



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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Morgan Spring Water

At the turn of the 20th century, the Defreestville area had few businesses other than farming. One of the enterprises was the sale of bottled water from a local spring.

The spring is located on property just across from the present day Cumberland Farms on the west side of Route 4. Probably Native Americans populated this area. Projectile points have been found and it is known that Indians often settled near sources of water.

The farmland at this site is historically significant. One of the earliest settlers in the area was Juria Sharp, whose house, circa the 1730's still exists on Laura Lane. In the mid 1800's, a great grandson, Jacob S. Sharp probably built the white house you can see from the highway. Down the hill from the house is where the water spring runs.

The Sharps, and later the Defreests and Lapes farmed this land. It wasn't until Joseph Morgan bought the property in 1903 that the idea of starting a business selling spring water developed. Morgan founded Morgan Spring Water Company (initially called Maple Villa Spring) in 1908.

In 1919 William A. Platt and his father Frank acquired the business. By 1921 the operation was producing over 1,500 gallons of per day and selling for 1 or 2 cents per gallon. It was delivered in 5 gallon and 1 gallon bottles, in its heyday, from five trucks to customers in the Defreestville area and up and down the streets of Rensselaer. This was a boon to the city which heretofore got its water from the Hudson River (not nearly as pure as the Morgan Spring Water.)

Additionally, the business supplied water to offices at the Capitol in Albany. I've found numerous ads in old Albany newspapers advertising the water.

William Platt's grandsons Gene and Bud Halsey remember water trucks still running the routes into the late 1950's. By the early 1960's, Rensselaer began to obtain its water from pipes running from Troy so the business for bottled water "dried up."

The Halseys recall individuals driving out from Rensselaer with gallon jugs and self served themselves to spring water. They would leave a nickel per gallon in a can in the bottling house. Although the property now has public water, the Morgan Spring brand is still pure enough to drink. Eat your heart out Dasani!