
SHERIFFS of HAMILTON COUNTY



1819 ⁴⁴	Charles Gamble	1860-1861	William R. Snow
1820-1822	Charles Gamble	1861-1862	Robert G. Campbell
1822-1824	Charles Gamble	1862-1864	Milo B. Coulter
1824-1826	Terry Riddle	1864-1866	George W. Rider
1826-1828	Terry Riddle	1866-1868	Asberry B. Conner
1828-1830	Unknown	1868-1870	Robert G. Campbell
1830-1832	Unknown	1870-1872	Asberry B. Conner
1832-1834	Alfred M. Rogers	1872-1873	James C. Conner
1834-1836	Unknown	1873-1873	J.R. Alison
1836-1838	James Lauderdale	1873-1874	Charles B. Champion
1838-1840	Unknown	1874-1876	Charles B. Champion
1840-1842	James M. Anderson	1876-1878	Charles B. Champion
1842-1844	James M. Anderson	1878-1880	Hiram J. Springfield
1844-1846	James C. Francis	1880-1882	Hiram J. Springfield
1846-1848	James C. Francis	1882-1882	William T. Cate
1848-1850	John Johnson	1882-1884	Hiram J. Springfield
1850-1852	James Roddy	1884-1886	Stephen C. Pyott
1852-1854	Unknown	1886-1888	John Emory Conner
1854-1856	James C. Conner	1888-1890	Azariah Shelton
1856-1858	James C. Conner	1890-1894	John R. Skillern
1858-1860	James C Conner	1894-1896	Frederick S. Hyde

1896-1902	Samuel Bush	1948-1950	Frank J. Burns
1902-1904	William P. Hays	1950-1956	Rex Richey
1904-1908	Joseph F. Shipp	1956-1958	Victor W. Maddox
1908-1914	Samuel A. Conner	1958-1963	James E. Turner
1914-1918	Nick P. Bush	1963-1963	Judge Robert Summit
1918-1920	Robert P. Bass	1963-1968	Gilbert F. Newell
1920-1922	Nick P. Bush	1968-1974	H. Q. Evatt
1922-1924	Horace G. Humphreys	1974-1976	Gilbert F. Newell
1924-1928	Thomas O. Selman	1976-1978	Jerry Pitts
1928-1932	Charlie C. Taylor	1978-1994	H. Q. Evatt
1932-1934	John K. Tate	1994-2006	John Cupp
1934-1940	Frank J. Burns	2006-2008	Billy Long
1940-1943	Fredrick H. Payne	2008-2008	Allen Branum
1943-1948	Thomas G. Head	2008-Present	Jim Hammond



**Former sheriffs "Bookie" Turner, Frank Newell,
"Red" Maddox, and Sheriff H. Q. Evatt**

Sheriff Charles Gamble

1819 & 1820-1824

Charles Gamble was of Scottish-Irish lineage and in 1806 took up residence on a farm in Sale Creek along with his brothers and sister. Like many of their neighbors, they came from Knox County. Such a short move to the frontier by a family cluster was typical in American pioneer history.

When the county of Hamilton was established on October 25, 1819, Gamble was one of three commissioners named by the legislature to begin the new government. The sheriff's office began in 1819⁴⁵ and Gamble was appointed to serve as sheriff until he was formally elected as the first sheriff for the county in 1820.⁴⁶

Sheriff James C. Francis

1844-1848

(First known photograph of a Hamilton County Sheriff)



Sheriff James C. Conner

1854-1860 & 1872-1873



A hard-working, dedicated farmer, James C. Conner was a pioneer to Walden's Ridge. He was a leader, devoted to community service, who earned the respect of the people of Hamilton County. He served three full terms as sheriff and died during his fourth term on July 4, 1873.

Conner married Kizziah Thurman Rogers after the death of his first wife, Martha Crawford. Kizziah was the daughter of Elisha Rogers, a pioneer to Hamilton County. She and Conner raised seven children, including a daughter from his earlier marriage.⁴⁷ During his time as sheriff in 1858, Conner also made personal contributions to the community by putting up his own money, along with eight other men, to found the Fair Mount Male and Female Academy, a private, state-authorized school on Walden's Ridge. The school served Hamilton County from 1858 until 1946, giving educational opportunity to children from surrounding communities who boarded in families' homes on Walden's Ridge while in attendance.^{48 49}

During that same year, Conner built for his family a two-story log home on Walden's Ridge. From that log home, Conner managed the Anderson Turnpike, being responsible for keeping it in repair – an often-grueling task – in addition to maintaining his duties as sheriff. After the Civil War, Conner also became the operator of the toll

gate that spanned the thoroughfare.⁵⁰ The house is now known as the Conner Toll House and is on the National Register of Historic Places.⁵¹

In addition to serving Hamilton County as a four-term sheriff, Conner also held the offices of justice of the peace and county tax collector.^{52 53}

Sheriff William R. Snow 1860-1861

As one rides out Snow Hill Road in Ooltewah, Tennessee, they are reminded of a day when periwinkle and dogwoods covered the land and gentle hilltop breezes made the area a popular resting place for weary nineteenth century travelers. It was there that the Snow Hill Plantation rested: the home of William Snow, his wife Mary, and their twelve children from about 1840 to 1870.⁵⁴

Goodspeed's *History of Hamilton County* lists Snow as acting sheriff at some time between 1820 and 1876.⁵⁵ However, this is unreliable information because resources show he did not move to the area until about 1840 and then left around 1870.⁵⁶ Updated research now shows that William Snow served as sheriff 1860-1861 until he joined the Confederate Army.^{57 58}



The Civil War created much unrest in Hamilton County. The Snow family, like most local families, did not escape its destruction. Cannons were hauled from Chattanooga by Union soldiers to bombard the Snow Hill Plantation home. Though the Union successfully routed the Confederacy, the Snow house bore cannonball holes until its dismantling in the 1920s.⁵⁹

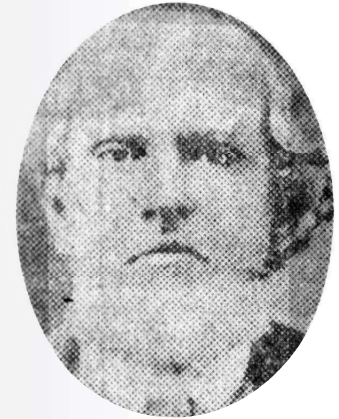
The Civil War also affected the Snows in a more personal way than the destruction of their property. In 1860, Snow joined the Confederate Army as Captain of the 3rd Battalion of Tennessee Cavalry. A Confederate record reports Snow was moved from the 3rd to the 2nd Battalion of Tennessee Cavalry for a second 12-month time period.⁶⁰ In 1862, at 53 years of age, Snow's health had deteriorated so much that he resigned from the army. Always a loyal Confederate, he later allegedly formed a guerilla group known as Snow's Scouts.⁶¹

Sheriff Robert G. Campbell 1861-1862 & 1868-1870

After Sheriff William Snow joined the Confederate Army, Robert G. Campbell finished the 1860-1862 term as sheriff. Records show that Sheriff Snow joined the Confederate Army August 7, 1861.⁶² Election results from November 12, 1861, are the first piece of evidence from original documents that show Robert G. Campbell became sheriff during this time.⁶³

Sheriff George W. Rider
1864-1866

George W. Rider received the meager amount of 29 votes when he was elected sheriff by the voters of Hamilton County in March 1864. Although the number of votes was small, only 75 voters participated in the countywide election since it took place during the Civil War. Union troops occupied Chattanooga from September 1863, and as Confederates left the county, the civilian residents wanted civil control rather than federal.⁶⁴



Sheriff Asberry B. Conner
1866-1868 & 1870-1872

Sheriff Asberry Conner served Hamilton County for two terms of office - first from 1866 to 1868 and again from 1870 to 1872.^{65 66} Conner was a Marion County native, but moved to Hamilton County as a young man. He served as justice of the peace for the county in 1861, but was arrested by Confederate soldiers when the Civil War began. His friend William Crutchfield was instrumental in his release, and Conner then travelled to Kentucky, where he joined a Tennessee regiment.⁶⁷

Conner became a captain in the Union Army, and after the war he was made the first marshal of Chattanooga. According to a newspaper obituary, Conner had six children and a large extended family in both Hamilton and Marion counties.⁶⁸

Tennessee archives show that Andrew Johnson, the military governor of Tennessee, appointed the members of the Hamilton County Court in April 1864. Johnson appointed all county officers until Tennessee was readmitted to the Union in July 1866. Only then was military control in Hamilton County abolished, at which point Conner took office. As sheriff, he enforced the law in an area plagued with disease, fire, and flooding. Smallpox was spreading among the poor, and the local government appeared helpless in collecting revenue to combat disease.⁶⁹

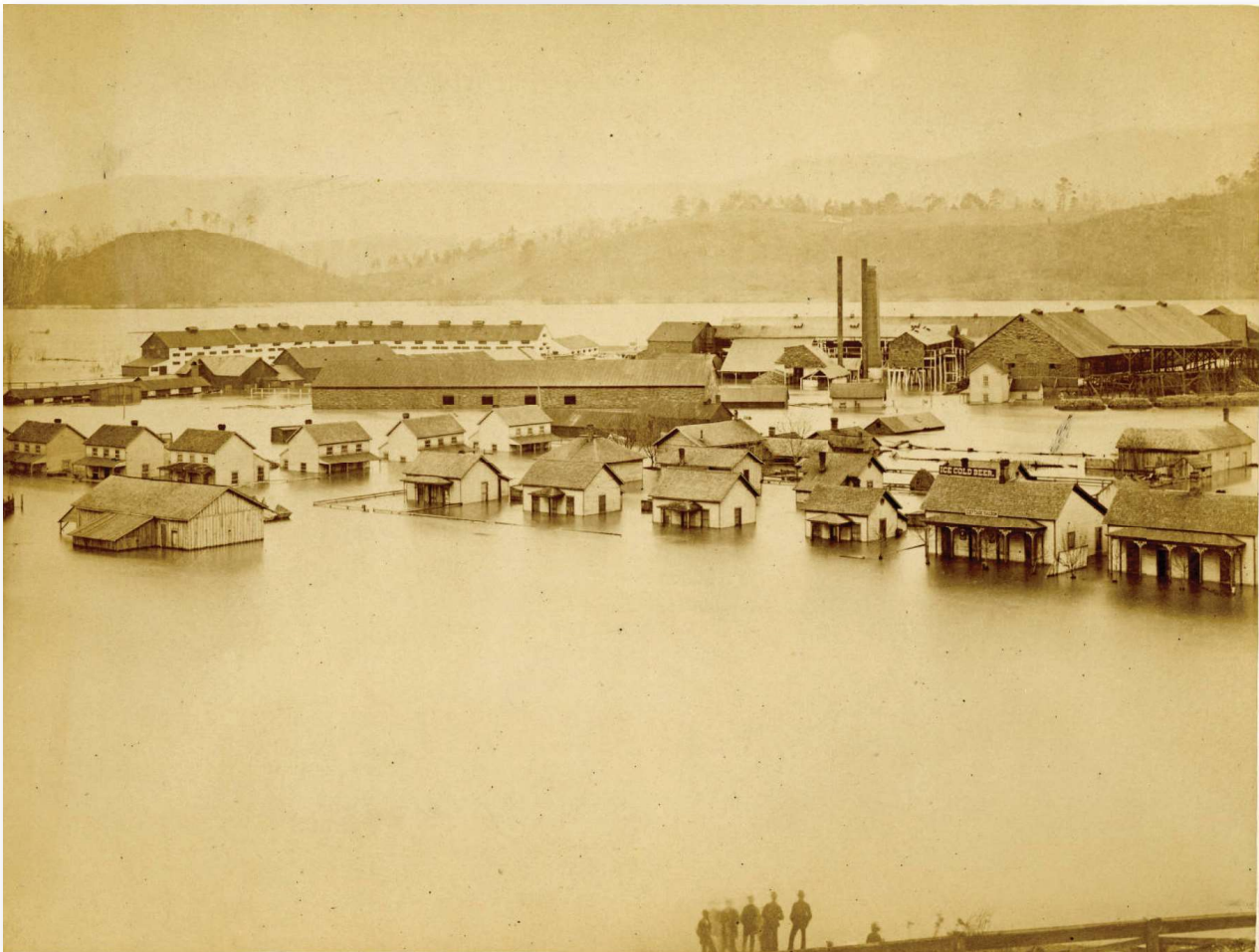
Fires were commonplace. The fire engine was manned by the first volunteers at its helm and pulled by as many as 100 men. There were no sirens, merely citizens crying, "Fire!" Despite their many obstacles, the volunteer firemen did a fine job and saved many lives.

By far the most catastrophic event during Sheriff Conner's term was The Great Flood of 1867. Hamilton county residents recorded many snowfalls that year that melted just as heavy rains pelted the area. Although residents were aware of the steadily falling rain, they had not expected or prepared for a flood of any size.⁷⁰

On Friday night, March 8, 1867, the waters of the Tennessee River began spilling over throughout the county. In downtown Chattanooga, buildings were under

five feet of water, and residents in low-lying areas were rushing to their rooftops. Most buildings along the riverbank were swept away, and the Union Army Bridge was destroyed. The Tennessee River crested on Monday morning, March 11, 1867, and would have measured 58.6 feet by the present gauge.⁷¹

Conner moved to Arkansas in 1880, eight years after finishing his second term in office for Hamilton County. Having served as the county's sheriff during some of its more difficult years, Conner wanted to try his hand at farming and merchandising in a new environment. By all accounts, Conner left an excellent record of service. He died in Magazine, Arkansas, on March 21, 1901, at the age of 79.⁷²

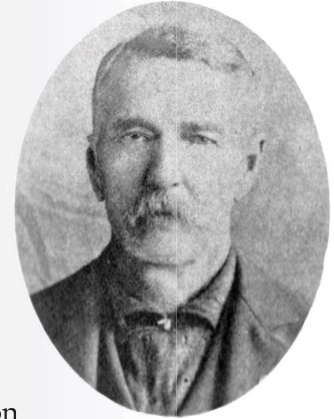


The great flood of 1866, Chattanooga.

United States Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District. (1886) Chattanooga 1886 flood [photograph collection]. Retrieved from US Army Corps of Engineers Digital Library.

William H. Bean

Previous Hamilton County Sheriff's Office publications have incorrectly listed William H. Bean as sheriff for the 1872-1874 term.⁷³ Though Bean was elected sheriff for this term, his oath was never administered. He was not allowed to serve as sheriff due to not turning over school funds collected during the time he was the tax collector.⁷⁴



Judge A. W. Puckett refused to administer Bean's oath of office.⁷⁵ Bean took this to the Supreme Court, which sustained Judge Puckett's appeal, reversed Bean's mandamus, and declared Bean's election void.⁷⁶

Sheriff Asberry Conner remained in office until November 7, 1872, when the Hamilton County Justices of the Peace voted for James Conner to take Bean's place for the 1872-1874 term.^{77 78}

Sheriff James C. Conner

1872-1873

James C. Conner was appointed by the Hamilton County Justices of the Peace in November 1872 to serve as sheriff after the Supreme Court declared Bean's election void.^{79 80} Sheriff Conner served in his fourth term for a short time until his untimely death on July 4, 1873.^{81 82}

Sheriff Conner was a respected and compassionate leader. His fourth and last term in office came to an unusual end. His son, Thomas Conner, relayed the story in later years:

"My father was bitterly opposed to warfare and to capital punishment . . . It was his duty as Sheriff to hang a certain guilty man* . . . The man had killed another man. The prisoner was a handsome young man about 30 years old with soft brown curly hair. . . Everybody liked him even though he was guilty of a terrible crime . . . Father said he couldn't hang the young man and felt sure he would not have to; something would happen to prevent it . . . While the young man was in jail, he wove a fish net for Father. Ten feet by fifteen feet long. It was made from strong twine and made by tying the twine together every half inch with little double knots so it would not slip. It was a tedious job and required months to make. Father brought the fish net home and kept it. He never used it. Father took the preacher to pray with the young man . . . He came home on July 3, 1873, saying that he would never hang the young man, that there would be a way out. The next day, on July 4, 1873, after answering a neighbor's knock at the door, he fell to the floor. We helped him to the couch where he died almost immediately. We never dreamed this would be the way. His friends who knew him best said they were sure he would rather have it this way.⁸³"

The death notice in the *Daily Times* on Sunday, July 6, 1873, read: “Sheriff Jas. C. Conner died very suddenly . . . He was one of the best sheriffs the County ever had . . .”

The County Coroner, J.R. Alison, acted as Interim Sheriff until another sheriff could be duly elected.⁸⁴

*Recent research has now shown that this guilty man spoken of by Conner, above, was most likely Shade Westmoreland, whose crime and hanging were of national infamy. Westmoreland was imprisoned in the Hamilton County jail for a long period – from April 28, 1872, until he was hung on November 20, 1874. Two of Westmoreland’s trial dates (November of 1872 and March of 1873) occurred during Conner’s last term. The third trial date, scheduled to occur during Sheriff Conner’s term, was July 21, 1873.⁸⁵ This was the date soon approaching and dreaded by Conner just before his death on July 3, 1873.⁸⁶

Sheriff Charles B. Champion 1873-1878

Charles B. Champion was elected sheriff on August 5, 1873.⁸⁷ He was first elected after Sheriff James Conner died in July of that year. Sheriff Champion was reelected for the 1874-1876 term⁸⁸ and the 1876-1878 term.

A resident of Harrison, Champion was born in 1831. During the Civil War, he served as a first lieutenant in the 36th Infantry of the Confederate Army.⁸⁹ After the war, he returned to his work as a farmer until he ran as the Republican candidate for sheriff of Hamilton County in 1874.⁹⁰ After serving part of the term from 1873-1874 and two full terms from 1874-1878, he returned to farming.⁹¹



Past publications stated that Champion did not leave behind a strong mark as sheriff, but he is remembered for two important events in Hamilton County history.⁹² He is best remembered for the escape of Mat Taylor. Taylor, the son of a prominent family, stirred the city with his pranks and destruction. Police arrested Taylor after he feloniously assaulted the marshal. At one point during his trial, Sheriff Champion (the only officer in the court) opened the court window to call upon witnesses, and Taylor escaped through the door of the old court house at Market and Fourth streets. Taylor was later arrested and charged for the murder of Dr. Moss of Walden’s Ridge.⁹³

The second event was the hanging of Shade Westmoreland, a noted murderer. A 1908 newspaper article describes the murder by Westmoreland as “probably the most brutal and inexcusable murder ever committed in Hamilton County” and

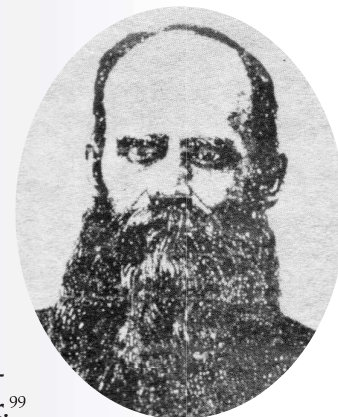
states that the “hanging was not half severe enough punishment for such a monster.”⁹⁴ Westmoreland murdered William Emberling for calling him a liar when asked if he was speaking ill of a woman. In a speech before his hanging, Westmoreland confessed to murdering Emberling but still denied what he supposedly said regarding the woman. Sheriff Champion cut the rope that extinguished life from Westmoreland.⁹⁵ The Tennessee State Library and Archives notes this was a nationally publicized hanging and is considered a piece of Tennessee folklore.

Sheriff Hiram J. Springfield

1878-1884

Hiram J. “Jack” Springfield was sheriff of Hamilton County for two full terms, 1878-1880 and 1880-1882.⁹⁶ ⁹⁷ He also served in the office for the remainder of the 1882-1884 term after Sheriff Cate’s death.

Sheriff Springfield was born in Murray County, Georgia, on September 15, 1841. He attended schools in Georgia and Alabama.⁹⁸ One of six children, Springfield and his family experienced economic hardships after the death of their father, a respected schoolteacher.⁹⁹



The Civil War was fought during Springfield’s early adult years, and his sympathies at first lay with the Confederacy, whose army he joined. Later, he enlisted with Union forces and became a captain. After the war, Springfield cast his first Republican vote for General U. S. Grant, and soon the Grant administration appointed him United States Marshal for the state of Alabama. However, as a result of bitter Southern resentment, he was shot and nearly killed while en route to Montgomery to assume his oath of office.¹⁰⁰

Springfield became a member of the Constitutional Convention in Alabama in 1867 for the reconstruction and restoration of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, but his time as an influencer on Southern politics was finished.¹⁰¹ His Union enlistment and Republican ideals were not compatible with postwar Southern sentiments.¹⁰²

Hamilton County was a safe haven for Springfield, and the citizens welcomed his talents. Republican influence was strong, and Springfield was quickly absorbed into the community. He, his wife Mary, and their five children were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Springfield was a Master Mason.

Establishing the mercantile business of H.J. Springfield occupied most of his time. When Springfield was elected sheriff of Hamilton County in 1878, his brother assumed control of the company until it was sold in 1880.¹⁰³ As sheriff, Springfield became one of the most prominent men in Tennessee Republican politics. He was known as a very aggressive politician and led a strong faction within the Republican Party.¹⁰⁴ The people of Hamilton County elected Sheriff Springfield for two consecutive terms.

Sheriff William T. Cate

1882-1882

Before being elected sheriff of Hamilton County, William T. Cate was the local mail agent and magistrate.¹⁰⁵ Married with two children, he and his family were well-liked and respected throughout the county. Cate was endorsed by the *Chattanooga Weekly Commercial*, a local newsletter, and easily won the sheriff's race against James E. Conner. There is little information available about Cate and his short term in office. This lack of knowledge is due, in part, to his young age when elected.



Like the lawmen before him, Cate knew that choosing police work as a career could entail danger both to himself and to his family. Nevertheless, Cate chose to become sheriff, and he is remembered to this day as one of the bravest men to hold the office.¹⁰⁶

"THE TERRIBLE TRAGEDY"

"The Terrible Tragedy" is taken from an article published Dec. 03, 1911 in the *Chattanooga Times*; written by Judge Lewis Shepherd.

In 1880, under Sheriff Springfield's administration, ship carpenter John Taylor murdered a steamboat captain. Taylor was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. Taylor won an appeal in the case, and by the time it was due, Sheriff Cate had taken office. Cate and his deputy, John J. Conway, escorted Taylor and three other prisoners to Knoxville aboard the Southern Railway System. Cate had only been in office for 14 days.¹⁰⁷

The lawmen sat in seats opposite their handcuffed prisoners in the passenger car. Two strangers boarded in Sweetwater, Tennessee, and took seats behind the sheriff and the deputy. When the train reached Philadelphia, Tennessee, the sheriff walked out on the platform to see if some of his relatives had come to visit him. With Cate out of the passenger car, Taylor's brother, Bob (one of the two who had boarded the train in Sweetwater), shot Deputy Conway in the back of the head, killing him instantly. Hearing the gunshots, Cate courageously rushed back into the car with his gun drawn. Andy, youngest of the Taylor brothers, shot him without warning. Then John and Bob approached the injured sheriff lying on the floor of the train and shot him three more times. As Cate lay dying, the killers ordered the conductor to "pull the bell" as they kept their hands on their pistols "all the way to Lenoir."¹⁰⁸

Once in Lenoir, the Taylors hurried on foot towards their home in Kingston, Tennessee. It appeared to everyone that the killers had escaped, but John Taylor had been wounded by Sheriff Cate and would later die from the injury.

Below: illustration depicting the murder of Sheriff Cate and Deputy Conway by J. Morris.



Reports of the murders and the escape of John Taylor swept throughout east Tennessee. A posse was formed, rewards were offered, and Coroner Curray was contacted to conduct the necessary steps for a new sheriff as mandated by Tennessee statute. The county court elected Hiram Springfield, the previous sheriff, as Cate's successor.

The community was outraged by the crimes. Never had Hamilton County been dealt such a grievous blow, their popular young sheriff and deputy gunned down unmercifully. "Men ran up and down Market Street with guns pulled," promising vengeance for the senseless killings.¹⁰⁹

The Taylor brother fugitives were brought to justice. Sheriff Springfield traveled to Missouri to identify the body of John Taylor, and, ironically, two officers in Missouri later killed Bob Taylor aboard a train. Finally, Andy Taylor was arrested and brought to Loudon County, where he was convicted and sentenced to hang for the murders of Sheriff Cate and Deputy Conway.¹¹⁰

All the published accounts of "The Terrible Tragedy" reflect the intense emotion the citizens of Hamilton County felt for the courageous sheriff and his deputy. It was the beginning of a new era – and a new respect – for the sheriffs of Hamilton County.

Sheriff Hiram J. Springfield

1882-1884

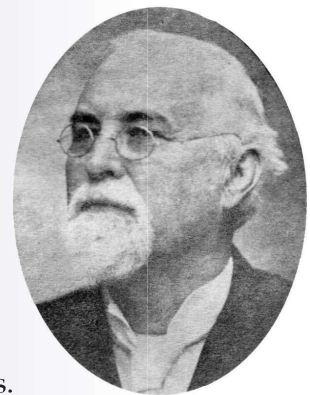
Sheriff Hiram Springfield is best remembered for his apprehension of killer Andy Taylor, who murdered his predecessor, Sheriff William Cate. When Cate was killed in September 1882, the county court quickly elected Springfield to fill the office of sheriff once again. Although he lived until 1906, Springfield was never more favored than when he avenged the murdered sheriff and his deputy.¹¹¹

Sheriff Stephen C. Pyott

1884-1886

Stephen Pyott was born in Rhea County in 1853. Pyott received a basic education with an emphasis in law. For many years he worked at various jobs, including serving as a clerk aboard a Tennessee River steamboat. It was not until he moved to Hamilton County that Pyott actually began practicing law.¹¹²

The election of 1884 was one of the most exciting the Hamilton County region had witnessed in years. Both Pyott and his Democratic running mate traveled throughout the county making campaign speeches. Votes from the African American community were a key issue during the election, and efforts were made by both parties to secure it.¹¹³

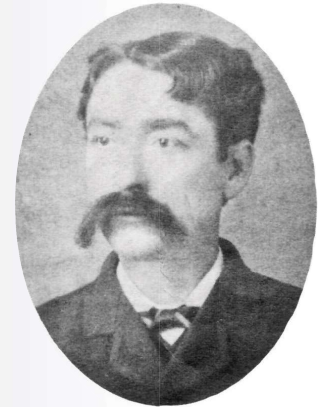


The day before the election, rallies were held late into the night. Boisterous speeches were given, bonfires raged, and fireworks lit up the skies of downtown Chattanooga.¹¹⁴

The next morning's vote count showed that Pyott won by only 62 votes.¹¹⁵ On September 2, 1884, he took the oath, becoming the next sheriff of Hamilton County.¹¹⁶

Sheriff John E. Conner 1886-1888

John Emory Conner was a native of Hamilton County and a farmer by trade. In 1876, at the age of 21, he began six years of service as constable for Chattanooga. In 1882, he ran for sheriff, but lost to William T. Cate, who was killed that same year by John Taylor.¹¹⁷



Conner worked as a foreman in a local department store until he was elected sheriff in 1886. He also served as tax assessor for four years. After finishing his term as sheriff, Conner tried farming and real estate sales until his appointment to postmaster general of Chattanooga in 1913 by President Woodrow Wilson.

Beginning in his youth and maintained until his death in 1961, Conner had strong Democratic political ties, taking part in several campaigns throughout the county.

Sheriff Azariah Shelton 1888-1890

Azariah Shelton was a native of Hamilton County who will long be remembered for his four decades of public service and monumental work in education. His service to Hamilton County began in 1878 when he was elected county superintendent of public instruction. During his four-year term as school superintendent he built 32 county school buildings and helped to organize the first Teacher's Institution. These achievements marked Shelton as a pioneer school builder.



Over his 42-year career as a public servant, Shelton held numerous offices in county government.¹¹⁸ He was elected sheriff of Hamilton County in 1888 and served until 1890. After completing his two-year term as sheriff, he served as county clerk until 1894 when he became the county representative in the Tennessee State legislature. From 1900 to 1904, Shelton served as superintendent of the county poorhouse and then became chief deputy tax assessor until 1920.¹¹⁹ In 1920, at the age of 73, Shelton was designated as Dean of Local Men in Public Service.¹²⁰

Sheriff John R. Skillern

1890-1894

John Skillern, known as an adventurous Irishman, served Hamilton County as sheriff from 1890 to 1894.

Born on April 15, 1849, on a plantation near Pikeville, Tennessee, Skillern was known as an adamant Democrat and generous man throughout his life. In the book *Skillern Family* by Darlene Appell, it is noted that he completed his primary education at Pikeville Academy and then attended the College of Pikeville for two years.¹²¹ His grandson William Skillern relates that two institutions his grandfather attended were Sequatchie College and Burritt College in Spencer, Tennessee.¹²²



In 1878, Skillern married Mary Katherine Roberts. Their grandson William Skillern remembers family history regarding the sheriff's marriage:¹²³

“Miss Roberts was the daughter of a prominent Southern planter whose family enjoyed the privileges of plantation life in the South prior to the Civil War. But the plantation was devastated during the war, and Miss Roberts had to work the fields with her family in order to survive.”¹²⁴

The young couple shared many successful experiences together. Early in their marriage, they lived in Igou's Ferry and Blue Springs, Tennessee, where they ran a small general store and traded livestock. Hotel management prompted their move to Chattanooga in 1884, where Skillern managed the Saint James Hotel and later the Mannix Hotel.¹²⁵ The couple had nine children.¹²⁶

When Grover Cleveland was elected president of the United States, Skillern developed an interest in politics, and his friends urged him to run on the Democratic ticket in Hamilton County's race for sheriff. He was elected and served two terms. He often reminisced with family members about how he had protected prisoners from lynch mobs. Skillern stood for justice and defied angry mobs more than once.¹²⁷

At the end of Skillern's term of office, Hamilton County presented him a revolver with his name engraved on it. He then returned to his former career of hotel management, operating the Grand Hotel in Bessemer, Alabama. At 50 years of age, Skillern decided to move his family to Boise, Idaho. In 1900, he moved there, bought sheep, and began a long career in ranching. He was one of Idaho's pioneer wool growers, and his business flourished. By 1916, Skillern was the largest individual grower in the state.¹²⁸

Skillern died May 16, 1934, in Boise, Idaho, at age 85.

Sheriff Frederick S. Hyde

1894-1896

Frederick Scott Hyde was born October 9, 1855, in Jasper, Tennessee, the son of the Honorable Atwood A. Hyde, one of the most prominent lawyers of his time.

After attending the common schools in Marion County, Hyde enrolled at Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, and graduated from the literary department with high honors. Hyde came to Chattanooga in 1875 and immediately took up the study of law with his father. He went on to graduate from the law department of Columbian University in Washington, D.C. After leaving Columbian, he held a position with the post office in Washington, D.C., for several years.

Upon returning to Chattanooga, Hyde formed the partnership of A. A. Hyde and Sons with his father and brother, Reverend Charles R. Hyde, and practiced law for many years. The confirmed bachelor later withdrew from the firm and organized the Hyde Transfer Company, where he was president and treasurer until the time of his death. Hyde was actively engaged in managing the affairs of his company as long as his health would permit.¹²⁹

In 1894, Hyde was elected sheriff of Hamilton County on the Republican ticket. He held this office for one term, being succeeded by Samuel Bush. As sheriff, Hyde developed a forceful character, which, if his health had not failed him, would have made him a powerful figure in both city and county politics. He strongly believed in the tax-paying citizen and found out early the abuses of his offices. He conscientiously (and at his monetary sacrifice) set out to correct these abuses and to introduce reforms that he deemed absolutely necessary. Once instituted, these reforms would be demanded of his successors for many years to come.¹³⁰



Sheriff Samuel Bush

1896-1902

In 1896, Samuel Bush ran for sheriff of Hamilton County and on September 1, 1896, was sworn into office. While campaigning, Bush was often quoted as saying, "Running for sheriff is both an impressive and depressing experience."

During the next six years, Bush was elected three times by wide margins, demonstrating the political power he held within the county. (At this time, the state constitution permitted a sheriff to hold office for a maximum of three two-year terms.)

After leaving office, Bush was appointed by then County Judge Will Cummings to the newly created office of license inspector for an indefi-



nite term. He also filled his time by being a member of the Elks Lodge, the Knight Templars, and the Shriners.

Following a brief illness, Bush died on July 1, 1923, at the home of his daughter.

Sheriff William P. Hays

1902-1904



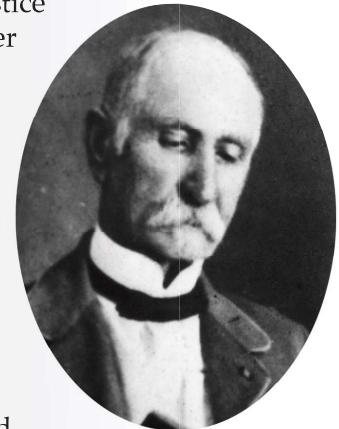
One of the most popular sheriffs of the early 1900s was William Philip Hays, a native of Blount County, Tennessee. Born on October 11, 1863, he moved to Hamilton County when he was 17 years old. He soon began working at the Chattanooga Saw Works where he remained for 21 years prior to running for office.

Hays entered politics in 1900. He ran for and won the Republican ticket as a lower house representative of the Tennessee General Assembly. In 1902, he was elected sheriff of Hamilton County.¹³¹ A Republican, Hays was well respected by both parties for his values and the dignity with which he conducted his elected duties.

Family life was very important to Hays. He and his wife, Sallie Roberts, had nine sons. A photograph of the Hays family appeared in a 1904 issue of the Chattanooga Times. The adjoining article stated that the sheriff was a “fine specimen of physical manhood” at 40 years of age. The photograph displayed nine boys, ages six months to 20 years.¹³²

When elected sheriff, Hays appointed Sherman Beck as his chief deputy. A *Daily Times* article said “no more suitable or fit man” could have been chosen.¹³³ Clearly, the leaders and voters of Hamilton County were supportive of the Hays administration.

After his term as sheriff expired, Hays was twice elected as county court clerk. In 1914, he returned to private business until he was appointed chief field deputy for the Internal Revenue of Tennessee. Hays served with the Justice Department in Washington, D.C., where he lived during the Hoover administration until becoming ill. He was granted sick leave and returned to his home in Chattanooga, where he died November 27, 1936, at the age of 73.



Sheriff Joseph F. Shipp

1904-1908

Joseph F. Shipp was born on February 3, 1845, in Jasper, Tennessee. On April 12, 1861, he ran away from home and enlisted in the Confederate Army as a private. His father was able to find him and

take him home, but Shipp was later allowed to rejoin the Army of Virginia. In the Battle of Malvern Hill he was severely wounded. For his numerous acts of gallantry and bravery in the face of danger, Shipp was promoted to the rank of captain, a title he held throughout the war. Later in his life he joined the United Confederate Veterans Association and served as the organization's quartermaster general until his death.

At the end of the Civil War he was discharged from the Army and returned to his home in Georgia. There he became involved in many successful business ventures.

On August 12, 1866, Shipp married Lily Eckles, and they moved to Chattanooga, where he became involved in the manufacturing business. By 1893 Shipp was known as one of the wealthiest citizens in Hamilton County.

In the early 1890s, Shipp was appointed coal oil inspector by Tennessee Governor Peter Turney. In 1900, he was elected as tax assessor, serving until 1904, when he was elected as sheriff of Hamilton County.¹³⁴ Shipp also served as a member of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Education, though he had little formal education. In addition, Shipp was active in the Board of Trade and the Chamber of Commerce. After serving two terms as Hamilton County Sheriff, he was again appointed coal oil inspector on April 18, 1923. After a brief illness, Shipp passed away on September 18, 1925, at his home on Lookout Place. He was laid to rest in his Confederate uniform.¹³⁵

Sheriff Samuel A. Conner

1908-1914

Born on January 7, 1868, Samuel A. Conner was raised on a farm in the Brainerd area of Hamilton County. The son of Captain Asberry B. Conner, a veteran of the Confederate Army, Samuel Conner attended county schools and worked with the Loomis and Hart Lumber Company as a young man.¹³⁶

He later became a real estate developer and builder. In 1893, Conner married Dora Shields of Chattanooga and together they had three children.

In 1908, Conner was nominated as the Republican candidate in the race for county sheriff. Twice re-elected sheriff, Conner became one of only a few men in the county to serve as sheriff for three terms. He was also the first sheriff to appoint a woman, Special Officer Mrs. J.J. Bork, on May 14, 1909.¹³⁷

Conner organized the Chattanooga Interstate Fair Association in 1915. He was elected county judge in 1918 and served an eight-year term.





Continuing in his political activities, Conner died suddenly while campaigning for the office of tax collector. He was making a speech on the evening of July 27, 1932, when he suffered a stroke.

At Conner's funeral, Judge Will Cummings, who had lost an election to Conner years earlier, commented, "Although Judge Conner and I were opponents in a political campaign, I cannot say anything but words of high praise for him. His death comes as a distinct shock. He was loyal to his friends. There are thousands of people in this country who will regret very deeply to learn of his death. I offer my deepest sympathy to his bereaved family."¹³⁸

Above:
Sheriff
Conner's
badge.

Sheriff Nick P. Bush 1914-1918 & 1920-1922

To Sheriff Nick P. Bush, law and order was not simply a job, but a way of life. The son of former Hamilton County Sheriff Samuel Bush, he served under his father in 1896 as jailer, office deputy, and criminal officer. For six years Nick Bush was deputy sheriff of Hamilton County and a member of the City Detective Department for eight years before being elected sheriff in 1914. Bush served as sheriff for a total of six years, completing a 20-year career in law enforcement and retiring undefeated in 1922.¹³⁹



Bush was highly respected throughout the southeastern United States.¹⁴⁰ Upon his election to office in 1914, *The Chattanooga Times* described Bush as an officer who "never took a drink, uttered an oath, or lost his equanimity."¹⁴¹

As a detective in Hamilton County, Bush was sent to Atlanta, Georgia, to serve for a week as an outside detective. While there, he toured Atlanta's jail to acquaint himself with area criminals. Three years later a man was arrested in downtown Chattanooga for possession of dynamite and other explosives. The suspect refused to identify himself to arresting officers. When the suspect was taken to the police station for further questioning, Detective Bush passed through the office, stopped in mid-stride, and took a look at the suspect under question. In a matter-of-fact tone Bush said, "Hello Jones. They got you, did they?"

Though encountering Jones for only a few minutes in the Atlanta jail some three years earlier, Bush recognized the escaped prisoner (a convicted safeblower) and provided proper identification to arresting officers. Jones was then sent back to Atlanta to finish his sentence

Sheriff Bush's last term of office was quite successful. Records show that approximately 5,000 arrests were made between 1920 and 1922. During that period, 61 arrests were made on murder and manslaughter charges, and more than 500 arrests were made for selling, storing, transporting, and manufacturing liquor. More than

1,050 gallons of corn whiskey were confiscated and destroyed, and 65 stills were captured.¹⁴²

Bush continued his career in law enforcement after his retirement as sheriff. He became chief deputy in 1924, a position he held until his death.

Sheriff Robert P. Bass 1918-1920

A native of Clayton, Alabama, Robert P. Bass served as sheriff of Hamilton County from 1918 to 1920. Bass and his brother, Ed (who became mayor of Chattanooga), served the people of the county most of their lives.¹⁴³

Bass was educated in Chattanooga schools and learned the trade of painting early in his life. He became a charter member of the first painter's union organized in Chattanooga, but painting was not to become his life's work. In 1903, he became a member of the Chattanooga Police Department, where he eventually was made chief of detectives.¹⁴⁴

In 1918, Bass was elected sheriff of Hamilton County and became a very popular community leader. His family played a vital role in his life throughout his law enforcement career. His 14-year-old twin sons were pictured in the Chattanooga News in 1918 for assisting their father in the capture of a moonshine still.¹⁴⁵

Bass had an extensive knowledge of law enforcement. He realized the need for jailers to be assigned eight-hour shifts and was the first

sheriff to implement the idea. Although his expertise in criminal justice matters was undisputed, Bass chose not to run for sheriff in 1920. He retired to his farm for a period of time and was then reappointed to the Detective Division of the Chattanooga Police Department where he remained until his retirement.¹⁴⁶

After persistent illness, Bass died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1945.¹⁴⁷



Above:
Colt pistol
used by
Sheriff Bass.

Left:
Sheriff Bass
sitting at
desk
(ca. 1919).



Sheriff Horace G. Humphreys

1922-1924

Horace Humphreys was born on February 7, 1879, in Athens, Tennessee. His family had come to America prior to the Revolution and were among the first pioneers in Sevier County. After attending public schools in McMinn County, he enrolled at Grant University.

Below:
Sheriff
Humphreys
and deputies
posing in
front of illegal
distilleries.



After graduation he took his first job with the railroad. In 1889 he came to Chattanooga to enter the wholesale grain business and was successfully pursuing a career when he was elected to the county court. Humphreys married Alice Maddox in 1904, and

they had four children. A prominent family in the area, they were very active in community affairs.¹⁴⁸



Humphreys campaigned as a Republican candidate for sheriff in 1922 on the platform that “prohibition laws are capable of enforcement in Chattanooga and Hamilton County.” He promised that if elected, he would vigorously enforce prohibition laws.¹⁴⁹ Both newspapers printed extremely critical articles about Humphreys that questioned his honesty. However, he emerged victorious and was elected by a landslide. He received the largest number of votes ever given to a Hamilton County sheriff.¹⁵⁰



No stranger to politics, Humphreys was an acknowledged leader of the GOP throughout his career. When his term of sheriff expired, he was appointed by President Herbert Hoover as a prohibition officer in the region. He later joined his wife in the management of their florist business until his death in 1945 at 66 years of age.¹⁵¹

Sheriff Thomas O. Selman

1924-1928

Thomas Oscar Selman was born on August 5, 1874, in Crystal Springs, Georgia, and was educated in Floyd County and in the Chattanooga Public School system. He came to Chattanooga at the age of 12 to live with his brother, Dr. Joseph Selman, after the death of their father, shortly after the great flood of 1886. Selman had many successful business ventures. He operated Selman and Company, a livery business, and was also an enthusiastic promoter of the Chattanooga Interstate Fair.¹⁵²



Prior to being elected Sheriff 1924, Selman tried his hand at many different ventures. His early career included working in a print shop, a cigar shop, and a clothing store before opening his own livery. When asked about his livery business, he was quoted in a *Chattanooga Times* article in 1929 as stating, "In the days of horses, my horses of that day were rated as equal to the Cadillac, Lincoln, and other high priced cars of today. Yep, they were some horses." After leaving office, Selman would be recalled by Sheriff Charles Taylor to serve as Chief Deputy prior to eventually be elected Hamilton County Criminal Court Clerk.

Supporters accurately predicted that Selman's keen business savvy would lend itself well to the office of sheriff. His first bills for jail costs were so enthusiastically received that his friends gave a party for him at the jail and presented him with a golden badge and nickel-plated .38-caliber Smith and Wesson revolver. The frugal report, according to acquaintances, showed that deputies were not involved in fee-grabbing and that arrests were of a serious nature.¹⁵³

Selman had defeated Horace Humphreys for the sheriff's office in 1924. After serving in the office for two years, he acquired an interest in the Chapman Funeral Home. Later, when the company merged with Wann Funeral Home, he remained as director. In 1934, he re-entered politics and held the office of court clerk for two terms.¹⁵⁴

Selman was known primarily for his independent career. Although he was a life-long Democrat, friends and admirers claimed that he belonged to the "silk stocking" element. He communicated well with citizens from all social backgrounds and was well respected.¹⁵⁵

He was a member of several organizations including the Chattanooga Half Century Club, the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, the Free and Accepted Masons, and the Alhambra Shrine. Selman attended Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church.¹⁵⁶



Above: *Chattanooga Times*, June 12, 1925, talking about the introduction of motorcycles into the Sheriff's Office.

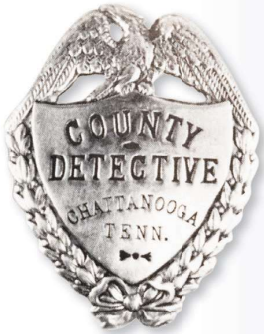
Sheriff Charlie C. Taylor
1928-1932

Named by *The Chattanooga Times* as “the sheriff who always gets his man,” Charlie Taylor established a reputation as a “crime-buster” during his two terms as Hamilton County sheriff.



Below:
Badges be-
longing to
Sheriff Charlie
Taylor.

Taylor was elected in 1928 and won re-election in 1930. While serving as sheriff, he solved four bank robberies, all of which occurred before his administration. He tracked the suspects from the East to the West Coast and brought them back to Chattanooga to stand trial.



Sometimes, while working on a case, Taylor would disappear. No one seemed to worry, for they knew he would be back within a few days with his suspect in handcuffs. In all of Taylor’s dealings with criminals, he never shot a man nor did he ever receive a scratch from them. Also, he never had a prisoner escape while in office. Although Taylor had his patrol officers ride motorcycles instead of drive cars, it did not seem to affect their crime-busting record.¹⁵⁷



As the youngest sheriff to be elected, Taylor brought his unique style to the department. He was noted for his creased suit coats, shoes shined to a gloss, starched bow tie, and, of course, a hat that looked like it was just purchased. During his term as sheriff, and later as a county detective, bachelor Taylor made his home in an apartment on the second floor of the jail. Continuing his career in law enforcement, Taylor served five terms as constable of East Chattanooga district and nine years as a county detective.¹⁵⁸

Taylor was also very popular in the community. While sheriff, he and his deputies gave 10 percent of their salaries for a fund used to benefit the unemployed and needy in isolated rural areas.

Charlie Taylor was a legendary Chattanooga law enforcement figure. He died on June 15, 1963, at the age of 77.

Sheriff John K. Tate
1932-1934

John Knox Tate was an educated man who came from a prominent family with a long history of judges, sheriffs, and teachers. Genealogy records show that John Tate was related to President James Knox Polk. It is no wonder that Tate gave way to the encouragement by both parties to run for Hamilton County Sheriff.



Tate won the 1932 election with a campaign promise that he would cut his salary by 20 percent, operate a smaller car to save money, cut the department budget to \$25,000, and retain officers from the Taylor administration.

Tate pressed for ardent law enforcement in his department. His ambition to serve his community sparked multi-media coverage with the destruction of countless distilleries, raids on gambling, and searches involving arrests at prostitution houses.

Tate was very supportive of his officers and frequently participated in the investigations and raids made by his department. He received considerable recognition when he personally pursued and captured federal prisoner Sam Godsey near Sweetwater. After his arrest, Godsey remarked, "Sheriff Tate and his men are as nice as they come." Another case that received much attention was the arrest and conviction of four-time bigamist Walter Lutz for a series of mutilations and killings.

Aside from his reputation for promoting justice and a desire to clean up Chattanooga, Tate received more favorable reviews as a "people's man" concerned about ordinary citizens. He used his own money to feed prisoners a hearty Thanksgiving dinner, bought his own vehicle, and often left his county car stored to save county money. He appealed to the people in the community for old books and purchased some himself in order to open a library for prisoners. He appointed officers to work in the court in order to eliminate fee-grabbing and later made these salaried positions. After taking office as sheriff, Tate received numerous gifts such as a badge with a diamond center. He had the diamond replaced with cut glass and mounted the diamond on a ring for his wife.

After the completion of his term, Tate elected not to run for a second term and returned to his grocery store business. On April 13, 1950, he suffered a fatal heart attack while working in his store. Today, he is remembered for his honesty, fairness, and generosity to Chattanooga.¹⁵⁹

Sheriff Frank J. Burns

1934-1940 & 1948-1950

Frank J. Burns was born in Polk County, Tennessee. His exact birthdate remains unknown, for he refused to divulge his age even to those who were closet to him. As a child, he moved to East Chattanooga with his family and later married Gladys Smalling.¹⁶⁰

For two and a half years Burns guarded the convicts at the Hamilton County workhouse before joining the Chattanooga Police Department in 1915. He was a popular yet stern police officer. His days as a workhouse guard laid the foundation for an amazing store



of information regarding criminals. Seldom did a day pass that his workhouse contacts failed to help track down thieves, killers, and other criminals.¹⁶¹ His dedication eventually won him a promotion to the detective force. In 1934 he took a leave of absence to run for sheriff against his old friend and neighbor, Charlie Taylor. Though Taylor had previously served two terms as sheriff (from 1928 to 1932), Burns won the election and made Taylor his chief detective.¹⁶²

Burns was the first sheriff to wage a personal campaign against fee-grabbing and promised to assign all criminal work to salaried deputies. He carried out his campaign promises and as a result was elected to three consecutive terms. Because of Tennessee's law that forbade a sheriff from serving more than six consecutive years, Burns was not able to seek re-election in 1940.¹⁶³

On January 1, 1941, he returned to Chattanooga's detective force so he would be eligible to retire under the city's pension program. He remained on the force until April 1, 1944, when he retired to his farm near the police and firemen's camp on Pan Gap Road in Tiftonia.¹⁶⁴

In 1948, the former sheriff decided to make a political comeback and began his campaign a year before the Democratic primary. Certain political forces opposed him strongly, which he made an important issue in his campaign. Burns went literally door to door canvassing the county and enlisting the support of the voters. He emerged the victor over those who had dominated Hamilton County and city politics during the years he had been out of office.¹⁶⁵

Below:
Sheriff
Burns' cabin.

In 1950, Burns made a bid for a fifth term and suffered his first defeat. In previous campaigns Burns declined to "meddle" in other races, but during the last campaign for Hamilton County Judge he took sides in what had become a very bitter race. He sided with Councilman Hugh Abercrombie, who was also defeated that same day by Democrat Judge Wilkes T. Thrasher. Judge Thrasher teamed up with Rex Richey, the Republican nominee for sheriff, and they won by a very narrow margin.



After the defeat, Burns again retired to his Pan Gap Road farm and had very little interest in politics. In 1951 he made an unsuccessful bid for city commissioner. His name was discussed as a possible contender in the 1956 primary, but he declined to enter the race.

On June 11, 1957, Burns died unexpectedly at Erlanger Hospital after suffering a heart seizure.

Sheriff Fredrick Payne

1940-1943

"I never knew a man who enjoyed a wider reputation for square dealing than did Fred Payne. He was scrupulously honest and his integrity was unquestioned," noted Hays Clark in a *Chattanooga News-Free Press* editorial.¹⁶⁶

In 1913, Payne began a long career in law enforcement as a patrolman in the Chattanooga Police Department. While serving in the police department, he was promoted to detective and then to captain. Retired police veteran Ollie C. Fitz remembers Payne's strict background and how it helped his popularity within the department.¹⁶⁷

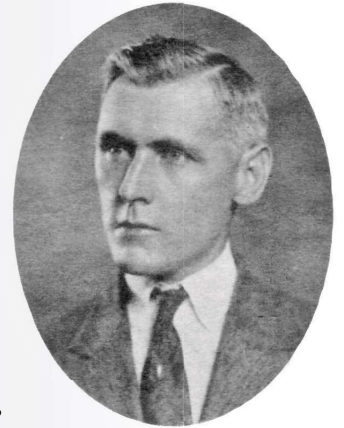
"He could be tough, but he was also pleasant," Fitz said. "Everyone liked him, and he would go out of his way to help anyone."

A veteran of World War I, Payne served in the 114th Field Artillery of the Tennessee National Guard's 30th Division. He was gassed during one of the many battles, and many believe that the incident led to his later illness.

Payne returned home from the war in spring of 1919. He found his old job waiting for him as well as Maude Louise Fonda, who soon afterward became his wife. The couple had four children, and his home became a vital part of his life. Payne was known as a devoted father and husband who always spoke with great affection about his family.¹⁶⁸

After almost 26 years in the Chattanooga Police Department, "Eagle Eye" Payne (nicknamed for his ability to identify criminals) ran for a post on the city commission, but was defeated by a narrow margin. In 1940, he was elected sheriff by a large majority of Hamilton County citizens.

During his campaign, Payne promised voters that he would rid the sheriff's office of fee-deputies in order to avoid any charge of fee-grabbing. He soon found that he could not financially operate the office without the deputies. Yet, Payne could not be persuaded to re-hire the fee-deputies. Rather than violate the trust of his voters, he resigned, preferring to keep his word instead of the position of sheriff.



Below:
Fred Payne
on horse
during his
days with the
Chattanooga
Police De-
partment.





Sheriff Payne (center, back), County Judge Will Cummings (right), President Franklin D. Roosevelt (front, left).

Sheriff Thomas G. Head

1943-1948

Thomas Grady Head was appointed sheriff by County Judge Wiley O. Couch to fulfill the unexpired term of Fred Payne, who resigned in late 1943. Law enforcement was Head's career, and he had served many years in the Chattanooga Police Department prior to his appointment as sheriff.¹⁶⁹

Retired police veteran Ollie C. Fitz remembers Head for his humor and likeable personality. "New officers quickly became friends with him and respected his years of experience," recalls Fitz.¹⁷⁰

Head and his wife, Clara, were residents of East Lake, where the sheriff was considered a "political power" in the area. Having served the unexpired term of office, Head ran unopposed for the nomination to succeed himself in March 1944.

Head and his deputies gained national attention in 1945 for once enforcing a Tennessee law that forbade the handling of poisonous snakes by a religious group in Harrison. The group based its beliefs upon their interpretation of certain Bible verses from the book of Saint Mark.¹⁷¹ At another time, during the funeral of a snake handler, thousands of curious spectators attempted to see the deadly ceremony that was to take place within the church. The casket was placed in front of the pulpit. The deceased has been bitten by a rattlesnake earlier that week and had died because he refused medical treatment. Now, the church was honoring his request for a three-hour "full service."¹⁷²

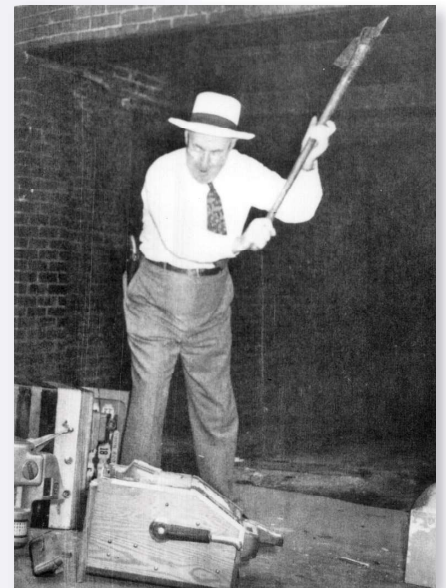
Head had asked the presiding minister to hold the ceremony behind a roped-off section that permitted only the congregation and members of the press to pass. Those who gathered around the casket began praying and speaking in tongues. Rattlers buzzed above their prayers and the followers began to play musical instruments and chant. The chanting soon grew louder, and to the sheriff's surprise, church members began to pass around five large rattlesnakes and a copperhead.¹⁷³

Head sometimes found himself caught in this kind of delicate balance between law enforcement and religious freedom. Although he chose not to make any arrests during the funeral, he sometimes did choose to enforce the standing law, and when he did so, the situation often became hostile and always seems to incite the crowd who had gathered to witness those who were "inviting death by clasping the serpents."

After completing his second full term, Head returned to the Chattanooga Police Department as a captain.¹⁷⁴



Below:
Grady Head
breaking up
various slot
machines
while Cap-
tain at CPD
(ca.1950s).



Sheriff Rex Richey

1950-1956

Rex Richey was born in 1893 and raised on a farm in the Harrison community. The oldest of 10 children, as a young man he helped his father with the family farm.

In 1917, after serving in the U.S. Army during World War I, Richey returned home to begin a career in the restaurant business. His first restaurant was the Broadway Lunch at Eighth and Broad streets. From 1925 to 1946, he operated Rex's Lunch Room at the corner of Eighth and Cherry streets.



During this time many politicians realized what a successful and popular entrepreneur Richey had become, including his friend, County Judge Will Cummings.

Although Richey was a Republican, Cummings, a Democratic sympathizer, urged him to enter the political arena. Consequently, Richey entered his first political campaign in 1948 for county judge against the powerful and popular incumbent, Wilkes T. Thrasher. Richey was defeated, but he had been bitten by the political bug. Two years later he launched what was considered the fiercest of all campaigns for the office of sheriff. With his wife, eight children, friends, and family, he campaigned from one end of Hamilton County to the other. Nevertheless, the incumbent and four-term sheriff, Frank Burns asserted, "I can sit in my rocking chair on the front porch and beat Rex Richey." How wrong he was.



Above:
Badge worn
by Sheriff Rex
Richey.

Richey became Hamilton County's first Republican sheriff in 18 years. Richey however, was not just a Republican; he was known as the people's sheriff. Adored by Hamilton County citizens and characterized as a man of strong religious convictions, Richey was hailed as being unsurpassed in integrity, honesty, and devotion.

In a campaign speech at Soddy Daisy High School, someone yelled that he would look awkward carrying a gun. Richey slammed his fist on the podium and responded, "I carried and used a gun all through France's Argonne Forest during World War I, and I'm sure I can handle one now." His audience went wild with applause, despite having a strong Democratic bias.

Richey wasted no time fulfilling his campaign promise to stop gambling and boot-

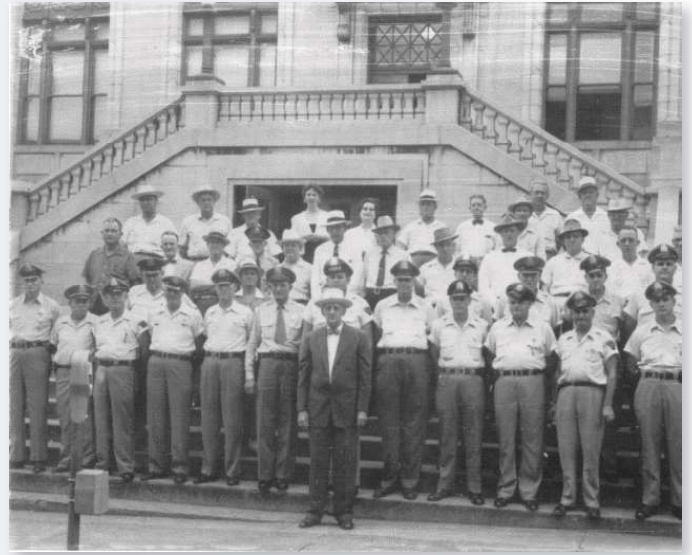


legging in the county. His raids of night spots and whiskey stills attracted national attention. Once, renowned radio personality Arthur Godfrey reported on an electric whiskey still raid at Lovell Field. Richey's raids made believers out of still operators who had been unimpressed by his campaign oratory. Richey ran his office based upon a pledge of honest, courageous, and vigorous law enforcement.

In the 1952 sheriff's race, Richey won by a two-to-one margin, and in 1954 was elected again by a landslide victory. During these years, the legislature still only allowed a maximum of three two-year terms in succession.

While campaigning for his last term of office, Richey and his staff were surprised by critical attacks from his opposition, who complained of his destruction of over 200 stills in his first 16 months of office and of more than 100 additional ones since then. His opponents felt the federal government, not the sheriff, should be raiding the hills of Hamilton County. Deputy Roy Uren commented at the time, "I say it is testimonial to the sheriff when whiskey raids are the only fault his opponents can find with his administration."

Richey died in 1981 at the age of 88. He had made local citizens very proud of their county during his lifetime. His good life and the service he performed remain an important legacy to all.¹⁷⁵



Above:
Sheriff Rex
Richey
and HCSO
personnel in
front of the
Hamilton
County Court
House
(ca. 1950s).



Sheriff Rex Richey and Chief Herbert
Grant at a Soddy area still.



Sheriff Rex Richey and deputies
pose in front of a still (ca. 1950s).

Sheriff Victor W. Maddox

1956-1958



Born July 8, 1903, in Charleston, Tennessee, Victor “Red” Maddox grew up on a farm in Bradley County and attended Wesleyan College, where he was a star athlete. After graduation, he was hired by Standard Oil and in 1936 purchased his own service station in downtown Chattanooga, which he proudly operated for 20 years.

Known for his red-headed temper and partiality to bow ties, Maddox became the Republican nominee for Hamilton County sheriff in 1956. Upon winning the election, Maddox began what has been called an eventful term of office.

White whiskey was popular in the county during the 1950s, and Sheriff Maddox conducted many raids reaching from Suck Creek to East Ridge during his term. On one occasion, he and his deputies raided a fruit stand in East Ridge and confiscated 474 half-pints of the “white lightning.”



In May 1957, popular Central High School football coach Marion Perkins was murdered while having breakfast at a boarding house. His landlady was present when her estranged husband entered the premises and shot Perkins twice. The gunman then pistol beat his wife and fled with Sheriff Maddox and his posse already in pursuit. They tracked the man to an open field, where his sons begged him to surrender. Without warning, the assailant suddenly placed the pistol to his left ear and pulled the trigger, taking his own life.

Above:
Badge worn
by Sheriff
Maddox.

In December 1957, Alcatraz parolee Joe Chesser used handmade keys to aid in his and three other inmates' escape from the county jail. They had cut a 12x18 inch hole through the steel wall of a shower in their attempt at freedom, but were all later recaptured. Luckily, when deputies searched the cell block that day, they discovered tools for another escape. Metal used to make keys, hacksaw blades, and a small flashlight were confiscated by the jailers. All packages delivered for inmates were temporarily retained, and all inmates were confined to their cells until the jail's security was restored.¹⁷⁶



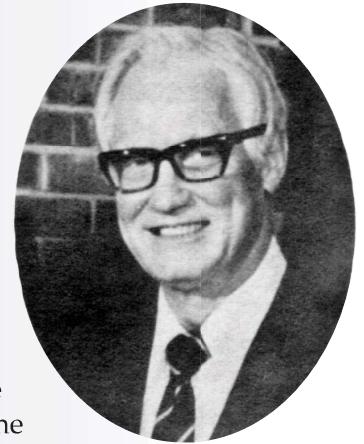
Chief Deputy Herbert Grant (left) and Sheriff Maddox shown with Mrs. Christine Hartman and part of the 190 gallons of corn liquor confiscated from her home. She assumed responsibility for the cache saying, “I buy it and I sell it.”

Maddox ran for sheriff again in 1958 but was defeated by Democratic nominee James “Bookie” Turner.

The Lions Club awarded “Red” Maddox their highest honor in 1988 with the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award. With 53 years of perfect attendance, the organization recognized his “outstanding example of leadership and service.”¹⁷⁷

Sheriff James E. Turner 1958-1963

One of eight children, James Estill Turner was born on January 13, 1917, and grew up in Chattanooga. A graduate of Central High School, Turner loved reading throughout his youth and was given the nickname “Bookie” by his siblings for hiding and reading when it was time to do family chores. He married Virginia Sivley and had two children, Brenda Gaye and James Michael.

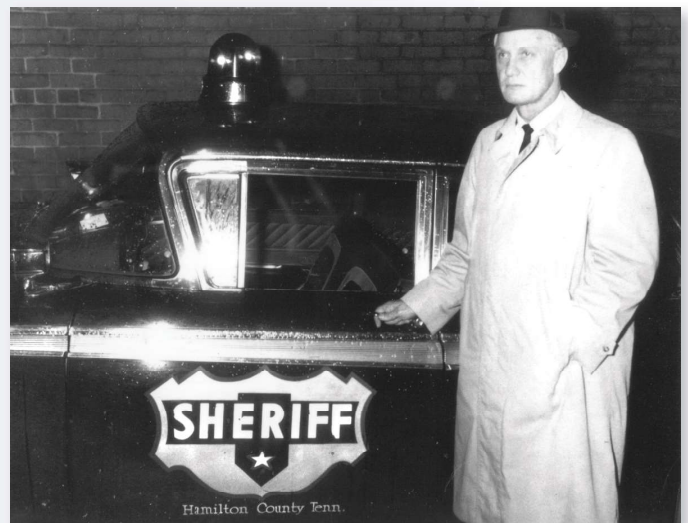


Appointed as Hamilton County coroner in 1940, Turner became the youngest coroner in the United States. In 1942, he enlisted in the Navy and served aboard the battleship USS Tennessee during World War II. Prior to entering politics, Turner and his wife operated the Brainerd Bootery, a children’s shoe and clothing store.

In 1958, Turner was elected as sheriff of Hamilton County, defeating Republican Victor “Red” Maddox. He was re-elected in 1960 and 1962. The position of sheriff was still limited to three consecutive two-year terms, so Turner was not eligible for re-election in 1964. In 1963, he entered the city election and was elected fire and police commissioner.

Below:
Sheriff Turner
in front of
patrol car.

Described as a flamboyant politician who attracted political storms, he was re-elected in 1967 to the fire and police post while under federal indictment on charges of conspiracy to supply unlicensed white whiskey. He was later cleared of the charges, but records show that he was under federal investigation even while he was sheriff. The week before his trial, Turner attended a \$100-a-plate dinner to pay for his defense. For years he spoke to friends of how he “beat the feds even though they spent a quarter of million dollars trying to get me.”



Right:
Sheriff Turner
on the back
of a motor
cycle.

Turner loved the limelight and seemed happiest when he was making the headlines. He was one of the top members of Kelley's Raiders when city officials staged a raid on "The General," a Civil War locomotive that had been on display for years at Union Station and was later lost to the state of Georgia in a legal battle. A daring attempt was made to regain possession of the locomotive by sidetracking it at Chattanooga as it was being delivered to Georgia, and Turner was in the forefront of the attempt. The effort was successful, but the engine was later lost to Georgia in court.



With his flair for the dramatic, Turner boldly bought advertisement time during the 1971 Sugar Bowl game between Tennessee and Air Force. A plane flew over the stadium trailing a sign that read, "Vote for Bookie." He was defeated that year by Gene Roberts and retired from politics. He remained active in a less vocal manner and was often mentioned as a potential candidate. He ran for mayor in 1975 and made it into a runoff against Pat Rose.

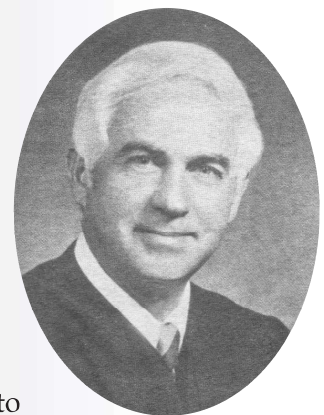
"Some people have politics in their blood. He just seemed to thrive on all aspects of politics. He was as good a politician as any I knew," said Election Commissioner Steve Conrad.¹⁷⁸

Turner was a cofounder, along with his two brothers, of Turner Funeral Home. After his political career, he worked with the funeral home. On February 23, 1986, while conducting a funeral, Turner died unexpectedly.

Sheriff Robert Summitt

April 15-29, 1963

Of all Hamilton County's sheriffs, Judge Robert Summitt's tenure was one of the shortest and most unusual. Summitt served as assistant county attorney and Hamilton County coroner for ten years before being summoned by the county court to complete Sheriff James "Bookie" Turner's last term of office. Turner had won the election for Chattanooga fire and police commissioner and was unable to finish the last days of his term as sheriff. Summitt's first duty was to swear all the sheriff's deputies in as assistant coroners. He brought his two top aides, Robert Lahiere and John Fry, with him to the sheriff's department.¹⁷⁹



Recalling the turn of events during his 15 days in office, Summitt remembers wanting to make sure that a low profile was kept within the department. Unfortunately, this was not to be. Soon after he was instated as sheriff, a fire broke out in the detectives' office. Not long afterward, a woman murdered her husband at the Soddy Daisy American Legion. "It was one thing after another," Summitt said. There were, however, some enjoyable moments like riding his four children around in the sheriff's car and taking a tour of the historical gallows and tunnel of the old jail.¹⁸⁰

Sheriff Gilbert F. Newell 1963-1968 & 1974-1976

Gilbert Frank Newell was appointed sheriff of Hamilton County on April 29, 1963, by the quarterly county court. He was appointed to finish James "Bookie" Turner's last term, which ended early when he was elected fire and police commissioner of Chattanooga.¹⁸¹



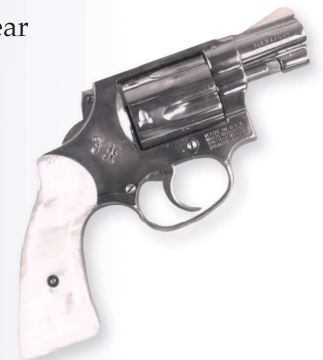
At the time of Newell's appointment, the *Chattanooga News-Free Press* referred to him as a "friendly, pleasant gentleman. It will be necessary for the public to wait and see, before evaluation can be made of the kind of office Mr. Newell runs as sheriff."¹⁸²

After five successive years, and later another two-year term, Hamilton County found out what kind of sheriff they had. In 1963, Newell appointed deputies to a horse patrol. In June of the same year, he petitioned Criminal Court for the authority to pay informants for information leading to the arrest of criminals. A request before its time, this idea was turned down. Also under Newell's direction, a car theft ring was uncovered and the kingpin of the operation, Sam Johnson, was arrested in July 1963.¹⁸³

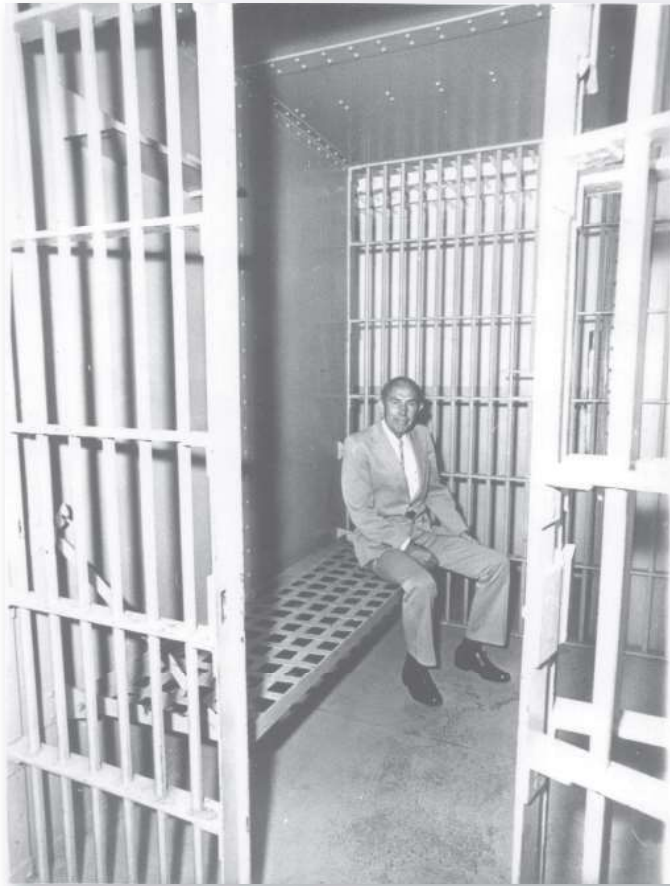
Below:
Sheriff Newell's Smith & Wesson revolver.

In August 1964 Newell was re-elected by the people to a full two-year term as sheriff of Hamilton County. During his re-election campaign, Newell openly opposed bringing metro government into the area.

After his re-election, the sheriff went on a moonshine still rampage. Known as the "still raiders," he and his deputies destroyed numerous stills operating on Flat Top Mountain and in Tiftonia and Birchwood. Besides destroying thousands of gallons of moonshine whiskey, the sheriff also organized several raids of gaming houses.¹⁸⁴



Adding to Newell's successful record, he directed the tracking and six-hour chase of two men who burglarized and looted 30 to 40 East Brainerd homes, which resulted in the capture and arrest of the burglars.



Above:
Sheriff Newell
in the cell
that Jimmy
Hoffa was
held in.

purchased and placed in the dispatcher's office. The computers linked detectives to stolen property and wanted persons files at the City Police Department, the Tennessee Motor Vehicle Bureau, and the F.B.I. in Washington, D.C.

On March 19, 1976, the sheriff and his deputies escorted inmates from the 95-year-old jail to the new Hamilton County Justice Building. Newell also announced his candidacy for sheriff again. He lost this election to Jerry Pitts but was appointed to the board of directors of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Planning Commission. He was the first Hamilton County representative to assume this seat.¹⁸⁵

In the seven years Newell was sheriff, he was known as a "gun toting, thief chasing, still raiding, club closing" sheriff dedicated to the future of law enforcement. Upon his retirement, he was lauded by County Judge Raulston Schoolfield as having emerged from years of political wars "without a blemish on his character."¹⁸⁶

Newell died on September 28, 1983. Newell Towers, formerly downtown's Park Hotel, was renamed in honor of Frank Newell.¹⁸⁷

In 1970, while he was serving on the county council, Newell laid the groundwork for the new Hamilton County Justice Building. In 1973, the county accepted bids to clear the jail site and made final plans for the new jail to replace the old one.

In 1974, Newell announced his candidacy for sheriff once again, and was re-elected in August of that year. During this administration he pushed for a civil service board.

Newell appointed Craig Glaze as the department's first arson detective in Hamilton County in 1975. "Arson seems to be occurring with alarming frequency. I am organizing an arson detail at the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department to handle all cases when arson is suspected," Newell said.

During his last term, he began the microfilming of jail records dating back over 50 years. An intoximeter was obtained, and the first computers were

Sheriff H. Q. Evatt

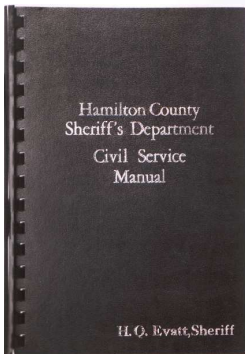
1968-1974 & 1978-1994

H. Q. Evatt was one of the most popular sheriffs to hold the office in Hamilton County. The youngest of four children, Evatt was born on September 9, 1929, to Hettie Lou Wallen and Henry Quilian Evatt, Sr.



Below:
First edition
of the HCSO
Civil Service
Manual.

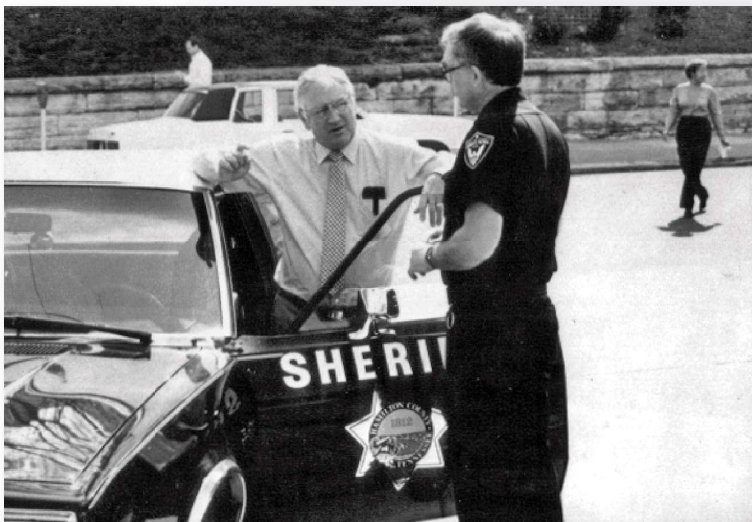
Evatt operated a service station for a short time after spending two years in the Marine Corps. In 1952, he was hired as a clerk in Hamilton County General Sessions Court, Criminal Division. His association with law enforcement started in 1957 when he was hired as a bookkeeper at the county jail during the administration of Red Maddox.



When James "Bookie" Turner was elected sheriff in 1958, he retained Evatt and eventually named him head bookkeeper. In 1963, at the age of 34, Evatt was named chief deputy under Sheriff Frank Newell, becoming the youngest chief deputy of a sheriff's office in the country.

Shortly after winning his first election in 1968, the new sheriff instituted the office's own in-service training school. (The law for minimum standards in Tennessee for police officers was finally passed in 1970.) Evatt was required to step down after serving the maximum three terms (six consecutive years) allowed by state law.

Evatt's popularity and successful record as sheriff led him to another victory in 1978. By this time, Tennessee law had changed, and the sheriff's term of office was increased to four years instead of two. The law further allowed unlimited terms of office. During the first years of this tenure, one top goal and accomplishment was the implementation of a Civil Service program. This was accomplished in 1980, providing job security for personnel for the first time in the history of the sheriff's office.

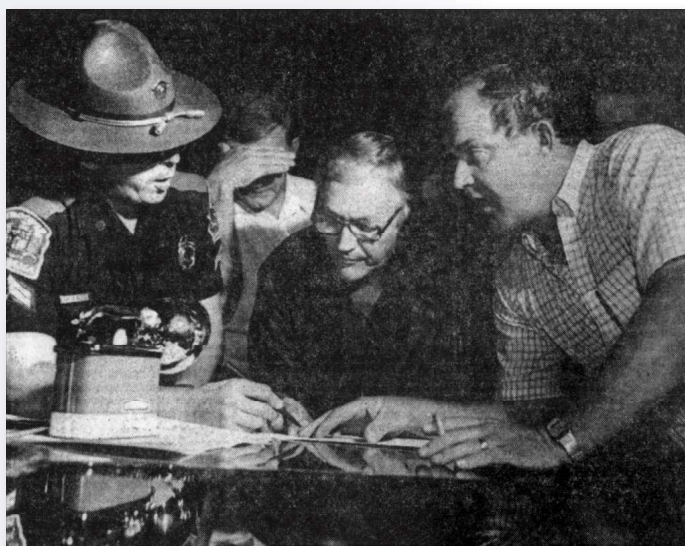


Left:
Sheriff H.Q.
Evatt with
Doug Rutherford.

Evatt consistently sought ways to improve services for the citizens of Hamilton County by implementing and overseeing many other innovative projects and technical changes. He formed the first Traffic Division; expanded Investigative Services; organized the Marine



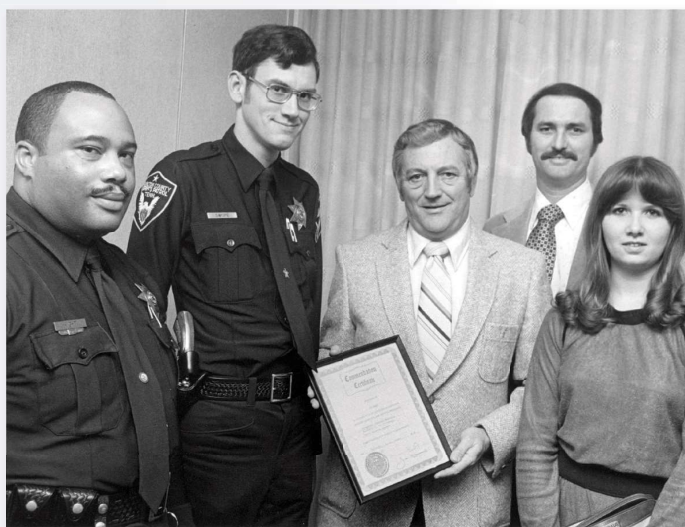
Tennessee Governor Ned Ray McWherter and Sheriff Evatt



Sheriff H.Q. Evatt with Tennessee Highway Patrol.



Hardie Stulce, Hank Dearmon, Sheriff H.Q. Evatt, and other TWRA officers in front of a HCSO Marine Patrol boat.



Sheriff H.Q. Evatt with Jim Hammond, John Swope, and Holbrook during a presentation for a certificate of commendation.

Patrol, DUI Task Force, Community Relations Council, and a full-time chaplaincy program for the department. He also established counseling services in the jail and provided literacy classes and GED tutoring and testing for the inmates.

Evatt remained active in every area of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office until his retirement in 1994. He is the only sheriff to occupy offices in the Hamilton County Jail, the Hamilton County Justice Building, and the Hamilton County-Chattanooga City Courts Building. He served the citizens of Hamilton County for 22 years.

Sheriff Jerry Pitts

1976-1978

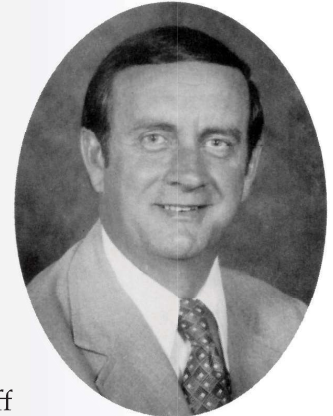
A former Marine, Jerry Pitts came with his wife and three children from Memphis, Tennessee, in 1971 to start his new job as Chattanooga's Chief of Police.¹⁸⁸

Five years later, Pitts was campaigning for the job of Hamilton County Sheriff. During the 1976 campaign, he strongly emphasized his wish to establish a more professional police force.

Soon after his election in 1976, as the county's first Republican sheriff since 1958, he began to implement many of the changes he had emphasized during his campaign.¹⁸⁹ Some of the new sheriff's goals and changes created disagreement and worry among many department personnel throughout his term of office.

Nevertheless, Sheriff Pitts believed that his reorganization plans would streamline the department and prepare it for the future challenges to law enforcement. While in office, he enlarged the traffic patrol division, reorganized the investigative division, and assigned the bookkeeping and accounting division to general county government.¹⁹⁰

The department also underwent a name change during his stay in office, as Pitts chose to call it the Hamilton County Police Department.



Officers' Cars, Uniforms Changed
SHERIFF DISPLAYS NEW BLACK-AND-WHITES—New black-and-white squad cars, a change from the former green-and-white vehicles in the Hamilton County Police Department, are shown lined up in front of the Justice Building as Sheriff Jerry Pitts unveils another change in the agency in his move toward "unification and professionalism" of the department.
Patrol Lt. Larry Holland, left, and Officer Tom Shugart, right, are shown wearing the department's new uniforms fashioned from navy blue material with black leather accessories.
Sheriff Pitts, second from left, and his second-in-command, Police Chief Luther Mowery, said the changes were made for quick identification of their patrolmen and their cars by citizens. (Staff color photo by Robin Hood)

Jerry Pitts lost his re-election to Sheriff H. Q. Evatt on August 3, 1978. Soon after, he announced that he had accepted a position with a security service in New Orleans, Louisiana. He further indicated that, if he had won the election, the term would have been his last, because "he did not want to stay in politics."¹⁹¹

Above: Hamilton County Police patch (ca. 1976).

Sheriff John Cupp
1994-2006

John A. Cupp Jr. was born to Sarah and John Cupp Sr. in Youngstown, Ohio, on April 8, 1931. Born to a large, blended family, John was one of seven children born to John Sr. He had one brother and a sister, as well as two half-brothers and two half-sisters.

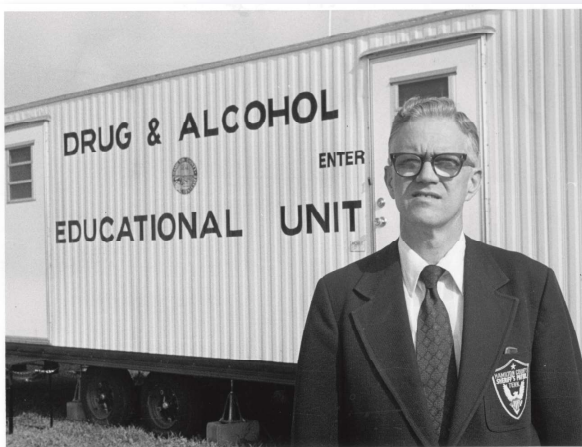


Cupp graduated from Florida Christian College in Tampa, Florida, with a degree in Bible and a minor in psychology. After college, he worked for the University of Tennessee's Medical Unit in Memphis. He also began to take on numerous ministerial assignments in the cities of Miami and Marathon, Florida. On September 8, 1952, he married Carolyn Bridges of Jacksonville, Florida. They had four children together, Phyllis, Darlene, John A. III, and Georgia.

Cupp's ministerial duties took his new family to Chattanooga in 1955. He served as a pastor for two area churches, Tiftonia Church of Christ and Eastdale Church of Christ, from 1955 to 1959. He briefly moved to Rochester, New York, before returning to Chattanooga again at the end of 1962, when he took on the pastoral duties for Tyner Church of Christ and the St. Elmo Church of Christ. He would continue to serve as minister for these churches until 1980.

Below:
Sheriff Cupp
outside a
Drug and
Alcohol
Educational
Unit trailer.

Cupp served numerous local organizations and institutions. He became the local PTA President at Bess T. Shepherd Elementary School from 1967 to 1969, and served with the Sixth District PTA from 1969 to 1971. He was a member of the State Board and the State Chairman of the Human Relations Committee from 1967-1972, and a hospital chaplain for Memorial and Erlanger hospitals. From 1972 to 1975 he was the Assistant Director of Human Services at Memorial Hospital. And from 1974 to 1981, he was a member of the Chaplain's Advisory Staff at Erlanger Medical Center.



Cupp's law enforcement career began at the sheriff's office in 1970, under Sheriff H. Q. Evatt. During this tenure, he would visit area schools, speaking to students about the dangers of drug addiction and trafficking. In 1979, Sheriff Evatt promoted Cupp to Director of Narcotics Information, where he would prove instrumental in the implementation of the D.A.R.E. Program. He was also appointed Consult to the U.S. Department of Education for the President's Drug-Free School Program, which evaluated 35 schools in 19 states on the effectiveness of their anti-drug policies and programs.

He was also instrumental in initiating the School Resource Officer Program, which started at Ooltewah High School and eventually spread to other public schools in Hamilton County. This program installed law enforcement officers in schools, where they served as mentors to students, as well as maintaining a command presence in safety situations.

In 1994, Sheriff. Evatt decided to retire. This prompted Cupp to announce his desire to run as a Republican for the office of sheriff of Hamilton County.

Sheriff Cupp's accomplishments included converting the dilapidated former Kmart shopping center into the Sheriff's Office West Annex, instituting the Domestic Violence Task Force for Hamilton County, pushing for tougher methods of narcotic enforcement with the Hamilton County Methamphetamine Task Force, and changing the typical patrol shift from an 8-hour shift to a greatly desired 12-hour shift.

Sheriff Billy Long 2006-2008

A lifelong resident of Hamilton County, Billy Long grew up in Tiftonia and graduated from Central High School in 1970. After high school, Long volunteered for the Army during the Vietnam era. He served three years with the 82nd Airborne Division located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

In 1974 Long joined the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and began his 31-year career. He started out working in the jail, along with dispatch and patrol, which was not unusual in those days. He worked in the Traffic Division for many years and was one of the two officers to start the Motorcycle Division in 1981 and conducted the first motorcycle officers training classes for other law enforcement agencies in the area. He was a Traffic Investigator and was one of the three original Traffic Reconstruction Investigators. He was promoted to Patrol Sergeant then later to Lieutenant. During those years Long served as Special Events Coordinator for events that are conducted throughout Hamilton County. Later he conceived the idea and became the first Court Liaison Officer for the Hamilton County Criminal and Session Courts. During his last years Long was responsible for the Homeland Security Preparedness of the sheriff's office.



Long joined the Tennessee Army National Guard and served for over 17 years, rising to the rank of First Sergeant. He is a veteran of both the Desert Shield and Desert Storm conflicts, and was stationed in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait during the conflicts. He received the Army Commendation Medal for his service during those conflicts. He retired with 20 years of military service.

After retiring from the sheriff's office in 2005, Long ran for sheriff of Hamilton County, was elected, and took office on September 1, 2006. Sheriff Long's accomplishments during his tenure were to develop a new Information Technology (IT) Division with professional, experienced personnel. The IT Division outfitted all vehicles in the sheriff's office with Toughbook computers, something they had not had before. This allowed deputies to communicate with both 911 and the Chattanooga Police Department. One of the biggest accomplishments was the acquisition of approximately 14 School Resource Officers (SRO) for the Hamilton County School System, funded by the sheriff's office and included in his budget. Previously patrol officers were being used as SROs. These SRO positions were new, additional officers. The Chaplain program was initiated by Sheriff Long and is still in operation today. These positions are filled by volunteer chaplains of all denominations.

Sheriff William Allen Branum

February 2008-August 2008

Allen Branum began his law enforcement career as a patrol officer with the Soddy-Daisy Police Department in January 1977. As a patrol sergeant in 1985, he accepted employment with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office under Sheriff H. Q. Evatt and Chief Deputy Jim Hammond. He worked in the Patrol, Narcotics, and Major Crimes Divisions there until 1999. He returned to serve as Chief of Police in Soddy-Daisy, where he served for over seven years. He also served on the Soddy-Daisy Board of Commissioners in the early 1990s for five years, with two of those years as mayor of Soddy-Daisy.



Below:
Allen Branum
in the historic
HCSO Model
T in the
Soddy Daisy
Christmas
Parade.

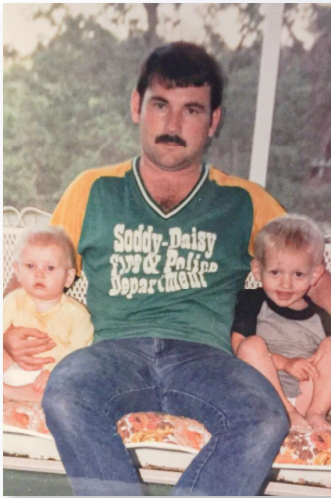
On September 1, 2006, Branum was sworn in as chief deputy under former Sheriff Billy Long. He was later appointed sheriff of Hamilton County after Sheriff Long was indicted on federal charges in February 2008. In August 2008, Jim Hammond was elected Hamilton County Sheriff and asked Branum to remain as his chief deputy.



Branum has been involved in service to the community since his teenage years, when he became a volunteer fireman in 1971. He has been involved with several civic organizations over the years and currently serves as president of the Soddy-Daisy Firefighters Association. Branum has completed in excess of 2,000 hours of specialized public safety training during his career,

including graduating from the first class of the Southeastern Command and Leadership Academy with the University of Tennessee in 2001.

Since February 1981, Branum has been married to Donna Parker Branum. They have two adult sons, Lee and Jay, and have lived in the Hamilton County/Soddy-Daisy area all of their lives. Branum and Donna are members of Christ Family Church (Church of God) in Soddy-Daisy, where he has served as a deacon.



Branum with sons Lee and Jay (ca. 1985).



Branum (right), during his time with the Soddy Daisy Police Department.



Chief Deputy Allen Branum, Mayor Jim Coppinger, Former CPD Chief Fletcher, Sheriff Jim Hammond, Congressman Chuck Fleischmann, and Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke.



Chief Branum speaking at the Hamilton County Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony.

SHERIFF JIM HAMMOND



Jim Hammond, sheriff of Hamilton County, is a P.O.S.T. certified officer, serving three full terms and one special two-year term. A graduate of Tennessee Temple University as well as the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, he holds bachelor's degrees in psychology and criminal justice, and a Master of Science in criminal justice. He is a graduate of the Chattanooga Police Department's Police Academy, Class of 1979. He is a graduate of the United States Secret Service's Dignitary Protection School, the National Insurance Crime Bureau's Auto Theft School, the Public Safety Institute's Police Planning and Resource Development, the Leadership Institute, and the United States Justice Department's International Training Assistance Program.

While few sheriffs enjoy a career free of challenges, this particular sheriff experienced a uniquely fascinating series of events and career twists during the course of his journey.





Sheriff Jim Hammond (lower right) at the Hamilton County Commission meeting.



Sheriff Jim Hammond with wife Jeanie.



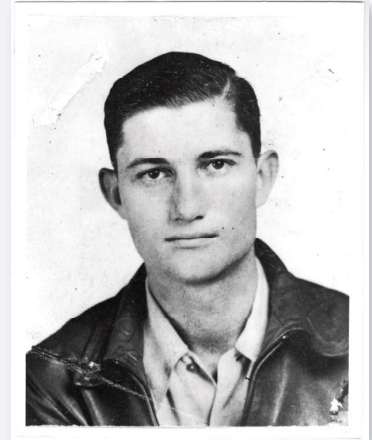
Police Memorial, Class A Uniform.

James Willis Hammond III was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on June 4, 1944, to James Willis Hammond Jr. and Claudine Milton. He was the second child of three; an elder sister, Gail, was born in 1942 and a younger brother, John, in 1946.

When Jim was three years old, tragedy struck the family on December 27, 1947, when James Jr. went duck hunting on Lake Kissimmee with a friend and was caught in an unexpected and violent storm, capsizing their small fishing boat. Though the friend was able to hold on to the overturned craft and eventually swim to safety, Jim Jr. was nowhere to be found.

A search party was quickly organized, conducting sweeps of the waterways over the course of several days before James Jr.'s body was recovered.

Mrs. Hammond would struggle to raise the children on her own for the next few years, moving the family to Tampa. During this time she reconnected with an old acquaintance of her deceased husband. The couple courted and married in 1952, moving to Sarasota, Florida.



Above: James Jr., Sheriff Hammond's father (ca. 1940).

Coming to Chattanooga

After graduating from high school, Jim travelled to Chattanooga to attend Tennessee Temple University. In 1963, after completing his freshman year, he was hired for his first job in public service as a third-shift intake officer at Juvenile Court, and was promoted to Probation Officer in 1966.

Below: Jim's Naval composite (ca. 1968).



By the spring of 1968, Jim was maintaining an exhaustive routine of working a full-time job along with an assortment of odd jobs after work, arriving home to study late into the night before getting a few hours of sleep, only to start it all over again the following morning. He was on his last semester of coursework, and graduation was almost in sight. Then came a notice in the mail instructing him to report for duty with the United States Navy.

He was assigned to the Navy's Submarine Flotilla Six. During this period he proposed to his college sweetheart, Jeanie, who he had met at his alma mater as she was attending her freshman year. They married in December 1969 and moved to his duty station in Charleston. Upon being honorably discharged in 1971 due to downsizing at the conclusion of the war, Jim and his new bride moved back to Chattanooga, where he returned to his old job at Juvenile Court as a legal services officer.



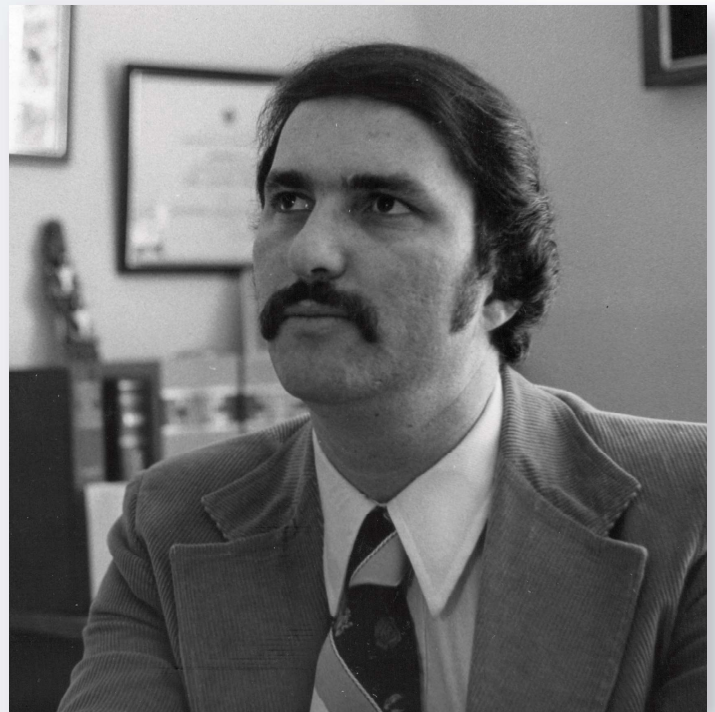
Jim and Jeanie on their wedding day.



Last day of active service (ca. 1971).



Jim and Jeanie during their first year of marriage.



Juvenile Court (ca. early 1970s).

Jim enrolled at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga the same year to pursue a second bachelor's degree, this time in criminal justice, completing it in 1976. In 1973, he became a first-time father with the birth of his son, James W. Hammond IV. A second child followed in May 1974 with the birth of a daughter, Brandi Jean.

It seemed that the young couple's life-goals were moving along rather nicely. Jim was enjoying the fruits of his labor and the couple had purchased a small house.

The day was January 9, 1975. Snow was blanketing the ground. Jim and his co-worker, Will Lasseter, were heading out early that morning to Lovell Field, where a small single-engine private plane would carry the two men and another co-worker, Minnie West, to Memphis for a conference.

The group arrived in Memphis and attended the conference without incident. And though the snow had continued much of the day, the consensus was that the returning flight should proceed.

At around 6:30 p.m., the flight began its final approach to Chattanooga. The passengers were dozing. Jim was half-asleep, in and out of slumber, and he could occasionally detect the pilot's voice radioing the tower for confirmation of their position and altitude.

The next time he opened his eyes, he caught a tree branch streaking past the windshield in a frightening blur. And in an instant came the deafening sounds of a catastrophic impact.

Next came the paralyzing helplessness of near-catastrophic forces exerted upon their frames. Metallic screeching sounds. The fuselage rotating and slamming end over end, punctuated by one final, bludgeoning stop as the fuselage plowed into a tree...then tumbling to the ground, crashing through the foliage before coming to a punishing halt. Then finally... it was quiet.

Though unsure of how long he had been semi-conscious, and extremely dizzy, Jim became aware of the curious sensation of blood rushing to his head. Disoriented, he gradually came to realize that he was hanging upside down in his seat, suspended only a few feet from the ground. He managed to trigger the seatbelt release, and fell a foot or two to the snow-covered ground.

He stumbled up and located Ms. West. He extricated her from the seat, dragging her a short distance from the wreckage and propping her up against a tree. Venturing back into the dark, he found his friend Will, critically injured and unconscious, and dragged him to where he had placed Ms. West.

To his horror, the plane was now fully engulfed in flames. His heart sank. He would have to abandon his search for the pilot and seek help. Reluctantly, he turned and made his way into the trees towards a distant light that he could barely make out. Soon he broke through the undergrowth and stumbled onto an open road, where

Passenger Of Crashed Plane Shuns Praise For Saving 2

By MIKE LEVAN
Staff Writer
Jim Hammond, one of three surviving passengers aboard the Piper Cherokee that



CRASH SURVIVOR
JIM HAMMOND
RESTS AT HOME

crashed in the Booker T. Washington State Park Thursday night, shuns all praise he is receiving for saving the lives of two others in the crash, saying, "Anyone would have done the same."

Mr. Hammond, an employee of the Hamilton County Juvenile Court for some 12 years, pulled two other court workers, Mrs. Minnie West and Will Lasater, from the craft only moments before it burst into flames.

The pilot of the small aircraft, John C. Henson, a volunteer worker with the court, was buried underneath the rubble of the cockpit area and a large tree and was killed in the crash.

Mr. Hammond said he and the other court workers had been in Memphis since early Thursday morning reviewing a volunteer juvenile court program there and were returning to Chattanooga when the crash happened.

He said, "We didn't realize we were in trouble until we hit the trees... there was no warning at all. I saw a tree hit the wing and that was it. We nosed over into the woods."

Mr. Hammond said that the craft was flying a normal course into Lovell Field, but the pilot was having to rely on his instruments because of fog in the Chattanooga area at the time of the 6:30 p.m. crash.

He said, "As soon as we hit the final tree—we were all twisted around in the crash—I worked to get my seat belt loose and then helped Mrs. West out of her belt."

"I worked for several minutes to get her loose and then carried her out of the plane. I found Mr. Lasater who was sitting in the co-pilot's spot and pulled him from the plane. By then the plane was catching on fire."

"I sat Mr. Lasater against a tree in Mrs. West's lap because he was having a hard time breathing and by that time the entire plane was in flames and I couldn't get back into it."

After Mr. Hammond made sure Mrs. West and Mr. Lasater were secure, Mr. Hammond ran through the thick brush to a light he saw through the fog.

That light was shining from the ranger station at the park. Minutes later, after Mr. Hammond called police, help was en route.

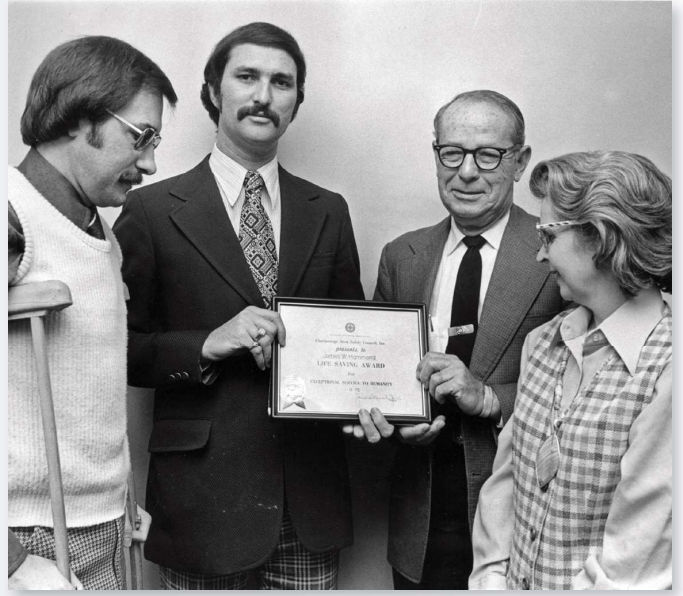
The court's legal services officer said that he luckily only suffered cuts to his hand and leg and a minor concussion.

"I guess that by being in the back seat I got out okay. That's the only place to ride in a small plane," he said.

When told that authorities were crediting him with saving the lives of Mrs. West and Mr. Lasater, Mr. Hammond only said, "When you've got to act, you've got to act. I think anyone would have done the same."

Mr. Hammond is married to Jeannie Hammond and is the father of two young children. They live at 23 Crescent Park.

W-1



Above: Life-saving award presentation. Will Lassetter (left), Jim, Safety Council representative, and Minnie West (far right).



he saw the beams of two headlights cutting through the snow, bearing down upon him. He waved his arms frantically at the approaching truck and flagged down a park ranger who'd heard the crash and was looking for survivors.

For his efforts, Jim was awarded a commendation from the Chattanooga Area Safety Board and recognized in the feature sections of local newspapers.

Despite the life-altering nature of this event, the young man returned to his work and home life, determined to restore a sense of normalcy to his family. As proof of his resolve, a blessing arrived that year with the birth of his third child, Sundi Dawn. It was also that year that Jim would meet a man who would come to alter the course of his career in innumerable ways.

H.Q. Evatt, the long-time sheriff of Hamilton County, had recently finished serving his third consecutive two-year term. At that time, Hamilton County term limits required the lawman to step down, prohibiting him from running again for at least one term. H.Q. found himself unemployed for the first time in over a decade. He still needed to work though, so with some guidance from a judge friend, he found himself reporting to Jim that year as a process server for Juvenile Court.

The two men got along quite well; H.Q. impressed the young man with his many tales and exploits in local law enforcement, while Jim impressed the elder statesman with his education and professionalism. As time progressed, the possibilities of a comeback campaign stirred in H.Q.'s thoughts.

An Idea Worth Considering

One day in early 1978, H.Q. stepped into Jim's office with a proposal. He was running for sheriff again. And he would be needing a new chief deputy.

"I don't know anything about being a chief," Jim stated wryly.

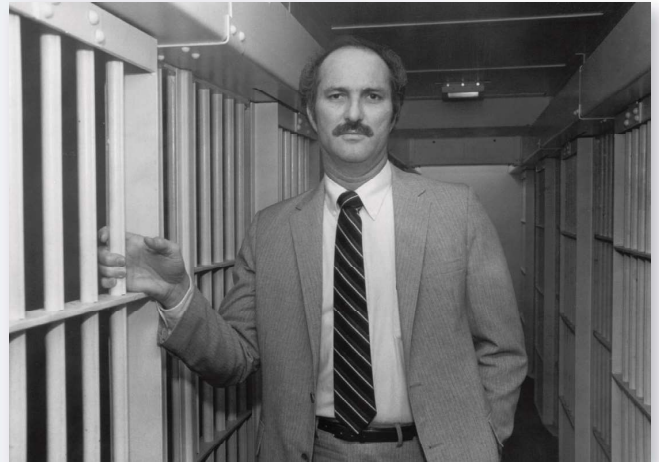
"Don't worry about that. You've got all you need to work with," H.Q. reassured him. "You've got the education and the background. I'll get you up to speed on the day to day."

On Thursday, August 3, 1978, after a divisive but spirited campaign, H.Q. Evatt was once again elected to the office of the sheriff of Hamilton County. He wasted no time in appointing Jim as his new chief deputy. Jim's first order of business would be to attend the Chattanooga Police Department's Police Academy, graduating with the class of 1979. Fully certified now, he set to work getting to know the comings and goings of the agency.

For the next 17 years, Jim faithfully served the citizens of Hamilton County with distinction. The chief enjoyed many successes over the course of his time as Chief Deputy.



Swearing in as the Mayor of Ridgeside (ca. 1980).



Free Press staff photo (ca. 1986).



Chief Deputy (ca. 1980s).



1994 Campaign Event.

During his tenure, Jim earned a master's degree of criminal justice in the summer of 1980. He would parlay this into a second career as an adjunct professor of criminal justice at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, a career he would continue to enjoy until 1994.

He also served on the boards of numerous state and local agencies including the Tennessee Sheriffs' Association, Hamilton County 911 Emergency Communications, Valley Psychiatric Hospital, Teen Challenge, and as a Trustee of Tennessee Temple University. He was also a founding member of the Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers Association. He even served as mayor of Ridgeside, Tennessee, the neighborhood in which he resided.

In 1994, after many years of faithful public service, H.Q. Evatt decided to retire from the sheriff's office. Jim announced his intention to run for office that same year and formed a campaign staff to set about the business of getting elected. Unfortunately, Jim lost the election by the narrowest of margins.

New Directions

In 1995, he was recruited by the United States Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). He would find himself landing in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as a member of a small contingent of International Police Instructors tasked with starting up a police force for the Haitian government.

Over the next decade, he would assist in training thousands of law enforcement officers around the world including assignments in Haiti, Russia, Colombia, Mexico, Albania, Moldova, Jordan, and Romania.



Moscow, Russia (ca. late 1990s).



Haiti (ca. mid 1990s).



Fingerprinting techniques, Haiti (ca. mid 1990s).



Teaching new cadets, Haiti (ca. mid 1990s).

In 2003, Jim and Jeanie moved to Amman, Jordan, where they lived for three years while he served as Chief of Operational Policing and Training Manager of the prominent Jordanian International Training Center.

Return to Chattanooga

Jim's tour of duty in the Middle East came to a close in December 2006. He and Jeanie had been in the states for only a few weeks when their youngest daughter, Sundi, was found deceased on February 5, 2007, the victim of an unintentional overdose, after struggling with long-term substance abuse. She was 27 years old. Jim and Jeanie were devastated.

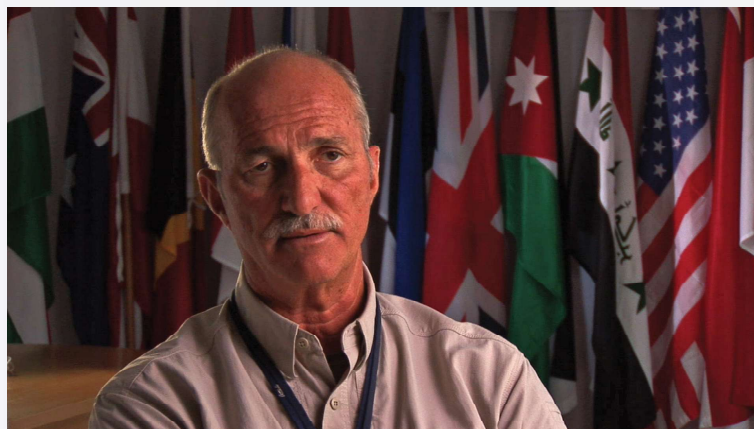
Jim needed to get his mind off of the loss they had suffered, and plunged into work to keep himself distracted. His old friend Emerson Russell hired him as a Director of Training for ERMC's Security Division, which the veteran lawman fulfilled until the following spring of 2008.



Bogota, Colombia (ca. 2010).



Speaking with State Department official.
ICITAP, Amman, Jordan (ca. 2006).



Director of Training, ICITAP, Amman, Jordan (ca. 2006).

Early on a Saturday morning in 2008 a knock came at the door. The couple's son, Jimi, opened the door to find a friend of the sheriff's office standing in the doorway, clutching a copy of a federal indictment that he'd been handed earlier that morning by the FBI. "Is the Chief home?" he asked solemnly. Jimi escorted him to the living room, where his father greeted the officer and invited him to sit.

For the next ten minutes, the two sat in silence as Jim flipped through the pages of the indictment, reading through a list of charges brought against the current sheriff of Hamilton County.

Though nothing was mentioned that day of his intentions, Jim knew that his hometown would need a leader. The agency he had come to know and love was suffering a dreadful moment in its nearly 200-year-old history.

The Door Swings Back Open

A special election would be held to fulfill the remaining two years of the present, indicted sheriff. The phone began to ring off the hook that day with calls for him to run. But Jim had been through this before. He decided to consult his family. One by one, he would sit with them and listen to their thoughts on the subject. Unsurprisingly, though, all fully supported his decision to seek the office of sheriff. Thus through a special election Jim became sheriff in the summer of 2008.

Unfinished Business

So much had changed since he had last sat in the office, with many of the individuals he had hired now seasoned officers.

During the next 14 years, he would accomplish a list of goals, including a mounted horse patrol and new retirement plans, affectionately referred to as "The Bridge Plan." He expanded the IT Division from a meager staff of three to 10. He allocated funds to purchase countless laptops, desktops, in-car video systems, body cams, and various other technologies, fundamentally modernizing the way the agency conducted business. In 2018, he orchestrated the management handoff of the Silverdale Detention Facility from Hamilton County General Government to the sheriff's office. Also that year, no small feat in its own right, he successfully negotiated the first substantial pay raise for law enforcement officers in over 20 years.

In 2018, he announced that his third term would be his last. He thus set about preparing the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office for a new leader in 2022.