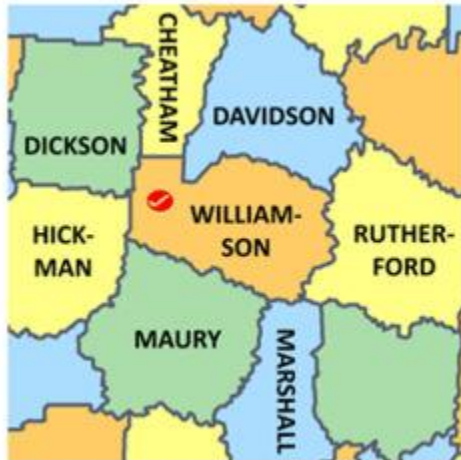


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Geographic Area



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Williamson County The County was named for Hugh Williamson, a North Carolina politician who signed the U.S. Constitution. The County is located in the central area of the state of Tennessee. The county was formed from Davidson County. ([FamilySearch Wiki](#))

Centuries before Europeans settled in what was to become Williamson County the area was home to at least five prehistoric cultures. Over many centuries these occupants of the Harpeth Valley progressed from a nomadic existence to a settled lifestyle in fortified villages along the Big Harpeth River and its tributaries. When white scouts and long hunters ventured onto the land, tribes of Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Shawnees were sharing its bounty in a migratory

fashion.

From the time white settlers began to attempt to wrest the area from the Indians, they were determined to have the rich, well-watered meadows and forests at all costs. They paid dearly for their desire to settle the region before treaties were signed, and several lost their lives to the tomahawks and arrows of those first Williamson Countians defending their hunting grounds.

By 1798 a few white settlers were permanently established in the area. Ewen Cameron built the first house in Franklin, and members of the Goff, McEwen, and Neely families made their way through the canebrake southward from Fort Nashborough. In 1799 Major Anthony Sharp sold 640 acres of his enormous military grant to Abram Maury, who laid out the county seat of Franklin, named for Benjamin Franklin, on 109 acres of this property in 1800. The little village with its huddle of log cabins was half-circled by the Big Harpeth River. Franklin and Williamson County were created by the Tennessee General Assembly on October 26, 1799. Carved from neighboring Davidson, the new county was named for Dr. Hugh Williamson, a Revolutionary patriot and distinguished statesman from North Carolina.

Many of the early settlers came to take up grants awarded to them for their Revolutionary War service. Others bought land from those who chose not to settle here. Soon representatives of every honorable profession were calling the county home. Possibly its fame could be laid in part to its fine schools dotting the countryside. Franklin and Triune were noted for their male and female academies. These private schools flourished until around 1861. Attendance declined during the years of war and Reconstruction, and they were gradually replaced by the public school system.

Prior to 1861 Williamson County was the third wealthiest county in Tennessee. Its riches were derived from its productive soil, timber, and livestock. Almost wholly loyal to the South, Franklin and its surrounding communities suffered extreme hardships during Union army occupation from 1862-65. Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest led a successful raid against a federal garrison near Brentwood, capturing 785 men and valuable stores in March 1863. The battle of Franklin was a bloody conflict fought on November 30, 1864, between the forces of Confederate General John

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B. Hood and those of Union General John M. Schofield. During the five hours of desperate fighting the Confederates, who made repeated attacks against strong breastworks, suffered an appalling number of casualties in both officers and men. Confederate Generals John Adams, Patrick Cleburne, States Rights Gist, Hiram Granbury, and Otho French Strahl were killed on the field. A sixth, John C. Carter, died ten days later. In some brigades all officers were killed down to the rank of captain. Union General David S. Stanley was wounded, but no Union generals were killed.

During the war and Reconstruction, two of Williamson County's most important historical cemeteries were established. The McGavock Confederate Cemetery near Carnton contains the bodies of 1,481 Confederates killed at Franklin and is the largest private Confederate cemetery in America. The other notable cemetery in Williamson County is the Toussaint L'Overture County Cemetery, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Although the cemetery was not incorporated until 1884, the first interments occurred much earlier, around 1869, making it the oldest African American institution in continuous use in Williamson County. The extent of destruction associated with the battle of Franklin, the collapse of slavery, and the political upheaval associated with Reconstruction produced years of uncertainty before recovery began for the citizens of the county.

In years past Williamson County boasted some forty-four communities, quite a few of which still retain their identity. However, only four—Franklin, Brentwood, Fairview, and Thompson's Station—have been incorporated as of April 1996. ([Tennessee Encyclopedia](#))

Record Loss – (Family Search) There is no known history of courthouse disasters in this county.

[FamilySearch Williamson County Catalog](#)

[TnGenWeb Project – Williamson County](#)

Contact - Darlene Anderson

[Williamson County Historical Society](#)

Record Location Table

Record Type	Location	Record Notes
Births	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1881
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 100 years then they are sent to TSLA
	FamilySearch TN Births	1828-1939
	ER Series	1908-1912
Marriages	County Clerk Office	County Registrations began 1800
	Tennessee Vital Records Office	Keeps for 50 years then they are sent to TSLA
	FamilySearch	Williamson County, Tennessee marriage records, 1800-1850

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		Williamson County, Tennessee marriage records, 1851-1879
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
	FamilySearch TN Deaths	1874-1955 1914-1963
	TSLA	1908-1912: Index to TN Deaths 1914-1933 Index to TN Deaths
Land Deeds		County Registrations began 1799
	County Register	County Register of Deeds
List of Microfilmed Williamson County Records	TSLA-PDF	
Pension Applications	Tennessee State Archives & Library	County Index to Tennessee Confederate Pension Applications
Probate Records	Chancery Court	County Registrations began 1799
Tennessee Enumeration of Male Voters	Ancestry.com (\$)	Tennessee Enumeration of Male Voters
World War I Veterans	Tennessee State Archives & Library	Research Collection

County Repositories

[Williamson County Public Library - Special Collections](#)

[Williamson County Archives & Museum](#)

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Current Area Information

[Williamson County Chamber of Commerce](#)
[Williamson County Government](#)

Resources

General

[Tennessee County Database \(TNGS\) – Williamson County](#)
[Williamson County Wiki \(Family Search\)](#)
[Linkpendium – Williamson County](#)
[Tennessee State Library & Archives – Williamson County Facts Sheet](#)
[TNGenWeb – Williamson County](#)
[USGenWeb Archives – Williamson County Tennessee](#)

Maps

[TDOT Map of Williamson County](#)
[Williamson County - 1878](#)
[Williamson County - 1888](#)
[Williamson County – 1950 ED Map \(Download\)](#)
[Williamson County \(Franklin\) – 1950 ED Map \(Download\)](#)

Cemeteries

[Williamson County Cemeteries – Find-a-Grave](#)
[Williamson County Cemeteries – USGenWeb](#)
[Williamson County Cemeteries – Genealogy Trails](#)
[Williamson County Cemeteries – TNGenWeb \(Foley Cemetery\)](#)

Newspapers

Tennessee State Archives & Library

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

Newspaper.com

The Fairview Observer (2007-2021)

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Selected Published County Histories

Tennessee State Archives & Library

- Back Home in Williamson County (Pewitt, 1996)
- Beechville, Then, Now and In Between (Lee, 2006)
- Brentwood I Remember: A History of the Brentwood Community from 1850 to 1950 (Oden, 2012)
- Brentwood, Tennessee: The Civil War Years (Fulcher, 1993)
- Burwood (1996?)
- Carnton's Empty Porch: Errors in the Published History of Williamson County, Tennessee, report number one (Fulcher, 2000)
- Civil War Battles & Skirmishes in Williamson County, Tennessee (Fulcher, 2000)
- College Grove, Williamson County, Tennessee History & Families (2011)
- Eagleville (McCord & Shelton, 201?)
- Flat Creek, Its Land and Its People (Wallace, 1986) [surnames listed in table of contents]
- Franklin: Tennessee's Handsomest Town; A Bicentennial History, 1799-1999 (Crutchfield & Holladay, 1999)
- Gently Flows the Harpeth (Little, 2009)*
- Granny White and Her Pumpkins and Other Tales of Brentwood (Little, 1993)
- Harpeth River: A Biography (Crutchfield, 1972)
- Heritage of Grandeur (Crutchfield, 1981)*
- Historic Brentwood (Lyttle, 1985)
- Historic Places in Davidson, Williamson, Maury and Giles Counties (Tennessee Historical Commission, 1921)
- Historic Williamson County; Old Homes and Sites (Bowman, 1971)
- Historical Markers of Williamson County, Tennessee: A Pictorial Guide (Warwick, 1999)
- Historical Markers of Williamson County, Tennessee Revised: A Pictorial Guide (Warwick, 2010)
- History of Brentwood United Methodist Church (Little, 1991)
- History of Tennessee From the Earliest Time to the Present: Together with a Historical and a Biographical Sketch of Maury, Williamson, Rutherford, Wilson (Goodspeed, 1988)
- Hold Us Not Boastful: A History of Thompson's Station, Tennessee and its People (Oden, 1996)
- Invitation to Enterprise. [The Story of Franklin, Tennessee in Williamson County] (Marshall Morgan Associates, 1952)
- Leiper's Fork: Our Family Album (Warwick, 200?)
- Leiper's Fork & Surrounding Communities (Warwick, 1999)
- Memories That Lead to a Street Named Natchez: Former home of Claiborne Institute, Franklin Training School, [and] Natchez High School, Williamson County, Tennessee (Battle, 1998)
- Murder on the Wilson Pike (Little, 1996)

Williamson County Locality Guide (24 March 2022)

National Register Properties: Williamson County, Tennessee (Tennessee: Division of Historic Preservation, 1995)

Native Americans in Williamson County, Tennessee Through the Date of the Last Permanent Village Settlement, Circa 1450 (McCullough, 2011)

Nolensville [Images of America Series] (Lothers, 2019)

Pictorial History of Williamson County (2000)

Pictorial History of Williamson County II (Tate, 2001)

Portraits in Time: Williamson County Bicentennial, 1799-1999 (Williamson County Bicentennial Committee, 1999)

Raining in the House and Leaking Outdoors: A Cultural and Photographic Presentation [of] 100 Local African American Women Over the Age of 65 (Battle, 2011)

Tennessee Town [Franklin, TN] (Morgan, 1936)

Triune: Two Centuries at the Crossroads (Warwick, 2004)

Two Centuries at Meeting of the Waters (Wills, 199?)

Who's Who in Williamson County [Vol. 1 A-K, Vol. 2 L-Z] (Carlisle, 2015)

Williamson Adventure: Settlement of Williamson County, Tennessee (Fulcher, 1999)

Williamson County (Marshall, 1970)

Williamson County in Black & White (Warwick, 2000)

Williamson County: A Pictorial History (Crutchfield, 1980)

Williamson County: Out There in the First District (Warwick, 2001)

Williamson County: The Civil War as Seen Through the Female Experience (Warwick, 2008)

Williamson County: The Civil War Years Revealed Through Letters, Diaries & Memoires (Warwick, 2006)

Selected Manuscripts Material

Tennessee State Archives & Library

Annie E. Cody Papers, 1927-1957 (Microfilm Manuscript #798, 2 reels)
Bellevue Cumberland Presbyterian Church Records. Williamson County, 1852-1908 (Microfilm Manuscript #429, 1 reel)
Bethesda United Methodist Church Records, 1823-2007 (Microfilm Manuscript #1900, 1 reel)
Big Harpeth Primitive Baptist Church Records. Williamson County, 1886-1909 (Microfilm Manuscript #937, 1 reel)
Charles Allen Collection. Williamson County, 1783-1842 (Microfilm Manuscript #852, 1 reel)
Church of Christ Records. Boston, 1855-1888 (Microfilm Manuscript #43, 1 reel)
Claybrooke Collection - Claybrooke and Overton Papers, 1747-1894 (Microfilm Manuscript #812, 10 reels)
Cool Springs Primitive Baptist Church Records. Peytonsville, 1829-1934 (Microfilm Manuscript #131, 1 reel)

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Crockett Collection, 1827-1947 (Microfilm Manuscript #1290, 6 reels)
Edwards Grove Methodist Church Records. Williamson County, 1873-1977 (Microfilm Manuscript #689, 1 reel)
First United Methodist Church Records. Franklin, 1812-1943 (Microfilm Manuscript #1455, 1 reel)
Flat Creek Baptist Church of Christ Records (Williamson County) 1830-1848; Spring Creek Baptist Church Records (Bedford County) 1819-1830 (Microfilm Manuscript #915, 1 reel)
Hayes Family Papers, 1837-1882 (Microfilm Manuscript #75, 1 reel)
Holt Family Papers, 1800-1916 (Microfilm Manuscript #1079, 4 reels)
Hunt Family Papers, 1837-1853 (Microfilm Manuscript #853, 1 reel)
James Harrison Campbell Papers, 1924-1951 (Microfilm Manuscript #1724, 60 reels)
Jesse Cox Diary and Memoirs, 1834-1863 (Microfilm Manuscript #86, 1 reel)
John Leland Jordan Papers, 1789-1869 (Microfilm Manuscript #110, 1 reel)
John Reid Papers, 1784-1816 (Microfilm Manuscript #113, 1 reel)
John Reid Papers, 1791-1802 (Microfilm Manuscript #155, 1 reel)
Little Harpeth Presbyterian Church (Williamson County, Tenn.), 1837-1914
Mary Nichols Britt Collection, 1807-1954 (Microfilm Manuscript #1322, 6 reels)
McCutchen Family Papers, 1818-1958
McGavock-Hayes Family Papers, Addition, 1796-2000 (Microfilm Manuscript #1677, 11 reels)
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St. Paul's Episcopal Church Records. Franklin, 1827-1954 (Microfilm Manuscript #22, 1 reel)
Samuel Henderson Diary, 1834-1876 (Microfilm Manuscript #148, 1 reel)
Samuel Lancelotte Richardson, Sr. Farm Ledger, 1936-1955 (Microfilm Manuscript #1766, 1 reel)
Sneed Family Papers, 1796-1956 (Microfilm Manuscript #945, 2 reels)
Susie Gentry Papers, 1870-1934 --Addition (Microfilm Manuscript #1193, 2 reels)
Truman Hudson Alexander Papers, 1817-1975 (Microfilm Manuscript #517, 2 reels)
Walter Wagner Faw Papers (Microfilm Manuscript #998, 53 reels)
William Wirt Courtney Papers, 1861-1928 (Microfilm Manuscript #1557, 1 reel)
Williamson County (Tenn.) Records, 1794-1942 (Microfilm Manuscript 1832, 11 reels)
Wilson Creek Primitive Baptist Church Records. Williamson County, 1804-1945 (Microfilm Manuscript #90, 1 reel)

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A heritage of grandeur. Photos by Arthur R. Ezell. Franklin, Carnton Association,	Crutchfield, James A., 1981	Y		
Along the Harpeth. Nashville, Mini-Histories,	Brehm, H.C., 1993	Y		
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Williamson County, Tennessee: a genealogical abstract of the county court minutes, 1800-1804.	Wells, Carol, 1988		Y	
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