

The White gin was for plantation owners. Big owners wanted to freeze out small owners. The gin was operating all the time I lived out there. You had to go up [what is now] Patton Road. In 1938 and 1939, I'd leave home at 3 or 4 a.m. and bring the mules and wagon and take the cotton to the gin on Brown Street. Woodall Produce is there now. It was one block from Clinton Street to Holmes Avenue, where they put the overpass and blocked the street. He left the mules and wagon at the gin and went on to school at A&M.

**A Mill: Sorghum Molasses Making on Dave Barley's Farm (Parcel D-173).** Walter said his family grew cane, emphasizing, "It was not the same sugar cane as they grow in Florence and South Alabama which takes about twelve months to mature. What we grew matured in about six months." They stripped their cane and carried it to "old man Dave Barley" [Dave Barley had a son named Dave, so "old" distinguished between the two]. Dave Barley's mill was up on the top of a hill. It was mule-drawn. The cane was fed in by hand. The mill was a big steel drum "that went round and round," crushing the cane. The juice went into the barrel. A pipe went from the barrel to a copper pan."

The juice was cooked down to heavy syrup. Walter Joiner explained:

Old Dave had a rock furnace. It was about 8 feet long and 4 feet wide with divisions in it. It had a smokestack at the end. He used a long copper pan with divisions in it. As the juice cooked down, he'd move it to the front of the pan. There was a spigot in the end of the pan for it to run out.

He'd get the pan full of juice and cook it until the water evaporated. Until the steam quit coming off. Then he'd turn a faucet that was on the end of the pan. He put his syrup in buckets. We put ours in a barrel. We went down to the Coke plant and got wooden barrels. We'd wash them and have them ready to put the syrup in. The biggest trouble was getting the syrup to pour out in the wintertime.

Walter's cousin, Willie Lacy, said her father, Percy Joiner, had a mule driven press and made molasses. Since Percy was Walter's uncle and neighbor, this suggests that Percy made molasses at one point in time but may have stopped doing so.

### **Moonshine/Home Brew**

The residue from making syrup was used for making home brew and moonshine. In the West Indies, the residue from making sugar resulted in the origin of rum. In Alabama we had molasses strap and moonshine and home brew. Walter said you had to be careful when putting up home brew, because "if you put it up before it got through breathing, it would blow the bottle up." A number of people the researcher