



July 22, 2024

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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Districts Reapportionment

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 Also referenced below is an act which repealed prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 1, required the General Assembly to adopt a Resolution which would name Commissioners charged with the responsibility of laying off their county into the number of civil districts as determined by the population of the county. This Act was passed after the adoption of the new State Constitution.
2. Resolution #6, was properly adopted in compliance with the terms of the Act set out above in Item One. William H. Biggs, Ezekiel Spriggs, William Smedley, Isaac W. Brazelton, and Samuel Mahan, were appointed as commissioners to lay off Bradley County into eight Civil Districts, under the same rules and regulations applicable to all the other counties.
3. Private Acts of 1903, Chapter 326, abolished the 14th Civil District in Bradley County, placing all the area embraced in that civil district into the 6th Civil District. The positions of Justice of the Peace and Constable which existed in the District were likewise abolished, the Justice being required to surrender all the records and books to the Justices of the 6th Civil District. All the elections in the Sixth Civil District would hereafter be held at the courthouse in Cleveland.
4. Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 17, abolished the four Civil Districts of Bradley County and established two in their stead. The First Civil District consisted of all that area of the County outside of the City of Cleveland and the Second Civil District was made up of the area within the City of Cleveland. The First Civil District would have two Justices of the Peace and a Constable while the Second Civil District was allowed three Justices of the Peace and two Constables. After the effective date of this Act, all other positions of Justice and Constable were abolished. Named in the Act to serve until the general August elections in 1944 could produce their successors to take office on September 1, 1944, were John D. Bowman and Alfton Mackey, as Justices, and Will Runions, as Constable, in the First Civil District, and J. D. Morelock, Lon Brock, and John A. Million, as Justices, and Charlie Smith and Wayne Samples, as Constables, in the Second Civil District. This Act was repealed for all practical purposes by the one following.
5. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 90, reestablished the four Civil Districts of Bradley County as they existed prior to January 8, 1943, and abolished the two Civil Districts which were provided under the 1943 Act above. The proper number of Justices of the Peace and Constables would be elected in the Districts at any election to be held in 1948. This Act was not intended to affect any school, or taxing district, or the terms of any Justice of the Peace, or Constable, but was intended to restore the four Civil Districts of Bradley county as they existed prior to the 1943 Act.

Elections

The following is a listing of acts for Bradley 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, Chapter 1, apportioned the General Assembly of Tennessee into 25 State Senatorial Districts and 50 State Representative Districts for the first time. The Seventh State Senatorial District was made up of the counties of Monroe, McMinn, Polk, and Bradley, while Bradley County would elect one Representative alone.
2. Acts of 1842, Chapter 7, established eleven U. S. Congressional Districts in the State and assigned the Counties of Knox, Roane, Bledsoe, Rhea, Meigs, McMinn, Polk, Bradley, Hamilton, and Marion to the Third U. S. Congressional District.
3. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 196, set up ten U. S. Congressional Districts in the State. The Third District was made up of the Counties of Blount, Monroe, Polk, McMinn, Meigs, Rhea, Bledsoe,

Bradley, Hamilton, Marion, and Roane.

4. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 197, stated that Bradley County would elect one State Representative alone, and would share a State Senator with the Counties of Rhea, Bledsoe, Hamilton, and Marion.
5. Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, was a post Civil War Act which divided Tennessee into eight U. S. Congressional Districts of which the Second U. S. Congressional District contained the Counties of Claiborne, Union, Knox, Campbell, Scott, Morgan, Anderson, Blount, Monroe, Polk, McMinn, Bradley, and Roane.
6. Acts of 1869-70, Chapter 105, was the legal authority to hold a referendum election across the State on the question of calling a constitutional convention consisting of 75 delegates from the Representative and Senatorial Districts of the State to change, alter, revise, or rewrite the present State Constitution. If approved by the voters, the Convention would meet in Nashville on the second Monday in January, 1870.
7. Acts of 1871, Chapter 146, apportioned the representation in the General Assembly of the State based upon the 1870 census and the new Constitution. Polk County and Bradley County would jointly elect one of the 50 Representatives and the Sixth State Senatorial District included the Counties of Loudon, Monroe, McMinn, Meigs, Bradley and Polk.
8. Acts of 1872, Chapter 7, divided Tennessee into nine U. S. Congressional Districts. The Third U. S. Congressional District was made up of the Counties of Blount, Loudon, Roane, Monroe, McMinn, Meigs, Rhea, Polk, Bradley, James, Hamilton, Marion, Sequatchie, Bledsoe, Grundy, Van Buren, and Warren.
9. Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, established ten U. S. Congressional Districts in the State composed of whole Counties. The Third Congressional District consisted of the Counties of Polk, McMinn, Meigs, Rhea, Bradley, James, Hamilton, Marion, Grundy, Sequatchie, Bledsoe, Van Buren, White, Warren, DeKalb, Cannon, and Cumberland.
10. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 5, permanently fixed the number of Senators in the State General Assembly at 33 and the number of Representatives at 99.
11. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 6, apportioned the State Legislature to conform to the new law regulating its composition. Bradley County and Polk County would share one Representative under the new quotas and Bradley County would join Polk County, Meigs County, McMinn County, and James County in constituting the Seventh State Senatorial District.
12. Acts of 1882, Chapter 27, established ten U. S. Congressional Districts in Tennessee, allocating the Counties of Monroe, Polk, Bradley, Hamilton, James, McMinn, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, Marion, Grundy, Van Buren, White, and Warren to the Third Congressional District.
13. Acts of 1883, Chapter 237, amended Chapter 27, Acts of 1882 so as to include within the Third Congressional District only the Counties of Monroe, Polk, Bradley, Hamilton, Meigs, Cumberland, James, McMinn, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, Marion, Grundy, Van Buren, White, and Warren.
14. Acts of 1891, Chapter 131, did some re-arranging of the counties in the ten U. S. Congressional Districts of the State. The Third District included the counties of Monroe, Polk, Bradley, Hamilton, James, McMinn, Bledsoe, Grundy, Van Buren, White, Warren, Franklin, Marion, and Meigs.
15. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, reorganized the representation in the State Legislature. Bradley County would elect one State Representative alone, and share a State Senator with the Counties of Monroe, McMinn, Polk, and James in the Seventh State Senatorial District.
16. Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, assigned Bradley County to the Third U.S. Congressional District out of the ten specified by the Act. Other Counties in the District were Monroe, Polk, McMinn, Meigs, James, Hamilton, Marion, Sequatchie, Bledsoe, Van Buren, Grundy, White, Warren and Franklin.

17. Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, rearranged the representation in the General Assembly of the State. The Seventh State Senatorial District was composed of Anderson, Roane, McMinn, Bradley, and James Counties. The Counties of Polk, Bradley, and James would share a Representative. Over 60 years would pass before the General Assembly would be reapportioned.
18. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 283, stated that no registration of voters was required to exercise their franchise at the precinct nearest them. This Act would not apply to incorporated cities, nor would the registration of voters be a prerequisite to voting in any election, State, County, or City.
19. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 370, amended Chapter 17, Acts of 1897, by inserting population figures which made that Act applicable to Bradley County. The amended act referred to the number of permissible civil districts in a County and the required population of the District.
20. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 272, which was properly ratified by the Quarterly Court, was the authority for the election officials to pay the election officers and others holding elections the sum of \$8.00 per day and, further, to see that polling places were kept open from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

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