



County Technical Assistance Service  
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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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 Hardeman County, but are no longer operative regarding elections.

1. Acts of 1905, Chapter 29, created and established eight Civil Districts in lieu of the existing twenty Districts and set forth the boundaries for each new District.
2. Acts of 1907, Chapter 509, created the Ninth Civil District in Hardeman County from parts of the Seventh and Eighth Districts. The act also changed the line between the First and the Sixth Civil Districts. The Governor was empowered to appoint two Justices of the Peace for the new District, each to serve until the next regular election.
3. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 51, changed the line between the Eighth and the Ninth Civil Districts in the area of the Bolivar and Jackson Road near the lands of J. A. Naylor and A. T. and L. E. Nuckolls known as the "Shandy Farm".

## **Elections**

The following is a listing of acts for Hardeman County which affected the elective process, but which have been superseded or repealed.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

1. Public Acts of 1824, Chapter 1, divided the State into eleven Electoral Districts for the election of the President and Vice President. The Eleventh District was composed of Wayne, Perry, and Hardin Counties and all other counties west of the Tennessee River.
2. Public Acts of 1826, Chapter 3, apportioned the State for representation in the General Assembly into 20 Senatorial and 40 Representative Districts. One Senator would be elected jointly by Haywood, Madison, Tipton, Hardeman, Fayette, and Shelby Counties, and McNairy, Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby, and Tipton Counties would elect one Representative.
3. Public Acts of 1827, Chapter 17, separated Tennessee into eleven Presidential Electoral Districts. The Eleventh District contained the Counties of Henry, Weakley, Hardeman, Obion, Carroll, Gibson, Dyer, Henderson, Madison, Haywood, Tipton, McNairy, Fayette and Shelby.
4. Public Acts of 1832, Chapter 4, organized Tennessee into thirteen U. S. Congressional Districts, placing in the Thirteenth District the Counties of Perry, Henderson, McNairy, Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby and Tipton.
5. Public Acts of 1832, Chapter 9, declared that fifteen Presidential electors would be chosen in Tennessee and that the Fourteenth District would be composed of the Counties of Hardeman, Hardin, Henderson, McNairy, Madison, Fayette and Shelby.
6. Public Acts of 1833, Chapter 71, reapportioned the State for the General Assembly which would be composed of twenty Senators and forty Representatives. The Counties of Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby and Tipton would elect one Senator and McNairy and Hardeman Counties would share a Representative. The polls in the Representative District were to be counted at Purdy. The polls in the Senatorial District were to be counted at Somerville.
7. Public Acts of 1833, Chapter 76, provided that a Constitutional Convention consisting of sixty delegates would convene in Nashville on May 10, 1834. Hardeman County would elect one delegate to the Convention which would revise, amend, or alter the Constitution, or form a new one.
8. Public Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 39, divided the State into Fifteen Presidential Electoral Districts. Hardeman, Hardin, Henderson, McNairy, Madison, Fayette and Shelby Counties were assigned to the Fourteenth District.
9. Acts of 1839-40, Chapter 79, provided that the Presidential Electoral Districts would coincide with the U. S. Congressional Districts. Fifteen Electors would be selected in the Districts and two selected at large.
10. Acts of 1842 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 1, apportioned the State for the General Assembly into twenty-five Senatorial Districts and fifty Representative Districts. Hardeman County was in the Twenty-fifth Senatorial District with Fayette and Shelby Counties. Polls would be counted in Somerville. Hardeman County alone would elect one Representative and elect another with Fayette and Shelby Counties.
11. Acts of 1842 (2nd Sess.), Chapter 7, provided for eleven U. S. Congressional Districts in Tennessee. The Tenth District contained the Counties of McNairy, Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby,

- Tipton, Haywood, Lauderdale and Dyer.
12. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 196, formed ten U.S. Congressional Districts in the State. The Counties of Hardeman, Madison, Haywood, Fayette, and Shelby were assigned to the Tenth District.
  13. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 197, apportioned the State for representation in the General Assembly. Hardeman County would elect one Representative. The Counties of Hardeman, Hardin, and McNairy would elect jointly one Senator.
  14. Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 32, directed that the Sheriff of Hardeman County, in person or through his Deputy, open and hold an election in the Town of Pocahontas in the Eleventh Civil District of the County in the manner prescribed by law.
  15. Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 88, Section 15, established a new voting district in Hardeman County at Toon's Depot and the qualified voters residing in that area would be entitled to cast their votes there.
  16. Private Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 146, Section 4, directed the Sheriff of Hardeman County, in person or through his Deputy, to open and hold an election in the newly incorporated Town of Middleburg for the purpose of electing Town officials.
  17. Public Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, was the first apportionment act subsequent to the Civil War and it divided Tennessee into eight U. S. Congressional Districts. The Eighth District contained the Counties of McNairy, Hardeman, Fayette, Shelby, Tipton, Madison and Haywood.
  18. Public of 1869-70, Chapter 105, authorized a referendum to be held on the proposed calling of a Constitutional Convention which would amend, revise, or form a new Constitution for the State. The ballots would be simply a "For" or "Against" proposition. There would be seventy-five delegates to the convention and each county would have the same number of delegates as it had Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly. The delegates elected would convene in Nashville on the second Monday in January, 1870.
  19. Public Acts of 1871, Chapter 146, reapportioned Tennessee for the General Assembly based upon the 1870 Federal Census. Of the fifty Representatives, Hardeman County would elect one alone and share a floater with Madison and Haywood Counties. Madison and Hardeman Counties jointly would elect one of the twenty-five Senators.
  20. Acts of 1872 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, created nine U. S. Congressional Districts with Shelby, Tipton, Fayette and Hardeman Counties making up the Ninth District.
  21. Public Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, added a tenth U. S. Congressional District to the State and rearranged the county assignments of each District. Shelby, Fayette, and Hardeman Counties were allocated to the Tenth District.
  22. Public Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 5, fixed the number of State Senators at thirty-three and the Representatives at ninety-nine.
  23. Public Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 6, apportioned Tennessee into districts. McNairy and Hardeman Counties composed the Twenty-fourth State Senatorial District and Hardeman County would elect one Representative and jointly elect another with Fayette County.
  24. Public Acts of 1882 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 27, divided Tennessee into ten U. S. Congressional Districts. The Counties of Hardeman, Fayette, Tipton and Shelby composed the Tenth District.
  25. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, provided that Hardeman County would elect one Representative alone and share a floater Representative with Lauderdale, Tipton, Haywood, Shelby and Fayette Counties. Hardeman, McNairy and Chester Counties composed the Twenty-seventh State Senatorial District.
  26. Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, divided the State into ten U. S. Congressional Districts. The Tenth District contained the Counties of Shelby, Hardeman, Tipton and Fayette.
  27. Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, apportioned the representation for the General Assembly of Tennessee based upon the 1900 Federal Census. The Twenty-sixth State Senatorial District contained the Counties of Hardeman, McNairy, Hardin, Decatur and Benton. Hardeman County would elect one Representative for itself and elect another with Haywood and Chester Counties.
  28. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 101, amended the State Election laws so that the registration of voters would not be a prerequisite to voting in Hardeman County in any election. The Election Commission would appoint two Registrars for each voting precinct and to perform all the acts necessary to carry on the election.
  29. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 607, amended Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, above, by removing Hardeman County from the Tenth U. S. Congressional District and assigning it to the Eighth

District.

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