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# Elections - Historical Notes

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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# Elections - Historical Notes

## **Districts - Reapportionment**

The acts listed below have affected the civil districts in Benton County, but are no longer operative regarding elections. Also referenced below is an act which repeals prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 275, abolished the 16 Civil Districts into which Benton County was then divided and created six Civil Districts, made up of the old Civil Districts. The First Civil District had the old 1st, 2nd, and 13th Civil Districts; the Second Civil District had the old 3rd, 11th, and 15th Civil Districts; the Third Civil District had the old 4th, 12th, and 14th Civil Districts; the Fourth Civil District had the old 7th and 10th Civil Districts; the Fifth Civil District had the old 5th and 6th Civil Districts; and the Sixth Civil District had the old 8th, 9th, and 16th Civil Districts. These new districts would remain as herein constituted until changed by the General Assembly.
2. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 315, amended Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 275, above, by adding a Seventh Civil District to the Six fashioned by that law. This Act was for all apparent purposes repealed by the one below.
3. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 497, repealed Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 275, above, and restored the 16 Civil Districts of Benton County which were in existence prior to the passage of that Act. Each Justice of the Peace who formerly represented the Districts should continue to do so and those who found themselves lacking their quota of Justices should immediately hold elections for them.

## **Elections**

The following is a listing of acts for Benton County which affected the elective process, but which have been superseded or repealed. They are listed here for historical and reference purposes.

1. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1, divided Tennessee into 25 State Senatorial Districts of which the 19th was composed of the counties of Dickson, Stewart, Humphreys, and Benton. The polls would be counted at Simmons Old Store in Dickson County. Humphreys County and Benton County would elect one Representative between them and these polls were to be counted at Reynoldsburgh in Humphreys County.
2. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, delineated eleven U.S. Congressional Districts for the State. The Ninth District had in it the counties of Robertson, Montgomery, Stewart, Dickson, Humphreys, Benton, and Henry.
3. Public Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, was the first post Civil War Act to attempt to provide for representation for Tennessee in the U.S. Congress. The Act set up eight districts across the State which reflected the decimation of the Civil War. The Seventh District contained the counties of Benton, Henry, Weakley, Obion, Dyer, Gibson, Lauderdale, Anderson and Carroll.
4. Public Acts of 1867-68, Chapter 7, stated that the votes polled in Humphreys and Benton Counties for Representative in the lower State House shall hereafter be compared at Johnsonville on the Monday next following the election.
5. Acts of 1872 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, apportioned the State for representation in the United States Congress according to the 1870 Federal Census count. There were still eight districts of which the Seventh District consisted of the counties of Montgomery, Houston, Stewart, Humphreys, Benton, Henry, Carroll, Henderson, Decatur, Perry, Hardin, and McNairy.
6. Public Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, in an apparent adjustment of representation to the U.S. Congress, delineated Tennessee into ten U.S. Congressional Districts. The Eighth District contained Henry, Benton, Carroll, Perry, Decatur, Hardin, McNairy, Henderson, and Madison Counties.
7. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 6, reapportioned Tennessee for the General Assembly, probably based on the 1880 census taking, into Senatorial and Representative Districts. Benton County would select one Representative alone and was a part of the 26th Senatorial District with Carroll and Decatur Counties.
8. Public Acts of 1882 (2nd Ex. Sess.), Chapter 27, divided the State into ten U.S. Congressional Districts of which Henry, Benton, Perry, Decatur, Hardin, McNairy, Henderson, Madison, and Carroll Counties were assigned to the 8th U.S. Congressional District.
9. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, reapportioned the whole State. Henry, Benton, and Decatur

County would elect one Representative and Benton, Humphreys, Decatur, and Hardin Counties would share one State Senator for the 24th Senatorial District.

10. Public Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, was the Act apportioning the State in accord with the 1900 Federal Census, starting the twentieth century. Benton and Decatur County would elect one Representative together and Hardeman, McNairy, Hardin, Decatur, and Benton Counties would make up the 26th State Senatorial District.
11. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 876, exempted Benton County, by using the 1940 Federal population figures, from the demands and operations of Section 1996, Code of Tennessee.

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