

Hawkins County Locality Guide (21 Oct 2021)

Geographic Area

Hawkins County is a county located in the U.S. state of Tennessee. As of the 2010 census, the population was 56,833. Its county seat is Rogersville, Hawkins County is part of the Kingsport–Bristol–Bristol, TN-VA Metropolitan Statistical Area, which is a component of the Johnson City–Kingsport–Bristol, TN-VA Combined Statistical Area, commonly known as the "Tri-Cities" region. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 500 square miles (1,300 km²), of which 487 square miles (1,260 km²) is land and 13 square miles (34 km²) (2.5%) is water.



Hawkins County, Tennessee covers an area of approximately 497 square miles with a geographic center of 36.43698733°(N), - 82.96962786°(W).

The largest city of Hawkins County is Church Hill with a population of 6,643. Other cities include, Rogersville population 4,364, Surgoinsville population 1,754 and Petersburg population 576.

Hawkins county lies in upper East Tennessee, and extends somewhat in the shape of a parallelogram from the Virginia line to the northern boundaries of Grainger and Hamblen counties. It is divided into two almost equal parts by the Holston River, which traverses its entire length. It is one of the largest counties in the State, having an area of 570 square miles. The surface is much of it broken, but the uplands are more fertile than in many counties. Iron ore is found in some localities, but is not now worked. In marble Hawkins County surpasses any other county in the South. It is found in all tints from a pale pink to a dark, richly variegated chocolate color, and in inexhaustible quantities. ([Wikipedia](#))

Key Historical Events

The first permanent settlers within the limits of Hawkins County were made in 1772, very soon after the settlements on the Watauga were begun. They were made in Carter's Valley, a short distance west of New Canton. Among these pioneers were Mr. Kincaid, Mr. Love, Mr. Long and Rev. Mr. Mulkey. At about the same time Messrs. Carter and Parker established a store in the neighborhood. Soon after this store was robbed by a party of Cherokees, and when Henderson and company's treaty was held with the Indians the proprietors of the store demanded as compensation all the lands in Carter's Valley, extending from Cloud Creek to Chimney Top Mountain of Beech Creek.

This was granted upon the payment of a small amount advanced by Robert Lucas, who then became a partner of Messrs. Parker & Carter. The firm leased their lands to the settlers much after the manner of the Patrons, in the early history of New York. This continued for a time but when it became known that the lands lay in North Carolina instead of Virginia, the settlers refused to recognize the ownership of the firm, and the right and title to the territory acquired was denied by the former state. They were afterward included with the members of

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the Henderson company, to whom a grant of 200,000 acres was given by the government of North Carolina as a compensation for the trouble they had been to in obtaining these lands. The deeds obtained by Henderson & Company from the Cherokees is recorded in the register's office of Hawkins county. It was given by Oconistoto, the chief warrior and representative of the Cherokee Nation, and Attakullakulla and Savanooka, otherwise Coronoh, appointed by the warriors and other head men to convey for the whole nation, to Richard Henderson, Thomas and Nathaniel Hart, John Williams, John Luttrell, William Johnston, James Hogg, David Hart and Thomas H. Bullock. The compensation for the immense tracts conveyed by these deeds is expressed at £100,000. ([TNGenWeb-County History to 1887](#))

The settlement in Hawkins County was confined chiefly to Carter's Valley until about 1780. Several stations or forts were built, and it is said that a Presbyterian church was organized.

At about the same time a fort was built at Big Creek. Not far from this fort, about three and one-half miles above Rogersville, Thos. Amis in 1780 or 1781 erected a stone house, around which he built a palisade for protection against the Indians. The next year he opened a store, and erected a blacksmith shop and distillery. Very soon after he also put into operation a saw and grist mill, and from the first he kept a house of entertainment.

The State of Franklin (also the Free Republic of Franklin or the State of Frankland) was an unrecognized proposed state located in what is today East Tennessee, United States. Franklin was created in 1784 from part of the territory west of the Appalachian Mountains that had been offered by North Carolina as a cession to Congress to help pay off debts related to the American War for Independence. It was founded with the intent of becoming the 14th state of the new United States.

Franklin's first capital was Jonesborough. After the summer of 1785, the government of Franklin (which was by then based in Greeneville), ruled as a "parallel government" running alongside (but not harmoniously with) a re-established North Carolina bureaucracy. Franklin was never admitted into the union. The *extra-legal* state existed for only about four and a half years, ostensibly as a republic, after which North Carolina reassumed full control of the area. The creation of Franklin is novel, in that it resulted from both a cession (an offering from North Carolina to Congress) and a secession (seceding from North Carolina, when its offer to Congress was not acted upon and the original cession was rescinded). ([Wikipedia](#))

Hawkins County was founded in 1786 and was named in honor of Benjamin Hawkins. He was a member of the Continental Congress from North Carolina, U. S. senator from North Carolina 1789-1795. He signed the Deed of Cession conveying the Southwest Territory to Federal Government, which is now the state of Tennessee. ([FamilySearch Wiki](#))

One of the oldest Tennessee counties, Hawkins County was first established as a separate North Carolina county on January 6, 1787, when the state legislature divided Sullivan County, North Carolina. The original county was quite large, extending from the North Fork of the Holston River southwestwardly to the "Big Suck" near present-day Chattanooga. Other counties, or parts of counties, later created from Hawkins include Hancock, Grainger, Jefferson, Knox, Roane, Meigs, and Hamilton. Prior to its creation by North Carolina, the county was Spencer County, State of Franklin.

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The act creating Hawkins County empowered seven commissioners to select a central place for the county seat, where a courthouse, prison, and stocks would be built and to levy a tax for the support of local government. The first meeting of the commissioners took place at the home of Thomas Gibbons on Big Creek on June 4, 1787, at which time Joseph Rogers's land on Crockett's Creek was selected as the location for the county seat. During the summer of 1787 the courthouse, jail, and stocks were erected, and the little community took the name Hawkins Court House. The first elected county officials were John Hunt, sheriff; William Marshall, register; and Thomas Hutchins, clerk. Marshall and Nathaniel Henderson were elected the first representatives to the North Carolina House of Commons, and Thomas Amis was elected the first senator to represent the new county in the legislative assembly.

In 1789 Amis presented a petition from the community to the North Carolina General Assembly to establish a town at the Hawkins Court House site and to name the town Rogersville. Approval of the petition, which was granted on November 7, 1789, empowered county commissioners to lay out a town in half-acre lots, with convenient streets and lots reserved for public buildings. ([Hawkins County, Tennessee](#))

In 1792 the counties of Greene, Hawkins, Jefferson and Knox were [circumscribed](#).

The Battle of Rogersville was a conflict in and around the town of Rogersville, Tennessee on the morning of November 6, 1863, between the United States Army 3rd Brigade, 4th Cavalry Division and the Confederate States Army Jones' Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Brigade and the 8th Virginia Cavalry. Because Federal forces were caught largely by surprise, the Confederates, under Brigadier General William E. Jones, were able to recapture Rogersville along with significant supplies from the town's railroad storehouses. ([Wikipedia](#))

Vital County Records

1863 Fire damaged courthouse records

Lost censuses: 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820

Early marriages beginning in 1820, but incomplete due to damage

[FamilySearch On-Line Hawkins County Catalog](#)

For records before 1786 check [Sullivan County](#) records

TNGenWeb Project - [Hawkins County](#)

[Research Aids - General](#)

[Research Aids - Private Records](#)

[Research Aids - Public Records](#)

[Research Aids - Families & Individuals](#)

USGenWeb Archives - [Hawkins County](#)

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Record Locations Table

Record Type	Location	Record Notes
Births	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1914
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 100 years then they are sent to TSLA
Marriages	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1789
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 50 years then they are sent to TSLA
1789-1964 records	Hawkins County Archives	16,548 indexed by bride & groom
1820-1880	TSLA	Microfilm reel #22
Deaths	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1914
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 50 years then they are sent to TSLA
1908-1912	TSLA Death Records	Index TN Death Records
1914-1933	TSLA Death Records	Index TN Death Records
Funeral Home Records 1930-1942	TSLA	Harrison Funeral Home Burial Records
Divorces	Circuit Court Clerk Office	County Registrations began
1881-1885	FS - Abstracted	
1911-1920	FS-Circuit Crt Records	
1795-1930	FS-Circuit Crt Records	
Circuit Court		
1795-1930 records	Hawkins County Archives	6,156 cases
Circuit Court Criminal		
1795-1930 records	Hawkins County Archives	7,032 cases
1931-1950 records	Hawkins County Archives	1,541 cases
Chancery Court		
1795-1927 records	Hawkins County Archives	5,180 cases
1804-1950 records	Hawkins County Archives	356 cases
1960-1969 records	Hawkins County Archives	
1787-1974 Wills	Hawkins County Archives	
1797-1910 Wills	TSLA	Microfilm reel #31
Civil War Claims		
1868	Hawkins County Archives	81
Grand Jury Lists		
1812-1930	Hawkins County Archives	323
Tax Assessments		3,572
1865-1973	Hawkins County Archives	
County road orders		
1832-1912	Hawkins County Archives	906
County School records		

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1926-1939	Hawkins County Archives	530
County oaths & bonds		
1813-1930	Hawkins County Archives	1,570
Various County Court recs		
1788-1930	Hawkins County Archives	4,170 cases
Misc. & misplaced Crt recs		
1794-1930	Hawkins County Archives	1,154 cases
Deeds	County Register of Deeds	
1788-1906	TSLA	Microfilm reel #32
List of Microfilmed Hawkins County Records	TSLA -PDF	Microfilm 1-59

Repositories

[Hawkins County Genealogical & Historical Society](#)
[Hawkins County Archives](#)
[H. B. Stamps Memorial Library - Rogersville](#)
[June Alton Genealogy Room](#)
[Church Hill Branch Library](#)
[Surgoinsville Public Library](#)

Current Area Information

[Hawkins County Tennessee](#)
[Rogersville Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce](#)
[EastTn.US Hawkins County](#)

Resources

General
[Tennessee County Database \(TNGS\) - Hawkins County](#)
[Hawkins County Wiki \(Family Search\)](#)
[Tennessee State Library & Archives - Hawkins County Facts Sheet](#)
[TNGenWeb Project - Hawkins County](#)
[Atlas of Historical County Boundaries - Interactive Map of Tennessee](#)
[Tennessee Atlas of Historical Boundaries - Hawkins County Chronology](#)
[Genealogy Trails - Hawkins County](#)
[Access Genealogy - Hawkins County](#)
[East Tennessee Historical Society](#)
[State of Franklin](#)

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Newspapers ([Newspapers.com](#) \$)

[Rogersville Herald](#)

[Rogersville Spectator](#)

[Rail-road Advocate](#)

[Hawkins County Telephone](#)

[The Herald](#)

[The Rogersville Herald](#)

[The Star](#)

[The Holston Review](#)

[Rogersville Review](#)

[Rogersville Press and Times](#)

Maps

[Free Hawkins County, Tennessee Topo Maps & Elevations](#)

[TDOT Map of Hawkins County](#)

[Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Rogersville, Hawkins County, Tennessee](#)

History

[History of Hawkins County, Tennessee \(Hawkins County Gov.\)](#)

[Hawkins County from Sullivan County, NC](#)

[Hawkins County Ceded to Tennessee](#)

[Hawkins County History \(from Goodspeed\)](#)

[Hawkins County History, by Kyle](#)

[Hawkins County Pioneer Women](#)

[Historic Locations in Hawkins County](#)

[History of Hawkins County \(from Goodspeed, published 1887\)](#)

Cemeteries

[Hawkins County Cemeteries – Find a Grave](#)

[Hawkins County Cemeteries and Cemetery Records](#)

[Hawkins County Cemetery Records](#)

[Hawkins County Cemetery Records and Cemetery Collection Links](#)

[Hawkins County, Cemeteries](#)

Wills

[Hawkins County Wills Abstracts](#)

[Hawkins County, Will Abstracts](#)

Voter Lists

[Hawkins County Poll List, 1847](#)

[Hawkins County Voter List 1790](#)

[Hawkins County Voter Lists 1820-1929](#)

[Hawkins County, Poll Records, Tennessee in 1853](#)

Miscellaneous

County Historian - George E. Webb, Jr. - Email: tennbooks@gmail.com

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Bibliography

[The Land Laws of Tennessee \(Whitney, 1891\)](#) Google Books
[The History of East Tennessee \(CD\)](#) Hearthstone Legacy Publ.

Library Titles	Author / Date	TSLA	GRH&GC	MPL
1880 Census, Hawkins County, Tennessee	Sistler, 1996	Y		
A history of Ross Silk Factory & other events of Rotherwood, TN.	Netherland, 1988	Y		
A History of the Sturgill Family	Sturgill, 1960		Y	
A sermon, delivered on Sept. 8th, 1813 by Isaac Anderson	Anderson, 1814	Y		
A short history of McCloud, TN & the Weaver Pottery Factory	Schaffer, 1981	Y		
A study of farm women in Hawkins County, TN (Thesis)	UT, 1990	Y		
A study of high schools in Hawkins County, TN. George Peabody College thesis	Vance, 1922	Y		
A study of seven school communities of Hawkins County, TN (Thesis) Davis, James A.	Davis, UT, 1971	Y		
Across the Mountain, Over the Clinch: A Folk History	Trent, 2008	Y		
Amis Ledger B (1782-1794): Interpretive Transcription of an East Tennessee Business Record Book	Gump, 1996	Y		
Amis Ledger D (1794-1801): Interpretive Transcription of an East Tennessee Business Record Book	Gump, 1997	Y		
An industrial history of Hawkins County, TN	Wolfe, 1983	Y		
Biographical directory, TN Genl. Assy, 1796-1969 Hawkins County	1973	Y		
Birth, marriage & death: past & present customs in east TN. Lewis, Patricia	<i>TN Folklore Soc. Bull.</i> 50 (1984)	Y		
Blue and Gray from Hawkins County (Includes Hancock County) Tennessee, 1861-1865 [3 vols.]	Johnston, 1995	Y		
Carter County, TN, Greene Cty, Tn, Hawkins Cty, TN, Johnson Cty, TN, Sullivan Cty, TN [1891 male voters]	Reed, 1992	Y		
Cemeteries of Hawkins County, Tennessee	HCGHS, 1985		Y	
Cherokee Reservoir Grave Removals by T.V.A.	Douthat, 2003	Y		
Church Hill, Tennessee area history, 1754-1976	Reber, 1976			Y
Church Hill, TN area history, 1754-1976.	Reber, 1976	Y		
Circuit Court Minutes 1810-1821 of Hawkins County	WPA, 1941	Y		
Circuit Court Minutes 1822-1825	WPA, 1939	Y		
Cloud's Creek School, 1919-1957.	Williams, 1987	Y		
County Court Minutes, Nov. 1827-Aug. 1828	WPA, 1939	Y		
David S. Booker: A Confederate soldier from the Cumberland Gap to Vicksburg, 1834-1912	Caldwell, 1994	Y		
Distant crossroads	HCGHS, 1983		Y	Y

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Cherokee Reservoir grave removals by T.V.A. Signal Mountain, Tenn.: Mountain Press.	Douthat, 2004		Y	
E. Early printing in Rogersville, TN	Webb, 1978	Y		
East Tennessee Pensioners, Revolutionary War	McGhee, 195?	Y		
East TN's lore of yesteryear.	Trent, 1987	Y		
Ebb and Flow: A Pictorial History of Hawkins County	Addison, 1995	Y		
Faces, places & things of early east TN: a sequel to East TN's lore of yesteryear.	Trent, 1989	Y		
Families of Hawkins County, Tennessee, 1786-1994.	HCGHS, 1994			Y
Federal pensioners: 1840 census of. Bethel Springs, TN	Brown, 1989		Y	
First Baptist Church, Rogersville, TN. Diamond anniversary, 1890-1965.	1965	Y		
First families of the lost state of Franklin	Rigdon, 2014		Y	
Five Rivers Area, TN [white and yellow pages].	BellSouth			Y
General highway map Hawkins County, Tennessee	TDOT, 1969			Y
Goodspeed's history of east TN (Hawkins County)	Goodspeed, 1887	Y	Y	
Hale Springs in the mountains of east TN	1891	Y		
Harrison Funeral Home burial records, 1930-1942 (Alvis, 2002)	Alvis, 2002	Y		
Hawkins County 1789-1865 : Being Transcriptions From the Original Bonds and Licenses at the County Courthouse, Rogersville	Price & Creekmore, 1958	Y		
Hawkins County 1836 Tennessee civil districts and tax lists	Douthat, 1993		Y	
Hawkins County Bicentennial Committee. 200 years: the bicentennial celebration of the USA, Hawkins County	1976	Y		
Hawkins County inventory of microfilmed community records	TSLA, 1987			Y
Hawkins County picture album. Rogersville, Hawkins County Bicentennial Comm.	1976	Y		
Hawkins County Tennessee General Index to Deeds vol. 1, 1788-1861	WPA, 1940		Y	
Hawkins County Tennessee Marriage Records vol. 1, 1820-46	WPA, 1938	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee: A Pictorial History	Price, 1996	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee 1914-1925 death records	Alvis, 1996			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee Cemeteries [4 vols.]	HCGHS, 1985	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee chancery court records, 1825 - 1845	Bowen, 1997		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee circuit court minutes, 1810-1821	WPA		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee circuit court minutes, 1817-1845	WPA		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee circuit court minutes, 1822-1825 and November 1827-August 1828	Lucas, 1983		Y	

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Hawkins County, Tennessee circuit court minutes: 1822-1825 and fragmented November 1827-August 1828	Lucas, 1983			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee county court minutes, Nov. 1827-Aug. 1828 fragment	WPA	Y	Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee court minutes, 1830-1837	Hayes, 199?		Y	Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee deed abstracts, 1801-1819	Murray, 1998		Y	Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee deed abstracts, 1801-1819	Murray, 1998			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee deed book number 1, 1788-1800	WPA, 1937		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee Marriages, 1900-1925	HCGHS, 1999	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee marriages.	HCGHS			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee miscellaneous records	WPA		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee wills	Messick, 1992		Y	
Hawkins County, Tennessee, 1830-1850 Censuses	Lawson, 1987-	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee, Cemeteries	HCGHS, 1997	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee, deeds [microform]	TSLA			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee, Grant Books 1-2, 1787-1819	McNamara, 1997	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee, marriage records January 1847 - May 1883. [microform]	TSLA			
Hawkins County, Tennessee, Marriage Records, 1789-1866: Bride & Groom Index	Cook, 1993	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee, Marriages, 1866-1899	HCGHS, 1997	Y		
Hawkins County, Tennessee, vital statistics, 1914 through 1925	Wiefering, 1993			Y
Hawkins County, Tennessee, wills [microform]	TSLA			Y
Historical map of Hawkins County, Tennessee, 1771-1971 [map]	Ketron, 1971			Y
Historical sketches of Hawkins County, Rogersville TN.	Walker, 1958	Y		
Historical sketches of Hawkins County: from its early settlement to 1891	Rogan, 1949	Y		
Historical sketches of the Holston valleys	Preston, 1926		Y	
Historical southern families	Boddie, 1957		Y	
History of St. Clair, TN.	Bacon, 1923	Y		
History of the lost state of Franklin	William, 1933		Y	
I could almost hear the guns": Battle of Big Creek, Hawkins Co.	Reynolds, 1994	Y		
Joseph Rogers Papers [2 vols.]	Huskey, 1990, 1995	Y		
Land Warrants & Grants, Hawkins Co., Tennessee (1788-1804)	Pruitt, 2016	Y		
Long's Bend and its People	Caldwell & Johnston, 1997	Y		
Minutes of the Circuit Court of Hawkins County, 1817-1845	WPA, 1942	Y		
Miss Nan, beloved rebel	Smith, 1986	Y		

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New Providence Presbyterian Church, Stony Point, Surgoinsville, TN, 1780-1980: a historical collection.	Crowe, 1980	Y		
Now and Then: Hawkins County, Tennessee	Brice & Caldwell, 1995	Y		
Old Rogersville: An Illustrated History of Rogersville	Price, 2002	Y		
Older Black Families of Rogersville, Tennessee	Rogers, 1976	Y		
Phases of southwest territory history	Williams, 1940	Y		
Post office history of Hawkins County.	Ketron, 1972	Y		Y
Printers in Appalachia: 1907-1967.	Mooney, 1993	Y		
Remarks on the statements of Dr. Coffin & the new school elders	Walker, 1840	Y		
Rogersville	Ball, 2011	Y		
Scalf Family History	Scalf, 1982		Y	
Tales of the past: pictorial history of the town of Surgoinsville, TN	1993	Y		
Tennessee 1860 U. S. census slave schedule:... Hawkins	NA, 1967		Y	
Tennessee genealogical records: records of early settlers from state and county archives	Whitely, 2010		Y	
Tennessee marriage records	Creekmore, 1958			Y
Tennessee marriage records.	Price, 1958		Y	Y
The 50th anniversary of the Rogersville Synodical Col.	Parks, 1889	Y		
The ambush at Flora's Ferry (Rice's Upper Ferry)	Bible, 1993	Y		
The Blue and Gray from Hawkins County, Tennessee: 1861-1865	Johnston, 1965			Y
The Joseph Rogers papers.	Rogers, 1990	Y		
The St. Clair Academy, St. Clair-- Hawkins County--	Cobb, 1956	Y		
The story of Rotherwood from the autobiography of Rev. Frederick A. Ross	Ross, 1988	Y		
Transylvania beginnings, a history	McCary, 1984		Y	
Two petitions to VA of north of Holston men, 1776, 1777.	ETHSP 21 (1949)	Y		
Wills of Hawkins County, Tennessee	Gardner, 1991.			Y
Wills of Hawkins County, Tennessee, 1786-1864	Messick, 1992		Y	Y
With the colors from Hawkins County: 1917-1918-1919.	1920	Y		
Works Progress Administration	WPA			

Benjamin L. Hooks Central Public Library (Memphis)	MPL
Germantown Regional History & Genealogical Center	GRH&GC
East Tennessee Historical Society Publications	ETHSP
Hawkins County Genealogical and Historical Society	HCGHS
National Archives	NA
Tennessee State Archives & Library	TSLA