

(The) Colonel Leroy
Pope-Spragins House
Huntsville, Alabama

Madison Co.

HABS No. 16-406

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 16

Historic American Buildings Survey
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Project #16-406
THE COLONEL LEROY POPE HOME
Huntsville, Alabama

HISTORICAL DATA:

Built in 1834.
Architect:
Purchase price of property: \$23 per acre.

Ownership:

Colonel LeRoy Pope bought in 1809 at the Government land sale, all the land now covered by Huntsville. The lot he built his house upon was part of this original purchase, near the Big Spring, around which Huntsville grew.

Dr. Charles H. Patton bought the property on February 5, 1848.

Mary B. Echols, daughter of Dr. Patton, acquired this home in 1868, and the property still belongs to her estate.

Present Occupants:

R. E. Spragins and family.

Colonel LeRoy Pope:

In 1809, Colonel Pope bought from the Government all the land now covered by Huntsville for \$23 per acre. This land was around a great spring, from which the city still gets its water supply.

Colonel Pope gave or sold all of this original purchase except about 25 1/2 acres. On this estate, with the bluff to the back and bordered by White Street and Madain Lane, the Colonel built his home.

Colonel Pope married Judith Sale, granddaughter of Captain John Sale, who served seven years under George Washington and who was placed in charge of the Hessians captured at Trenton.

Colonel Pope was the president of the Alabama State Convention, which resulted in the formation of Alabama as a state. This convention was held at Huntsville. Alabama became a state in 1819.

Colonel Pope died in 1844.

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Twickenham: This was Huntsville's first name.

The town was named after the home of Alexander Pope. This was the first English town in Alabama. Later this name was changed to Huntsville.

LeRoy Pope Walker:

The Colonel's grandson.
First Secretary of War for the Confederacy.
He ordered Fort Sumter fired upon.

Civil War Period:

This house was occupied by Federal troops. The sons of the home went to war, the women found refuge in South Alabama.

Dr. Charles H. Patton:

In 1848, four years after the death of Colonel Pope (1844), Dr. Patton bought this home.

Dr. Patton made vast plans for the renovating the house, also for enlarging it. But the Civil War occurred, thus putting a halt to these plans. So this old home has remained unchanged, in most particulars, to this day.

Grounds:

Colonel Leroy Pope selected, of all Huntsville, Echols Hill, near the Big Spring, for his home. This site overlooked the whole town, in the early days. The original estate consisted of twenty-five and a half acres. After the Civil War its owners were compelled to divide this magnificent estate into lots and sell most of the land surrounding the home.

The private cemetery of the Pope family has been discarded. The bodies of Colonel LeRoy Pope and his wife have been removed from the family graveyard to Maple Hill Cemetery.

Source of Material:

Historic Homes, by Pat Jones, published in the Huntsville Times, August 28, 1932.

Reviewed by H.C.F. 1/36

COLONEL LEROY POPE HOME
Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

This most noted Huntsville house has a very prominent location on the top of the highest hill, in back of the famous Huntsville Spring, overlooking the portion of present Huntsville between the foot of the hill and the spring, and the extensive Tennessee Valley.

With this in view, the designer-builder, Mr. George Steele, must have forced the unusual front which this house possesses. The truncated pediment with wood balustrade is one of the rare pediment motives. The semi-circular window and the arched pediment cornice are of unusual treatment.

The right side has a unique use of a side entrance, made necessary, no doubt, by the rapid falling off of the hillside from the front portico.

The interior details are fine in character, but nothing unusual, as the exterior might suggest.

One story slave quarters are still in existence in the rear of the building.

MAJOR, DOM. ARCH. OF EARLY AMER. REPUB., PL 144

Source of Material:

E. Walter Burkhardt, District Administrator, HABS.
Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama.

Pat Jones, Historic Homes, published in the Huntsville Times, August 28, 1932.

Howard Major, The Domestic Architecture of the Early American Republic, the Greek Revival, Lippincott, 1926.

(Revised at HABS Headquarters

Feb. 13, 1936 - H.C.F.)

(Original sheet in field notebook).