

PAPER READ BEFORE  
THE FILSON CLUB

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*This copy received from  
Dr. L. S. Coomes, Bardstowr.  
August 30, 1934*

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Read before The Filson Club by Dr. M. F. Coomes Jan. 7, 1895.

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History of Benjamin Linn, and his work as a Kentucky pioneer--  
Biographical sketch of John Ritchie, who was a co-worker of Linn's  
and the man who most likely erected the first sour mash  
distillery in Kentucky- A short biographical sketch of John  
Gilkey.

It seems rather paradoxical to talk of writing the history of a  
man whom we have not seen; neither is there any surviving contem-  
porary of his now alive to tell us anything about him, a man  
leaving no written record of his life or doings, save that connected  
with the transfer of certain lands in the state of Kentucky, and  
yet I have ventured to undertake this task, and will gladly make  
you the judges of my success. I hope to prove a successful under-  
taker! Hem.

To this man Linn, our native state owes much of her fame, for he  
was instrumental in bringing John Ritchie to Kentucky, and he laid  
the broad and deep foundation of our world wide reputation by  
having manufactured the first sour mash whisky made in this common-  
wealth.

Tradition informs us.....(remaining lines mutilated)

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.....  
.....

John Gilkey, the Goffs, the Kings and others who all accompanied him to the western portion of this state. Under the leadership of Linn, the above named men with some others constructed a flotilla of five boats out of huge poplar trees. The average length of these boats we are told was sixty feet, having a width of five feet and being of sufficient depth.

These boats were employed not only as a means of transportation but were substantially covered and served on occasions both as dwellings and fortifications. With this imposing fleet laden with supplies and properly manned, under the direct leadership of Linn, they steered down the Licking River into the Ohio, and then up the now famous Salt River, to the mouth of the Rowling Fork. From this latter point they made their way slowly up the Beech-Fork to the mouth of a small stream in Nelson County about five miles south-east of Bardstown. Here they disembarked and journeyed through wilderness in a north-east direction for about three miles, halting on the edge of a beautiful plateau, upon which one of Kentucky's earliest settlements was located, viz, Linn's Fort of Station as it was then called. A more beautiful spot could not well have been found in the entire state.....  
(remaining lines mutilated).....

stately red cedars. Even at this late day many fine specimens of these noble trees still remain as monumental survivors of the glories of the native forests in the perilous times of our forefathers.

Linn's Fort of the year of 1773 or thereabouts, was probably as well located from a military standpoint as it could be, considering the kind of warfare these hardy pioneers had to wage. The most usual method of attack was for the Indians to besiege a strong hold and starve or burn out the brave defenders. This latter method was not a very successful way of killing the pale-faces, if I am correctly informed, for our forefathers generally managed to keep fire of that kind pretty well under control. The Fort or stockade was constructed by digging a ditch around the intended enclosure, and setting stout post close together so as to form an impenetrable barrier. This forest wall had one or more gates, which in time of active hostilities were securely barricaded. Behind such a rampart the pioneers were safe from any aboriginal implements of war. Linn's Fort, was located on the brow of a hill some five hundred yards on a direct line from the river. It commanded a full view of the rising and setting sun. Its advantageous position enabled the garrison to .....

.....(remaining lines mutilated).....

.....

of land with an avenue in the north-east corner leading out to a spring of the very purest water. The spring like nearly all of the springs in that immediate vicinity is what is known as a cliff or spout spring, the water issuing from between the ledges of rock. The accompanying sketch will give you a very good idea of the location of the Fort and its relations to the grounds immediately surrounding it. The rocks at the north-west corner of the fort are very superficial, and in view of that fact it was necessary to use stones to support the posts of the stockade, in an upright position as ditches could not be dug at this point. I was told by S. G. Ritchie, Jerry Hagan and John Hagan all of whom have seen the wall standing, that it was really a stone wall as much as four feet in height, at its highest point. Its greatest elevation must of necessity have been at the point, where the spring drained out as will be seen from the drawing. It has only been a few years since the stone wall was torn down. The owner at that time was Mr. William Ritchie, a grand son of the original John Ritchie. He removed the wall to keep his cattle from injuring themselves, by cornering one another between the wall and the bluff where the spring emerges. This was an excellent place for cattle to punish each other as they are often wont to do.....(remaining lines mutilated).....

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emptied its waters directly into Sugar Camp Run, but the Linn  
spring. During my visit in company with Mr. Jerry Hagan, S. C.

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the blue colors is the Beech-Fork, the next largest is now known  
as Sugar Camp Run, formerly Landing Run, this being the stream  
at the mouth of which the fleet of Benjamin Linn made its final  
halt. Its present name was probably suggested by the great  
number of sugar maples fringing the hillsides along its quiet  
waters.

Traditions tells us that the Fort of Linn spring may be known  
from all others by the fact of its being the only spring along  
Sugar Camp Run that empties directly into the creek, all the  
other springs flowing into the run indirectly through some other  
drain. I investigated this matter very closely during the past  
summer, and found that it was correct, viz, that no other spring  
emptied its waters directly into Sugar Camp Run, but the Linn  
spring. During my visit in company with Mr. Jerry Hagan, S. C.  
Ritchie, John Hagan, John S. Cotton and Mr.....Simm, I visited  
the spot where the Linn Fort stood. The first three named  
gentlemen had all seen the stone wall mentioned above, and what  
is to be seen at present, confirms their statement in every par-  
ticular. Mr. John Hagan who is now fifty years old was cared for  
by an old colored woman who had shared many of the hard-ships of  
frontier life and who had frequently seen the Linn residence. I  
was given to understand that.....(remaining lines mutilated)

.....



individual houses or cabins in close proximity to the fort, so that in times of emergency, every one could be quickly and safely gathered into the stockade. This old aunty told Mr. Hagan that she had known Massa Ben Linn well, and was very positive in telling him that the folks did not treat Massa Linn right and that he left the neighborhood on that account. This same old colored woman pointed out to Mr. John Hagan the exact spot where the Linn residence stood, and in turn Mr. Hagan showed it to me. To be certain that it was the site of an old residence, I removed the sod, and found the hearth stones, somebody's surely, for they were evidently placed there in the peculiar position usual in these backwoods cabins. I found no less than three of these old chimney sites. The upper end of stones were burned and red, while the under portions were practically unchanged in color by reason of their having been less exposed to the fire. This is the direct traditional evidence concerning Benjamin Linn, and erection of the Fort bearing his name in Nelson County, Kentucky.

On the first day of June, 1785, Patrick Henry, a governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, issued to Benjamin Linn, a grant for one to thousand acres of land in Jefferson County, on account of a redemption treasury warrant, numbered 741, issued the 26th of April, 1783. Kentucky, as I understand it was originally Fincastle County, Virginia.....first Kentucky, then Fayette, Lincoln....  
(remaining lines mutilated).....  
.....

and hence this old grant was located in Jefferson County.

I have here an attested copy of the original grant, which I procured from the land office at Frankfort. A number of the earlier surveys made in Nelson County include this piece of land granted to Linn, and his Fort and his landing are mentioned therein, all of which goes to show, that he was in Nelson County long before there was any local government, all of these warrants having been issued at Richmond, Virginia.

These ancient records are found in the old possessioners books in the office of the county clerk at Bardstown, Kentucky, and the first and the oldest entry (on page one) is dated November the third, 1789. This date would also go to show that the country about Bardstown, was one of the first settled in the state, at least the first in the western part of the state.

Biographical sketch of John Ritchie, founder of the first sour  
mash distillery in Kentucky.

John Ritchie was born in Scotland in 1752, and died in Nelson County, this state, in 1812. He left Scotland and came to America while a mere youth and made his permanent abode in Virginia. It is not known just how long he remained there, very likely he tarried for about the space of six years, when his restless nature prompted him to seek other fields of excitement, and thus he made his way to Kentucky, where his anticipations were fully realized in this particular. As stated in the first part of this paper, whilst Ritchie was in eastern Kentucky he made the acquaintance of Benjamin Linn, and became one of his party, accompanying him and his party to the point in Nelson County where the Linn Fort was constructed.

Before he left eastern Kentucky, he formed the acquaintance of a fair young woman in the person of Miss Jemima Quick. In the vernacular of this day she would be termed a yankee girl, having been born in Jersey, then called the Island of Jersey. Miss Quick was born in 1758 and died in Nelson County in 1841, in the first house built by her and her devoted husband built some time between the years of 1773 and 1775.....(remaining lines mutilated)

.....



The sketch here presented is a faithful representation of the original house with its weightpole roof, small doors and two port holes, one by the chimney, the other by the door. The one by the chimney enabled the occupants to enjoy the fire and at the same time keep a lookout for invaders. The one at the door helped for examination and parley previous to admitting a visitor: little formalities which were imperatively necessary in these stirring times. Mr. Ritchie was more ambitious than most of his neighbors, or probably I should say he was more ambitious than most settlers of that date for the majority of them were content with one room while Mr. Ritchie, had two. No doubt the scattered settlers knew only too well that it was much more easy to protect a small house than a large one. The luxury of a library or drawing room was not then to be dreamed of: so the only reasonable conclusion is that Mr. Ritchie was a fearless man who in anticipation of rearing a large family built a house sufficiently ample to serve his purposes, and when it was once finished he never added any more to the original structure. The want of enterprise cannot be laid at his door, for the man who had the courage to fight Indians and build a distillery at the same time, could not lack.....It is not known just how long Mr. Ritchie lived.....(remaining line mutilated).....

indeed they were the first couple to leave its enclosure, and build a house for themselves. The construction of the house is prima facie evidence that Mr. Ritchie expected to have trouble with the Indians for the small doors, small windows and Port holes show that his Indian neighbors were hostile in character. It is (was) my good fortune to be able to visit that old land mark during the present year. It is located about two miles from the spot where Linn's Fort stood. Its location is almost if not directly on a portion of land occupied by an Indian village and burying ground. It is certain that both the Indians and Mr. Ritchie drew water from the same spring, as it is the nearest and most abundant in flow. As I stood within the walls of this ideal back-woods house, with its wide fire place, its door on wooden hinges, its carefully hewn logs, its low ceiling, its narrow doors and windows, and when that the log which was the ancient door sill was almost worn through by long and constant use, I could not help contrasting two things. First the love cherished by its present owner Mr. S. G. Ritchie, for the memory of him who built it. So fondly does he love and cherish his ancestors that with a liberal allowance of this world's goods at his disposal, he will not for an instant think of destroying the..... those things which.....

hardships and pleasures endured and enjoyed by his parents and grand parents, during their long and eventful lives. I know of no greater pleasure for a man to know that he sleeps under the same roof and sits by the same hearth stones in his declining years, as did his father and grand father before him. It transfers one to the distant past, it enables him to bathe his spirit continually in recollections which though tinged with sadness of memory, comforts the filial heart and strengthens it to fight as did our fathers the noble battle of life. How unlike is Mr. Ritchie, in this particular, to the average man, who, with his wealth, would content himself in this little humble dwelling? Not many indeed. The second thing that struck me forcible was the great contrast between our modern houses and those occupied by our early settlers in the state. They enjoyed life to the very full of its measure in every particular and were healthy and happy, many of them were brain workers as well as farm workers, yet their longevity was greater than ours.

The modern dwelling of today is a palace in every way compared with the early settlers log hut, the same diseases that killed men then, kill them now, and yet our medical science has made the greatest imaginable progress and still the....(remaining line mutilated).....

some very material change takes place in our mode of living he will soon be a wonderful and lamentable rarity. The lesson to be learned from this is that pure air does not kill, but the want of it is very destructive to human life.

Mr. Ritchie had many encounters with the Indians after moving into his new home, but he would never leave it. He was a temperate, law abiding citizen, as have been all of his descendants so far as I am able to ascertain.

In 1885 the living heirs of John Ritchie, and Jemima Quick, his wife numbered 488. In 1885 he had 25 living grand children. His daughter Polly, had one hundred and sixty-nine living children and grand children - his daughter, Sallie, 10 - his daughter, Jemima, 35 - his daughter, Nellie, 87 - his son John, 81 - his son William, 41 - and his son Cornelius, 40, making the grand total of 488. These heirs are scattered all over the western and southern country, but most of them are in Kentucky. From this it will be seen that Mr. Ritchie's family is not likely to become extinct any where in the near future.

As I sat in this quaint old house and looked out at a monster elm nearly eight feet in diameter, I wished that I could have seen what it had witnessed-- most likely the doings of no less than three distinct races of men, in as many centuries. Lying under its very shadows are the remains of many noble red men, who in life had sported and played in their youth under its friendly protecting branches. Here was a village in which the red men of the forest planned their hunting trips, and their raids upon offending tribes. Here they reveled in their war dances and sun dances, here too did their dusky children play. Here the solemn, but exquisitely simple and pathetic rites of their dead took place and they were left to enjoy a rest unbroken by either red or palefaced enemy forever. Some years since Mr. S. G. Ritchie and his brother opened the grave of one of these brave red men and removed his skull and one bone of the arm. In life the Indian must have been a man of great stature and great strength. His teeth were in a perfect state of preservation. The arm bone had been fractured between the elbow and shoulder, but the union of the bone was perfect. ....we ask what surgeon adjusted this fracture..... (remaining line mutilated).....



dressing encased his brawny arm, no trained nurse with tender touch ministered to his wants during this siege of pain and suffering. We only conjecture what was done for him. Pain was not to him what it is to the paleface. In his very nature were the elements of endurance and the absence of the finer sensibilities of our humanity. Hence his pain was comparatively slight. As to his surgeon and nurse we can say that their work speaks for itself. Death as it came to this particular child of nature was doubtless preferable to seeing his people surrender their lives and their homes, to see them compelled to abandon the great hunting grounds and the beautiful rivers, the homes of their youth in favor of the hated white man. All of this seems to have been unjust and cruel, and yet it is but a repetition of history - a survival of the fittest, the superior conquering the inferior, the Caucasian predominating over all other races. It need not have been so - yet such is the sad fact.

Within one mile of the Ritchie residence are the remains of an old stone fort, and account of which was published by Col. Bennett H. Young, in the Courier-Journal of July the 9th, 1895. ...had visited this old stone fort before reading the.....  
(remaining line mutilated).....

a front to the south of 100 feet, the walls being some twelve feet high and eighteen feet apart. Fifty years ago Mr. Hagan, the then owner, and the father of the present occupant, Mr. Jerry Hagan, had a tulip poplar tree cut down, which had grown from under the walls of this old fort. The tree was more than three feet in diameter. A reasonable estimate would place this tree at 125 years old when it was cut down, and fifty years added to that would make it 175 years since the tree was planted by nature under the ruins of this human habitation. When this fort was built, and who built it, and what was their fate cannot be even conjectured, as there is absolutely nothing left to give the slightest clue to the age of the structure or its builders.

It would seem that the history of this particular locality and its settlement by at least three distinct races of men, who could not possibly have communicated with each other in any way, that the minds of men in all ages have run pretty much in the same vein so far as personal protection and comfort are concerned. The indians did not build the structure.....  
(remaining lines mutilated).....  
.....

Their existence we must assign a prehistoric commencement to this lonely stone fort in Nelson County.

At the Ritchie home, not one hundred yards from the residence was where the first sour mash whisky was ever made in Kentucky. Mr. Ritchie's grand children all say that their grand father began the manufacture of whisky soon after he moved from the Linn Fort.

It is but a few years since the original house was torn down by his grand son, Mr. S. G. Ritchie, whose photograph is here appended. The entire house was built of red cedar logs and those that still remain are in a perfect state of preservation as can be seen by the accompanying cane and gavel, made from the logs of this old distillery. One of the necessities of every distillery is a good water supply, and Mr. Ritchie had it in abundance from a fine spring just in the rear of his house.

The large building in the sketch of "John Ritchie's distillery 1777-1780, with the two windows and one door, is the distillery with the water trough leading from the spring into the house. On the left is the little furnace.....(remaining lines mutilated)

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The roofs of these distilleries were all close to the floor. In this house the meal was mashed and worked. Here it underwent the process of fermentation, and (beer as it is termed) was either carried over to the still in buckets or was run over in troughs, where the process of distilling was completed. This is the spot where the first of "Kentucky's famous red liquor" was made, certainly it was the first that was made in Nelson County, and as the Nelson County product is considered the best whisky of all, the discovery is all the more valuable.

The evolution of the genus homo has been disputed and I think very satisfactorily controverted, but there is no disputing the fact that evolution as applied to Kentucky distilleries has worked wonders. The difference between Mr. Ritchie's modest little plant nested down in the wilderness, remote from the highways of commerce and that of the modern distillery, run by steam, lighted by electricity, with its machinery working almost automatically and its buildings representing thousands of dollars in investment presents a contrast that is one of the marvels of the age.

Little did John Ritchie dream that he was the inventor of the greatest beverage the world has ever seen - the most valuable and the least harmful if properly used. It never entered his brain that the time would come when this industry would yield to his adopted government its greatest revenue. Yet such is the case for without the revenue from whisky the United States would find it difficult to raise so large amount of money, with such small effort.

Of course, good John Ritchie, in setting the precedent of building a distillery could not dream of the role whisky would play in government economics. Wisely or unwisely he inaugurated a scheme by means of which our common-wealth of Kentucky as well as the general federal government raises money enough to liquidate the expenses of our administration, money which would else have to be gathered by direct taxation of the necessities of life, in that light, at least, John Ritchie was a public benefactor.

Cold water athletes honestly differ as to the benefits of whisky: to them I would remark, merely in passing that we need go no farther than the case under consideration to be convinced of the unqualified curse and blight.....(remaining lines mutilated).....  
.....



truth of these remarks by my professional testimony. That John Ritchie and his posterity have not been harmed and ruined by the death poison of Bourbon mash is gathered from the following facts.

1. Neither he nor any of his descendants were ever known to be drunk.
2. Neither he nor any of his descendants ever disgraced themselves by any overt crime by which they would justly have forfeited the esteem of their fellow citizens.
3. Neither he nor any of his descendants ever harmed themselves or curtailed their lives by over-indulgence, since both he and all of them lived to a green old age.
4. Neither he nor they found that whisky was the fruitful source of physical decrepitude or decay, since both he and they have raised large families of prosperous useful and self-representing citizens.

Gentlemen, if argument goes for anything this clearly proves that whisky is an unmixed evil, that in every case it produces a blight and that every one who uses it in moderation is either a wreck or a rascal - or both.

John Gilkey the subject of this sketch was born in Virginia, but when is not known. He came to Kentucky with Benjamin Linn, and assisted in constructing Fort Linn. He was married when he came to Kentucky, and his son John was born on the night of June 6th, 1780, in Linn's Fort being the first child born therein. This same night of June 6th, 1780, was an eventful one at Linn's Station. The birth of the child of course was no small event as sons and embryo warriors were always welcome comers to parents and friends alike.

A more exciting event was the attack made on the fort that night by the Indians. The red men were desperate and were determined to capture the station, and as a result, a stubborn fight was carried on by them. But they paid dearly for their rashness by having great numbers of their dusky braves killed. Mr. Gilkey was there and we are told did his part nobly and effectively. Being famed for his prowess with the rifle as a sharp shooter, he celebrated his son's first birth-day to the dismay of the Indians. Mr. Gilkey's son, John, died in Nelson County, this state, in 1867 at the age of 87, leaving a large family scattered over this state and Missouri. When the elder Gilkey died is not known.

He had many remarkable experiences with the Indians, during the early settlement of the country around Linn's Fort. And one that is particularly worthy of note is an encounter that he had with a stalwart Shawnee chief called "Big Jim," who became somewhat civilized and lived in the neighborhood of the stockade. There was a favorite fishing spot on the Beech Fork at the mouth of the creek called Sugar Camp Run, and both the Indian and John Gilkey, Senior, were accustomed to fish at the spot. For some reason or other there was a mutual dislike existing between Gilkey and the Indian. Near this favored spot is a high cliff overhanging the river, and pathway leading up and around one end of it. Early one morning the Indian and John Gilkey, Senior, chanced to meet at the top of this cliff, both being in an angry mood. An exchange of glances was sufficient, and without a word both rifles were brought to position and both flashed. Flint locks were then in use and neither gun went off. With incredible fury they attacked each other with the weapons which nature gave them. The Indian was naked, and had thereby a decided advantage over Gilkey, as Gilkey could not hold him, or rather, hold on to him. Time and again in their hands Gilkey.....  
.....(remaining lines mutilated).....

They suddenly became accidentally separated from each other and each made for his gun and took an opposite direction, neither being seriously injured but being thoroughly contented to quit. They never had personal encounter afterwards though they continued to be neighbors.

I have here an old rifle, which is the only thing that I have been able to secure that was connected directly with the Linn Fort. It was used by Mr. John Ritchie on the night of June the 6th, 1780, at Linn's Fort during the fight with the Indians. It has been in the Ritchie family ever since, and is now the property of a granddaughter-in-law of Mr. John Ritchie. About 35 years ago it was changed from a flint lock to an ordinary cap gun: Its rifles were cut out, and the gun converted into what is known as smooth bore. The brass trimmings and woodwork are modern, but the barrel is the original one. It is esteemed as valuable heirloom, and I am almost under bond to secure its safe return home.

I have here a lamp also, which was presented to me by Mr. S. G. Ritchie. It was brought to Kentucky by the Bealmers, some of whom have intermarried with the Ritchies. I have never seen any other lamp of this peculiar pattern. The odd manner in which the handle is made and the fact of its being.....

was probably made in their native land. It is as you  
see a piece of workmanship, and shows that the artisan who  
made it was an expert. In its time bears' oil was most frequently  
used. What a contrast in the means of illuminating between

It was formerly a part of what is supposed to be one of  
the earliest wagons brought to Kentucky. It is what is known as the  
"band of the hounds" and bears the date of 1750. The wagon  
was bought by Mr. John Ritchie from a Virginian, who brought it  
over to Kentucky with him, most likely conveying his family in it.  
This piece of brass was found near the Ritchie house more than fifty  
years ago. It seems to have been part of a lock, and from its ap-  
pearance many miscalculations were made by the designer, as a number  
of the holes are unfinished, or at least they seem to be in that  
condition.



Presentation of the Gavel.

Mr. Chairman, I present you this gavel as a memento and as their lamp & emblem--as a part of one of the first, if not the first, that can see a fine erected in Kentucky, certainly the first erected in Nelson. molded it was a

More than a century ago a hardy back-woodsman, with his burned in it. left Ben Linn's Fort and built them a conventional cabin, as then and now. Indian proof as it could be; having one door, one window, and This bar port holes. Soon after the construction of his dwelling, and the fire the redmen were still his neighbors, he felled the tree from "nosch" this gavel was made. This tree with a sufficient number of wasers entered into the construction of a distillery, which we are old was about 18 feet square, and within these walls this hardy Pioneer brewed his first yeast, and established what is today one of the greatest industries in the United States, if not in the world. The industry speaks for itself, so also does this little piece of red cedar wood. It has weathered the storms of a century and is but little the worse for it.

And I trust, sir, that you may weather life's storms to the end of the century, and that it.....  
(remaining lines mutilated).....

Copied from the Scrap Book of C. M. Ritchie, who lives about five miles out on the New Haven Road.

THE RITCHIES  
March 16, 1897.

AMONG THE FIRST SETTLERS IN NELSON COUNTY.

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A FIGHT WITH THE INDIANS.

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First Distillery Erected in this Section--  
Interesting Reminiscences of Pioneer  
Days in Kentucky.

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John Ritchie's Home was first built in the wilderness in Nelson County. He was born in Scotland, in the year, 1752, and was married to Miss Jemima Quick, of New Jersey, in 1775. He died in Nelson County in 1812. His widow survived him until July, 1839. She was about 80 years old at the time of her death.

After his marriage he left New Jersey and went to the mouth of Licking River, where he met with Ben Linn, who was making up a company to defend themselves and families from the Indians. They built a boat and started down the Ohio River, and their first landing place was where Louisville now stands. There were only two buildings there then, one being the postoffice and the other a little store. They stopped off for a few days but as they were not satisfied with the locality, they concluded to go farther down the Ohio, finally reaching, after many days' trial a small stream which is now known as Landing Run. Here they tied up their little boats and went three miles east and built a fort which they called Linn's Fort. This fort was built on the farm now known as the Wm. A. Ritchie

farm. John Ritchie was the first man to build a house and leave Linn's Fort. He built his house two miles west of the fort, near the Beech Fork river, where he took up 650 acres of land and began to till the soil. This place is now know as the John Ritchie farm. Not one hundred yards from this residence was where the first sour mash whisky was ever made in Kentucky. Mr. Ritchie's grandchildren unite in saying that their grandfather began the manufacture of whisky soon after he left Linn's Fort. His little distillery was built of red cedar logs and it has only been a few years since that it was torn down and some of these logs are now on the farm, having been used as fence posts, and they are as sound as they were the day they were cut from the tree.

That house was built about 1778, and during the year, 1780, John Ritchie and companions loaded a flat boat with the whisky he had made, together with other produce, and with Ritchie as pilot, made a trip to New Orleans, where they sold their entire boat load at a good profit. I can not give the names of those who accompanied Mr. Ritchie on this trip. After disposing of their stock they all <sup>of</sup> tramped back through the wilderness to Kentucky with a load on their backs.

Upon their return to Linn's Fort, John Ritchie and a Mr. Gilkey concluded to go to the place where they first landed when they settled in Kentucky, which was at the mouth of a small branch. While standing there they espied a buffalo coming towards them. Ritchie fired and killed him. At this juncture three Indians dashed out of thicket and shot at the white men with arrows, at the same time running towards

them with uplifted tomahawks. Mr. Gilkey, who was armed with a good gun, kept them at bay, while Ritchie ran for his life. Then Gilkey, who was very fleet of foot, would run until he overtook Ritchie. This mode of procedure was continued until the fort was reached, when the Indians disappeared, and were seen no more. The creek where Gilkey and Ritchie started on their race for life was called Ritchie's Run, and is known by that name to this day. The stream near which the buffalo was killed is known as Bull Run, and flows from the direction of New Haven, emptying into the Beech Fork at Buckman's fish trap. There is still another stream where Ritchie and his companions first landed, which is known as Landing Run. This is a very large stream and is well-known throughout Kentucky by that name. It crosses the Louisville and Nashville turnpike about one mile south of Balltown.

The old rifle which Mr. Ritchie brought to Kentucky with him is known as the oldest rifle in the State and has always been kept in the family. Mrs. Mary A. Ritchie has the gun to-day and it is a curiosity. This old rifle has been written of often and some of the readers of The Record have doubtless heard of it.

John Ritchie and wife had seven children born to them, four girls and three sons.