

Why Battletown?: the evidence

The six sources behind the Our Clarke story [Why Battletown?](#): A spring, a tavern, an estate — and a name the town could not shake.

Story	https://ourclarke.com/stories/battletown/
Packet version	v1.0
Last researched on	September 23, 2026
Evidence compiled on	September 27, 2026
Story last updated on	September 23, 2026
Status	Accepted for public release.

These dates describe this packet; each document inside carries its own date. Compiling added no research.

What is in this packet

Six sources, exactly those the story cites. One 1883 Clarke Courier page is reproduced, at full resolution in three labeled details plus the whole page for context. The other five — an 1856 biography, a 1914 county history, a 1987 historic-district nomination, and two Virginia DHR web pages — are cited only: two for unclear rights, and the rest because only OCR or web text has been read, with no page image inspected.

Four things this story keeps apart

That the name was used. This packet's sources do not establish how early; nothing before 1831 was inspected here.

That Daniel Morgan is associated with the place. He appears in the 1883 letter (BT-01) and in Graham's 1856 biography (BT-02), both written decades after the events they describe.

Proposed origins, plural, not one settled answer. The 1883 letter derives the name from fighting at a spring (BT-01); the 1987 nomination derives it from Charles Smith's estate, called Battletown before the town existed (BT-03); Gold's 1914 history repeats the tavern-and-Morgan version (BT-05). The story does not choose among them.

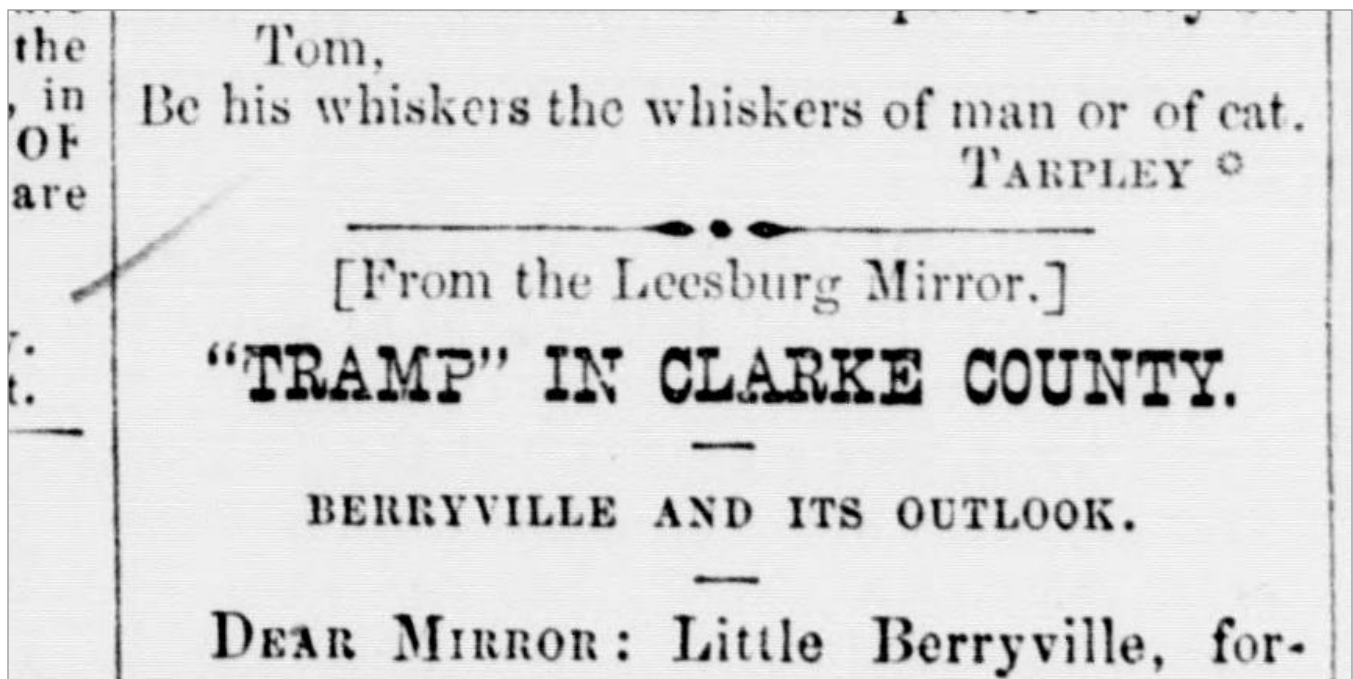
The feud detail. Graham's account of Morgan's crooked toe, from a fight with Bill Davis “at Battletown,” is Morgan's own reported words, at second hand through his minister and then his biographer (BT-02) — not independent confirmation of any of the naming accounts above.

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BT-01b. Clarke Courier (Berryville, Va.), 22 March 1883, page 1: “‘TRAMP’ IN CLARKE COUNTY. BERRYVILLE AND ITS OUTLOOK”, reprinted from the Leesburg Mirror.

“[From the Leesburg Mirror.]”, the headline “‘TRAMP’ IN CLARKE COUNTY. BERRYVILLE AND ITS OUTLOOK’”, and the letter’s opening: “DEAR MIRROR: Little Berryville, formerly known to the world as Battletown...” — read from the image, correcting the held OCR’s garbled rendering of this passage.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn85025371/1883-03-22/ed-1/?sp=1>

Why it may be reproduced: An 1883 newspaper page, published well before 1929 and served by the Library of Congress in the National Digital Newspaper Program.

What was read: the full page image inspected September 23, 2026, correcting the held OCR and confirming the letter is signed “TRAMP.”

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

spring on Saturday evenings to talk, and
drink, and trade and fight, and they in-
dulged so much in this latter amusement
that the spring was named Battle Spring.
In these fisticuffs Daniel Morgan was par-
ticularly prominent, and was always victo-
rious. Upon other nobler, and bloodier
fields, as a General in the Revolutionary
war, he won for himself a niche in the Pan-
theon of his country's history before which
the world will always bow with respect.—
Gen. Morgan sleeps now, to the shame of
his country, be it spoken, in a neglected
grave in the cemetery at Winchester under
a broken and defaced granite slab, from
which the meagre inscription has become
almost obliterated, and brambles and weeds
have gathered thick around it. That ceme-
tery is becoming rich in memorial tributes
to the gallant dead who sleep there. Le

BT-01c. Clarke Courier (Berryville, Va.), 22 March 1883, page 1: "'TRAMP' IN CLARKE COUNTY. BERRYVILLE AND ITS OUTLOOK", reprinted from the Leesburg Mirror.

The passage the story quotes: men meeting at the spring on Saturday evenings to talk, drink, trade and fight, until the spring took the name Battle Spring — and, in the same account, "In these fisticuffs Daniel Morgan was particularly prominent, and was always victorious."

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn85025371/1883-03-22/ed-1/?sp=1>

Why it may be reproduced: An 1883 newspaper page, published well before 1929 and served by the Library of Congress in the National Digital Newspaper Program.

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In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

alienable right be forgotten.

From this Battlespring the name of Battletown was given to the neighboring village, and don't you think that it ought to have kept that name? The rough and tumble, but comparatively harmless, battles around that old spring served to toughen the sinews of Morgan and the riflemen who followed him, for the endurance of the hardships of other battles, upon the issue of which hung the world's hopes of civil

BT-01d. Clarke Courier (Berryville, Va.), 22 March 1883, page 1: "'TRAMP' IN CLARKE COUNTY. BERRYVILLE AND ITS OUTLOOK", reprinted from the Leesburg Mirror.

"From this Battlespring the name of Battletown was given to the neighboring village" — the correspondent's own derivation, one writer's account rather than a settled origin.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn85025371/1883-03-22/ed-1/?sp=1>

Why it may be reproduced: An 1883 newspaper page, published well before 1929 and served by the Library of Congress in the National Digital Newspaper Program.

What was read: the full page image inspected September 23, 2026, correcting the held OCR and confirming the letter is signed "TRAMP."

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

Cited sources

No image of these sources is included in this packet.

BT-02. James Graham, *The Life of General Daniel Morgan, of the Virginia Line of the Army of the United States* (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856).

<https://archive.org/details/lifegeneraldani00grahgoog>

What was read: read from the complete Internet Archive OCR text; no page image was held or inspected.

Why no image: Public domain, but no page image is held or was inspected for this book: only its OCR text has been read. Without an inspected image to reproduce, this stays citation-only. Published 1856, fifty-four years after Morgan's death, footnoted to the manuscripts of the Rev. William Hill, which have not themselves been inspected. A recollection twice removed.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

BT-03. Berryville Historic District, National Register of Historic Places nomination, DHR 168-0012 (1987).

https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/168-0012_-Berryville_HD_1987_Final_Nomination.pdf

What was read: read from the PDF text layer, pages 2, 3 and 63, September 23, 2026; the footnoted references (pages 4 and 68) were located but not read.

Why no image: Rights unclear: a state nomination form, and DHR hosting or use of an NPS form establishes no public-domain status or item-level license. No image is reproduced. An architectural-survey nomination. Its estate account has not been traced to the deeds and wills its own footnotes point to, so whether it rests on independent deed research or repeats an earlier published history is unresolved.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

BT-04. A Brief County History.

<https://www.clarkecounty.gov/residents/a-brief-county-history>

What was read: page text read.

Why no image: Rights unclear, and it is a government summary rather than an original record. No image is reproduced. A summary account, not the original 1798 charter or enabling act.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

BT-05. History of Clarke County, Virginia and its connection with the war between the states.

<https://archive.org/details/historyofclarke00gold>

What was read: existing OCR read (printed pages 16, 30 and the preface); no page image inspected.

Why no image: Rights unclear, and no page image has been inspected: only existing OCR has been read. No image is reproduced. The version of the name most often repeated since, connecting it to tavern quarrels and Daniel Morgan. That the explanation was published is documented; that Morgan's fighting caused the name is not.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

BT-06. Josephine City Historic District, 168-5029.

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5029/>

What was read: page text read.

Why no image: Rights unclear. No image is reproduced. Used here only to place Josephine City within Berryville, as the onward link to a different Berryville thread; its own presumed-namesake claim is not part of this story.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

Bibliography

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Clarke Courier (Berryville, Va.), 22 March 1883, page 1: "'TRAMP' IN CLARKE COUNTY. BERRYVILLE AND ITS OUTLOOK", reprinted from the Leesburg Mirror. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn85025371/1883-03-22/ed-1/?sp=1>

Cited only; no image included

James Graham, The Life of General Daniel Morgan, of the Virginia Line of the Army of the United States (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856). <https://archive.org/details/lifegeneraldani00grahgoog>

Berryville Historic District, National Register of Historic Places nomination, DHR 168-0012 (1987). https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/168-0012_-Berryville_HD_1987_Final_Nomination.pdf

A Brief County History. <https://www.clarkecounty.gov/residents/a-brief-county-history>

History of Clarke County, Virginia and its connection with the war between the states. <https://archive.org/details/historyofclarke00gold>

Josephine City Historic District, 168-5029. <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5029/>