

Goodspeed's History of Tennessee
Smith County History
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SMITH COUNTY

The county of Smith is bounded north by Trousdale and Macon Counties, east by Jackson and Putnam, south by DeKalb, and west by Wilson. It lies mostly in the central basin, and is drained by the Cumberland River, which flows through it from east to west, and so divides it as to leave about three-fourths of its area on the south side, and the other fourth on the north side. The tributaries flowing into the Cumberland from the north are Peyton Creek and Defeated Creek, and other smaller streams. The principal one flowing into it from the south is Caney Fork, which is navigable for small vessels about forty miles from its mouth, which is just above the town of Carthage. The spurs of the Highland Rim extend far into the county from the north and east, thus making that part lying north of the Cumberland and east of Caney Fork extremely hilly and uneven. The balance of the county has a more even surface. The streams have broad valleys, and the "the soil of the county, with the exception of the caps of the ridges, rests everywhere on limestone belonging to the Nashville and Lebanon formations, but principally the former. The tops of the ridges present the siliceous rocks of the highlands, being the sub-carboniferous. Immediately below these siliceous rocks, and separating them from the limestone, is the black shale formation."* ["Resources of Tennessee."] The lands having a limestone soil are rich and productive, and those on the highlands produce an excellent quality of tobacco, but the yield is light. The timber is similar to that of Trousdale County.

William Walton, original proprietor of the site of Carthage, settled, according to best information, on the north side of the Cumberland, opposite the mouth of Caney Fork in 1787. He is said to have been the first settler in the territory now composing Smith County. Daniel Burford, **Richard Alexander**, Tilman Dixon, William Saunders and Peter Turney were among the first settlers in the vicinity of Dixon Springs. Peter Turney was the father of the noted lawyer, Hopkins L. Turney, and grandfather of Judge Peter Turney, now of the supreme bench of the State. The best agricultural lands being in the vicinity of Dixon Springs, that locality soon became the most thickly settled one in the county. Micajah Duke was an early settler in what is now the Second District; David Apple in the Eight; William McDonald in the Eleventh; Armstead Flippen in the Thirteenth; William Goodall, and James Hodges, with his son Richard, and Arthur S. Hogan in the Fourteenth; and Zachariah Ford in the Fifteenth. Other early settlers were David Cochrane, John Baker, Thomas Dies, George T. Wright and also all persons hereinafter mentioned in connection with the organization of the county. "The grandfather of S. M. Fite, with his family, and two other men, with their families, made the first settlement on Smith Fork, fifteen miles south of the Cumberland River. The first night after camping Mr. Fite had family worship, no doubt the first Christian worship ever made in the vast region.* ["Resources of Tennessee."] When the first settlers appeared in Smith County, they found the territory inhabited with Indians, and many kinds of wild animals, such as bears, wolves, panthers, wild-cats, deer, etc. Wild game was also abundant, and those hardy pioneers, during their struggles to subdue the forest and establish civilization in a vast wilderness, often supplied their families with meat secured by means of their rifles. Bear meat, venison and wild fowl were then common articles of food. The Indians were here about ten years after the first settlers located, and during this time the pioneers, no doubt, had many encounters with them; the history of which, unfortunately, has not been preserved. One incident which occurred in this county before it was settled, between citizens of Sumner County and the Indians, may be related here. "In February, 1786, John Peyton (father of the late Hon. Bailie Peyton); Ephraim Peyton, his twin brother; Thomas Peyton, another brother; Squire Grant and John Frazer were out hunting and surveying. They encamped on an island in Defeated Creek, near where Capt. C. N. West now resides. On Sunday night they sat up late playing cards, when they were attacked by the Indians. Four out of the five were wounded—all except Ephraim Peyton. They separated and fled leaving their horses instruments.

The Indian party was commanded by Hanging Maw. All made their escape and survived, and the next year John Peyton sent word to Hanging Maw to return the stolen horses, to which the chief replied, 'that the horses were his, that he (Peyton) had run away like a coward and left them, and as for his 'land-stealer,' the compass, he had broken that against a tree.'" * ["Reminiscences of Gen. William Hall.] Robert Smith and Lucy Gordon were the first couple married in Smith county, and Richard Hodges and Delilah Risen the second. The latter were married by Arthur S. Hogan, Esq, in 1803.

Large tracts of the best land in the country were entered by surviving soldiers of the war of the Revolution, or by their assignees, by locating the land warrants granted to said soldiers by the State of North Carolina. These tracts ranged from 640 to several thousand acres. The early settlers of Smith County were mostly from North Carolina, Virginia, and East Tennessee, and after erecting their rude log cabins, they began the clearing of their lands, and the raising of the cereals. Subsequently, and for many years, including the decade of the twenties, they raised cotton to a considerable extent, and afterward abandoned its cultivation. The cultivation of tobacco was early introduced and this crop has always been, and still continues to be, a staple production of the county, which ranks as the sixth county in the State in the amount of that article produced. The cultivation of blue-grass, and the raising of fine breeds of cattle were introduced into the county in 1836, by Dr. F. H. Gordon, who was then a teacher in Clinton College. He went to Kentucky and on his return, brought to the farm on which the college is located, a herd of Durham cattle, and began to sow blue-grass for pasture. Since that time considerable attention has been given to the raising of fine breeds of stock of all kinds, and to the cultivation of the grasses. The cereal, and other productions of Smith County, according to the census of 1880, were as follows: Indian corn, 1,071,050 bushels; oats, 47,240 bushels; rye, 3,228 bushels; wheat, 104,945 bushels; orchard products, \$11,927; hay, 2,730 tons; Irish potatoes, 13, 817 bushels; sweet potatoes, 29,335 bushels; tobacco, 1,799,981 pounds; live stock and its production—horses, 5,112; mules and asses, 1,973; cattle, 8,623; sheep, 10,234; hogs, 31,871; wool 40,393 pounds; butter, 221,381 pounds. The population of Smith County in 1860, including that part which has since been attached to Trousdale County, was as follows: White, 12,015; colored, 4,342; nearly all of the latter were then slaves, and in 1880 it was—white, 14,215; colored, 3,578. Notwithstanding the reduction of the territory, and the ravages of civil war, the white population of the county increased 2,200 in the twenty years following 1860, while the colored population decreased 764 during the same period. The transportation of produce and merchandise to and from Smith County has always been by way of the Cumberland River. But the citizens are now anticipating the early completion of the Middle & East Tennessee Central Railroad, and also the Nashville & Knoxville Railroad through the county by way of Carthage. These railroads when completed will be of great advantage to the county, in hastening its future development.

Smith County was organized in accordance with an act of the General Assembly of the State, passed October 26, 1799, providing "That a new county be established by the name of Smith, to be contained within the following described bounds: Beginning on the south bank of Cumberland River, at the south end of the eastern boundary of Sumner County; thence north with the said eastern boundary to the northern boundary of the State, and with the said boundary east to where it is intersected by the Cherokee boundary, run and marked agreeably to the treaty of Holston; thence with that boundary to the Caney Fork of Cumberland River; thence with said fork, according to its meanders, to the mouth thereof; thence down the south bank of Cumberland River, according to its meanders, to the beginning." According to this description Smith County originally contained a portion of what is now Trousdale, DeKalb, Putnam, Jackson, Clay and the greater part of Macon Counties. By an act passed November 6, 1801, the county was changed in size by attaching to it a large portion of Wilson County, lying south of the Cumberland River and west of Caney Fork, and by cutting off a portion on the east side to constitute the county of Jackson. And by a subsequent act of the same session of the Legislature Smith County was extended southward to the line between Tennessee and Alabama—thus causing the county to embrace a strip of territory extending from the northern to the southern boundary of the State. In 1805 an act was passed to reduce the county to its constitutional limits of 625 square miles, still allowing its northern boundary to reach the Kentucky line. And by an act passed January 18, 1842, the northern portion of Smith County became a part of Macon County in its formation. And in 1870 a tract in the northwestern part of the county was cut off to form a part of Trousdale County. And thus by these and other acts of the Legislature Smith County has been reduced to its present limits, embracing about 360 square miles. In accordance with the act of creation the first bench of justices of the peace for Smith County, consisting of Garrett Fitzgerald, Wm. Alexander,

James Gwinn, Tilman Dixon, Thomas Harrison, James Hibbetts, Peter Turney and Wm. Walton, met at the house of Tilman Dixon, near Dixon Springs, on the 16th of December, 1799, and organized the court of pleas and quarter sessions by electing Garrett Fitzgerald, chairman thereof, and Moses Fisk clerk pro tempore. The next day the following county officers were permanently elected by said court, to wit: Sampson Williams, clerk; John Martin, sheriff; Chas. F. Mobias, coroner; James Gwinn, trustee; Daniel Burford, register; Bazel Shaw, ranger, and Benj. Sewell, State's attorney. Amos Lacy, Silas Jonokin, Robt. Cotton, James Strain, James Wright, Wm. Levington and Henry Huddleston were then appointed constables, and thus the organization of the county was completed. Then on motion of Tilman Dixon it was "ordered that all tavern-keepers be allowed to sell spirituous liquors at the following rates: Good whisky and brandy, 12 ½ cents by the half-pint; for breakfast, dinner and supper, 25 cents; for corn and oats by the gallon, 12 ½ cents; for two bundles of fodder, 2 pence; for pasturage twenty-four hours, 12 ½ cents; for lodging, 6 ¼ cents." The next action of the court was to grant to Tilman Dixon, the mover of the aforesaid motion, a license to keep a tavern at his house. License was then granted to Edmond Jennings to keep a ferry near the mouth of Jennings Creek, at the following rates: "For man and horse, 18 1/3 cents; single man and single horse, each 9 cents; wagon and team, \$1.25; cattle, hogs and sheep, 6 ¼ cents each." For many years after the organization of the county no person was allowed to keep a tavern, or a ferry, or to build a mill-dam without license from the court, which also established the rates to be charged by the persons obtaining such privileges. Henry McKinsey, Wm. Saunders, Samuel Caruthers, Elisha Oglesby, Wm. Gillespie, Wm. Gilbreath and others were then appointed overseers of certain public roads.

The first grand jury in Smith County, consisting of Grant Allen, Willis Haynie, John Barkley, James Draper, William Pate, Anthony Samuel, James Ballow, William Kelton, Daniel Mungle, John Crosswhite, Thomas Jemison and Nat Ridley were impaneled by the court of pleas and quarter sessions at its March term, 1800. The county not being then divided into civil districts, assessors were appointed to list the taxable property in each captain's company of the militia. The following persons were then appointed assessors for the year 1800, to wit: Garrett Fitzgerald, for the Flinn Creek company; Charles Hudgspath, for the Obed and Roaring River company or settlement; William Walton, for Capt. Vance's company; Thomas Harmand, for Capt. Pate's company; Peter Turney, for the Peyton Creek company; Tilman Dixon, for Capt. Bradley's company; James Hibbetts, for Capt. Shaw's company, and James Gwinn, for Capt. Gwinn's company. Several persons then appeared in court and had their stock marks recorded, it being the custom then to allow the stock to run at large on the unoccupied lands, and each man had his own peculiar stock mark. The bounty on wolf scalps was then established at \$1. And David Venters was allowed to build a mill on Goose Creek near the Big Spring. The same year, 1800, William Saunders was permitted to build a saw and grist-mill on Dixon Creek, about 200 yards below the Blue Spring. The dam was not to be over twelve feet high, and the water was to be drawn off, if requested by Mr. Dixon, by the 15th of June each year. At the June term, 1801, of said court the sheriff returned a long list of delinquent tax lands belonging to non-resident owners. Many of their tracts contained several thousand acres, and all were ordered to be sold to satisfy the taxes and costs charged thereon. The court of pleas and quarter sessions continued to be held at the house of Tilman Dixon until June, 1802, when it was held at the house of William Saunders. And from that time till 1806 it was held alternately at the houses of the said Dixon, Saunders, William Walton and Peter Turney. At the December term, 1804, Willis Jones, Benjamin John and Wilson Cage were appointed commissioners to select and purchase a site for the seat of justice, and to lay out a town thereon, and to sell the lots and appropriate the proceeds to the payment of the land, and the erection of the public buildings. These commissioners selected the site of the present town of Carthage, then owned by William Walton and from him purchased the same, consisting of fifty acres, for the consideration of 1 cent, and secured title thereto by deed dated December 28, 1804. And during that winter they laid out the town of Carthage and sold the lots thereof and erected the first courthouse for the county, on the public square, in 1805. This courthouse was constructed of brick and was about fifty feet square, with four offices and a hall on the first floor, and two offices and the court room on the second. All the rooms had large wood fireplaces. The first term of the court of pleas and quarter sessions held in the courthouse was in March, 1806. This courthouse stood until 1877, when it was taken down and the present one erected in its stead at a cost of about \$18,000. This is a substantial two-story brick building of considerable architectural beauty, with the county offices and hall on the first floor and the court room and some small rooms on the second. Col. Fite was the general superintendent of the erection of this building, and Henry C. Jackson, of Murfreesboro, was the contractor and builder. The first jail in the county was built about the year 1812 by James Walton. It was made of logs and contained two rooms, one above the other, and cost about \$700. It

stood on the site of the present jail and was replaced by the latter about the year 1835. The old poor-farm on Peyton Creek, consisting of seventy-five acres, was purchased and fitted up in an early day. It was sold in 1871 to Henry, William and Thomas Hacket for \$761, and at the same time another farm containing 211 acres was purchased in the horse-shoe bend of the Cumberland River, in District No. 20 for \$1,200. Buildings were erected thereon and other improvements made, costing about \$3,500. The location of this farm being considered unhealthy, as well as very inconvenient, it was afterward sold and the present one purchased. The latter is situated two and a half miles west of Carthage and contains forty-five acres of good tillable land. The poor asylum, which is a substantial and safe brick building of modern architecture and heated with two furnaces, was erected in 1885 at a cost of \$9,000. At present writing there are fourteen paupers in the asylum.

During the early history of the county, the revenues were not assessed and collected according to the value of the property. To illustrate the method, the rates for the year 1811, which are similar to other years of that period, are here given as established by the then authorities. They are as follows: For county purposes—on each 100 acres of land, 12 ½ cents; each white poll, 12 ½ cents; each black poll, 25 cents; each town lot, 25 cents; each stallion, \$1; each retail store, \$5. For Jurors—on each 100 acres, 6 ¼ cents; each white poll, 6 ¼ cents; each black poll, 6 ¼ cents; each town lot, 6 ¼ cents; each stallion 25 cents; each retail store, \$1. Thus it will be seen that the taxes were levied on specific property, without writing any regard to its value. The taxable property of the county at present writing consists of 202 town lots valued at \$84,835, and 197,279 acres of land valued at \$2,335,195, and personal property valued at \$347,125, and other property valued at \$25,755, making a grand total of taxable property of \$2,792,910. There are also 2,709 taxable polls. The total taxes levied on the foregoing property and polls for the year 1886 amounts to \$32,788.51. The finances of Smith County have always been so well managed that her warrants have seldom if ever been below par. The county is well supplied with public buildings, all of which have been erected without the issuing of bonds. And at present the county has no outstanding bonds or warrants, and is entirely out of debt. The following is a list of the county officers with dates of service: County court clerks—Sampson Williams, 1799-1804; Robert Allen, 1804-12; Joseph W. Allen, 1812, a few months and died; Robert Allen, 1812-19; Jonathan Pickett, 1819-35; John I. Burnett, 1835-48; W. V. R. Hallum, 1848-56; David C. Sanders, 1856-64; E. W. Turner, 1864-68; John P. Yelton, 1868-70; B. F. C. Smith, 1870-1874; Samuel Allison, 1874-82; John B. Jordan, 1882-86; and re-elected. Sheriffs—John Martin, 1799-1802; Lee Sullivan, 1802-04; George Matlock, 1804-12; John Gordon, 1812-16; Wm. Goodall, 1816-27; David Burford, 1827-29; S. B. Hughes, 1829-34; Samuel P. Howard, 1834-38; Wyatt W. Bailey, 1838-44; John Bailey, 1844-48; John Bridges, 1848-52; Samuel Allison, 1852-58; John W. Hughes, 1858-60; B. B. Uhles, 1860-62; Larkin Cornwell, 1862-64; H. S. Patterson, 1864-66; J. H. Smith, 1866-68; J. E. Clark, 1868-70; Wm. Arrington, 1870-72; J. H. Corder, 1872-76; John B. Wilson, 1876-80; Wm. T. Barrett, 1880-84; A. J. Dawson, 1884-86, and re-elected. Registers—Daniel Burford, 1819-25; Alex Allison, 1825-32; Harvey Hogg, 1832-42; A. S. Watkins, 1842-46; David C. Sanders, 1846-54; Quaintance C. Sanders, 1854-58; S. R. Thompson, 1858-62; J. P. McKee, 1864-70; W. P. Pettie, 1870-74; A. N. Williams, 1874-78; Joseph P. King, 1878-80; W. W. Ford, 1880-82; E. B. Price, 1882-86; D. C. Sanders, 1886. Trustees since 1840—David K. Timberlake, 1840-52; A. W. Allen, 1852-54; John P. Haynie, 185-56; Ira W. King, 1856-62; J. H. Newbell, 1862-66; Joseph A. Pendarris, 1866-70; E. H. Knight, 1870-72; D. J. Lynch, 1872-74; D. A. West, 1874-76; S. R. Johnson, 1876-78; N. J. Kemp, 1878-80; W. V. Harrell, 1880-82; W. J. Johnson, 1882-84; J. B. Duke, 1884-86; W. M. Johnson, 1886. Circuit court clerks—Robert Allen, 1810-13; John W. Overton, 1813-20; Charles Sherwood, 1820-23; Wm. Hart, 1823-48; Henry Wm. Hart, 1848-52; N. B. Burdine, 1852-56; Thomas Fisher, 1856-64; Ira W. King, 1864-65; John L. Arendall 1865, March to August; W. J. Cleveland, 1856-66; Thomas Waters, 1866-68; W. B. Pickering, 1868-70; Thomas Fisher, 1870-74; W. B. Pettie, 1874-82; T. B. Read, 1882-86; W. W. Ford, 1886. Clerks and Masters of chancery courts—Robert L. Caruthers, 1825-27; John G. Park, 1827-37; Wm. C. Hubbard, 1837; one term; John G. Park, 1837-38; A. Moore, Jr., 1838, to the civil war; D. H. Campbell, 1865-71; John A. Fite, 1871-77; Wm. D. Gold, present incumbent ever since 1877. For list of congressmen see history of Sumner County.

The court of pleas and quarter sessions, for many years after its organization, had jurisdiction over all kinds of business, both civil and criminal. One of its early criminal cases was that of the State vs. Dr. Charles F. Mabias. The defendant was indicted for stealing a cow bell, of the value of 6 cents, from one

Joseph Cannon. He was tried and found “not guilty,” whereupon the costs of the prosecution were all taxed against Mr. Cannon, the prosecutor. This occurred when the court was held at the house of Wm. Saunders. The following novel resignation was discovered in the records of the May term, 1814, of said court:

A justice of the peace, you see,
No longer now I mean to be;
I therefore now resign to you,
As by these lines you see it true.
You therefore now your order may
Give to the clerk without delay,
That he may your right transmit
To the next session when they sit.

--Henry McWhorter.

The last term of the court of pleas and quarter sessions was held in February, 1836; and the first term of the county court, which was established instead of and to succeed the court of pleas and quarter sessions, was held in May, 1836. The county court was then composed of forty-two justices of the peace, all of whom were present and to whom the oath of office was administered by Judge Abraham Caruthers. Exum Whitley was elected chairman of the court. This court is now composed of forty-five justices of the peace, and its present chairman is Irenus Beckwith. The Third Judicial District of the State, including the counties of Smith, Warren, Franklin, Sumner, Overton, White and Jackson, was formed by an act of the Legislature passed November 16, 1809. The circuit court, according to this act, was to be held in Smith County, beginning on the fourth Monday of March and September of each year. The first term of this court was probably held in March, 1810, but the records thereof not being found among the records of the clerk the exact date cannot be given. Hon. Nathan W. Williams was the first judge of the district, and he continued to preside alternately for many years with Judges Archibald Roane, P. W. Humphreys, Thomas Stewart, Bennett Searcy, J. C. Isaacks, Charles F. Keith and others until 1834, since which time the court has been presided over by the following judges, to wit: Abraham Caruthers, 1834-47; Wm. B. Campbell, 1847-51; Alvan Cullom, 1851-52; James T. Quarles, one term in 1852; John L. Goodall, 1852-58; S. M. Fite, 1858-64; Andrew McClain, 1864-69; S. M. Fite, 1869-75; N. W. McConnell, 1875-86; John A. Fite, 1886. The chancery court of Smith County was established by an act of the Legislature passed October 29, 1824, and its first term was begun and held on the third Monday of May, 1825, with Hon. John Catron presiding as chancellor, and Hon. Robert C. Caruthers clerk and master. Prior to 1840 this court was presided over by Chancellors John Catron, Robert White, Nathan Green, Will A. Cook, Wm. B. Reese and Thomas L. Williams, in the order here named. From 1840 to 1860 Hon. Bloomfield L. Ridley was chancellor and presided for forty terms, and then Smith County was changed by act of the Legislature from Ridley's district. Since 1860 the chancery court has been presided over as follows: Josephus C. Guild, 1860-61; Jas. O. Shackelford, 1865-66; Thomas Barry, 1866-67; B. C. Tillman, 1867-69; Charles G. Smith, 1869-70; W. W. Goodpaster, 1870-72; W. G. Cowley, 1872-86; W. W. Wade, 1886—elected. The bar of Carthage has contained many resident members whose reputation for ability was widely extended. Among those who rose to eminent distinction may be mentioned the Hon. Robert L. Caruthers, Judge Abraham Caruthers, Gen. Wm. Cullom, Wm. B. Campbell, the noted jurist, soldier, and subsequent governor for the State; Judge Samuel M. Fite, Hon. James B. Moore, Col. W. H. DeWitt, Capt. W. W. Ward, Capt. J. W. McHenry, Col. Jordon Stokes, Judge John D. Goodall and Hon. Andrew McClain; all too well known to

need further mention here. The present bar of Carthage consists of the following honorable gentlemen: E. L. Gardenhire, A. A. Swope, John A. Fite, judge of the circuit court; H. M. Hale, T. J. Fisher, Sr., J. B. Jordon, W. D. Gold, Col. A. E. Garrett, C. W. Garrett, E. W. Turner, B. F. C. Smith, J. B. Luster, W. W. Fergusson, J. M. Fisher, W. V. Lee, L. A. Ligon, the present representative in the State Legislature, and D. A. Witt.

Smith County was represented in the war with Great Britain in 1812-15 by two companies of soldiers commanded respectively by Capt.--Roberson and James Walton. These companies went to New Orleans and participated in that famous battle under the heroic Gen. Jackson. There were four companies of soldiers raised in this county, which served through the Mexican war; two of them, commanded respectively by Capt. Wm. Walton and L. P. McMurry, served in the First Regiment of Tennessee Volunteers, commanded by Col. (since governor) William B. Campbell. Capt. Don Allison's company served in a Tennessee regiment of cavalry, commended by Col. Thomas. And soon after entering the service Capt. Allison was promoted to the office of lieutenant-colonel of his regiment. Capt. John D. Goodall's company served in the Fourth Regiment of Tennessee Volunteers, commanded by Col. Waterhouse. The first three companies entered the service in 1846, and the latter in 1847, and all served to the close of the war. At the approach of the late civil war there was a strong Union sentiment in Smith County, but being inside the Confederate lines when the war began, no companies of soldiers were organized for the Union Army. Several Union men subsequently joined Federal commands. There were twelve companies raised in Smith County for the Confederate Armies. The first one was raised in April, 1861, and was commanded by Capt. (now judge) John A. Fite. It joined the Seventh Tennessee Regiment. Two other companies, commanded respectively by Capt. W. W. Ward and—Cossett, served in Col. Bennett's regiment. Three companies, commanded respectively by Capts.—James, H. W. Hart and Alex Dillaha, served in the Twenty-fourth Tennessee Regiment. One company commanded by Capt. W. H. McDonald, served in the Twenty-fifth Tennessee Regiment. Capt. Q. C. Sanders' company served in Col. Baxter Smith's regiment of cavalry. Two companies, commanded respectively by Capt. Tom King and A. B. Cates, served in Col. Bartow's regiment of cavalry, and two companies commanded respectively by Capt. H. B. Haynie and William B. Burford, served in other regiments. Including with the companies raised in the county, the individuals who joined companies raised in adjoining counties, it is estimated that fully 1,200 men served in the Confederate Army from Smith County. Being outside of the direct line of march of the contending armies, Smith County did not suffer as much as many other counties from the ravages of war. The first occupation of Carthage by Federal troops took place in February, 1863, when Gen. George Crooks with his command took possession of the town. He was relieved in June following by Gen. Spears, who commanded a brigade of East Tennesseans, and subsequently the town was occupied by Col. Jordon Stokes and his command. From the time Gen. Crooks first occupied it until the close of the war, it was in possession of Federal troops.

Carthage was laid out as heretofore stated in the year 1805, on lands purchased from William Walton, and being the oldest town in a large place of considerable business importance. In 1830 it contained, according to the "Tennessee Gazette," "about 700 inhabitants, eight lawyers, three doctors, one divine, thirteen stores, four taverns, one grocery, two tailors, two blacksmith shops, one printing office, one tanyard, one male and female academy, one church and a steam grist and saw-mill." As the country became settled other towns were established, which took the trade away from Carthage, so that its business has declined to that of a small village. It now contains, aside from the county buildings, the general store of Joseph Myer & Son, the drug, hardware and furniture store of Capt. T. P. Bridges, two groceries kept by E. B. Price and T. B. Read & Son, the wagon and blacksmith shop of W. I. Chandler, a few other mechanics' shops, two printing presses, three hotels—the Carthage Hotel, the McDonald Hotel and Fisher's Hotel—two schools (one white and one colored), four physicians, five churches (four white and one colored), two livery stables and a lodge each of Free Masons and Good Templars. The names of the physicians are J. S. Cornwell, Frank Swope, H. M. Blair and H. C. McDonald. The population of the town is about 400. The Carthage Mirror and The Record are weekly newspapers, both having a good circulation and both being well sustained. The former was established in May, 1883, by J. B. Luster, who continues its publication, and the latter was established in the fall of 1883, by W. D. Gold, who continues its publication. Dixon Springs contains three general stores, one drug store, one grocery, one saddler's shop, one livery stable, one

grist and saw-mill, two hotels, one union church, an academy and a colored school. Gordonsville was established in 1804, and named after John Gordon, its first merchant. It now contains two store, a livery stable, one school, two churches, a tobacco factory, some mechanics' shops, and about 175 inhabitants. Chestnut Mound, in District No. 8, contains three stores, a cabinet shop, livery stable and a school. Elmwood, located east of Cane Fork, contains two stores, one church and the Elmwood Institute. Rome, situated on the Cumberland, at the mouth of Round Lick Creek, contains several business houses. Monoville, Riddleton, Stonewall, Grant, Lancaster and Middleton are post villages each containing from one to four stores, etc.

According to the custom in all newly settled countries, the children of the first settlers of Smith County were deprived of many educational advantages. As soon, however, as a neighborhood became sufficiently settled, a private school or academy was established therein. There being no free schools, the children of the poor who were not able to pay "rate bills," continued to remain without school privileges. Among the first schools of note in the county was the Geneva Academy established at Carthage in the first decade of the century. This was a county school entitled to the public school fund, meager though it was, of the county. The Carthage Female Academy was established in 1842, and subsequently made a branch of Geneva Academy in order to enable it to draw a portion of the aforesaid public fund. The building of the original Geneva Academy was sold a few years ago, and the Female Academy, which is still sustained, was then opened to both sexes. The most noted school the county has ever had was Clinton College, founded by Dr. Francis H. Gordon, James B. Moores and Willie B. Gordon, and established in October, 1833, on the Lebanon and Trousdale Ferry Turnpike. Dr. F. H. Gordon and Prof. James B. Moores (the latter of whom became an eminent lawyer) were for many years the principal teachers in the college, the doors of which were permanently closed some time during the decade of the fifties. There are several high schools distributed throughout the county, prominent among which are the Elmwood Institute and Dixon Springs Academy. To show how the county is progressing under the free school system, the following statistics are taken from the last published report of the State superintendent of public instruction: Scholastic population—White: male, 2,775; female, 2,440; total, 5,215. Colored: male, 629; female, 626; total, 1,255; Number of pupils enrolled during the year—White: male, 1,461; female, 1,338; total, 2,799. Colored: male, 398, female, 358; total, 756. Number of teachers employed—White: male, 44; female, 12. Colored: male, 14; female, 4; total, 73. Number of schools, white, 56; colored, 17; total, 73. Amount of money expended during the year, \$11,916.79. By comparing the above figures it will be seen that only a little over one-half of the white children attended the free schools while a larger percentage of the colored children were in attendance.

It is thought that the Baptist organized the first religious society in the county, at the house of Grant Allen near Dixon Springs in the year 1799. It is now known as the Dixon Creek Baptist Church. Rev. John McGee, a noted pioneer minister of the Methodist Church, settled near Dixon Springs in 1798, and a meeting-house was built on his land, called the McGee's Meeting-house. And this was no doubt the first Methodist Church in the county.* [Reminiscences of Dr. J. W. Bowen.] Rev. McGee was noted of the active part he took in the great religious revival at the beginning of this century. Other noted pioneer ministers of the county were Revs. John Page, John Maffit, David K. Timberlake, John Mann, David Halliburton, Sr., Jesse Moreland, Stephen B. Lysle, Wm. Cherry, Wm. H. Johnson, Ira W. King and Robt. Trawick. The first church in Carthage was built by the Methodists at the upper end of Main Street soon after the town was established. The next was the present Methodist Church built jointly by the Methodists and Cumberland Presbyterians about the year 1830. The Cumberland Presbyterians built their church a few years later. The Baptist and Christian Churches in Carthage are both of recent construction. The first camp-meeting ground, known as the Hodge's camp-ground was established one and a fourth miles west of Carthage. The site of it is now in possession of Horace Oliver. A meeting-house was erected at that point soon after it was settled. The noted evangelist, Lorenzo Dow, preached in Carthage to the soldiers raised for Jackson's army, just before their departure for New Orleans. This was about the year 1813. The Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians were the pioneer Christian denominations of the county, and they have always been, and still continue to be the leading religious sects. The establishment of the Christian

Church in the county has been of a more recent date. The people of Smith County are primitive in their habits and customs—generous and hospitable, and sustain a high standard of morality.

Transcriber Note: Transcribed November 2000 for the TNGenWeb Project for Smith County
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