



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

September 28, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kate Husband
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley *Renee Gledhill-Earley*
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Replace Bridge 78 on SR 1343 (Morgan Road) over Little Island Creek, PA 15-02-0063,
Vance County, ER 15-2089

Thank you for your memorandum of September 9, 2015, transmitting the Historic Structures Survey Report for the above-referenced undertaking. We have reviewed Marvin Brown's very thorough report and concur that the **Thomas A. Morgan Farm (VN0386) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places** under Criteria B and C and that the boundary appears appropriate.

We also believe that the property is eligible under Criterion A. It is explained on p. 27 that the farm is not recommended as eligible under Criterion A because it was a gentleman's farm that did not make a significant contribution to the field of agriculture. We believe, however, that its history as a gentleman's farm is significant, but in the area of social history rather than agriculture. We would refer the author to the National Register nomination for Boxwood Lodge in Davie County (NR 1995). This nomination by David Hood presents a very thorough discussion of gentleman farms as hunting retreats, a category that the Thomas A. Morgan Farm seems to fit.

There are a few places in the report that could use minor amendments for the sake of clarity:

Page 8: In the chronology of Thomas Morgan's marriages, a couple of the dates are confusing. Specifically, if Morgan was not divorced from Isabel Parker Morgan until 1942, how could he have married Celeste Walker Page Morgan in 1941? Perhaps the two dates were transposed.

Page 15: Words seem to be missing from the third sentence.

Page 23: In the description of the chicken houses, we recommend changing to second sentence to read "... but they are structurally sound."

Page 25, near the end of the fourth paragraph: The farm really was associated with any specific actions that are the basis of Morgan's significance. Instead of ". . . and the actions upon which his significance rests," it would be more accurate to read, ". . . during the period in which he gained national significance" or to shorten the sentence to "The farm was a place closely associated with Morgan during the longest period of his productive life."

Page 26: The mention of tattoos does not seem relevant in this paragraph as they don't result from "modest, rural roots." Very likely he got the tattoos when he was in the Navy, not necessarily a condition of rural roots.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT

mfurr@ncdot.gov

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE
ELIGIBILITY EVALUATION REPORT**

**Replace Bridge No. 78
on SR 1342 (Morgan Road) over Little Island Creek,
Vance County
WBS# 17BP.5.R.64**

Thomas A. Morgan Farm

Prepared For:

**Human Environment Section
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Prepared By:
URS Corporation – North Carolina
[AECOM]
1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Morrisville, NC 27560**

**Marvin A. Brown
Principal Investigator**

August 2015

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August 2015



8-18-15

**Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator
URS Corporation - North Carolina**

Date

**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architectural Resources Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

Date

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

URS prepared this report in August 2015 in support of the proposed project to Replace Bridge No. 78 on SR 1342 (Morgan Road) over Little Island Creek in Vance County (WBS# 5C.03901) (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The project is subject to review under the *Programmatic Agreement for Minor Transportation Projects* (North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)/North Carolina Historic Preservation Office (NCHPO)/ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) 2007). NCDOT architectural historians established an Area of Potential Effects (APE) and conducted a preliminary investigation, identifying one property, the Thomas A. Morgan Farm (VN0386), warranting additional study and eligibility evaluation. NCDOT established the APE as extending approximately 500 feet from either end of existing Bridge No. 78 and 50 feet to either side of the existing SR 1342 centerline (Figure 3). URS conducted an intensive-level field survey that included identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the Morgan Farm according to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP or National Register) Criteria. As a result of these efforts, URS recommends that the Thomas A. Morgan Farm is eligible for NRHP listing under Criteria A and C. Bridge No. 78 is not addressed in this report. Built in 1954 and spanning Little Island Creek, the bridge was determined not eligible for NRHP listing during the 2005 NCDOT Bridge Inventory.

Property Name	NCHPO Survey Site Number	NRHP Eligibility Recommendation	NRHP Criteria
Thomas A. Morgan Farm	VN0386	Eligible	Criterion B for association with industrialist Thomas A. Morgan and Criterion C as an assemblage of resources that well represent a rural retreat or farm established from the 1920s into the 1940s.

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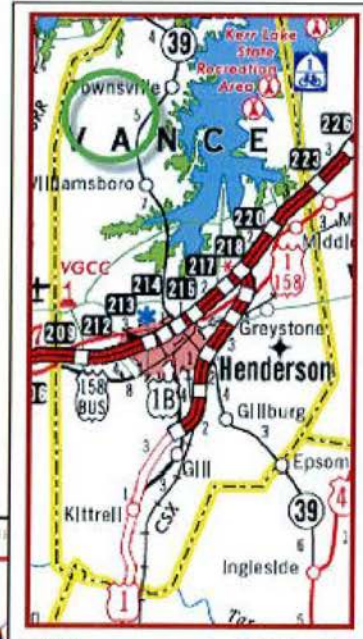
I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

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In June 2015 NCDOT requested that URS [AECOM]—under a contract providing the Department with assistance in the planning process and historic architectural analyses—conduct an intensive-level field survey that included identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the Morgan Farm according to NRHP Criteria. URS senior architectural historian Marvin A. Brown, who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s qualifications for history and architectural history (CFR 36 CFR Part 61), completed that effort and drafted this report. As part of the analysis, he visited, documented, and photographed the resources and conducted supplementary research. This effort included reviewing the records of the Vance County Register of Deeds Office and historical materials in the Vance County public library in Henderson and the Granville County public library in Oxford; speaking with Tom Morgan, owner of the property and Thomas Morgan’s grandson, and Bob Morgan, manager of the property and Thomas Morgan’s nephew; reviewing the Vance County files of the NCHPO in Raleigh; and conducting online historical and genealogical research.

VICINITY MAP

	NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS Division 5
	VANCE COUNTY REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 900078 ON SR 1342 (MORGAN ROAD) OVER LITTLE ISLAND 17BP.5.R.64



Proposed Detour: *Off-Site – SR 1434 (Island Creek Road) to SR 1341 (Rice Road) to SR 1303 (Hicksboro Road)*
ADT: 810, Future ADT 1620

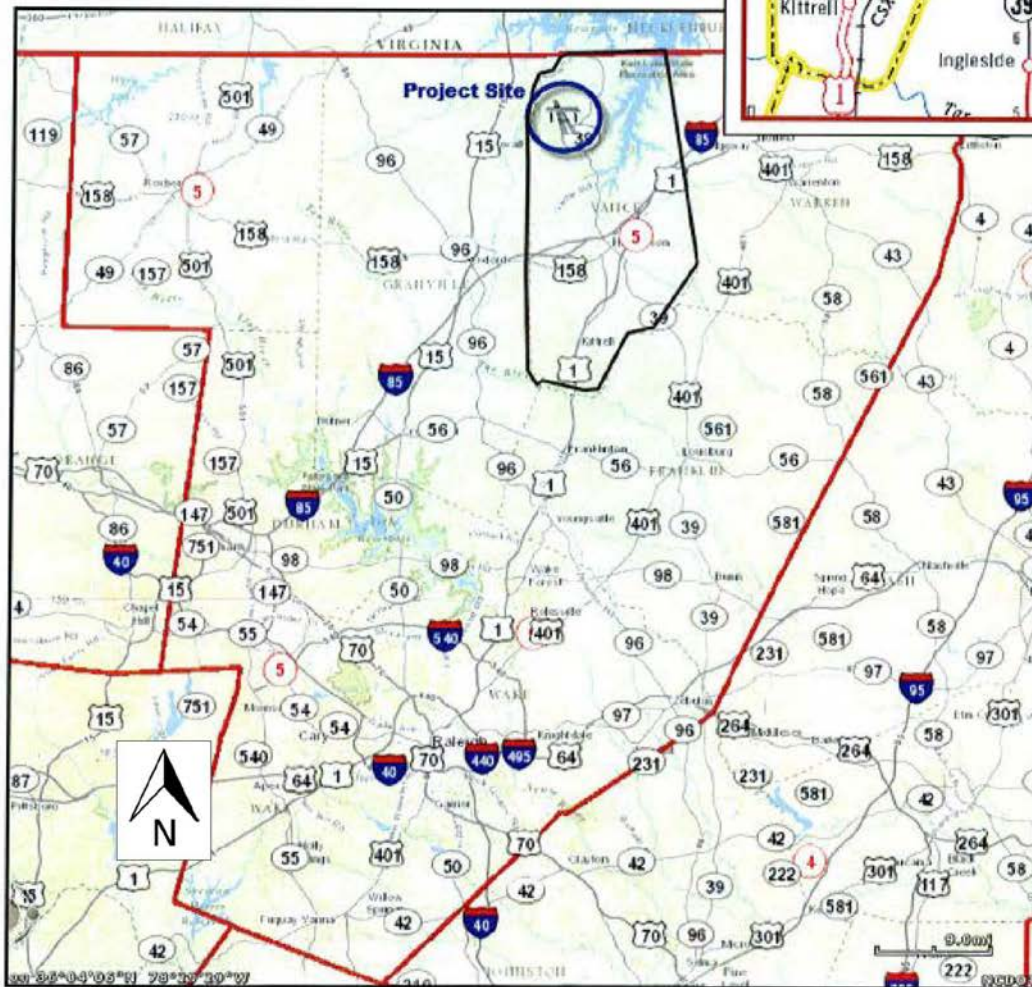


Figure 1. Location of project area in northwestern Vance County (source: NCDOT)

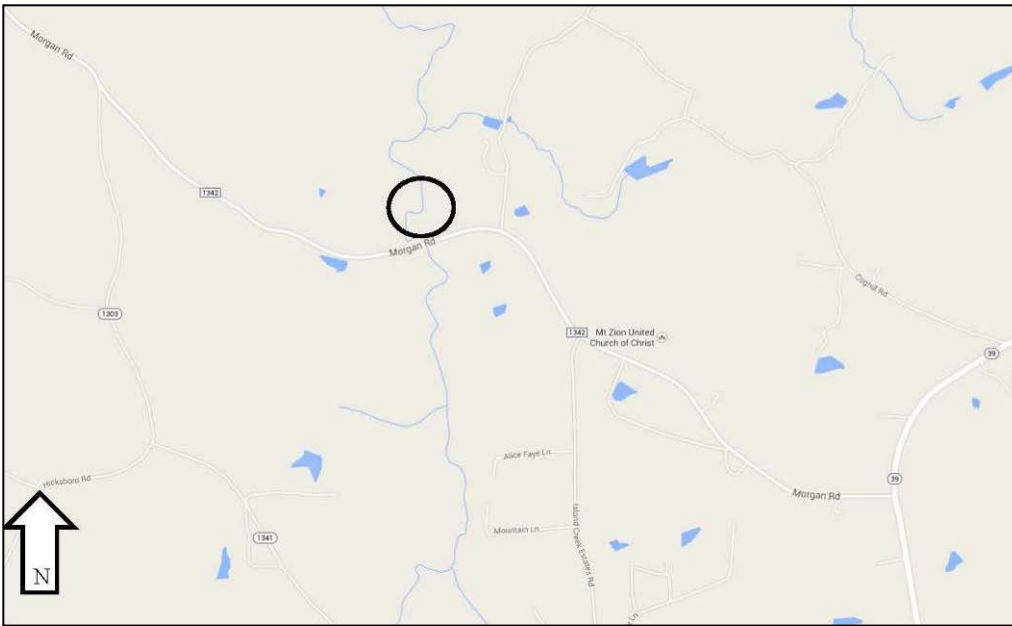


Figure 2. Location of Thomas A. Morgan Farm in northwestern Vance County (source: NCDOT)

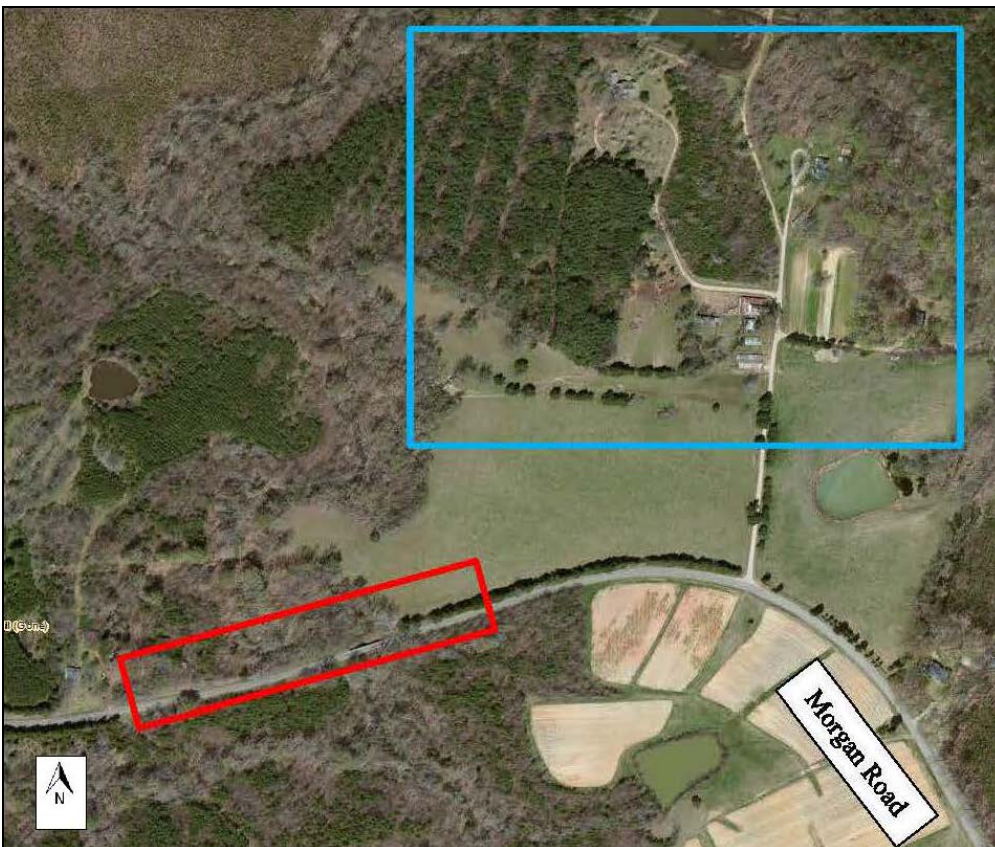


Figure 3. Thomas A. Morgan Farm identified by blue box and APE identified by red box (source: NCDOT)

II. INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF THOMAS A MORGAN FARM



Thomas A. Morgan Farm
VN0386
North side of SR 1342 (Morgan Road), 0.4 miles west of SR 1434 (Island Creek Road), Townsville vicinity, Vance County
Entire farm occupies Vance County Pin 0323-01005 (1910.61 acres); recommended National Register boundaries encompass approximately 85 acres at south-central portion of parcel
1937-1938
Eligible under Criterion B for association with industrialist Thomas A. Morgan and Criterion C as an assemblage of resources that well represent a rural retreat or farm established from the 1920s into the 1940s

Figure 4. Thomas A. Morgan House

A. History

The four earliest maps of Granville and Vance counties show no buildings located at the site of the Thomas A. Morgan Farm. Of varying detail, these maps are the Harris “Survey of Granville County” of 1868; the Harris and Bullock “Map of Granville County” of 1880; the North Carolina Department of Agriculture “Soil Map” of Vance County of 1918; and the Buck “Map of Vance County” of 1925.

In the late nineteenth century, much of the property associated with the Morgan Farm was owned by Drewry S. Marrow. A farmer, Marrow put together more than 1,500 acres of land, much of which he distributed to his children in 1906 (Vance County Deed Book 13/Page 102). This property included lands described as the homeplace of Marrow. In the early twentieth century, Marrow’s son, Goodrich (Goodie) W. or G.W. Marrow acquired most or all of his father’s land and added onto the property. G.W. Marrow was, at least on paper, a successful entrepreneur. In 1908 he was president of the Roanoke River Railway Company, which opened a twelve-mile line along an antebellum alignment that ran from Townsville, a few miles northeast of the project area, to a connection with the Seaboard Air Line in western Warren County (*Henderson Gold Leaf*, May 16, 1907; *Raleigh North Carolinian* March 26, 1908).

Much of the property owned by the Marrows was woodland in 1908, when a notice of sale of “valuable timber” was posted in the *Henderson Gold Leaf* (December 24, 1908) in connection with the bankruptcy of the “East Coast Lumber Corporation.” The proposed sale consisted almost entirely of timber on a tract of 1,176 acres “known as the D.S. Marrow homeplace.”

Drewry S. Marrow was certainly a large landowner in northwestern Vance County, although little else is known about him. His son, G.W., also had some local success, holding onto and expanding his father’s lands and running a railroad for more than ten years until it went bankrupt in 1919 (*High Point Enterprise* June 27, 1919; *Raleigh News and Observer* July 19, 1919; Peace 1955:236-238). Historic newspapers outside of Vance County make virtually no mention of them and they were not men of particular significance in our past, even within the county. The next owner of the property, though, was a man of national prominence.

In August 1937 Thomas A. Morgan of New York City purchased almost 2,000 acres of land from J.H. Zollicoffer, trustee in the bankruptcy of G.W. Marrow. The deed between Morgan and Zollicoffer (Vance County Deed Book 198/Page 452) identified five parcels—including one that was the Drewry S. Marrow homeplace—that reportedly encompassed 1,801.5 acres. A survey conducted for Morgan in April, however, established the total extent of the property as 1,965.2 acres (Figure 5, at left).

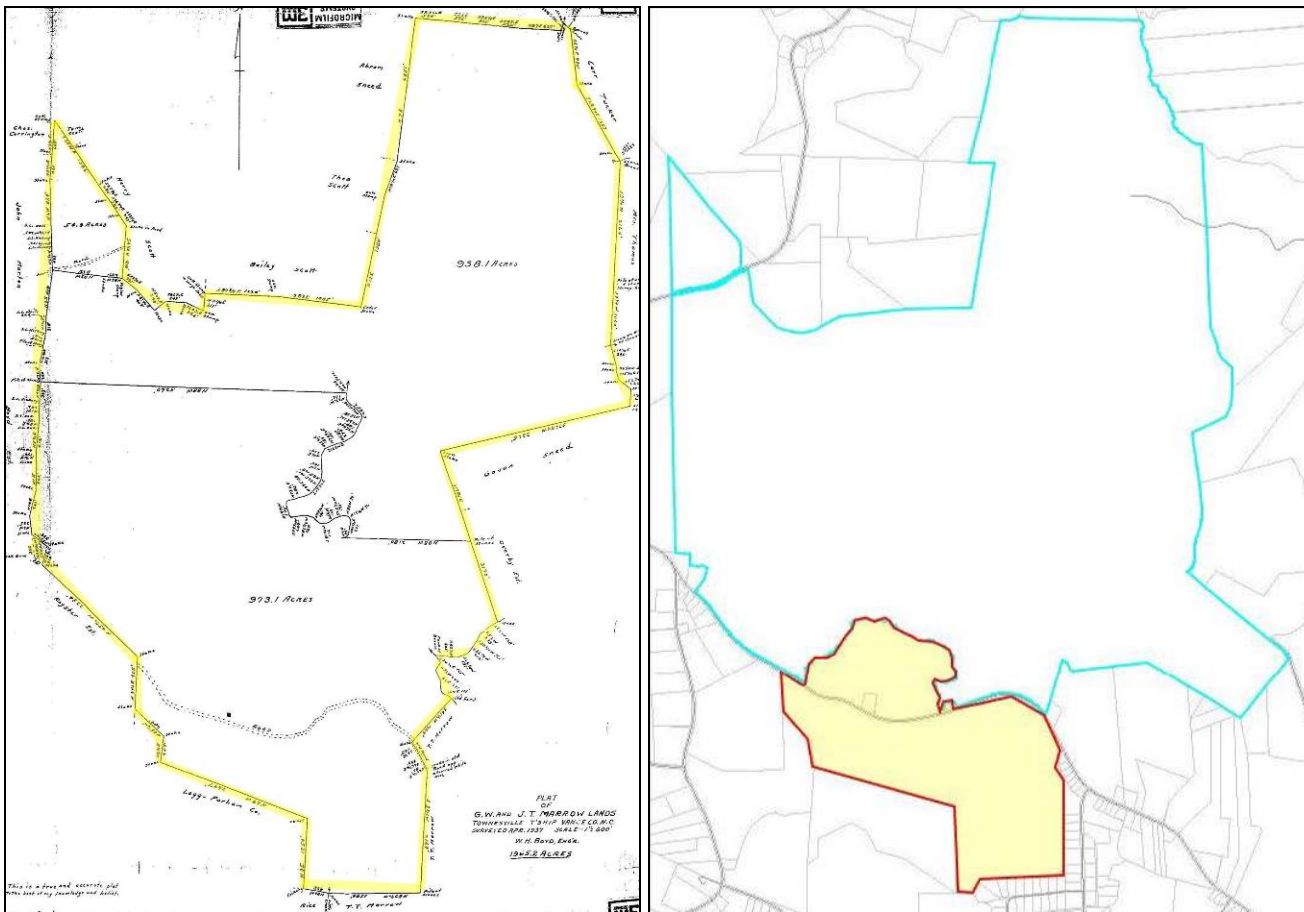


Figure 5. Plat map of 1937 Morgan purchase of 1,952.2 acres, with total extent outlined in yellow (Vance County Plat Map C/Page 54), at left; tax map of current parcel of Morgan Farm outlined in blue, with 310.5 acres cut out of holdings in 1944 shaded in yellow, at right

In December 1940 Morgan added an additional four tracts encompassing 175 acres to his holdings (Deed Book 220/61 and 221/79). In 1944, though, he sold off 310.4 acres to his brother, Robert L. Morgan (Deed Book 234/Page 537). This property included the roughly L-shaped tract south of the road—visible at the bottom of the images at Figure 5—that contained about 225 acres. It also included a roughly semicircular tract of about 75.5 acres on the north side of the road, centered around a house marked on the plat map with a black box. This house was the early-nineteenth-century, two-story, frame Grove Hill in which Drewry Marrow lived (<http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpoweb/> and Bob Morgan 2015). The parcel Morgan sold off in 1944, which totaled about 310.5 acres, is shaded in yellow on a current tax map of the property at Figure 5, at right.

Why did Thomas Morgan of New York choose to purchase nearly 2,000 acres of land in remote northwestern Vance County between 1937 and 1940? And who was he? These interrelated questions are addressed below.

Thomas A. (Tom) Morgan (1887-1967) was born into limited circumstances in Vance County on September 27, 1887. According to census records, in 1880 his father, James T. Morgan (1859-1922), was an unmarried laborer who boarded with a family in the northwestern portion of the county. In 1900, when Thomas was 12, his father was a sharecropper who raised tobacco. The family in 1900, which lived in the Williamsboro section of northwest Vance, consisted of James, his wife Virginia, Thomas, and three younger children (Morgan 2011:entry1240; *New York Times*, October 30, 1967).

Thomas Morgan recalled in 1932 that when young he worked for 24 cents a day plowing fields from sunup to sundown. He was 11 before he ever went to school and he calculated that by the time he was 16, he had only managed to attend classes a total of nine or ten months, although his mother taught him at night. To provide himself with prospects in life, he enrolled in high school in Littleton in neighboring Warren County. He paid his way there working as a night telephone operator and a maintenance man, delivering messages, chopping wood, and selling books door-to-door (*Sunday [Brooklyn] Eagle Magazine*, March 31, 1929; *Shamokin Dispatch*, January 7, 1932; Sprague 1933:11).

In 1908, with an interest in electricity sparked by his work at the telephone company, Morgan enlisted in the U.S. Navy and enrolled in its electronics school (Figure 6). In 1911 the Navy assigned him to its newly built U.S.S. *Delaware*, the country's first dreadnaught battleship. That year Morgan and Reginald E. Gillmor—chief electrician and electrical officer, respectively—helped the Sperry Gyroscope Company install the first Sperry gyro compass on the ship. Dr. Elmer A. Sperry (1860-1930), the inventor, had only readied the device for sea trials the previous year (*Statesville Daily Record*, November 26, 1941; *Shamokin Dispatch*, January 7, 1932; *Sunday [Brooklyn] Eagle Magazine*, March 31, 1929; Keith 1938:8).

According to the most authoritative account of the fortuitous meeting of Sperry and Morgan and its aftermath:

After a preliminary run from New York to Norfolk on the *Princess Anne* of the Old Dominion Line, the compass was delivered to the U.S.S. *Delaware*. Hannibal Ford went aboard to superintend the installation, and Sperry joined him later to witness the tests. By the time the tests were completed, the Navy had two gyro experts, Lieutenant R. E. Gillmor, who mastered the theory, and Chief Electrician Thomas A. Morgan, who made the compass operate. The tests were successful and soon Sperry had a trial order for four gyro compasses. Business prospects for this new scientific gadget looked good and more help was needed. Gillmor and Morgan resigned from the Navy [in 1912] to join Sperry. Within a year Gillmor had a London office and was demonstrating the gyro compass before the Admiralty and the Royal Society. Sperry rented space near the Navy Yard in Brooklyn to produce compasses. Soon Morgan was installing the new compasses on battleships, cruisers, and submarines of the British, French, Italian and Russian navies. Trials were in progress on a German naval vessel at the outbreak of World War I. The engineer in charge had to get off in a hurry and leave the instrument on board (Hunsaker 1954:233).



Figure 6. Thomas A. Morgan as a sailor, about 1910, and as corporate president, 1932 (source: *Shamokin Dispatch*, January 7, 1932)

Between 1916 and 1932 Morgan steadily climbed through the company's ranks, moving from sales manager to general manager to president. Elmer Sperry sold the corporation in 1929 to North American Aviation, Inc., a holding company that held a large interest in Curtiss-Wright Corp., solely owned Eastern Air Transport, and had holdings in other aviation enterprises. Morgan thrived in the expanded enterprise, which named him president of Sperry in 1929 (*Sunday [Brooklyn] Eagle Magazine*, March 31, 1929). By 1932 he was president not only of Sperry, but also of Curtiss-Wright (reportedly the largest aircraft company in the world) and North American Aviation (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 22, 1931; *Shamokin Dispatch*, January 7, 1932). In 1933 he was named chairman of the board of Sperry Gyroscope, where he worked side-by-side with his former shipmate, Reginald E. Gillmor, who succeeded him as Sperry's president (Sprague 1933:10; Keith 1938:8; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 17, 1932).

The Sperry corporation was a dynamo in the 1920s and 1930s:

In the years between the two world wars, Sperry and his engineers developed the automatic pilot, the first airplane stabilizer, gyrostabilized bomb sights, and automatic-fire control. By the 1920s, Sperry Corporation had become known as the "Brain Mill for the Military."

In the 1930s and 1940s, Sperry engineers worked with researchers at Stanford University and MIT to develop the microwave technology that forms the foundation of modern radar systems. At the beginning of World War II, Sperry was supplying approximately 100 highly technical products to the U.S. military, including directors (automated firing devices), sound locators, high-intensity search lights, gyropilots, bomb sights, gyrocompasses, range finders, and automatic gyrohorizons (Fleischman and Marquette 2003:78).

Under Morgan's leadership, in 1940 the company had 5,400 employees. By November 1941 the number had grown to 20,000 and at its wartime peak the company employed about 56,000. In 1942 its sales were just shy of 250 million dollars (*Statesville Daily Record*, November 26, 1941; Fleischman and Marquette 2003:87, 92).

In 1948 Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal presented Morgan with a President's Certificate of Merit, for his service during World War II. The citation read in part (*Current Biography* 1950:410): "Through Mr. Morgan's exceptional foresight, ingenious organizing and business abilities and patriotic and earnest endeavors in the direction and operation of the Sperry Corporation, a substantial contribution was made to the success of the Allied Nations during World War II by that organization."

Morgan led Sperry and its associated enterprises through the Great Depression and World War II, and continued to successfully guide the company after the war as well. Not until 1952 did he step down, three years before the company acquired Remington Rand and renamed itself Sperry-Rand (Fleischman and Marquette 2003:78; *New York Times*, October 30, 1967).

According to a brief death notice in *Time* magazine (November 11, 1967), Morgan's tenure at Sperry and its associated companies was extremely profitable: "Though he was not a flyer, in the early 1930s Morgan was president of North American Aviation and Curtiss-Wright, as well as Sperry Gyroscope; in 1933 he concentrated on Sperry, diversified into missiles and hay balers, and boosted annual sales from \$3,000,000 to \$240 million by retirement in 1952."

While Morgan gave up the helm at Sperry, he did not pull away from corporate or civic service. In 1952 he served on the board of directors of a dozen companies, including such dynamos as Sperry, Bankers Trust, Shell Oil, and Western Union. His other activities in 1952 included chairmanship of the President's Advisory Committee on Management (Figure 7) and serving as a director of the American Arbitration Association and a trustee of the National Safety Council.



Figure 7. Thomas Morgan presents report of President's Advisory Committee on Management to Pres. Harry S. Truman, December 18, 1952 (source: Harry S. Truman Library & Museum)

Perhaps Thomas Morgan's most public position was his long-term chairmanship of the board of directors of the United Negro College Fund ([Mt. Vernon, Illinois] *Register-News*, November 22, 1952). Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute (now University), Mary Bethune Cookman, and other leaders of historically black colleges incorporated the United Negro College Fund in April 1944 (Gasman 2007). African-Americans led the organization from its inception, but for many

years white executives headed up its fundraising campaigns. At a meeting in the Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center on March 5 1945, Morgan was introduced as the Fund's first national campaign chairman. The meeting was arranged by Walter Hoving, the president of Lord & Taylor, who initially led fundraising efforts, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., head of the advisory committee (United Negro College Fund, March 1, 1945; Gasman 2007:209).

Most of the money Morgan and the fundraisers brought in came from wealthy men such as Rockefeller. (A history of the Fund includes a chapter titled "Bringing the Millionaires on Board.") Others, including black servicemen, contributed as well (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Lena Horne presents checks, sent to her by black soldiers in the Pacific, to Fund executive director, William J. Trent, Jr., and Morgan, 1945 (source: *The Crisis*, May 1945); Rockefeller and Morgan with First Sergeant Jerry Davis, first African-American to win the Legion of Merit, 1945 (source: www.corbisimages.com)

Morgan offered some explanations to the Associated Press in 1952 about why he was actively involved in the Fund, even though he was a white Southerner who never attended college (*The [Danville] Bee*, July 26, 1956):

It's close to my own days as a boy. . . In my experience, I didn't have the opportunity for all the education I wanted. How in the heck could I go to college? I couldn't go rob a bank to go.

. . .

I seem to have an attachment of some kind for education. . . I'm not dedicated to education as such, but I find I want to devote whatever time and energy and whatever I can afford to the purpose.

Several things have gone into that philosophy. First, it's that I didn't find getting an education too easy myself. It gradually grew on me that the greatest thing you could do for your fellow man is to help him learn how to make a better world for himself.

You realize there's so much here in this life. And it'll pass you by if you don't notice it. People have got to have their minds open and their eyes open. Education is the thing that opens the mind.

Morgan remained chairman of the United Negro College Fund until 1962 (Gasman 2007:209).

Although he spent most of his working life in and around New York City, Thomas Morgan considered Vance County home, particularly after he bought his expansive farm there in 1937. His work and constantly increasing status, and perhaps his four marriages, led him to have a number of residences over much of the first half of the twentieth century. His first wife, Josephine Edwards Morgan (1893-1917), died in 1917. They had one child, Thomas A. Morgan, Jr. (1915-2006), who was born in 1915 in Delaware. In 1918 Morgan married Diana Yorke Morgan (ca.1894-ca.1924) of New York (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 27, 1918), who also died young. They had a son, Peter, who was born in 1919. In 1930 Morgan married Isabel Parker Morgan (1900-1989), from whom he was divorced in 1942. Their household included two children, Thomas, who was 14, and six-year-old Mary. His fourth and final wife, Celeste Walker Page Morgan (1909-1984), whom he married in 1941, outlived him (*New York Times*, October 30, 1967). She died in Durham, North Carolina in 1984. The two share a gravestone at Grace Episcopal Church in Cismont, Albemarle County, Virginia (www.findagrave.com; <http://search.ancestryheritagequest.com>; 1920 and 1930 federal censuses).

The following table identifies places Morgan is known to have resided, excluding his farm, after leaving Vance County in 1908. He likely lived at a number of these places for longer periods of time than indicated and may well have had other residences.

Year(s)	Place of Work/ Residence	Other Information/Source(s)
1912-14	Europe	Morgan installed gyro compasses on ships in Europe until the outbreak of World War I (Hunsaker 1954:233)
1915	Wilmington, DE	Thomas A. Morgan, Jr. born in Wilmington (1920 federal census; <i>Naples [Florida] Daily News</i> , August 12, 1973)
1920	62 Roxbury Road, Garden City, NY	Federal census placed him on “Roxberry” Road in Hempstead, likely Roxbury Road in Garden City
1922	Japan and the Far East	After World War I Morgan worked for Sperry in the Far East; he was stationed in Japan during the great earthquake of 1922 (<i>Shamokin Dispatch</i> , January 7, 1932)
1929-31	Kilburn Road, Garden City, NY	Kilburn Road was approximately 2.5 miles from the Curtiss airplane factory and corporate offices in Garden City (www.gardencityhistoricalsociety.org/historic_structures/71clintonrd.htm ; 1930 federal census; <i>Brooklyn Daily Eagle</i> , July 14, 1929 and September 24, 1931)
Fall-Winter 1931-32	Hotel Carlyle, Manhattan	(<i>Brooklyn Daily Eagle</i> , September 24, 1931)
1935-40	Manhattan	In 1940 rented the same house he occupied in 1935 (1940 federal census)
1946-50	217 East 62nd Street, Manhattan	In 1946 architect William Muschenheim drew plans for flower/plant stand(s) for this 1872-1873 three-story-over-basement, Upper East Side townhouse (quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bhl2ic ; Treadwell Farm Historic District 1967); Morgan still lived there in 1950 (<i>Current Biography</i> 1950:409); the neighborhood and residence were appropriate to someone of Morgan’s stature—a later owner, director Martin Scorsese, sold the town house in 2007 for 6.1 million dollars (therealdeal.com/blog/2007/08/15/scorsese-sells-townhouse/)
1967	30 Sutton Place, Manhattan	At his death in Vance County in 1967, Morgan lived at the farm and at 30 Sutton Place, an elegant East Side apartment building (<i>New York Times</i> , October 30, 1967)

Thomas Morgan's route back to Vance County was a bit circuitous. In a 1929 profile, he said:

I always knew that I could not stay on the farm. I did not know what I could do, but I figured there must be something. I had seen my parents and our neighbors struggle to eke out an existence on their farms. I knew I wanted to do something else (*Sunday [Brooklyn] Eagle Magazine*, March 31, 1929).

However, in 1941—four years after buying the Vance property and decades into a high-pressure business career—a newspaper profile (*Statesville Daily Record*, November 26, 1941) noted that Morgan “likes farming and recommends it for youngsters. His fetish is progress and for recreation he chooses dogs, hunting and horses.” (An obituary stated that he grew up hunting raccoon and possum in his spare time (*New York Times*, October 30, 1967).) A 1956 article (*The [Danville] Bee*, July 26, 1956) noted his “model farm” with its “purebred stock and rich fields near Henderson, N.C. . . just a few miles from the scrubby quarter section where he grew up. . .” A local history (not without errors about Morgan's business career) stated that Morgan named the property “Coon Creek Farm.” (Where the name, which continues in use on modern deeds, came from is not known. Maps do not identify a Coon Creek running through or near it.) The article continues (Peace 1955:416-417):

He is very much interested in improving live stock in Vance County and has on the farm Palomino horses, Brown Swiss cattle and an improved stock of hogs.

He spends some time on this attractive farm, especially when the dogwood is in bloom, and when the hunting season for birds is on.

According to his grandson, Thomas “Tom” Morgan III (2011:Entry 1240), who now owns the farm, the property was “known for its champion horses, innovative farming techniques, and visitors and guests, from US Cabinet figures to foreign dignitaries.”

Thomas Morgan was in residence at the farm when he died, at the hospital in Henderson, on October 29, 1967. According to an Associated Press obituary, he and Celeste “resided alternatively” in New York City and at the farm (*High Point Enterprise*, October 30, 1967).

In an editorial titled “Great Industrialist,” run two days after Morgan's death, the *High Point Enterprise* (October 31, 1967) summarized Morgan's largely forgotten, eminent position in twentieth-century American industry and the role his North Carolina roots may have played in it:

The obituary of Thomas A. Morgan was brief as printed in even metropolitan dailies, but there was a story of a great industrialist who took the savvy of a Vance County farm boy and his training as a sailor in the U.S. Navy to scale the heights of American industry.

Tom Morgan worked so closely with the inventor of the Sperry gyroscope that he was tapped to head the giant Sperry-Rand Corporation there to continue Sperry's work.

It was during the booming 20s that Tom Morgan emerged as a great figure of modern industry. And it was from the wreckage of the early 30s that his stature emerged to reveal a giant pulling killing loads in heading such pioneering outfits as Eastern Airlines and North American Aviation while on such boards as Banker's Trust in New York, General Aniline and Film, Western Union, Lehman Corp., U.S. Industries and many others.

Tom Morgan, whose death at 80 takes one of the greatest industrialists the nation has developed, remained true to the Tar Heel soil whence he sprang. He divided time between his farm near Henderson and his home in New York City. He never failed to recognize the power from which he drew his basic strength.

B. Description

Summary

The Thomas A. Morgan Farm currently encompasses just over 1,910 acres. In 1944, after Morgan sold off the Grove Hill house and associated land to his brother, the farm consisted of about 1,830 acres. In the intervening years, some additional acreage was added at the southeast (compare images at Figure 5). According to Bob Morgan (2015), who grew up at Grove Hill and manages the farm, the property is currently largely a timbering operation. About 1,200 to 1,400 of its acreage is planted in pine.

The house Morgan built in 1937 or 1938, and 11 other agricultural resources and secondary residences—all but one of which are contemporary with his house—stand in a relatively small section at the south-central edge of the property, just north of SR 1342/Morgan Road (Figure 9). Two farm ponds are sunk near the house and buildings. The fields between the buildings and the road are among the farm's only cleared pieces of land. As a whole, the property is heavily wooded with a few other farm ponds and naturally wet areas, and a network of small streams and narrow sandy lanes.

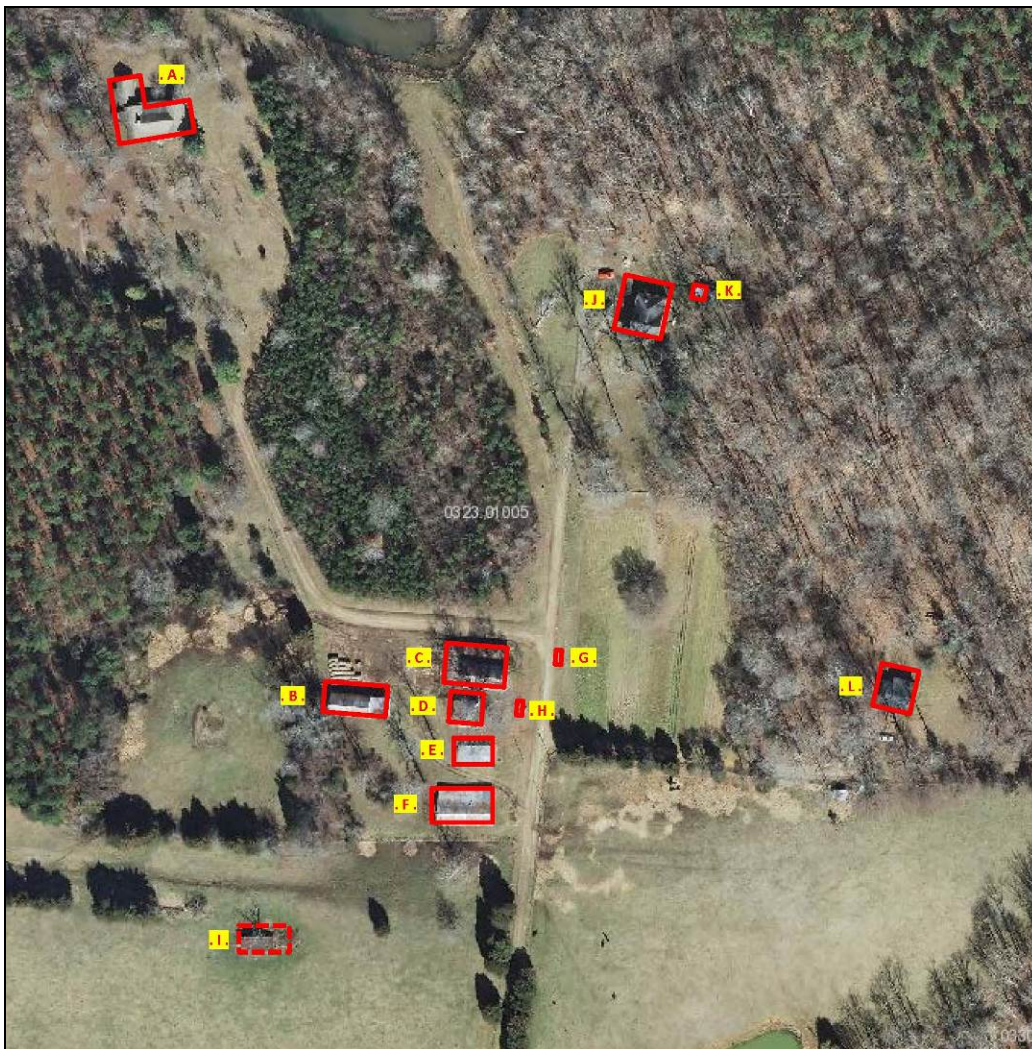


Figure 9. Resource locator map

Thomas A. Morgan House (contributing building) [A in Figure 9]

Thomas A. Morgan erected his new house on his new farm in 1937 or 1938, not long after purchasing the property (Tom Morgan 2015; Bob Morgan 2015; Vance County tax records). A local history in 1941 noted that on the recently acquired farm, “. . . Mr. Morgan has built a bungalow for himself” (Watkins 1941:22). This identification uses a general definition of bungalow as a casual one-story house with a low-pitched roof. More precisely, the dwelling is a Rustic Style log house or lodge, built of round, skinned, saddle-notched logs laid with a heavy infill of mortar (Figure 10 through Figure 16). The logs overhang at the corners like toy Lincoln Logs which, not coincidentally, were invented and released in the late 1910s/early 1920s (Moore 2009:363). The house is a straightforward expression of the style, with logs that terminate at the corners in the same plane. They do not extend out irregularly or in decreasing lengths as they climb, which was often the case at similar large log houses built locally in the 1930s. Variation is limited to the differing sizes of the logs.

The house’s design is largely regular as well. It is one-story tall with and an essentially symmetrical H-plan marked by a central gabled roof with perpendicular gabled legs to either side. Five bays cross the front (south) façade. The shed-roofed porch at the front extends across the gap between the legs of the H and out beyond their footprint. Unadorned log posts and upbraces support the end of its long shed roof. Large metal windows with small panes at all elevations are fixed, with inset, central, metal casements that swing out for ventilation. Due to the irregularity of the site, the logs rest on a relatively high brick foundation. A large, rectangular, off-center, stone, chimney stack projects above the central, cross-gabled, asphalt-shingled roof. The gap between the H’s legs at the house’s rear (north) elevation is filled by a log-walled sunroom well lit by multiple casement windows. The east side elevation is plainly finished. The west side elevation features a shed roof over a side entry that opens onto a modern deck. The west elevation is further extended by an original rear ell with a porch at its west that is a reduced version of the principal front porch.

Permission was not received to view the interior of the house. A glimpse inside, though, revealed original, rustic, wood paneling. According to Bob Morgan (2015), the farm manager and Thomas A. Morgan’s nephew, the interior has been little altered over the years. The house is in excellent condition and retains its integrity.

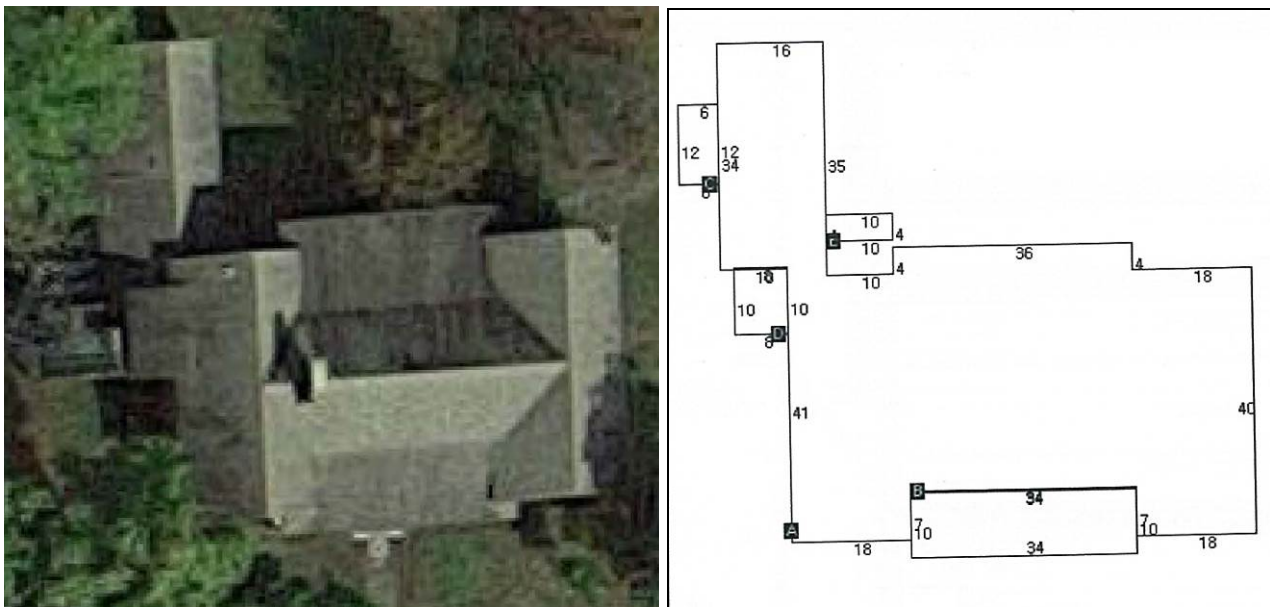


Figure 10. Aerial and tax map drawing of Morgan House (north at top)



Figure 11. South front and east side elevations of Morgan house



Figure 12. Front porch of Morgan house with log posts and upbraces and fixed and casement window



Figure 13. South front and west side elevations of Morgan house



Figure 14. West side and north rear elevations of Morgan house and ell



Figure 15. North rear and east side elevations of Morgan house



Figure 16. Detail of north rear elevation of Morgan house with projecting sunroom at center

Pack barn (contributing building) [B]

The frame pack barn or packhouse was erected with a small group of nearby outbuildings, at the same time as the Morgan house, in 1937 or 1938 (Bob Morgan 2015) (Figure 17 and Figure 18). Its original western section is longer and taller than the later addition at its east end. It is German siding and topped a gable-end, seamed metal roof. A large, wooden, sliding door is set near the center of the barn's long north elevation. Adjacent to it is a boarded-up opening that provided light to workers who stripped tobacco inside the barn in preparation for sending it to market. According to Bob Morgan, when Thomas Morgan purchased the property it included tobacco fields, but no tobacco barns or fields remain on the property. A single opening—a smaller sliding door of wood—marks the long south elevation. A set of metal sliding doors crosses almost the entire long north elevation of the east block, which has a seamed metal roof but is clad in artificial siding. This section was added in the 1950s (Bob Morgan 2015). Both blocks stand on concrete-block foundations. The barn is in good condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 17. Long north and west gable-end elevations of pack barn with original block at right



Figure 18. Long south and east gable-end elevations of pack barn

Stable (contributing building) [C]

The stable, located between the pack barn and the principal farm lane, also dates from 1937 or 1938. It is a large, frame, weatherboarded building with a concrete-block foundation and a seamed metal, gambrel roof (Figure 19 and Figure 20). Sheds wrap around the stable's south, west, and north elevations. At the long south and narrower gambrel-end west elevations the sheds are enclosed as stalls. At the north elevation and beneath the northeast corner of the building, which is notched in, the shed is open, supported by heavy wood posts with upbraces raised on tapered concrete piers. A large pair of doors open out of the peak of the stable's east-facing gambrel end. According to Bob Morgan (2015), Thomas Morgan stabled horses and mules in the building. The stable is in good condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 19. Enclosed stalls wrapped around long south and west gambrel-end of stable



Figure 20. Open shed along long north elevation of stable at notched-in northeast corner of building

Corncrib (contributing structure) [D]

South of the stable and west of the pack barn stands a large frame corncrib (Figure 21 and Figure 22). To cope with the slope of the land and possibly to protect against vermin, it is elevated relatively high off the ground on brick piers. Weatherboards cover its bottom half and open slats face its upper section. A hipped, seamed metal roof extends out over all four of its elevations, supported by exposed rafter ends and, at the west, skinned log posts. A single door of vertical boards is centered on its north elevation. The crib is in good condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 21. South and west elevations of corncrib with stable at rear



Figure 22. North elevation of corncrib

Milkhouse (contributing building) [E]

A rectangular frame building south of the corncrib, also built in 1937 or 1938, served the farm as a milkhouse (Figure 23 and Figure 24). The milk, according to Bob Morgan (2015), was only produced for consumption on the farm. The building is sided in weatherboards, leveled by a concrete-block foundation, and topped by a seamed metal, shed roof. Doors open into its long north and south and narrow east elevations. A total of three window bays also pierce the north and south elevations. The interior could not be viewed. The milkhouse is in fair condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 23. Long south and narrow east elevations of milkhouse with pack barn at left distance and corner of equipment shed at left foreground



Figure 24. Long north and narrow east elevations of milkhouse with stable at left distance

Equipment Shed (contributing building) [F]

A rectangular equipment shed (Figure 25 and Figure 26), also built in 1937 or 1938, stands to the south of the milkhouse. The long southern section of the building, which is open, was built to facilitate the movement of tractors and other equipment in and out of the building. This section is supported by skinned log posts and topped by a gabled, seamed metal roof. Weatherboards enclose the long north end of the building. This section's shed roof, supported by exposed rafter ends, is set in a slightly shallower plane than the building's principle gabled roof. The equipment shed is in fair condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 25. Long south and gable-end east elevations of equipment shed with milkhouse at right distance



Figure 26. Long north and gable-end east elevations of equipment shed

Gas Pump (contributing structure) [G]

Opposite the stable, on the other side of the farm lane, is a rusting red gas pump on a concrete pad (Figure 27). It has lost its hose and nozzle, but retains the nozzle holding slot. It also retains its clockface dial, which leads pumps such as this to be called “clockface gas pumps”. A peeling decal beneath the dial says “SHELL.” Information at internet sites suggests that the pump is a Tokheim 40A clockface model (see, for example, <http://www.oldgas.com/forum/ubbthreads.php?ubb=showflat&Number=521854>). These were manufactured in the late 1930s, indicating that the pump dates from 1937 or 1938, when Morgan established the farm. The pump is in poor condition, but retains sufficient integrity to support its contributing status.



Figure 27. Looking northeast at gas pump

Pumphouse (contributing structure) [H]

Bob Morgan (2015) believes that the pumphouse to the east of the corncrib, on the east edge of the farm lane, dates from 1937 or 1938. It is a small brick structure, on a partial concrete pad, topped by a sheet metal, shed roof (Figure 28). It was built to pump water up from a deep well. The pumphouse is in good condition and retains its integrity.



Figure 28. Looking northwest at pumphouse with corncrib to rear

Run-in Shelter (noncontributing building) [I]

A ruinous frame building in a field west of the farm lane just south of the farm's principal outbuildings was built as a run-in shelter for livestock (Figure 29). According to Bob Morgan (2015), it too was one of the original buildings on the farm and dates from 1937 or 1938. It has largely collapsed and therefore does not contribute to the farm's integrity.



Figure 29. Looking west at ruinous run-in shelter

Frank Morgan House (contributing building) [J]

Beyond (north of) the outbuildings, on the east side of the farm lane, is the house that Thomas Morgan built in 1937 or 1938 for his brother, Frank, who managed the farm (Bob Morgan 2015). Frank W. Morgan (1904-1965), the last born of Robert and Susan Morgan's six children, was 17 years younger than Thomas, the first born. The 1940 federal census records Frank living in Townsville, apparently in this house, with his wife, Elizabeth, and their four-year-old daughter, Virginia. The one-story, brick house is built in a stripped-down, Colonial Revival-style (Figure 30 through Figure 32). Though only containing about 1,600 square feet, it has front (south) and side (west) porches marked by square posts and pilasters and triangular pediments. The front elevation is five bays wide and symmetrical. The other elevations have asymmetrically placed entries and sash. The south half of the house is topped by a gable-end roof. A lower hipped roof tops the house's rear half which, due to the difference in roof height, has the appearance of an ell. An integral enclosed porch is set into the house's northwest corner. The house is in excellent condition and retains its integrity.

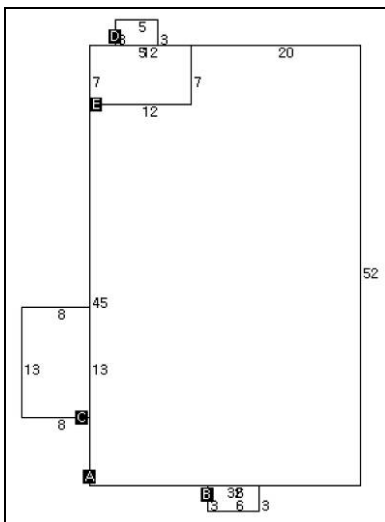


Figure 30. Tax sketch of Frank Morgan house with front (south) facade at bottom; photograph depicts south façade at right, side (west) elevation at center, and enclosed rear porch at far left



Figure 31. West side and north rear elevations of Frank Morgan house



Figure 32. East side and south front elevations of Frank Morgan house

Chicken Houses (contributing building) [K]

Just east of the Frank Morgan House stand two vacant chicken houses that share a fenced chicken yard (Figure 33). The yard is overgrown and the houses are vacant, but they are in fair condition. Both are built of frame with seamed metal, shed roofs and multiple openings. According to Bob Morgan (2015), they may date from 1937 or 1938. The chicken houses are in fair condition and retain their integrity.



Figure 33. Looking northwest at chicken houses with chicken yard between

Tenant House (contributing building) [L]

According to Bob Morgan (2015), this small dwelling was built on the farm as a tenant house in the 1950s. Tax records place its date of construction at 1950. The house is one-story tall and built of concrete block (Figure 34 and Figure 35). An asphalt-shingled, gable-end roof pierced by a central flue stack tops it. A shed roof porch with square posts supported by brick piers shades the front (south) entry, which is flanked by a pair of metal casement windows. Pairs of metal casement windows also mark each gable end. A small ell is centered at the rear (north) elevation. A small storage room and porch, to the east of the ell, are set beneath a shallower extension of the principle gable roof at the house's northeast rear corner. It is in good condition and retains its integrity.

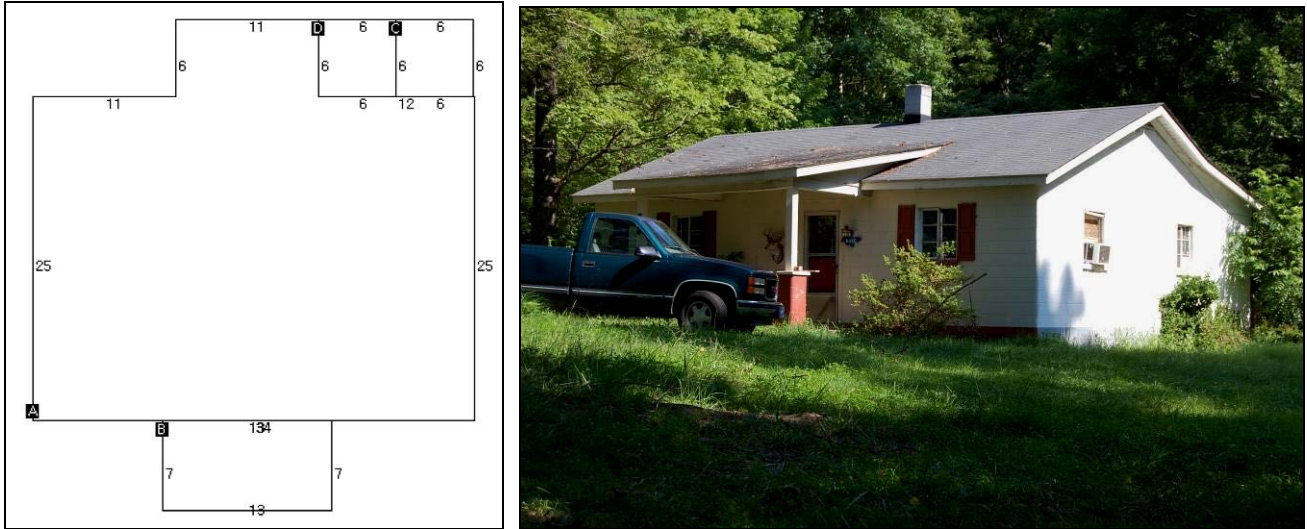


Figure 34. Tax sketch of tenant house with front (south) facade at bottom; photograph depicts east side elevation at right and south facade at center; note kick of roof at northeast corner at far right



Figure 35. West side and south front elevations of tenant house

C. Significance

The Thomas A. Morgan Farm is recommended as eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B for its association with Thomas A. Morgan and under Criterion C for its collection of principal house, secondary houses, and outbuildings.

Between 1912 and 1928 Thomas Morgan held increasingly responsible positions in the Sperry Gyroscope Corporation. In 1929 he became president of Sperry and by 1932 he also led the Curtiss-Wright Corporation and North American Aviation. He was named chairman of the board of Sperry in 1933 and guided the company until 1952. In that 20-year period the company's yearly revenue increased from \$3,000,000 to \$240,000,000. Morgan's retirement from Sperry did not mean retirement from the worlds of business or public service. He continued to sit on the board of directors of 12 companies, including corporate titans such as Sperry, Bankers Trust, Shell Oil, and Western Union. He also served on national commissions before and after retirement and, perhaps most significantly, was chairman of the board of directors of the United Negro College Fund, for which he led the fundraising campaign from 1945 through 1962. Thomas A. Morgan was certainly a person significant in the country's past.

Morgan acquired his farm in Vance County, the county in which he was raised, in 1937. From then until his death in 1967 he regularly visited the property. During these years the farm was the single place he was most closely associated with. He lived in numerous places in the New York City metropolitan area during those three decades and worked out of a number of different offices. When he lived in Garden City, he likely had an office in the nearby Curtiss-Wright factory and headquarters building in the community. He may also have worked out of the Sperry Gyroscope corporate offices in Brooklyn, also not too distant from his residence. By the early/mid-1930s, when he had relocated his residence to Manhattan, he worked out of the then-Curtiss-Wright corporate offices at 57th Street near Fifth Avenue (*Rotarian* October 1933:10) and likely also headed across the river to the Brooklyn Sperry offices as well. By 1950 his offices were in the relocated Sperry corporate headquarters at 30 Rockefeller Plaza (*Current Biography* 1950:409). In Manhattan he lived in the Hotel Carlyle, a rental property, a townhouse he owned on the Upper East Side and, at the time of his death, an apartment building on Sutton Place. He may have had other homes in the New York metropolitan area as well.

None of these residences or offices were as permanent or held so dear by Morgan as his Vance County farm. He spoke warmly and often about the farm and hosted a range of individuals there, from U.S. Cabinet figures to foreign dignitaries. His ownership of the farm was coterminous with many of his most important accomplishments, including guiding Sperry through World War II and leading the fundraising efforts of the United Negro College Fund. The farm was a place closely associated with Morgan's life and the actions upon which his significance rests. It is therefore recommended as National Register-eligible under Criterion B.

The collection of resources that comprise the Thomas A. Morgan Farm are also recommended as National Register-eligible under Criterion C as a significant and distinguishable entity. Almost all of them were erected in 1937-1938 when Morgan acquired his country property and as a group they are an example of a gentleman's (or gentlewoman's) second, rural retreat or farm established from the 1920s into the 1940s. Morgan's house (contributing building) is an intact, if architecturally spare, representative of a Rustic Style log building erected during the period as a country home. It is less finely finished than other log buildings built during the 1930s and 1940s in the region, such as the National Register-eligible Spruce Pine Lodge (DH1822) summer house of Durham's Mary Washington Lyon Stagg (www.opendurham.org/buildings/spruce-pine-lodge) and the Civilian

Conservation Corps-constructed North Carolina State University Forestry School “log cabin” in Hill Forest (DH1783) in northern Durham County, which has also been determined NR-eligible (Slocum and Miller 1953) (Figure 36 and Figure 37). Its relative lack of grandiosity may reflect Morgan’s modest rural roots. (Articles written about him in the 1930s and 1940s often mentioned his tattoo(s) (see, for example, Wharton 1943).) It is closer in spirit to the modest community buildings and small residences erected in the region at the time, such as the NR-listed 1935 Red Oak Community Building (NS0430) in Nash County (Van Dolsen 2005) and the 1940s Granville Circle log houses (DH2327) built near Durham (Little 1990) (Figure 38).



Figure 36. At left, Spruce Pine Lodge in northern Durham County, built (according to www.open.durham.org/buildings/spruce-pine-lodge) as a summer house in the 1930s; at right, “log cabin” erected in northern Durham by the CCC for NCSU Forestry School in the early 1930s



Figure 37. Decorative details of NCSU Forestry School log building



Figure 38. At left, Granville Circle log house, Durham County, 1940s; at right, Red Oak Community House, Red Oak, Nash County, 1935 (source: Van Dolsen 2005)

Morgan’s log house is supported by an array of contemporary buildings proper to the rural farm of a wealthy individual. There are nine outbuildings or otherwise farm-related resources—all but one put up contemporaneously with the house in 1937 or 1938—appropriate to a farm that did not provide its owner with his or her primary means of subsistence. These are a pack barn (contributing building), but no associated tobacco barns; a large stable (contributing building); a corncrib (contributing structure); a milkhouse that provided milk only for farm use (contributing building); an equipment shed (contributing building); a private gas pump (contributing structure); a pumphouse (contributing structure); a run-in shelter (noncontributing building); and a pair of chicken houses sharing a common yard (contributing building). All but one of these resources is intact and contribute to the property: the run-in shed has collapsed and lost its integrity and is therefore noncontributing. The log house is further supported by two resources necessary for the farm of a non-hands-on and often absent owner: the neatly finished, intact, brick house of the farm manager, Frank Morgan (contributing building), and an intact, modest, concrete-block tenant house erected ca. 1950 (contributing building) near the middle of Thomas Morgan’s tenure on the land. Taken together the farm’s resources retain their integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and comprise a significant and distinguishable entity. They are therefore recommended eligible as a group under Criterion C.

The farm is not recommended as eligible under Criterion A, for it was a gentleman’s farm that made no significant contribution to the field of agriculture and is not associated with any significant historic event. The farm is unlikely to yield any important historical information not readily available from other sources. It is therefore also recommended not National Register-eligible under Criterion D. (Any archaeological potential under Criterion D is not addressed in this report.)

THOMAS A. MORGAN FARM CONTRIBUTING/NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES				
Resource	Year Built	Condition	Integrity	Contributing/Noncontributing
Thomas A. Morgan house	1937 or 1938	Excellent	Yes	Contributing
Pack barn	1937 or 1938; 1950s	Good	Yes	Contributing
Stable	1937 or 1938	Good	Yes	Contributing
Corncrib	1937 or 1938	Good	Yes	Contributing
Milkhouse	1937 or 1938	Fair	Yes	Contributing
Equipment shed	1937 or 1938	Fair	Yes	Contributing
Gas pump	1937 or 1938	Poor	Yes	Contributing
Pumphouse	1937 or 1938	Good	Yes	Contributing
Run-in shelter	1937 or 1938	Ruinous	No	Noncontributing (loss of integrity)
Frank Morgan house	1937 or 1938	Excellent	Yes	Contributing
Chicken houses	1937 or 1938	Fair	Yes	Contributing
Tenant house	ca.1950	Good	Yes	Contributing

THOMAS A. MORGAN FARM ELEMENTS OF INTEGRITY

Element of Integrity	Level of Integrity	Assessment
Location	High	Continues to stand on the place where it was constructed and location continues to be complemented by largely intact setting in a remote portion of northwestern Vance County.
Design	High	The exterior design of, and relationship to, all of the farm’s contributing resources is intact with only minor changes, most notably the extension of the pack barn in the 1950s and the addition of a modern deck to the house. The interior of the Thomas A. Morgan house was only viewed in small part, but is said to be intact.
Setting	High	Environment within proposed National Register boundaries continues to illustrate physical character of place: it remains rural amidst open fields, woods, and farm ponds with no modern intrusions and with resources in same location and association with each other. Almost all of the acreage within the property’s parcel that is excluded from the proposed boundaries is now planted in pines for harvest, which would have been out of character with use of the land when Thomas Morgan owned it.
Materials	High	All of the exterior materials of the resources are intact, although heavily worn at some of the outbuildings, which also have some bays boarded up. The interior of the Thomas A. Morgan house was only viewed in small part, but is said to be intact.
Workmanship	High	With the exception of the log Thomas A. Morgan house, workmanship is not a notable feature of the farm. The exterior materials and construction of the resources remain intact, though. The interior of the Thomas A. Morgan house was only viewed in small part, but is said to be intact.
Feeling	Medium to High	The setting, location, design, and relationship of the resources to each other remain intact, although the farm no longer has the prize livestock or large numbers of horses and mules it had during Thomas Morgan’s tenure on the land.
Association	High	The farm retains many or all of the resources it had when Thomas Morgan owned and used it, in the same locations and association with each other. (It is not known if any resources no longer stand, but the farm likely at least once included tobacco barns.) Morgan’s residence stands little altered.

D. National Register Boundaries

The proposed National Register boundaries for the Thomas A. Morgan Farm encompass approximately 85 acres of the current 1,910-acre parcel (Figure 39 and Figure 40). The entire parcel was historically associated with Morgan, but about 1,200 to 1,400 acres are now planted in pine for harvest, which was not this acreage's use during Morgan's tenure. The land is little farmed, but for its planted trees. The selected acreage encompasses all of the standing resources historically associated with farm, the entry lane, and two farm ponds. It is edged on the west and north by creeks and on the south by the parcel boundaries at Morgan Road, which was historically and presently provides access to the property. The eastern boundary is straight, not based upon a watercourse, but follows the historic property line of the parcel.

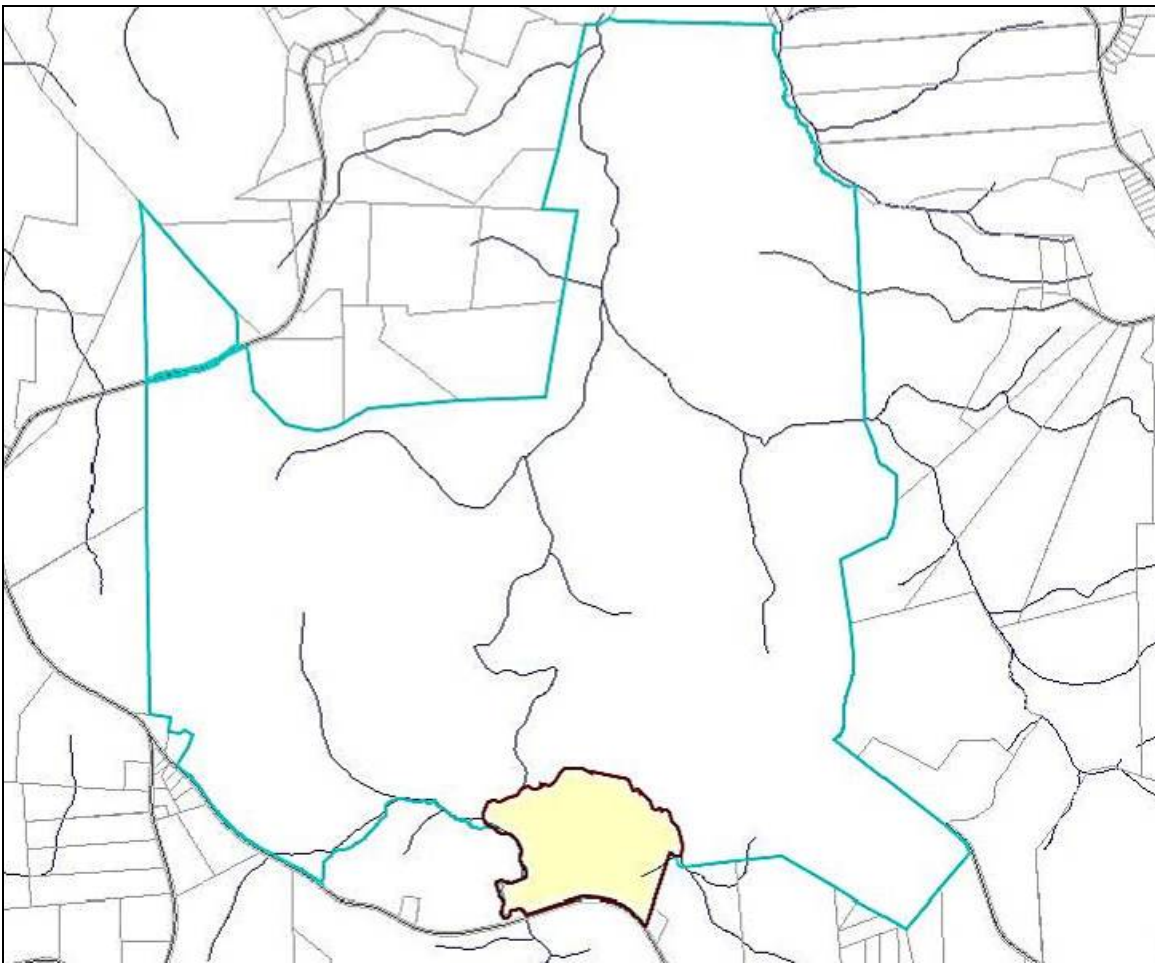


Figure 39. Proposed National Register boundaries of Thomas A. Morgan Farm shaded in yellow, entire parcel outlined in blue (north at top)



Figure 40. Proposed National Register boundaries of Thomas A. Morgan Farm shaded in yellow; note Bridge No. 78 marked by tiny orange rectangle at bottom left (north at top)

The southern extent of the parcel and the proposed National Register boundaries—as shown on county tax maps—is about 19 or 20 feet north of SR 1432/Morgan Road and Bridge No. 78. Figure 41 depicts a section of the proposed southern boundary, outlined in yellow, with the area contained within the boundaries shaded with parallel yellow lines. The NCDOT property to either side of the road is outlined in orange and an orange box rests atop the bridge. NCDOT right-of-way is clearly visible at Figure 42 through Figure 44.



Figure 41. Detail of southern edge of proposed National Register boundary outlined in yellow with NCDOT property and location of bridge marked in orange



Figure 42. View looking southwest from within NCDOT right-of-way at Bridge No. 78 and Morgan Road



Figure 43. Reverse view looking northeast from Morgan Road and Bridge No. 78 at NCDOT right-of-way and, beyond, a portion of the Thomas A. Morgan Farm included within the proposed National Register boundaries



Figure 44. View looking northwest from southeastern edge of parcel and proposed Thomas A. Morgan Farm National Register boundaries, with outbuildings visible across field in distance; note NCDOT right-of-way and maintained drainage ditch

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