NORTHWOOD CEMETERY

FASHION

JOHN MORGAN (d.1889)

John Morgan's shop in 2017.

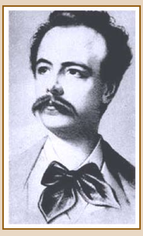
John Morgan first opened his business as a tailor and hatter in Cowes, at 47 High Street, in the 1820s. By 1879 John Morgan and Sons were listed in the Isle of Wight directory as tailors, habit makers and yacht outfitters and now spread to 46, 47, 48 and 49 High St Cowes, owning a 45 metre long frontage along the street.

They supplied tailoring and yachting outfits for both male and female customers. Like John Redfern and Sons nearby, they soon became popular with the yachting circles found at Cowes during the regatta and later with high society and royalty across Europe. John Morgan and Sons remained a popular and well respected business well into the 20th century.

Morgan woollen dress showing the influence of mens' tailoring.

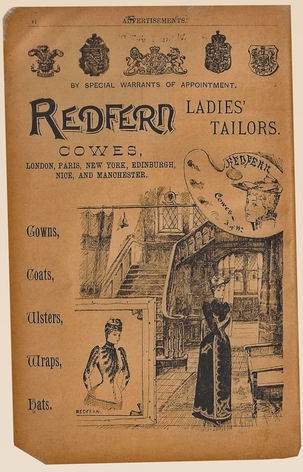
JOHN REDFERN (1820-1895)

John Redfern was the founder of an international fashion house that shook the fashion world. He was one of the first to make tailoring fashionable for women and by 1892 had eleven branches across Europe and America, including London, Paris, Nice, New York, Edinburgh, Manchester and Cowes. Its clientele included Queen Victoria and her daughters, Lily Langtry and the wealthy socialites of Europe and America.



John Redfern.

John Redfern started out as a draper in Cowes between 1847 and 1849. He then supplied Osborne house with materials and silks, listing John Redfern and Sons as 'silk mercers to Her Majesty the Queen'.



Kelly's Directory advert, 1892

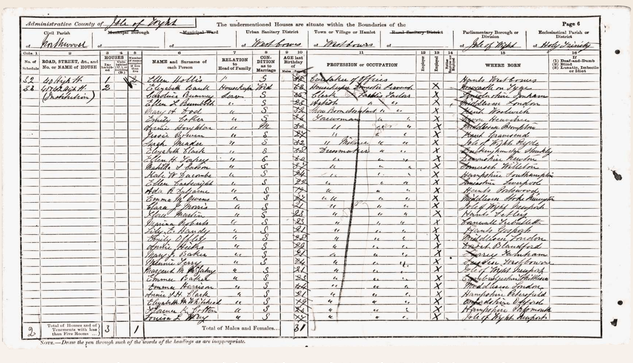
Redfern's drapery expanded to fill the demand for special yachting outfits during Cowes week. Cowes had become the headquarters of yachting for England By the 1870s Women were also participating in sports such as archery, fencing, shooting, tennis, golf, cycling and walking. Their designs were both stylish and practical and tailor made for variety of sports. By adapting these outfits to the very latest trends, Redfern made their creations fashionable.

Redfern's shop on Cowes High Street.

JOHN REDFERN TIMELINE

1847-1849 – *John Redfern establishes his drapery business at 41 High Street, Cowes.*
1878 – *The shop expands to 41 and 42 High Street and numbers 1-4 Sun Hill, Cowes.*
1878 – *London branch opens, 26 Conduit Street.*
1881 – *Paris branch opens, 242 Rue de Rivoli.*
1884 – *New York branch opens, 210 Fifth Avenue and 1123 Broadway.*
1886 – *Edinburgh branch opens.*
1888 – *Manchester branch opens.*
1892 – *John Redfern and Sons becomes Redfern Limited.*
1895 – *John Redfern dies and is buried in Northwood Cemetery.*
1907 – *The Cowes shop closed and the Paris house became the main branch.*

Redfern family grave.



1891 census showing some of the residents of 41 and 42 High Street, Cowes.

The census returns for 1891 show 73 women living and working at 41 and 42 High St, Cowes. 53 of these were dressmakers.

Research by Kate Tiley.

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