

The above page of the 1870 census shows (for reference) the family of the John Burton who became a pioneer druggist in the town of Madison, just northwest of arsenal lands. The Burton family enterprise was among the core businesses within Madison as it grew from a small village to a city.

The page of the 1870 census below shows James W. Morton, age 32, born in South Carolina, living in the household headed by Nancy Graham, of the south arsenal Rankin – Dickson Cemetery. In fact, Madison County Marriage Book Volume 5, page 1161, recorded the license for a marriage between James W. Morton and Margaret A. L. Dickson on 4 September 1871. Eighteen years later, on 5 February 1889 a license was issued in Madison County for the marriage of Nina Morton to H. W. Jamar, per Marriage Book Volume 16, page 426. However, James Morton was not the first of the surname found in the marriage records for the county.

In 1817, on May 5, a license was issued for the Joseph Morton and Sally Slaughter. The Slaughter family was among the very earliest of Madison County pioneers, with representation in the “squatters” on Indian lands known as the Sims Settlement in the period of 1806 – 1812. Today there is a road that forms part of the boundary between Huntsville and Madison that is known as “Slaughter Road”. It passes near the 1800s Lanford - Slaughter Mansion on Old Madison Pike near Indian Creek where Dr. John R. Slaughter lived for a number of years and practiced his trade. The old Chickasaw Indian Boundary line that ran through the arsenal area extends along a portion of Slaughter Road between Old Madison Pike and U. S. Highway 72.

Of course, at this time the exact connection of James W. Morton and his wife Sallie Slaughter to the Burton family of the arsenal is not known. However, the cemetery obtained its name somehow to tie the two surnames together, so it is still reasonable to assume that members of both families are buried there. The fact that both the Burton family and the Morton family were obviously “well-off” and “well-placed” among arsenal land pioneers further indicates that they would possibly have had some connections or ownership of the land around the cemetery at some time. The family of James W. Morton did not stay in the household of Nancy Graham, as the census of 1880 (inserted excerpts to be found later in this report) reveals.