

## 1861 SECESSION VOTE IN EAST TENNESSEE

The Civil War in East Tennessee was in reality, a 'Civil War within a Civil War'. For most States, the general populace was overwhelmingly of a single mindset. For certain areas within border states such as East Tennessee, the war was doubly deadly. In these regions, neighbors killed each other over factionalism, both on and off the battlefield. Greene County, Tennessee was perhaps among the worst because the majority of the State was Confederate and Northeast Tennessee was an island surrounded by pro-Confederate states.

Civil War historians have gauged the pro-Union versus pro-Confederate factions in Tennessee based on the 1861 secession vote. For Greene County, this estimation has proven to be reasonably accurate, based on the Greene County Civil War Soldiers Database project.

Civil War historian and author, W. Todd Groce, presents in his book *Mountain Rebels*, page 173, the East Tennessee vote - by county - for secession:

### Percentile FOR Secession

*Sullivan	71.7
Polk	69.9
Meigs	64.3
Rhea	64.1
Monroe	58.6
McMinn	44.1
*Washington	41.4
Marion	40.8
Hamilton	40.4
*Hawkins	38.3
Hancock	30.7
*Cocke	30.4
Bledsoe	28.3
Grainger	28.2
Knox	27.7
Bradley	26.8
Jefferson	23.3
Roane	22.4
<b>GREENE</b>	<b>21.7</b>
Blount	19.1
Claiborne	16.7
Johnson	12.4
Anderson	7.0
Carter	6.0
Morgan	5.7
Campbell	5.6
Sevier	3.8
Scott	3.5

**\*denotes counties adjacent to Greene**

When county and state adjacencies are considered, these factors coalesced into the "perfect storm" for Greene County residents and our near neighbors. Geography and regional political differences escalated into a deadly type of War - one of guerrilla warfare, bushwacking and in more than a few cases, just out-and-out murder of both civilians and soldiers at home on parole or on furlough. Further, acts of "retribution" continued well after the surrender at Appomattox Court House.



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**Battle of Blue Springs [now Mosheim]  
Courtesy Library of Congress**