Mississippi_Historical_Counties_Dataset

Shapefile

Tags

historical county boundaries, 7 February 1785 to 31 December 2000, Mississippi

Summary

The Atlas is meant to be a resource for people (a) seeking records of past events, (b) trying to analyze, interpret, and display county-based historical data like returns of elections and censuses, and (c) working on state and local history. The special interests of those potential users range from history to demography, economics, genealogy, geography, law, and politics. Counties and their equivalents (e.g., parishes in Louisiana and independent cities in four other states) cover all the territory of the United States, function as repositories of valuable records, and long have been used as the geographic base units for the gathering of essential social, political, and economic data. The authority to create, change, or eliminate counties and to specify their functions lies with the states and their predecessors. In detail, the role of counties varies from state to state, but in every state they administer the judicial system and provide a great number of services. In the process, counties collect and preserve large quantities of information. For example: records of marriages, births, and deaths; probated wills; militia training; real-estate transfers; tax collections; welfare benefits; school programs; voter registrations; etc. Outside densely populated cities, counties have served as colonial, territorial, and state legislative districts and as the building blocks of congressional districts. In the nineteenth century they became the grassroots centers for the development of political parties. Moreover, counties have been the principal geographic units for the collection and aggregation of data from colonial/territorial, state, and federal censuses. Unfortunately for researchers, the average county has changed size, shape, or location between four and five times. Therefore, knowing the present county of the place where a past event occurred may not be sufficient to find its official records. If county boundaries changed in the meantime, it is necessary to learn what county had jurisdiction at the time of the event to identify the courthouse where the record is stored today. If the reported population of a county changed from one census to another, was that because of an increase or a decrease in the number of people, or an annexation or loss of populated territory, or a combination of both? Trying to analyze county-based historical data without controlling for boundary changes is almost certain to yield errors and lead to false conclusions.

Description

This document serves as the metadata for the Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile for use in a geographic information system (GIS). That file may be downloaded without charge from this Web site (http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp); see also Distribution_Information, below. In addition, an interactive map of Mississippi's Historical Counties Dataset is available for operation and viewing through the Web site by means of ArcIMS, a program produced by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). ArcIMS draws its boundary data for the interactive map from the Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. The interactive map is projected while the downloadable shapefile is not. Here are descriptions of the sources and methods used to gather and process the information that appears in the shapefile and in the interactive map so that users can evaluate the quality and utility of the data. The comprehensive Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile holds the polygons, metadata, and attribute data

for every different configuration of every county or county equivalent in Mississippi, dated to the day, from 7 February 1785 through 31 December 2000. The Historical Counties Dataset, together with a number of supplementary cartographic data files and text files, enable users easily to employ a geographic information system for the analysis and display of county-related historical data. First among the non-cartographic data files is the Mississippi Comprehensive Database (a tab-delimited text file that can be imported into a database or spreadsheet program), which provides descriptions of all known changes in state and county boundaries, changes in county organization and attachments, and changes in status and name, together with citations to the sources. These data include unmappable boundary changes, which usually means changes too small to plot as polygons at compilation scale, changes whose shapes could not be plotted at compilation scale (e.g., shift of a boundary line from the centerline of a road to one shoulder or the other), and changes that could not be mapped for other reasons (e.g., the location of the change could not be determined). In the Comprehensive Database, there is a separate entry for each county involved in each event. That facilitates assembling all the events pertaining to a single county. In addition to the Comprehensive Database, there are five supplemental texts. These are: (1) a comprehensive County Index (includes proposed and extinct counties and non-county areas and provides cross references for name changes, with hyperlinks to corresponding individual county chronologies), (2) a Consolidated Chronology that organizes all the data by date, combining all the counties involved in an event into a single, composite entry, (3) a set of Individual County Chronologies, each one covering all the changes in a single county or equivalent, (4) a Bibliography that lists the primary and secondary sources found useful in the historical research, and (5) a Commentary on the research problems and materials that were remarkable or unusual in the process of historical compilation (Not every state requires a commentary.). A "Read Me" file introduces all these files and indicates how to get started with them.

Credits

Principal financial support for the project was provided by the Reference Materials Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency; additional support came from the Newberry Library, Chicago, the project's headquarters, and from a number of corporations, foundations, and individuals.

Use limitations

Extent

West	-91.662506	**East**	-84.888247
North	35.008029	**South**	30.149892

Scale Range

There is no scale range for this item.

ArcGIS Metadata ►

Topics and Keywords ►

THEMES OR CATEGORIES OF THE RESOURCE boundaries

* CONTENT TYPE Downloadable Data

PLACE KEYWORDS Mississippi

TEMPORAL KEYWORDS 7 February 1785 to 31 December 2000

THEME KEYWORDS historical county boundaries

Hide Topics and Keywords ▲

Citation ►

TITLE Mississippi_Historical_Counties_Dataset

PRESENTATION FORMATS digital map
FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT vector digital data

SERIES
NAME Atlas of Historical County Boundaries-Digital (Shapefiles)

Hide Citation ▲

Citation Contacts ►

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Peggy Tuck Sinko, Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME John H. Long, Editor, Atlas of Historical County Boundaries
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Laura Rico-Beck, Digital Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

Hide Citation Contacts ▲

Resource Details ►

DATASET LANGUAGES English (UNITED STATES)

STATUS completed
SPATIAL REPRESENTATION TYPE vector

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Method: Historical compilers plot county boundary changes in chronological order. Working directly from originals or photocopies of the verbal boundary descriptions in the state session laws, the ultimate authoritative source, the researcher plots the lines on a transparent compilation sheet laid over a modern base map of the state. As each change is plotted, the compiler writes a descriptive entry for the state's boundary chronology and a brief citation of the source of the information. The compiler creates the Comprehensive Database from this information. Plotting boundary changes of all counties together and in sequence, not merely reconstructing the counties at different points in time (e.g., dates of censuses) or concentrating on a single county at a time (thereby taking it out of the context of what happened to its neighbors), is an important aspect of the historical compilation process. Doing so gives the compiler valuable insight into how the counties developed and whether the intentions of legislators were realized in their enactments. For example, a law may say its purpose is to transfer territory from County A to County B, but the actual effect, visibly evident from the plot, may be to transfer territory from both A and C to B. When boundaries are plotted this way, gores (gaps between counties) and overlaps created accidentally

by the legislature are readily apparent, and errors in plotting are discovered almost immediately. It is nearly impossible to detect such developments unless the counties are plotted together. Descriptive entries in the comprehensive database and in the chronologies reflect actual changes because they are written from the compilation plots, not from the laws alone or from secondary works. One additional benefit of this approach is that it provides an automatic checking mechanism. When the historical compiler reaches the end of the development of the county network, the final version should be identical with the boundaries of the present county. If there is a difference between the completed compilation and the standard, current map, the compiler knows there is a mistake somewhere. Such a discrepancy is rare, but when one is discovered, the compiler reviews the compilation to find the source of the problem. Usually it is a matter of the compiler erring in the plot of a boundary or accidentally omitting some change, either of which can easily be corrected, but occasionally the fault is found on the current, federal map. When the error appears on the federal map, the boundary is plotted accurately and a brief explanation of the difference is added to the supplemental Commentary. Problematic Data. Every so often, a state's law makers mistakenly overlapped the lines of two or more counties. Once such an overlap was detected, it seldom lasted long because dual jurisdictions generate only trouble, and states acted swiftly to eliminate them. This atlas treats areas of overlapping jurisdiction as distinct polygons and provides the usual data (e.g., start dates and end dates) for each one. Much more common than overlaps are non-county areas, that is, areas not within the jurisdiction of any county. Sometimes legal boundary descriptions left small areas, known as gores, outside the bounds of any county. Such inadvertent omissions errors most often occurred in the early days of a state's history when boundary makers lacked knowledge of the state's topography. Sometimes, legislators purposely did not extend county jurisdiction over all of their state's territory as early as possible, but waited until they had a better understanding of the lay of the land and until the prospect of European settlement was closer. Under those circumstances, they often provided a minimum of legal and administrative services for each non-county area by formally attaching it to a fully operational county; later, when the area was ready for settlement or was already under development, the state created one or more counties from the non-county area. This atlas aims to be absolutely comprehensive and, with a few exceptions (see next paragraph), to leave no "holes" in its historical and geographic coverage of a state. In practice, each state compilation includes all the territory within its bounds in 2000, regardless of what authority created or altered a county there, plus all other territory that may have been within the state's jurisdiction at an earlier time. Also, there are no empty spaces, no areas outside a named polygon. Each non-county area, whether an accidental gore or a region purposely set aside for future settlement, is represented by a polygon, the polygon is named (often merely as a non-county area with a number, such as NCA1), and a full set of data about it is entered in the database and the attribute file. The exceptions to the "no-holes" policy described above are the large non-county areas in western Virginia, New York, and the New England states during much of the seventeenth century. In London and the other European capitals, officials had access to so little accurate information about inland territory that imperial claims and land grants, including colonial charters, often were incomplete or imprecise or asserted limits (e.g., the Pacific Ocean or "South Sea") that were so extreme as to be impractical to plot. Compilers treated those large, indefinitely bounded, and inadequately described, non-county areas as empty territory and made no attempt to represent them as coherent, historically complete polygons. Because the ArcGIS program requires that all polygons be closed, the compilers supplied estimated boundary lines to close polygons representing indefinitely extensive frontier counties and noted their action in the "Change" field. Some changes have not been mapped because the change is too small to map, or the location is unknown, or both; for example, a law that transferred ten acres belonging to farmer Smith from one county to another would be unmappable because the parcel is too small to be mapped at the standard compilation scale or because the location of Smith's farm cannot be

discovered. When the location of a change too small to map is known, the historical compiler marks the location and the digital compiler digitizes it as a point. All such tiny changes are collected in a separate shapefile, usually labeled [YEAR]_pt.shp. Using the historical compiler's plotting overlays and associated material (e.g., notes, copies of the laws), the GIS compiler draws the counties in digital form. For digitizing, the program is ArcGIS 9.1, and the electronic modern "base map" is from the Digital Chart of the World (DCW) provided with ArcGIS by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), plus, as needed, such other data (often from another source) as the grid of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS). By repeating much of the procedure of the historical compiler, the digital compiler implicitly checks the work of her predecessor and occasionally finds line segments that must be corrected. As digitizing proceeds, data from the comprehensive database are entered into the attribute table. After perfecting the boundary lines, the GIS digitizer assembles copies of all county polygons and attribute data into a single shapefile, the Historical Counties Dataset shapefile.

* PROCESSING ENVIRONMENT Version 6.2 (Build 9200) ; Esri ArcGIS 10.6.1.9270

CREDITS

Principal financial support for the project was provided by the Reference Materials Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency; additional support came from the Newberry Library, Chicago, the project's headquarters, and from a number of corporations, foundations, and individuals.

ARCGIS ITEM PROPERTIES

* NAME MS_Historical_Counties
* SIZE 10.637
* LOCATION file://\\DESKTOP-TP9LNVL\F$\DATA\00_BOUNDARIES\MS_Historical_Counties.shp
  * ACCESS PROTOCOL Local Area Network

Hide Resource Details ▲

Extents ►

EXTENT
GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT
BOUNDING RECTANGLE
WEST LONGITUDE -91.662506
EAST LONGITUDE -84.888247
SOUTH LATITUDE 30.149892
NORTH LATITUDE 35.008029

EXTENT
DESCRIPTION
publication date

TEMPORAL EXTENT
BEGINNING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 02/07/1785
ENDING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 12/31/2000

EXTENT
GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT
BOUNDING RECTANGLE

EXTENT TYPE Extent used for searching
* WEST LONGITUDE -91.662506
* EAST LONGITUDE -84.888247
* NORTH LATITUDE 35.008029
* SOUTH LATITUDE 30.149892
* EXTENT CONTAINS THE RESOURCE Yes

EXTENT IN THE ITEM'S COORDINATE SYSTEM
* WEST LONGITUDE -91.662506
* EAST LONGITUDE -84.888247
* SOUTH LATITUDE 30.149892
* NORTH LATITUDE 35.008029
* EXTENT CONTAINS THE RESOURCE Yes

Hide Extents ▲

Resource Points of Contact ►

POINT OF CONTACT
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library
CONTACT'S POSITION Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture
CONTACT'S ROLE point of contact

CONTACT INFORMATION ►
ADDRESS
TYPE both
DELIVERY POINT 60 W. Walton Street
CITY Chicago
ADMINISTRATIVE AREA Illinois
POSTAL CODE 60610
COUNTRY US
E-MAIL ADDRESS scholl@newberry.org

HOURS OF SERVICE
8:00 am - 5:00 pm M-F, CT

Hide Contact information ▲

Hide Resource Points of Contact ▲

Resource Maintenance ►

RESOURCE MAINTENANCE
UPDATE FREQUENCY as needed

Hide Resource Maintenance ▲

Resource Constraints ►

LEGAL CONSTRAINTS
LIMITATIONS OF USE

No liability is assumed by the Atlas of Historical County Boundaries Project or the Newberry Library

OTHER CONSTRAINTS
Free access for use under an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike Creative Commons License

SECURITY CONSTRAINTS
CLASSIFICATION unclassified
CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM none

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS
none

CONSTRAINTS
LIMITATIONS OF USE
Free for use under an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike Creative Commons License

Hide Resource Constraints ▲

Spatial Reference ►

ARCGIS COORDINATE SYSTEM
* TYPE Geographic
* GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATE REFERENCE GCS_North_American_1983
* COORDINATE REFERENCE DETAILS
GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATE SYSTEM
WELL-KNOWN IDENTIFIER 4269
X ORIGIN -400
Y ORIGIN -400
XY SCALE 11258999068426.238
Z ORIGIN -100000
Z SCALE 10000
M ORIGIN -100000
M SCALE 10000
XY TOLERANCE 8.983152841195213e-09
Z TOLERANCE 0.001
M TOLERANCE 0.001
HIGH PRECISION true
LEFT LONGITUDE -180
LATEST WELL-KNOWN IDENTIFIER 4269
WELL-KNOWN TEXT
GEOGCS["GCS_North_American_1983",DATUM["D_North_American_1983",SPHEROID["GRS_1980",6378137.0,298.257222101]],PRIMEM["Greenwich",0.0],UNIT["Degree",0.0174532925199433],AUTHORITY["EPSG",4269]]

REFERENCE SYSTEM IDENTIFIER
* VALUE 4269
* CODESPACE EPSG
* VERSION 6.12(3.0.1)

Hide Spatial Reference ▲

Spatial Data Properties ►

VECTOR ►
* LEVEL OF TOPOLOGY FOR THIS DATASET geometry only

GEOMETRIC OBJECTS
FEATURE CLASS NAME MS_Historical_Counties
* OBJECT TYPE composite
* OBJECT COUNT 487

Hide Vector ▲

ARCGIS FEATURE CLASS PROPERTIES ►
FEATURE CLASS NAME MS_Historical_Counties
* FEATURE TYPE Simple
* GEOMETRY TYPE Polygon
* HAS TOPOLOGY FALSE
* FEATURE COUNT 487
* SPATIAL INDEX TRUE
* LINEAR REFERENCING FALSE

Hide ArcGIS Feature Class Properties ▲

Hide Spatial Data Properties ▲

Data Quality ►

SCOPE OF QUALITY INFORMATION ►
RESOURCE LEVEL dataset

Hide Scope of quality information ▲

DATA QUALITY REPORT - COMPLETENESS OMISSION ►
MEASURE DESCRIPTION

The data set is complete. All changes are dated to the day. If there is a difference between the effective date of change and the date when a law was passed, the effective date of change is used. Boundary changes too small to map are included in the chronologies and in the Comprehensive Database. As a rule, boundary changes occurring entirely on water were not mapped. Exceptions to this rule might include county boundaries which run through large inland water bodies like Lake Okeechobee, Lake Pontchartrain, Great Salt Lake, etc. No regular or systematic updating of the pre-2001 data is anticipated because (a) the historical data cannot change and (b) the compilers believe their methods and materials are sufficient to produce data that are complete and correct. (That is not to say no error can slip through. Suggestions for ad hoc changes or additions to the historical data, together with an explanation of why the change should be made and supporting evidence, should be directed to scholl@newberry.org or Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610.) County boundary

changes that occur after 31 December 2000 will routinely be digitized by both the state of Mississippi and the federal government and, therefore, will be available from agencies of those governments in separate files in the indefinite future.

Hide Data quality report - Completeness omission ▲

DATA QUALITY REPORT - QUANTITATIVE ATTRIBUTE ACCURACY ►

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries Project aims to achieve high accuracy through the use of the most authoritative and reliable sources, analysis of those sources by tested procedures, and careful proofreading of the results. Because counties are created and changed by their states, the state session laws are the primary, authoritative sources for the county lines, names, organization, and attachments. The initial plots of the boundaries are direct conversions of the legal boundary descriptions in the laws into linework on the plotting sheets. They are performed with copies of the legal descriptions at hand, and those same laws also are at hand for the GIS compiler when digitizing boundaries. All other sources, including old maps, are derived from those legal descriptions. The historical compiler searches the state session laws and, when necessary, related material (e.g., court decisions, executive proclamations) for information about the courses of the boundaries. Secondary texts, maps, and local experts are consulted as needed (e.g., when recovering a long-lost landmark that figured in an early boundary description). Dates of changes are also taken from the laws. Some laws specify when the change will go into effect, but others (mostly those passed before the twentieth century) do not; if no official effective date is provided, the historical compiler uses the date when the law was passed or approved. The locations of places and landmarks cited in the boundary descriptions are gathered from the modern, federal base maps or from secondary publications (e.g., gazetteers, county histories, articles in historical journals), old maps, or local experts. Several steps are taken to insure the accuracy of the boundaries as they are manually plotted, and to maintain the precision of those plots as they are manually digitized. The digitizing process involves faithfully drawing the sketched counties using landmarks such as rivers, roads, and places. These positional data were obtained from ESRI's Data and Maps collection (1:100,000 scale). Additionally, Public Land Survey System data (also at 1:100,000 scale) were used to digitize boundaries in Mississippi. These PLSS data were acquired from ESRI. Once the initial digitizing is complete a master file is created and uploaded on IMS. When the digitizing is complete, the digitized polygons and their attribute data are once again checked for accuracy against the chronology for the state.

Hide Data quality report - Quantitative attribute accuracy ▲

DATA QUALITY REPORT - ABSOLUTE EXTERNAL POSITIONAL ACCURACY ►

DIMENSION horizontal

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

Accurate to matching USGS 1:500,000 scale State Base maps.

Hide Data quality report - Absolute external positional accuracy ▲

Hide Data Quality ▲

Lineage ►

PROCESS STEP ►

WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 2007-01-01

DESCRIPTION

Digitizing Historical Counties. Using the historical compiler's base map, plotting overlays, the Comprehensive Database, and associated material (e.g., notes, copies of the laws), the GIS compiler manually digitizes the historical county polygons over the digital base map. By repeating much of the process of the historical compiler, the digital compiler implicitly checks the work of the historical compiler and occasionally finds line segments that are in error and must be corrected. As digitizing proceeds, data from the Comprehensive Database are entered into the attribute table. The process of entering attribute data entails an implicit review of the database and, if the greater map detail involved in working at digitization scale (see below) is different from the original descriptions, that may lead to updates of the database, including dates and version numbers and even descriptions of changes. The compiler works "heads up," facing the monitor and using the mouse to draw lines against a background of the digital base map. The historical compiler's plots are not scanned and overlaid on the digital base map, nor does the digital compiler trace the earlier work on a digitizing tablet, because neither technique is as efficient or accurate as drawing the lines anew. One reason is that the scale for most of the historical compilations is 1:500,000 and the scale for digitization is 1:100,000. It is most unusual to draw a map at a larger scale than its source or early version, but in this case it was unavoidable because digitization did not commence until after nearly all the states had already been compiled at the smaller scale. In effect, the historical plots are a preliminary stage, and the plots from that work become the chief sources or guides (supported by the historical notes and copies of the legal descriptions, and other material) for the digital compiler who renders the final, detailed version of the boundary lines.

SOURCE DATA ►

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ►

ALTERNATE TITLES MSB1, BASE2

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ►

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB2

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

PROCESS STEP ▶
WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 2007-01-01
DESCRIPTION

Create the comprehensive Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. After digitizing the historical counties, the GIS compiler creates a shapefile known as the comprehensive Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. It holds all versions of each county, plus unsuccessful proposals for changes and new counties, thus enabling a user to acquire maps of every version of every county. After the historical and IMS master files have been created, areas are calculated for all polygons.

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB2

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB3

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

PROCESS STEP ▶
WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 2007-01-01
DESCRIPTION

Final Proofing. Compilers proof the polygons of the master shapefile against the comprehensive database. After using ArcIMS to prepare an interactive, viewable cartographic shapefile, the compiler compares the entries in the database to the entries in the attribute table and checks the IMS image for the date and county names specified in the database entry. Discrepancies in the textual material (i.e., database) can be corrected on the spot; apparent errors in the polygons are noted for later correction by the GIS compiler. Later, after the GIS compiler corrects any faults in the line work, those corrections are reviewed again by the compilers and, if all polygons and text match properly, the shapefile is posted to the Web site.

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB3

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB4

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

PROCESS STEP ▶
WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 1993-01-01
DESCRIPTION

Historical Compilation. Working directly from originals or photocopies of the verbal boundary descriptions in the laws, the historical compiler plots the boundary lines of

Historical Counties Dataset on a transparent compilation sheet laid over a base map of the state. Compilation proceeds from past to present. As each change is plotted the compiler writes a descriptive entry for the state's boundary chronology and a brief citation of the source of the information and enters it into the Comprehensive Database. (See also Supplemental_Information, Method, above.) The base map for this operation was the Mississippi map from the U.S.G.S. State Base series at the scale of 1:500,000. (The 1:1,000,000 version of the map was employed whenever smaller scale was appropriate or needed to plot large or simple changes.) The original strategy for the Atlas was to publish all states in book form before venturing to digitize the data, and the 1:500,000 scale maps were used in making the books. Before switching to all digital products and methods, about 80% of the states had been researched and compiled using this series of base maps, including 24 states published in 19 printed volumes. It was not practical to re-compile those data at a larger scale like 1:100,000. (See below, the next two process steps.)

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES Miss. Laws

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MS_BIB

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES Miss. Terr. Stat.

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB1

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

PROCESS STEP ▶
WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 2007-01-01
DESCRIPTION

Digital Base Map Creation. The GIS compiler creates a digital base map for the state (and any neighboring states that take part in its history) by editing the relevant portion of the Digital Chart of the World (DCW) supplied by ESRI in its ArcView package. This process consists chiefly in deleting elements (e.g., rivers) that are not related to the boundaries or do not serve a major reference function for potential readers and adding such other data as necessary. State Web sites commonly are the best sources for the grid of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) in states west of the Appalachian Mountains and for the networks of town boundaries in the New England states. The main component of the customized base map is the set of detailed polygons of the modern counties. The GIS compiler projects the DCW so that the working version matches the projection of the paper base map used by the historical compiler.

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES BASE1

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES BASE2

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

PROCESS STEP ▶
WHEN THE PROCESS OCCURRED 2008-20-09
DESCRIPTION

Topology Check. A multi-step process was applied to ensure that historical county polygons fit together precisely at all dates. The first step was to convert the historical county shapefile to a polygon feature class in an ESRI geodatabase. ArcMap tools were then used to planarize the polygon boundary lines in the historical county feature class, and to create polygons from these lines. This resulted in a new feature class consisting of non-overlapping component polygons. The ESRI topology functionality was applied to the component polygons to detect overlaps and gaps, and to snap vertices to the ESRI modern county polygon feature class. Based on the original historical county data, a table was created to specify, for each component polygon, the different counties to which it belonged and the time frames. The table was programmatically checked to verify that each component polygon was correctly assigned to historical counties throughout its life, with no unexpected gaps or overlaps. The component polygons were then reassembled back into the historical counties, and converted to a shapefile. The resulting historical county shapefile consists of a large number of overlapping polygons; however, as a result of the topology check process, the subset of counties in effect at any selected date is topologically correct, with no unexpected gaps or overlaps. There are a number of known gaps and overlaps, however, due to legislative or surveying errors, and to conflicting territorial claims.

SOURCE DATA ▶
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP used

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB4

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROCESS STEP produced

SOURCE CITATION ▶
ALTERNATE TITLES MSB5

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Process step ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
DESCRIPTION
"Mississippi: Bibliography and Sources," a partially annotated bibliography of textual and cartographic sources that yielded useful information in the compilation of the historical evolution of Mississippi's counties, is a separate document that is a companion to this shapefile. Items in the bibliography are not equally important, yet each one was sufficiently valuable to the research and compilation of Mississippi's historical county boundaries to merit listing. With the exception of the detailed citations above, no other sources are cited and described separately in the metadata and in the style set by the FGDC metadata standard; traditional bibliographic style is more compact and provides sufficient information for a user to find the item in any library.

SOURCE MEDIUM NAME hardcopy—printing on paper
SOURCE CITATION ▶
TITLE Mississippi Historical County Boundaries - Bibliography
ALTERNATE TITLES MS_BIB

EDITION various

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME various
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME various
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ▶
ADDRESS
DELIVERY POINT various

Hide Contact information ▲

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
DESCRIPTION
These laws are the authority for the creation and change of each county; they contain the legal, verbal descriptions of the county boundaries, the effective dates of change, and related material. The historical compilers plot the lines described in the laws, converting them from words to lines on a map.

SOURCE MEDIUM NAME hardcopy—printing on paper
SOURCE CITATION ▶
TITLE General Laws of Mississippi
ALTERNATE TITLES Miss. Laws

PRESENTATION FORMATS hardcopy document
FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT document

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Government of Mississippi
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ▶
ADDRESS
DELIVERY POINT Jackson, Miss.

Hide Contact information ▲

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Mississippi legislature
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

Hide Source citation ▲

EXTENT OF THE SOURCE DATA
DESCRIPTION
publication date

TEMPORAL EXTENT
BEGINNING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 10/1817
ENDING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 12/31/2000

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
DESCRIPTION

The compilation of this digest is often attributed to Edward Turner. These laws are the authority for the creation and change of each county; they contain the legal, verbal descriptions of the county boundaries, the effective dates of change, and related material. The historical compilers plot the lines described in the laws, converting them from words to lines on a map.

SOURCE MEDIUM NAME hardcopy—printing on paper
SOURCE CITATION ▶
TITLE Statutes of the Mississippi Territory
ALTERNATE TITLES Miss. Terr. Stat.
PUBLICATION DATE 1816-01-01

PRESENTATION FORMATS hardcopy document
FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT document

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Government of Mississippi Territory
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ▶
ADDRESS
DELIVERY POINT Natchez, Miss.

Hide Contact information ▲

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Mississippi territory legislature
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

Hide Source citation ▲

EXTENT OF THE SOURCE DATA
DESCRIPTION
publication date

TEMPORAL EXTENT
BEGINNING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 01/1799
ENDING DATE
INDETERMINATE DATE 11/1816

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ▶
DESCRIPTION
The U.S. National Atlas Public Land Survey represents the Public Land Surveys (e.g., donation lands, land grants, private and public lands) of the United States. This polygon coverage of the townships, ranges, and sections contained in the Public Land Survey System grid for the nation made it possible to map boundary lines where

boundary descriptions were based upon the PLSS or included references to some of its features. The PLSS data were acquired through ESRI.

SOURCE MEDIUM NAME CD-ROM
RESOLUTION OF THE SOURCE DATA
SCALE DENOMINATOR 0

SOURCE CITATION ►
TITLE U.S. National Atlas Public Land Survey
ALTERNATE TITLES PLSS

PRESENTATION FORMATS digital map
FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT vector digital data

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME National Atlas of the United States and the United States Geological Survey
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME ESRI
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ►
ADDRESS
DELIVERY POINT Redlands, California, USA

Hide Contact information ▲

RESOURCE LOCATION ONLINE
LOCATION http://www.esri.com

Hide Source citation ▲

Hide Source data ▲

SOURCE DATA ►
DESCRIPTION
The ESRI detailed county, msrivers, glocale, gsummit, highway, mjwater, and rail100K data were used as a modern base map, a reference for drawing historical county boundaries.

SOURCE MEDIUM NAME CD-ROM
RESOLUTION OF THE SOURCE DATA
SCALE DENOMINATOR 100

SOURCE CITATION ▶
TITLE ESRI Data Maps
ALTERNATE TITLES BASE1

EDITION 2000

PRESENTATION FORMATS digital map
FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT vector digital data

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ▶
ADDRESS
DELIVERY POINT Redlands, California, USA

Hide Contact information ▲

Hide Source citation ▲

EXTENT OF THE SOURCE DATA
DESCRIPTION
publication date

TEMPORAL EXTENT
DATE AND TIME 2000-01-01

Hide Source data ▲

Hide Lineage ▲

Distribution ▶

DISTRIBUTOR ▶
CONTACT INFORMATION
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library
CONTACT'S POSITION Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture
CONTACT'S ROLE distributor

CONTACT INFORMATION ▶
ADDRESS
TYPE both

DELIVERY POINT 60 W. Walton Street
CITY Chicago
ADMINISTRATIVE AREA Illinois
POSTAL CODE 60610
COUNTRY US
E-MAIL ADDRESS scholl@newberry.org

HOURS OF SERVICE
8:00 am - 5:00 pm, M-F, CT

Hide Contact information ▲

AVAILABLE FORMAT
NAME SHP
FILE DECOMPRESSION TECHNIQUE Zipped file.
TECHNICAL PREREQUISITES To use this data requires software that supports ESRI GIS shapefiles.

ORDERING PROCESS
DATE OF AVAILABILITY

TRANSFER OPTIONS
TRANSFER SIZE 10.637

ONLINE SOURCE
LOCATION http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp

TRANSFER OPTIONS
ONLINE SOURCE
DESCRIPTION Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile

Hide Distributor ▲

DISTRIBUTION FORMAT
* NAME Shapefile

TRANSFER OPTIONS
* TRANSFER SIZE 10.637

ONLINE SOURCE
LOCATION http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp

Hide Distribution ▲

Fields ►

DETAILS FOR OBJECT MS_Historical_Counties ►
* TYPE Feature Class
* ROW COUNT 487
DEFINITION
county and county equivalents

DEFINITION SOURCE
Miss. Laws

FIELD FID ►

* ALIAS FID
* DATA TYPE OID
* WIDTH 4
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

Internal feature number. The FID number is the unique identifier (a primary key in database terms) for each polygon within a shapefile; its application is limited to its single shapefile.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

ESRI

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

Sequential unique whole numbers that are automatically generated.

Hide Field FID ▲

FIELD Shape ►

* ALIAS Shape
* DATA TYPE Geometry
* WIDTH 0
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

Feature geometry.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

ESRI

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

Coordinates defining the features.

Hide Field Shape ▲

FIELD NAME ►

* ALIAS NAME
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 20
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

name or other identification of county or equivalent, limited to 20 characters

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field NAME ▲

FIELD ID ►
* ALIAS ID
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 50
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
Whereas the FID numbers (see above) uniquely identify the different polygons in a single state's shapefile, the ID code identifies unique geographical institutions, i.e., states, counties, and other administrative entities. The ID code is stable across datasets (state shapefiles); it does not change when there is a change in the county's name, shape, size, location, or parent state or equivalent. Each county's unique identifier is set in terms of its current or most recent state affiliation. Hence, "MES_York" is the identifier for modern York County, Maine, and all its earlier versions, even though it was created as part of colonial Massachusetts and is represented by polygons in the shapefiles of both Massachusetts and Maine.

Because the FIPS system (see below) provides no codes for some extinct counties, no codes for non-county areas, and no codes for the colonies and territories that were predecessors of the states, it has been necessary to create a more comprehensive, alternative system of identifiers. The system adopted by the Atlas identifies each state and colony or territory with three letters, the first two based on the system of two-letter codes employed by the U.S. Post Office and the third indicating the status of the organization. (In most cases that is simply a C for colony, a T for territory, or an S for state.) For example, IAT stands for Iowa Territory and IAS for the state of Iowa. Some precursors of states need special ID codes, most of which are intuitively easy to read and to apply, especially in the context of a particular state's dataset. Examples are NWT (Northwest Territory, formally named Territory Northwest of the River Ohio), SWF (Spanish West Florida), FRS (State of Franklin), DKT (Dakota Territory), CRC (Colony of Carolina), and TXR (Republic of Texas).

Counties are identified by appending their names to the state codes, as in "KYS_Adair" for Adair County in the state of Kentucky. Non-county areas are abbreviated NCA; within a specific state they are differentiated from each other by adding a numeral to the abbreviation, as in "MOS_NCA1" for non-county area number 1 in the state of Missouri. Occasionally special codes are needed to deal with unusual historical situations, as in Vermont where the original Washington County, identified as "VTS_Washington01," became extinct and later the name was applied to another county ("VTS_Washington") that continues today. The county identifiers also have been created with an eye towards users who may wish to download and work with more than one state file for regions and want a comprehensive way to sort and select shapefiles or to link the attribute table to the comprehensive database.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
project standards

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field ID ▲

FIELD STATE ►
* ALIAS STATE
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 20
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
name of the county's current or most recent state affiliation.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field STATE ▲

FIELD FIPS ►
* ALIAS FIPS
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 5
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
FIPS codes are provided for the convenience of researchers working with data that has already been labeled with numbers from that coding system. FIPS is the abbreviation of Federal Information Processing Standard. FIPS codes were created in the first half of the twentieth century and are meant to facilitate efficiency and clarity in data handling. The system provides a two-digit code for each state or equivalent and a three-digit code for each county or equivalent. (Sometimes those codes are combined into five-digit numbers that start with the two digits for the state, as in this attribute table). The FIPS codes for states and counties in existence at the end of 2000 were taken from the federal government's FIPS PUB 6-4 (created 1996, last modified 10 May 2002), and the codes for extinct counties were taken from earlier lists. Some counties or other administrative entities may have no FIPS codes. In some cases they represent historical counties that became extinct before the introduction of FIPS codes; in other cases they represent temporary non-county areas. In the attribute table the FIPS field for those areas and extinct counties has been left blank because there is no standard system for pre-FIPS colonies, territories, and counties and no coding system includes non-county areas. Of course, users may supply a FIPS substitute of their own

creation or, for extinct early counties, adopt an existing, alternative coding scheme, such as the one employed by Richard L. Forstall in his compilation, "Population of States and Counties of the United States: 1790-1990" (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). In addition, as described above under Attribute Label: ID, the Atlas developed a parallel system of non-FIPS Identifiers to encode all states, counties, and equivalents; it is more flexible and working with it is easier than using the FIPS codes.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
FIPS PUB 6-4

CODED VALUES
NAME OF CODELIST Federal Information Processing Standards
SOURCE FIPS PUB 6-4

Hide Field FIPS ▲

FIELD VERSION ►
* ALIAS VERSION
* DATA TYPE SmallInteger
* WIDTH 4
* PRECISION 4
* SCALE 0
FIELD DESCRIPTION
sequential and chronological change in county name or configuration

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
compiler

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field VERSION ▲

FIELD START_DATE ►
* ALIAS START_DATE
* DATA TYPE Date
* WIDTH 8
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0
FIELD DESCRIPTION
first date for a particular county version or event, arranged as mm/dd/yyyy

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

RANGE OF VALUES
MINIMUM VALUE 17850207
MAXIMUM VALUE 20001231

BEGINNING DATE OF VALUES 02/07/1785

ENDING DATE OF VALUES 03/14/1934

Hide Field START_DATE ▲

FIELD END_DATE ►
* ALIAS END_DATE
* DATA TYPE Date
* WIDTH 8
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0
FIELD DESCRIPTION
last date for a particular county version or event, arranged as mm/dd/yyyy

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

RANGE OF VALUES
MINIMUM VALUE 17880131
MAXIMUM VALUE 20001231

BEGINNING DATE OF VALUES 01/31/1788
ENDING DATE OF VALUES 12/31/2000

Hide Field END_DATE ▲

FIELD CHANGE ►
* ALIAS CHANGE
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 254
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0
FIELD DESCRIPTION
creation, change, or other event for each county on the given date

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws, compiler

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field CHANGE ▲

FIELD CITATION ►
* ALIAS CITATION
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 254
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
reference to the source of data for the event described under CHANGE

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws, any other texts, maps, or interviews employed to gather data

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES
character field

Hide Field CITATION ▲

FIELD START_N ►
* ALIAS START_N
* DATA TYPE Integer
* WIDTH 9
* PRECISION 9
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
first date for a particular county version or event, arranged in the standard date format yyyymmdd

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

RANGE OF VALUES
MINIMUM VALUE 17850207
MAXIMUM VALUE 19340314

Hide Field START_N ▲

FIELD END_N ►
* ALIAS END_N
* DATA TYPE Integer
* WIDTH 9
* PRECISION 9
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION
lsat date for a particular county version or event, arranged in the standard date format yyyymmdd

DESCRIPTION SOURCE
colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

RANGE OF VALUES
MINIMUM VALUE 17880131
MAXIMUM VALUE 20001231

Hide Field END_N ▲

FIELD AREA_SQMI ►

* ALIAS AREA_SQMI
* DATA TYPE Double
* WIDTH 19
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

area of a county or equivalent in square miles, calculated from polygon by means of ArcMap facility

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

compiler

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

numeric field

Hide Field AREA_SQMI ▲

FIELD DATASET ►

* ALIAS DATASET
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 25
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

The dataset field identifies the topical focus of the master shapefile. For every state the subject matter consists of all events affecting state and county jurisdiction within the borders of the modern state, regardless of the enabling authority, plus similar events involving the state outside its modern bounds, regardless of where or when. For example, polygons for Virginia's earliest western counties appear in the dataset for Kentucky because they represent part of the history of the area that became Kentucky; they also are included in the Virginia dataset because they are integral to the early history of Virginia, even though Virginia long ago ceded its authority over the area. In general, therefore, the dataset encompasses more data than a state, concentrating on one state (the principal point of focus) but possibly embracing data from one or more related, secondary states.

Historically, almost every colony and territory transformed smoothly into statehood with no complications that might have required separate datasets for the state and its predecessors. The exception is Dakota Territory, which has its own dataset, and which split into a pair of states.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

Project standards

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

character field

Hide Field DATASET ▲

FIELD CNTY_TYPE ►
* ALIAS CNTY_TYPE
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 25
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

This field classifies each county and equivalent into one of several categories: (1) District; judicial districts, a county equivalent which at one time served as a basic unit of government in South Carolina, (2) Parish; a county equivalent which at one time served as a basic unit of government in South Carolina, and which is currently the primary unit of government in Louisiana, (3) Jefferson_Territory; an extralegal territory, never recognized by the United States, that included all of present Colorado and parts of present Nebraska, Wyoming, and Utah, (4) Proposal; proposed counties which never became operational, (5) County; all remaining counties and county equivalents included in this dataset.

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

Project standards

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

character field

Hide Field CNTY_TYPE ▲

FIELD FULL_NAME ►
* ALIAS FULL_NAME
* DATA TYPE String
* WIDTH 50
* PRECISION 0
* SCALE 0

FIELD DESCRIPTION

name or other identification of county or equivalent

DESCRIPTION SOURCE

colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

character field

Hide Field FULL_NAME ▲

Hide Details for object MS_Historical_Counties ▲

Hide Fields ▲

References ►

AGGREGATE INFORMATION
ASSOCIATION TYPE cross reference

AGGREGATE RESOURCE NAME ►
TITLE Atlas of Historical County Boundaries

FGDC GEOSPATIAL PRESENTATION FORMAT book and vector digital data

OTHER CITATION DETAILS
19 book vols. (1993-2000), online publication (2000-present)

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Peter Siczewicz, GIS Consultant
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Laura Rico-Beck, GIS Specialist, GIS Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME John H. Long, Editor, Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Gordon DenBoer, Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Robert Will, Cartographic Assistant
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME George E. Goodridge, Jr., Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME John Ford, Cartographic Assistant
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Emily Kelley, Historical Compiler, GIS Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
CONTACT'S ROLE publisher

CONTACT INFORMATION ►
ADDRESS

DELIVERY POINT New York

Hide Contact information ▲

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Douglas Knox, Book Digitizing Director, GIS Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Peggy Tuck Sinko, Assoc. Editor, Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

RESPONSIBLE PARTY
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Kathryn Ford Thorne, Historical Compiler
CONTACT'S ROLE originator

Hide Aggregate resource name ▲

Hide References ▲

Metadata Details ►

METADATA LANGUAGE English (UNITED STATES)
METADATA CHARACTER SET utf8 - 8 bit UCS Transfer Format

SCOPE OF THE DATA DESCRIBED BY THE METADATA dataset
SCOPE NAME * dataset

* LAST UPDATE 2019-02-14

ARCGIS METADATA PROPERTIES
METADATA FORMAT ArcGIS 1.0

CREATED IN ARCGIS FOR THE ITEM 2009-10-01 14:19:04
LAST MODIFIED IN ARCGIS FOR THE ITEM 2019-02-14 10:53:12

AUTOMATIC UPDATES
HAVE BEEN PERFORMED Yes
LAST UPDATE 2019-02-14 10:53:12

Hide Metadata Details ▲

Metadata Contacts ►

METADATA CONTACT
ORGANIZATION'S NAME Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library
CONTACT'S POSITION Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture
CONTACT'S ROLE point of contact

CONTACT INFORMATION ►

ADDRESS
TYPE both
DELIVERY POINT 60 W. Walton Street
CITY Chicago
ADMINISTRATIVE AREA Illinois
POSTAL CODE 60610
COUNTRY US
E-MAIL ADDRESS scholl@newberry.org

HOURS OF SERVICE
8:00 am - 5:00 pm, M-F, CT

Hide Contact information ▲

Hide Metadata Contacts ▲

Thumbnail and Enclosures ►

THUMBNAIL
THUMBNAIL TYPE JPG

ENCLOSURE
ENCLOSURE TYPE File
DESCRIPTION OF ENCLOSURE original metadata
ORIGINAL METADATA DOCUMENT, WHICH WAS TRANSLATED yes
SOURCE METADATA FORMAT fgdc

Hide Thumbnail and Enclosures ▲

FGDC Metadata (read-only) ▼

CITATION
CITATION INFORMATION
ORIGINATOR Peggy Tuck Sinko, Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR Laura Rico-Beck, Digital Compiler
ORIGINATOR John H. Long, Editor, Atlas of Historical County Boundaries
PUBLICATION DATE 2/12/2010
TITLE
Mississippi_Historical_Counties_Dataset
GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM vector digital data
SERIES INFORMATION
SERIES NAME Atlas of Historical County Boundaries-Digital (Shapefiles)
ONLINE LINKAGE http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp

DESCRIPTION
ABSTRACT

This document serves as the metadata for the Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile for use in a geographic information system (GIS). That file may be downloaded without charge from this Web site (http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp); see also Distribution_Information, below. In addition, an interactive map of Mississippi's Historical Counties Dataset is available for operation and viewing through the Web site by means of ArcIMS, a program produced by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). ArcIMS draws its boundary data for the interactive map from the Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. The interactive map is projected

while the downloadable shapefile is not. Here are descriptions of the sources and methods used to gather and process the information that appears in the shapefile and in the interactive map so that users can evaluate the quality and utility of the data.

The comprehensive Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile holds the polygons, metadata, and attribute data for every different configuration of every county or county equivalent in Mississippi, dated to the day, from 7 February 1785 through 31 December 2000. The Historical Counties Dataset, together with a number of supplementary cartographic data files and text files, enable users easily to employ a geographic information system for the analysis and display of county-related historical data.

First among the non-cartographic data files is the Mississippi Comprehensive Database (a tab-delimited text file that can be imported into a database or spreadsheet program), which provides descriptions of all known changes in state and county boundaries, changes in county organization and attachments, and changes in status and name, together with citations to the sources. These data include unmappable boundary changes, which usually means changes too small to plot as polygons at compilation scale, changes whose shapes could not be plotted at compilation scale (e.g., shift of a boundary line from the centerline of a road to one shoulder or the other), and changes that could not be mapped for other reasons (e.g., the location of the change could not be determined). In the Comprehensive Database, there is a separate entry for each county involved in each event. That facilitates assembling all the events pertaining to a single county.

In addition to the Comprehensive Database, there are five supplemental texts. These are: (1) a comprehensive County Index (includes proposed and extinct counties and non-county areas and provides cross references for name changes, with hyperlinks to corresponding individual county chronologies), (2) a Consolidated Chronology that organizes all the data by date, combining all the counties involved in an event into a single, composite entry, (3) a set of Individual County Chronologies, each one covering all the changes in a single county or equivalent, (4) a Bibliography that lists the primary and secondary sources found useful in the historical research, and (5) a Commentary on the research problems and materials that were remarkable or unusual in the process of historical compilation (Not every state requires a commentary.). A "Read Me" file introduces all these files and indicates how to get started with them.

PURPOSE

The Atlas is meant to be a resource for people (a) seeking records of past events, (b) trying to analyze, interpret, and display county-based historical data like returns of elections and censuses, and (c) working on state and local history. The special interests of those potential users range from history to demography, economics, genealogy, geography, law, and politics.

Counties and their equivalents (e.g., parishes in Louisiana and independent cities in four other states) cover all the territory of the United States, function as repositories of valuable records, and long have been used as the geographic base units for the gathering of essential social, political, and economic data. The authority to create, change, or eliminate counties and to specify their functions lies with the states and their predecessors. In detail, the role of counties varies from state to state, but in every state they administer the judicial system and provide a great number of services. In the process, counties collect and preserve large quantities of information. For example: records of marriages, births, and deaths; probated wills; militia training; real-estate transfers; tax collections; welfare benefits; school programs; voter registrations; etc. Outside densely populated cities, counties have served as colonial, territorial, and state legislative districts and as the building blocks of congressional

districts. In the nineteenth century they became the grassroots centers for the development of political parties. Moreover, counties have been the principal geographic units for the collection and aggregation of data from colonial/territorial, state, and federal censuses.

Unfortunately for researchers, the average county has changed size, shape, or location between four and five times. Therefore, knowing the present county of the place where a past event occurred may not be sufficient to find its official records. If county boundaries changed in the meantime, it is necessary to learn what county had jurisdiction at the time of the event to identify the courthouse where the record is stored today. If the reported population of a county changed from one census to another, was that because of an increase or a decrease in the number of people, or an annexation or loss of populated territory, or a combination of both? Trying to analyze county-based historical data without controlling for boundary changes is almost certain to yield errors and lead to false conclusions.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Method: Historical compilers plot county boundary changes in chronological order. Working directly from originals or photocopies of the verbal boundary descriptions in the state session laws, the ultimate authoritative source, the researcher plots the lines on a transparent compilation sheet laid over a modern base map of the state. As each change is plotted, the compiler writes a descriptive entry for the state's boundary chronology and a brief citation of the source of the information. The compiler creates the Comprehensive Database from this information.

Plotting boundary changes of all counties together and in sequence, not merely reconstructing the counties at different points in time (e.g., dates of censuses) or concentrating on a single county at a time (thereby taking it out of the context of what happened to its neighbors), is an important aspect of the historical compilation process. Doing so gives the compiler valuable insight into how the counties developed and whether the intentions of legislators were realized in their enactments. For example, a law may say its purpose is to transfer territory from County A to County B, but the actual effect, visibly evident from the plot, may be to transfer territory from both A and C to B. When boundaries are plotted this way, gores (gaps between counties) and overlaps created accidentally by the legislature are readily apparent, and errors in plotting are discovered almost immediately. It is nearly impossible to detect such developments unless the counties are plotted together. Descriptive entries in the comprehensive database and in the chronologies reflect actual changes because they are written from the compilation plots, not from the laws alone or from secondary works.

One additional benefit of this approach is that it provides an automatic checking mechanism. When the historical compiler reaches the end of the development of the county network, the final version should be identical with the boundaries of the present county. If there is a difference between the completed compilation and the standard, current map, the compiler knows there is a mistake somewhere. Such a discrepancy is rare, but when one is discovered, the compiler reviews the compilation to find the source of the problem. Usually it is a matter of the compiler erring in the plot of a boundary or accidentally omitting some change, either of which can easily be corrected, but occasionally the fault is found on the current, federal map. When the error appears on the federal map, the boundary is plotted accurately and a brief explanation of the difference is added to the supplemental Commentary.

Problematic Data. Every so often, a state's law makers mistakenly overlapped the lines of two or more counties. Once such an overlap was detected, it seldom lasted long because dual jurisdictions generate only trouble, and states acted swiftly to

eliminate them. This atlas treats areas of overlapping jurisdiction as distinct polygons and provides the usual data (e.g., start dates and end dates) for each one.

Much more common than overlaps are non-county areas, that is, areas not within the jurisdiction of any county. Sometimes legal boundary descriptions left small areas, known as gores, outside the bounds of any county. Such inadvertent omissions errors most often occurred in the early days of a state's history when boundary makers lacked knowledge of the state's topography. Sometimes, legislators purposely did not extend county jurisdiction over all of their state's territory as early as possible, but waited until they had a better understanding of the lay of the land and until the prospect of European settlement was closer. Under those circumstances, they often provided a minimum of legal and administrative services for each non-county area by formally attaching it to a fully operational county; later, when the area was ready for settlement or was already under development, the state created one or more counties from the non-county area.

This atlas aims to be absolutely comprehensive and, with a few exceptions (see next paragraph), to leave no "holes" in its historical and geographic coverage of a state. In practice, each state compilation includes all the territory within its bounds in 2000, regardless of what authority created or altered a county there, plus all other territory that may have been within the state's jurisdiction at an earlier time. Also, there are no empty spaces, no areas outside a named polygon. Each non-county area, whether an accidental gore or a region purposely set aside for future settlement, is represented by a polygon, the polygon is named (often merely as a non-county area with a number, such as NCA1), and a full set of data about it is entered in the database and the attribute file.

The exceptions to the "no-holes" policy described above are the large non-county areas in western Virginia, New York, and the New England states during much of the seventeenth century. In London and the other European capitals, officials had access to so little accurate information about inland territory that imperial claims and land grants, including colonial charters, often were incomplete or imprecise or asserted limits (e.g., the Pacific Ocean or "South Sea") that were so extreme as to be impractical to plot. Compilers treated those large, indefinitely bounded, and inadequately described, non-county areas as empty territory and made no attempt to represent them as coherent, historically complete polygons. Because the ArcGIS program requires that all polygons be closed, the compilers supplied estimated boundary lines to close polygons representing indefinitely extensive frontier counties and noted their action in the "Change" field.

Some changes have not been mapped because the change is too small to map, or the location is unknown, or both; for example, a law that transferred ten acres belonging to farmer Smith from one county to another would be unmappable because the parcel is too small to be mapped at the standard compilation scale or because the location of Smith's farm cannot be discovered. When the location of a change too small to map is known, the historical compiler marks the location and the digital compiler digitizes it as a point. All such tiny changes are collected in a separate shapefile, usually labeled [YEAR]_pt.shp.

Using the historical compiler's plotting overlays and associated material (e.g., notes, copies of the laws), the GIS compiler draws the counties in digital form. For digitizing, the program is ArcGIS 9.1, and the electronic modern "base map" is from the Digital Chart of the World (DCW) provided with ArcGIS by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), plus, as needed, such other data (often from another source) as the grid of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS). By repeating much of the procedure of the historical compiler, the digital compiler implicitly checks the work of her

predecessor and occasionally finds line segments that must be corrected. As digitizing proceeds, data from the comprehensive database are entered into the attribute table.

After perfecting the boundary lines, the GIS digitizer assembles copies of all county polygons and attribute data into a single shapefile, the Historical Counties Dataset shapefile.

Time Period of Content
Time Period Information
Range of Dates/Times
Beginning Date 02/07/1785
Ending Date 12/31/2000
Currentness Reference
publication date
Status
Progress Complete
Maintenance and Update Frequency As needed

Spatial Domain
Bounding Coordinates
West Bounding Coordinate -91.662506
East Bounding Coordinate -84.888247
North Bounding Coordinate 35.008029
South Bounding Coordinate 30.149892

Keywords
Theme
Theme Keyword Thesaurus none
Theme Keyword historical county boundaries

Place
Place Keyword Thesaurus none
Place Keyword Mississippi

Temporal
Temporal Keyword Thesaurus none
Temporal Keyword 7 February 1785 to 31 December 2000

Access Constraints
Free access for use under an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike Creative Commons License
Use Constraints
Free for use under an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike Creative Commons License
Point of Contact
Contact Information
Contact Organization Primary
Contact Organization Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library
Contact Position Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture
Contact Address
Address Type mailing and physical address
Address 60 W. Walton Street
City Chicago
State or Province Illinois
Postal Code 60610
Country UNITED STATES

CONTACT ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESS scholl@newberry.org
HOURS OF SERVICE 8:00 am - 5:00 pm M-F, CT

DATA SET CREDIT

Principal financial support for the project was provided by the Reference Materials Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency; additional support came from the Newberry Library, Chicago, the project's headquarters, and from a number of corporations, foundations, and individuals.

SECURITY INFORMATION

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM none
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified
SECURITY HANDLING DESCRIPTION none

NATIVE DATA SET ENVIRONMENT

Microsoft Windows 2000 Version 5.0 (Build 2195) Service Pack 4; ESRI ArcCatalog 9.1.0.780

CROSS REFERENCE

CITATION INFORMATION

ORIGINATOR John H. Long, Editor, Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR Peggy Tuck Sinko, Assoc. Editor, Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR Douglas Knox, Book Digitizing Director, GIS Compiler
ORIGINATOR Gordon DenBoer, Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR Kathryn Ford Thorne, Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR George E. Goodridge, Jr., Historical Compiler
ORIGINATOR Emily Kelley, Historical Compiler, GIS Compiler
ORIGINATOR Laura Rico-Beck, GIS Specialist, GIS Compiler
ORIGINATOR Peter Siczewicz, GIS Consultant
ORIGINATOR Robert Will, Cartographic Assistant
ORIGINATOR John Ford, Cartographic Assistant
PUBLICATION DATE various
TITLE

Atlas of Historical County Boundaries

GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM book and vector digital data

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

PUBLICATION PLACE New York
PUBLISHER Simon and Schuster
PUBLISHER Charles Scribner's Sons

OTHER CITATION DETAILS

19 book vols. (1993-2000), online publication (2000-present)

Hide Identification ▲

ATTRIBUTE ACCURACY
ATTRIBUTE ACCURACY REPORT

The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries Project aims to achieve high accuracy through the use of the most authoritative and reliable sources, analysis of those sources by tested procedures, and careful proofreading of the results. Because counties are created and changed by their states, the state session laws are the primary, authoritative sources for the county lines, names, organization, and attachments. The initial plots of the boundaries are direct conversions of the legal boundary descriptions in the laws into linework on the plotting sheets. They are performed with copies of the legal descriptions at hand, and those same laws also are at hand for the GIS compiler when digitizing boundaries. All other sources, including old maps, are derived from those legal descriptions. The historical compiler searches the state session laws and, when necessary, related material (e.g., court decisions,

executive proclamations) for information about the courses of the boundaries. Secondary texts, maps, and local experts are consulted as needed (e.g., when recovering a long-lost landmark that figured in an early boundary description). Dates of changes are also taken from the laws. Some laws specify when the change will go into effect, but others (mostly those passed before the twentieth century) do not; if no official effective date is provided, the historical compiler uses the date when the law was passed or approved.

The locations of places and landmarks cited in the boundary descriptions are gathered from the modern, federal base maps or from secondary publications (e.g., gazetteers, county histories, articles in historical journals), old maps, or local experts.

Several steps are taken to insure the accuracy of the boundaries as they are manually plotted, and to maintain the precision of those plots as they are manually digitized. The digitizing process involves faithfully drawing the sketched counties using landmarks such as rivers, roads, and places. These positional data were obtained from ESRI's Data and Maps collection (1:100,000 scale). Additionally, Public Land Survey System data (also at 1:100,000 scale) were used to digitize boundaries in Mississippi. These PLSS data were acquired from ESRI. Once the initial digitizing is complete a master file is created and uploaded on IMS. When the digitizing is complete, the digitized polygons and their attribute data are once again checked for accuracy against the chronology for the state.

COMPLETENESS REPORT

The data set is complete. All changes are dated to the day. If there is a difference between the effective date of change and the date when a law was passed, the effective date of change is used. Boundary changes too small to map are included in the chronologies and in the Comprehensive Database. As a rule, boundary changes occurring entirely on water were not mapped. Exceptions to this rule might include county boundaries which run through large inland water bodies like Lake Okeechobee, Lake Pontchartrain, Great Salt Lake, etc.

No regular or systematic updating of the pre-2001 data is anticipated because (a) the historical data cannot change and (b) the compilers believe their methods and materials are sufficient to produce data that are complete and correct. (That is not to say no error can slip through. Suggestions for ad hoc changes or additions to the historical data, together with an explanation of why the change should be made and supporting evidence, should be directed to scholl@newberry.org or Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610.) County boundary changes that occur after 31 December 2000 will routinely be digitized by both the state of Mississippi and the federal government and, therefore, will be available from agencies of those governments in separate files in the indefinite future.

POSITIONAL ACCURACY

HORIZONTAL POSITIONAL ACCURACY

HORIZONTAL POSITIONAL ACCURACY REPORT

Accurate to matching USGS 1:500,000 scale State Base maps.

LINEAGE

SOURCE INFORMATION

SOURCE CITATION

CITATION INFORMATION

ORIGINATOR Mississippi territory legislature

PUBLICATION DATE 1816

TITLE

Statutes of the Mississippi Territory

GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM document

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

PUBLICATION PLACE Natchez, Miss.
PUBLISHER Government of Mississippi Territory

TYPE OF SOURCE MEDIA paper
SOURCE TIME PERIOD OF CONTENT
TIME PERIOD INFORMATION
RANGE OF DATES/TIMES
BEGINNING DATE 01/1799
ENDING DATE 11/1816
SOURCE CURRENTNESS REFERENCE
publication date
SOURCE CITATION ABBREVIATION
Miss. Terr. Stat.
SOURCE CONTRIBUTION
The compilation of this digest is often attributed to Edward Turner. These laws are the authority for the creation and change of each county; they contain the legal, verbal descriptions of the county boundaries, the effective dates of change, and related material. The historical compilers plot the lines described in the laws, converting them from words to lines on a map.
SOURCE INFORMATION
SOURCE CITATION
CITATION INFORMATION
ORIGINATOR Mississippi legislature
PUBLICATION DATE 1817 to 2000
TITLE
General Laws of Mississippi
GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM document
PUBLICATION INFORMATION
PUBLICATION PLACE Jackson, Miss.
PUBLISHER Government of Mississippi

SOURCE SCALE DENOMINATOR
TYPE OF SOURCE MEDIA paper
SOURCE TIME PERIOD OF CONTENT
TIME PERIOD INFORMATION
RANGE OF DATES/TIMES
BEGINNING DATE 10/1817
ENDING DATE 12/31/2000
SOURCE CURRENTNESS REFERENCE
publication date
SOURCE CITATION ABBREVIATION
Miss. Laws
SOURCE CONTRIBUTION
These laws are the authority for the creation and change of each county; they contain the legal, verbal descriptions of the county boundaries, the effective dates of change, and related material. The historical compilers plot the lines described in the laws, converting them from words to lines on a map.
SOURCE INFORMATION
SOURCE CITATION
CITATION INFORMATION
ORIGINATOR Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)
PUBLICATION DATE 11/01/2000
TITLE
ESRI Data Maps
EDITION 2000
GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM vector digital data
PUBLICATION INFORMATION
PUBLICATION PLACE Redlands, California, USA

PUBLISHER Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)

SOURCE SCALE DENOMINATOR 100,000
TYPE OF SOURCE MEDIA CD-ROM
SOURCE TIME PERIOD OF CONTENT
TIME PERIOD INFORMATION
SINGLE DATE/TIME
CALENDAR DATE 2000
SOURCE CURRENTNESS REFERENCE
publication date
SOURCE CITATION ABBREVIATION
BASE1
SOURCE CONTRIBUTION
The ESRI detailed county, msrivers, glocale, gsummit, highway, mjwater, and rail100K data were used as a modern base map, a reference for drawing historical county boundaries.
SOURCE INFORMATION
SOURCE CITATION
CITATION INFORMATION
ORIGINATOR National Atlas of the United States and the United States Geological Survey
PUBLICATION DATE 12/01/2002
TITLE
U.S. National Atlas Public Land Survey
GEOSPATIAL DATA PRESENTATION FORM vector digital data
PUBLICATION INFORMATION
PUBLICATION PLACE Redlands, California, USA
PUBLISHER ESRI
ONLINE LINKAGE http://www.esri.com

SOURCE SCALE DENOMINATOR 1,000,000
TYPE OF SOURCE MEDIA CD-ROM
SOURCE CITATION ABBREVIATION
PLSS
SOURCE CONTRIBUTION
The U.S. National Atlas Public Land Survey represents the Public Land Surveys (e.g., donation lands, land grants, private and public lands) of the United States. This polygon coverage of the townships, ranges, and sections contained in the Public Land Survey System grid for the nation made it possible to map boundary lines where boundary descriptions were based upon the PLSS or included references to some of its features. The PLSS data were acquired through ESRI.
SOURCE INFORMATION
SOURCE CITATION
CITATION INFORMATION
ORIGINATOR various
PUBLICATION DATE various
PUBLICATION TIME various
TITLE
Mississippi Historical County Boundaries - Bibliography
EDITION various
PUBLICATION INFORMATION
PUBLICATION PLACE various
PUBLISHER various

SOURCE SCALE DENOMINATOR
TYPE OF SOURCE MEDIA paper, internet
SOURCE CITATION ABBREVIATION
MS_BIB

SOURCE CONTRIBUTION
"Mississippi: Bibliography and Sources," a partially annotated bibliography of textual and cartographic sources that yielded useful information in the compilation of the historical evolution of Mississippi's counties, is a separate document that is a companion to this shapefile. Items in the bibliography are not equally important, yet each one was sufficiently valuable to the research and compilation of Mississippi's historical county boundaries to merit listing. With the exception of the detailed citations above, no other sources are cited and described separately in the metadata and in the style set by the FGDC metadata standard; traditional bibliographic style is more compact and provides sufficient information for a user to find the item in any library.

PROCESS STEP
PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Historical Compilation. Working directly from originals or photocopies of the verbal boundary descriptions in the laws, the historical compiler plots the boundary lines of Historical Counties Dataset on a transparent compilation sheet laid over a base map of the state. Compilation proceeds from past to present. As each change is plotted the compiler writes a descriptive entry for the state's boundary chronology and a brief citation of the source of the information and enters it into the Comprehensive Database. (See also Supplemental_Information, Method, above.)

The base map for this operation was the Mississippi map from the U.S.G.S. State Base series at the scale of 1:500,000. (The 1:1,000,000 version of the map was employed whenever smaller scale was appropriate or needed to plot large or simple changes.) The original strategy for the Atlas was to publish all states in book form before venturing to digitize the data, and the 1:500,000 scale maps were used in making the books. Before switching to all digital products and methods, about 80% of the states had been researched and compiled using this series of base maps, including 24 states published in 19 printed volumes. It was not practical to re-compile those data at a larger scale like 1:100,000. (See below, the next two process steps.)

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
Miss. Terr. Stat.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
Miss. Laws

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MS_BIB

PROCESS DATE 1993
SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB1

PROCESS STEP
PROCESS DESCRIPTION
Digital Base Map Creation. The GIS compiler creates a digital base map for the state (and any neighboring states that take part in its history) by editing the relevant portion of the Digital Chart of the World (DCW) supplied by ESRI in its ArcView package. This process consists chiefly in deleting elements (e.g., rivers) that are not related to the boundaries or do not serve a major reference function for potential readers and adding such other data as necessary. State Web sites commonly are the best sources for the grid of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) in states west of the Appalachian Mountains and for the networks of town boundaries in the New England states. The main component of the customized base map is the set of detailed polygons of the modern counties. The GIS compiler projects the DCW so that the working version matches the projection of the paper base map used by the historical compiler.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
BASE1

PROCESS DATE 2007

SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
BASE2

PROCESS STEP
PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Digitizing Historical Counties. Using the historical compiler's base map, plotting overlays, the Comprehensive Database, and associated material (e.g., notes, copies of the laws), the GIS compiler manually digitizes the historical county polygons over the digital base map. By repeating much of the process of the historical compiler, the digital compiler implicitly checks the work of the historical compiler and occasionally finds line segments that are in error and must be corrected.

As digitizing proceeds, data from the Comprehensive Database are entered into the attribute table. The process of entering attribute data entails an implicit review of the database and, if the greater map detail involved in working at digitization scale (see below) is different from the original descriptions, that may lead to updates of the database, including dates and version numbers and even descriptions of changes.

The compiler works "heads up," facing the monitor and using the mouse to draw lines against a background of the digital base map. The historical compiler's plots are not scanned and overlaid on the digital base map, nor does the digital compiler trace the earlier work on a digitizing tablet, because neither technique is as efficient or accurate as drawing the lines anew. One reason is that the scale for most of the historical compilations is 1:500,000 and the scale for digitization is 1:100,000. It is most unusual to draw a map at a larger scale than its source or early version, but in this case it was unavoidable because digitization did not commence until after nearly all the states had already been compiled at the smaller scale. In effect, the historical plots are a preliminary stage, and the plots from that work become the chief sources or guides (supported by the historical notes and copies of the legal descriptions, and other material) for the digital compiler who renders the final, detailed version of the boundary lines.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB1, BASE2
PROCESS DATE 2007
SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB2

PROCESS STEP
PROCESS DESCRIPTION
Create the comprehensive Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. After digitizing the historical counties, the GIS compiler creates a shapefile known as the comprehensive Historical Counties Dataset shapefile. It holds all versions of each county, plus unsuccessful proposals for changes and new counties, thus enabling a user to acquire maps of every version of every county. After the historical and IMS master files have been created, areas are calculated for all polygons.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB2
PROCESS DATE 2007
SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB3

PROCESS STEP
PROCESS DESCRIPTION
Final Proofing. Compilers proof the polygons of the master shapefile against the comprehensive database. After using ArcIMS to prepare an interactive, viewable cartographic shapefile, the compiler compares the entries in the database to the

entries in the attribute table and checks the IMS image for the date and county names specified in the database entry. Discrepancies in the textual material (i.e., database) can be corrected on the spot; apparent errors in the polygons are noted for later correction by the GIS compiler. Later, after the GIS compiler corrects any faults in the line work, those corrections are reviewed again by the compilers and, if all polygons and text match properly, the shapefile is posted to the Web site.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB3

PROCESS DATE 2007

SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB4

PROCESS STEP

PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Topology Check. A multi-step process was applied to ensure that historical county polygons fit together precisely at all dates. The first step was to convert the historical county shapefile to a polygon feature class in an ESRI geodatabase. ArcMap tools were then used to planarize the polygon boundary lines in the historical county feature class, and to create polygons from these lines. This resulted in a new feature class consisting of non-overlapping component polygons. The ESRI topology functionality was applied to the component polygons to detect overlaps and gaps, and to snap vertices to the ESRI modern county polygon feature class.

Based on the original historical county data, a table was created to specify, for each component polygon, the different counties to which it belonged and the time frames. The table was programmatically checked to verify that each component polygon was correctly assigned to historical counties throughout its life, with no unexpected gaps or overlaps.

The component polygons were then reassembled back into the historical counties, and converted to a shapefile. The resulting historical county shapefile consists of a large number of overlapping polygons; however, as a result of the topology check process, the subset of counties in effect at any selected date is topologically correct, with no unexpected gaps or overlaps. There are a number of known gaps and overlaps, however, due to legislative or surveying errors, and to conflicting territorial claims.

SOURCE USED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB4

PROCESS DATE 2008-2009

SOURCE PRODUCED CITATION ABBREVIATION
MSB5

Hide Data Quality ▲

HORIZONTAL COORDINATE SYSTEM DEFINITION
GEOGRAPHIC
LATITUDE RESOLUTION 0.000000
LONGITUDE RESOLUTION 0.000000
GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATE UNITS Decimal degrees

GEODETIC MODEL
HORIZONTAL DATUM NAME North American Datum of 1983
ELLIPSOID NAME Geodetic Reference System 80
SEMI-MAJOR AXIS 6378137.000000
DENOMINATOR OF FLATTENING RATIO 298.257222

Hide Spatial Reference ▲

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

ENTITY TYPE
ENTITY TYPE LABEL MS_Historical_Counties
ENTITY TYPE DEFINITION
county and county equivalents
ENTITY TYPE DEFINITION SOURCE Miss. Laws

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL FID
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
Internal feature number. The FID number is the unique identifier (a primary key in database terms) for each polygon within a shapefile; its application is limited to its single shapefile.
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE ESRI
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
Sequential unique whole numbers that are automatically generated.

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL Shape
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
Feature geometry.
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE ESRI
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
Coordinates defining the features.

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL NAME
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
name or other identification of county or equivalent, limited to 20 characters
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
character field

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL ID
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
Whereas the FID numbers (see above) uniquely identify the different polygons in a single state's shapefile, the ID code identifies unique geographical institutions, i.e., states, counties, and other administrative entities. The ID code is stable across datasets (state shapefiles); it does not change when there is a change in the county's name, shape, size, location, or parent state or equivalent. Each county's unique identifier is set in terms of its current or most recent state affiliation. Hence, "MES_York" is the identifier for modern York County, Maine, and all its earlier versions, even though it was created as part of colonial Massachusetts and is represented by polygons in the shapefiles of both Massachusetts and Maine. Because the FIPS system (see below) provides no codes for some extinct counties, no codes for non-county areas, and no codes for the colonies and territories that were predecessors of the states, it has been necessary to create a more comprehensive, alternative system of identifiers. The system adopted by the Atlas identifies each state and colony or territory with three letters, the first two based on the system of two-letter codes employed by the U.S. Post Office and the third indicating the status of the organization. (In most cases that is simply a C for colony, a T for territory, or an S for state.) For example, IAT stands for Iowa Territory and IAS for the state of Iowa. Some precursors of states need special ID codes, most of which are intuitively easy to read and to apply, especially in the context of a particular state's dataset. Examples are

NWT (Northwest Territory, formally named Territory Northwest of the River Ohio), SWF (Spanish West Florida), FRS (State of Franklin), DKT (Dakota Territory), CRC (Colony of Carolina), and TXR (Republic of Texas). Counties are identified by appending their names to the state codes, as in "KYS_Adair" for Adair County in the state of Kentucky. Non-county areas are abbreviated NCA; within a specific state they are differentiated from each other by adding a numeral to the abbreviation, as in "MOS_NCA1" for non-county area number 1 in the state of Missouri. Occasionally special codes are needed to deal with unusual historical situations, as in Vermont where the original Washington County, identified as "VTS_Washington01," became extinct and later the name was applied to another county ("VTS_Washington") that continues today. The county identifiers also have been created with an eye towards users who may wish to download and work with more than one state file for regions and want a comprehensive way to sort and select shapefiles or to link the attribute table to the comprehensive database.

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE project standards

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN

character field

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL STATE

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

name of the county's current or most recent state affiliation.

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN

character field

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL FIPS

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

FIPS codes are provided for the convenience of researchers working with data that has already been labeled with numbers from that coding system. FIPS is the abbreviation of Federal Information Processing Standard. FIPS codes were created in the first half of the twentieth century and are meant to facilitate efficiency and clarity in data handling. The system provides a two-digit code for each state or equivalent and a three-digit code for each county or equivalent. (Sometimes those codes are combined into five-digit numbers that start with the two digits for the state, as in this attribute table). The FIPS codes for states and counties in existence at the end of 2000 were taken from the federal government's FIPS PUB 6-4 (created 1996, last modified 10 May 2002), and the codes for extinct counties were taken from earlier lists. Some counties or other administrative entities may have no FIPS codes. In some cases they represent historical counties that became extinct before the introduction of FIPS codes; in other cases they represent temporary non-county areas. In the attribute table the FIPS field for those areas and extinct counties has been left blank because there is no standard system for pre-FIPS colonies, territories, and counties and no coding system includes non-county areas. Of course, users may supply a FIPS substitute of their own creation or, for extinct early counties, adopt an existing, alternative coding scheme, such as the one employed by Richard L. Forstall in his compilation, "Population of States and Counties of the United States: 1790-1990" (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). In addition, as described above under Attribute Label: ID, the Atlas developed a parallel system of non-FIPS Identifiers to encode all states, counties, and equivalents; it is more flexible and working with it is easier than using the FIPS codes.

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE FIPS PUB 6-4

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

CODESET DOMAIN

CODESET NAME Federal Information Processing Standards

CODESET SOURCE FIPS PUB 6-4

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL VERSION
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
sequential and chronological change in county name or configuration
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE compiler
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
character field

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL START_DATE
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
first date for a particular county version or event, arranged as mm/dd/yyyy
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
RANGE DOMAIN
RANGE DOMAIN MINIMUM 17850207
RANGE DOMAIN MAXIMUM 20001231
BEGINNING DATE OF ATTRIBUTE VALUES 02/07/1785
ENDING DATE OF ATTRIBUTE VALUES 03/14/1934

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL END_DATE
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
last date for a particular county version or event, arranged as mm/dd/yyyy
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
RANGE DOMAIN
RANGE DOMAIN MINIMUM 17880131
RANGE DOMAIN MAXIMUM 20001231
BEGINNING DATE OF ATTRIBUTE VALUES 01/31/1788
ENDING DATE OF ATTRIBUTE VALUES 12/31/2000

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL CHANGE
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
creation, change, or other event for each county on the given date
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws, compiler
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
character field

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL CITATION
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION
reference to the source of data for the event described under CHANGE
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws, any other texts, maps, or interviews employed to gather data
ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES
UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN
character field

ATTRIBUTE
ATTRIBUTE LABEL START_N
ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

first date for a particular county version or event, arranged in the standard date format yyyymmdd

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

RANGE DOMAIN

RANGE DOMAIN MINIMUM 17850207

RANGE DOMAIN MAXIMUM 19340314

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL END_N

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

lsat date for a particular county version or event, arranged in the standard date format yyyymmdd

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

RANGE DOMAIN

RANGE DOMAIN MINIMUM 17880131

RANGE DOMAIN MAXIMUM 20001231

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL AREA_SQMI

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

area of a county or equivalent in square miles, calculated from polygon by means of ArcMap facility

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE compiler

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN

numeric field

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL DATASET

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

The dataset field identifies the topical focus of the master shapefile. For every state the subject matter consists of all events affecting state and county jurisdiction within the borders of the modern state, regardless of the enabling authority, plus similar events involving the state outside its modern bounds, regardless of where or when. For example, polygons for Virginia's earliest western counties appear in the dataset for Kentucky because they represent part of the history of the area that became Kentucky; they also are included in the Virginia dataset because they are integral to the early history of Virginia, even though Virginia long ago ceded its authority over the area. In general, therefore, the dataset encompasses more data than a state, concentrating on one state (the principal point of focus) but possibly embracing data from one or more related, secondary states. Historically, almost every colony and territory transformed smoothly into statehood with no complications that might have required separate datasets for the state and its predecessors. The exception is Dakota Territory, which has its own dataset, and which split into a pair of states.

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION SOURCE Project standards

ATTRIBUTE DOMAIN VALUES

UNREPRESENTABLE DOMAIN

character field

ATTRIBUTE

ATTRIBUTE LABEL CNTY_TYPE

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITION

This field classifies each county and equivalent into one of several categories: (1) District; judicial districts, a county equivalent which at one time served as a basic unit of government in South Carolina, (2) Parish; a county equivalent which at one time

served as a basic unit of government in South Carolina, and which is currently the primary unit of government in Louisiana, (3) Jefferson_Territory; an extralegal territory, never recognized by the United States, that included all of present Colorado and parts of present Nebraska, Wyoming, and Utah, (4) Proposal; proposed counties which never became operational, (5) County; all remaining counties and county equivalents included in this dataset.

Attribute Definition Source: Project standards

Attribute Domain Values

Unrepresentable Domain

character field

Attribute

Attribute Label: FULL_NAME

Attribute Definition

name or other identification of county or equivalent

Attribute Definition Source: colonial, territorial, state, and federal laws

Attribute Domain Values

Unrepresentable Domain

character field

Hide Entities and Attributes ▲

Distributor

Contact Information

Contact Organization Primary

Contact Organization: Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library

Contact Position: Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture

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Address Type: mailing and physical address

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State or Province: Illinois

Postal Code: 60610

Country: UNITED STATES

Contact Electronic Mail Address: scholl@newberry.org

Hours of Service: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, M-F, CT

Resource Description: Mississippi Historical Counties Dataset shapefile

Distribution Liability

No liability is assumed by the Atlas of Historical County Boundaries Project or the Newberry Library

Standard Order Process

Digital Form

Digital Transfer Information

Format Name: SHP

File Decompression Technique: Zipped file.

Transfer Size: 10.637

Digital Transfer Option

Online Option

Computer Contact Information

Network Address

Network Resource Name: http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp

Technical Prerequisites

To use this data requires software that supports ESRI GIS shapefiles.

AVAILABLE TIME PERIOD
TIME PERIOD INFORMATION
SINGLE DATE/TIME
CALENDAR DATE Fall 2009 and thereafter

Hide Distribution Information ▲

METADATA DATE 2/12/2010
METADATA CONTACT
CONTACT INFORMATION
CONTACT ORGANIZATION PRIMARY
CONTACT ORGANIZATION Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, The Newberry Library
CONTACT POSITION Director, Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture
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COUNTRY UNITED STATES

CONTACT ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESS scholl@newberry.org
HOURS OF SERVICE 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, M-F, CT

METADATA STANDARD NAME FGDC Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata
METADATA STANDARD VERSION FGDC-STD-001-1998
METADATA TIME CONVENTION local time

METADATA EXTENSIONS
METADATA EXTENSIONS
ONLINE LINKAGE http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html
PROFILE NAME ESRI Metadata Profile

Hide Metadata Reference ▲