

# LANIER CEMETERY, 46 - 3

## Summary Report



Lanier Cemetery 46-3, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co. AL, Jan. 28, 2003

This cemetery is located in the northwest corner of Test Area 1, with access allowed only by special protocols during non-test times. It is adjacent to a Hazardous Chemical Area south of the west end of Saturn Road. Access is via a rough trail (ditches, mudholes) through woods along the TA1 north perimeter fence.

(Gabbie Ehinger visiting Lanier Cemetery with John Rankin)

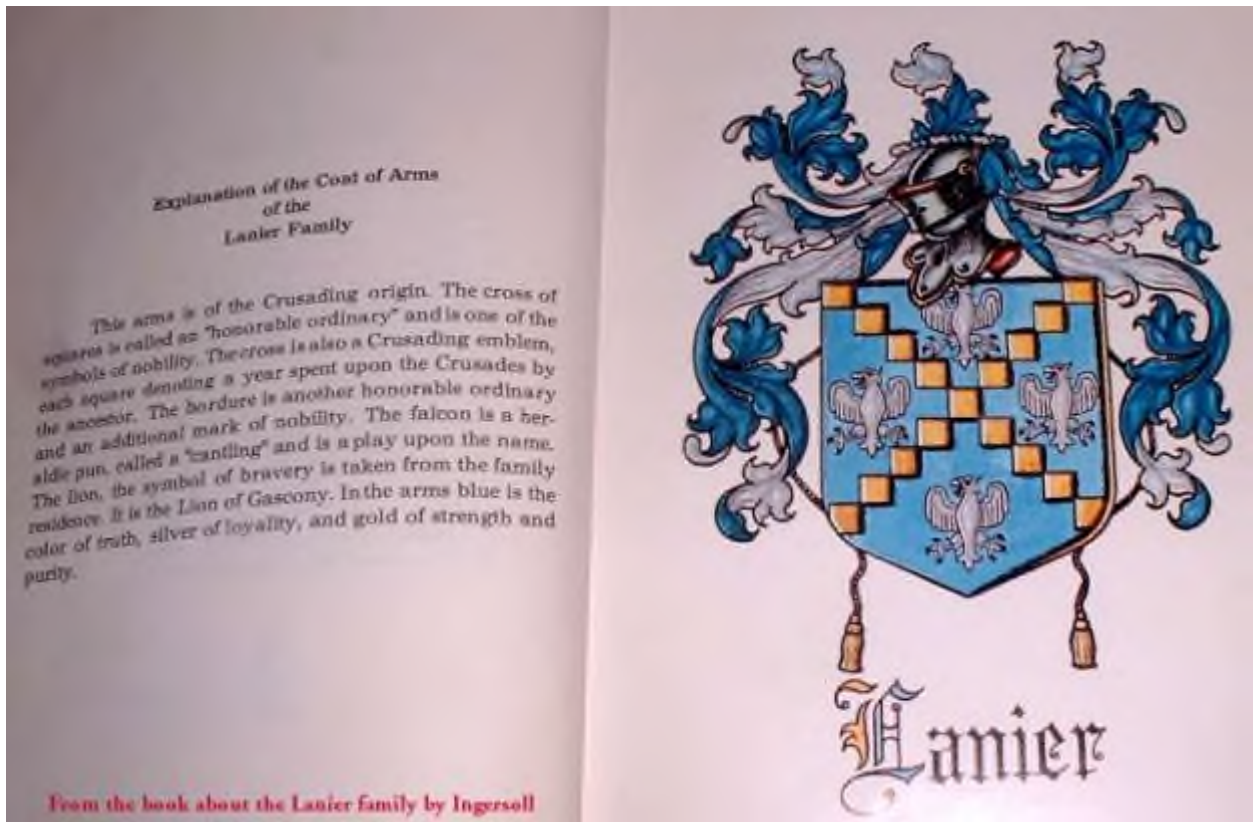
The Laniers buried in the little family cemetery pictured above lie within a quarter mile of the test stands where the rocket engines that took man to our

moon were tested. During those tests conducted on former Lanier lands, their bones no doubt were “shaken, but not stirred”. While this connection of the Lanier family to our current generation’s historic achievements is impressive, that is typical of the history of the family. They are perhaps the most significantly connected family buried on the arsenal lands, with marriages and accomplishments that have always reached national and international prominence.

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 direct descendants from the great grandfather of 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”.

According to papers found in the Lanier folder of the Family Files in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library, in the late 1600s some Huguenot Laniers living in the southern part of France fled persecution to reside in Wales. This data largely consists of information collected from the older family members in the 1800s and recorded in works about the Laniers published around 1900. According to these works, after a time in the British Isles, 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.

The Coat of Arms show below is taken from a book entitled “*LANIERS*”, by Laura Ingersoll. The book is in the family bookshelves of the Heritage Room at the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library.



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. However, it should be noted that the preponderance of recent data shown on the internet in Ancestry Family Tree files of Ancestry.com shows that it was John Lanier who married Elizabeth Washington and was the progenitor of the Laniers who came to the pre-arsenal lands. Another published work shows that a Sampson Lanier born in 1682 married Elizabeth Washington, daughter of Richard Washington and his wife Elizabeth Jordan. Either way, the Lanier family history is intertwined with that of George Washington and other nationally prominent figures from Colonial days.

Sampson / John / Thomas and **Elizabeth Washington Lanier** had children named Sampson, James, Richard, Thomas, and Elizabeth. The **Sampson Lanier** (b. about 1712 in VA) who was a son of Elizabeth Washington Lanier and her husband, 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**. Burwell's sons **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 Adams Lanier who purchased lands around New Hope in the southeastern portion of the county about the same time that William, Thomas, and Isaac were acquiring lands in the arsenal area. All of these brothers had died 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:

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**From:** [John P Rankin](#)  
**To:**  
**Cc:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 04, 2002 1:18 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Lanier Family Research Info

Lou Ann --

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 local 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 near Huntsville between 1809 and 1820 were without question headed by brothers Isaac, Thomas, and William Lanier, sons of Burwell Lanier. Isaac was reported to have moved to Madison County before 1819 and died here on December 15, 1827. His brother Thomas bought government land in Section 5 of Township 5, Range 1W, on February 2, 1818, as did a daughter of Isaac, Clarissa, who married first Thomas Hill Boddie. (This land is where the NASA vertical test stands are located, on the east side of Dodd Road.) William, brother of Isaac and Thomas, is known to have arrived in the county soon after January of 1809 – almost 10 years before Isaac and Thomas are known to have arrived. By the time of the 1830 federal census, Thomas is found living in Limestone County, between the families headed by James Allen (who had married a daughter of Thomas' brother, the Rev. William Lanier) and John Allen, who appeared to be of the age to be father of James Allen.

However, there is a marriage record dating from 1815 in Madison County for the marriage of an Isaac Lanier to Patsey Crunk. Connections to this Isaac of the Crunk marriage are not currently proven; however, it could not be the brother of William and Thomas, since their brother Isaac already had a living wife. William Lanier was not included in the January 1809 Madison County census, but he purchased government land here in August of 1809. William is not known to have had a son named Isaac who could have been the man who married Patsey Crunk in this county in 1815. Likewise, there is very little known of the family of Thomas, who could have had a son named Isaac that married Patsey Crunk. Additionally, there was another family of Laniers, headed by Adams Lanier, living in the New Hope area about the same time as the clan assembled in Madison County. It is possible that Adams Lanier had a son or brother named Isaac who married Patsey Crunk in this county.

Isaac was one of the 11 children of the Burwell Lanier who was in turn a son of Sampson Lanier and Elizabeth Chamberlain, according to most published family research results. Isaac was born in North Carolina and married Arabella Clinton there. She was a daughter of Richard Clinton, a Baptist minister – and it may be that this is the line for which Clinton Avenue in Huntsville is named, since it is an old name for the street and was not given in honor of the more recent President of the United States from Arkansas. Isaac and Arabella lived in Sampson County, NC, where they had 3 children before she died. These 3 children were **Burwell Clinton Lanier, Isaac Hill**

**Lanier**, and **Arabella Lanier**. Arabella and Isaac H. Lanier were twins, born August 31, 1792. It was soon after their birth that their mother died, and Isaac moved his family to Anson County, NC, where Isaac's brothers William and Thomas lived before they came to Madison County, AL.

After Arabella's death, Isaac married in 1796 in Duplin County NC to Miss **Mary Dickson** (a daughter of William Dickson), by whom he had 4 children: **William Dickson Lanier**, **Clement G. Lanier**, **Mary Ann Lanier** (who married Eldred Rawlings in Madison County; see [Rawlins-Lanier Cemetery, 37-4](#)), and **Clarissa Lanier**. By 1808, Isaac inherited some land in Tennessee from his deceased unmarried brother Clement. He purchased much more land in the area and moved his family the Tennessee in late 1809 or early 1810, while his brothers William and Thomas apparently moved to Alabama.

Isaac was a tobacco farmer and in the mercantile business in Dover, the county seat of Stewart County, TN, near Fort Donaldson. Family stories relate that Isaac put his son Burwell Clinton Lanier in charge of the extensive lands and slaves that he acquired in Tennessee. This land was bounded on one side by the Tennessee River and on another by the Cumberland River, where these rivers are separated by distances of 12 to 20 miles. Isaac left management of the store in Dover in charge of his son Isaac Hill Lanier. The family resided in that area for about 10 years, then Isaac (the father) moved to Madison County of Alabama, after disposing of the lands and mercantile businesses in Tennessee. It is stated in the family data that his son Burwell C. Lanier married Miss Mary Shelby McCrabb in 1814 and moved to the town of Jackson, in Madison County TN, even before Isaac sold the tobacco plantation. Burwell moved from Jackson TN to Madison County AL before 1820, where he died in that year, soon after his arrival in northern Alabama.



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Isaac's son Isaac Hill Lanier (brother of Burwell C. Lanier, b. 1789) remained in Tennessee after the sale of the Dover store to live for a time in Charlotte, Dickson County, TN, where he remained in the mercantile business. Isaac H. married in 1819 to Henrietta Van Lear, born 1800 in Lancaster County PA. Henrietta was a daughter of Bernard Van Lear and his wife Hannah Haislip of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, who had moved to Tennessee.

The father of Isaac Hill and Burwell Clinton Lanier, Isaac Lanier (b. 1767) is known to have died in Madison County AL on December 15, 1827, per newspaper announcements of the passing. The date and place of the death of Isaac's 2nd wife Mary J. Dickson, is not precisely known at the time of this writing. However, it is known that she moved to Autauga County AL before 1850. She is found living there at the time of the 1850 and 1860 censuses, right beside her youngest living daughter, Clarissa. There are no known tombstones for the senior Isaac nor any of his wives (or his brother Thomas) in this area. Considering that when Mary J. Dickson Lanier, Isaac's widow, sold some land in 1832 where the deed stated that it was the parcel of land where she resided, and that the parcel contained the **Rawlins – Lanier Cemetery**, it is a fairly sure bet that Isaac is buried in that cemetery.

The subject of this report, the **Lanier Cemetery 46-3**, is on the land first owned by Isaac's son Burwell, who had died 7 years before Isaac's death. It is also the land of the family plantation operated by Burwell's widow **Mary Shelby McCrabb Lanier** and her three sons: **Isaac Alexander** (1816 – 1894), **William H.** (1818 – 1895), and **Burwell Clinton** (1820 – 1895). Mary S. M. Lanier is said by some researchers to have died November 30, 1858 (1853 per her tombstone, and 1855 per the notes of Felix R. Lanier), and she is buried in the family cemetery on the plantation operated by her three sons. All three sons lived on the plantation, sharing ownership throughout their lives. Apparently, late in life, William H. and Burwell C. Lanier moved off the plantation and into nearby towns. William H. was buried in Huntsville's Maple Hill Cemetery, and Burwell C. is known to have lived from 1887 in the town of Madison, even though he is buried on the plantation in the family cemetery. In fact, it was recorded that Isaac Alexander died in the home of Burwell C., in Madison. All three brothers died within a year of each other, in the order of their births.



**Lanier Cemetery 46-3, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co. AL, Jan. 28, 2003**

The story of the Lanier Cemetery 46-3 is that of Burwell Clinton Lanier's family – his mother-in-law **Louisa McCrabb**, his widow Mary Shelby McCrabb Lanier, and his three sons.



**Lanier Cemetery 46-3, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co. AL, Jan. 28, 2003**

Louisa Shelby McCrabb was the wife of Alexander McCrabb, who died in Montgomery County, TN. Louisa was the daughter of John Shelby (b. 1725 MD, d. 1794 Washington Co. VA) and his wife Louisa **Looney** (b. 1728, Isle of Mann). Louisa Looney was a sister of Absalom Looney (b. 1729 Ireland, d. 1791 VA). Her father was Robert Looney (b. 1692, d. 1769), who operated “Looney’s Mill” in Augusta County, VA. During Louisa Shelby McCrabb’s lifetime on the pre-arsenal lands, there was another Absalom Looney and a John W. Looney (cousins of Louisa) who lived on pre-arsenal land. John W. Looney had land and until 1834 operated a “Looney’s Mill” just barely over a mile to the west of the Lanier Cemetery, where Louisa is buried. (Looney lands and Lanier lands were adjoining.) This mill was on the west side of the junction of what today is known as Huntsville Spring Branch with Indian Creek, according to the legal land description in the deed of sale. (See below.) The property and the mill (to be destroyed) were purchased by Thomas Fearn and others of the consortium that was formed in Huntsville to create the short-lived Indian Creek Canal. This canal was operated under the name of the Indian Creek Navigation Company to carry cotton from Big Spring in Huntsville to the Tennessee River for shipment downriver to markets in New Orleans.

John W Looney & wife  
To Deed  
Thomas & George Fearn  
& Howell & Patteson

MAD. Co. AL  
Deed Bk. P  
Page 263-4

This Indenture made this twenty first day of November one thousand eight hundred and thirty four between John W Looney of the County of Madison and State of Alabama of the one part and Thomas Fearn and George Fearn partners trading under the Style of Thomas & George Fearn and Alfred Howell and Thomas Patteson partners trading under the Style of Howell & Patteson all of the said County and State of the other part. Witnesseth; That the said John W Looney for and in consideration of the sum of two thousand nine hundred dollars to him in hand paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath this day bargained, sold, aliened enfeoffed and conveyed and by these presents doth bargain, sell, alien enfeoff and convey to the said Thomas & George Fearn and Howell & Patteson all that certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in said County of Madison usually known as his said Looneys Mill tract being the west half of the North west quarter of Section twelve in Township five of Range two west of the Basis Meridian and the west quarter of same Section Township and Range togetherwith the Mill, Mill house \_\_\_ chinery warehouse or warehouses outhouses with all improvements privilegges rights tenements and hereditaments to the same belonging or in anywise appertaining. To have and to hold the above described premises with the tenements and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise belonging or appertaining unto the said Thomas & George Fearn and Howell & Patteson (that is to said Thomas & George Fearn one undivided half, and to the said Howell & Patteson the other undivided half) there heirs and assigns forever: And the said John W Looney for himself his heirs executors and administrators doth warrant and will forever defend the title to the above described and hereby granted

Louisa's daughter Mary Shelby McCrabb Lanier took charge after her husband Burwell C.'s death in 1820 and saw that the land was cleared to establish the plantation. She continued to acquire additional land in her own name, as did the three sons (Isaac Alexander ["Alexander"], William Henry, and Burwell Clinton Lanier), sometimes jointly and with their mother Mary ["Polly"].

General Index to Real Property — DEEDS, MORTGAGES, JUDGMENTS, LIS PENDENS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS AFFECTING REAL ESTATE No. 1—REVERSE—1810-1919

TO WHOM MADE				M A K E R		AGE OF INSTRUMENT	Where and When Recorded				Location or other brief description	
SURNAME	GIVEN NAMES AND SUFFIX	GIVEN NAMES AND SUFFIX	BY WHOM PURCHASED	SURNAME	AL		Book	Vol.	Page	Year	Sec.	Ta.
Lanier		Isaac A	Wm	Wm Baker	al	Deed	D	N 508	1832	21	4	1-W
do	Burwell C	Mary S	William H	Ann Auld		Deed	D	P 596	1836	29	4	1-W
do	Adams Tr			Hiram Vann		D T	D	R 438	1840	30	5	2-E
do	Adams Tr			Thomas Edge		D T	D	S 337	1841	31	5	2-E
do	Burwell C	Isaac A Mary S Isaac A	Wm H	Wm H Weeden		Deed	D	W 431	1847	8 5	5 1-W	7 5 1-W
do	Burwell C	Mary S	Wm H	Rimond Ayers by Comr		Deed	D	W 438	1847	1	5	2-W
do	Burwell Alexander	Polly William		Abram Bransford	al	Deed	D	X 12	1848	6	5	1-W
do	Adams Tr			H F Hornbuckle		D T	D	Y 77	1850	8 8	6 6	2-E 2-E
do	Adam	L A		George Lemley	al	Deed	D	Y 531	1852	37	5	2-E
do	B	Lewis H		Wm F Elliott		Deed	D	Z 342	1853			Hvl
do	Burwell C	Isaac A		Robt C Harrison		Deed	D	Z 534	1854			Indef
do			Brother William H	S H Ayers by Gdn	al	Deed	D	AA 311	1855	12	5	2-W
do	Burrell C	Isaac	Wm H	Robt C Harrison		Deed	D	CC 160	1859	31	4	1-W
do	Burrell C	Isaac	Wm H	do do		Deed	D	CC 160	1859	32	4	1-W
do	Burwell C	Isaac A	Wm H	John J Fletcher	al	Deed	D	DD 176	1861	31	4	1-W
do	Burwell	Isaac A	William H	Unkn Comr by Pro J		Tax Deed	D	EE 3	1863	12	5	2-W
do		Laura P by Tr by Tr Laura P		Isaac A Lanier		Deed	D	FF 573	1867	31	4	1-W etc
do		Marion S		Burwell C Lanier		Deed	D	FF 577	1867			Same
do				Wm H Lanier		Deed	D	FF 578	1867	8	5	1-W
do			Wm H	Isaac A Lanier	al	Deed	D	FF 585	1867	5	5	1-W etc
do	Burwell C	Isaac A		Wm H Lanier		Deed	D	FF 586	1867	32	4	1-W
do	Burwell C Burrell C C E	Mary R	Thos O	James H Scruggs by Shff		Deed	D	GG 305	1867			Indef
do	Elizabeth L			J H Beadle Admr		Deed	D	HH 456	1871	32	3	1-E
do	B Tr			do do		Deed	D	HH 456	1871	32	3	1-E
do	B			J G Wilson Tr		Deed	D	TT 587	1873			Hvl Washington St
do	B C			Wm W Darwin	al	Deed	D	TT 600	1873			Hvl Same
do				Crockett Lanier	al	Mtg	M	18 248	1875	31	4	1-W 1 5 2-E
do			Wm D	Adams Lanier by Comr		Deed	D	FFF 294	1881	17	6	2-E
do		Mildred	W D	Lemuel Hanner		Deed	D	GGG 6	1881	8	6	2-E
do	Crochatt	Jerry		Burwell C Lanier		Deed	D	GGG 6	1881	4	6	2-E
do	Ada E			do do		Deed	D	GGG 6	1881	12	4	1-W
do	Burwell C			Burwell C Lanier		Deed	D	KKK 121	1885	31	4	1-W 1 5 2-W
do	Burwell C			John Johnson	al	Deed	D	MMM 5	1886			Madison
do	B			Rebecca F Bibb		Deed	D	MMM 436	1887	17	4	2-W
do	B			John H Bibb by Gdn	al	Deed	D	MMM 498	1887			Same
do	Chas W			Jere Murphy	al	Deed	D	NNN 456	1887			Viduta
do	Crocker	Jerry		Geo Bishop		Deed	D	OOO 611	1888	24	3	2-W
do				Burwell C Lanier	al	Deed	D	RRR 177	1889	1	5	2-W
do			W D	Charles H Craft	al	Deed	D	TTT 531	1890	29	5	2-E

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

The above is the first of 6 pages of land purchase indexes for the Lanier family and their descendants of that name in the Madison County courthouse records. Below is the first deed transacted by the brothers with their mother in Madison County, followed by the patents that the brothers and Mary executed for government lands. All are for lands that are now part of the arsenal.

Ann Auld  
to deed  
Mary S Lanier  
Isaac A Lanier  
William H Lanier  
Burwell C Lanier

MAD. Co. AL  
Deed Book P  
Page(s) 596-7

This indenture made this the fourth day of January in the year eighteen hundred and thirty six between Ann Auld of the County of Madison in the State of Alabama of the one part and Mary S Lanier Isaac A Lanier William H Lanier and Burwell C Lanier of the County and State aforesaid of the other part witnesseth that the said Ann Auld for and in consideration of the sum of four thousand nine hundred and five dollars and thirty cents to her in hand paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath this day given granted bargained sold aliened enfeoffed released and conveyed and by these presents doth give grant bargain sell alien enfeoff release and convey unto the said Mary S Lanier Isaac A Lanier William H Lanier and Burwell C Lanier their heirs and assigns forever all those certain tracts or parcels of land lying and being in the County and State aforesaid and known and described as the north west quarter of section numbered five in Township numbered five of Range numbered one west of the Basis Meridian line containing one hundred and sixty four acres and fifty five hundredths of an acre be the same more or less and the north east quarter of section numbered six in the township and range aforesaid containing one hundred and sixty two acres and forty seven hundredths of an acre be the same more or less. To have and to hold the above described tract or parcels of land with the tenements and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining unto the said Mary S Lanier Isaac A Lanier William H Lanier & Burwell C Lanier their heirs and assigns forever; and the said Ann Auld for herself her heirs executors and administrators doth hereby and in consideration of the premises aforesaid warrant and will forever defend the title to the before described and hereby granted premises unto the said Mary S Lanier Isaac A Lanier William H Lanier & Burwell C Lanier their heirs and assigns from and against

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

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CERTIFICATE }  
No. 19863 }

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas *Burwell C. Lanier, Isaac A. Lanier and William A. Lanier of Madison County Alabama*

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at *Huntsville* whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *Burwell C. Lanier, Isaac A. Lanier and William A. Lanier* according to the provisions of the

Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for *the West half of the South East Quarter and the North East Quarter of the South East Quarter of Section One in Township Five of Range Two West in the District of Lands Subject to Sale at Huntsville Alabama containing one hundred and Ninety five hundredths of an acre*

according to the official plat of the Survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tracts have been purchased by the said *Burwell C. Lanier, Isaac C. Lanier and William A. Lanier*

NOW KNOW YE, That the

United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said

*Burwell C. Lanier, Isaac C. Lanier and William A. Lanier* and to their heirs, the said tracts above described: To have and to hold the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature, thereto belonging, unto the said *Burwell C. Lanier, Isaac C. Lanier and William A. Lanier* and to their heirs and assigns forever.

In testimony Whereof, I, *James Buchanan* PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the *First* day of *March* in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *Eighty Fifth* and of the INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES the *Eighty Fifth*



BY THE PRESIDENT: *James Buchanan*  
By *C. A. D. Conrad* Secretary

*P. A. Granger* Recorder of the General Land Office

[Select view at 200% to read easily]



By the President  
Andrew Jackson

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the proper authorities for their consideration.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and the Great Seal of the United States, at the City of Washington, this 15th day of August, 1820.

Andrew Jackson

The President of the United States

By the President  
Andrew Jackson

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the proper authorities for their consideration.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and the Great Seal of the United States, at the City of Washington, this 15th day of August, 1820.

Andrew Jackson

The President of the United States

The above land transaction records are just examples of the many purchases made by the Lanier family on pre-arsenal lands in Townships 4 and 5 of Madison County. Of course, they also made many land sales in the county, covering 7 pages of the indexes for such sales in the courthouse records.

The memoirs and notes (penned up to about 1910) by Isaac Hill Lanier's son, Felix Robertson Lanier, born in 1829, includes descriptions of each of Burwell Clinton Lanier's sons who ran the plantation on the pre-arsenal lands. Felix traveled extensively during and after the Civil War to meet most of his relatives. He described his first cousin **Isaac Alexander Lanier** as the eldest of the sons of Burwell Clinton and Mary Shelby Lanier, writing that Isaac was born in Tennessee on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1816 in Jackson, Madison County (TN). The account by F. R. Lanier continues as given in bold print below, with blue commentary and explanations inserted as this text was prepared by John P. Rankin:

**“A few years later (after 1816), his parents (Burwell C. and Mary S. Lanier) moved to Madison County, Alabama, where he was reared, educated, and resided the balance of his days. Alex Lanier, as he was called by his companions and intimate friends, was a successful cotton planter until the Civil War destroyed his business. As a joint owner with his two brother, he resided on their plantation, devoting his energy and skill in aiding in the management. He was a genial companion, popular in the county, and when a young man, represented it in the State Legislature. Though pronounced in his political opinions, he preferred the quiet life of a planter to that of a political promotion. In 1861, Alex Lanier enlisted as a private soldier in the Fourth Alabama Regiment of Infantry to serve in the Confederate army and was on its organization elected a Lieutenant of his company. This Regiment became one of the most gallant and famous in the Confederate Army. It was conspicuous in the Battle of Manassas, July 21, 1861, where the Federal Army was routed and driven back, a terrified mob, to Washington. In this engagement Lieutenant Lanier was severely wounded and disabled from further service. Alexander was never married.”** [Isaac Alexander Lanier died at the house of his brother Burwell C. Lanier in the town of Madison on December 29, 1894, and he is buried in the family cemetery near Triana, on today's Redstone Arsenal lands.]



**Lanier Cemetery 46-3, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co. AL, Jan. 28, 2003**



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About his first cousin, William H. Lanier, Felix wrote:

**“William H. was the second son of Burwell Clinton and Mary Shelby Lanier, born in the state of Tennessee (in Jackson, Madison Co. TN) the 17<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1818. Reared in Madison County, Alabama, where he was educated, married, and spent a long, useful life as a cotton planter on a large plantation some ten or twelve miles from Huntsville, on which he resided in a commodious residence, where he reared a large family. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1855, William H. Lanier married Miss Marena Jane Saluter Ford, of Madison County. She was a sister of the wife of his brother Burwell Clinton (Lanier). They had several children, to-wit: Laura Celest, born November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1855; married Mr. William L. Halsey (progenitor of the famed grocers line of that name in**

**Madison County AL), April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1880. Mary Shelby (Mollie), born April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1858, married Mr. Thomas J. Young on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1884. Rena Roper, born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of November, 1860, married Mr. Archie Rison, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1880. William H., born in 1863. Lucy Corinne, born February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1867, married Mr. Thomas H. Gilbert, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1889. Birdie Williametta, born October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1872, married Mr. Joe Nix, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1890.”**

**“Mary Shelby (Mollie) died \_\_\_\_ of June, 1887, and William H. (son of William H. & Marina) died in 1865.”**

**“Marina Ford, wife of William H. Lanier died on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1886. (Her husband) William H. Lanier died in Huntsville, Alabama, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, 1895 (and was buried in Maple Hill Cemetery in Huntsville).”**

About his first cousin, the third son of Burwell Clinton & Mary Shelby Lanier, Felix Lanier wrote:

**“Burwell Clinton, the third son of Burwell C. and Mary Shelby Lanier, was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1820. Soon after, his parents moved to Madison County, Alabama. (Other accounts show that he was born in Madison County, Alabama.) They had settled on a large tract of land near Triana. His father died the first of the year (March 31, 1820, per most accounts found) after their arrival at their new home, leaving his estate (lands and Negro slaves, etc.) to his widow and three sons, who continued to reside on the lands and succeeded in clearing up a large plantation.”**

**“Burwell and his brothers were sent by their Mother to the best schools and their bright minds enabled them to qualify themselves for the high social position they held through their long lives. Alabama was a new State when their parents moved to it. The Indians had but recently been removed. (The U. S. Government beginning in February of 1818 offered for sale the land west of the old Chickasaw Indian Boundary Line that runs through the arsenal. The Lanier lands were west of that line.) Courage and self denial were requisite qualities for success, and these three boys, to an eminent degree possessed them, and they and**

**their companions and neighbors succeeded in clearing off the forest and changing the wilderness to its subsequent attractiveness and the homes of the brave, generous, and cultivated people. The foundation of the present beauty and civilization of Madison County was laid by these pioneers and is maintained by their descendants.”**

**“These three brothers were tall, erect, and splendid specimens of manhood, with genial and attractive manners, by which they gained and held many friends. Burwell Clinton married Miss Laura Prudence America Ford of Madison County, on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1853, a member of a prominent family, a cultivated, attractive, Christian woman, who died in Huntsville, Ala., July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1908, at the age of 73 years.”**

**“There were ten children born to this couple, to-wit: [1] Burwell Clinton, the third, born June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1854, married Miss Mattie C. Ashford, on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1881. [They had two children, Isaac Alexander Lanier, Jr., born September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1881, and died March 1896, and Joseph B. Lanier, born May 1864, died February, 1907. Burwell Clinton Lanier, the third, died from yellow fever at Decatur, Oct. 23, 1888.]”**

**(Continuing the list of children of Burwell C. & Laura Prudence Ford Lanier) [2] “John Ford (Lanier), born February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1857, married Miss Ada Johnson, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1881. (In 1886 Ada E. Johnson Lanier inherited land in the town of Madison, Madison County, Alabama, from her deceased father in Illinois, per Madison Co. AL Deed Book MMM, page 5. Her descendants still live on Maple Street and Martin Street, on land along both sides of the railroad on the east side of the historic district of the town of Madison.) The children of John Ford and Ada Lanier are: John Fulton, born December, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1882; Katherine Elizabeth, born 1<sup>st</sup> day of December, 1884, married Mr. Ortis Green of Madison County, April 1904; David Shelby Lanier, born 15<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1887 – he became a Mayor of Madison for 6 terms; Burwell Clinton Lanier (1890 – 1964); Ada Lorena Lanier (1891 – 1985); and Elsie Lanier (b. Apr. 1896). John Ford Lanier died in Huntsville, Alabama, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1900.”**

[3]“Isaac Alexander, son of Burwell C. and Laura Prudence Lanier, was born August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1859, died September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1879. [4] William Henry Jr., born October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1861, died October 23, 1864.”



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[The dates on the tombstone above suggest that this is the grave for the son of Burwell Clinton & Laura Prudence Ford Lanier, not for the son of William H. Lanier & Marena Jane Ford, who Felix Lanier recorded as being born in 1863 and dying in 1865 – close dates for the same name, but different children.]

(Continuing the list of the 10 children of Burwell Clinton & Laura Prudence Ford Lanier) [5] “Helen Virginia, born March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1864, married Mr. J. R. Martin, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1886. Died Aug. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1894. They had no children.”

[6] “Fulton Clement Lanier, born February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1867, died May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1881.”



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**(Continuing the list of the 10 children of Burwell Clinton and Laura Prudence Ford Lanier:)**

**[7] “Mary Lucilla, born February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1870, married Rev. Joseph W. Caldwell, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1893. [They have five children: Robert Henderson, born February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1901; Burwell Clinton Lanier (Henderson), born July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1904; Alice Elizabeth, born February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1911.]”**

**[8]“Laura Prudence, born October 5, 1872, married Mr. John Robert Wynn, October 3, 1894. [They have one child, Helen Lanier Wynn, born November 15, 1895.]” [The lineage of the Wynn family in America has been documented in several published works through the Kings of Wales all the way back to Adam, the original man.]**

**[9]“Alice Louisa Lanier, born January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1875.”**

**[10]“Milton Harris Lanier, born July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1878, married Miss Annie Newman Troy, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1909. [They have one child, Margaret Troy, born November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1910.]” [They had another child, Milton Harris Jr., after the account was written by Felix R. Lanier. Milton H. Lanier Sr. was admitted to the Bar in Alabama in 1899. He served terms as City Attorney, City Commissioner, and Mayor of Huntsville.]**

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**[This completes the list of the 10 children of Burwell Clinton & Laura Prudence Ford Lanier.]**

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**“Burwell Clinton Lanier, the second, died at his residence in Madison, Madison County, Alabama, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1895.” (Burwell C. Lanier [thought to be “the second”, b. 1820, d. 1895] purchased land in the town of Madison in 1887, perhaps to in his old age live near his son John, who married Ada Johnson. The land that he purchased had been owned by James H. Bibb and lay in the northern half of Section 17, Township 4, Range 2W. This land today is bounded on the north by Mill Road, on the east by Wall – Triana Highway [called Sullivan Street in that area], and on the south by Palmer Road. It nearly reached Mill Creek on the west, and the tracts included the location of the Bibb House, now on Allen Street in Madison.)**

Felix Lanier further wrote of this family that “**The disastrous result of the (Civil) war left the three brothers (Isaac Alexander, William H., and Burwell Clinton Lanier) financially distressed. Past middle age, they were unable to recover their losses and chose rather to strive to retain the remnant than to enter into competition with those more skilled with free labor. The three brothers had held their property almost through life in common, as partners residing on the same plantation when called to their last home. They passed away in less than a year in the order of their birth. Isaac Alexander Lanier died on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of December, 1894, at the residence of his youngest brother, Burwell Clinton Lanier, at Madison, Alabama.**”

[This concludes the material contained herein as excerpts from that written about a hundred years ago by Felix Robertson Lanier regarding his relatives in Madison County, Alabama.]

In summary, the members of the Lanier family buried on the arsenal in the little cemetery designated now as site 46-3 are the descendants of an Isaac Lanier, born in 1767 in North Carolina and died December 15, 1827 in Madison County, Alabama. Isaac himself is almost certainly buried in what is now called the **Rawlins – Lanier Cemetery** (see also), but there is no inscribed stone to mark the precise spot. He appears to have come to this location around 1819, after all of his children reached adulthood. His daughter Clarissa Lanier Boddie and his brothers, Thomas and the Reverend William Lanier, were already residing in Madison County on pre-arsenal lands, along with William’s wife Ann Dickson Lanier. Ann Dickson Lanier was a sister of Isaac’s 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Mary J. Dickson Lanier. With these strong relationships, Isaac may have come to Madison County with the idea to reunite the Lanier clan before he died. His daughter Clarissa was first married to Thomas Hill Boddie, who must have been disabled, in order for her to buy pre-arsenal government land in her own name in 1818. This land was located beside the lands bought by her uncle Thomas Lanier. Clarissa’s husband Thomas Boddie died in 1826, and she married Samuel Henry Neely Dickson in Autauga County, AL on December 19, 1832, after her father Isaac Lanier had died in 1827. Clarissa and her mother (Mary J. Dickson Lanier, widow of Isaac) lived beside one another in Autauga County AL at

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 1<sup>st</sup> wife Arabella Clinton, were soon found in Madison County, Alabama. Moreover, the children of the senior Isaac by his 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

descendants moved to nearby towns. The family cemetery gradually became neglected and forgotten, for the most part. Large trees grew among the graves, and the fence around the cemetery fell into disrepair. Today, large stumps remain in the cemetery, even after the U. S. Government took over the land and management of the cemeteries on the arsenal. These huge (in circumference) stumps are mute witness of past greatness, not only of the trees, but of the people who owned the land where they grew.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, October 24, 2004; revised September 19, 2005