

**TENNESSEE CIVIL AND MILITARY COMMISSIONS  
1796-1976  
RECORD GROUP 195**

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**MICROFILMED**

## INTRODUCTION

Record Group 195, Tennessee Civil and Military Commissions, 1796-1976, contains the records of the commissions made by the governors of Tennessee. The commissions measure seven and ½ cubic feet and are recorded in 56 volumes. These records were maintained by the Secretary of State and were found to be in fair to good condition. Many of the earlier volumes required light cleaning of accumulated soot. Fifteen volumes were found to be in fragile condition and were placed in acid free boxes for their protection. Portions of these records were received from the Records Center at various times between 1973 and 1994. There are no restrictions on the use of these records. The volumes have been arranged chronologically and have been microfilmed. The original documents have been retained.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

Tennessee Civil and Military Commissions, 1796-1976, record the appointments by the governors of Tennessee to various positions of authority in the state. Tennessee's chief executive used commissions to confer positions of military and civil authority on various individuals. These records were kept and maintained by the Secretary of State.

The commissions found in these volumes can include Military Officer, Judge, Attorney, Sheriff, Coroner, Justice of the Peace, Surveyor, Road Commissioner, Turnpike Operators, Attorney General, Solicitor General, Electors for President and Vice-President, Indian Treaty Delegates, State Boundary Line Dispute Delegates, Trustees to the Lunatic Asylum and Institution for the Blind, Inspectors of Tobacco and the Penitentiary, State Agricultural Bureau, Assayer, Superintendent of Weights and Measurers, Geologist & Mineralogist, Railroad Directors, and Bonding Regulators. Honorary commissions known as "Colonel, Aide de Camp, Governor's Staff," have been awarded to individuals for meritorious service since 1943. These are reflected in the last four volumes of this collection.

The commissions are entered chronologically in bound volumes. Most volumes will contain a wide range of commissions unless otherwise noted in the Container List. An index is often found either in the front or back of the volume and the location is indicated in the Container List. The exception is Volume 6, where the entire volume is an index to Volume 7. Volume 16 and 41-A is another exception in that it contains only Judges and Chancellors commissions.

There is a considerable number of commissions for officers in the militia found in ten of the first fourteen volumes. Volumes 10-13 are devoted entirely to military commissions while volumes 8 and 9 contain none. There are no military commissions found after volume 14. Officer commissions in the militia were considered very important in the early years of statehood, since service in the militia was required for all able bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45, with some limited exceptions. Specific information on the history of the Tennessee militia can be found in "The Militia Law of The State of Tennessee, passed January 28, 1840" and a graduate thesis by Maurice L. Rowland entitled "The Militia Laws of Tennessee to the Year 1860." Additional records of Notaries Public at Large Bonds from 1875 to 1978 can be found in Record Group 288.

Volume 2 is missing, creating a gap from 1801 through 1806. Mrs. John Trotwood Moore, former State Librarian and Archivist, makes a reference to the volume as missing as early as 1947 when she published *Records of Commissions of Officers in the Tennessee Militia, 1796-1811*. This book was also printed in installments in the *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* starting with Volume 8, 1949, pages 63-85 and Volume 9, 1950, pages 171-182 and 273-285.

This collection could be helpful to genealogical researchers, historians interested in the militia system in early Tennessee, and researchers seeking insight into the functions of state government. This collection has been microfilmed and the original documents have been retained. There are no restrictions on the use of these records.

## CONTAINER LIST

### RG 195

#### MF ROLL #1

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##### VOLUME #:

1. Commission Book 1, April 2, 1796-June 16, 1801.
2. Commission Book 2. **Missing**.
3. Commission Book 3, May 8, 1807- October 31, 1815. Name Index in back.
4. Commission Book 4, October 2, 1815-September 27, 1827. Name index in back.
5. Commission Book 5, Sam Houston, Governor, October 3, 1827-January 23, 1832. Name index in back.

#### MF ROLL #2

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6. Index to Commission Book 6, William Carroll, Governor, January 4, 1832-December 28, 1839.
7. Commission Book 6, January 4, 1832-December 28, 1839. Name index in front. (Located in Box 1)
8. Commission Book, Civil Offices, January 3, 1840-May 22, 1844. **No Military**, Index in front. (Located in Box 1)
9. Commission Book, October 17, 1839-September 5, 1856, **No Military**, Index in front. (Located in Box 9)
10. Commission Book 7, James K. Polk, Governor, January 1, 1840-March 15, 1862. **Military only**.

#### MF ROLL #3

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11. Commission Book, 1861-1862. **Military only**, Partial index in front. (Located in Box 2)
12. Commission Book, List of Officers, 1861-1865. **Military only**. (Located in Box 3)

**RG 195**  
(Continued)

**VOLUME #:**

13. Commission Book, Andrew Johnson, Governor, April 6, 1862-February 1, 1863.  
**Military only**, No Index. (Located in Box 2)
14. Commission Book 10, October 1863-June 21, 1871. Index in front.

**MILITARY COMMISSIONS END HERE**

15. Commission Book, Miscellaneous Commissions, J. C. B., John C. Brown, Governor, October 11, 1871-August 4, 1874. (Located in Box 4)
16. Commission Book, **Judges and Chancellors**, J. C. B., John C. Brown, Governor, November 22, 1871-February 1, 1875. (Located in Box 4)

**MF ROLL #4**

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17. Commission Book, John C. Brown, James D. Porter, Albert S. Marks, Alvin Hawkins, and William B. Bate, Governor, February 27, 1873-March 3, 1883. Index in front. (Located in Box 5)
18. Commission Book, William B. Bate, Robert L. Taylor, John P. Buchanan, and Peter Turney, Governor, January 23, 1882-February 13, 1893. Partial name index in front. (Located in Box 6)
19. Commission Book, January 17, 1887-January 14, 1891. (Located in Box 10)

**MF ROLL #5**

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20. Commission Book, January 15, 1891-December 28, 1892. (Located in Box 10)
21. Commission Book, January 19, 1893-September 11, 1894. (Located in Box 4)
22. Commission Book, Peter Turney and Robert L. Taylor, Governor, May 1, 1893-June 21, 1899. Name index in front. (Located in Box 7)
23. Commission Book, Benton McMillin and James B. Fraizer, Governor, January 21, 1899-April 14, 1904. Name index in front. (Located in Box 8)

**RG 195**  
(Continued)

**MF ROLL #6**

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**VOLUME #:**

24. Commission Book, James B. Fraizer, John I. Cox, Governor, November 2, 1903-October 11, 1905. Name index in front.
25. Commission Book, Malcolm R. Patterson, Governor, January 26, 1907-January 24, 1911. Name index in front.
26. Commission Book, Ben W. Hooper, Governor, February 2, 1911-January 14, 1915. Name index in front.

**MF ROLL #7**

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27. Commission Book, A. H. Roberts, Governor, January 20, 1919-December 7, 1920. Name index in front.
28. Commission Book, Gordon Browning, Governor, March 13, 1937-June 20, 1939. Name index in front.
29. Commission Book, Prentice Cooper, Governor, July 5, 1939-August 19, 1942. Name index in front.
30. Commission Book, Prentice Cooper, Governor, August 19, 1942-February 21, 1945. Name index in front.

**MF ROLL #8**

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31. Commission Book, Jim McCord, Governor, February 24, 1945-September 1, 1948. Name index in front.
32. Commission Book, Jim McCord, Governor, September 1, 1948-August 28, 1950. Name index in front.
33. Commission Book, Gordon Browning, Governor, August 28, 1950-December 1, 1952. Name index in front.
34. Commission Book, Gordon Browning, Governor, December 22, 1952-January 18, 1955. Name index in front.

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(Continued)

**MF ROLL #9**

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**VOLUME #:**

35. Commission Book, Frank G. Clement, Governor, January 18, 1955-February 27, 1957. Name index in front.
36. Commission Book, Frank G. Clement, Governor, April 15, 1957-September 1, 1958. Name index in front.
37. Commission Book, Buford Ellington, Governor, July 6, 1960-April 11, 1962. Name index in front.
38. Commission Book, Buford Ellington, Governor, June 13, 1962-July 17, 1963. Name index in front.

**MF ROLL #10**

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39. Commission Book, Frank Clement, Governor, July 17, 1963-October 1, 1964. Name index in front.
40. Commission Book, Frank Clement, Governor, October 20, 1964-December 14, 1965. Name index in front.
41. Commission Book, Frank Clement, December 15, 1965-September 1, 1967. Name index in front.
- 41-A. Commission Book, Judicial Officials, Frank G. Clement, Governor, August 4, 1966-August 18, 1972. No index.
42. Commission Book, Buford Ellington, Governor, September 15, 1967-October 24, 1969. Name index in front.
43. Commission Book, Buford Ellington, Governor, November 5, 1969-January 15, 1971. Name index in front.
44. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, January 27, 1971-January 20, 1972. Name index in front.
45. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, January 25, 1972-August 28, 1972. Name index in front.

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(Continued)

**MF ROLL #11**

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**VOLUME #:**

46. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, August 4, 1972-February 20, 1973.  
Name index in front.
47. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, March 13, 1973-April 5, 1974. Name  
index in front.
48. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, April 5, 1974-November 27, 1975.  
Name index in front.
49. Commission Book, Winfield Dunn, Governor, August 30, 1974-September 30, 1974.  
Name index in front.
50. Commission Book, Ray Blanton, Governor, January 18, 1975-September 30, 1975.  
Name index in front.
51. Commission Book, Ray Blanton, Governor, September 30, 1975-December 3, 1976.  
Name index in front.

**MF ROLL #12**

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**Commission Books for "Colonel, Aid De Camp, Governor's Staff"**

52. Commission Book, Prentice Cooper, Governor, February 17, 1943-January 13, 1945.  
Index in front.
53. Commission Book, Jim McCord and Gordon Browning, Governor, April 25, 1945-  
January 13, 1953. Index in front.
54. Commission Book, Frank G. Clement, Governor, April 1, 1953-April 9, 1953. Index  
in front.
55. Commission Book, Frank G. Clement, Governor, April 15, 1959-May 21, 1959.  
Index only, no entries in book.