

## **Morgan's Spring Area Properties**

**Morgan's Spring house**

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**1738** – Richard Morgan, a Welsh immigrant living in New Jersey, purchased 242 acres of the 442-acre grant land of John Welton (also Welsh) by Lease and Release for £70 (Orange Co. DB 2, p. 413). This was part of the 40,000-acre Vanmeter grant sold to Jost Hite just a few years earlier.

Beginning at Shepherd's SW corner [I think this may be the SE corner of Thomas Shepherd's 222-acre tract that Shepherdstown sits on – on the original grant survey this point was described as "by a Meadow of the Falling Spring Run" (GB 15, p. 315)], then running N 70° W 180 poles "to his corner," then S 30° W 66 poles "to a Hickory on a Hill Side," then S 56° W 40 poles, then S 18° E 150 poles "Cross the Intire Tract," then N 72° E 212 poles "to a Duble White Oak on a Hill," then N 14° E 150 poles to the beginning.

This appears to be most of the tract that includes the houses known as Rosebrake (Poplar Grove, old section ca.1745, front section 1828), Falling Spring (1834-35), and Morgan's Spring (Old Stone House ca.1734?). [Both Rosebrake and Falling Spring (with Morgan's Spring) have their own NR nominations] It also appears to include a chunk of land on the east side that was later part of Spring Dale.

"Thomas Shepherd petitioned the Orange County, Virginia Court about this time [1738], requesting to be discharged as "Constable Sherundo" as soon as Richard Morgan was sworn in his place (O'Dell 1995); in October Shepherd was also paid a bounty of 14 shillings for a wolf's head by certificate of Richard Morgan (FC VA Court Journal, in Smyth 1909)." (Everson, <http://training.fws.gov/history/PropertyHistory/historyb.html>)

Here is what is written in the Morgan's Grove District NR:

"Maps dated 1736 to 1755, show a route of the pre-revolutionary wagon road between Winchester and Philadelphia. This was the route used earlier by Indians and early pioneers who settled the valley. Morgan's land was bisected by this road and he built a stone house (Old Stone House) in 1734, a distance off the road on high ground above the gushing springs he called Falling Springs. The limestone rubble house has a single gabled dormer. Nearby stands a stone springhouse from this period. Eleven years later in 1745, Richard Morgan built a new house which was one story in height."

The attached genealogy states that Richard's youngest son Abel was born in 1755 in New Jersey. Perhaps Richard's family did not move to Virginia until after 1755?

(see pdf file "Descendants of Richard Morgan [Spring Dale report])

**We do not know where the 1734 date for the Morgan's Spring house (Old Stone House) came from other than that is the earliest date recorded for a Richard Morgan land purchase. However, Richard Morgan did not purchase the land on which the Morgan's Spring house stands until 1738 so already the 1734 date is likely wrong. Is there any physical evidence that the house dates from the 1730s? Is there physical evidence for a later date? The Falling Spring NR described the building with flat arches and large quoins – Paula suggests 1780s for the flat arches.**

**A second question that comes to mind is why would Morgan build a 1 ½ story stone house in the 1730s and then build a “lath and plaster” [log or timber frame?] one in 1745 (the “back building” of Rosebrake)? Is it possible that the 1745 house is actually the only Richard Morgan house and the Morgan's Spring house was built later, perhaps by his grandson Daniel, son of Abel Morgan?**

1763 – Richard Morgan died; his will was recorded in Frederick County, Virginia. He devised to his youngest son Abel the “home plantation.” (FC WB 3, p. 159 on Frederick Co. RootsWeb page) This likely included the house known as Poplar Grove (the “back building” after 1828), later known as Rosebrake, and probably the Morgan's Spring house (or the land on which it was later located).

**Clearly by 1763 Richard Morgan was living in a house on the subject land. Which of the two houses is not known.**

1784 – Berkeley County Personal Property tax (John Kearsley's List) listed Abel Morgan with 1 white tithable (Daniel over 16?), no slaves, 6 horses, and 7 cattle.

Morgan genealogy indicates that Abel Morgan died in 1784 or possibly 1788. He married Elizabeth Bedinger and left five children: Daniel, Joseph, Jacob, Olive, Polly, and Elizabeth.

In 1787, Elizabeth Morgan was assessed in the personal property tax with no tithable children or slaves, 2 cattle, and 6 horses.

Daniel Morgan inherited the Morgan “home plantation.” **(will check for Abel Morgan's will next time I'm at BCHS)**

It is possible that his younger brother Jacob (born 1781) also inherited part of the property – possibly that with the Morgan Spring house on it. Jacob Morgan built the nearby Falling Spring house in 1834 (according to the 1835 tax record).

1798 – Berkeley County House & Slave Tax listed Daniel Morgan:

1 house in the country, District 2, occupied by Self, \$735 **[Poplar Grove? Or Morgan's Spring? - this seems high for either]**

According to the Rosebrake (Poplar Grove), Falling Spring, and Morgan's Grove District NRs, in 1803 Daniel Morgan took up residence in the family house then known as Poplar Grove and constructed the front brick section he called the “Great House.” The 1798 tax record for Daniel Morgan seems to indicate he was there earlier and the 1828 tax record for Daniel Morgan gives

the date for the new construction as 1827-28, "New Brick dwelling \$1,000" previously (1820-1827) valued at \$100.

**1815** – Elizabeth Morgan (listed immediately after Conrad Licklider) was assessed for a house valued at \$700 over the \$500 minimum (\$1,200 total).

**There is no listing for Daniel Morgan so is this his mother, Abel Morgan's widow Elizabeth (Bedinger) Morgan? This seems like a really high assessment for a one-story log or frame house if this is Poplar Grove before the improvements – see above.**

Conrad Licklider at Spring Dale was assessed for a house valued at \$1,200 over the \$500 minimum or \$1,700 total value.

Jacob Morgan, third son of Abel Morgan, lived in Jefferson County in 1810 when he purchased Spring Dale from his cousin Abraham Morgan.

By 1813, when he sold Spring Dale to Conrad Licklider, he was a merchant living and working in Alexandria.

In 1816, Jacob Morgan was listed on the Jefferson County tax record with 81 acres adjoining Daniel's 140 acres.

In 1818, the tax record listed Jacob with 100 acres plus 24 acres purchased from Daniel Morgan.

**I'm thinking the 24 acres may have included the Morgan's Spring house – reference an 1837 letter written by Henry Bedinger, brother? of Elizabeth Bedinger Morgan (Abel's widow): "I remained at Jacob Morgan's who resides in his elegant new house [Falling Spring, built 1834] built about fifty yards west where the log barns of our sister's stood."**

In 1820, Jacob Morgan, of Alexandria, was listed with 124 acres with buildings valued at \$500 [probably including the Morgan's Spring house].

Daniel's 109 acres had buildings valued at \$100 (ca.1745 log or frame one-story dwelling?). [Daniel must be living elsewhere at this point, preparing to construct the new brick house addition completed by 1828]

In 1835, Jacob Morgan's 124-acre farm had \$2,500 "added for New House" for a total building value of \$3042. This was the construction of Falling Spring.

Jacob and his wife Mary probably did not return to live in Jefferson County until the new house was built. The old house – Morgan's Spring house (Old Stone House), was likely tenanted.

After that, nothing much changed for Jacob Morgan until his death in 1855. Daniel Morgan (Poplar Grove/Rosebrake) died ca.1836 and his 139 acres passed to Mary Morgan (widow?). In 1849, Jacob acquired 73 ½ acres from the Daniel Morgan heirs. In 1852, Jacob's combined Falling Spring acreage (including Morgan's Spring) was listed adjoining Alexander Boteler (Fountain Rock).