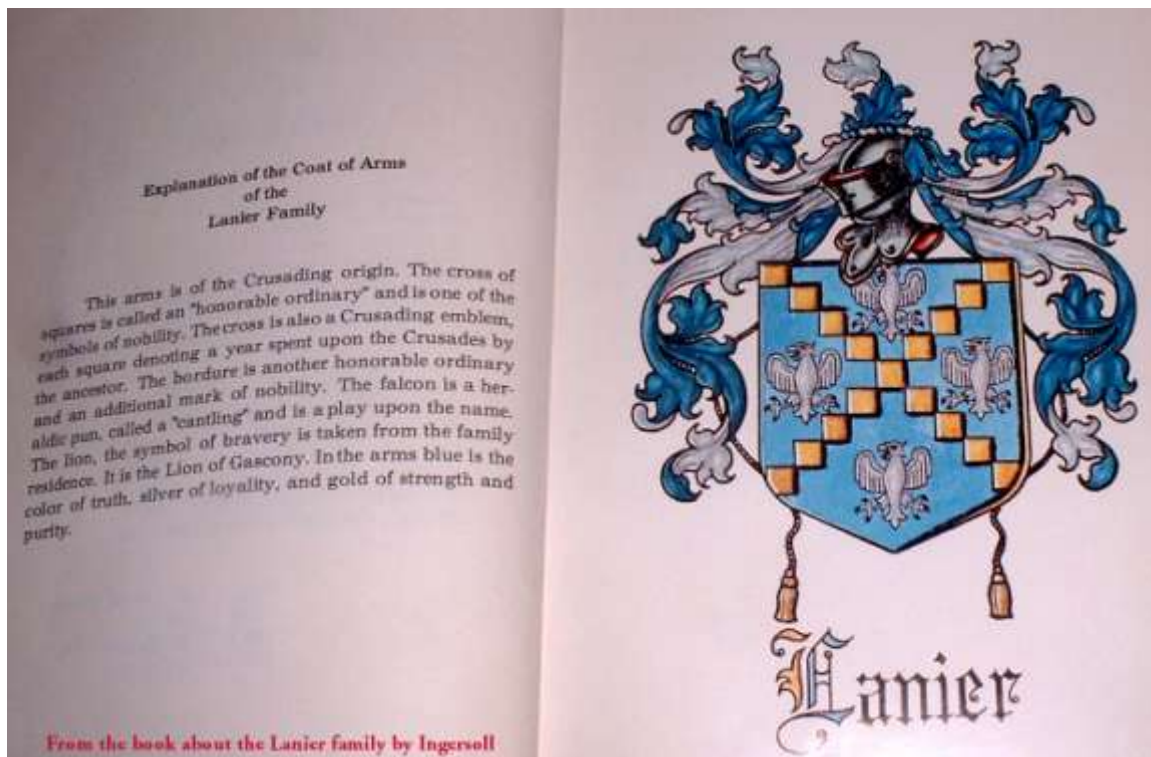


JORDAN – LANIER CEMETERY, 51-1

Summary Report



The history of the Lanier family that settled on the pre-arsenal lands is traced back into our country's colonial days and earlier. They are descendants of the Washington family that produced George Washington, our first President of the United States of America. The Laniers from the time of Queen Elizabeth in England were noted for their love and cultivation of the fine arts. The family also produced a famous American poet-writer-musician-lawyer, Sidney Lanier (1842-1881), a son of the state of Georgia who lived for a time in Alabama. The history of the Lanier families of north Alabama includes intermarriages with the Jordan, Dickson, and Pope families, who were also prominent in the history of the settlement of Madison County and

the establishment of Huntsville, with Leroy Pope being recognized as the “Father of Huntsville”.

In the late 1600s, some Huguenot Laniers living in the southern part of France fled persecution to reside in Wales. After a time there, a Thomas Lanier left Wales with other Huguenots and a company of English emigrants to settle in Powhatan County of the Colony of Virginia. They established homes near what is now Richmond, within the 64,000 acre “Crown Lands” granted by William and Mary to Henry Harris and John Jourden in 1691. Members of the Harris and Jordan families were thereafter intermingled with the Laniers through our nation’s history. Some time after his arrival in Virginia, Thomas Lanier married Miss Elizabeth Washington, a daughter of John Washington, who was the paternal great grandfather of General George Washington. John Washington’s wife was Annie Pope.

Thomas and Elizabeth Washington Lanier had children named Sampson, James, Richard, Thomas, and Elizabeth. Sampson Lanier, son of Thomas, married Elizabeth Chamberlain in Virginia and had 6 children, including sons Burwell, Buckner, and Lewis. They lived in Virginia, but some of their children later lived in North Carolina and Tennessee before reaching Alabama and other states. Burwell Lanier, son of Sampson, had at least 11 children. Among them were sons Isaac, Sampson, Clement, William, and Thomas. William, Thomas, and Isaac are the known early owners of large tracts of pre-arsenal lands in Townships 4 and 5, Ranges 1W and 2W, of Madison County, Alabama. There was also an Adam Lanier who purchased lands around what is now New Hope in the southeastern portion of the county about the same time that William and Isaac were acquiring lands in the arsenal area. There was most likely a connection of the families, since in later years, a descendant of Isaac purchased part of the estate of Adam. The brothers William and Isaac are now known to have died on pre-arsenal lands by 1840.

As the above information was being collected, it was summarized in various e-mails shared with direct descendants of the Laniers, who are still living in the area. An example is given below:

From: [John P Rankin](#)

To:

Cc:

Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2002 1:18 PM

Subject: Re: Lanier Family Research Info

Thanks for sending the write-up about your house in Madison and the Lanier family. I intend to take the tour of Madison homes this Sunday afternoon, so perhaps I'll see you then.

I did note in the write-up that you provided of the Laniers that the birthdate of **John Ford Lanier** was given as **1820**. That immediately caught my attention, as that date would make him 61 when he married Ada in 1881, and then he raised children. I have portions of a history of the Lanier family that was compiled a century ago by Felix Robertson Lanier and written by John Fulton Lanier (a son of John Ford Lanier). On page 16 of that collection, it states that John Ford was born **February 5, 1857**, and that he married Ada Johnson on **September 15, 1881**.

Anyhow, this genealogy takes the history of the Lanier family in detail back to Thomas Lanier of 1685 in France. There is a possible gap in the generations to another **Thomas Lanier who married Elizabeth Washington, daughter of John Washington, who was the paternal great grandfather of General / President George Washington.** Elizabeth's mother was Annie Pope Washington. The Pope family is, of course, quite well known as pioneers of this area of northern Alabama.

Thomas and Elizabeth Lanier lived on the James River, near the present location of the town of Richmond, on land originally granted by William & Mary to Henry Harris and **John Jourden** in 1691. [It may be that the Jordan families of pre-arsenal land ownership were descendants of this John Jourden.] Another connection of note is that apparently the famed poet Sidney Lanier was also of this line in America.

The family genealogy is covered in this document down to David Shelby Lanier of your family and others of his generation. The parents of John Ford Lanier are given as Burwell Clinton Lanier and his wife Laura Prudence America Ford (could be of the Ford's Chapel family, but I have not researched that). They were married on May 26, 1853.

Paternal grandparents of John Ford Lanier are given as Burwell C. and Mary Shelby Lanier. Burwell Clinton Lanier was born Oct. 5, 1820 in Madison County, AL. His father was Isaac Lanier, who came to Madison County late in life to join his brothers Thomas and William, who had moved here about 1810. Isaac was born in NC and married Arabella Clinton, daughter of a Baptist minister. She bore him 3 children, including Burwell C. Lanier, born about 1790. After Arabella died, Isaac married Mary Dickson, by whom he had another 4 children. She may have been of the family for which Dickson County, TN was named, as they lived there for a time. There was also a

Dickson plantation owner in the early 1800s on what is now the southern portion of Redstone Arsenal, living very near the Lanier holdings in that area. I suspect that there is a relationship, but I have not yet researched it. There are cemeteries on the arsenal for the various Lanier families, including one with tombstones for Isaac and Burwell C. Lanier (two generations of them) per Dot Johnson's book of 1971 about the cemeteries of Madison County. The stones are reported to no longer be there per arsenal records, but I intend to visit the site soon and try to locate any remaining stones. It is reported to be a very bad area of overgrowth, etc., so it may take me a while to get there. When I do reach it, if there are any tombstones to photograph, I will share what I find with you, since it is in the ancestry of your husband and children.

Isaac, the father of Burwell C. Lanier, was in turn a son of a Burwell Lanier whose wife has not yet been identified in the material I have found, but further research may turn it up. This senior Burwell was a son of Sampson Lanier and Elizabeth Chamberlain Lanier of Virginia. The senior Burwell was thought to have been born about 1740. His children included Isaac, Sampson, Clement, William, and Thomas, plus about 6 more. William, Thomas, and Isaac are known to have come to Madison County, AL eventually. Of course, Sampson (the father of the senior Burwell) was the son of the Thomas Lanier who married Elizabeth Washington.

This material came from the family files at the Heritage Room of the Huntsville - Madison County Public Library. I also have digitally photocopied various deeds and probate records of the Lanier family in Madison County, including some for Burwell C. Lanier. I have attached two examples. I'll be happy to share what I have with you if you want more details....

John Rankin

The Lanier families found in the pre-arsenal areas of Madison County in or around Huntsville between 1809 and 1820 were headed by brothers Thomas, Isaac, and William Lanier -- sons of Burwell Lanier. Isaac was reported to have moved to Madison County in 1819 and died here in 1827, whereas William is known to have arrived in the county in 1809. William was not included in the January 1809 Madison County census, but he purchased government land here in August of 1809. Thomas bought government land near William in 1818, as did a daughter of Isaac, Clarissa Lanier Boddie. William was a patriot of the American Revolution and the first Lanier to have recorded a land purchase in the area, per Madison County Deed Book N, page 508.

William Baker & wife. This Indenture made this First day of October one thousand
 1832 } eight hundred and thirty one, between William Baker
 William Lanier } and his wife Jane Baker of the County of Madison in
 the State of Alabama of the one part, and William Baker of the County of Madison in
 aforesaid of the other part Witnesseth: That the said William Baker and Jane
 wife Jane Baker for and in consideration of the sum of Two thousand two hun-
 dred and forty Dollars to them in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknow-
 ledged, have this day bargained, sold, aliened, enfeoffed and conveyed, and by their
 presents do bargain, sell, alien, enfeoff and convey to the said William Lanier all
 that certain tract or parcel of Land, lying and being in the County of Madison
 and State of Alabama, consisting of the following Quarter Section, to wit the
 North east quarter of Section twenty eight Township Four, Range one West
 containing one hundred & sixty acres more or less - Also one half acre of
 Land more or less, being part of the South West quarter Section 21 Town-
 ship 4 Range 1 West, and including one half of the principal Spring on
 said last named quarter Section which said half acre, is bounded as follows
 Beginning at the head of said Spring, and running Southeast to a Sycamore, thence to
 a White Oak, thence to the line, thence East down the line to a creek in the sur-
 rounding fence, thence about a North West course to a White Oak, thence to a sugar
 tree, and thence to the beginning - To Have and to hold the above described
 Quarter Section and half acre of Land, with the tenements and appurtenances
 thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining unto the said William Lanier
 and his heirs and assigns forever; and the said William Baker and wife Jane Baker
 for themselves their heirs, executors and administrators, do warrant and will forever
 defend the title to the above described and hereby granted premises unto the said
 William Lanier his heirs and assigns from and against the said William Baker
 and wife Jane and all and every person or persons claiming or holding under
 them the said William Baker and wife Jane Baker, and also against the law-
 ful title claim or demand of all and every person or persons whomsoever claim-
 ing or holding by from or under the Government of the United States -

In testimony whereof the said William Baker and Jane Baker have
 hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year above written
 Signed sealed and delivered,
 in the presence of }
 Richard B Purdom Clerk

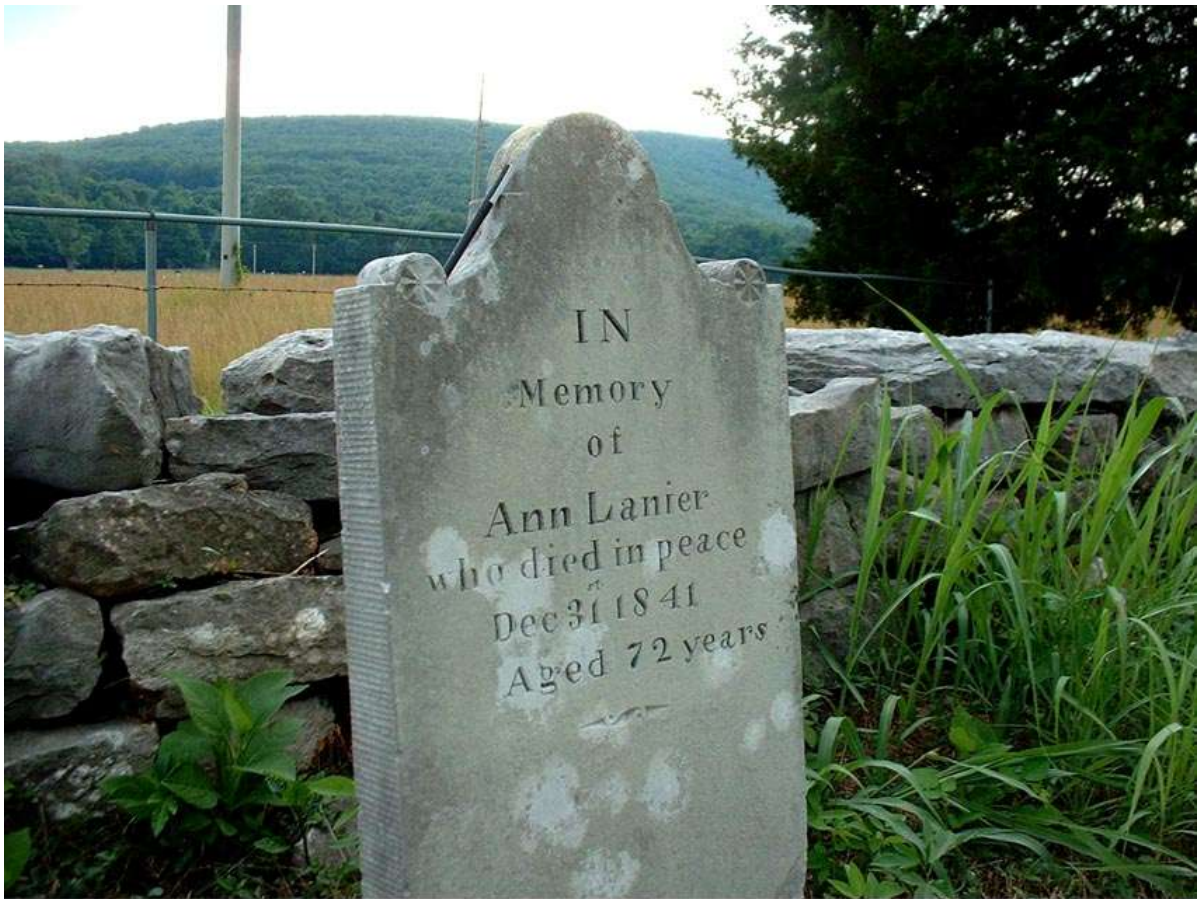
William Baker (C)
 Jane Baker (C)

State of Alabama }
 Madison County } This day personally appeared before me Richard B Purdom
 Clerk of the County Court for the County aforesaid William Baker and Jane
 Baker his wife, who acknowledged the signing sealing and delivery of the within

This land was bought in 1832 from William and Jane Baker. It consisted of a 160-acre tract in the NE/4 of Section 28, T4 – R1W, plus another ½ acre in the adjoining Section 21. The land of the northeast quarter of Section 28 is approximately bounded today on the north by Gray Road, on the east by Patton Road, on the west by Madkin Mountain, and on the south by Neal Road. It is the site where William Lanier built his house, near the north end of the bicycle / walking trail north of the Sparkman Center today. The land in Section 21 contained a spring, probably the one that comes from Madkin Mountain about 100 yards southwest of Building 3547 on Cajun Drive. William probably wanted to secure a good water supply for his house and for his livestock as a condition of the purchase.

William Lanier was married twice, both times in North Carolina. His first wife was Mary Hill, whom he married in 1784 according to family data. William and Mary had a son Asa (who raised a large family in Texas) and two daughters. His first daughter, Elizabeth, married twice – first to a Mr. Fraser, and next to a Mr. Horton. These surnames later are mentioned when William left property to his grandchildren. William and Mary's second daughter (given name unknown) married to a Mr. Ford.

William Lanier's second wife is stated in the family data (and on her tombstone) as **Ann** Dickson. However, in his last will and testament, William referred to her only as **Nancy**. It is not yet known whether she was related to the Dickson family that also lived at the time on the southern portions of the arsenal area, but it is probable. She was born in 1769 per her tombstone inscription (d. 1841, aged 72 years), but the family data shows that she was born in 1775.



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

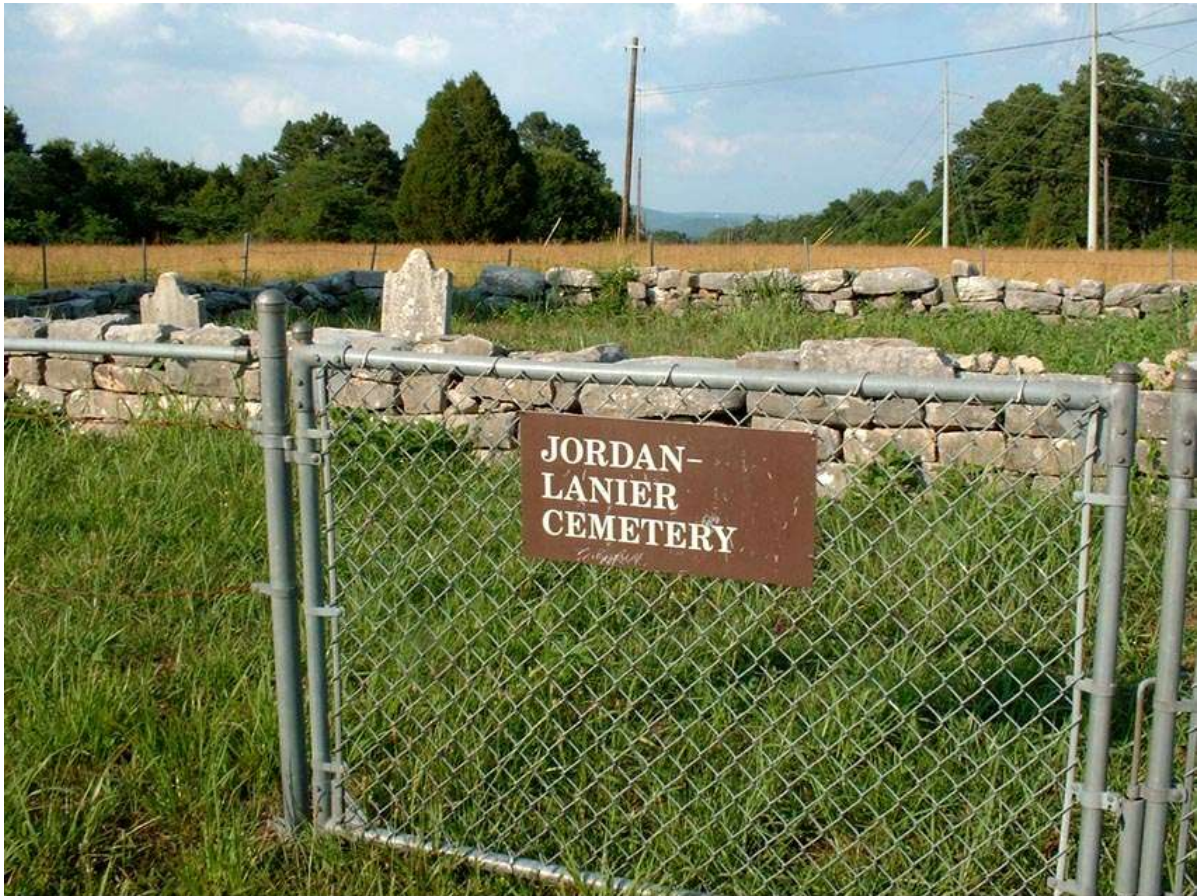
Ann married William Lanier in 1795 in Duplin Co. NC, according to family data. She was a daughter of William Dickson. By (Nancy) Ann Dickson, William Lanier had 6 more daughters. The name of the first was Susanah; she married Nicholas Hobson, a Nashville (TN) banker. The second was Maria (or Susan?), who never married. The third was Mary Dickson, who married Henry Jordan and is buried in the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery (51-1) near her parents. The name of the fourth daughter is not precisely known, but it may have been Susan; she married a Mr. Crebb (Crabb?) [Or, this could be a reference to the marriage in Madison County of **Finna (Frances A.?) Lanier** to John Cobb, Dec. 28, 1830, per the entries in the Marriage Index book]. The fifth daughter, Louisa A., was born in 1806 in NC and died in Madison County on February 3, 1833, after marriage to Thomas J. Sumner on May 10 of 1830 and having one son, who died in infancy. Louisa is buried beside Mary Dickson Lanier Jordan.



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

[Louisa A. LANIER married Thomas J. Sumner on May 13, 1830.]

The sixth daughter (Matilda) of Rev. William and Nancy Ann Dickson Lanier married James W. Allen {"Allin" on tombstone of child}, a Methodist minister, and lived in Athens, Alabama, by the time of the 1850 census. [The above names for the 6 daughters of William & Nancy Ann Lanier were derived from the family data and from a deed recorded in January of 1812 in Madison County, wherein William gave a gift of a female slave to each of his 6 daughters.]



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

William Lanier was reported to have been a Baptist minister in North Carolina, per data found in the Lanier folder of the Family Files of the Heritage Room at the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library.

However, it is also known that in Madison County he was a minister of the early Methodist Episcopal Church, and it is thought that he preached at times at Jordan's Chapel. William's credentials as a Methodist Episcopal minister were recorded on May 16, 1814, in a Special Session of the Orphan's Court of Madison County. Furthermore, William was listed among the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church when Robert Lankford / Langford deeded land for the establishment of a church building in 1820 (Deed Book G, pages 221-3, filed as being in the NW/4 of Section 22, T4-R1W). After a few years, this site was abandoned, and Bartholomew Jordan, another of the trustees, deeded land for the new location of the church. This new location was approximately on the south shoulder of Interstate 565 at the D.O.T. area. The church had a cemetery associated with it, and that is where Bartholomew Jordan was buried. The Jordan's Chapel Cemetery was likely where the Morris Elementary School operates today in Huntsville, as at least one map shows a cemetery at the northeast corner of that property and there is an uninscribed tombstone there. It was at the new location that the church came to be known as Jordan's Chapel, the second or third oldest Methodist Church in north Alabama, behind Ford's Chapel and the first Methodist church in downtown Huntsville.

Bartholomew Jordan was the father-in-law of Mary D. Lanier Jordan. Mary was the daughter of William Lanier. She married Henry Jordan in Madison County in 1821. Her grave was covered in the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery by a stone slab tablet, which at one time may have been the top slab of a box crypt. What remains today is shown in the photos below:



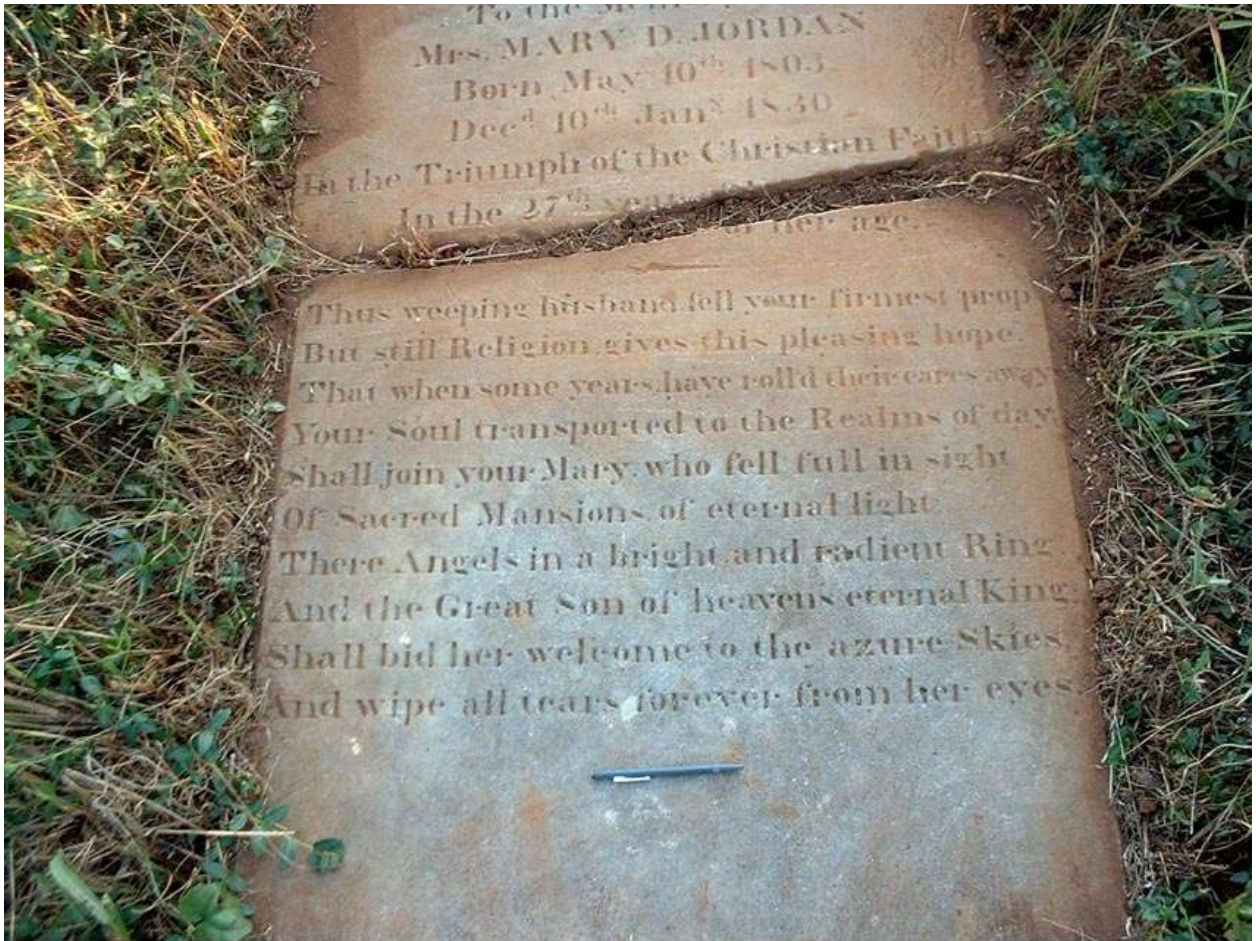
Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

[Mary D. LANIER married Henry Jordan on November 11, 1821.]

On 27 June 1835 per Certificate # 8325, John G. Jordan purchased from the U.S. Government 80 acres in the W/2 of the NE/4, S20-T4S-R1W. This land is about 2 miles from the land of William Lanier where the Jordan - Lanier Cemetery is located. On 10 Dec 1813 Batt Jordan bought from the U.S. Govt. per Certificate 821 the 160 acres of the NW/4 of S9-T4S-R1W, including in its northern edge the eastern portion of the area of the Space & Rocket Center today.

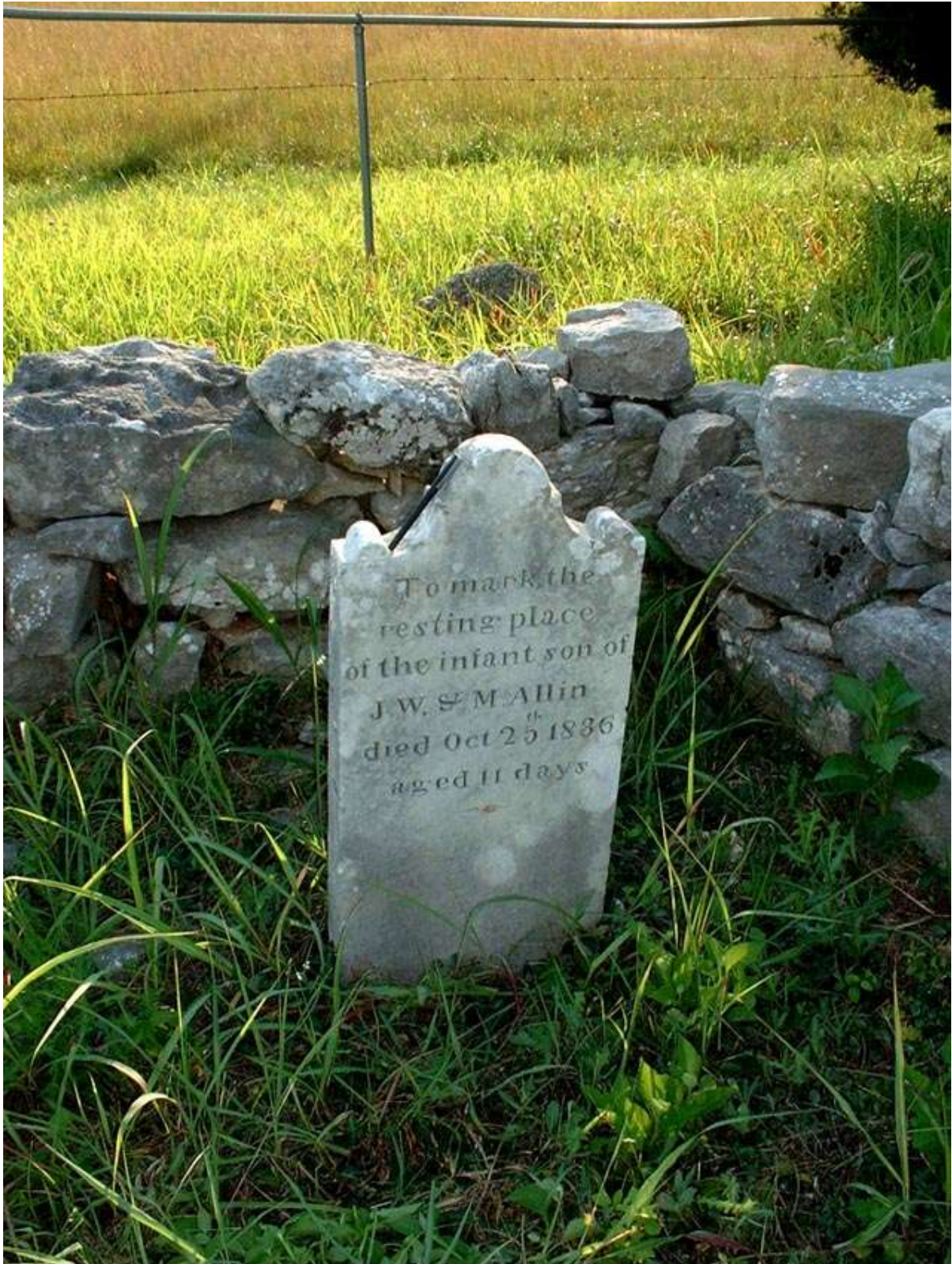
This land is about 3-1/2 miles from the location of the Jordan - Lanier Cemetery.

The rest of the inscription on Mary's stone can be seen below:



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

Another of William's daughters, Matilda, married another Methodist preacher, James W. Allen, and they lived on pre-arsenal lands in the 1830 and the 1840s, but they were in Limestone County in the 1850 census. However, one of their children, an unnamed infant of 11 days, died in 1836 and is buried in the northwest corner of the family cemetery, near Rev. William.



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.



Jordan - Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

William Lanier purchased as "assignee" from the U.S. Government on 30 Aug 1809 per Certificate # 348 the 160 acres of the SW/4 of S27-T4S-R1W. This is the legal land description of the location of the Jordan - Lanier Cemetery.

(One would think that the patriarch of the family would have the best stone.)

In 1835, William Lanier deeded 240 acres to his great-grandsons Thomas A. Sledge and George H. Horton (another prominent pre-arsenal figure). The wording of his deed names George Horton as the son of George & Mary (Hill) Horton of Madison County, Alabama. The last will and testament of William, dated August 23, 1834, also names several grandchildren, as well as consistently referring to his wife as Nancy, not Ann. The will further names many slaves, who were divided among the heirs, and it states that his homesite was on two of the three quarter sections of land that he owned. The third quarter section was stated as having been purchased from Eldred Rawlings, who married Ann Lanier (a niece of William, daughter of his brother Isaac) on August 9, 1821. However, the record of that purchase from Eldred Rawlings has not been found. If the purchase occurred in 1809, it would have been before the records were kept in Madison County, where the records begin with 1810. An exhaustive land record search of the sale of lands by the heirs of William could eventually determine which land was purchased from Mr. Rawlings by the process of elimination. That search has not yet been accomplished.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that Rev. William Lanier is the only recognized Revolutionary War patriot known to be buried on the arsenal today. Yet, Rev. William Lanier's tombstone is broken and badly weathered, lying in grass at his grave in the family cemetery near his old homesite and just east of Patton Road (and north of Martin Road), near the junction with Neal Road. It would be historically meaningful to someday have a more suitable marker and an appropriate commemoration ceremony for this Revolutionary War patriot, who lived near his younger brothers Thomas and Isaac on pre-arsenal lands. It is highly probable that Isaac is likewise buried on arsenal property, in the Rawlings-Lanier Cemetery (37-4). Isaac died within 8 years of his arrival in Madison County in 1819. His widow, Mary J. Dickson Lanier, continued to reside on the parcel of land around the Rawlings-Lanier Cemetery and finally sold it outside the family in 1832. She then moved to Autauga County AL, where she lived long enough to be enumerated in the 1860 census at age 83. See the **Rawlings – Lanier Cemetery 37-4** and **Lanier Cemetery 46-3** for more information about the inter-related Lanier families of the arsenal.

KNOWN BURIALS

Per the photos inserted above, plus an infant son of Louisa Augusta Lanier Sumner (1806 - 1852). The infant died Oct. 25, 1836, age 11 days, according to family records and historical documents.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, October 25, 2004, Revised September 17, 2005

An earlier report written about this cemetery is inserted below. It has some duplication of material covered above, but most of the content is somewhat different, as it was originally used for another purpose.

JORDAN - LANIER CEMETERY

(51 -1)

This cemetery is in a pasture on the east side of Patton Road, just a bit south of the junction with Neal Road. It carries the identifier 51-1 on the Redstone Arsenal cemetery database. **It should be named the William Lanier Cemetery**, as he is the patriarch of all known to be buried there. The only Jordan buried there according to legible markers is Mary LANIER Jordan, a daughter of William who married Henry Jordan and preceded her parents in death. The cemetery is perhaps half a mile southeast of the location of the William Lanier residence site. He moved to Madison County from North Carolina (with possibly a short stay in Tennessee) by August 30 of 1809 to live in Huntsville near his brothers Thomas and Isaac Lanier.

[By the date above, William Lanier had bought from the U.S. Government his land around the cemetery, at that time about 6 miles from Huntsville. He was listed in the Decennary Censuses of Madison County for 1810, 1811, 1812, and 1819 per information on Ancestry.com. The decennary censuses were constructed for that period from old tax lists and other public records during the Territorial days. William Lanier was **not** found on the January of 1809 Territorial Census, indicating that he most likely moved to Madison County just a bit later in 1809. His last child, a daughter, was born in Tennessee in 1809, whereas all of his other children were born in North Carolina. This indicates that he apparently moved through Tennessee, where he may have stayed for a short time or his daughter was born on the wagon train, in transit.]

The cemetery is bordered by a low wall of large, shaped rocks. The wall is perhaps 30 to 40 inches high and about 16 inches thick. It is accessible from Patton Road through an unlocked gate that opens to a lightly graveled road leading to the cemetery. The site of the cemetery was described in early documents as being on the west side of the road from Huntsville to Triana. There is now [2002] a collection of pipelines running in the general path of that old road.

Since all known tombstones are for members of William Lanier's family, it will be well to examine the history of that family in order to comprehend the importance of the cemetery to the local area. William Lanier was among the wealthy landowners in Madison County. He was also ordained as a minister of the Gospel. Several accounts state that he was of the Baptist faith. However, there is one scrap of paper in the Lanier family folder of the Family Files in the Heritage Room at the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library that states that William Lanier, "... having produced to the court his credentials of ordination and of his being in Regular Communion with the Methodis[t] Episcopal Church, it is ordered a testimonial (sic) authority be issued." This scrap of paper is not referenced to any publication, nor is it dated. It is possible that this scrap of paper refers to another William Lanier. However, further support that he was of the Methodist Episcopal denomination is provided by the fact that his daughter Mary D. Lanier married Henry Jordan, a son of Bartholomew Jordan. The Jordan family lived just to the north and west a few miles. Bartholomew Jordan deeded land to the Methodist Episcopal Church that became known as Jordan's Chapel. He and his son Henry were trustees of the congregation.

Another of William Lanier's daughters (Matilda) married James Wilburn Allen, who was a Methodist preacher of the Limestone Circuit, including Lebanon Methodist Church. In 1847 James and Matilda (Lanier) Allen bought the Carroll-French house (built about 1818) that was approximately a mile southeast of the town of Athens, on the old stage road to Huntsville. James Wilburn Allen was a son of Benjamin and Mary (Wilburn) Allen. He was born January 10, 1801, and he died on October 11, 1858. His wife Matilda died in 1852, and James sold the house and remarried after two years to Eliza Freeman Cox, widow of Bartley Cox of Limestone County.

No matter the denomination, the William Lanier of Madison County, original owner of the land where the family cemetery is located, was often mentioned in various records as an ordained minister. Still, in his will of 1834 one of the "items" grants permission to his wife Nancy "... to remove my dwelling house Gin and Gin House..." He also had a number of slaves, so he apparently was making his own gin with slave labor, unless the reference was to a cotton gin. It is not clear how he would have a "dwelling house gin" if that meant having a cotton gin in his house. Since the removal was granted only after his death, and for the purpose "... for the better preservation of the health of the family", it is considered more likely related to the alcoholic beverage.

Reverend William Lanier of Madison County was born in Brunswick County, VA, in 1765. He moved with his parents and siblings to Anson County, NC, as a child. There he served in the House of Commons in 1786 and in 1802, according to some papers written in 1902 and now found in the Family Files at the Heritage Room. He apparently married twice in North Carolina. His first wife was a Miss Hill, who bore him a son named Asa and two daughters. Asa moved to Texas early in life and had a large family there. The older of the two daughters, Elizabeth, married twice. Her first husband was a Mr. Fraser. Her second husband was a Mr. **Horton**. (For the **Horton connection on arsenal lands, see Deed Book P, pages 260-2.**) In 1902 a grand daughter of William Lanier, Mrs. Lucy **Jordan**, was living in Madison County and provided inputs to the 1902 manuscript found in the Heritage Room of the library.

The second wife of Rev. William Lanier was given as Miss Ann Dickson in the 1902 manuscript, but in his will she is named as Nancy. She must have been Nancy Ann Dickson, because it is not at all plausible that William had a third wife. His wife "Ann Dickson" is reported in the 1902 document as

dying on December 3, 1841, slightly less than a year after William's death on December 26, 1840. However, her tombstone gives the death date as December 31, 1841. Nancy / Ann was born in 1789 in NC. She was reported in the 1902 family paper as being buried beside her husband in the Lanier family cemetery, and her tombstone is there today, with the name as "Ann" rather than "Nancy".

William Lanier's ancestry is documented in several publications back to the 16th century in Rouen, France. The family name is spelled variously as Lanye, Lanares, Lanyer, Lanier, and Lenoir. They moved from France to England beginning in the mid-1500s. According to one source, William Lanier's father was Thomas, whose father was Burwell. Burwell married Elizabeth Hill, daughter of William and Catherine Hill, who lived in Brunswick Co., VA, and later in Duplin Co., NC, where Burwell and Elizabeth Lanier moved in 1772. Burwell was a Revolutionary Patriot, as he "testified against a preacher who was inciting the people not to fight." [According to page 205 of the book "*LANIER: A Genealogy of the family who came to Virginia and their French ancestors in London*" by Louise Ingersoll, 1965; available at the Heritage Room of the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library, call number **H 929.2 ING.**] Burwell's father was Sampson Lanier, Jr., born about 1712. He married Elizabeth Chamberlain around 1742 and had 8 children. Sampson Lanier, Sr., was born in 1682 and married Elizabeth Washington. Elizabeth was reported to be the daughter of Richard Washington and his wife Elizabeth **Jordan** on page 345 of selected pages from a book with the title **MY SOUTHERN FAMILIES** at the top of each page. This title may be a chapter title, rather than the book title, but without more of the book, the precise title and author are uncertain.

The 1902 Lanier family manuscript draws upon another (older) source that gives the father of Elizabeth Washington as "John Washington, paternal great grandfather of **General George Washington**". John Washington's wife (and the mother of Elizabeth) was Annie **Pope**, who was part of the Pope family (with known Washington, Custis, and Dandridge family connections) that in later generations came to Madison County, where LeRoy Pope became the "Father of Huntsville". [The Pope, Dandridge, Custis, Washington, and Lanier families of Virginia apparently all had an early influence on the growth of Madison County and Huntsville.] This same 1902 Lanier family manuscript gives the father of the Rev. William Lanier as Burwell Lanier, son of Sampson Lanier and Elizabeth

Chamberlain. Sampson is stated as the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Washington Lanier of Virginia.

The father of the Sampson Lanier who married Elizabeth Washington is documented as John Lanier II, born 1655 in England and lived in Charles City County, Virginia. His father was another John Lanier, who was baptised in 1633 and arrived in Virginia in 1656. His wife was named Lucrece. The elder John's parents were Clement Lanier and Hannah Collet. Clement was buried in East Greenwich in 1651, and Hannah was buried there in 1653. Clement's parents were Nicholas Lanier and Lucretia. Nicholas was from Rouen, France. He settled in London in 1561 and died in 1612. His wife Lucretia was buried at Greenwich in 1634. Nicholas' father was John Lanye, who was born in Rouen, France. His wife was named Joan, and he died November 29, 1572.

The Laniers were highly acclaimed musicians and artists in London. Nicholas was a musician in the court of King Henry II of France in 1561 when the Earl of Hertford engaged him to fill a place in the Royal Orchestra of Queen Elizabeth. About this time, when there were 44 members of the Royal Orchestra, as many as 10 of the 44 were of the Lanier family. In later generations in America, poet Sidney Lanier was widely famous.

The children of the Rev. William Lanier of Madison County were:

- Asa H. – son by 1st wife, Miss Hill. Asa was mentioned in William's will of 1834 as having been given land and negroes, as well as negroes having been given to the children of Asa, and Asa had been given money in exchange for "a certain bond" for "two or three hundred dollars". Asa moved to Texas at some time, perhaps even before 1834, as the will does not mention where he was living when it was written. However, the wording seems to imply that he was a resident of Madison County by the fact that it does not say he was in Texas, and the transactions mentioned would normally be concluded with nearby family – unless they were "parting gifts". The only possibility found in the Ancestry.com searches for Asa in the federal censuses of Alabama was in 1840 Madison County. On page 181 is listed Bryant **A. Lanier**, age 20 – 30, with a wife given as age 15 – 20 and no children. There was likewise no suitable match for an "A.", "Asa", or "H." Lanier who would have been born in the early 1800s in

NC to be found in the Texas census listings of 1850 on Ancestry.com files.

- Elizabeth H. – daughter by 1st wife, Miss Hill. Elizabeth married first a Mr. Frazer, then second a Mr. Horton. At the time of the writing of William’s will of 1834, she was still married to Mr. Frazer. The 1834 will left Elizabeth “and her heirs” 243 acres of land and 4 negroes: Sophia (a woman of about 29 years) and her three children – Isham, Rose, and Sarah.
- Unknown Name – daughter by 1st wife, Miss Hill; married a Mr. Ford. Not named in 1834 will of William Lanier, indicating possible death without children before that time.
- Susanna – eldest child (of 6 daughters and no sons) by William’s 2nd wife, [Nancy] Ann Dickson. Susanna married Nicholas Hobson, who became a banker in Nashville, TN. He and Susanna had no children, and Susanna died before Nicholas in Tennessee.
- Susan – 2nd daughter by 2nd wife of William. She never married, and nothing is known of her life or death.
- Mary – 3rd daughter by 2nd wife of William. Mary was born in NC on May 10, 1803. She married Henry Jordan on November 11, 1821 (per Dorothy Scott Johnson’s book of the cemeteries of Madison County), and they had a son named Henry who married Lucy Martin. She apparently had other sons as well, since the 1834 will of William Lanier names some of his grandsons as William H., James B., and Henry C. Jordan. Mary’s parents William and Ann Lanier deeded land to these Jordan grandsons of theirs per Deed Book Q, pages 416 – 417. Mary died while still a young woman, and she is buried beside her parents in the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery on Redstone Arsenal. Hers is the only grave with a large slab stone, which at one time was probably the top cover for a box crypt of stone. The slab is now broken and lying flat on the ground.
- Unknown Name – 4th daughter by 2nd wife of William. Married a Mr. Crebb and had no children.

- Luisa A. – 5th daughter by 2nd wife of William. Luisa (sometimes given as “Louisa”) was born in 1806 and died in 1833. She married Mr. Sumner and is buried near her parents in the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery on Redstone Arsenal. She left one son, who died in infancy, according to some accounts. However, the 1834 will of William Lanier leaves to his grandson William I. Sumner some land and Negroes (after the death of William’s wife Nancy). It is suspected that the family memories summarized in the accounts that said that Louisa’s only son died in infancy were somewhat confused with respect to Matilda’s son who died in infancy, per the note below.
- Matilda – 6th daughter by 2nd wife of William. Matilda was born in 1809 in Tennessee, per her listing in the 1850 census (page 93) of Limestone County, AL, where she lived with her husband James W. Allen. They had 8 children included in the 1850 census of their household. The head of the household, James, was given as age 46, a “Clergyman, M.E.” (Methodist Episcopal) by occupation, born in VA. James and Matilda had a son born in October of 1836 who lived only 11 days. This infant son is buried in the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery on Redstone Arsenal near his grandparents, in the northwest corner of the cemetery. James and Matilda were married November 14, 1827, per Dorothy Scott Johnson’s book.

A typed translation of the 1834 will of William Lanier, as found in the Family Files at the Heritage Room of the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library, has been scanned to image files and is added below, as well as to the photo files of the Jordan – Lanier Cemetery on this CD-ROM. It has several names of Negroes mentioned in the will. Most of these names of the Negroes were not given in the above text of this NOTES file. Per the usual practice prior to the Civil War, the Negroes had no surnames. However, after emancipation, it is likely that several of them took Lanier as their surname, and there is a Lanier Cemetery marked as “colored” on early maps of Redstone Arsenal. That cemetery is very near the Lanier Cemetery where Madison County pioneers Isaac and Burwell Lanier and their families are buried. There is also another cemetery just north of the Sparkman Center, on the west side of Patton Road and south of Neal Road. This cemetery has no markers, and is possibly a Lanier slave cemetery.

Madison County, Alabama

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF WILLIAM LANIER, DECEASED.

I, William Lanier of the County of Madison, and State of Alabama, being of sound mind and memory but weak in body. Being convinced of the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death doth this 23rd day of August, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty four make and constitute this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

Item - I lend to my beloved wife, Nancy Lanier during her life my Tract of Land whereon I reside consisting of Three Quarter Sections, one of which was purchased of Eldred Rawlins, and the other two quarters my place of residence for several years past.

I give to my said wife Nancy to dispose of as she may think proper, the following negroes and their future increases, Darby a man about fifty three, Flora a woman about forty three, Cyrus a man about Fifty three, Tom a man about twenty five, Richmond a boy about sixteen, Clariso a woman about twenty one, Jenny a woman about forty eight, Joshson a boy about Ten and Hugh Blair a boy about nine years old. I likewise give to my said wife, Nancy, all my stock of every description consisting of horses, cattle, hogs and sheep likewise, all my household and kitchen furniture of every description, also my crop of corn, fodder, oats and wheat including all such articles that may be on hand and provisions of every description at my death likewise my Plantation tools, and utensils of every kind including waggon, cart, plows, hoes, axes &c. likewise my single Gig and Harness, my clock and all the Books in my Library.

Item - I give to my son, Asa H. Lanier, Five Dollars, having heretofore given to him, land and negroes &c and negroes to his children. I likewise give to my son a certain Bond or obligation I hold of his, for two or three hundred dollars the exact amount and date not now recollected.

Item - I give to my daughter, Elizabeth H Frazer to her and her Heirs forever the East part of the Fraction of Land I bought at the Land Sales in Huntsville, which part or division has since been run out by Hunter Peel, containing about two hundred and forty three Acres, likewise the following negroes and their future increase, Sophia a woman about twenty nine years old, and her three children, Isham, Rose and Sarah.

Item - I lend to my son in law Henry Jordan, a certain piece or parcel of land containing about one hundred and thirty six acres, it being the southwest part of the above named Fraction of land during his life and at his death I give the said Land to be equally divided between my grand sons, William H. Jordan, James B. Jordan and Henry C. Jordan children of my dec'd daughter Mary Jordan.

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~~has since been run out by Hunter Peel, containing about Two hundred and forty three Acres, likewise, the following negroes, and their future increase, Sophia a woman about Twenty nine years old and her three children, Isham, Rose and Sarah.~~

~~Item. I lend to my son in Law Henry Jordan, a certain piece or parcel of Land containing about One hundred and Thirty Six Acres, it being the south west part of the above named Fraction of Land, during his life, and at his death, I give the said Land to be equally divided between my grand sons, William H Jordan, James B. Jordan, and Henry C. Jordan, children of my dec'd daughter Mary Jordan. I also give to my said grand sons, William H James B and Henry C Jordan One Negro Boy Daplin about Twenty years old. It is my will and desire that if either of my said grand sons should die before they come of Lawful age or marry that their portion of the Land and Negro given to them shall go to the survivors or survivor.~~

Item. I give to my grand son William I. Sumner Son of my daughter Louisa Sumner (after the death of my wife Nancy) the Quarter section of Land I purchased of Eldred Rawlins but if my said Grand son William I Sumner dies without leaving Lawful Heirs or Heir of his body; It is my will and desire that the said Quarter Section of Land should be equally divided between my grandsons, William H, James B and Henry C Jordan or the survivors of them. I also give to my said grand Son William I Sumner, the following negroes and their future increase, John about Twenty Hirman about Twelve, Evelins about eight and Lucy about Twenty four years old. Also a negro man George should he prove to be my property in a suit now depending in the County Court of Madison County, With the same proviso, as to the Land that is if my said grandson, William I Sumner dies Lawful heirs or Heir of his body, that the said Negroes shall be equally divided between the children of my Daughter Matilda Allen, or their Survivors. It is also my will and desire that the negroes given to my said grand son, William I. Sumner should remain in the possession and disposition of my wife Nancy to manage as she may think proper during her life for the purpose of raising and educating my said grand Son,

Item. I lend to my daughter, Matilda Allen (after the death of my wife Nancy) Two Quarter Sections of Land being the place of my residence for several years past during her life and at her death to be equally divided between her surviving children to them and their Heirs forever. I also lend to my said daughter, Matilda Allen during her life the following Negroes, and their future increase Edy a woman about Twenty one years old and her child, Alex, Jerome a boy about nine and Caroline a girl about eight years old and at her death to be equally divided between her surviving children.

Item. I give to my wife Nancy full power to remove my dwelling house Gin and Gin House, Negro Cabbins and all out Houses and fixtures from my old residence to the Mountain Grove Quarter, as I have contemplated myself to do for the better preservation of the Health of the family.

Item. It is my will and desire that the whole of my Estate be kept together until my debts are paid and should there be any surplus left from the sale of the Cotton &c after payment of my debts, I give the same to my wife, Nancy Lanier. I hereby constitute and appoint my wife, Nancy Lanier, Stephen S Ewing, Henry Jordan and James W. Allen, Executors to this my last Will and Testament revoking all others heretofore by me made.

InWitness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first written.

Wm Lanier (SEAL)

Signed Sealed and Acknowledged
In Presence of

Wm Brandon
WmH. Jones
Robt S. Brandon.

THE STATE OF ALABAMA

ORPHANS COURT OF MADISON COUNTY this 11th day of January 1841.

The Last Will and Testament of William Lanier late of said County deceased having this day beenproved by the oath of Robert S Brandon one of the subscribing witnesses thereto, is Ordered to be recorded
(See Minute Book No. 8 page 191)

Pursuant to said order said Last Will and Testament was duly recorded on the 22nd day of April, 1841.

Test. Rich B. Purdom Clk CC.

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The land holdings of William Lanier are reflected in his recorded purchases of government lands in the county. [He may have also purchased parcels of land from private individuals. The deed records have not yet been fully checked to determine the total holdings of Rev. Lanier.] On **August 30 of 1809** William Lanier purchased government land of 160 acres in the southwest quarter of Section 27, Township 4 South and Range 1 West. This is the quarter section of land where the Jordan - Lanier Cemetery is located, and it shows that the Lanier family was in the county and buying land by that date. On the same date, William Lanier purchased from the Federal Government the 156 acres that comprised the NW/4 of S34-T4S-R1W. His

son-in-law, James W. Allen purchased 39 acres of adjoining land as the SW/4 of the NE/4 of the same section on June 20, 1844. Rev. Allen (a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal faith) had already purchased 39 acres as the NE/4 of the NE/4 on June 6, 1843 in the same section. Of course, Rev. Lanier had died during 1840, before James W. Allen purchased these lands.

On February 2, 1818, when lands west of the old Chickasaw Indian Boundary line were first available for legal purchase, William Lanier bought 482 acres west of the boundary line in Section 4 of T5S-R1W. Likewise, on that same date was purchased under the name William **D.** Lanier 165 acres as the NE/4 of S5-T5S-R1W. William's brother Thomas purchased on the same day the north half of the SE/4 and the SE/4 of the SE/4 plus the SW/4 of the SW/4 of the same section, adjoining William's land. William **D.** Lanier additionally bought 81 acres as the E/2 of the NW/4 of Section 7, T5S-R1W on July 25, 1831.

Mary Lanier is recorded as the original purchaser of the adjoining W/2 of the NW/4 (81 acres) of the same Section 7 on February 6, 1832. Reverend William's daughter Mary had married Henry Jordan in 1821, and she died on January 10, 1830, so this purchaser could not have been Rev. William's daughter. The relationship is not known, but Mary is also recorded as buying 80 acres as the E/2 of the NE/4 of Section 12 in T5S-R2W on the same date as above. These two parcels of land purchased by Mary Lanier were adjacent, located just over half a mile southwest of the Isaac and Burwell C. Lanier family cemetery (and the associated "colored" cemetery) that is half a mile west of Dodd Road and a mile and a half south of Martin Road. It is thought that the Laniers buried in the family cemetery mentioned immediately above were the brothers of William and their families. There are many land records of these closely related Laniers buying Government lands on what is now arsenal property. It is even possible that the William **D.** Lanier who bought lands in the 1830s was a nephew of Rev. William Lanier, rather than the Reverend himself. In any case, the Laniers purchased a significant portion of the arsenal lands as original owners.

Written by John P. Rankin, July 14, 2002; revised December 13, 2002