

reports of a land teeming with squatters, some 2,223 white inhabitants and 522 slaves, the Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, required a census of this group. Freeman's report of January 1809 listed individual names of some 353 "Heads of Families."³ The next decisions were to shape the political and social history of Huntsville and, subsequently, Alabama.

Robert Williams, Governor of the Mississippi Territory, organized in 1798. created Madison County in the new territory by Executive Proclamation on December 18, 1808. The Territorial Legislature then extended its jurisdiction over the area on February 27, 1809, and shortly afterwards, President James Madison announced sales in the new territory to begin August 1 and to extend for three weeks at a land office in Nashville, Tennessee.

Although the squatters were given the right to remain on the lands they had settled and begun to cultivate until the lands were sold, few had the necessary funds for the initial quarter section purchase required, i.e. 160 acres. John Hunt's spring was especially desirable, and this quarter section was originally bought by LeRoy Pope, a landowner from Petersburg, Georgia, with William P. Anderson and James Jackson of Nashville. This trio paid \$23.50 per acre for the site while surrounding acreage went for much less, and some for the minimum asking price of \$2 per acre. Significant land purchases were also made by Pope's fellow Georgians. For a time it looked as though all of Petersburg would move to the new county. This roster of land owners would include significant families associated with the early history of Huntsville and Alabama; Bibb, Pope, Thompson, Walker, Percy, and Watkins. Unlike the usual concept of a pioneer, these men were rich, influential and educated. Of great importance was the fact that they had access to the seat of power of the nation, Washington, DC. This was of enormous importance ten years later when the territory sought statehood.⁴

By special act of the Territorial Legislature, a commission was created to designate a site for a county seat to be named Twickenham. Although several sites were proposed, LeRoy Pope was successful in having the bluff site by the spring selected. Therefore, he sold the commissioners the southern half of the town plat of 30 acres, but reserved the northern half for his own exploitation. He had become sole owner of the quarter section he had purchased with Anderson and Jackson. This area served as the nucleus of the new city which included two blocks in either direction from a central courthouse square immediately adjacent to the spring bluff. Only one block of the western edge of the square would be developed.

The original city limits of the new town, to be renamed Huntsville in 1811, became Lincoln Street to the east, Holmes Street to the north, Gallatin and Henry Streets to the west, and Williams Street to the south. Intersecting streets were named Jefferson, Washington, Clinton, Randolph, Eustis, Gates, Franklin, Madison, and Greene. Spring Street led off the square to the spring site.

A necessary development for the city was some thought about a burial ground. Death was no stranger on the frontier. It is not known when the first cemetery was designated, but its location is accurately described in a manuscript written by Judge Thomas Jones Taylor which served as the basis for his newspaper articles written between 1880 and 1886, later published as *A History of Madison County, Alabama*. Judge Taylor described the original cemetery site as:

"...that part of Patton's purchases on Greene Street is said to have been the location of a graveyard prior to the purchase of the present cemetery in 1824 and the principal burial place where the brick cottage now stands."⁵