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Boundaries - Historical Notes

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

1. Acts of 1807, Chapter 9, stated that Rhea County would begin on the north bank of Tennessee, at the end of the ridge that divides the waters of White's creek from those of Piney river; thence along said ridge, to Wallen's ridge; thence north forty five west to Overton county line.
2. Acts of 1809, Chapter 20, stated that the line which divides Rhea County from Roane County, and Bledsoe County, shall begin on the north bank of the Tennessee River at the mouth of Whites Creek; thence up White's Creek, as it meanders, to the place where the road leading from Knoxville to Nashville crosses the main fork of said Whites Creek; thence north, forty west, to the Overton County line. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to preclude the Sheriff of Roane County from collecting the State, County, and poor tax due in that part of Rhea and Bledsoe Counties.
3. Acts of 1815, Chapter 75, stated that all that part of Rhea County lying north and east of the following described line, that is, beginning at White's Creek near Matthew English's saw mill, at the mouth of Crab Orchard Creek, thence running up said creek to the mouth of Burkes's Creek, thence a direct course to the new comer of Roane County, at the line of Overton County, is hereby declared to be and made a part of Roane County.
4. Acts of 1815, Chapter 200, extended the boundaries of Roane County and used the boundary lines of Rhea County as part of the description but this Act apparently does not affect the area of Rhea County.
5. Acts of 1817, Chapter 13, provided that Rhea County begin on the South Bank of Tennessee River, opposite the mouth of White's Creek in Rhea County, thence South thirty degrees East, to the southern boundary line of this State, thence West with said boundary line to a point opposite the mouth of Opossum creek that empties in on the north side of said river; thence a direct line to the mouth of said creek; thence north thirty degrees West to the extreme height of Waldens Ridge, thence east, with Bledsoe county line, until it intersects Roane County or White's creek; thence down said creek, as it meanders, to the beginning.
6. Acts of 1819, Chapter 3, stated that the boundary lines of the county of Rhea, shall be as follows to wit: beginning at the mouth of the first creek above the Cherokee Agency, that empties into Hiwassee River, on the north bank; thence down the said river to its confluence with the Tennessee River; thence down said river including Jollys Island in said county, to the line of the county of Hamilton; thence with the line of Hamilton county to the Bledsoe county line; thence with said county of Bledsoe to the county of Morgan; thence with said county of Morgan to the county of Roane; thence with the line of the county of Roane to Whites Creek; thence down said creek to the mouth thereof crossing Tennessee River and running south forty five degrees east, eight miles from the mouth of said creek; thence due south to the top of the ridge dividing the waters of Soowee Creek from those of Mouse Creek; thence along the top of said ridge to the head of the creek that runs to the beginning; thence down said creek to the beginning.
7. Acts of 1821, Chapter 73, stated that the line dividing Bledsoe and Rhea counties shall be as follows, (to wit); beginning in a point on the northern boundary line of Hamilton county, near where the road from Keedy's Gap to Washington crosses the head of Sale Creek; running thence up the general course of Walden's ridge of Cumberland mountain, so as - to cross Richland Creek at the bridge on the Kincah turnpike road; thence to cross Loony's turnpike road so as to include the former residence of Richard Walker on said road in the county of Bledsoe; thence a direct line to the old Cumberland turnpike road, to T. Bound's turnpike gate, and that all persons residing near to, and south of Morgan, and west of said line shall belong to the county of Bledsoe.
8. Acts of 1821, Chapter 169, provided that the line running between the counties of Rhea and Hamilton, shall commence at a point one half mile below Blythe's ferry, and Benjamin Jones and John Russell, thence up the foot of the said mountain to the line of said counties as now run and marked.
9. Acts of 1833, Chapter 16, extended the Jurisdiction of the State over a portion of the Cherokee Indian Reservation and thereby enlarged the areas of several counties, including Rhea. The Act provided, among other things, that the county of Rhea, in addition to its present limits, shall commence at the point where Hamilton County terminates on the bank of the Tennessee River, as provided in this Act, running thence along said line to the house now occupied by Wilson Evans, thence a direct line to a point on the Hiwassee River, opposite the first large ridge above the mouth of Price's Creek.

10. Acts of 1833, Chapter 214, provided that the line dividing the counties of Rhea and M'Minn, shall continue from the south bank of Hiwassee river, crossing said river opposite to the foot of the first large ridge, above the mouth of Prive's creek, thence along the extreme height or top of said ridge, as it meanders until it strikes the south line of the top of said ridge, which runs from the eight mile tree or stake from the mouth of White's creek, as established by the act of 1819, fixing the lines between the counties of Rhea and Roane, leaving John Igon's plantation, William Moore's plantation, Matlock's Mills, and the whole of the back valley so called and its meanders on the north side of Rhea county.
11. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 259, changed the boundaries between Rhea and Roane Counties so as to include the land and possessions of Leonard C. Nance wholly within Roane County. If the County Court of Roane County desires, they may appoint someone to run and mark the line between and pay him a reasonable compensation.
12. Acts of 1849-50, Chapter 82, rearranged the boundary lines between Rhea County and Hamilton County commencing at a Black Walnut and Hickory on the eastern fork of the said creek, down the creek 40 poles to a stake north, 75 west, to the fork of the said creek, thence up the said creek to the turnpike road, west with the road to the Bledsoe County line so as to include John Gray and Roman Quarles in Rhea County.
13. Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 83, changed the boundaries between Rhea County and Bledsoe County beginning at the Pole Bridge Creek and running in a southwesterly direction so as to include B. F. Bridgeman's farm, and to intersect the established line at a white oak, black oak, and hickory, known as the old comer of Rhea, Hamilton, and Bledsoe Counties.
14. Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 211, rearranged the lines between Rhea County and Cumberland County so as to embrace all the land belonging to the estate of Thomas J. Gillespie, deceased, in Rhea County.
15. Acts of 1867-68, Chapter 23, had a partial metes and bounds description of the involved area but the effect of the Act was to include the farm of Mrs. Ann Russell, the farm of the heirs of John Gray, deceased, the farm of Mrs. Nancy McGill, the farm of Alexander Hickman, and the farm of F. M. Bowers, which were all formerly located in Hamilton County, in Rhea County.
16. Acts of 1879, Chapter 137, changed the lines between Rhea County and Hamilton County which divides the farm of James A. Kelly, so as to make the same run from a stake on the county line comer to J. W. Pearce's land, thence with the said Pearce's line southwest to William Nash's line, thence with Nash's line to the county line, so as to include the farm of James A. Kelly wholly within Rhea County.
17. Acts of 1881, Chapter 143, changed the lines between Bledsoe County, Rhea County, and Hamilton County so as to attach the lands of James Sladen to Bledsoe County. See case of McMellan v. Hannah, 106 Tenn. 691, 61 S.W. 1020 (1901), declared this act to be unconstitutional in Cheatham County because Cheatham County was under the land area requirements for counties as established in the Constitution to begin with, but the unconstitutionality would not affect Rhea County.
18. Acts of 1889, Chapter 25, moved all the lands and improvements belonging to Oxshee John Thurman out of Rhea County and into Bledsoe County.
19. Acts of 1889, Chapter 140, changed the boundary line between Rhea County and Hamilton County commencing at a point where Theodore Flora's line crosses the said county line, thence with the said Flora line with its different degrees so as to include all the lands of Theodore Flora and Peter B. Clouse, about 30 acres, more or less, in Rhea County entirely.
20. Acts of 1903, Chapter 41, detached the farm of J. R. Swafford, lying partly in the 10th Civil District of Rhea County, from Rhea County and attached all the same to Bledsoe County.
21. Acts of 1903, Chapter 54, is an exact duplicate of Acts of 1903, Chapter 41, above, which involved the property of J. R. Swafford.
22. Public Acts of 1982, Chapter 682, transferred, four parcels of land from Hamilton County into Rhea County which were located near the old Hart Turnpike where it intersects with the Bledsoe County line. They were 6.6 acres belonging to Edgar and Bobbie Long in Graysville, 25 acres owned by Anthony and Diane Knox, in Graysville, 31 acres belonging to Howard and Wilma Bowman, in Graysville, and 28 acres owned by Charles and Carolyn Bryant in Chattanooga, Tn.