



County Technical Assistance Service
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Elections - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

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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,

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

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Districts - Reapportionment

The acts listed below have affected the civil districts or voting precincts in Sumner County, but are no longer operative regarding elections.

1. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 1, required both houses of the General Assembly, by joint Resolution, to appoint five (5) suitable people, as Commissioners, in each County to lay off the county into Districts of convenient size regarding both land area and population. The number of Districts would depend on the population of the County, as each County with 3,000 qualified voters would be divided into twenty-five (25) Districts. Resolution #3 accomplished this task for the State and named Daniel Montgomery, Thomas Anderson, William Hall, Meredith Hodges, and Jonothan Davis, for Sumner County.
2. Acts of 1868-69, Chapter 61, provided that the town of Gallatin, in Sumner County, would be a new Twentieth Civil District for Sumner County and parts of the Fifth, Sixth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Civil Districts could be included therein.
3. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 515, changed the lines between the First Civil District and the Eleventh Civil District of Sumner County.
4. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 322, established five voting precincts in the Third Civil District of Sumner County. Voting precincts are now determined by the county election commission according to general law.

Elections

The following is a listing of acts for Sumner County which affected the elective process, but which have been superseded or repealed. They are listed here for historical and reference purposes. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Acts of 1796, Chapter 4, named the electors from each County who would vote in the selection of a President and Vice-President of the United States. Kasper Mansker, Edward Douglas, and John Hogan, were designated as the electors from Sumner County. The convening of the electors from the Mero District would take place in Nashville.
2. Acts of 1796, Chapter 10, divided Tennessee into two separate sections, the Holston Section, which was composed of the Washington and Hamilton Districts and the Cumberland Section, which consisted of the Mero District. Each of these Districts would elect a Representative to the United States Legislature, the election taking place on the first Thursday in August, 1796.
3. Acts of 1798, Chapter 16, established twelve (12) Senatorial Districts and twenty-four (24) Representative Districts in the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee according to its Constitution. The Mero District was awarded four (4) Senators and eight (8) Representatives of which Sumner County would elect one (1) Senator and three (3) of the Representatives.
4. Acts of 1799, Chapter 46, provided that three (3) Presidential electors would be chosen from the State, one each from the Washington, Hamilton, and Mero Districts. The Act named the people in each County who would meet to choose an Elector. In Sumner County the duty was given to George Smith, Samuel Donelson, and Edward Douglas.
5. Acts of 1803, Chapter 24, fixed the number of Presidential Electors to be selected in the State at five (5). The Fourth District contained the counties of Jackson, Smith, Wilson, and Sumner who would elect one Elector jointly. The votes from this District would be counted at Bledsoeborough in Smith County on the Monday following the election.
6. Acts of 1803, Chapter 79, determined that the State would send three (3) Representatives to the Congress of the United States, one each from the Districts of Washington, Hamilton, and Mero.
7. Acts of 1805, Chapter 64, stated that the enumeration of citizens which was required by a former public act had been completed and the results reported to the General Assembly. The State would have thirteen (13) Senatorial Districts of which Sumner and Wilson Counties made up one and would elect one State Senator between them counting the polls at Gallatin. Of the twenty-six (26) Representatives in the House, Sumner County would elect two.
8. Acts of 1807, Chapter 58, provided for a separate election to be held at the home of William Harper in the east end of Sumner County for all authorized county elections, state elections, and national elections. A separate election would also be held at the home of Joshua Rice, Esq.
9. Acts of 1807, Chapter 74, established five (5) Districts for the Electors of the President and the

- Vice-President of the United States. The Fourth District contained the counties of Smith, Jackson, Overton, White, Sumner, Wilson, Warren, and Franklin. Votes would be tabulated at Carthage.
10. Acts of 1812, Chapter 5, increased the number of Presidential Electoral Districts in the State to eight (8) from five (5). The Fifth District was made up of the counties of Smith, Wilson, and Sumner, which would elect one Elector together. Votes would be counted and recorded at Cairo in Sumner County.
 11. Acts of 1812, Chapter 27, established six (6) U. S. Congressional Districts in Tennessee, doubling Tennessee's representation in Washington. The Fourth Congressional District was composed of the counties of Smith, Sumner, Wilson, and Jackson.
 12. Acts of 1812, Chapter 57, increased the membership of the General Assembly of Tennessee to twenty (20) Senators and forty (40) Representatives. Sumner County would elect one Senator and one Representative who would represent them.
 13. Acts of 1815, Chapter 31, organized Tennessee into eight (8) U. S. Electoral Districts for the election of the President of the United States.
 14. Acts of 1819, Chapter 5, set up a separate precinct election which would be held at the home of John Sarver in Sumner County for all State, County, and national elections.
 15. Acts of 1819, Chapter 69, divided the State into twenty (20) Senatorial and forty (40) Representative Districts. Sumner County would elect one Senator and one Representative alone.
 16. Public Acts of 1822, Chapter 1, established eight (8) U. S. Congressional Districts in the State. Smith County, Sumner County, and Wilson County composed the Fifth District.
 17. Public Acts of 1823, Chapter 47, formed eleven (11) Presidential Electoral Districts in Tennessee, assigning the counties of Smith, Sumner, and Wilson to the Sixth Electoral District.
 18. Acts of 1824, Chapter 1, was identical to the 1823 Act above, except that this Act specified that the votes be counted and recorded at Hartsville in Sumner County.
 19. Public Acts of 1826, Chapter 3, apportioned the State for representation in the General Assembly to twenty (20) Senators and forty (40) Representatives. Smith County and Sumner County made up one Senatorial District while Sumner County and Rutherford County would each elect two Representatives.
 20. Public Acts of 1827, Chapter 17, established eleven (11) Presidential Electoral Districts but left Smith County, Sumner County, and Wilson County in the Sixth District.
 21. Acts of 1832, Chapter 4, divided Tennessee into thirteen (13) U. S. Congressional Districts. The Sixth Congressional District included the counties of Jackson, Smith, and Sumner.
 22. Acts of 1832, Chapter 9, set up fifteen (15) Electoral Districts for the President and Vice- President's elections. Sumner County and Davidson County were the Eighth U. S. Congressional District.
 23. Acts of 1833, Chapter 71, provided that Smith County and Sumner County would constitute one of the twenty (20) State Senatorial Districts and that Sumner County would elect one of the forty (40) Representatives alone. Polls would be counted at Hartsville in Sumner County in the Senate election.
 24. Acts of 1833, Chapter 76, stated that a Constitutional Convention of sixty (60) members would be called, whose delegates would be elected on the first Thursday and Friday in March, and those selected would meet in Nashville on the third Monday in May to revise, amend, alter the present State Constitution, or form a new one. Smith and Sumner Counties would compose a District and jointly elect three (3) delegates.
 25. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 39, enacted subsequent to the adoption of the 1835 Constitution, formed fifteen (15) Presidential Electoral Districts in Tennessee. Sumner County and Davidson County formed the Eighth District.
 26. Acts of 1839-40, Chapter 79, shifted the responsibility for selecting Electors for the President and Vice-President to the General Assembly who would pick one Elector from each of the Congressional Districts in Tennessee.
 27. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 1, divided the State into twenty-five (25) Senatorial Districts and fifty (50) Representative Districts for the General Assembly. The counties of Smith and Sumner comprised one of the Senatorial Districts and Sumner County, alone, would elect two Representatives.
 28. Acts of 1842 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, established eleven (11) U. S. Congressional Districts in the

- State, also assigned Smith, Davidson, and Sumner Counties to the Eighth Congressional District.
29. Acts of 1847-48, Chapter 152, removed the place of holding the elections in the Sixteenth Civil District of Sumner County from the house of William Holdey to Daniel Perdue's school house in the said District.
 30. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 196, formed ten (10) U. S. Congressional Districts in the State. The Fifth District contained the counties of Sumner, Wilson, Rutherford, Cannon, and Williamson.
 31. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 197, apportioned the State for representation in the General Assembly. Sumner County would elect one Representative alone and share another with Smith and Macon Counties. Smith and Sumner Counties constituted one Senatorial District. All polls would be counted and recorded at Hartsville.
 32. Acts of 1865, Chapter 34, set up eight (8) U. S. Congressional Districts in Tennessee. The Fifth District contained the counties of Williamson, Davidson, Wilson, Sumner, Robertson, and Cheatham.
 33. Acts 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 seventyfive (75) 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.
 34. Acts of 1871, Chapter 146, apportioned the representation in the Tennessee General Assembly based on the 1870 Census. Sumner County would elect one Representative alone, and be a part of the Ninth State Senatorial District with the counties of Macon, Smith, Clay, Trousdale, and Jackson.
 35. Acts of 1872 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 7, divided Tennessee into nine (9) U. S. Congressional Districts, based on the 1870 Census. The Fifth District was made up of the Counties of Robertson, Cheatham, Davidson, Sumner, Wilson, Trousdale, and DeKalb.
 36. Acts of 1873, Chapter 27, increased the number of U. S. Congressional Districts in Tennessee from nine (9) to ten (10) and reassigned counties accordingly. The Fourth U. S. Congressional District included the counties of Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Jackson, Clay, Macon, Smith, Trousdale, Wilson, Robertson, and Sumner.
 37. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 5, established the number of State Senators at thirtythree (33) and the number of Representatives at ninety-nine (99).
 38. Acts of 1881 (Ex. Sess.) Chapter 6, apportioned the State Senatorial and Representative Districts. Sumner County elected one Representative alone and another with Trousdale and Smith Counties. The counties of Trousdale, Sumner, and Robertson composed the Twelfth Senatorial District.
 39. Acts of 1882 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 27, divided Tennessee into ten (10) U. S. Congressional Districts. The Fourth Congressional District was made up of the counties of Sumner, Wilson, Macon, Trousdale, Smith, DeKalb, Clay, Jackson, Putnam, Overton, Fentress, and Pickett.
 40. Acts of 1891 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 10, apportioned the state according to the 1890 Census. Sumner County would have one Representative alone and share a Representative with Trousdale and Wilson Counties. The 14th State Senatorial District contained the counties of Macon, Sumner, and Trousdale.
 41. Acts of 1901, Chapter 109, formed ten (10) U. S. Congressional Districts in the State. The Fourth District included the counties of Sumner, Trousdale, Wilson, Putnam, Jackson, Clay, Overton, Smith, Macon, Pickett, Fentress, Morgan, Cumberland, and Rhea.
 42. Acts of 1901, Chapter 122, was the last reapportionment of the General Assembly for more than sixty years. The Fourteenth Senatorial District included the counties of Sumner, Trousdale, and Macon. Sumner County was to elect one Representative alone and another with Trousdale and Macon Counties.
 43. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 706, amended Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 75, to provide for opening of polling places at 9:00 a.m. and closing at 6:00 p.m. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 44. Private Acts of 1939, Chapter 213, provided an additional voting precinct in Sumner County, to be called the City Hall Precinct of the Third Civil District.
 45. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 392, gave the Quarterly Court of Sumner County the authority to regulate and fix the compensation of persons holding the general and primary elections, except

County primaries. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.

46. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 55, was the authority for the Quarterly Court of Sumner County to designate the places and the hours of each voting place in the county for all general and primary elections. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
47. Private Acts of 1955, Chapter 2, changed the voting place which was formerly at Phosphate in the Tenth Civil District to the Union Hill School House in the same District. The Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
48. Private Acts of 1965, Chapter 10, provided that any person who served as an election official in any election in Sumner County would be paid \$8 per day for their services. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
49. Private Acts of 1965, Chapter 182, made it unlawful in Sumner County for any person to distribute cards, handbills, placards, or any other vote soliciting matter, or to loiter about the polls to solicit votes, within 1,000 feet of any polling place during the hours of any election. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.

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