

Some people made their own stills. Lester Love was one of those people. His story was



found in a booklet entitled *Reflections in a Squirrels Eye*. It is a collection of 19 short interviews. Helen Rector, who allowed the researcher to use her copy, said her mother had been interviewed by a student. No school name or project name is given in the booklet, dated “Winter of 1978.” [Note: When John P. Rankin read this manuscript in 2007, he recognized the booklet being discussed here as one that was reportedly done as a student project at the J.O. Johnson High School.] Lester Love’s photograph is on the cover. The cover photographer is listed as Debbi Bishop; thus, it is reasonable to assume that she took the photos of Lester Love that are included in the article. The author of the article was Mike Porter, a young man who captured a piece of history before it was lost.

Lester Love made his own still. It is probable that his home-made still is an example of the kind that was used by the “independent” moonshine makers who made their moonshine, hidden away from outsiders, in the woods on what is now Redstone Arsenal. The name Love was a prominent one in the pre-arsenal communities of Silverhill and Pond Beat. It is not known whether Lester Love was kin to any of the Love families named in this report. However, one connection to the pre-arsenal communities was ascertained. Lester Love was married to (and later divorced by) a woman who lived in one of them.

“**Mr. Love on Moonshine,**” written by **Mike Porter,** as found in *Reflections in a Squirrel’s Eye,* 1978, pp. 16-25. Reproduced in its entirety.

“I learned to make whiskey under one of the finest whiskey makers you ever saw. That’s why I had such a good business, ‘cause I made it right. People came to my outfit and saw me make it and they could depend on me havin’ the right kind of stuff (ingredients) and (whiskey) fit to drink.”

Moonshining is an old art of which very few craftsmen are left. Lester Love is an expert in the field of moonshining. How is moonshine made? This is one of the many interesting things discussed in this story which Mr. Love was generous enough to tell us.