

Clarifying the Multiple 18th Century North Carolina William Linvills

Narrative of William Linvill (bc 1735; dc 1759), 3rd Son of Thomas Linvill (bc 1703; dc 1761)

Before working through the brief evidence of William Linvill (bc 1735; dc 1759), son of Thomas Linvill (bc 1703; dc 1761), grandson of John Linvill (b 1677; dc 1739) some context is important.* While John had three sons, only two of them are referred to in this narrative – Thomas (bc 1703; dc 1739) and William (bc 1708; d 1766) as illustrated here. The third son – John Linvill – lived in Frederick Co. VA, was married to Maria Christina Stephens – traveled to Indian Creek area in SC before returning to norther VA/WVa. He is not discussed in this narrative. ***Those male descendants of John's (b 1677; dc 1739) discussed in this narrative are in bold below. Known daughters are not covered, except in passing. See Linville Family Database.***

John Linvill (b 1677; dc 1739)

[Likely 3 wives – only Ann (--?--) is known as of 1733]

Two of his Three Sons

Thomas Linvill (Sr.) (bc 1703; dc 1761)

Wives unknown except – Hannah (--?--)
is mentioned in Nov 1747 land sale

his sons

Thomas (Jr.) (bb 1732; d 1798 NC)

David (bb 1734; d 1787 NC)

William (bc. 1735; d before 1759)

Richard (bc 1740; d 1821 NC)

Aaron (bc 1750; d 1824 NC)

Moses (bc 1752; d 1826 NC)

William Linvill (bc 1708; d 1766)

m. Ellender/Eleanor Bryan in May 1736

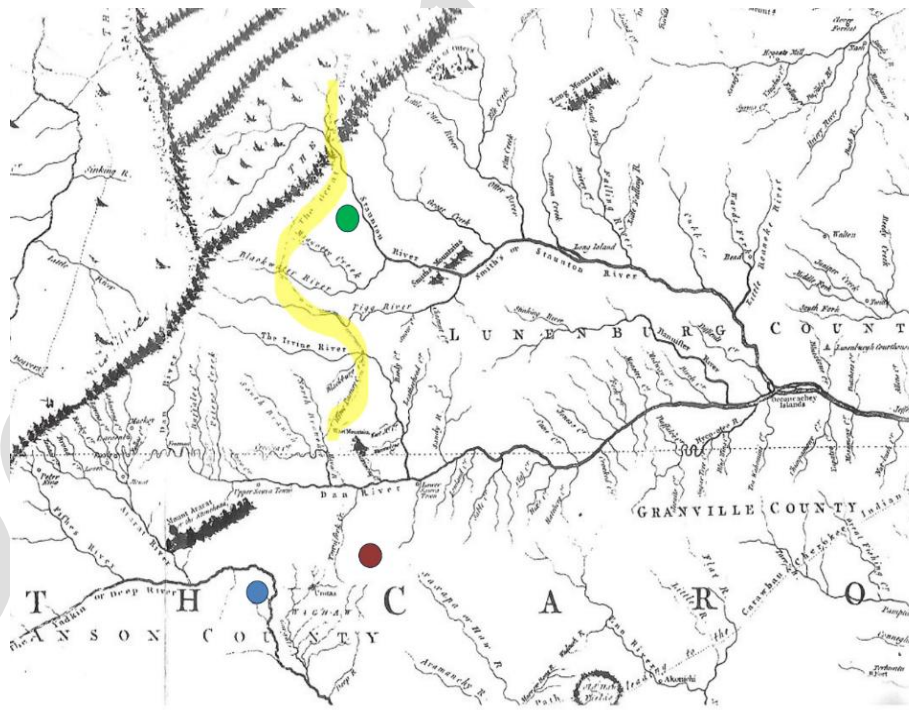
his sons

John Linvill (bc 1738; d 1766 NC)

William Linvill (bc 1742; d 1799 KY)

As listed above, these two sons of John each had a son William who were contemporaries: the son of William (bc 1708; d 1766) being more easily identifiable in the records. But it is the second, contemporaneous William (bc 1735; d before 1759) and his possible descendants who are the subject of the following discussion. He apparently lived a short time in adulthood, leaving only scant evidence, and two possible sons of his own.

The families of these two sons of John moved from Conestoga, Lancaster Co. PA to Augusta Co. (now Rockingham Co.) VA between 1733-5. After living 10 years along Linville Creek in Augusta Co. VA they moved 1747-8 with their young families to NC – Thomas Linville (Sr) to Belews Creek, Rowan Co. NC (now Forsythe Co.) and William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville 20 miles west to the Bryan Settlement at the Forks on the Yadkin River in Rowan Co. NC (now Davie Co.). By 1755, at least two of their sisters with their families moved from PA and VA to join William’s family at Forks of the Yadkin (now near Clemmons NC). Sister Ann Linville had married Henry Hendricks and sister Alice Linville had married Joseph Bryan, brother of William’s wife, Ellender (Bryan) Linville. While these three siblings – William, Ann, and Alice – all lived in the same neighborhood in one settlement, their brother Thomas and family lived in another location 20 miles east. There appears to have been little to no contact between the two enclaves of Linville after the move to NC with the possible exception of Thomas’s grandson, William **(2)** discussed below.

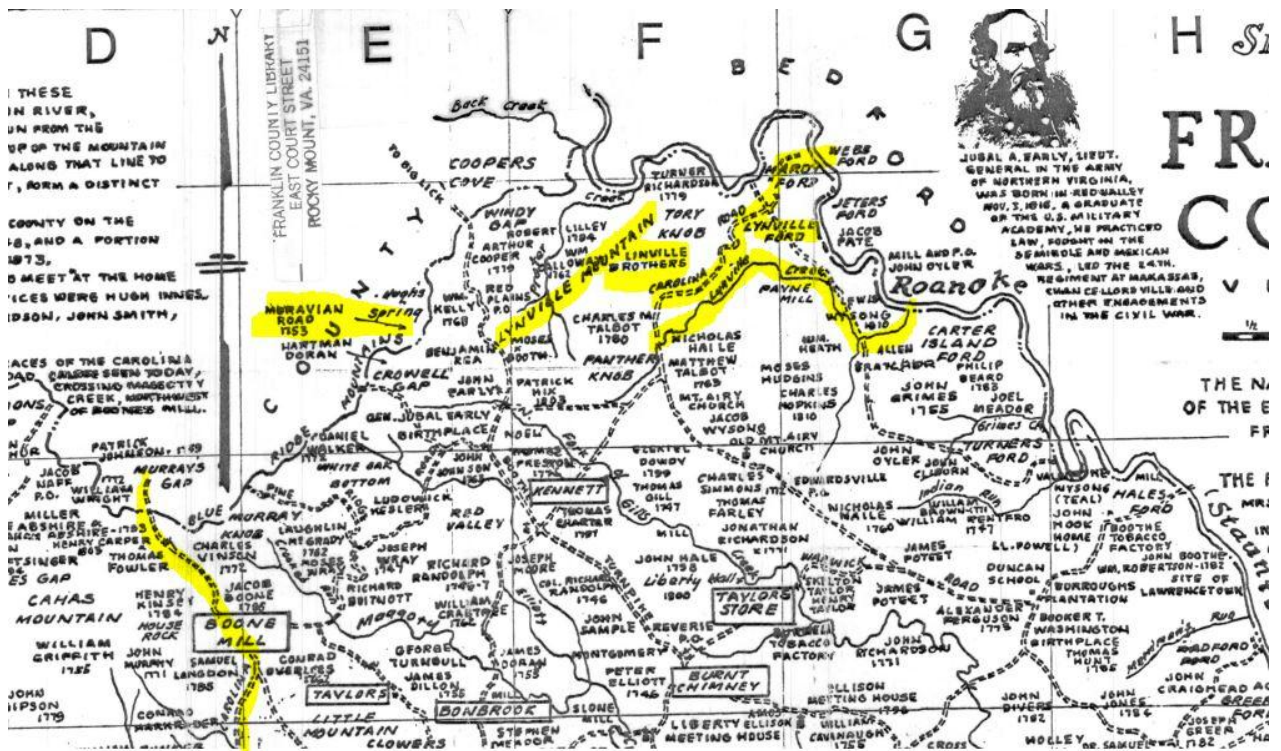


Fry Jefferson Map of 1751

The picture above is a portion of the Frye Jefferson Map from 1751 that includes North Carolina and Virginia- though it is a bit deceptive in missing other geographic features beside rivers. The Blue dot represents the location of William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville settlement at the Forks of the Yadkin. The Red dot represents the settlement of Thomas Linville and family at Belews Creek - about 20 miles east. The Green dot is the location of Linville Mountain and Linville Creek and Little Linville Creek in VA before 1760 in what is now Franklin Co. VA (all three now spelled Lynville). This is a different location from Linville Creek to the north, down the Shenandoah River Valley in what is now Rockingham Co VA where John's sons, Thomas and William, lived in the 1730s. The Yellow line highlights the wagon roads from Pennsylvania to the Carolinas, it is about 100 miles from the Green dot to the two NC Linville settlements.

The question arises as to the source of Linville names for this second area of VA geographic features and who were the "Linville Brothers" on the map below:

My present "working hypothesis" - definitely not certain - is that Thomas Linville's (Sr) sons William (1) (bc 1735-subject of this narrative) and older brother David Linville (bb 1734 'bb'= born before; d 1787) were the "Linville Brothers" noted on the historical map of what is now Franklin County, VA (then Lunenburg and later Bedford counties). The "Linville Brothers" could only have referred to the older sons of Thomas since they were the only Linvilles old enough to have been land owners/squatters before 1760.



<https://www.franklincountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/619/Settlement-Map-PDF>

Although the geographic features in 2023 are spelled Lynville Mountain and Lynville Creek (and Little Lynville Creek) previously - at least in the 18th century - the spelling was "Linville," giving rise to the speculation that some males in the family must have had something to do with that area before 1760. The only evidence I have found to date for the source of the name is a VA Royal Patent [Bk 33; p 384] for 400 ac both sides of Linwell's Creek granted to Nathaniel Haile (Hale) 15 Jul 1760 (see location marked on map along one "Carolina Road" near Lynville Ford and Creek). Reading abstracts of the first three books of Bedford County VA deeds (1754-1762) and the deeds of 1760s neighbors indicated on the map led to no other mention of Linvilles except those associated with this Haile patent acquisition and sale when the creek is mentioned [Bedford Deeds C: 176, 180, 196]

Still, some Linville brothers seem likely to have established something along the creek to have warranted that name for it, the mountain, and the ford. I continue to try to find the source of information about “Linville Brothers” at that time and place with no success yet [As of 11-2023]. Original records are extremely sparse to support this hypothesis.

One possibility is that the “brothers” established a waystation (Linville Ford??) along the Staunton/Roanoke River some distance from the Great Wagon Road, but along another Carolina road for a short period of time (1754-1759) - long enough for William (1) to marry (possibly a woman with maiden name Worley) and have at least one, possibly two sons, and then die before their father, Thomas (bc 1703; dc. 1761) died at Belews Creek NC. Only Thomas Sr. and his sons Thomas Jr., David and Richard appear in the 1759 tax list [NCSA-Rowan Co NC tax list 1759]- not William. David Linville, the second son, took over father Thomas Linville land grants 27 Feb 1762 [NCSA – Granville Surveys 12.12.77.43 and 12.13.123.17]. His older brother Thomas Jr. had a land grant at Belews Creek since 1753. The younger brothers – Aaron and Moses – were not quite old enough to be taxed or own land. There is no further evidence as to what happened to William after 20 March 1754 when he and brother Thomas were chain carriers on Belews Creek land [NCSA Granville Grant SSLG 119G -- #4510]. It seems possible that David Linville (bb 1734) and William (b 1735) would have been the “Linville Brothers”- doing something in that geographic area between 1751-4 and 1759.

One notable aspect supports this hypothesis:

Both the son of William (bc 1735) also named William and his probable uncle David are the only branches of the family that used the surname Worley as given names for several generations. This suggests both brothers William and David had some connection to a Worley family, though there were no Worleys found in the mid-18th century records for the Linville areas of NC or VA at

the time. A Francis Worley (widow Martha) and William Worley (widow Mary) were both back in Bedford Co VA but not until the 1780s. Both left wills, but no obvious connection of Linvilles to Worleys is apparent in them [Bedford Wills 1:384 and 1:533-4; 2: 9-10].

Since we know nothing about the wives of William (bc 1735; dc 1759) or his potential son, William (bc 1755; d after 1811 in Rockcastle County KY), or David Linville (bb 1734; d 1787] it is possible that one of them had some connection to a Worley family, in addition to their grandfather being neighbors of Worley's back in PA a generation earlier.

This hypothesis needs to be explored further, even with the limited records for the time and place in that part of Virginia. But it seems possible that William (bc 1755; d 1811) married a female cousin (a Hendricks? Or Ellis?) from the families in the Forks of the Yadkin to account for why this William Linville (bc 1755; d 1811), apparent son of William (bc.1735; dc 1759) lived first in Belews Creek and then moved to the Forks of the Yadkin before moving to KY.

William Linvill discussed, now, in this narrative was born circa 1735 at Pennsylvania or Virginia. His mother is not known, though his father was married to a Hannah (--?--) at least by Nov 1747, which would have been after his birth. He first appears on the 1751 tax list for Dan River, Granville County, NC [NCSA: 1751 Dan River Tithables- see also FHL Film 2438748, views 280, 281, 282], which includes the Belews Creek settlement mentioned above. A year earlier, it is only father Thomas and his oldest sons Thomas and David who appear on the 1750 list [NCSA: 1750 Tithables on Dan River CR.044.701.20 and FHL Film 2438748 views 279,283, 284, 285]. His first appearance on the tax record in his father's 1751 household but not 1750 would mean that William turned 16 between 1750-1, therefore, born in 1735. He possibly married sometime in the mid-1750s, wife unknown.

William was a chain carrier for father Thomas Linvill's (Sr.) land survey on 21 Apr 1752 at Middle Fork, Belews Creek, (filed) Orange County, NC [NCSA-Granville Land Office – Orange – S 108.283]. Until

1753, the boundary between Orange and Rowan counties was not clear [Orange County NC Court Abstracts 1752-1766 – Shields - FHL Digital Book, Introduction]. Apparently, living in Belews Creek was near the disputed Orange County line in 1752-3, explains why the family recorded land at the Orange County seat of Hillsborough for that short time period.

Next, William was chain carrier along with his father Thomas (Sr) for brother Thomas Linville's (Jr) survey on 16 May 1753 for land on both sides of Great Meadow, Middle Fork, Belews Creek, Orange Co. NC [NCSA- Granville Warrants and Plats – Orange Co – SR 12.8.040]. Next, with brother David, William again served as chain carrier for the survey of Thomas Linville (Sr.) for another 554 acres of land on 7 Mar 1754 in what is now Surry County, NC [Records of Moravians in NC by Fries Vol 2 p 534]. The final entry for this William appearing in any tax, land, court records in NC was on 20 May 1754 when he and Thomas Linville (Jr) were sworn chain carriers for Egbert Haywood for land on both sides of Belews Creek, joining the Linville line [NCSA-Granville Grants – SSLG-119G]. William must have died sometime after 20 Mar 1754 and before the 1759 tax list as he doesn't appear on it or any other records that have been discovered. Two sons possible for William (bc 1755), even probable – William (bc 1783) and John – are discussed below.

William Linville (bc 1755; dc 1811 KY): There is some logic to this William being the son of William, grandson of Thomas (bc 1703; dc 1761). This William is not listed as head of household in the 1790 census, but his 1800 census enumeration in Rowan Co NC [1800 North Carolina, Rowan County, Salisbury p. 346] provides an age range as 'over 45.' From land records (see below), his family left NC and settled in Rockcastle Co KY in 1805-6.

Any confusion between the two Williams whose fathers name was also William comes in that the two William Linvilles were of similar age and evidently lived from in the 1780-90s in the same 'Linville/Bryan/Hendricks/Ellis' Forks of the Yadkin neighborhood: William (bc 1755; dc 1811 KY), subject of this discussion in the narrative of his father William (bc 1735; db 1759), and his (first) cousin

(once removed), William (bc 1742; d 1799 Clark Co KY), son of William (bc 1708 – d Jul 1766 at the falls).

Separating them out has been challenging, particularly because of the oral history of William Linville's (bc 1755; dc 1811 KY) descendants that claim he was the son not the nephew of the William who died at the falls. What follows is my attempt to use chronological evidence to straighten out the two Williams in the Forks of the Yadkin 1787-90s. Then I discuss how the younger of the two Williams would likely have been the son of William (bc 1735; dc 1759), grandson of Thomas (bc 1703; dc 1761):

(a) **In 1778**, two William Linvilles, and no other Linvilles, are listed on the Rowan Co. NC list of those who hadn't yet taken the oath of allegiance to North Carolina patriots [NCSA-Rowan Co Minutes of Pleas and Quarter sessions CR. 85.301.4 pp 169-70 – Capt Cook's district-Forks of Yadkin]. Belews Creek had been part of Surry County at the time, not Rowan County. One of these Williams, the son of William (d 1766 at the falls) and Ellender (Bryan) Linville, is documented as dying in 1799 Clark Co KY [Clark Co. KY Probate 1:257-8]. Also, that William not only took the oath of allegiance later, as evidenced by a receipt for him in the Morgan Linville Papers [University of KY Library], but he wrote out the receipt to in his own handwriting and with signature, to his brother Morgan Linville in 1779. This William's mother, Ellender (Bryan) Linville, and younger brother Morgan had moved to Bourbon Co KY by 1791 [Rowan Co NC Deeds 12:240]. The children of William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville were clearly literate as evidenced in the collection of Morgan Linville Papers. As we will see shortly, the older William Linville only signed records with a mark – not a signature.

(b) **In 1782** a William Linville with no land but 4 horses and 16 cattle was enumerated in a tax list for Surry Co NC along Belews Creek near Aaron Linville, likely his uncle [FHL #07519203 view 606-Surry Co NC 1782 Tax]. This William would have been too old to be the son of any of the

other Linvilles (David, Richard, Aaron, Moses) living at the time along Belews Creek and on that same tax list. Based on the 1800 Census of Rowan Co NC [1800 North Carolina, Rowan County, Salisbury p. 346] that William would have been about 27 years old in 1782. This is the only extant tax record in Surry or Rowan County tax records that includes this second William (bc 1755).

(c) **In 1784** only one William Linville appears on the tax list for Gabriel Enoch's district in Rowan County (Forks of the Yadkin), which is clearly taken by visitation. That William Linville was listed on line 72 right after his mother Ellenor (sic) Linville Sr. [NCSA-Rowan Co. Tax list 1784-Gabriel Enochs' list]. Belews Creek, then in Surry County, has no comparable 1784 tax list to account for William (bc 1755) that same year.

(d) **In 1786**, William Linville (bc 1755), who was not literate, signed two documents with his mark. The first of these "marked" documents was an assignment of a land entry requested by William Linville 3 May 1786 for 100 acres in Guilford (later) Rockingham Co. on Reed Creek and assigned by William to Cornelius Cook 1 Dec 1790 for 20 pds [NCSA – Rockingham County Land Grants - S.108.1012 File 129]. He used his mark (an upside-down W).

The second was as a witness to a will written by a Fork of the Yadkin neighbor Thomas Job 16 May 1786 [Rowan Co NC Wills F:39]. Here the "mark" is a W (not upside down) but both marks are strikingly alike. Since one William Linville was literate (bc 1742) and the second (bc 1755) not, this adds to the separation of the two.

(e) Finally, despite both Williams living in the same location in the 1780s, land records separate the two. Note the highlighted portion of the following map of the Forks of the Yadkin neighborhood in the northeast section of Rowan County 1778-1789 (now Davie County, NC) where the two William Linvilles lived.

ROWAN COUNTY, NC, VACANT LAND ENTRIES, 1778-1789
Water Courses of Davie and Rowan Counties



A 1761 deed for 419 ac of land was given by William Linvill (bc 1708; d 1766 at the falls) to son John (bc 1740; d 1766 died at the falls) [Rowan Deeds 4: 543]. This same 419 acres then passed by primogenitor law to the next oldest son, William (bc 1742). Then in 1779 those same 419 acres that William Linvill had inherited from his father William, following his brother John's death, were sold to their uncle Samuel Bryan [a famed Loyalist who remained in NC following the war] for a hefty sum [Rowan Deeds 9:77-8], following which there appear no other land records for this William either in Rowan Co NC, or Kentucky.

The younger William Linville's land was part of a grant originally to widow Ellender (Bryan) Linville's, suggesting at least some kind of relationship to her or her extended family. Ellender Linville first obtained a state grant for 400 (sic) acres 10 Oct 1784 [Rowan Deeds 9:392—NCSA State File # 1146]. The metes and bounds for this grant are quite clear. Ellender split the grant into two parts (interestingly 1/3 and 2/3). The 1/3 consisting of 105 ½ acres she sold to Henry Hendricks (married to her husband William's sister Ann Linvill Hendricks) 29 July 1785 for 8 pds [Rowan Deeds 10:459], below market value, suggesting a family relationship. A year later Eleanor sold 2/3 of the 419 acre parcel of 294 ½ acres to Evan Ellis (long thought to have some relationship to the Linvilles) for 70 pds [Rowan Deeds 10: 497].

Henry Hendricks (husband of Ann Linvill), then, sold his 105 ½ acre parcel two years later on 21 Aug 1787 [Rowan Deeds 11:483] to the second William Linville **(2)** who is subject of this narrative. We know it is that William Linville both because he signed with a mark and because it is the exact same 105 ½ acres that he later sold to Evan Ellis 15 June 1805 for 100 pds [Rowan Deeds 19: 343] when he left for Kentucky and after the other William had died. Both of these sales were at market value, not below market value. Therefore, this second William (bc 1755) cannot be the one who signs a full signature and who died in Clark County KY in 1799.

With this evidence from court, tax, land, and signatures, we can separate out the two William Linvilles. William (bc 1755; d 1811) cannot be the son of William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville. However, because of their locations by the mid-1780s, the two Williams likely knew each other and lived for a few years in the same neighborhood in northeastern Rowan Co. NC before Ellender and sons left for Kentucky. Since we know the origin of the William (bc 1742), son of William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville, we need to consider a possible origin for the other contemporaneous William Linville (bc 1755).

Summarizing the discussion above, the logic that William (bc 1755) was the son of William (bc 1735; dc 1759), and grandson son of Thomas (bc 1703; dc 1739) is based on presumed ages and geography. Neither William Linville appears in the 1790 Census for NC as head of household. But there is a William Linville who appears in the 1800 census for Salisbury, Rowan Co NC (p 346) as aged 45 and over (therefore born 1755 or earlier), with potential wife the same age and four girls under 26 and one 10-16 yr old boy in the household. His location on the census is in keeping with the neighborhood where he owned land by 1787 [Rowan Deeds 11:483] and where he was witness to neighbor Thomas Job's will in May 1786 [Rowan Wills F:39].

We know from the above discussion William (bc 1755) was not the son of William and Ellender (Bryan) Linville. And we know for sure that his documented descendants share the confirmed Linville Y-DNA [FTDNA-Linville Surname Project- R-BY12141], leaving little doubt that the male parentage in this line has been consistently a Linville.

Brothers Thomas (c1703-c1761) and William (c1708-d1766) with their families living 20 miles apart, do not cross over into any other records together in North Carolina with the exception of this William.

It is possible that there is an additional relationship between this William Linville's (bc 1755) family and the Linville/Bryan/Hendricks/Ellis extended families at the Forks of the Yadkin through females in the family or some other way. William's (bc 1755) descendants have long held some oral history about being connected the Bryan/Boone families at the Forks of the Yadkin. Knowing that he lived in the same tight-knit community at the Forks of the Yadkin, could explain that understanding of oral history.

After William (bc 1755) moved to KY 1805-6 he appeared taxed in Rockcastle Co KY until 1811, and his sons William and Worley continued to be taxed there. He therefore likely died after 1811 probably in Rockcastle County, KY.

Much of the original information in the Linville database for descendants of William Linville (bc 1755; d 1811) that follows was submitted and researched predominately by Lee Anglin and Edna Brock Huff from family records and the Scaffold Cane Cemetery in Rockcastle County, KY. Additional details for William's (bc 1755) children William Linville, Jr. (bc 1782) and Martha Linville (bc 1755) and all of their descendants were provided by Jeff Renner - May 2002. The information on the family is supplemented by census, land, tax, and probate records. [See LinvilleFamily.us for details.]

Children of William Linville (bc 1755 NC; dc 1811 KY)

Rebecca Linville was born circa 1780. She married John McGinnis, son of John McGinnis and Rebecca Jane (--?--), on 4 Feb 1807 at Pulaski County, KY. She died in Kentucky in 1813 and was buried at Old McGinnis Cemetery, Inez, KY. All of the detailed descendant information for Rebecca Linville was provided by Loni McGinnis who is the daughter of Thomas McGinnis. Information provided March 2003.

William Linville Jr. was born c1782 at NC. He may be the "Wiley" (a nickname since his father was William) of Rowan County Land Entry #868 on 2 Nov 1803 for 100 acres on Briants Mill Creek - originally Linville Creek. He likely is also the William Jr., brother to Worley Linville (see below), since their NC land was adjacent to each other and it was near Evan Ellis's and their father William Linville's (bc 1755) land on the waters of Linvill Creek in Rowan County, NC. William (bc 1782) married Louisa Renner, daughter of Jacob Renner and Mary (--?--), on 27 Jun 1809 at Pulaski County, KY. He continues on Rockcastle Co. tax and census records up to 1840, suggesting the year of his death.

Worley Linville was born circa 1783 at NC. He recorded a Rowan County land entry #866 on 26 Oct 1803 for land near either brother or father William. He married Elizabeth (?-) circa 1805 and moved to Knox Co KY, circa 1806 which shortly became Laurel Co., KY. He appeared on the Knox Co. KY tax list in 1807 as a farmer and then was one of three adjacent Linville households with William (bc 1755), William Jr. (bc 1782) on 1810 census of Rockcastle County, KY [Kentucky 1810 Census-Rockcastle Co p 163]. Worley (bc 1783) continued to appear on the tax lists between 1811 and 1822 for Rockcastle County, KY and on the census of 1820 at Rockcastle County, KY. He acquired two grants of land in Rockcastle Co on 5 Mar 1827 and 21 Aug 1827 and appeared on the census of 1830 at Laurel County, KY after which he moved to Randolph Co

AL where he died in Sept 1746. His estate was probated on 16 Sep 1846 at Randolph County, AL. Estate administration was changed following the probable death of son Lambert Linville. Son Worley D. Linville then became administrator and was compelled to convey land for which his father Worley (bc 1782) had given Amos Willingham a bond for before he died.

Much of the detailed information for Worley Linville's descendants was provided by Jack Hughes - Oct 2000. Additional information on descendants of Worley Daniel Linville supplied - March 2002.

(female) Linville, possible dau of William (bc 1755), was born between 1785 and 1794 – enumerated with him on 1800 Rowan County Census.

Martha Linville was born in 1788 at NC. She married John Renner, son of Jacob Renner and Mary (--?--), circa 1806 at Rockcastle County, KY. As of circa 1806, her married name was Martha Renner. She died after 1850 at Rockcastle County, KY.

Much additional detail for Martha (Linville) Renner's descendants was provided by Jeff Renner - May 2002.

(female) Linville, possible daughter of William (bc 1755), was born between 1800 and 1809 enumerated with him on the 1810 Census for Rockcastle Co KY.

John Linville, a second probable son of William's (b 1735; dc 1759) was likely born before 1759.

There is a John Linville in a few records in Rowan County in the late 1780s. He appears on a Rowan County tax record for 1787 with a tax of 9 pds for which he paid 5 pd, 10 shillings [Rowan Tax 1787 FHL #005819567 view 17]. This John Linvill appeared in the Rowan County court records when he was asked on 8 May 1789 to bring to court the orphans -- three girls -- of Rodum Bussel [Rowan Court 5: 228]. When he next appears in court on 6 Nov 1789 the girls names are given -- Prisly, Elizabeth, and Jenny Bussell [Rowan Court Records 5: 265]. Their parents were likely the Rudum Bussell and

Charity Smith who took out a marriage license 4 Sept 1767 in Rowan County [Rowan Marriages]. The bondsmen were John Turner and Cornwell Smith. Was John Linville the new husband of Charity (Smith) Bussell? If so, there is no record. And there is no record of the girls after this court date. Is he the John Linville in the 1800 Census of Greenville County, South Carolina [1800 Census -South Carolina, Greenville County, p 272, line 1120]?

Like probable brother William (bc 1755) this John Linville cannot be the son of William and Ellender(Bryan) Linville since their son John died with the father in July 1766. Given William (bc 1755) in Rowan County, it is possible that this John Linville was his brother since they both appear in Rowan County in the same area at the same time, are clearly of similar ages, and left Rowan County at the same time. That would mean two potential sons for William (bc 1735-dc 1759) – William (bc 1755) and John (bb 1759). Additional research is needed on that generation.

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* A note about sources: This research has been undertaken over 50 years. Many of the sources have been re-cataloged and web addresses changed over time, but what existed at the time is included in the Linville Family Database. What is provided there should help anyone at least search for the whereabouts of the reference mentioned.