



March 29, 2025

Law Enforcement - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (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,

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Militia

Those acts once affecting Cocke County, which related to the militia and to other law enforcement agencies other than the sheriff, are mentioned below in chronological order.

1. Acts of 1801, Chapter 84, authorized the Cocke County regiment of militia to muster at the upper end of the plantation of John Gilliland's widow.
2. Acts of 1801, Chapter 87, provided that the calvary of Cocke, Jefferson, Grainger and Claiborne counties would compose a separate regiment, and that they would hold their annual muster at Cheek's Crossroads.
3. Acts of 1803, Chapter 1, provided for the establishment and regulation of the militia of the state. The act also divided the militia of state in which Cocke County's militia formed the eighth regiment.
4. Acts of 1815, Chapter 119, revised and amended the militia laws of the state. The militia of Cocke County composed the eighth regiment.
5. Public Acts of 1819, Chapter, 68, revised and amended the militia laws of the state. The militia of Cocke County composed the eight regiment and held regimental musters on the on the third Saturday in October.
6. Public Acts of 1825, Chapter 69, revised and amended the militia laws of the state. The militia of Cocke County composed the eighth regiment and placed in the second brigade. The militia of Cocke County held regimental musters on the third Saturday in October.
7. Public Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 21, divided the militia of the state into companies, battalions, regiments, brigades and divisions, and prescribed the times and modes of electing officers. The militia of Cocke County formed the twelfth regiment.
8. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 157, set the dates for the annual musters of the second brigade in Cocke County on the Wednesday and Thursday following the first Friday and Saturday in September.
9. Acts of 1839-40, Chapter 56, condensed and brought into one view the militia law of the state. The militia of Cocke County formed the twelfth regiment and was placed in the second brigade
10. Public Acts of 1861, Chapter 1, was an overall militia law for the state. The Cocke County militia formed the twelfth regiment and was placed in the second brigade.

Offenses

The acts briefly summarized below fell into this category in Cocke County. Also referenced below is an act which repeals prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 705, regulated the possession, storage, use, manufacture, or sale of pyrotechnics in Cocke County. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1985, Chapter 67.

Sheriff

The following acts have no current effect but are included here for reference purposes since they once applied to the Cocke County Sheriff's Office.

1. Private Acts of 1831, Chapter 123, authorized the sheriff of Cocke County to appoint three deputies.
2. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 153, authorized the Cocke County Sheriff to appoint one additional deputy.
3. Public Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 21, Section 2, provided that the various sheriffs, who may be elected in Cocke County, may have the privilege of appointing three or more deputies, as convenience may require.
4. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 595, required law enforcement officers in Cocke County to capture all illicit distilleries and to destroy immediately all the fixtures, equipment, supplies and liquor found at such distilleries. This act also gave officers the authority to seize any liquor being illegally transported.
5. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 786, set the maximum salary of the Cocke County Sheriff at \$2,500 annually, to be paid from the fees of the office, except the fees received for boarding prisoners.
6. Private Acts of 1975, Chapter 170, attempted to create a civil service merit board for the Cocke County Sheriff's office, but this act did not receive local approval and never took effect.

7. Private Acts of 1978, Chapter 248, would have repealed Private Acts of 1831, Chapter 123, but the act was never acted upon by local officials and therefore never became law.

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