

Roane County Locality Guide (15 March 2023)

Geographic Area & History



Roane County was named for Archibald Roane, the second Governor of Tennessee. The county is located in the east-central area of the state. ([FamilySearch Wiki](#))

Roane County is situated at the juncture of the Tennessee, Clinch, and Emory Rivers, a location of vital importance to both white settlers and Native Americans in the early years of Tennessee state history. Settlers gained control of the area through three treaties with the Cherokee Indians: the Treaty of 1794, the Third Tellico Treaty of 1805, and the Hiwassee Purchase made through the Calhoun Treaty of 1819. In 1792 John Sevier

established Fort Southwest Point at the convergence of the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers to protect white settlers traveling west. Initially the fort was placed near a spring rather than at a higher point, since the defenders apparently valued access to water more than strategic advantage. In 1797, when the mission of the fort changed to one of offering protection to the Indians against the encroaching settlers, the fort was expanded and moved to a hill overlooking the two rivers. The boyhood dreams of Roane County Historian J. C. Parker were fulfilled posthumously in 1996 with the completion of the restoration of Fort Southwest Point and its dedication and opening to the public.

After several petitions to the state legislature, Roane County was established in 1801 and named in honor of the second governor of Tennessee, Archibald Roane. The town of Kingston, in the shadow of Fort Southwest Point, was chosen as the county seat. In 1807 Kingston became “Capital for a Day.” The Tellico Treaty of 1805 stated that Kingston would become the state capital in return for thousands of acres of Indian land. It did, for a few hours on September 21, 1807. The terms of the treaty were thus fulfilled, the capital was returned to Knoxville, and the Indian land was forfeited. A monument commemorating this infamous event stands in the center of Kingston.

It was not until the Civil War, when Union Colonel John Wilder led troops through the area, that the commercial potential of local mineral deposits was recognized. Wilder, with other northern industrialists, organized the Roane Iron Company, and in 1868 established the town of Rockwood. It was a “Company Town of the New South,” shipping pig iron first by steamboat and later by rail.

The town of Harriman brought diversified industry to Roane County late in the nineteenth century. Northern industrialists of the East Tennessee Land Company, impressed by the climate, location, transportation systems, and work ethic of southerners in the area, established the town of Harriman in 1890. The industrialists were strict prohibitionists with strong religious backgrounds and high ideals who believed that sober workers and a variety of industries would insure a successful town and reliable profits. In February 1890 the company held a “Great Land Sale” on its property. Thousands of buyers from all

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across the United States offered astonishing prices for lots. Within ten hours 573 lots had been sold for more than \$600,000. Utopian dreams shaped this social experiment in town building. Every contract or deed contained a provision forbidding the use, making, storage, or selling of intoxicating beverages. As a result, Harriman soon gained the reputation as a "Utopia of Temperance."

Oliver Springs, a small town at the convergence of the Roane, Anderson, and Morgan County lines, enjoyed national prominence as a mineral springs resort that attracted people from across the eastern United States in the late nineteenth century. Richard Oliver, the first postmaster of the town and the man for whom the town was named, commercialized the springs. Oliver built a four-story hotel containing almost two hundred rooms topped by a sixty-foot tower. The resort featured bridle paths to the top of Walden's Ridge, a billiard room, electric elevators, wine cellars, and a dance pavilion. The resort burned in 1905 and was not rebuilt.

Roane County has its share of famous residents. Return Jonathan Meigs served as Indian agent at Fort Southwest Point. Sam Houston lived in Kingston briefly, where he clerked in a store before volunteering for military service in the War of 1812. A little-known Civil War heroine was sixteen-year-old Mary Love, who carried a Union message to Knoxville through Confederate lines. Sam Rayburn, longtime Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, was born in Roane County in 1882 and lived there until 1887, when his family moved to Texas. Roane County also has its infamous residents. Cherokee chiefs Tullentusky (variously spelled) and Doublehead attacked local settlements for several years. The Harpe brothers swept through Roane County in the early 1800s, killing and pillaging.

Today, Roane County offers the tranquil beauty of Watts Bar Lake, the community atmosphere of small town living, and the convenience of proximity to the metropolitan areas of Knoxville and Chattanooga. Its 2000 population was 51,910. ([Tennessee Encyclopedia](#))

Record Loss – Roane County (Family Search)

Lost censuses: 1810, 1820

Many marriage licenses issued before 1838 have been lost; others were destroyed during the Civil War.

Most records are complete

[FamilySearch Roane County Catalog](#)

TnGenWeb Project – [Roane County](#)

Contact – [Kelly Loveall](#)

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Record Location Table

Record Type	Location	Record Notes
Birth	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1881
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 100 years then they are sent to TSLA
Marriages	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1801
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 50 years then they are sent to TSLA
Divorce	Chancery Court Clerk	
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	TSLA
Deaths	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1881
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 50 years then they are sent to TSLA
	TSLA	1908-1912
		1914-1933
Funeral Home Records	TSLA	Manuscripts "R"
Land Deeds		County Registrations began 1801
	County Register	County Register of Deeds 1801
	TNGenWeb	Index to Deeds
List of Microfilmed Roane County Records	TSLA- PDF	
Pension Applications	Tennessee State Archives & Library	County Index to Tennessee Confederate Pension Applications
Probate Records	Chancery Court	County Registrations began 1801
Tennessee Enumeration of Male Voters	Ancestry.com (\$)	Tennessee Enumeration of Male Voters

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World War I Veterans	Tennessee State Archives & Library	Research Collection

County Repositories

[Harriman Public Library](#)

[Oak Ridge Public Library - Genealogy](#)

[East Tennessee Historical Society](#)

Current Area Information

[Roane County Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Roane County Government](#)

Resources

General

[Tennessee County Database \(TNGS\) - Roane County](#)

[Roane County Wiki \(Family Search\)](#)

[Linkpendium - Roane County](#)

[Tennessee State Library & Archives - Roane County Facts Sheet](#)

[TNGenWeb - Roane County](#)

[USGenWeb Archives - Roane County Tennessee](#)

Roane County Museum of History & Archives - The goal of the Roane County Heritage Commission (established 1974) is to preserve our past for all future generations, by preserving and protecting the large collection of court documents from over the years and maintain the Historic Roane County Courthouse in Kingston. Researchers and genealogists visit the Roane County Archives Library housed in the courthouse in search of data. This antebellum courthouse was built in the 1853-1854 time period and is one of six remaining courthouses in the state to have been built before the civil war. The courthouse is located at 119 Court Street.

Pages from former Roane County Heritage Commission Website:

[1810-1820 Marriage Bonds](#)

[Thomas Norris Clark Sr. Bible](#)

[Wilson - Haley Family](#)

[Goodspeed's Biographies of Roane County - 1886 Page 2 of 3](#)

[Roane County Heritage Commission - Facebook Page](#)

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[The history of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870 \(Ancestry.com\)](#)

Newspapers

Tennessee State Archives & Library

[Check Online Catalog for Roane Newspaper Details & Dates Held.](#) We do not necessarily hold all published issues of the newspapers.

- Cardiff
- Harriman
- Kingston
- Oliver Springs
- Rockwood

Newspaper.com nor Genealogybank.com have any Roane County issues. Recommend check Knoxville papers for surrounding area coverage.

Maps

[TDOT Map of Roane County](#)

[Roane County - 1888](#)

[Roane County - 1930](#)

[Roane County - Tennessee Century Farms](#)

[Old Maps of Roane County](#)

Cemeteries

[Roane County Cemeteries - Find-a Grave](#)

[Roane County Cemeteries - USGenWeb](#)

[Roane County Cemeteries - Genealogy Trails](#)

[Roane County Cemeteries - TNGenWeb \(Cemetery\)](#)

Selected Published County Histories

Tennessee State Archives & Library

- 200 Years of Kingston, Tennessee History 1799-1999 (Parker, 1999)
- Company Town: A History of Rockwood and the Roane Iron Company (Moore, 1984)
- East Roane County Homecoming '86 (Guettner, 1986)
- Glimpse of the Past (Roberts, 1982?)
- Guidebook to Historic Places in Roane County, Tennessee (Anderson & Hall, 1997)

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- Harriman (Brown, 2014)
- Historical Review: Rockwood's centennial year, 1868-1968 (Staples, 1968)*
- History of Roane County, Tennessee (Wells, 1920) *
- History of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870 (Wells, 1975)* [*name index*]
- History of Roane County, Tennessee to 1860 (Pickel, 1981)*
- Pictures of the Past (Williams & Myers, 1982)*
- Rockwood, Tennessee: The Little Pittsburgh of the South (Seward, 1962?)
- Roots of Roane County, Tennessee, 1792- (Roberts, 1981)*
- Valley of Challenge and Change: The History of Roane County, Tennessee, 1860-1900 (Shelley & Hall, 1986)* [*surname index*]

Selected Manuscripts Material

Tennessee State Archives & Library

- Adly M. Millsaps Letters, 1833-1850 (Microfilm Manuscript #35, 1 reel)*
- Anderson County Records, 1800-1974 (Microfilm Manuscript #506, 1 reel)*
- Booth (formerly Lamb and Coulter) Funeral Home Records. Roane County, 1914-1939 (Microfilm Manuscript #930, 1 reel)*
- Blair and Johnson Family Scrapbooks. Roane County, 1688-1988 (Microfilm Manuscript #1048, 1 reel)*
- Cedar Fork Baptist Church Records. Philadelphia, 1844-1968 (Microfilm Manuscript #263, 1 reel)*
- Cooper Family Letters, 1836-1847
- Emma (Middleton) Wells Papers, 1712-1945
- Hiwassee Association of Primitive Baptists Minutes. Anderson, Campbell, Cumberland, Loudon, Morgan, Roane, Scott, and Sevier Counties, 1894-1986 (Microfilm Manuscript #929, 1 reel)*
- Hindses Valley Baptist Church Records. Roane County, 1820-1924 (Microfilm Manuscript #1046, 1 reel)*
- Hiwassee Baptist Association Records. Kingston, 1878-1967 (Microfilm Manuscript #319, 1 reel)*
- J. G. D'Armond Funeral Home Records. Roane County, 1908-1939 (Microfilm Manuscript #723, 1 reel)*
- McKenzie and Son, Surveyors Maps. Chattanooga, 1880-1916 (Microfilm Manuscript #1477, 1 reel)*
- Mabel Harvey Thornton Papers, 1845-1984 (Microfilm Manuscript #1040, 12 reels)*
- Maxwell Funeral Home Records. Harriman, 1926-1979 (Microfilm Manuscript #775, 5 reels)*
- Oak Grove Cemetery Association Records. Roane County, 1898-1963 (Microfilm Manuscript #931, 1 reel)*
- Post Oak Christian Church Records. Rockwood, Roane County, 1887-1904 (Microfilm Manuscript #987, 1 reel)*

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Bibliography

[The Land Laws of Tennessee \(Whitney, 1891\) Google Books](#)

Library Titles	Author / Date	TSLA	GRH&GC	MPL
"To Save the County Harmless": Roane County, Tennessee, Bastardy Cases, 1806-1900	Bailey, 1995	Y		
1860 Census of Roane County, Tennessee	McCluen & Thornton, 1993	Y		
1880 Census Roane County, Tennessee	Pierce & McCluen, 1986	Y		
1880 Census, Roane County, Tennessee	Sistler, 1990	Y		
1900 Census, Roane County, Tennessee	Pierce & McCluen, 1988	Y		
4th Surveyors District. Tennessee homesteaders and landowners; abstracts of Survey book, 1808-1810 [and] Entry book, 1814-1815.	Compiled by Willis Hutcherson.			Y
A history of Roane County, Tennessee to 1860 / by	Eugene Monroe Pickel, 1981.			Y
Basic data on Tennessee counties	Richard G. Milk. 1940.			Y
Cemeteries of Roane County, Tennessee [3 vols. in 4 pts.]	Roane County Genealogical Society, 1988-	Y		
Cemetery Atlas for the Thirty Four Atomic Energy Commission, Depart of Energy Conservation Cemeteries in Roane County, Tennessee	DAR Avery Trace Chapter, 2007	Y		
Cemetery Atlas George Jones Memorial Baptist Church Cemetery, Wheat Community, Roane County, Tennessee		Y		
Churches of Roane County, Tennessee	McCluen, 1976	Y		
Cumberland Co., Tennessee, Fentress Co., Tennessee, Jackson Co., Tennessee, Loudon Co., Tennessee, Morgan Co., Tennessee, Overton Co., Putnam Co., Tennessee, Roane Co., Tennessee, [1891 enumeration of male voters] (Reed, 1990)	DAR, 2008	Y		
Estate Book, 1802-1842 [vol. 1 & 2 1802-1828 & 1829-1837; vol. 3 1838-1842]	WPA, 1936	Y		

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Fort Southwest Point, Kingston, Tennessee	Luke Henry Banker, 1984.			Y
Fourth Survey District of Tennessee, 1808-1810: John McClellan-Surveyor Anderson, Bledsoe, Campbell, Knox, Overton, Rhea, Roane Counties, TN	Douthat, 1988	Y	Y	
General Index to Warranty Deeds, 1801-1860	WPA, 1940	Y		
Historic photos of the Manhattan Project.	Joseph, Timothy W., 2009		Y	
History of Roane County, Tennessee, 1860-1870. [microform]	William Joseph Fowler, 1964.			Y
History of Tennessee: containing historical and biographical sketches of thirty east Tennessee counties.	Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1980		Y	
Hiwassee Land District: Blount, Loudon, Monroe, McMinn, Meigs and south of the river portion of Roane Counties.	Douthat, James L., 2001		Y	
Index to county records [on] microfilm : Roane County [and] Kingston, Tennessee.,	1968			Y
Index to Roane County, Tennessee Chancery Court Case Files, 1824-1924	Bailey, 2004*	Y		
Kyker Funeral Home of Harriman, Tennessee Death Index, 1938-December 31, 2004 [vol. 1 - 1938-2004; vol. 2 - 1938-2004]	McMinn County Historical Society, 2005	Y		
Kyker Funeral Home of Kingston, Tennessee Death Index, 1959-2004 (McMinn County Historical Society, 2005)	McMinn County Historical Society, 2005	Y		
Locations of Roane County Cemeteries, Plus Tombstone Readings of Harriman Cemetery and Willard Park Cemetery in Harriman, Tennessee		Y		
Marriage Records of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1855	Hutcherson & McCluen, 1973*	Y	Y	
Marriage Records, Roane County, Tennessee, 1856-1880	Pierce, 1987*	Y		
Marriages of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1838	Whitley, 1983*	Y	Y	

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Marriages of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1838	Edythe Rucker Whitley, 1983.			Y
Maxwell Funeral Home Records: Harriman, Roane County, Tennessee, 1926-1979	Bailey, 2000	Y		
Minute Book [County Court], 1801-1826 [10 vols.]	WPA, 1937-1942	Y		
Minutes of the county court of Roane County, Book no. H, 1819-21.	US-WPA			Y
Minutes, New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1824-1845	WPA, 1938	Y		
Pioneers of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1830. Tax Lists, Muster Rolls, Election Lists, Petitions, etc.	Thornton, 1965*	Y		
Pioneers of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1830; (tax lists, muster rolls, election lists, petitions, etc)	1965			Y
Records of Roane County, Tennessee [court records, early marriages, wills, muster rolls]	Wells, 192?	Y		
Revolutionary war pension applications, Roane County, TN	Marilee Douthat, 1988	Y	Y	Y
Roane County Tennessee Minute Books: 1801-1812. Microfilm Pub., 1973.	1973	Y		
Roane County TN Polk City Directory (2003-2007, 2009-2020)		Y		
Roane County tombstone records, Post Oak Springs Cemetery.	Hamby, Grace, 1937	Y		
Roane County, Tenn., 1805 tax list, 1970				
Roane County, Tennessee 1850 Federal Census	Roane County Heritage Commission, 2002	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee 1870 Federal Census	Bailey & Trent, 1997	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee 1910 Federal Census [5 vols.]	Bailey, 1996-1997	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee 1920 Federal Census ... Civil District ... [5 vols.]	Bailey, 1999-2000	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee 1930 Federal Census [vols. 1 - 3]	Bailey, 2003*	Y		

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Roane County, Tennessee Abstracts of Estate Book "A", 1801-1824	McCluen, 1965	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee abstracts of estate book "A", 1801-1824	Marilyn N. McCluen, 1965			Y
Roane County, Tennessee Bible Records: W.P.A. Records [1938]	Mountain Press, 2012	Y	Y	
Roane County, Tennessee Census of 1870 [2 vols.]	1986	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee colored Bible records.	W.P.A. Records. 1938		Y	
Roane County, Tennessee County Court Minutes (Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions) ... [vol. 1 1830-1831; vol. 2 1832-1835; vol. 3 1836-1840; vol. 4 1841-1843; vol. 5 1815-Jan 1816; vol. 6 1823-1826; vol. 7 1827-1828; vol. 8 1828-1830]	Bailey, 2000-	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Estate Book [vol. 1 1802-1842; vol. 2 1842-1846; vol. 3 1847-1855; vol. 4 1856-1863]	Bailey, 1999-	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Marriage Records [vol. 1 1875-1892; vol. 2 1892-1899; vol. 3 1900-1906; vol. 4 1906-1914; vol. 5 1914-1919; vol. 6 1920-1924; vol. 7 1925-1930; vol. 8 1931-1937]	Bailey, 2002	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Marriages, 1856-1875	Sistler, 1988	Y	Y	
Roane County, Tennessee Militia Companies 1806-1820 & 1828-1839	Brittain, 1999	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee militia fines records, 1806-1839.	Douthat, James L., 2011	Y		Y
Roane County, Tennessee minute book, 1807-1809.	US-WPA	Y		Y
Roane County, Tennessee Newspaper Abstracts, 1808-1879 : Obituaries, Marriages, and Other Items of Genealogical Interest	Bailey, 1998	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Obituaries [vol. 1 1880-1883; vol. 2 1884-1889; vol. 2a 1890-1895*; vol. 2b 1896-1899*; vol. 3 1900-1909; vol. 4 1910-1912; vol. 5 1913-1915; vol. 6 1916-1917; vol. 7 1918-1919; vol. 8 1920-1921; vol. 9 1922-1923; vol. 10 1924-1925*; vol. 11 1926; vol. 12 1927; vol. 13 1928; vol. 14 1929; vol. 15 1930; vol. 16 1931*; vol. 17 1932*]	Bailey, 1999-	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Scholastic Population Lists, 1838-1861	Bailey, 1997	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee Scholastic Population Lists, 1872-1899	Bailey, 2003	Y		

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Roane County, Tennessee Tax Lists [vol. 1 1822-1827; vol. 2 1828-1832; vol. 3 1833-1840; vol. 4 1841-1844; vol. 5 1843-1851 (1846-1847 missing)]	Bailey, 1994-	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee trial docket, 1810-1830.			Y	
Roane County, Tennessee, 1830 & 1840 Censuses and 1830 & 1840 Tax Lists	Bailey, 1995	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, court records [microform]				Y
Roane County, Tennessee, Deed Abstracts [1793-jAN 1834] [6 vols.]	Roane County Genealogical Society, 1980-	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, deeds [microform]				Y
Roane County, Tennessee, Divorces, 1807-1900	Bailey, 1994	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Family Bible Records [2 vols.]	WPA, 1938	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, John McClellan's Surveyor's Book, 1808-10	WPA, 1938	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Land Entry Book A, 1807-1808	WPA, 1939	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, marriage records [microform]				Y
Roane County, Tennessee, Marriage Records, 1801-1838	WPA, 1939	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Revolutionary War Pension Applications, 1793-1855	WPA, 1938	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Vital Statistics, 1914 through 1925	Wiefering, 1993	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, vital statistics, 1914 through 1925	Edna Wiefering., 1993			Y
Roane County, Tennessee, Vital Statistics, 1926 through 1930	Wiefering, 1997	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Vital Statistics, 1931 through 1935	Wiefering, 1999	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Vital Statistics, 1936 through 1941	Wiefering, 1999	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, Vital Statistics, 1942 through 1946	Wiefering, 1999	Y		
Roane County, Tennessee, wills [microform] 1802-1846;				Y
Roane County, Tennessee: minute book A, 1801-1805.	WPA. 1937			Y

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Roane County, TN marriages, 1856-1875	Byron Sistler, Barbara Sistler, 1988			Y
Roane Couty, Tennessee minute book, 1816-1818.	US-WPA			
Tax Lists of Roane County, Tennessee, 1814-1821	Hutcherson, McCluen & Thornton, 1969	Y	Y	
Tax lists of Roane County, Tennessee, 1814-1821	Willis Hutcherson, Marilyn McCluen [and] Mable Thornton, 1969			Y
Tennessee Fourth Surveyor's District Land Surveys 1814-1824: Anderson, Bledsoe, Campbell, Morgan, Overton, Rhea and Roane Counties, Tenn.	Bailey, 1996	Y		
Tennessee genealogical records and abstracts.	Eddlemon, Sherida K., 1998			
Tennessee Negro Cemetery Records and Marriage Records: Counties of Campbell, Dickson, Madison, McMinn, Monroe, Roane, Sevier [arranged by county -- Roane County section has only Negro Bible Records; some pages out of order with several Roane County records following the Campbell County section]	WPA, 1938	Y		
Tennessee records of Roane County land entry book (A), 1807-1808.	US-WPA			
Tennessee, Roane County, Negro Bible Records	WPA, 1938	Y		
The Crumblisses of Kingston.	Lanier, Robert A., 1995			
The history of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870	Jessica Budick and Anita Comtois., 1975.			Y
The history of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870.	Wells, Emma Middleton.			
The history of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870. Chattanooga, Tennessee: The Lookout Publishing Company, ©1927.	Wells, Emma Middleton, 1927			

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Watts Bar Reservoir Cemeteries	Douthat, 1986	Y		
Watts Bar Reservoir [sic] cemeteries	James L. Douthat, c1986.			Y