

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: