

Historical Resources on Microfilm:
Chester County, Tennessee

Revised: 2003 Oct

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West Tennessee Heritage Study Center
Univ. of Tennessee at Martin

Chester County

In mid October 1818, Andrew Jackson and Isaac Shelby successfully strong-armed Chickasaw Indians into ceding lands in the tribe's cultural region lying east of the Mississippi River. Land south of the Ohio River and north of the Kentucky-Tennessee border became the Jackson Purchase; land within Tennessee became the Western District. The legislature passed an act to organize the region into new counties on November 7, 1821 (*Acts of Tennessee* 1821, p.39). Seventeen counties were created during the next few years to organize this section politically, three of which straddled the Tennessee River.

On 1875 Mar 19 the Tennessee legislature carved out pieces from the northeastern corner of Hardeman, the southwest quarter of Henderson, southeastern corner of Madison, and northern section of McNairy counties to create Wisdom County. That organizational act was repealed, but Chester County reestablished from the same fractions by a later act dating 1879 Mar 1. After legal challenges were resolved the county organization finally took effect in 1882. The new entity was named in honor of Robert I. Chester, quartermaster of the Fourth Tennessee Regiment during the War of 1812.

Chester County has always been small. The 1920 census listed a population of 9,669; the 2000 census counted 15,540 individuals.

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Book and film holdings of the West Tennessee Heritage Study Center may be searched via the Internet by pointing a browser to <<http://wthsc.utm.edu>> and following the link to the Paul Meek Library catalogue.

MICROFILM

WTHSC
Film reel

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Federal census¹

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Maps

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¹ County boundaries changed dramatically between nineteenth century census enumerations. Researchers can follow changes graphically in William Thorndale and William Dollarhide's *Map Guide to the U. S. Federal Censuses, 1790–1920* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1987).