

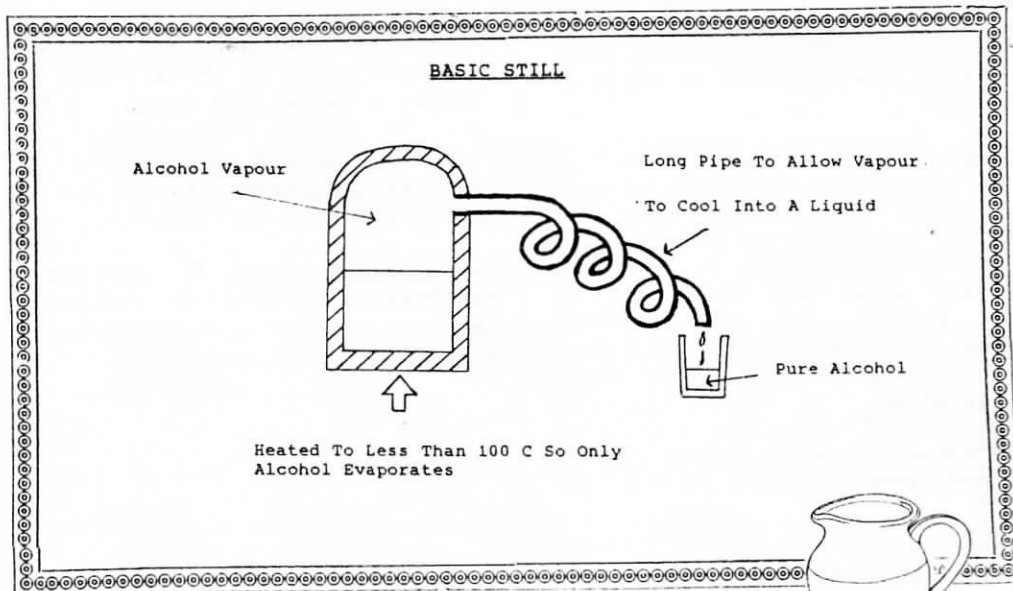
RUM

There's a neat little still at the foot of the hill,
Where the smoke curls up to the sky,
By the whiff of the smell you can plainly tell,
That there's poitin boys, close by.
For it fills the air with a perfume rare,
And betwixt both me and you,
As home we roll, we can drink a bowl,
Or a bucket of mountain dew.

The song "A Bucket of Mountain Dew", was written by Samuel Lover (1797 - 1869), the son of a stock broker.

In 1760 private distillation, unless licensed by the state, became a crime. Due to continuous wars in Europe, the government was looking for ways of obtaining more revenue and a tax on spirits was one avenue open to them. Before this anyone could distil his own whiskey, the ingredients were easy to obtain, as was the equipment needed to build the still. The stills were usually in lonely places, which provided the natural resources needed, fuel(peat) and water. It was estimated that a still could produce between ten and twelve gallons at a time.

So after 1760, those who continued to make their own whiskey, overnight became 'criminals'. The levy was 10d in 1760 and by 1815 had risen to 6s.1d. The government decided that the home distiller had to be stopped and so began the battle of wits between the distiller and the excise man



DRUNKEN PHEASANTS

After home made wine making, poachers would obtain the wine soaked wheat, sloes etc, and feed this to the pheasants, the birds were then easily caught as they wandered around intoxicated.