

In 1895, Cairo, Georgia, shipped about 6,000 barrels of cane syrup and by 1899 the amount had doubled. There was even talk of establishing a refinery. But, due to difficulties encountered in processing, packing and marketing the syrup, the refinery was never built.

In the twentieth century sugar cane production fluctuated. Acreage increased in the late 1920's and continued until it reached 39,000 acres in 1935. Afterwards, the crop experienced a steady decline dropping to 4,000 acres in 1955.

The drop in sugar cane production was due primarily to labor problems beginning after the Civil War, which left farms destroyed and the work force unsettled. Some growers, who had used slave labor before the War, turned to share-

cropping or tenant farming. But most found these systems unsuitable for sugar cane production. Because too many problems developed in trying to fairly divide the cane crop, most planters turned to wage labor by the 1870's.

The decline of shade tobacco production in Georgia further reduced the labor supply for the state's sugar cane producers. Many shade tobacco workers also worked with sugar cane, rotating between the two crops. As production of shade tobacco decreased, workers migrated elsewhere, creating a labor shortage for cane growers. As labor became scarce, production costs rose, eventually forcing many growers to decrease or stop growing sugar cane.