

[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.