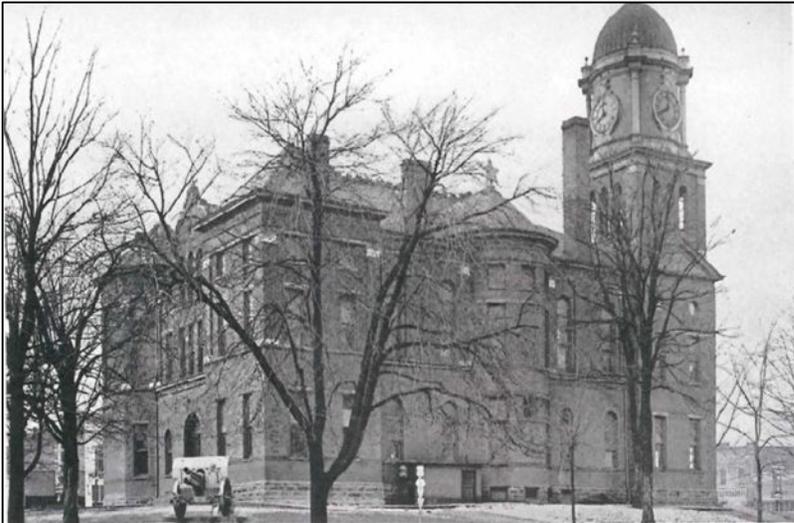


COMMISSION TO CONSIDER RESOLUTION FOR COUNTY'S BIRTHDAY

By Lindsay McReynolds

The Putnam County Commission will get a chance to recognize the work of its founding

fathers next week when it considers a resolution to officially recognize the county's birthday.



(Putnam County's courthouse in the early 1900s. Putnam County Archives)

The reason that the county has celebrated different birthdays in the past is due to lawsuits contesting the

constitutionality of its establishment in 1842.

“Putnam is made out of mainly Overton and Jackson and a little bit of White and Fentress,” said Putnam County Archivist Glenn Jones, who has the first chancery court book of Putnam County in the archives, which includes court cases from 1842, 1843 and 1844. “Mainly it was taken from Jackson.”

Jones said the reason for establishing counties by taking land from others was to lessen travel distance for people needing to conduct business at the courthouse.

“They tried to make it where it wasn't more than 20 miles to the courthouse,” he said. “If you were in Buffalo Valley and you had to go all the way to Jackson to do business, that's too far.”

But Overton and Jackson county officials filed lawsuits against Putnam's first establishment, claiming that it took too much land from Overton and Jackson, according to Jones.

“They summoned the sheriff and justices of the peace,” Jones said. “All (Putnam County) court records were sent to Jackson County. There were a few years where there was no Putnam County.”

“Then the state Supreme Court ruled that no county could dissolve another county.”

The Tennessee State Legislature reestablished Putnam County in 1854 thanks in part to the efforts of Richard Fielding Cooke, for whom Cookeville is named.

“He was a senator from Jackson County,” Jones said.

“He helped push it through (the state legislature).

“Then they named county seat after him.”

Cooke had received a land grant in the Double Springs area from the government for his service in the War of 1812, according to Jones.

Putnam County Executive Randy Porter said he’d talked to the state about establishing 1842 as the county’s official birthday, but learned that could best be handled through a resolution approved by the county commission.

Based on the 1842 establishment of the county, Putnam County’s 175th birthday will be celebrated in 2017.

The Putnam County Commission will consider the resolution when it meets Monday, Nov. 21, at 6 p.m. in the third floor courtroom of the Putnam Courthouse on Spring Street.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: Tuesday, November 15, 2016

*Read more about the history of Putnam Co., TN & surrounding areas at:
<http://www.ajlambert.com>