

1909 Taxes in Haywood County
Dorothy Granberry, Geneva Miller Historical Society

What clues do county tax records hold about life in a local community? Of course, there is the obvious. These records tell us who owned taxable property and how much they were taxed for said property. Sometimes as in the 1909 records, they tell what other properties formed the boundaries for a land parcel. With this information one can begin to construct a map of the area for that time period. Readers who have researched county tax records are invited to share with the GMHS other information that can be gleaned from these records, Remember to present examples in your communication. As always this info can be sent to GMHS at dgrnbrry@aol.com.

In 1909, Haywood County taxed real property (land and buildings), other taxable property (property designated by local or state laws to be taxed, for example in the 1870s or 1880s there was a tax on dogs), and polls (a head tax on every man between the ages of 21 and 50). Although by 1909 most county citizens of African ancestry were barred from voting, this tax was collected in 1909 and continued to be collected through the end of the 1920s. Men unable to pay the poll tax with money could work for a designated period of time on county roads.

County District 2 included Dancyville, Douglass, Good Hope, St. John and Prospect communities. In this district, 194 owners were taxed on their real property. Two hundred seventy-five men were taxed for the poll tax only. This last group of 275 were men between the ages of 21 and 50 who owned no real estate or other taxable property. Besides women, the only group not fully represented in this data set is non-property holding men, as those 50+ are omitted. Female and male property owners over 50 are included.