Rohr: Jackson's Victorious Return to Huntsville: One Fine Day

Andrew Jackson

LeRoy Pope
(Courtesy Huntsville Public Library)

Published by LOUIS, 2022
On October 7th 1813 panic filled the county, and folks fled to Tennessee for safety leaving food on the tables and animals not fed. It appeared that a large body of Indians was within a day’s march of Huntsville, coming toward town. The citizens of Huntsville, and the whole of Madison County, were instantly panic-struck, and immediately fled towards Nashville. Some left their calves fastened up in pens; some their horses in the plow; most of them taking their flight on foot. Others mounted their horses without saddles or bridles. Four young ladies rode on one horse, riding like gentlemen without saddle or bridle and making good speed by applying their heels to the horses sides!!! One man took another man’s child, and left his own. Women on foot, running with their nightcaps on, and no bonnet...husbands riding, and wives walking...The whole was a false alarm. About a thousand people were on the road to Nashville.¹

But the horror had been real. The accounts, just two months before, of the bloodiest massacre in America’s frontier history at Ft. Mims, screamed to the people of Madison County of immediate danger. Two hundred fifty settlers had been killed within the confines of the Fort just north of Mobile. Huntsville did not even have that possible shelter. Word spread that the Indians, always a threat, were on the way to this very village. Mrs. Royall’s account, written just a few years later, probably does not exaggerate how frantically the citizens responded as the rumors grew. And now on this very fine day in May of 1814, General Andrew Jackson and the Militia were returning through Huntsville from the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, where in late March, they defeated the Creek Indians and put an end to the uprisings. There had been so much at stake.

The route back to Huntsville had not been easy. The original Militia, composed of 2000 men, was a volunteer army. When their enlistment time, the pay, and the supplies ran out, many men felt it was time to return home. Jackson actually quelled two mutinies when his men threatened to desert. After order was restored

¹ Anne Newport Royall, *Letters from Alabama 1817-1822*, ed. Lucille Griffith (1830; rpt. ed., University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), 243-244. Anne Royall may have been convicted in the District of Columbia as a “common scold,” but she was an uncommon reporter. During her travels about the country she was a fearless correspondent with a good ear, keen eyes, a sharp tongue, and a grand sense of the ridiculous. Her two observant trips to northern Alabama make one wish she had stayed longer and written even more.
among his troops, the decisive battle near present-day Alexander City wiped out the entire Creek Indian force. Except for a few men left to guard the outposts, the army now made its way toward Tennessee and home.

Citizens along the way eagerly cheered Jackson and the army as they progressed northward. At Huntsville, with last October’s panic still in mind, the townspeople planned a heartfelt and exciting daylong welcome for the heroes. Town leaders, and most particularly LeRoy Pope, hosted the festivities. There had been so much at stake in the community, and Pope was the man with perhaps the most to lose. His vision and energy planned and built where only a spring and a few squatter cabins had been earlier. Leroy Pope was clearly the most powerful leader in the town and county in those early years.

For a man who was so influential, little is really known about his personal life, but he certainly was in all the right places at the right times to take advantage of hard work and good fortune. LeRoy Pope (1764-1844) was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, son of John Pope and Elizabeth Mitchel Pope. At the age of 15 he served in the Revolutionary army, and according to one account he was a courier for General Washington during the siege and battle of Yorktown. In 1790, with a group of friends, he moved to Petersburg, Georgia, in the area of the Broad River. Pope’s influence became so impressive that in the community his extended family was often referred to as the “Royal Family.”

Enormously successful with his ventures in Georgia, LeRoy Pope continued to look westward and seek still better investments. In 1805 Pope took a tour by horseback to view acreage soon to become available for sale. He must have liked what he saw because in August 1809 when the Madison County lands were finally made available by the federal government, he and his friends were ready. “Alabama Fever” struck these wealthy planters from Petersburg, all college educated and cultured, and they joined Pope in this exodus in 1810. Together they settled in the “Great Bend” of the Tennessee River in the northeast corner of what was still the Mississippi Territory but would become the state of Alabama in 1819.

LeRoy Pope quickly acquired the Big Spring tract that the first white settler, John Hunt, could not afford to buy at the land sales. Laying out the town to his design, Pope generously donated the land for the Public Square and the ground on

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which the earliest jail was built. He continued to play a variety of roles as a leading citizen. Pope, as his activities suggest, was both a risk-taker and a public-spirited citizen. Besides his widespread holdings in town and in the county as the years advanced, he established the Planters and Merchants Bank. He promoted the Indian Creek Navigation Company, was one of the founders of the Episcopal Church, and was the chief justice of the first County Court. Pope showed enough control in his new domain to name the village Twickenham in honor of the country estate of his literary ancestor Alexander Pope. However, with persuasion from the Tennessee settlers and other pioneers, the Territorial Legislature restored the name Huntsville to the community in 1811. Nonetheless, his total realm of influence was immense; LeRoy Pope was the “father of Huntsville.”

There is sometimes a residue of resentment surrounding those who are wealthy and powerful. Many of the townsfolk felt Pope’s purchase of the land had been illegal, or at least immoral. If he was admired by some, Pope was not always liked. As a public figure he was also an easy target for those who might have expected more from him on every occasion. Anne Royall reported attending her first missionary preaching while in Huntsville. The evangelist had collected several hundred dollars to convert the heathen. “The next day, after the event, the women spoke of Col. Pope because he put only 25 cents in the hat. ‘Such a man – of his wealth – to give a quarter – Did you ever see the like! They would have given all they had!’ It was beyond doubt, the worst laid out quarter he ever spent” suggested Mrs. Royall.4

Pope’s immediate family included his wife, Judith Sale Pope (1770-1827), and at least five children, born in Georgia. Judith Pope died at the age of 58 and was buried at Maple Hill Cemetery. Born in Virginia, she had moved to Georgia with her family and then again to Alabama. Mrs. Royall described Judith Pope as “one of your plain, undisguised, house-keeping looking females; no ways elated by their vast possession... Report says, she is benevolent and charitable, and her looks confirm it.” The Southern Advocate at the time of Mrs. Pope’s death reported, “She was the first and oldest female inhabitant of the town.” Their children included Matilda, Maria, John, William (Willis) and LeRoy, Jr.5

4 Royall, Letters, 286.
5 Anne Royall, Sketches of History, Life and Manners in the United States (New Haven, Priv. Prnt. 1826; repr. New York: Johnson 1970), 14; Pauline Jones Gandrud, Marriage, Death and Legal Notices from Early Alabama Newspapers, 1810-1893 (Easley, South Carolina: Southern Historical Press, 1981), 458. (Perhaps this implies Mrs. Pope was the most worthy female in town. Or, simply she really was the first female settler to take up residence.) LeRoy Pope died June 17, 1845, and was buried beside his wife at Maple Hill Cemetery. Diane Robey, Dorothy Scott Johnson, John Rison Jones, Jr., Frances C. Roberts Maple Hill Cemetery, Phase One (Huntsville: Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society, 1995), 116 -117.
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LeRoy Pope progressed, as did his friends, from being “just” log cabin aristocrats. Pope soon enjoyed the comforts of what is often considered Alabama’s most photogenic mansion. He built his new brick home on the highest hill, overlooking the entire town—his town. Flatboats carried the bricks, made in Tennessee, down the river, and then they were carted to town by wagonloads. Anne Royall noted the house during her visit in 1818. “If I admired the exterior, I was amazed at the taste and elegance displayed in every part of the interior; massy plate [heavy sterling silver], cut glass, china ware, vases, sofas and mahogany furniture of the newest fashion decorated the inside.” The house was newly completed in 1814, just in time for the victorious army’s return through Huntsville. Pope called his fine new home, “Poplar Grove.”

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Economics and marriage related many of Pope’s fellow transplanted Georgians as they settled the new territory. Together these families owned between them perhaps one-half of the entire Madison County acreage purchased in the early land sales. United by their common ties and politically powerful, they became known as the “Royalist Party.” Certainly all of these friends would have attended the festivities on the lawn at Pope’s new mansion to honor the returning heroes.

Among the Broad River bunch were many other enterprising newcomers. Dr. James Manning, Anne Royall reported, was the second greatest planter in the state. She admired Manning because he showed not only great wealth but also modesty. Manning’s only daughter married Bartley M. Lowe, later General of the Militia of the state. The wedding announcement in the newspaper tastefully noted Lowe was a merchant, but this marriage really combined immense acreage and commercial wealth in Madison County.

The Bibb brothers also settled in the area. William Wyatt Bibb, another of the former Petersburg citizens, was a physician and Senator from Georgia before he moved to Madison County. He became the first governor of Alabama, appointed so by President Monroe. When he died in a riding accident, his brother, Thomas Bibb, a man of “great intellectual force and indomitable energy, and of marked distinction of bearing,” became governor.

The Petersburg Watkins family “were prominent in business life, but they were also successful in marriages.” Attention to business, well-considered marriages, and prosperity seemed to go hand in hand for these Georgia families. Captain

6 Royall, Sketches, 14; Royall, Letters, 246.
7 Bailey, Walker, 69.
8 Royall, Letters, 245, 286. (There is an unexplored link between these early Alabamians and today’s Tennesseans. The name Peyton Manning appeared repeatedly in early land deeds and court actions in Madison County.)
9 Stephens, Historic Huntsville, 21.

https://louis.uah.edu/huntsville-historical-review/vol27/iss2/3
Robert Thompson came along with the pioneers. He was a very successful merchant and was nicknamed “Old Blue” in the community because he carried considerable sums of money with him in a blue denim bag. Reflecting the violence that always was nearby on the frontier, Thompson’s portrait shows him elegantly seated but holding a cane with a concealed sword. One of his daughters married Dr. James Manning, and another married Thomas Bibb.10

Peyton Cox also arrived with the Georgia aristocrats and became the cashier of the newly formed Planters and Merchants Bank. Anne Royall wrote, not kindly, that he was “a crusty old man and a bachelor.” Perhaps someone in the community had tried matchmaking. Anne, always one to speak her mind clearly said, “the dogs may take him for me.”11

Probably closest to LeRoy Pope, of those from the Petersburg community, was his son-in-law, John Williams Walker. This young man, with old family ties, graduated from Princeton, and had recently married Pope’s older daughter, Matilda. The newlyweds made the move from Georgia with the family just five months later to begin their married life together on the frontier. Walker was highly regarded as a lawyer, and at the time of statehood he served as President of the Constitutional Convention. Andrew Jackson would recommend him to become the first governor of the new state, but Walker served instead as the first legislator in the Senate of the United States. It was here at his new home place, Oakland, that President Monroe made a call on his way north after a surprise visit to Huntsville that year.

Joining the already powerful band from Georgia were two wealthy and influential men from Mississippi. Thomas Percy, a college chum of Walker’s, left his own plantation and settled on 1400 acres in Madison County next to Walker’s property. At Oakland, Percy met and then courted successfully Maria Pope, daughter of LeRoy Pope.12 The second newcomer, Dr. Samuel Brown, had married Percy’s sister, Catherine, in Mississippi. Catherine Percy Brown died in childbirth in 1813, and Brown moved from the Natchez area with his three small children to join this close-knit group.13 However, he accepted a teaching position at Transylvania University in Lexington, while Tom Percy sheltered his nephew and nieces during their motherless years in Alabama. Percy also tended Walker’s plantation and his young children while Walker served in the U. S. Senate.

10 Ibid.
11 Royall, Letters, 122.
12 Walker’s own brother, Samuel Sanders Walker, a childhood friend courted Maria for many years but waited too long to act. Rejected by Maria, Samuel settled in Tuscaloosa. After Tom Percy’s death at their plantation, Belfield, his widow relocated with the children in Greenville, Mississippi. These Percys became a power southern dynasty, noted as politicians and writers in the south.
turn, Dr. Brown watched over the schoolboys, Pope and Walker, when they attended boarding school in Lexington.14

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Although they formed a strong opposing political party, a powerful band of settlers from Tennessee were likely included as guests at the Pope mansion that day in May of 1814. Certainly it would be considered rude and politically incorrect to ignore these local leaders. After all it was the Tennessee army that had just saved the countryside from slaughter.

Hugh McVay was a frontier Democrat from Tennessee who served in the Mississippi Territorial Legislature in 1811 and 1818. His education was limited but never his patriotism. He proudly named his second daughter Atlantic Pacific. Life was filled with tribulation in the rough-and-tumble frontier for this widower. In 1828 his second wife left him for another man taking with her two slaves and two horses, leaving him saddled with her many debts. Later McVay was elected president of the Alabama Senate, and still later he became the state’s ninth Governor.15

Gabriel Moore represented Madison County in the first session of the Alabama Territorial Legislature. At home he served as county tax assessor, a position of enormous power. Apparently Moore was an especially regarded candidate by some. He "early became the squatter's favorite lawyer and representative. His opponents claimed that he 'frequented every grog shop in the county and visited every old woman.'" 16 Moore resourcefully supported the popular General Jackson quite early and was elected Governor in 1829.

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There were other leading citizens who were likely to be at Poplar Grove for the celebrations who did not take sides with either the Georgia or the Tennessee factions.

14 This was an ambitious family. Samuel Brown received the best possible medical education in Edinburgh and in Philadelphia with Dr. Benjamin Rush. His brothers expressed their energy as politicians in the South. James Brown was a senator in Louisiana, and John Brown served in the United State Senate from Kentucky. Wyatt-Brown, Percy, 74.


15 Quoted in Stephens, Historic Huntsville, 33, 34.

16 Quoted in Stephens, Historic Huntsville, 34.
Respected in the community, T. B. Bradford published the *Madison Gazette*, already in business for two years, and he wrote a first-hand account of the events with excitement in almost every word. He obviously was in attendance.

Dr. Thomas Feam of Virginia studied medicine in Philadelphia with the leading practitioner of the country, Dr. Benjamin Rush. Feam settled in Huntsville in 1810 or 1811 to begin his practice. But he suspended business as Jackson and the army came through town on their way to Horseshoe Bend. Feam served as a battalion surgeon, then as a surgeon of the Tennessee regiment. He tended Andrew Jackson and was in charge of the military hospital at Huntsville.17

Dr. Henry H. Chambers, also a Virginian, was a surgeon on the staff of General Jackson during the Creek War. Later he became active and popular in politics; he died on the way to Washington, D. C. to take his seat in the Senate.

Certainly other worthy citizens were at the gala events at the Pope mansion. General Brahan, Anne Royall said, “was a prince in whatever light he may be viewed. He is polite and affable of great size, handsome person, of middle age, and a man of great wealth.” Brahan was the receiver of public money at Huntsville and helped keep the wealthy Tennessee clique at bay during the recent land bidding mania. He at least earned the respect of the less prosperous future landowners in the county. Anne hinted at what had become public knowledge and thus public embarrassment. Brahan, in effect, had speculated and come up $80,000 short in his accounting with the federal government. Some of the town leaders, notably Walker, Percy, and Pope, who already had their lands, kept the secret, helped bail him out, and saved him from jail.18

Major John Read was a merchant, a stout gentlemanly man said to be wealthy. He served as the clerk in the Nashville Land Office and knew every chain and link of land in Madison County when he arrived in 1810. As a result he invested in town property. He was both prosperous and popular according to Judge Taylor.19 Eli Hammond, of Tennessee, was a friend of long standing of Andrew Jackson’s. At one time he masqueraded with a small group of men as Indians, attacked and

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17 Owen, *Dictionary*, 2:591. Feam later studied abroad in Paris and London. He became noted in medical circles for his pioneering work in the use of quinine for malaria and typhoid. Among his many interests, he and his brother George purchased the Huntsville Water Works. He was also involved with forming Greene Academy and the Indian Creek Canal.


killed a war party of Indians, and had come away untouched. Hammond was one of the close company of friends who fought with Jackson during the murderous attack by the Benton brothers on the streets of Nashville. Hammond served in the War and formed his own company of Mounted Rangers from Huntsville. S. D. Hutchings, as he was known locally, did not have to call attention to himself. Everyone in the neighborhood knew his relations. Stockly Donelson Hutchings was a Tennessean fortunate enough to be related by lineage and marriage to General Jackson. Hutchings settled in Madison County where he served as postmaster, then a political appointment.

Anne Royall observed William Patton had set out poor, was now one of the richest men in the territory, and all this was acquired by his own industry. Much respected, he was the proprietor of large plantations, stock, etc. Patton was born in Londonderry, Ireland, and immigrated first to western Virginia. He arrived in Huntsville in 1812 to begin “merchandising.” By 1815 Patton felt secure enough to return to Virginia to gather up his wife and children, driving the entire distance in wagon from his store. He was a merchant and founder of Bell Factory, perhaps the first cotton mill in the state. Adding to the family connections, Patton's eldest daughter, Jane, married Willis Pope.

Judge Clement C. Clay, Mrs. Royall said, is “a very young man of pleasing manners, a handsome person said to be a man of the first talents in the state. There are few who might rank with Judge Clay in elegance of manners.” He came to Alabama in 1811 with one Negro manservant, two horses, his law books in his saddlebags, and only enough money to last a few days. He built an extensive law practice and served on the Constitutional Convention, in both houses of the Legislature, as Governor, and Judge of the State Supreme Court.

Marmaduke Williams was also an attorney, a brother of Robert Williams who became governor of the Mississippi Territory. Marmaduke Williams had served

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as a member of the congress in North Carolina before coming to Madison County. He was a clever and amiable gentleman, it was said.24

Dr. David Moore, of an old Virginia family, arrived in 1809 and through judicious investments accumulated property both in the county and in town. Among other enterprises he established the first cotton-ginning house. He was a family physician and a personal friend to Andy Jackson. Moore shared his energy in public service where he showed "financial ability, sagacity and prudence." At the time of his death in 1844, he was the largest landowner in northern Alabama. Judge Taylor suggested that Dr. Moore was the most prominent man of the 1820's.25

Describing some of the respectable citizens of the community, Mrs. Royall wrote that Major Rose, another of the heroes of the War, was a Scotch gentleman and a Tennessee soldier. "You have not to look very deep for the qualities of his mind. It is plainly depicted in his fine open countenance, and soft blue eye. He is a middle-aged man of portly size, and acted in the quartermaster's Department. He was in high favor with Jackson; and his labors in procuring supplies for the army were unequalled by any thing in history." Rose tried his hand at various undertakings, a merchant and owner of the Planters' Hotel. Perhaps he was best remembered as the operator of the hotel where as a genial host he delighted ready listeners - travelers and townspeople alike. He spoke with a Scottish burr and had the ability to hold an audience spellbound with his story telling and sense of humor.26

Edwin, Frederick and Irby Jones together owned the Huntsville Inn and the Bell Tavern. In the less formal occasions of the festivities, merchants and townspeople would mingle with Jackson and soldiers - if not at the ball, at least on the Town Square or at the meal served by Mrs. Bunch at the Bell Tavern that night.

The Brandon brothers, William and Thomas, and their families were greatly admired by the townspeople. They arrived in town with no other possessions than their masonry tools. As highly successful bricklayers, most likely they had seen the bricks of the Pope mansion up close. The Brandons created many of the fine brick buildings early visitors admired. Theirs was an extended family that worked hard and was highly respected. Later Andrew Jackson, as President, appointed Byrd Brandon Attorney General of the United States.

John Connally was probably in town by then. In 1815 he formally opened the Green Bottom Inn. Horseracing was already an established practice in that very site. Connally's property included a noted turf for racers that always drew a crowd. Horse fanciers, and Jackson particularly was fond of racing, could

socialize freely. Here also the common laborer and the aristocratic planter could mingle socially on level ground, as it were. Of course gambling always accompanied racing. It was only natural to see whose nag was the best and to put a little money down. With the great wealth available in Huntsville and Madison County, many of the gentlemen were known to have expensive racers. In the days when the price for returning a slave was a mere two to five dollars, Willis Pope offered twenty-five dollars for the return of his racer “Cyclops.”

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All these settlers – whether from Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, or Ireland, living in a modest log home or in a fine brick mansion – hoped for statehood soon. Judge Taylor described with realism his pioneer family’s struggle to clear the dense forest, grub the rough soil, and plant the first patch of corn – all with hand tools. Cotton planting would come later because the day was spent in obtaining the “absolute necessities of life.” Many early houses did not have iron in the construction, and the floors were dirt or made of puncheons. Writing his memoirs later, Judge Taylor had few regrets, and he did not appear to think he had suffered in his childhood from the hard work. On the other hand, the wealthy planter may have only supervised the building of his home or the planting of his crops, but financially and emotionally he was just as involved. And the village was taking shape. In this short time the town’s attractions were evident to early visitors who recognized the lovely vista and the excellent prospects for the future.

Anne Royall wrote, also in 1818, the cotton fields were astonishingly large, from four to five hundred acres in a field.... The land around Huntsville and the whole of Madison County is rich and beautiful as you can imagine; and the appearance of wealth would baffle belief. Town has 260 houses, principally built of brick, bank, court house and market house, large square in the center with 12 stores around it. The workmanship is the best I have seen in all the states; and several of the houses are 3 stories high and very large. The citizens are gay, polite and hospitable and live in great splendor. They are the most generous of the human race... Madison County alone contains more wealth than half of western Virginia.

Little did the frantic citizens know on that fearful October day in 1813 that deliverance was on the way to save all them. When General Jackson heard the Indians might be heading for Huntsville, he rushed from Fayetteville, Tennessee,

with the volunteers, marching 32 miles in nine hours to save the town. The next day, the army continued on down to Ditto's Landing and Fort Deposit on their way to decisively defeat the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.

While the army caught its breath overnight before starting south, Jackson consulted with LeRoy Pope about the status of the troops and the safety of the town. It is clear from correspondence that Jackson was on friendly terms with members of the Pope family. In a letter of October 1813, Jackson added a postscript to give his compliments to Mrs. Pope. To Miss Maria he hoped soon to be able to send a princesses [sic] necklace.30

Obviously LeRoy Pope was the real financial and political power in the village. Jackson sent 74 Indian prisoners in October and November to be confined at Pope's.31 It may be simply that Pope had enough goods and cash to feed them. (One might be surprised to know that Jackson had Choctaw captives that were not to be considered prisoners sent to Pope on one occasion. His instructions requested they were to be held until he could locate the family of the Indian woman and her three children to reunite them with their families.) Jackson did not need extra mouths to feed because stores for the troops had been delayed, and this became one of the causes of desertion among his men. Jackson wrote that he would be able to put an end to the Creeks if he just had enough supplies. If he could, Pope could furnish them and draw on Governor Blount of Tennessee for funds.32

Jackson's entourage included the second most admired Creek War hero, John Coffee. Anne Royall, who met everybody sooner or later, was clearly impressed with him. She wrote

General Coffee is upwards of six feet in height and proportionally made. Nor did I ever see so fine a figure. He is 35 or 36 years of age. His face is round and full and features handsome. His complexion is ruddy, though sunburnt. His hair and eyes black, and a soft serenity diffuses his countenance.... His countenance has much animation, while speaking, and his eyes sparkle, but the moment he ceases to speak, it resumes its

31 Andrew Jackson to Rachel Jackson, November 4, 1813, Moser, Papers 2:44.

Published by LOUIS, 2022
wonted placidness, which is characteristic of the Tennesseans.33

Coffee had moved to Tennessee in 1789 and worked as a surveyor. On hearing of the massacre at Fort Mims, he went to Alabama with some Tennessee volunteers and served under Jackson at Horseshoe Bend and later New Orleans. When peace was restored he was appointed surveyor for the Creek boundary and the northern Mississippi Territory lines. After tramping much of the area during the Indian and British Wars and as the official surveyor, Coffee was certainly qualified to take notice of any good buys for his special Nashville friends that included Jackson. The two men became plantation neighbors in north Alabama.34

Among the returning local Militia leaders were Captains Gray and Mosely, who raised two companies in the spring of 1813. Eldridge and Hamilton raised two more local companies soon after that.35 Local officers, if they were free from duties, would have attended the ceremonies. Col. Thomas E. Eldridge, who rallied settlers to volunteer from Huntsville and Meridianville, continued to be a fighting man after the battles. Later he was brought before the Territorial Court for fighting “to the terror of peaceable citizens.” Apparently in the violent setting of the frontier, he did not consider that would lessen his chances for political office when he ran for the House of Representatives in 1819.36

Certainly not any less important were the militiamen from the county who served in the ranks during the hostilities, whether or not they were invited to attend the festivities at the mansion. In later years the newspaper death notices of these soldiers always included proudly their service with the army. Charles Hall enlisted with Jackson and lived to be 81. Col. Henry King, it was said, was a warm friend of Jackson’s who later avoided politics because he felt the “filthy pool of politics had for him no charms.” Aged veteran Joseph Rice died in 1883 at 86. He and his brothers, Levi and George Rice, had been in the New Market area since 1805. At 16 Joseph Rice served with Jackson as a volunteer in the Creek War and was one of those who marched from Fayetteville in double quick time to defend Huntsville, the distance being noted in 1883 as 30 miles and the time raced down to five hours.37

Also among the death notices were William Kirby of nearby Triana, who died in 1847 at the age of 52. Kirby entered the army with Jackson at New Orleans and fought bravely. Marcus LaFayette High, who died in 1847, aged 65, had served

33 Royall, Letters, 120, 121
34 Ibid., 270.
35 Taylor, History, 30, 41, 43.
36 Taylor, History, 41; K. Loughran, comp. Minutes Book, Superior Court of Law and Equity Madison County, Mississippi Territory, 1811-1819. State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, n.d..
37 Gandrud, Notices, 261, 357, 380.
12 months under Jackson in the Indian Wars. Undoubtedly there were more veterans from the county who served. Some of course, like Captain John J. Winston, were wounded during the battles. Jackson wrote that five men from Capt. Hammond’s men had been wounded, but all behaved bravely. Among the wounded were John Taylor, Bryson Hinds, George Sharp and “old” John Wright as he carried Taylor out of the range of the action. Those not there, dead in the battles, from Madison County were John Bean and William McCartney, surely not forgotten.38

Decent citizens, merchants, and their wives – although probably not invited to the festivities at the house – would have crowded around the Square for the ceremony. Andrew Jackson, the peoples’ hero, who visited town often, could have known some of them by sight or name. Among the spectators most likely were men like the well digger, John Baxter; David Beckett the weaver; and Thomas Johnson, the shoemaker.39 John Ditto, whose ferry Jackson’s army used to cross the River, certainly came to town to join the celebration. Everybody must have known the army was on its way home; and everyone must have come to share in the jubilation. Servants and slaves all recognized the returning heroes. Passing Cherokee and Chickasaw Indians, who aligned themselves with the winning side, certainly joined in. In the warm spring air with the dust underfoot, children running and cheering, a dog or two barking alongside, a grateful village welcomed the victors who had saved them from death or worse.

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The Madison Gazette reported its account just two days after the festivities.

The army of General Jackson, except for the troops left to garrison the Forts William and Strother, passed through our little village on the return march home. It was a scene of much interest, animation and feeling. An army of victorious warriors... headed by their hero General, was returning triumphantly and crowned with laurel from the savage country they had subdued, thro’ the village they had passed – destined by the Red Sticks after the fall of Fort Mims to be the next victim of their hellish fury.40

Of course a committee had been appointed by the citizens to make suitable arrangements. “On the approach of the army the General was met by Capt. Winston at the head of his company and almost the whole of the gentlemen of the

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38 Gandrud, Notices, 488, 355; Jackson to Rachel Jackson, November 4, 1813
Moser, Papers, 2: 444; Taylor, History, 43.
40 Madison Gazette, May 10, 1814.
village on horseback and escorted to the public Square, while the main body of the army continued their march through town.” Major Walker then delivered an address at the request of the committee. Walker, Pope’s son-in-law, was tellingly sincere as he spoke of the alarm and fears about the countryside the previous autumn, danger seemingly on all sides. He spoke of the difficulties of the army – the winter, hunger, sedition and desertion. However “feeble and inadequate,” the citizens of Huntsville offered their attention, respect, and affection for the termination of the Creek campaign.41

After the salute the artillery company, headed by the General, his aides and staff, and accompanied by General Coffee, was formed in front of Col. Pope’s dwelling house, where they witnessed the presentation of a stand of colors by Miss Maria Pope and the return of an Indian child. She spoke, she said with the liveliest joy to the deliverer of Madison. She handed the flag to the conqueror of the Creeks with best wishes for his health and happiness and length of days. Maria Pope returned the little Indian boy [Lincoya], “the sole remnant of a warlike family,” she said. “I have discharged the trust reposed in me” and “I deliver him to you with no happier fortune than the patronage and protection of a brave and generous chieftain who in the midst of victory forgot not the duties of humanity and claimed as his own the friendless, helpless, isolated orphan, tho’ of enemy blood and savage race!”42

Major Reed, the General’s aide, replied for him thanking Miss Pope because their arms could never “know disgrace nor be soiled with dishonor” when presented under the banners of the fair. After the receipt of the colors, a handsome salute was fired by artillery.43

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Besides getting the recognition the army deserved, Jackson did have another reason for stopping at Huntsville. He wrote Rachel on November 4th of 1813 that he would be sending a little Indian baby to Huntsville for safety. No one was available to leave the fighting and on the 19th of December Jackson wrote again to tell Rachel that he was indeed sending Lincoya as a playmate or companion for Andrew Jackson, Jr. (Jackson and Rachel had adopted one of the twins born to Severn Donelson and his wife. The mother was unable to care for the two infants and his sister-in-law, Rachel, took one of the twins to the Hermitage, naming him Andrew Jackson, Junior.) Jackson wrote, “The Indian infant is the only branch of the family left, and other [Indian women] when offered to them to take care of would have nothing to do with him, but wanted him killed. Quals [probably James Quarles] my interpreter took him up and carried him on his back and brought him to me. Charity and christianity [sic] says he ought to be taken care of

41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.

https://louis.uah.edu/huntsville-historical-review/vol27/iss2/3
and I send him to my little Andrew and I hope will adopt him as one of our family."\textsuperscript{44} Still later Jackson wrote again thinking the infant had already reached her, "Keep Lincoya in the house. He is a Savage but one that fortune has thrown in my hands when his own female matrons wanted to kill him. I therefore want him well taken care of, he may have been given to me for some Valuable purpose – in fact when I reflect that he as to his relations is so much like myself I feel an unusual sympathy for him."\textsuperscript{45}

At the time the army was destitute of provisions and the only food that could be found for the infant was made by mixing "a bit of brown sugar and crumbs of biscuits scraped from the chinks of a barrel. These, mixed in water, composed a diet which he seemed to relish, and with it the General and his faithful servant, Charles, kept him alive until he was sent to Huntsville."\textsuperscript{46}

The three-month-old baby, Lincoya, was sent north out of harm's way to be sheltered by Miss Maria Pope and her family in Huntsville. Jackson wrote Rachel on May 8th about his reception in Huntsville the day before. He said that he and his officers had received every mark of attention by a gratefull \[sic\] people. We were met by the respectable citizens, escorted into Town, where a salute was given us, a sumptuous dinner, provided and an elegant ball in the evening." He wrote he would join her in Nashville on the 13\textsuperscript{th}. Would she bring little Andrew, and he would present him with Lincoya. "Miss Maria Pope, when presenting me with an elegant stand of Coulours \[sic\], presented little Lincoya with them dressed more like a poppet, than anything else."\textsuperscript{47}

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At 3 o'clock the General was conducted to the dinner table, which was laid on the fine green immediately back of Col. Pope's new brick house – no room in town could have contained the company – upwards of one hundred persons partook of the festivities of the day. The General’s family and staff, Generals Coffee and Johnston, and many gentlemen of the army" were among the guests. "Col. Pope presided, aided by Col. Perkins and Capt. Brahan.... The dinner was abundant, for the season excellent and well arranged. The utmost harmony, hilarity and joy pervaded the whole assemblage. The full number of toasts were

\textsuperscript{44} Andrew Jackson to Rachel, November 4, 1813, December 19, 1813, Moser, \textit{Papers}, 2: 400, 401, 495.


\textsuperscript{46} United States' Telegraph, July 3, 1828.

\textsuperscript{47} Andrew Jackson to Rachel, May 8, 1814 Moser, \textit{Papers}, 3: 70. Poppet is still a term of endearment used for the very young in Britain.
drank—many of them were cheered and encored with burst of feeling—while the artillery, under the orders of Capt. Parish lent forth its deep toned echo.48

The “regular” toasts, 19 in number were heartfelt. The first of course, was to “Our country—may she never want defenders, nor ever forget to honor and reward them.” The second was to “The Union of the States—the sheet anchor of our national safety.” Continuing, toasts were to the American Congress, the President, Major General Andrew Jackson, Brig. General John Coffee, the Militia of Tennessee and the Madison Volunteers all gallant heroes, the British Partizins [sic], and continued through to “The Fair—May they greet with the animating light of their smile, and bless with rich reward of their love the gallant defenders of their country’s [sic] rights.”49

After the General retired, the committee cheerily continued raising their arms to toast Jackson, “whose sword had reduced the savage yell of war to humble petition for peace,” another to Gen. Coffee and a third toast against Benjamin Hawkins, the object of their “implacable hate.”50 About 6 o’clock the company separated in good order, pleased with each other, and full of enthusiastic admiration of their illustrious guest.

About 7 o’clock the General was escorted to the Ballroom at the Bell Tavern, where was collected a numerous and brilliant assemblage of beauty. Pleasure beamed in every eye; every countenance was lighted up with joy; the accent of gratified satisfaction hung on every tongue; all hearts were filled with the same delighted and delightful emotions. A handsome supper was prepared by Mrs. Bunch, and set out with considerable style. [The] well-pleased party separated at an orderly hour, without the slightest circumstance having transpired to mar the pleasure or interrupt the harmony of the evening.51

Everyone slept securely that night, even those respectable citizens who perhaps were unable to recall every event or every toast of the celebration. And, after all, the next day, Sunday was a day of rest.

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48 Madison Gazette, May 10, 1814.
49 Ibid.
50 The unfortunate Hawkins was always considered honest and able; there was no doubt. Originally his appointment by President Washington was made when the government maintained an image as the Great White Father to the native Indians. As the agent for the United States government, Hawkins spoke out in defense of treaty rights for the Indians and was, as a result, poorly thought of among the settlers. Fortunately history considers him more kindly today.
51 Madison Gazette, May 10, 1814.
The hero of the day retired early; he was not well. Anne Royall described Jackson as, “tall and slender. [Jackson was 6’1” but sometimes weighted as little as 120 lbs.] Features not handsome, but strikingly bold and determined. He is very easy and affable in his manners and loves a jest, but there is a dignity about him. His language is pure and fluent, and he has the appearance of having kept the best company.” Those who raced at the Green Bottom Inn racetrack would be pleased to hear they were among the “best company.” Modestly, Jackson told one of her party that he was only “one of the blue hen’s chickens.” Although he was not from Delaware, the phrase implied that he thought of himself, as did everyone else, as a formidable fighter.52

General Jackson was the hero of the south and soon to be of the entire nation for many reasons. Besides being an awesome fighter and leader, he was considered to be “good and kind to his soldiers.” One of his soldiers informed Anne Royall, the man, Andrew Jackson would “walk through the mud for miles and let his sick men ride his horse. He would distribute his biscuit, tea, and whatever his private stores consisted of, among the sick.”53 At the same time this is the general who did not hesitate to order a soldier shot for desertion, and he aimed his own pistol at soldiers who attempted to desert.

Jackson was not in good physical condition himself. Still recovering from the attack by the Benton brothers when he heard the news of the Mims massacre, Jackson left his sickbed in Nashville and took charge of the army. Bits of bone were still being expelled from his arm, and he was unable to put his left arm in the sleeve of his jacket. During the campaign he suffered from fever, dysentery, pulmonary hemorrhaging, and malaria. To relieve these symptoms he was given the best current medical prescriptions – massive doses of calomel and sugar of lead, effectively poisoning his entire body.

* * *

By next morning the shouting and the toasts were done. The troops continued on to Tennessee where most of them were eager to return to their families. Even though it was Sunday, servants and townspeople probably cleaned up after the grand celebrations at Poplar Grove, the Bell Tavern, and the Town Square. Surely the festive atmosphere spilled over into other local taverns and outlying homes as well.

The baby, Lincoya, joined Jackson, the faithful Charles and the returning army as they traveled northward. Jackson met Rachel and Andrew Jackson, Jr. just outside of Nashville in a triumphal return. The orphan was raised in a totally

52 Royall, Letters, 152,196.
53 Ibid., 152. Mrs. Royall wrote a good deal more about the common soldiers’ affection and admiration for Jackson.
white man's environment with Jackson, Jr., the Jackson's ward A. J. Hutchings, and the miscellaneous nephews and nieces at the Hermitage.\footnote{United States' Telegraph, July 3, 1828.}

Lincoya was sickly in his early years, but at the age of eight he was strong enough to be sent to the same day school in the neighborhood as the other boys. The General hoped to send him to West Point as his education progressed, but the political climate had changed by then, and the appointment was not received. Jackson suggested Lincoya use his mechanical tendencies and learn a trade. The lad chose to become a saddler and was apprenticed in Nashville in 1827.\footnote{Ibid.}

Unfortunately during that winter Lincoya caught a cold which settled in his lungs, and he returned home to the Hermitage. His family treated him with the "greatest kindness and care." While he was able, he often rode horseback with Mrs. Jackson on short excursions or traveled in the family carriage. However, he died of consumption "under the roof of the hero who had conquered his nation, but who followed his remains to a decent grave and shed a tear as the earth closed over him forever."\footnote{Ibid. Although this story would suggest the grave is on the grounds of the Hermitage, Lincoya's actual gravesite is unknown.}

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In January of 1815 Jackson and the army went on to soundly defeat the British at New Orleans, and he became truly a national hero. His military days may have been over, but his battles continued as he entered politics. A grateful state elected him to the U. S. Senate from Tennessee in 1823, and in 1828 a grateful nation elected him the seventh President of the United States. Unfortunately his beloved Rachel died less than a month before he left for the inauguration in Washington, D. C. In 1832 the first national political conventions were held. The group nominated Jackson for President as they formed what would become the Democratic Party. The people again elected Jackson to serve as President. After his somewhat stormy second term in Washington, he returned to Tennessee. He died there, near Nashville, in 1845. Jackson was buried beside Rachel in the gardens of the Hermitage.

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Among those present that day in 1814 for the ceremonies on Pope's hill in Huntsville, Andrew Jackson became the most distinguished as a legendary war hero and President of his country. There were others who were no less important within the state. Six counties in Alabama were named for men who probably were in attendance—Bibb, Chambers, Walker, Clay, Coffee, and Jackson. Five
men went on to become Governors of the state of Alabama – William Wyatt Bibb, Thomas Bibb, Gabriel Moore, Clement Clay, and Hugh McVay.

In safety now, Huntsville continued to grow; statehood was just around the corner in five years. Citizens returned to the rhythms of everyday life on the frontier. Farmers planted their crops, hunted for game, gathered for muster day, and met afterwards to argue politics. The womenfolk worked in the fields too, prepared the homespun thread, cooked, tended the sick, and gathered at the quilting bees to share gossip. Of course the children worked in the fields, and some attended school if they were lucky. Merchants sold, tinkers mended, servants and slaves performed their work. On Sunday most folks tried to attend some kind of church meeting. After services the well to do sat down to a meal eaten with their silverware, the middlin’ folk with pewter, and the less fortunate were glad to have spoons of muscle shells. All took up the task again of making a home and a town for their families and loved ones. Probably that day of joy was celebrated in stories long after the events. Recollections are meant to be shared, and who can say if some accounts were exaggerated as time passed. After all, it was one fine day in May when the Militia and General Jackson returned to Huntsville