After the Saints Left

To the Democrats of Hancock County
The political aftermath of Nauvoo in 1847

An illustrated historical report • David Larsen • October 2026

Carthage, Illinois, March 18, 1847. The Whigs were organizing. Hancock County's Democratic Central Committee believed its own party had to act. In a short printed notice, it asked sixteen precincts to send delegates to Carthage on Saturday, April 3, to nominate candidates who would compete for a place in the rewriting of Illinois's constitution. [1]

Near the bottom of the sheet, beneath the commanding words "HANCOCK COUNTY," the printer listed the precincts and their allotted delegates. The last entry is easy to miss: **Nauvoo, 4.**

Most of the Latter-day Saints had left Nauvoo during the previous year. Their departure had broken the concentration of voters that once made their city a force in county elections. Yet Nauvoo remained on this political roll, alongside Warsaw and Carthage. The sheet brings us back to the county after the wagons had gone, when familiar men were seeking power under changed circumstances. [1–3]

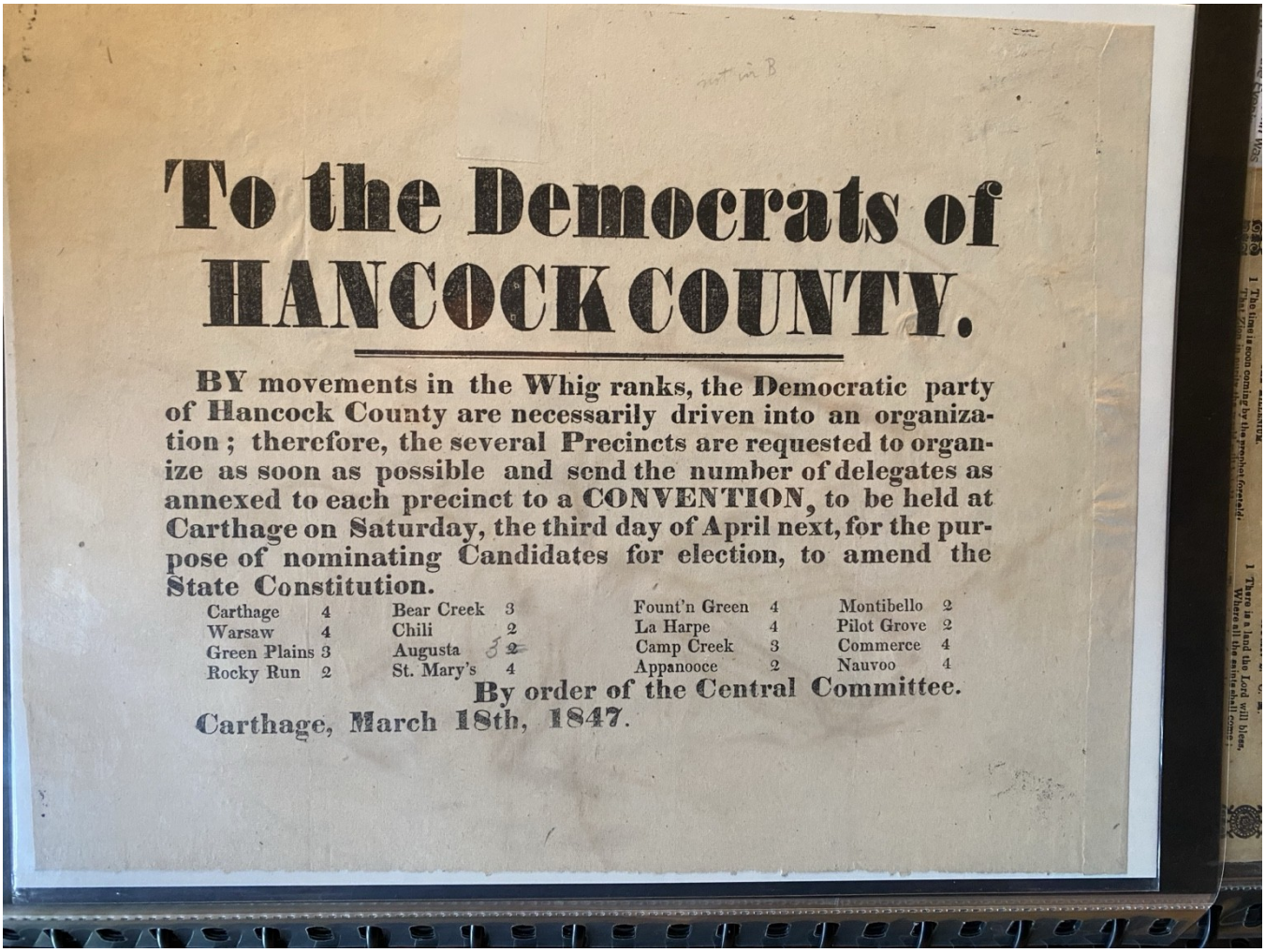
One of those men was Thomas C. Sharp, the Warsaw editor who had helped organize opposition to the Saints. Within weeks of this notice, he would be elected to the Illinois Constitutional Convention. The small broadside opens a story about the people who remained, the alliances they carried forward, and the question of who would speak for Hancock County. [2, 5]

Highlights

Date	What changed
1841	A local Anti-Mormon coalition brought Democrats and Whigs together.
June 27, 1844	Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed at Carthage Jail.
1846	The principal Latter-day Saint exodus transformed Nauvoo and county politics.
March 18, 1847	The Democratic Central Committee issued this broadside.
April 3, 1847	The notice called for a Democratic nominating convention at Carthage.
April 19, 1847	Hancock voters elected five delegates to the state convention.
March 6, 1848	Illinois voters approved the new constitution.

The original sheet and its transcription follow. The narrative then traces the campaign's background and outcome; biographical and research notes conclude the report.

The surviving broadside



To the Democrats of
HANCOCK COUNTY.

BY movements in the Whig ranks, the Democratic party of Hancock County are necessarily driven into an organization; therefore, the several Precincts are requested to organize as soon as possible and send the number of delegates as annexed to each precinct to a CONVENTION, to be held at Carthage on Saturday, the third day of April next, for the purpose of nominating Candidates for election, to amend the State Constitution.

Carthage	4	Bear Creek	3	Fount'n Green	4	Montibello	2
Warsaw	4	Chili	2	La Harpe	4	Pilot Grove	2
Green Plains	3	Augusta	3 ~~2~~	Camp Creek	3	Commerce	4
Rocky Run	2	St. Mary's	4	Appanooce	2	Nauvoo	4

By order of the Central Committee.

Carthage, March 18th, 1847.

Figure 1. "To the Democrats of Hancock County," dated Carthage, March 18, 1847. Original in the David Larsen collection, reproduced from the owner's photograph and oriented for reading. The photograph includes the protective sleeve and album edges. [1]

What to notice first

The opening sentence identifies the immediate provocation: "movements in the Whig ranks." The notice then gives a practical response, instructing local precincts to organize and send delegates to a county meeting. It names the date, place, purpose, and representation for that meeting. It is a call to organize, issued before candidates were nominated.

The closing line supplies the corporate issuer: "By order of the Central Committee." No individual author or printer is named. "Carthage" identifies the place from which the notice is dated; it does not by itself identify the printing shop.

Beside Augusta's printed allocation of two delegates is a handwritten alteration that appears to substitute three. That small mark deserves preservation. It may record a correction or later annotation, although its date and writer remain unknown.

The broadside in readable type

Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are retained. Line-end word divisions are joined, and the precinct list is reset for legibility. The photograph remains the authority for typography and physical marks. [1]

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HANCOCK COUNTY.

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Precinct	No.	Precinct	No.	Precinct	No.	Precinct	No.
Carthage	4	Bear Creek	3	Fount'n Green	4	Montibello	2
Warsaw	4	Chili	2	La Harpe	4	Pilot Grove	2
Green Plains	3	Augusta	2*	Camp Creek	3	Commerce	4
Rocky Run	2	St. Mary's	4	Appanooce	2	Nauvoo	4

By order of the Central Committee.
Carthage, March 18th, 1847.

* Augusta has a manuscript mark beside the printed 2, apparently changing it to 3. The printed allocations total 49; with that apparent correction, they total 50. These are places at the proposed county party convention, not votes cast in the April election.

Two conventions and an election

The word "convention" can be confusing here. On **April 3**, local Democratic delegates were asked to assemble at Carthage to choose candidates. On **April 19**, eligible voters elected Hancock County's representatives to the statewide constitutional convention. That state gathering opened in Springfield on **June 7**. Its work became the Constitution of 1848. [1, 2, 4]

The broadside establishes that the April 3 meeting was called. A report or minutes of the meeting would still be needed to establish who attended, what candidates it nominated, and how closely the meeting followed the notice.

Nauvoo on the list

Nauvoo received four places, the same printed allocation as Carthage and Warsaw. Commerce appears separately, also with four. The list shows the committee's intended organization of the county. It cannot tell us how many Saints remained, how many people voted, or whether four Nauvoo delegates actually attended.

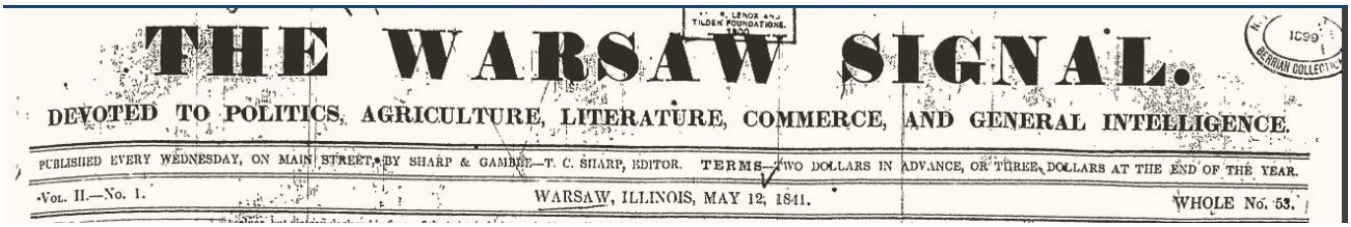
When the Mormon vote changed the county

The appeal to Democrats had a history. During the Nauvoo years, county elections had become arguments about the Saints themselves: their growing numbers, their leaders' influence, and their right to participate together in public life. A reader in 1847 would have encountered the party names against that recent experience.

Nauvoo grew rapidly after Latter-day Saints began settling there in 1839. For families driven from Missouri, gathering offered a chance to rebuild homes, worship together, and find protection. For politicians seeking office, the concentration of voters made the city impossible to ignore. Candidates courted their support; opponents portrayed that support as evidence of improper religious control. The Saints and their critics understood the same voting power in sharply different ways.

County geography sharpened the contest. Nauvoo stood on the Mississippi River; Warsaw, another river town to the south, became a center of opposition and the home of Sharp's newspaper. Carthage, inland to the east, was the county seat. Elections, newspaper arguments, and legal proceedings repeatedly drew these places into the same struggle.

In 1841, opposition acquired an organization that crossed the usual party boundary. The Anti-Mormon Party nominated Richard Wilton, a Democrat, for school commissioner and Robert Miller, a Whig, for county commissioner. Both won. Local hostility to Nauvoo could therefore bring together men who differed in national politics. [3]


THE WARSAW SIGNAL.

DEVOTED TO POLITICS, AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, COMMERCE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY, ON MAIN STREET, BY SHARP & GAMBLE—T. C. SHARP, EDITOR. TERMS—TWO DOLLARS IN ADVANCE, OR THREE DOLLARS AT THE END OF THE YEAR.

VOL. II.—No. 1. WARSAW, ILLINOIS, MAY 12, 1841. WHOLE No. 53.

Figure 2. The Warsaw Signal masthead, May 12, 1841, naming Sharp & Gamble as publishers and T. C. Sharp as editor. A newspaper office could spread political arguments and meeting notices across the county. This earlier masthead does not identify the printer of the 1847 broadside. Warsaw Public Library Digital Archives. [6]

The Saints answered in print

Joseph Smith's July 1842 public letter described the Saints as citizens entitled to a share in choosing candidates. He objected to an Anti-Mormon ticket that excluded them and appealed for independent candidates willing to cooperate. His own formulation brought the dispute down to participation:

"If the old citizens of the county are still desirous of equal participations with us in the choice of candidates, we are ready to co-operate with them." [3]

The letter's published text makes the underlying question plain. Would neighbors negotiate for votes across religious differences, or organize to exclude one another? The broadside of 1847 belongs to the later history of that question, after the largest group of Latter-day Saint voters had left.

The city the Saints had built



Figure 3. Henry Lewis, Nauvoe, Illinois, published 1854–1858 by Arnz & Co., Düsseldorf. The temple dominates this nineteenth-century view. The print evokes the city's setting; its publication date must not be mistaken for a photograph or exact record of Nauvoo on March 18, 1847. Saint Louis Art Museum, Museum Purchase 143:1949; public domain. [7]

For readers who know Nauvoo chiefly as a sacred gathering place, the election notice offers a different way to encounter the city. The name at the bottom of the handbill represents a precinct expected to take part in county politics. It also recalls a community whose homes, businesses, and temple had required years of work.

The rupture came in stages. Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed at Carthage Jail on June 27, 1844. Their deaths did not end the hostility. Violence and threats continued, and the Saints' leaders prepared an organized departure. The principal migration began in February 1846 and continued through the year. In September, armed conflict forced remaining Saints and sympathetic residents to evacuate. [8, 9]

The familiar image of an entire people leaving at one moment obscures that difficult sequence. Families departed at different times and with unequal resources. Some remained in the region. Nauvoo continued to exist, but the community that had given the city its extraordinary political influence had largely dispersed.

By March 1847, the Democratic committee could still write "Nauvoo" on its list. What the name represented politically had changed. Four allotted delegates are evidence of the precinct's place in the proposed organization, not a measure of the old Mormon voting bloc.

Thomas Sharp after Carthage

Thomas Coke Sharp was twenty-eight when the committee issued its call. He had already become one of the best-known and most controversial men in Hancock County. He had arrived at Warsaw in 1840 after legal training and moved into newspaper work. His editorials helped turn fear of Nauvoo's political strength into organized opposition. [5]

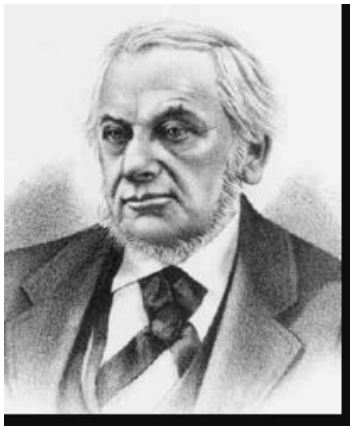


Figure 4. Thomas C. Sharp in later life. Portrait reproduced in the Famous Trials Carthage collection. This later likeness helps identify the man; it does not show his appearance in 1847. [10]

Sharp's early Democratic allegiance matters. He was not simply a Whig attacking a Democratic stronghold. His career shows how a Democrat could participate in a movement that worked across party lines against the Saints. The Pease election compilation identifies him as a Democrat in the 1847 contest. [2, 5]

In June 1844, after the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor press, Sharp's rhetoric became incendiary. His newspaper urged action against Joseph Smith and his supporters. Following the killings at Carthage, Sharp was among the men prosecuted for Joseph Smith's murder. He, Levi Williams, Mark Aldrich, Jacob C. Davis, and William N. Grover were acquitted in 1845. That verdict must be stated accurately; it does not erase the newspaper campaign or settle every historical question about the violence. [8, 10]

Two years later, Sharp won 767 votes for the constitutional convention. His election is a striking continuation of the Nauvoo story. A man whose name was inseparable from the conflict could still obtain a place among the county's five representatives in the making of a new state constitution. [2]

That makes Sharp essential to this report, but it does not make him the author of the broadside. His name is absent from the sheet. The committee may have supported him, opposed him, or helped initiate a process that developed in an unexpected direction. The convention's nominations and campaign coverage are needed to decide among those possibilities.

Organizing after the exodus

The committee begins by explaining why Democrats must act: their Whig rivals have made a move. Its wording presents organization as a response to pressure. It then turns immediately to machinery: precincts, delegate numbers, a meeting place, and a deadline. Those details show a party trying to assemble itself across the county.

The preceding years had made that task complicated. Men could retain Democratic or Whig identities while joining an anti-Mormon coalition. The Saints' departure removed much of the electoral force against which that coalition had organized, but it did not remove its leaders or the relationships formed during the conflict.

The broadside can be read as evidence of renewed competition between the national parties. It is more difficult to say whether it was meant to dissolve an older coalition, discipline Democrats who cooperated with Whigs, or defend a particular group within the party. The opening sentence supports the first, broad observation. It does not settle the factional questions.

A county preparing to choose five men

The state election gave local political organization a substantial purpose. Hancock County would send five men to Springfield. Whoever won would help frame rules that reached well beyond their own towns, including the structure of state government and the terms of voting. [2, 4]

The committee's precinct table offers a glimpse of how candidates might reach that ballot. Instead of inviting every Democrat in the county to take part equally in one large meeting, it assigned each precinct a number of delegates. Local organization would feed into a county convention, which would produce candidates for an election. The sheet does not explain the formula behind the allocations.

The correction beside Augusta makes the organizational work tangible. A change of one place could affect representation at the meeting. We cannot tell whether the mark was authorized by the committee or added later, but it preserves evidence that someone handled this copy as more than a finished printed announcement.

What the handbill leaves unsaid

There is no attack on Mormonism in the printed text. There is no candidate list, no named committee member, and no account of the proposed constitution. The connection to Mormon history comes from its setting and the careers of the men active in the election. Reading that context into the document is useful; treating the sheet itself as an explicit anti-Mormon manifesto would go beyond its words.

Its brevity is part of its character. Readers were asked to do something soon. Once the convention and election had passed, the notice had little practical use. Its survival allows us to recover a small step in a political process that fuller histories often pass over.

What happened in the April election

Theodore Calvin Pease's Illinois Election Returns, 1818–1848 records eleven names in the Hancock County return for April 19, 1847. The five successful candidates are marked below. Party descriptions follow Pease; they describe the candidates' affiliations, not a proven common ticket. [2]

Candidate	Party in Pease	Votes	Result
Charles Choate	Democrat	1,129	Elected
Robert Miller	Whig	871	Elected
Thomas C. Sharp[1]	Democrat	767	Elected
Thomas Geddes	Whig	723	Elected
William S. Moore[2]	Democrat	710	Elected
Stephen H. Tyler	Democrat	672	Defeated
Hurlbut P. Griswold	Democrat	632	Defeated
Joseph Sibley	Democrat	589	Defeated
Jacob C. Davis	Democrat	544	Defeated
Joseph Hatchett	Not stated	28	Defeated
John Scott	Not stated	1	Defeated

[1] Pease prints "Thomas C. Sharpe." [2] Pease's return and main index entry print "George S. Moore," with "William S. Moore" cross-referenced to him. The 1847 convention journal's printed signatory list gives "WILLIAM S. MOORE." This report uses William and preserves the discrepancy rather than treating the names as two candidates. [2, 11]

Three Democrats and two Whigs

The winners crossed party lines. That result is consistent with the county's history of local combinations, although it does not by itself prove that all five stood on a single coalition ticket. Choate led the poll with 1,129 votes. Sharp finished third. Moore, the fifth successful candidate, led Stephen H. Tyler by 38 votes.

Jacob C. Davis, Sharp's fellow defendant in the 1845 trial and a Democratic state senator, received 544 votes and was not elected. The contrast is useful: the men associated with the earlier conflict did not all share the same electoral fortunes.

Pease's "Total" of 6,666 is the sum of the votes recorded for the candidates. Because this was a contest for multiple seats, it must not be presented as 6,666 individual voters. A turnout figure or reliable percentage of voters requires separate evidence.

The returns answer who won. They do not answer which candidates the April 3 Democratic meeting selected. That distinction keeps the broadside's call, the nominating process, and the election result in their proper order.

Hancock County enters the state convention

The constitutional convention opened in Springfield on June 7, 1847. Illinois had outgrown its 1818 constitution, and state debt and dissatisfaction with existing government helped drive the demand for change. The delegates completed their work on August 31. Voters approved the constitution on March 6, 1848, and it took effect on April 1. [4]

The resulting constitution made more offices elective, including the secretary of state and the state's supreme court judges, and altered the balance between the legislature and executive. Its provisions also reveal the limits of the era's democratic language. Voting remained restricted to white men; the convention failed to extend suffrage to African Americans, and voters approved a separate provision against Black immigration. [4, 11]

Hancock County's delegation joined that larger undertaking. The election connected the county's recent conflict with decisions about how Illinois would be governed. Establishing how each delegate voted on particular provisions would require a further reading of the convention journal and debates; election to the convention alone does not establish an individual position.



Figure 5. Henry Lewis, Warsaw, Iowa, published 1854–1858 by Arnz & Co. The printed title is misleading: the scene is identified as Warsaw, Illinois, in the Old Print Shop's catalogue. It provides a later nineteenth-century riverfront view of the town associated with Sharp's press. Saint Louis Art Museum, Museum Purchase 145:1949; public domain. [7, 12]

Return now to the sheet dated at Carthage. "Nauvoo, 4" remains at the end of the list. The community the Saints had built was greatly changed, but the town still occupied a place in the county's plans. The broadside preserves a moment when organizing for the next election carried forward relationships formed during years of religious conflict.

The people behind the election

No individual is named in the broadside. These sketches identify people whose careers help explain its setting and the election that followed. They should not be read as a list of the committee's members or nominees.

Thomas Coke Sharp

1818–1894; elected with 767 votes. Sharp moved to Warsaw in 1840, worked in law and journalism, and became a leading organizer of opposition to the Saints. His Democratic affiliation in 1847 is documented in Pease's index, which cites the State Register of June 11, 1847. His later break with the Democrats over the Kansas-Nebraska Act belongs to the 1850s and should not be projected backward onto this election. His newspaper work makes a printing connection conceivable, but no imprint or direct statement links him to the sheet. [2, 5]

Robert Miller

Elected with 871 votes; identified as a Whig. Miller was the county commissioner candidate on the Anti-Mormon ticket in 1841. His election that year and his return as a constitutional delegate in 1847 show continuity in local leadership across the Saints' departure. They do not, without campaign evidence, prove that the same electoral coalition delivered both victories. [2, 3]

Thomas Geddes

Elected with 723 votes; identified as a Whig. Earlier county research connects Geddes with the anti-Mormon side of the conflict, including militia organization. His political label is more securely grounded by Pease's index, which cites the June 11, 1847 State Register. His particular campaign role and military activities should be distinguished from the simple fact of his election. [2, 13]

Charles Choate

Elected with 1,129 votes; identified as a Democrat. Choate received the largest recorded total. Pease also connects him with an "Old Settlers" convention to appoint delegates to the Democratic state convention, citing the State Register of January 23, 1846. That reference offers a concrete path into his political associations. It replaces the older report's uncertainty about his party, while leaving his fuller biography to be developed. [2]

William S Moore

Elected with 710 votes; identified as a Democrat in Pease. His name presents a source problem: Pease calls him George S. Moore in the returns, while cross-referencing William S. Moore in the index. The convention journal prints William S. Moore among the signatories. The discrepancy should accompany future searches in newspapers, census records, and county histories. His place among the five delegates is better established than the details of his life. [2, 11]

Jacob C Davis

Unsuccessful candidate with 544 votes; Democrat. A state senator and one of the defendants acquitted in the 1845 Smith murder trial, Davis remained politically active after the exodus. The return now establishes his participation in this contest and its outcome. It does not identify him as an author, committee member, or nominee of the April 3 meeting. [2, 10]

Who wrote and printed the sheet

The broadside supplies a date, a place of issue, and a corporate issuer. It does not supply an individual author or a printer. These are separate attribution questions, and each requires its own evidence.

Question	What the evidence supports
Who issued it?	The Central Committee named in the Democratic notice; individual members are unnamed.
Where and when was it issued?	Dated Carthage, March 18, 1847.
Who composed the words?	No individual author is established.
Where was it printed?	No printing office is named.
Was Sharp involved?	He was an active Democrat and successful candidate; direct involvement in this sheet remains unproved.

The Warsaw printing connection

The Warsaw press deserves close comparison because it repeatedly served county political organization. The Western World appeared in 1840; the Warsaw Signal title followed in 1841. The paper passed through a Warsaw Message period under Thomas Gregg and associates before the Signal title returned under Sharp in 1844. [6, 14]

The precise transfer of the Signal to Gregg after the Saints' departure is described differently in later histories. Some accounts place the transition in 1846, while another extends Sharp's association into spring 1847. Ownership, editorship, and day-to-day printing could change at different times. A masthead or contemporary notice from March 1847 would be more useful than choosing one later summary simply because it fits an attribution. [13, 14]

Even proof that the Signal office printed the sheet would not establish Sharp as its writer. A committee could commission printing from a shop; an editor could be absent from the actual composition or presswork. Distinctive damaged letters, rules, and spacing might identify a printing office more readily than an author.

A catalogue description supported by the sheet

Hancock County Democratic Central Committee. To the Democrats of Hancock County. Dated Carthage, Illinois, March 18, 1847. Printed broadside calling a precinct-delegate convention at Carthage on April 3 to nominate candidates for the forthcoming constitutional-convention election. Sixteen precinct allocations. Printer and individual author unidentified. Present copy bears a manuscript alteration beside Augusta's delegate number. [1]

A possible association with the Warsaw Signal office may be recorded as a research lead. It should not be converted into a statement that Sharp printed or authored the broadside.

The survival of a disposable notice

The sheet was meant to prompt action within a few weeks. Such notices could be distributed, displayed, read, and discarded when the meeting was over. We do not know how this copy circulated, and its present photograph cannot tell us whether it once hung in a public place or remained among someone's papers.

Its large heading, compact instructions, and precinct allocations suit a practical political announcement. The creases and manuscript change add to its documentary interest, but physical conclusions should remain limited to what the original can show. Paper stock, watermarks, and exact dimensions require examination beyond the supplied photograph.

The present census of copies

David Larsen has identified the present sheet and recalls a physically distinct example offered by antiquarian bookseller Rick Grunder. The defensible description is therefore **at least two distinct copies reported in the project record**, one reproduced here. This is not a completed institutional census or a claim that only two copies survive. [1, 13]

A lead in the earlier project notes identifies Grunder's Mormon List 74, March 2015, item 28, reportedly priced at $900. The original catalogue entry should be retained as a target for verification, not quoted as an independently checked description in this edition. A separate dealer-market lead may concern one of the same sheets and should not be counted as a third copy without a physical comparison. [13]

Comparison should begin with the printed setting and Augusta's altered number. Matching damaged letters and spacing could establish a common setting of type. Different wording or a reset heading could indicate a second printing. Identical handwriting or matching tears would instead raise the possibility that two catalogue appearances describe the same physical copy.

A related piece of election printing

Flake and Draper's bibliography records an 1846 Hancock County broadside presenting Democratic, Whig, and Anti-Mormon ballots. It is a different item, but it demonstrates the local use of ephemeral print to carry competing party choices. It should remain a comparison source, not be confused with this committee call of March 1847. [15]

For a fuller census, searches should include variant titles and descriptive terms in WorldCat and the catalogues of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Western Illinois University, the Newberry, BYU, the Church History Library, Yale, the Huntington, the Bancroft, and the Library of Congress. Local historical collections may preserve notices that never received individual catalogue records.

Research notes and the next questions

What the recovered evidence changes

The earlier research report treated the constitutional-convention connection as a strong hypothesis and described the issuer as unresolved. The original photograph settles both points more closely: the sheet is dated March 18, 1847, calls the April 3 nominating convention, and is issued by order of the Central Committee. It names no candidates.

Pease's published return supplies the candidate totals, establishes Davis's unsuccessful candidacy, and identifies Choate and Moore as Democrats. The remaining question is how the committee's April 3 meeting related to those candidates. The new evidence strengthens the history without resolving Sharp's authorship or printing role.

The newspaper search can now be precise

The key span is mid-March through late April 1847, with follow-up coverage in May. Search the Warsaw Signal for the March 18 call, an April 3 meeting report, committee names, nominee lists, and election results. Compare the exact phrases "movements in the Whig ranks" and "necessarily driven into an organization." Inspect complete pages where OCR fails; do not assume weekly issue dates without checking the mastheads. [6]

Pease's index adds targeted contemporary leads: the State Register of January 23, 1846, for "Old Settlers" activity, April 9, 1847, for Davis's political identification, and June 11, 1847, for several delegates' affiliations. These references are especially useful for reconstructing how Democratic and Whig labels operated in the campaign. [2]

Returns and population require different counts

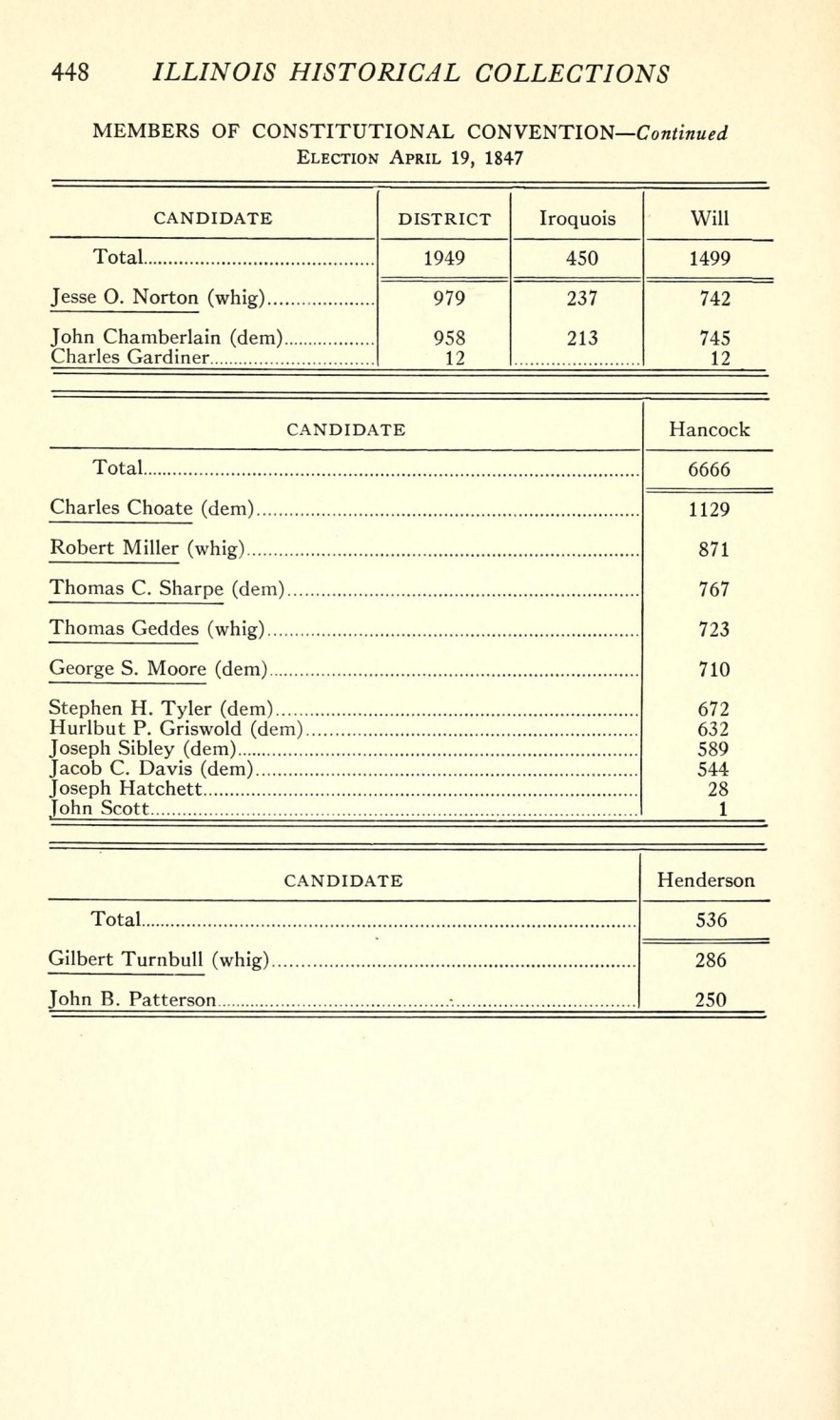
The candidate totals here come from Pease's 1923 compilation, based largely on county-clerk returns. The original manuscript return and any surviving precinct poll books would allow verification and a more local analysis. County-wide totals cannot identify Nauvoo's votes or individual voter behavior.

The earlier report noted an 1840 population discrepancy between 10,008 and 9,945 in secondary tabulations and a county population above fourteen thousand in 1850. Those figures should be checked against a common census definition before further use. Neither a straight line between census years nor the broadside's delegate allocations can reconstruct the number of Latter-day Saint voters present in 1847. [13]

Questions worth pursuing

The most productive next steps are to identify the Central Committee's members and the April 3 nominees; compare March 1847 newspaper type with the broadside; resolve Moore's name through the convention's credentials and local records; and locate the Grunder catalogue copy for direct comparison. Each question could change a specific conclusion. A famous name attached without evidence would add less than a reliable account of how this notice was used.

The published Hancock County return



448 *ILLINOIS HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS*

MEMBERS OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION—*Continued*
ELECTION APRIL 19, 1847

CANDIDATE	DISTRICT	Iroquois	Will
Total	1949	450	1499
Jesse O. Norton (whig)	979	237	742
John Chamberlain (dem)	958	213	745
Charles Gardiner	12		12

CANDIDATE	Hancock
Total	6666
Charles Choate (dem)	1129
Robert Miller (whig)	871
Thomas C. Sharpe (dem)	767
Thomas Geddes (whig)	723
George S. Moore (dem)	710
Stephen H. Tyler (dem)	672
Hurlbut P. Griswold (dem)	632
Joseph Sibley (dem)	589
Jacob C. Davis (dem)	544
Joseph Hatchett	28
John Scott	1

CANDIDATE	Henderson
Total	536
Gilbert Turnbull (whig)	286
John B. Patterson	250

Figure 6. Pease, Illinois Election Returns, 1818–1848 (1923), p. 448. The Hancock table occupies the center of the page. Underlining identifies the five elected delegates. The return preserves the spellings Sharpe and George S. Moore discussed in the election table. Public-domain scan via Internet Archive. [2]

Sources and image credits

Numbers in brackets refer to the entries below. Historical quotations are from the identified original documents. Interpretations of the broadside are distinguished in the text from statements it makes explicitly. Web sources were consulted in October 2026.

1. Original broadside and photograph. “To the Democrats of Hancock County,” Carthage, March 18, 1847. David Larsen collection; source photograph IMG_3244.jpeg. Figure 1 and the transcription are based on this image. The printed allocations are summed directly from the sheet. No measurement has been inferred from the photograph.

2. Theodore Calvin Pease, editor. Illinois Election Returns, 1818–1848. Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library, vol. 18, Statistical Series, vol. 1. Springfield: Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 1923. Hancock return, p. 448; biographical index under Choate, Davis, Geddes, Miller, Moore, and Sharpe. The index provides the cited State Register references. The scanned page, rather than OCR alone, controls the vote totals.

https://archive.org/details/illinoiselection18peas/page/448/mode/2up

3. Joseph Smith Papers. “Letter to the Citizens of Hancock County, circa 2 July 1842,” first published in the Wasp, July 2, 1842, p. [2], with historical introduction and source notes. Supports the 1841 coalition and the Saints’ response to political exclusion. The quotation in this report expands the linked place label “county” and joins line-end word divisions.

https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-the-citizens-of-hancock-county-circa-2-july-1842/1

4. Illinois State Archives. “Second Illinois Constitution (1848),” in 100 Most Valuable Documents. Dates of the state convention, ratification, and effective date; principal changes and the separately submitted provisions. Original held in Secretary of State Record Series 103.013.

https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/archives/online-exhibits/100-documents/1848-second-il-con.html

5. Papers of Abraham Lincoln. “Sharp, Thomas C.” Biographical entry for his newspaper career, Democratic background, and later Republican affiliation.

https://papersofabrahamlincoln.org/persons/SH39970

6. Warsaw Public Library Digital Archives. Warsaw Signal, May 12, 1841, masthead (Figure 2), reproduced from the project’s previously preserved newspaper image. The newspaper archive is the principal source for the proposed March–May 1847 campaign comparison. Also consulted in the related project: Western World, November 11, 1840, and Warsaw Message, January 7, 1843.

https://warsaw.advantage-preservation.com/

7. Saint Louis Art Museum. Henry Lewis, Nauvoe, Illinois, 1854–1858, color lithograph, published by Arnz & Co., Düsseldorf. Museum Purchase 143:1949 (Figure 3). Henry Lewis, Warsaw, Iowa, 1854–1858, same publisher and medium. Museum Purchase 145:1949 (Figure 5). Both museum records mark the images public domain.

https://www.slam.org/collection/objects/37452/
https://www.slam.org/collection/objects/37455/

8. Joseph Smith Papers and prior trial research. Brett D. Dowdle, “Stirring up Strife: Threats against Latter-day Saints outside of Nauvoo in June 1844”; Joseph Smith Papers biographical entry “Thomas Coke Sharp”; and the trial sources retained in the August 2026 research report. These support the escalation of rhetoric, the murders, and the distinction between Sharp’s political activity and his acquittal.

https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/thomas-coke-sharp

9. Church History Topics. “Departure from Nauvoo,” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The account distinguishes the organized migration beginning in February from the September fighting and forced evacuation.

https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/departure-from-nauvoo?lang=eng

10. Famous Trials. Carthage conspiracy-trial collection, “Meet the Defendants.” Figure 4 is the later-life Sharp portrait previously preserved in the related illustrated Sharp report. The web reproduction supplies no secure original portrait date or creator; those details are not assigned here.

https://famous-trials.com/carthrage/1256-meetdefendants

11. Illinois Constitutional Convention. Journal of the Convention, assembled at Springfield, June 7, 1847. Springfield: Lanphier & Walker, 1847. Printed signatory list, pp. 574–575, gives “WILLIAM S. MOORE.” Constitution and proceedings excerpt hosted by Eastern Illinois University; scanned PDF pp. 1 –16.

https://www.eiu.edu/past_tracker/1847_Constitution_.pdf

12. The Old Print Shop. Catalogue description of Henry Lewis’s Warsaw, Iowa, inventory no. 12834, item 2. Identifies the depicted location as Warsaw, Illinois, despite the printed Iowa title. The museum title is preserved in the figure caption.

https://oldprintshop.com/product/23731?inventoryno=12834&itemno=2

13. Earlier project research. To the Democrats of Hancock County: An 1847 Illinois Political Broadside in the Aftermath of Nauvoo, research report dated August 31, 2026, and associated project notes. Preserves the owner’s testimony about a second copy, the Grunder catalogue lead, county-history and census leads, and the attribution research. Conclusions superseded by the recovered broadside and Pease return are revised in this edition. Related source: The Thomas C. Sharp Document, Expanded Illustrated Edition, for the preserved portrait and newspaper mastheads.

14. Papers of Abraham Lincoln and newspaper histories. “Warsaw Signal,” organization history; Thomas Gregg, History of Hancock County, Illinois (Chicago: Charles C. Chapman, 1880), especially newspaper history and the 1841 political narrative. The earlier report also cites “Early Newspapers in Illinois” for a transfer chronology extending into spring 1847; that incomplete citation remains a bibliographic lead, not a resolved date.

https://papersofabrahamlincoln.org/organizations/WA39044

15. Chad J. Flake and Larry W. Draper. A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930, section H, entry for the 1846 Hancock County Democratic, Whig, and Anti-Mormon ballots. Used only as a comparison for local political ephemera.

https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub_content/pdf/H.pdf

Further reading retained from the research record

Jeremy J. Chatelain, “Thomas Sharp’s Warsaw Signal: Crafting an Anti-Mormon Rhetoric Prior to the Murder of Joseph Smith Jr.,” Journalism History 51, no. 1 (2025): 42–70. The earlier project also identified BYU Studies material on the period from assassination to expulsion, Hancock County census transcriptions, and Andrew Jenson’s “Hancock County, Illinois” in the Historical Record (1889). These remain supporting research paths; they are not substitutes for the dated broadside or the election return.