



County Technical Assistance Service  
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

March 29, 2025

---

# Boundaries - Historical Notes

---

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website ([ctas.tennessee.edu](http://ctas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

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,

The University of Tennessee  
County Technical Assistance Service  
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
615.532.3555 phone  
615.532.3699 fax  
[www.ctas.tennessee.edu](http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu)

Table of Contents

<b>Boundaries - Historical Notes .....</b>	<b>3</b>
--	----------

## Boundaries - Historical Notes

The following is a summary of acts which authorized boundary changes for Carter County.

1. Acts of 1803, Chapter 35, authorized the County Court of Carter County to appoint one Commissioner to run and designate such parts of the county lines as they he deemed proper. The Commissioner was permitted to employ one Marker. The act provided the Commissioner with \$2 per day for each day of employment and the Marker was allowed \$1 per day, to be paid out of the County Treasury.
2. Acts of 1804, Chapter 18, changed the lines between Carter and Sullivan Counties. John McKay was appointed Surveyor to run this line at a salary of \$2 per day for his services.
3. Acts of 1809 (Sept. Sess.), Chapter 27, authorized Elihu Embree, of Washington County, to employ a Surveyor to run a line to include the dwelling house of Embree in Carter County, but not to take more than 50 acres from Washington County. The line was to be recorded at Embree's expense and was to be part of the dividing line between Washington and Carter Counties.
4. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 211, provided that the Quarterly County Court of Carter County appoint a suitable person to run and mark the line between the Counties of Johnson and Carter lying between the County of Sullivan and the Watauga River. Carter County was to pay a reasonable compensation out of any money in the County Treasury for the services. The Surveyor shall make and return a fair plat of such line to the Clerk of the County Court, who was to record the same.
5. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 249, moved the lands upon which Joshua Perkins and Richard G. Perkins lived from Johnson County into Carter County.
6. Public Acts of 1868-69, Chapter 20, appointed James G. Smith and William C. Emmett of Carter County and John Anderson and John Welch of Sullivan County as a Commission to run the line between Sullivan and Carter Counties, beginning at the coroners of Carter, Sullivan and Washington Counties near Widow Humphrey's place with the county line to the top of Holston Mountain. Commissioners were to be compensated as the court might direct.
7. Public Acts of 1869-70 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 21, transferred the lands and residence of H.P. Phillips from Washington County into Carter County.
8. Public Acts of 1870-71, Chapter 41, appointed James G. Smith, William C. Emmett and Sam A. Cunningham of Carter County; John Wolf, R. P. Fickle and the Surveyor of Sullivan County; and John Bowman and G. W. St. John of Washington County as Commissioners to re-survey and establish the line between Carter and Sullivan Counties, beginning at the corner of Carter, Washington and Sullivan Counties near the residence of the Widow Humphreys, thence with the line between Carter and Sullivan Counties to the top of Holston Mountain. The Commissioners would run and mark the line and file a plat of it in the office of the Secretary of State and in the Register's office in Carter and Sullivan Counties. The line established would be recognized as the true dividing line. The expenses would be paid by the respective County Courts.
9. Public Acts of 1871, Chapter 61, appointed T. A. Faw, E. F. Akard and John Hardin of Washington County as Commissioners. They were to examine records, take testimony and any other means necessary to ascertain the true and original corner of Carter and Sullivan Counties on the same lines mentioned in the above act. The Commissioners were to make full report of their findings to the County Courts of Carter and Sullivan Counties to enter into their respective records. This would be the boundary line in law and equity. The Commissioners would receive compensation for their services by Carter and Sullivan Counties.
10. Public Acts of 1883, Chapter 201, changed the lines between Carter and Unicoi Counties to begin at the State line between North Carolina and Tennessee on the top of Rickels Ridge, thence with the top of the Dividing Ridge to the top of Stone Mountain, thence on a direct line to Honey Comb Mountain, repealing all conflicting acts.
11. Public Acts of 1887, Chapter 21, designated practical Surveyors William H. Gaines of Sullivan County, J. O. Robertson of Washington County and Nat Hyder of Carter County as Commissioners. They would examine all records, evidence, take testimony and use any other means to determine the true and original corner of Carter and Sullivan Counties, near the Widow Humphrey's residence, to survey and mark the line between the two Counties to the top of Holston Mountain. If they could not serve, the County Court of that County would appoint another Surveyor. The Commissioners were to make a full report to the County Court of Carter and Sullivan Counties to enter into their respective records. This would be the established boundary in law and equity. The Commissioners would receive compensation for their services.

12. Public Acts of 1895, Chapter 61, changed the line between Carter and Johnson Counties to begin on the county line at the top of the Dividing Ridge between the said Counties, then with the old stage road to the Branch at the residence of Eli Oliver, up the McQueen Branch to the northern boundary of Dicey Marley's land, west with her line to the Johnson County line and then back to the beginning.
13. Public Acts of 1899, Chapter 171, altered the lines between Carter and Washington Counties so as to include all the farm of H.B. Huston in the 13th Civil District of Carter County. A metes and bounds description is furnished in the act.
14. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 275, moved all the lands of I. W. McQueen and V. A. L. Rainbolt from Carter County into Johnson County.
15. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 646, repealed Private Acts of 1899, Chapter 171, above.

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/private-acts/boundaries-historical-notes-8>