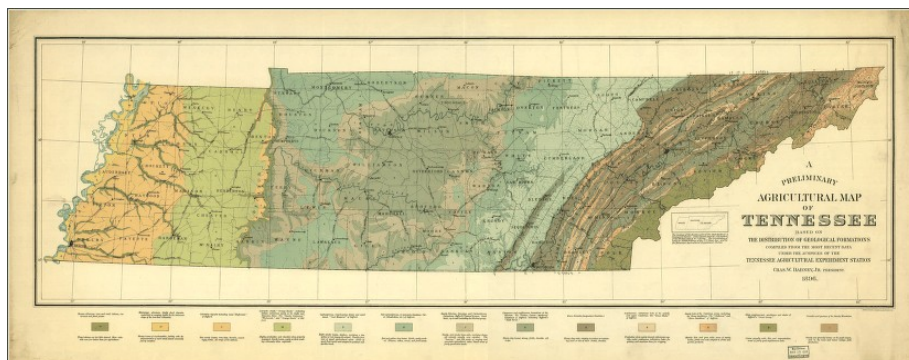


## Teaching with Primary Sources across Tennessee

### PRIMARY SOURCE SET: TENNESSEE'S GRAND DIVISIONS– WEST TENNESSEE



[A preliminary agricultural map of Tennessee based on the distribution of geological formations.](#) [1896]

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tennessee has three very distinct regions that make up the state: east, middle, and west. These are commonly referred to as the “grand divisions” and are represented by three stars on the state flag. The grand divisions of Tennessee are most visible by the different types of geological features across the state. Because of differences in geology and resources, the distribution of industrial and agricultural products varies widely. Furthermore, cultural differences have inspired different forms of folklife, including popular music, from blues in the west, to country in the middle, to bluegrass in the east.

West Tennessee is distinct for several reasons: it is

- Composed of 20-22 counties (differs according to source– Tennessee State Code states that there are 21)
- Situated between the Tennessee River on the east and the Mississippi River on the west
- Located on the edge of the New Madrid Seismic Zone. In 1811 and 1812, some of the strongest [earthquakes](#) ever recorded briefly changed the way the Mississippi River flowed and created Reelfoot Lake.
- Home to Tennessee’s largest city, Memphis (currently with a population of around 670,000)
- An important center for the development of blues and rock-n-roll, and home to major musical sites such as Beale Street and Graceland (both in Memphis)

### SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS & ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

There are great primary sources available from the Civil War and Great Depression eras in West Tennessee, especially in the following collections: [America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945](#) and [Map Collections](#). In these and other collections, you can find great sources on the effect and use of the rivers in West Tennessee, including flooding, transportation, and shipping.

Have students research the Mississippi or Tennessee Rivers in West Tennessee and how they impact the region.

- How does the river affect the landscape? How is the river important to farming?
- What kinds of transportation does each river support? How has river transportation changed over the years?
- How have the rivers impacted patterns of settlement, agriculture, invasion, and economic development over 200 years of history?
- How have the roles and importance of the rivers changed over time?

Library of Congress resources to examine:

- [Primary Sources for Tennessee](#)
- [Explore the States: Tennessee](#)
- [Local Legacies: Tennessee](#)

Also see this:

- “[Geologic Zones](#)” entry in the [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture](#)
- [Grand Divisions](#) map from the [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture](#)



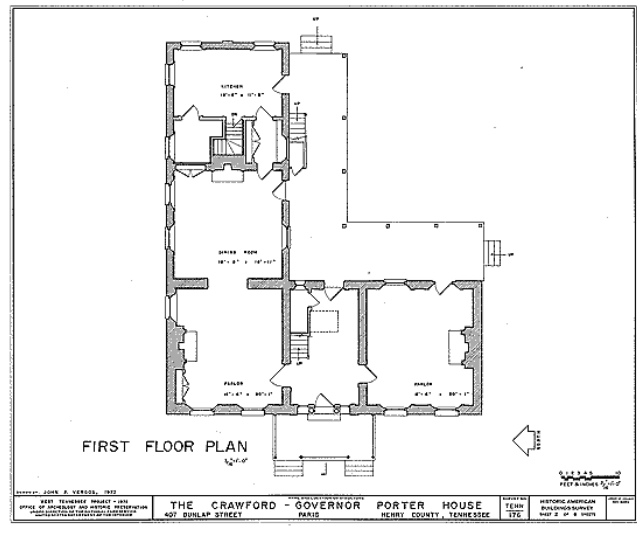
[One of the few remaining old Mississippi River boats, Memphis, Tennessee. \[1935\]](#)



[Erosion control on Natchez Trace Project near Lexington, Tennessee. \[1936\]](#)



[Resettlement official investigating case of nine living in field on U.S. Route 70 between Camden and Bruceton, Tennessee, near Tennessee River. \[1936\]](#)



[Crawford-Governor Porter House, 407 Dunlap Street, Paris, Henry County, TN](#)

**WEST TENNESSEE COLLEGE.**  
JACKSON TENNESSEE.

THIS INSTITUTION will be reopened for the reception of pupils on Monday the 12th of February. The Buildings and Grounds will be refitted and improved so as to adapt them to the use of the College.

It has been put in charge of Rev. William Shelton, A. M., of Brownsville, Tenn.; who will enter on the duties of his office at the opening of the Session. His long experience and high character as a Teacher give the assurance that pupils, put under his charge, will be thoroughly educated; and his extensive reputation, it is believed, will secure for the College an extensive patronage.

He will be assisted by Prof. Benjamin H. Arnold, A. M., of Virginia, who will have charge of the Preparatory Department. After his graduation, he spent three years, before the War, in teaching. During the War, he was a Soldier in the Southern Army. Now he returns to his profession, bringing the highest recommendations of his Scholarship and ability to Teach. As the wants of the College may require, other competent Teachers will be added.

During the War, most of our Southern Colleges have been broken up, and many of them cannot be re-established for years to come. But the Buildings of West Tennessee College have not been destroyed, and its Endowment has been saved from the wreck of the War, with an accumulated interest of about ten thousand dollars, which the Trustees intend devoting, when collected, to the improvement and enlargement of the College buildings.

They have the means therefore of still carrying on the College. And they propose re-establishing it on such liberal terms that all may patronize it. It will be their aim to secure the best Teachers in the South; and, as far as possible, they will endeavor to have the various Protestant Churches of the South represented in the Faculty, so that all the Southern people, of all Denominations may patronize the College. And, as most of the Denominational Colleges of the South cannot be re-established for several years, they invite the co-operation of all in making West Tennessee College worthy of their patronage. It is better that the scattered educational means and patronage of the country should be combined to build up one school of high order for West Tennessee, rather than to diffuse one's means among half a dozen minor lights.

During the Spring Session, pupils in the Primary and Preparatory Departments will be thoroughly instructed, and the more advanced pupils will be prepared to enter the regular College Classes at the opening of the Fall Session.

**EXPENSES.**

Tuition in the Primary Department.....	\$20 00
" " Preparatory ".....	25 00
" " Collegiate ".....	30 00
Fee for Incidental Expenses.....	2 00

All payable in advance.

Board can be obtained in private families, where everything is furnished, at Twenty Dollars a month; and at Fifteen Dollars a month, when pupils furnish their own wood, lights and washing.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES.**

Dr. W. M. E. BUTLER,	Dr. ALEX. JACKSON,
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[West Tennessee College. Jackson, Tennessee. \[1866\]](#)



[Shiloh National Military Park Tour Roads, Shiloh vicinity, Hardin County, TN](#)  
(Image #39: "BARGE TRAFFIC ON TENNESSEE RIVER FROM LARGEST INDIAN MOUND")



[Medicine show, Huntingdon, Tennessee. \[1935\]](#)

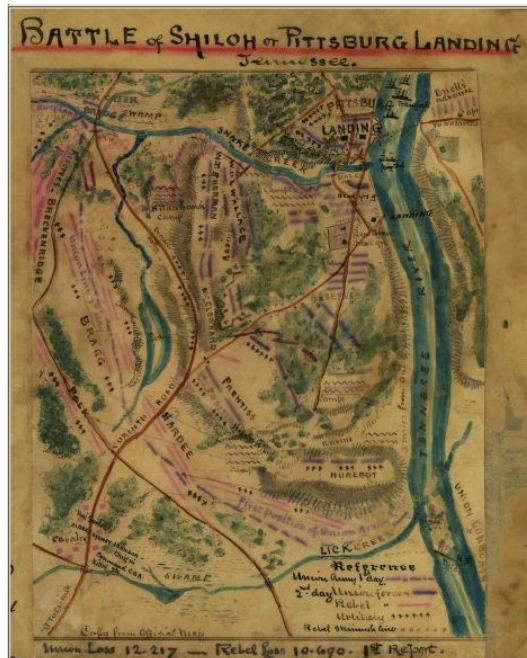


[The Bessie Levee augmented with sand bags during the 1937 flood. Near Tiptonville, Tennessee.](#)



[Balloon barrage training center. Lilluputians at a weemie roast. This illustration is portrayed here by comparing the huge balloons and dwarfed trainees seated in picnic fashion around their instructor. Camp Tyson, Tennessee.](#)

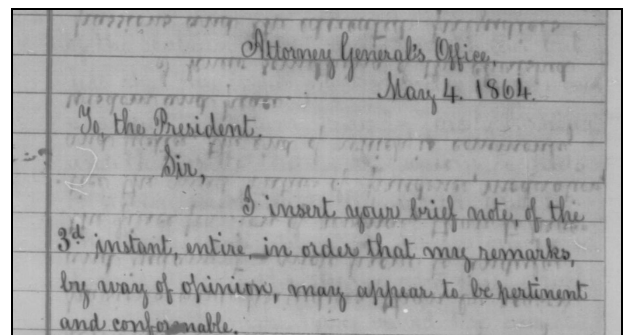
Learn more about Camp Tyson [here](#).



[Battle of Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee. \[1862-1865\]](#)



[Beale Street blues / by W.C. Handy. \[1917\]](#)



[Edward Bates to Abraham Lincoln, Wednesday, May 04, 1864 \(Opinion on Fort Pillow massacre\). \[Detail\] \[Transcription\]\(#\) available.](#)

## CITATIONS: TENNESSEE'S GRAND DIVISIONS– WEST TENNESSEE

*Teachers: Providing these primary source replicas without source clues may enhance the inquiry experience for students. This list of citations is supplied for reference purposes to you and your students. We have followed the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) format, one of the formats recommended by the Library of Congress, for each entry below, minus the access date. The access date for each of these entries is December 14, 2009.*

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