumbull Ladd, for a quarter of a century, professor of philosophy in Yale.

Twenty Yale men who have taken the degree of Ph. D. in Yale in the philosophical department will write for this volume. The object of the work will be to tell of how much value the study of philosophy has been to these men in their actual work as teachers, ministers, authors, etc., in which they are now engaged.

The work will be under the supervision of a committee of five, of which Morgan will be the chairman. The volume will be a complimentary volume to Professor Ladd upon his seventieth birthday.



Dr. William S. Morgan and his contribution to the philosophical interpretation of religious thought



THE PHILOSOPHY OF
RELIGION

By
WILLIAM S. MORGAN, Ph.D., S.T.D.

The keynote of this work is unity and harmony in the consideration of the problems of philosophy and religion. Both are considered from the viewpoint of "A unitary principle such as will satisfy the intellect and heart of man."

In modern philosophy this unitary tendency is manifested in the Cartesian thinkers struggling with a theoretical dualism introduced by Descartes. Geulinx and Père Malebranche did their best to overcome it but did not succeed so well as Spinoza, who nevertheless failed to emancipate himself completely from it.

Religion both from the experiential and thought aspects has advocated the principle quoted in the words of St. Paul: "In Him we live and move and have our being." It has in all its forms, both primitive and advanced, regarded man as an essential and contributory part of what is ultimate in the universe an essential and contributory part of Humanity and an essential and contributory part of nature. This general principle emerges with more or less clearness in animism, totemism, taboo, fetichism, etc., and comes to full fruition in the Jewish-Alexandrian movement as incorporated in the philosophy of Philo in our own culture, and in all advanced religions of the world.

RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

The religion of the future will consist in: Simple living, simple and well-made clothing, simple and strongly constructed furniture, simple and permanently built houses, good roads, artistic and well-planned cities and villages, and in all material concerns, things of the best and things honest; ¶ Laws formed in the light of reason and conscience, well administered and obeyed by all; ¶ Living the golden rule; ¶ Courtesy and frankness without rudeness; ¶ All purity, kindness, justice and love; ¶ Reading the best books, thinking deep thoughts and experiencing noble emotions; ¶ ¶ Ornamenting the soul more than the body; ¶ Health of soul and body; ¶ Prayers and praises of contemplation rather than in superficial words or forms; ¶ Listening to the divinity within and not to external authority; ¶ In fine, it will consist in doing rightly by oneself, soul and body, loving our neighbor individually and collectively and loving God our divine Father—this will be the religion of the future.

WILLIAM SACHEUS MORGAN

In 1910, while in Albany New York, my dad received an appointment to the chair of systematic theology in the Divinity School of the University of California and came to Berkeley in the fall of 1910. Commenting on his appointment to Berkeley, the *Times-Union* of Albany wrote on Sept 21, 1910:

DR. MORGAN'S PROMOTION

A promotion has come to Rev. Dr. William S. Morgan, of the Unitarian Society of this city, by his appointment to the chair of systematic theology in the Divinity School of the University of California. But, while the people of this city rejoice in this acknowledgement of Dr. Morgan's standing as a scholar and an educator, they grieve to lose him. In this case Berkeley's gain is Albany's loss. Dr. Morgan is a man of wide culture. He is an omnivorous reader. He is a good speaker. He swings a trenchant pen. Public spirited, he has the courage of his convictions and is not afraid to say what he thinks. In this city he made himself felt for the city's good. The political bosses feared him. Education was helped by him. Public rights and civic virtue found in him an ardent champion who could strike hard blows and do telling work. When a man can write well, and speak well, and think well, and has a ton of grit and a head full of knowledge, he is an effective man. Such is Dr. Morgan. Albany will miss him.

He was soon on the faculty of the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry in Berkeley where he was professor of philosophy and psychology of religion, secretary of the faculty, and served as acting Dean between 1924 -1925. In 1929 he received his Sacred Doctorate of Theology from the school and served as acting president until 1931 when he was made president.



Dr Morgan when he received his Sacred Doctorate of Theology

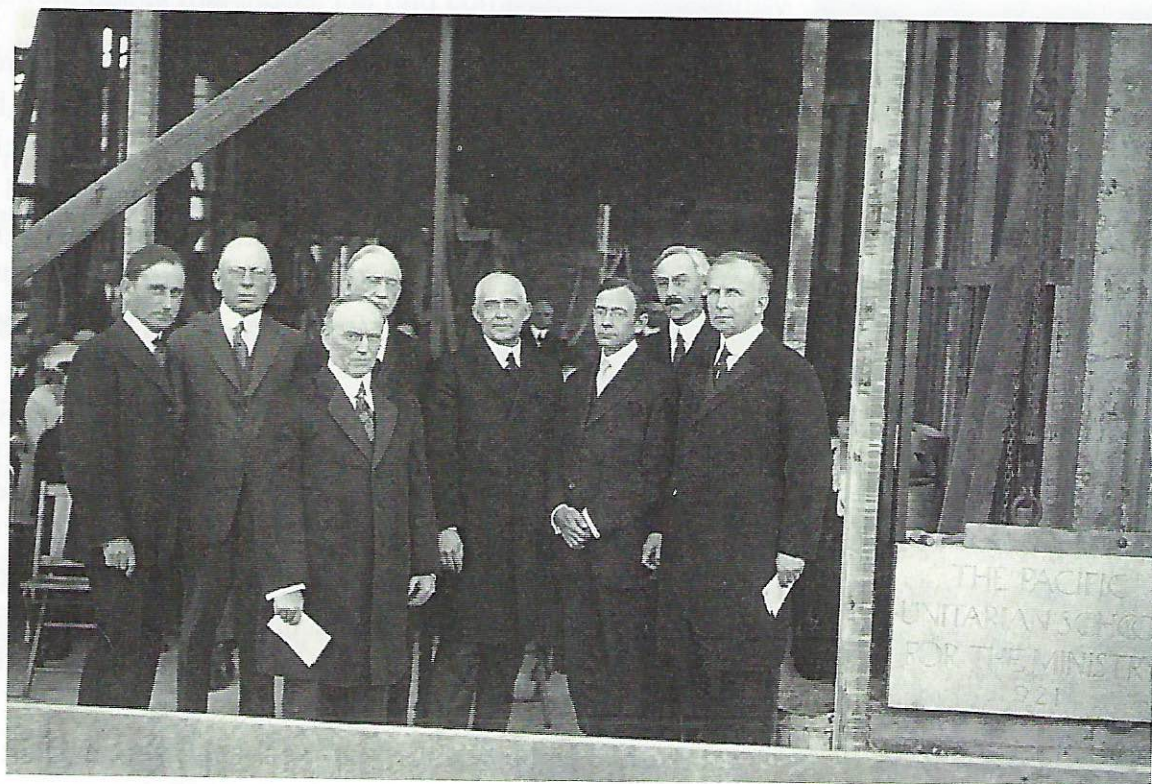
My dad's church was the First Unitarian Church of Berkeley located at 2425 Bancroft Way at Dana and was adjacent to the school. He gave a number of sermons there and elsewhere throughout California but spent most of his time teaching at the school. He trained men and women to become ministers. Many years later the school was relocated to Arch Street in Berkeley and its name was changed to the Starr King School for the Ministry. The University of California took over the original school building and it's now the UC Alumni House. The First Unitarian School for the Ministry used to own the entire block that included a boarding house for students, tennis courts, and the school. The university also took over the church building years ago but the original building is still there at Bancroft and Dana. The university owns it today and it's used as a chapel where dance recitals and small concerts are performed, and it's still a beautiful building. The church was relocated to Kensington at the top of a hill above Arlington Road and today it's called the Unitarian Universalist Church. It's unfortunate we didn't find another property close to the university. Most Unitarian churches have a kind of special relationship to universities and are often close to campuses.

During the depression era my dad's students had the privilege of attending CAL free of charge and taking courses without a fee because they were students in the divinity school. It was an arrangement that existed between the university and the school. During Charter Day, my dad wore his gown and took part in the ceremony on campus. I'm sure he had this special privilege because he was head of the school. For his students this special relationship with the university was a wonderful privilege because they were able to use the campus library free. When the Unitarian Church is close to campus it attracts more young people than it does when it's out in neighborhood communities. Most people interested in the Unitarian Church are young thinkers, free thinkers, and want something more liberal. That's where Unitarianism works best. When the church is located away from the university it changes the texture of the church and its membership. The membership has grown quite a bit since my dad's church moved to Kensington but there aren't as many young



people as there were before. It's very different now. It's more a community church and we don't attract students like we did before.

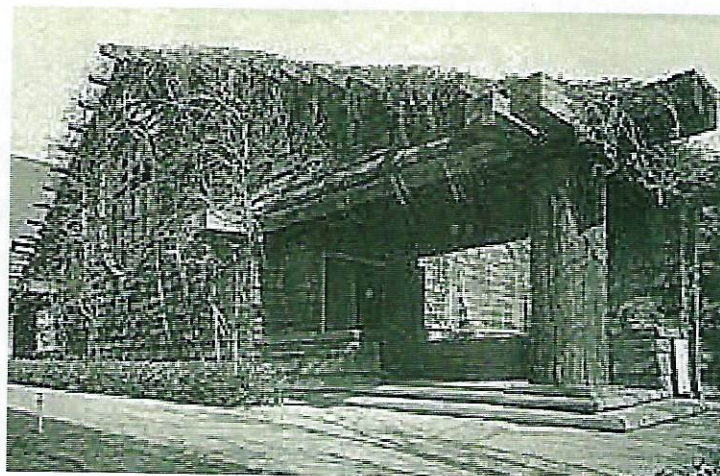
Speaking of how liberal and free thinking our church was, we had quite a bit of drama in the early fifties during the McCarthy era when churches and other businesses were asked to sign a loyalty oath. When our church first received the letter from the government asking that we sign the oath it was extremely divisive for us. Many quit the church and moved away out of protest rather than sign or be stigmatized for not signing. We lost quite a few members over it. They didn't know how far McCarthy would go, the possibility of losing jobs, being labeled, etc, etc. It all died down after a while of course but at the time it was very traumatic for a lot of us, especially as the Unitarian Church is pretty liberal and independent. We believed signing such an oath to be unconstitutional, so we didn't sign it. In fact, we fought it and had to pay legal fees to fight it.



Dr. Morgan, in his role as a civic leader, is seen here immersed with his colleagues in the rebuilding phase of the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry

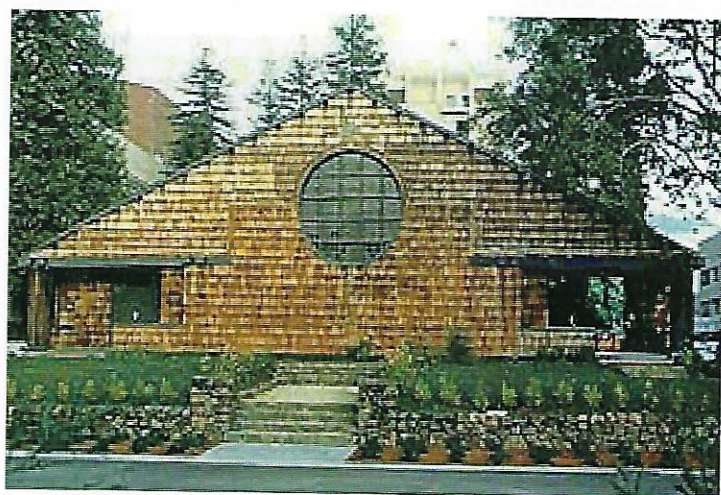
The First Unitarian Church of Berkeley

The original building of the First Unitarian Church of Berkeley's was the creation of architect A.C. Schweinfurth of the office of A. Page Brown & Co. of San Francisco and New York. He had been instructed to use only the best materials. Bernard Maybeck, then a young member of the congregation and eventually a famous California architect, worked in the same offices and may have helped with the church's design. It



was an excellent early example of the Bay Area shingle style. The building was 40 feet square, with a basement. A member gave the redwood pillars that graced the two front entrances. Among its most unusual exterior features was an abundant growth of wisteria that covered the roof and exterior walls.

The First Unitarian Church of Berkeley was founded on July 12, 1891. In 1898, it moved into its



first building, a beautiful redwood structure at the corner of Dana and Bancroft in Berkeley. The early years were a period of growth and enthusiasm, characterized by a close relationship with UC Berkeley and the Starr King School for Religious Leadership. During the McCarthy era in the 1950's, we were one of several congregations to refuse to sign the California Loyalty Oath, an action successfully upheld by the Supreme

Court. The First Unitarian Church has a long-standing tradition of freedom of thought, speech and religion. Those years were a time of rapid spiritual growth for the church.

The University of California acquired the land in 1960, and the congregation moved to Kensington the following year. The parish house and auxiliary structure were razed in 1965 to clear a site for the Zellerbach Playhouse. The church building was retained and has been converted into the University of California Dramatic Arts Department's Dance Facility.

In 1961, the church moved to its present eight-acre site on Squirrel Hill overlooking San Francisco Bay. Today, there are approximately 600 UUCB Members. In 1997 the congregation voted to change the name to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley.