Marlboro County was named for John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722). The county name was originally spelled Marlborough, but it was later shortened. The county was created in 1785 as a part of Cheraws District. Welsh Baptists from Delaware settled in an area of the county known as Welsh Neck around 1737, and they were later joined by English and Scotch-Irish settlers. Cotton growing made this a wealthy part of the state prior to the Civil War. The town of Blenheim was also known for its mineral springs. General Sherman's troops passed through the county in 1865, briefly occupying the town of Bennettsville. Some famous Marlboro County natives are U.S. Congressman and diplomat Robert Blair Campbell (1791-1862), U.S. and Confederate Congressman John McQueen (1804-1867), and children's advocate Marian Wright Edelman.

County histories obtained from the S.C. State Library Reference Room at www.statelibrary.sc.gov/sc-counties. All other sources listed in the county comparison tables in the appendix.