

MARIA MORRIS, Col. Morris's youngest daughter, married a Mr. Carr of Albemarle. . .

### WILLIAM MORRIS, SON OF SYLVANUS MORRIS

William Morris, my grandfather, was the second son of Sylvanus Morris, and the grandson of the first William Morris, in whom the traditional account of the family terminates. My grandfather, when he attained his majority, came into possession of a valuable estate, a partly inherited from his father and brother John, and partly derived from the first William Morris. This estate consisted of a large tract of land on Taylor's creek in the County of Hanover, and another tract near the Green Springs in the County of Louisa. . . . On the first of these tracts my grandfather fixed his residence, and the greater part of it is still owned and occupied by his descendants.

I have been able to collect but very scanty information as to my grandfather's habits, pursuits, and associations prior to his marriage with my grandmother, Elizabeth Dabney.<sup>1</sup> It was a maxim with him that what men usually call bad luck is nothing but bad management; and his uniform success in everything he undertook seemed to verify the correctness of this opinion. In all departments of agriculture he was prosperous, and never failed to draw remunerative profits from every application of his labor and capital. . . . It was from agriculture, that noblest and most useful of employments, that he drew the chief part of his resources; and it was in this department that his judgment and energy achieved the best results. . . . My grandfather was a strict disciplinarian and had no toleration for indolence, wastefulness or dishonesty; but he imposed moderate tasks on his servants, proportioned to their ability; and, as his judgment and experience enabled him to determine with much accuracy what they were capable of performing, he was not easily satisfied with their failure to comply with his requirements. On the other hand, he was very attentive to their health and comfort, furnishing them with warm houses and abundant food and clothing. . . .

His style of living was plain but plentiful, and with the freedom of intercourse characteristic of the time, all respectable strangers, not less than his friends and neighbors, were always welcome and his house was the rendezvous of much gay and youthful society, and, though he was not a man with whom undue liberties could be taken with impunity, and in his own person always made pleasure subordinate to business, he never laid any restraint on the amusements of his guests. In his latter years he gave up his homestead to his youngest son, Richard, and retired to a small house in the upper part of his estate, where he lived in seclusion, his unhappy separation from my grandmother having suspended in a great measure his intercourse with his family. Of that separation it is painful to speak, but while delicacy forbids any allusion to the causes of a breach so mortifying to every member of the connection, truth compels me to say that the conduct of my grandfather, out of which it grew, was wholly indefensible. My grandmother was the mildest, the most patient, and forgiving of human beings, and nothing but a sense of intolerable injury could have driven her to the decided step of renouncing the protection of her husband, thereby making her domestic grievances the subject of public animadversion. However reprehensible his course may have been in this unpleasant affair, it reflects the greatest credit on my grandfather's candor that, notwithstanding the violence of his passions and

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<sup>1</sup> Sister of Colonel Charles Dabney.