

**From Sewell S. Combs (Great Grandson of Harrison Combs)
Richmond, KY**

Harrison Combs, my great grandfather, came to Kentucky from Russell County, Virginia, in 1795, and settled on the North Fork of the Kentucky River. The place at which he settled was known as the Big Bottom, which was about a half mile above where the town of Hazard now stands. This was the first settlement on the North Fork of the Kentucky River in this section of the country.

When Harrison Combs came to Kentucky, his son, Mathew, came with him. He was ten years old. They brought along with them some peach seeds, seed corn, a rifle gun, a supply of ammunition, an ax, a weeding hoe, an iron wedge and a froe. They built a shanty to sleep, cleared two acres of ground, caught a young bear and kept it at their shanty. The young bear took up with Mathew. The bear stayed with them until large enough to eat, when they killed it and kept the meat to eat. So they had some fine tame bear meat.

As soon as they got their corn laid by and a house built they went back to Virginia after the rest of the family. On their return trip they carried their household goods on the horses. Most of the family walked and drove two cows through to Kentucky. The peach seeds mentioned before, grew and bore more peaches than they knew what to do with so Mathew and his brother Henry went to Washington Co, Virginia, and got a still and hauled it to the foot of Black Mountain. There they took Hickory withes and a pole and carried it across the mountain and on to their home, where they made peach brandy. This still was in the Combs family for years. It was loaned to Henry Ingle about the year Isaac Combs, an uncle of mine, took it to Wolf County. I went after it and took it home with me where I made peach and apple brandy in it. It was loaned to someone on the Kentucky River and the house in which it was located was burned in 1872.

Harrison Combs sold their place to his son Mathew, and he bought on Troublesome Creek, which is now in Breathitt County but at the time was in Perry County. The Troublesome Creek place was also later sold to Mathew. Harrison Combs wife died about the time he sold out. He had five boys: Mathew, Henry, Hugh, George and Steve. Harrison Combs later married a young woman and moved to the State of Indiana, and was lost sight of. The Troublesome Creek farm of Harrison Combs is in the hands of the Combs family to this time.

Harrison Combs hung the first bow oar on a boat on the Kentucky River. When they commenced running boats and rafts they had what is called the stern oar and one on each side next to the bow end. When Harrison Combs got to running on the water from Kentucky to New Orleans, he hung an oar on the bow end of the raft or boat and did away with the side oar.

New Orleans was the market place for corn, potatoes, tobacco and hemp, also lumber. The farmers would sell their surplus of crops to the men who ran the boats or rafts. They would take it to New Orleans, sell it and walk back home, a distance of 1200 miles, which was traversed almost entirely through the woods.

The last time I ever saw Mr. Charles Allen he took dinner at my father's when I was a boy just about ten years old. Mr. Allen told me he had made eleven trips to New Orleans and had walked back every time. Mr. Allen lived in what is now Lee County, Kentucky.

Matthew Combs, my grandfather moved to the Troublesome Creek farm in 1828. His son, Henry, who was my father, was two years old when Perry County was made and was ten years old when his father moved to Troublesome Creek. Mathew Combs married Fannie Brown, daughter of William Brown, who came from England before the Revolutionary War.

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The above spelling is as close as these tired old eyes can copy it. Does anyone know who this William Brown is?

Submitted By: J.P. Downard

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