

**INDEX TO DEED BOOK A (WATAUGA PURCHASE BOOK)  
NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE**

One June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the county's earliest deed book, Deed Book A, was returned to Washington County by Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and Secretary of State Tre Hargett, after an absence of almost 125 years. Soon afterwards, archive volunteer Carolyn Andrews began indexing this nearly 500-page volume. After nearly a year, that massive indexing project is completed and is now available to researchers online on the archives' website: <https://wctnarchives.files.wordpress.com/2022/06/deed-book-a-index-public.pdf>. In that frontier era before census records, the land records found in this volume can be wonderful for tracing that early ancestor.

The volume contains the earliest land transactions for the county and for what became the state of Tennessee. Land records found in the deed book cover the period 1775-1782. It includes copies of all the deeds made to settlers by Charles Robertson as trustee for the Watauga Association that preceded the establishment of Washington County, along with deeds made by Jacob Brown for lands of the Nolichucky settlements. These records were made following the purchase of the settlement lands from the Cherokee nation completed at Sycamore Shoals on March 19<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1775. For this reason, the deed book was often referred to as the "Watauga Purchase" book. Also included are land patent surveys and early North Carolina land grants made in Tennessee.

Contained in the book are 73 indentures (deeds), including the original indenture securing the land from the Cherokee; 84 land patent surveys; and 233 land grants. The land records provide names of many of the earliest settlers in what became Washington County and Tennessee. This includes many prominent frontier leaders such as William Bean, Jacob Brown, John and Landon Carter, John Chisolm, William Cobb, Isaac Lincoln (Abraham Lincoln's great-uncle), William Nelson, Charles and James Robertson, John Sevier, Matthew Talbot, Christopher Taylor, Robert Young, and many others. Indexed are all personal names and geographic locations found in the documents.

We especially thank Carolyn Andrews for her hard work in completing an index that will prove invaluable to researchers.

###