

the time of the 1850 and the 1860 censuses. It is known that Mary J. Dickson Lanier in 1832 sold the land that Isaac had owned in Section 22, Township 4, Range 1W. The deed states that it was the land “wherein (she) now resides”. Apparently, that was the time that she decided to move on to Autauga County to be with her youngest living child, Clarissa Lanier Boddie Dickson.

Soon after arriving here, Isaac may have communicated the excellent prospects for cotton farming to the rest of his children, because Burwell Clinton, Isaac Hill, Arabella Lanier Bronson (twin sister of Isaac Hill), all children by his 1st wife Arabella Clinton, were soon found in Madison County, Alabama. Moreover, the children of the senior Isaac by his 2nd wife, Mary J. Dickson, were also found here. They included Clarissa Lanier Boddie (as previously mentioned), William Dickson Lanier, Clement G. Lanier, and Mary Ann Lanier (who married Eldred Rawlins in Madison County in 1821 – see the report on the **Rawlins – Lanier Cemetery**).

Isaac’s eldest son, Burwell Clinton Lanier, died in March of 1820, soon after arriving in Madison County. Burwell’s three sons (Isaac Alexander, William Henry, and Burwell Clinton Lanier) all lived on the plantation that covered much of the southern half of today’s arsenal, along with their mother, Mary Shelby McCrabb Lanier. The family was stated as having “commodious” houses on the land – probably located along the creek that is now called Huntsville Spring Branch, near its confluence with today’s Indian Creek. This location is near the family cemetery, which normally would be found within 100 to 200 yards of the family home.

The plantation style of living of course became obsolete after the freeing of the slaves that had made it possible. The Lanier family story is one of great prominence and wealth under the old slave-based culture in the South, but it could not be maintained during and following the Civil War. Still, the education and social prominence of the Lanier family members held the seeds for the accomplishments of their descendants to be realized later under the commercial labor of the free enterprise system of society. The descendants of the Civil War generation went on to become lawyers, city and state officials, and once again wealthy members of their communities. The little family cemetery on the arsenal stands silent witness to the greatness that was once manifest in the early county history. After the lands transitioned from the original white plantation owners to the descendants of the slaves who performed the labor to turn forests into farmlands, the Lanier