

**THE 1884 CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN IN THE
ILLINOIS FIFTEENTH DISTRICT: GENERAL
JOHN CHARLES BLACK CHALLENGES JOSEPH G.
CANNON, "WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR,
CONGRESSMAN CANNON?"**

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INTRODUCTION

Cannon obtained his re-nomination to the office effectively at the end of April 1884. Black agreed to run against Cannon on September 10th. It was, as such campaigns generally went, short, but it was not sweet.

The fall campaign was dominated by the Presidential campaign between the Democrat Grover Cleveland, with Indiana's Thomas A. Hendricks for Vice President, and Republican James G. Blaine, with Illinois' John Logan for Vice President. National issues were discussed by both Cannon and Black, but when the congressional election came into focus in mid-September 1884, the contest assumed a tone similar to the National campaign, but with a twist that all politics is local.¹

In his study of America from 1865 to 1915, *The Age of Acrimony; How Americans Fought To Fix Their Democracy*, Jon Grinspan observed that the 1884 presidential campaign was the “ dirtiest, most disgusting and disgraceful our nation has ever known. . . .The Republicans began the ugliness by nominating James G. Blaine, the most divisive man in their party.”² Blaine was seen as the embodiment of financial corruption. Cleveland, on the other hand, first appeared bland but sturdy. Then word spread of his “illicit connection,” fathering a child with a Buffalo widow, Maria Halpin. Cleveland claimed it was a brief, consensual affair between two unmarried adults. Allen Nevin's³ study of the allegations concluded that Cleveland, while uncertain of his paternity, assumed financial responsibility for the child. The Republican campaign machine, however, pushed the question of Cleveland's private character throughout the campaign.

While the Republicans questioned Cleveland's private character, the Democrats attacked Blaine's public character by raising new questions

¹ The best study of the 1884 campaign may be found in Mark Wahlgren Summers' *Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion: The Making of a President, 1884*, University of North Carolina Press (2000).

² Bloomsbury Publishing, New York: 2021, page 249. For a “quick and dirty” analysis of the campaign, see *American Heritage*, Volume 13, Issue 5 (1962). <https://www.americanheritage.com/dirtiest-election#2>

³ *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage*, ISHI Press, first published in 1932, at pages 162 to 169.

as to Blaine's honesty with new material involving the Mulligan letters. This latter correspondence involved allegations of corruption by Blaine while he was Speaker of the House of Representatives whereby he received an inappropriate financial benefit for taking up certain legislation in the House.

As between these "scandals," the issue was simple: Cleveland had clearly established public integrity, but suffered from private morality issues, while Blaine was corrupt in public affairs, but pure in private morality.

Nevins identified five principal factors in the campaign, besides the character issue:

The Democratic schism in New York, where Tammany Hall was in revolt.

The old-soldier vote, vigorously appealed to by the Republicans through Pension Bureau officials.⁴

The Prohibitionist vote, cutting into Blaine's strength.

The lingering distrust of the South.

The business depression of 1884, engendering a discontent with Republican policies.⁵

Neil Rolde's biography of James G. Blaine, *Continental Liar From the State of Maine*⁶, observed

Blaine's strategy had been to run his campaign entirely on the tariff issue. The Republicans were for protection, high duties to

⁴ At the national level, the Republican Commissioner of Pensions left his office in Washington for the last two months of the campaign and actively campaigned for Republicans while drawing his salary. Republicans had also used the pension process to award as many veterans as possible, within the law, with pensions. When pensions could not be awarded by the Pensions Bureau, the claimants then sought private legislation from Congress for their pensions.

⁵ Nevins, *supra*, page 169.

⁶ Tilbury House, Publishers, Gardiner, Maine, (2007).

keep out cheap foreign goods, and that continuation of this policy offered insurance of sustained prosperity in the U. S. . . It was not Blaine's wish to institute a vicious attack upon Grover Cleveland's private life. That impulse came unbidden from G. O. P. partisans in Buffalo, the Democratic candidate's hometown. . . .⁷

In his biography of Thomas B. Reed⁸, James Grant summarized the contest in terms of policy.

The fact was that, in policy matters, one party sounded much like the other. Each stood for the gold standard, for reduced taxation and for sensible reductions in the tariff. The Democrats, it is true, were by conviction the low-tariff party and the Republicans the party of protection, but the Democratic platform pledged that the party would pull the rug out from under no protected industry by precipitously slashing the tariff that kept foreign competition at bay.⁹ The Republicans, for their part, committed themselves to correcting 'the inequalities of the tariff,' whatever they might be. Blaine, in writing and on the stump, tried to bring the tariff front and center. The Democrats would dismantle the very system of protection that had sustained 20 years of American industrial

⁷ Page 273.

⁸ *The Life and Times of Thomas B. Reed: The Man Who Broke The Filibuster*, Simon and Schuster, New York (2011), pages 207 to 208.

⁹ George Fitch, in his collection of commentaries *Sizing Up Uncle Sam*, noted in 1914 "The tariff is like a revolver. It is either a menace or a protection, depending on whether you are opposing it or standing behind it. . . .The tariff lives in the customs house, but is borrowed by both Republicans and Democratic parties during each campaign and led about the country for exhibition purposes. When Democrats exhibit the tariff, they do so with great terror, and pale statesmen endeavor to keep it from breaking out of its cage and devouring children three at a gulp. . . .On the other hand, when Republicans exhibit the tariff they put their arms lovingly around its neck and claim that it is as useful in a kitchen as two hired girls and a gas stove. On the whole, it is more fun to be a Republican than a Democrat, because a Democrat is so scared of the tariff all through the campaign that he can't sleep at night. A Democratic will link arms with a tiger and stroke his whiskers with pleasure, but let the tariff rise up ever so little and he shrieks for help from Maine to California. . . .Republicans are very kind to the tariff and point with pride to its growth and height. But Democrats claim it should be cut in two close to the tail. . . . We owe a great deal to the tariff, because it has protected our infant industries until they grow up and become carnivorous."

prosperity, he contended. Nor did he neglect to waive the bloody shirt. 'I do not believe,' Blaine harangued a crowd at Ft. Wayne, Indiana, 'that men who added luster and renown to your State through four years of bloody war can be used to call to administration of the Government the men who organized the great Rebellion. . . .Blaine was the first Republican Presidential candidate of the postwar era not to have served in the Union army (the rest had been generals). But because Cleveland too had avoided service, the Democrats had no ready response to Blaine's postdated bellicosity.

Alyn Brodsky summarized the differences in his analysis of Cleveland's character..

The Democrats in their party platform called for reform of the federal land-sale policy, reduction of federal taxes through lowering of import duties, and tighter control on monopolies. The Republicans called for high tariffs, domestic market expansion, and an international standard for the relative value of gold and silver coinage. Also, they demanded more federal government on the local level, whereas the Democrats favored 'the preservation of personal rights' and 'the reserved rights of the states.'¹⁰

As will be seen in this essay, in the context of Nevins' analysis, the Cannon-Black campaign concentrated on the old-soldier vote (but with a distinct twist), and distrust of the South. The extant Republican papers that covered the campaign in the Fifteenth Congressional District, did not pay much attention, if at all, to the Tammany Hall rebellion, Prohibition, nor the business depression (which Danville was not feeling). The character question received some coverage.

While the lack of military service of the two principal presidential candidates reduced their respective war service to a non-issue, in east central Illinois, Cannon's lack of military service during the Civil War was the issue that permeated the campaign in Democratic circles. Black, brevetted a Brigadier General at the end of the war, had served

¹⁰ *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character*, Truman Valley Press, St. Martin's Press, New York, (2000), pages 81 to 82.

gloriously during the war.¹¹ Cannon, however, remained in east central Illinois, serving as State's Attorney in the Twenty-seventh Judicial Circuit (consisting at various times from 1861 to 1868, Vermilion, Champaign, Ford, Douglas, Coles, and Edgar counties), and generating substantial income from fees earned for convictions obtained in his prosecutions and real estate investments.¹² Democrat Black and his supporters took every opportunity to contrast Black's service in the Union Army with Cannon's failure to serve, as a means to attract the traditionally Republican soldier's vote in the District to Democrat Black.

One of the not so subtle efforts of a Republican newspaper to remind the soldiers that commonality in service in the army with Black did not justify changing your vote from a non-serving Republican, and abandoning the party's principles that won the war (as represented by Cannon), to supporting an honored, war-serving Democrat, who represented a party that had radically different principles espoused by the ex-confederate politicians now serving in the national legislature (as represented by Black), appeared in the October 2, 1884, Danville *Daily Commercial*. The newspaper reminded its readers that supporting Republican principles remained worthy everywhere, including among the descendants of the animals who helped the Union army win the war.

¹¹ Black, who had been wounded and permanently disabled in his left arm and wrist, and severely wounded in his right arm, with his brother William, would be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in the early 1890s for their service at Pea Ridge.

¹² See Timothy Ohrea Smith's *The Tuscola Years of Joseph Gurney Cannon and his family: With attention given to the contributions of men from Parke County, Indiana, in the establishment and Development of Tuscola and Douglas County, Illinois*-OCLC 1005740162

An enthusiastic member of some one of our visiting Blaine and Logan clubs, after the procession had been disbanded on the square, spied one of the street car mules, and going up in front of it, shook his torch in its face and shouted, "hurrah for Blaine and Logan." The mule shook his tail out, threw his ears back, and if he didn't make that man sick in the way of making a noise we are mistaken. That mule's father had been in the army and had taught his offspring never to go back on his principles.

Danville Daily Commercial, October 2, 1884

CANNON FACES A CHALLENGE TO HIS RENOMINATION

January 1, 1884, was cold in Danville, and over the next several days, the temperature dropped.¹³ On the night of January 4th, the Cannon family, Joseph, Mary, and daughters Helen and Mabel, left Danville for Washington City.¹⁴ Cannon returned for the remaining portion of the first session of the Forty-eighth Congress. For Mary and Helen, the Washington social season would soon begin, and both would participate in the various teas and gatherings populated by the spouses and older daughters of the representatives and senators who brought their families with them. Mary had attended a school in Chicago in the fall of 1883, and now would attend school in Washington City.

Cannon was not the only nationally known politician to leave town for political purposes in early January. Jesse Harper, of the Greenback party, left town on January 3rd to go to Buffalo, New York.

It did not take long for General John Charles Black's name to appear in the newspapers in the New Year. The *Chicago News* reported that Danville lawyer and Democratic state legislator Joe Mann had "his shoulder against a boom for Gen. John C. Black for Governor." The next day Mann denied the report, and noted "if there are any Governorships to be distributed he is open for an engagement."¹⁵ This would not be the last time that Mann would be associated with booming Black for political office in 1884, and at that time Mann would not deny it.

Locally, it was said that W. J. Calhoun was intending to run for State's Attorney of Vermilion County since C. M. Swallow did not intend to seek re-election.

Cannon had been gone only twenty days when the *Danville Daily News* reported

¹³ The winter of 1883/1884 was considered severe, but on the evening the Cannons left town, the thermometer at the *Danville Daily News* registered twenty below zero from 11 o'clock through three o'clock in the morning. January 5, 1884.

¹⁴ It appears Mary's mother, Frances Reed, stayed in Danville to "hold down the fort" at 418 N. Vermilion Street, Danville.

¹⁵ *Danville Daily News*, January 9 and 10, 1884.

Champaign Gazette: We hear it rumored that J. G. English, of Danville, is a candidate for congress. If Jim and Joe both set out on the mission from that town there will be lively times there about primary season.¹⁶

English, one of the wealthiest men in Vermilion County, was President of the First National Bank in Danville, the chief banking competition to the Cannon's Second National Bank in Danville. English, with his son Charles, had their economic thumbs in many business pies in Vermilion County, and were active Republicans. When the account of the alleged English interest in the congressional job was made, it was report by the *Champaign Gazette* that Champaign's Circuit Judge C. B. Smith, whose name appeared as a potential challenger to Cannon every two years, announced he was not interested this year.¹⁷ The *Champaign Gazette* reported on the perennial rumors of various potential candidates challenging Cannon, but as for English, it noted "that gentleman could see no necessity for taking upon himself the unnecessary burden at this time of life." The *Gazette* further noted in Smith's case, that he would make a good primary race, "but he has decided not to enter the list, wisely we think, for we can see no compensation in the office of Congressman that is an equivalent for the expense, the worry, the libels and the wear and tear on a man's mind that inevitably follow the announcement of candidacy." On January 29th, the *Champaign Gazette* endorsed Cannon's re-election.

The troubles associated with being a congressman were not limited to the *Gazette's* analysis. On February 2nd, the *Danville Daily News* reported on the headaches facing congressmen once they get to Washington City.

It's a pity,' said a congressman, who had come home for the holidays, 'that we no sooner get settled in our seats in the house ready to see what we can do for ourselves and our constituents

¹⁶ January 24, 1884.

¹⁷ *Danville Daily Commercial*, January 28, 1884. The *Gazette* further noted in Smith's case, that he would make a good primary race, "but he has decided not to enter the list, wisely we think, for we can see no compensation in the office of Congressman that is an equivalent for the expense, the worry, the libels and the wear and tear on a man's mind that inevitably follow the announcement of candidacy."

than we find ourselves right on the eve of another campaign,¹⁸ and we are absolutely compelled either to give up hopes of public life before we have got fairly started or to devote more time to the questions of re-nomination and re-election than to matters of state. Why, three members that I know well, and one of them is a prominent candidate for the Ohio senatorship, have gone in together, rented a room across from the state department, and made it their seed headquarters. Don't laugh or make jokes, for it's a fact. They hire a clerk to attend to dispatching their quota of seeds from the agricultural bureau, and spend as much leisure time there as they can themselves. The last time I was in the room it contained 18,000 pounds of seeds, and at least one of the partners expected to be returned to congress principally on account of this seed enterprise. In addition to this mailing machine he is hiring a man to take a horse and buggy and go through the district distributing seeds to farmers.¹⁹

Even though English's name was floating about, the Rossville *Press* on January 30th opined that the field was now clear for Cannon's re-nomination. The Danville *Daily News* took the opportunity on February 1, 1884, to announce its endorsement of Cannon.

A democratic paper a few weeks ago, in speaking of Mr. Cannon, referred to the fact he never yet secured an appropriation for his district, and for this reason should not be returned. Every one knows that there is not so much a pretext for an excuse for an

¹⁸ To illustrate this, Cannon was elected to the Forty-eighth Congress in November 1882, but the House in the Forty-eighth, while it came into legal existence on March 4, 1883, did not meet until December of 1883. Eleven months later, in November 1884, the election for the Forty-ninth Congress was held. This was the customary practice of the House until the Presidential inauguration date was changed from March 4th to January 20th in the Twentieth Century.

¹⁹ One wonders just how much Mary and her daughters, in between their socializing (networking in Twenty-first century parlance) when they were with Joseph in Washington, helped Joseph in keeping up with the correspondence and other constituent services. Cannon had sufficient wealth to hire a private clerk to help with his seed distribution, and other correspondence, and he did so for correspondence and other business before the departments. On this latter point, see the Danville *Daily News* (March 6, 1884) reprint of an *Inter Ocean* profile of Cannon.

appropriation in this district. The same sheet howls for economy, and yet abuses Mr. Cannon for not asking that a portion of the people's money should be needlessly expended in a district where it would be worse than wasted. This, however, only illustrates democratic methods and shows that the chief end of a democratic member of Congress should be to secure an appropriation.

Mr. Cannon's ability as a legislator has for years been acknowledged, not only by the republicans in Congress, but by the democrats as well. This is borne out by the fact that every year he has been advanced higher on each committee of which he has been a member. Had his recommendations in the matter of the star-routes been heeded, there would have been no star-route trials, for it would have been impossible for the gang to have stolen anything; but the democratic majority voted to pass the bill appropriating the money for the star-route service over Mr. Cannon's protest and the result was the steal, the trial and the quittal [sic] by a democratic jury.

Mr. Cannon has been several times honored by his fellow members by being chosen as a member of the committee to lay out and plan the work of the House, and at the opening of the present session was chosen chairman of the republican caucus. The democratic speaker of the House also further honored him by placing him first on the list of republican members of the committee on appropriations, a committee second to none in responsibility and importance.

We allude to these facts to show that the oft repeated charge against Mr. Cannon that he has no influence, is not borne out by the facts. No man could be selected to succeed him who could expect to more than take a back seat for a couple terms, and after that he might remain a nonentity. There are dozens of such nonentities sent to Congress year after year, who are contented to sit at the tail of some committee, and who are only heard when they vote.

We also in this connection desire to call attention to this further fact, that during Mr. Cannon's long term of service he has never

been accused of having any share in any of the numerous steals, even by his worst enemies. That he has sometimes made mistakes, as he himself will not deny; but if one will look the history of the men over who have been in Congress during the same period, who is there of all the number who has made fewer? We have frequently disagreed with Mr. Cannon regarding some of the recommendations and appointments that he has made, but we recognize this further fact, that other people in the district have asked for what we opposed, and we should be egotistical indeed not to concede to others the same right to their opinions that we claim.

So far as attending to the business of his constituents before the several departments, we venture the assertion, without the fear of successful contradiction, that no member has been more faithful, persistent or prompt, and it has made no difference whether the applicant was a Republican, Democrat or greenbacker.

For these reasons, and the further one that we believe when the party has a good servant it should keep him. Mr. Cannon's friends believe the party would do right to send him back to Congress.

That there are equally good men for the place in the district, we concede, but none of them have yet signified their desire to become candidates; and if they do, it is a question whether just at the present, when we need experience to combat the machinations of the democratic party in as well as out of Congress, we should make a change. We submit these views to the readers of the Gazette and ask for them a careful consideration. We are also free to say that if the republicans of the district see fit and proper to nominate some other man for the position, the Gazette will be found just as earnest in urging his election as it would Mr. Cannon's.

As the initial days of February passed, it appeared that Cannon's road to re-nomination was clear. But then, on February 6, 1884, the following appeared in the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*.

The feud in the Republican party in this county [Champaign] took shape to-day in the securing of M. W. Mathews, of this city [Urbana], as a candidate for Congress in opposition to Hon. J. G. Cannon, who has represented this district for many years in Congress. There has been a growing faction in opposition to Mr. Cannon for years, but his course last fall in relation to the Collectorship aroused a great deal of opposition to him. Between one and two hundred leading Republicans signed a request to Mathews to become a candidate, and he to-day entered the field for a hot fight.

Mathews was an attorney and Editor of the Urbana *Herald*, a Republican newspaper. At the end of January, just before the Illinois Press Association left for an excursion to Washington City, Mathews was elected President of the Association.

Milt is known as the silver-tongued orator of Champaign county, a title which he bears by virtue of his powers of oratory. He is socially whole-souled, convivial and companionable. He is just the sort of a person the association require to lead them in a trip of the sort they are now indulging. To all addresses of welcome he is ever ready with a happy and timely response, and where Milt is the spokesman every auditor is at once placed in good spirits by his witty and telling expressions.²⁰

As one would expect, Phocion Howard was on top of this development.

Phocion writes to the *Inter Ocean* from Danville as follows: 'Last week a very select and, as the members supposed, secret caucus of Mr. Cannon's opponents was held in this city, seven gentlemen from Champaign county composing the same. These gentlemen resolved themselves into a committee of grievance and solicitation-the latter partaking somewhat of an offer like Satan once made to our Savior, for the caucus committee is just as powerless to "deliver." The Champaign disgruntled politicians first solicited the Hon. Joseph G. English to become their candidate against Mr. Cannon, promising Champaign in the convention. Mr.

²⁰ Danville *Daily News*, February 2, 1884.

English declined. The committee then solicited ex-representative W. J. Calhoun²¹ and he declined. A similar offer was made mayor L. T. Dickason, but he emphatically declines.' The gentlemen mentioned above are some of Champaign's best citizens, who are not office-seekers, and who have a perfect right to put up a candidate for congress, and it is real mean of Phocion to call them 'disgruntled politicians.'²²

On February 9th, the Danville *Daily News* again endorsed Cannon, and in the process hinted at the source of the Champaign opposition to Cannon.

... Cannon may have some enemies in the district; that would be natural enough for an aggressive man, as Mr. Cannon is. Serving the time he has as our representative, he could not possibly comply with all the personal whims and preferences of individuals or sections, but when he does anything, it stands out bright as a new milled dollar of the dads.

The origin of the Champaign County opposition to Cannon began in the fall of 1883. The Gibson City *Courier* summarized the conflict as a "lively scramble."

A lively scramble is going on for the vacant internal revenue collectorship in this district. Senator Cullom says his man shall have it, and Congressmen Cannon, Payson and Rowell say he shan't, but it must go to their man, and so these great statesmen are expending a considerable amount of brain power over the momentous question as to whether Senator or Representatives ought to have the most influence with the President. Obviously the first deputy ought to have the office, under the principle of civil

²¹ Calhoun was a rising star in the Illinois Republican party, and was already being mentioned as the Republican candidate to succeed State's Attorney Swallow. Danville *Daily News*, February 7, 1884. See Danville *Daily News*, February 26, 1884, which noted "[I]t was Mr. Calhoun who, when he rose in the house of representatives [Illinois General Assembly] to oppose Jim Harrington's resolution declaring Gov. Cullom ineligible to the United States Senate, was sneered at as a boy by those he was to answer. When he was half through his speech, however, a prominent democrat walked around among the members of his side, saying: 'Boys, it's no use to try to answer that speech; that boy knows what he is talking about.'"

²² Champaign *Daily Gazette*, February 7, 1884.

service reform, and the President would do well to appoint him, even if he has to ignore the politicians.²³

The Congressmen had united for the appointment of Champaign's Dr. Wilcox for the appointment.²⁴ Senator Cullom wanted Jake Wheeler, who was not a resident of the collector's district, to get the job. The *Pantagraph* opined

This is one of the most interesting struggles over the spoils which has occurred since the civil service reform was passed. Senator Cullom says that he does not have his heart upon the contest, but, of course, expects and hopes to be successful.²⁵

Cannon went to Washington City in September²⁶ and again in October, presumably to deal with this matter, but on October 14, 1883, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that Senator Cullom had won the fight and Wheeler would get the job over Wilcox.

The case, of course, has been decided without any regard to civil service principles and in strict accordance with the precedents of time-honored patronage.

President Arthur took the position that when there was an internal collector in each congressional district, the district's congressman enjoyed the patronage, but when the number of collectors had been reduced, the position came within the purview of the State's senators' patronage. Perhaps it was Cannon's earlier vote on the House bill reducing the number of internal revenue collectors, thereby increasing government efficiency with reduced costs but also removing the patronage from his hands as a representative, that came home to roost. But what about losing this "turf battle of patronage" made the seven Champaign Republicans "disgruntled?" It was the March 21, 1884

²³ September 21, 1883,

²⁴ Bloomington *Pantagraph*, September 19, 1883.

²⁵ September 19, 1883.

²⁶ Cannon was seen at the Riggs Hotel according to the *Washington Post* edition of September 17, 1883, The October 14th *Tribune* article noted that Cannon left for home on the evening of October 14, the day the decision was announced.

Danville *Daily Commercial*, citing the *Champaign Gazette* that revealed the cause.

Last fall a committee waited on Mr. Cannon and informed him that if he would withdraw his recommendation for Dr. Wilcox, as collector for this district, that they, the committee, would be for him, that he could be nominated without opposition. Mr. Cannon explained his reasons why he could not withdraw his recommendation. Dr. Wilcox was the only man in the district upon whom all could unite, and he thought it better to have Dr. Wilcox than lose the office entirely. His man was not appointed, he was beaten and has accepted it without grumbling. Now, Mr. Cannon is just as worthy of being a candidate as he was then. If he had withdrawn his recommendation there would have been no opposition.

By February 1884, Cannon's refusal to yield to the disgruntled Champaign committee opposing Wilcox in the fall of 1883, and the committee of seven's threat to oppose Cannon, was the spark that set off the Champaign County rebellion against Cannon. It was probably not the only cause. Champaign County Republicans had felt for some time that Cannon's tenure was long enough and that it was their time to be the home of the district's congressman.²⁷

Mathews was not the only Republican expressing an interest in replacing Cannon. Judge Clark of Coles County initially thought Colonel Henry Van Sellers of Paris should get the nomination.²⁸ On February 15th, the *Paris Beacon* endorsed Cannon's re-election, thereby suggesting that Van Sellers was not really in the game. Clark would then start considering opposing Cannon himself. On the 19th, the *Danville Daily News* re-published the *Champaign Gazette's* endorsement of Cannon, thereby outwardly conflicting with Mathews and his *Urbana Herald*. The *Gazette* pointedly observed that no one should doubt the influence of Cannon in the House, and further noted

²⁷ There may also have been residual bitter feelings on Cannon's defeat of Champaign's Langley for the Republican congressional nomination in 1872.

²⁸ *Danville Daily Commercial*, February 11, 1884.

We know whereof we speak when we say that Mr. Cannon is regarded as one of the leaders in the legislation of the Nation; not only in Washington, but in New York; and that he is well known in intelligent and financial circles in New York and New England, as any man in congress today. A gentleman, a former resident of this city, said to one of our citizens the other day: 'You people here don't half appreciate Joe Cannon'

In February 1884, the Danville *Daily Commercial* joined the chorus of endorsements in a long editorial as to why Cannon should be returned to Washington. It alluded indirectly to the Wilcox matter by opining in the context of the selection of postmasters.

Of course there is some opposition to him. Any other man would have opposition after having recommended one man for a postmastership to the exclusion of half a dozen others who aspired to the same honor. The disappointed one and their relatives almost always raise the standard of opposition. Such opposition is unavoidable, but it is unworthy a true patriot.

It was reported on February 13, 1884, by the Champaign County *Herald*, (edited by M. W. Mathews, who was also serving as Champaign County's state's attorney), that Mathews had announced his willingness to oppose Cannon in the Republican primaries for the congressional nomination. Almost immediately an old smear charge against Cannon was raised as applying to Mathews, and illustrates the subtle use of disinformation in the campaigns of the era. Cannon served as state's attorney for the Twenty-seventh Circuit court, which included Champaign County, from 1861 to 1865. The majority of cases for which Cannon brought indictments during his tenure were for the unlicensed sale of liquor. Typically, Cannon would bring multiple counts in an indictment against a person who allegedly illegally sold liquor, and then strike a plea deal with the defendant by nolle [not] prosecuting some of the counts upon the defendant pleading guilty on two to four of the remaining counts. Under the fee system then in effect, Cannon would receive a fee of \$5 for each conviction, taxed as court costs.²⁹ It became

²⁹ See Timothy Ohrea Smith's *Joseph G. Cannon: State's Attorney, Twenty-Seventh Judicial Circuit, 1861 Through 1868* for a detailed analysis of Cannon's years as state's attorney.

common in Democratic political circles to accuse Cannon of generating excessive income for himself through his multiple count indictments with his deals to nolle prosecute some in exchange for guilty pleas.³⁰ This practice became the subject of a response to a letter, originally directed to Champaign County's Circuit Judge C. B. Smith and published in the *Rantoul Press*, and republished by the *Herald*. Champaign County's Circuit Judge C. B. Smith, responded to the charge, and in the process of defending Mathews, absolved Cannon of all similar charges against him.

Dear Sir:-Your letter of the 28th inst. is received, saying that Mr. M. W. Mathews procures the grand jury to return whisky indictments against persons charged with selling liquor with a large number of counts in each indictment and that Mr. Mathews then induces the parties indicted to come into court and plead guilty to a much smaller number of counts than are contained in the indictment, and that he then gets his fee of five dollars on each of the counts named in the indictment, and not on the number to which the defendants plead guilty. I have quoted the substance of your statement. You ask me to answer and inform you as to the facts in such cases. In reply I have to say that persons making these charges are in error. The law allows the prosecuting attorney five dollars on each count, where there is a conviction and judgment against the defendant. The prosecuting attorney is entitled to no fees upon any indictment or upon any count in an indictment when a nolle is entered. No judgment is entered against any defendant which is nolle, either for cost or fine; but the judgment is he goes unacquitted. The public record of the court shows these facts, and where all men may read for themselves. I have watched the official conduct of Mr. Mathews as well as that of every officer of my court) with constant vigilance since he has been a public prosecutor and during the time he was master-in-chancery, covering a period of ten years, and have at each term of court personally examined his reports and I do not believe that he has taken one cent of money for his fees that did not belong to him under the law. He has been a faithful, vigorous and efficient public officer and until your letter came to me I never before heard him charged with misconduct in office. Every intelligent person knows

³⁰ This charge would circulate through the constituency at each of Cannon's early re-election campaigns, reaching it zenith in 1890.

that it is much easier to get the truth out of witnesses in liquor cases before a grand jury than before the petit jury. It is no uncommon thing for defendants to escape conviction entirely, who are charged by the grand jury with a large number of violations of the 'dram shop' act, because witnesses will not testify before the trial jury as they did before the grand jury. The prosecutor must decide whether he will allow a plea of guilty to a part of the counts and thus secure some punishment to the party indicted or take his chances with a lot of unwilling witnesses to let the party escape entirely. In many cases the witnesses who were before the grand jury can never be found when wanted before the petit jury. The same course was pursued by Mr. Cannon, as the records of the court will abundantly show, while he was public prosecutor in this district, and it is the course pursued by every prosecutor in this circuit, and has been ever since I have had any connection with the courts in this state, and I have no reason to believe that any of them have exercised that power unworthily. In thus fully answering you letter it is not for the purpose of being used affirmative electioneering document favorable to Mr. Mathews and hostile to either of the other gentlemen opposing him, although I am earnestly and heartily in favor of Mr. Mathews' nomination, but to correct an erroneous statement which attempted to be used to the injury of a faithful public officer, an honorable and upright man, in whose honor and integrity I have the most abiding confidence. Very truly, C. B. Smith

In a companion article to the above C. B. Smith letter published on the 20th, the Champaign County *Herald*, used Danville Democrat Phocion Howard to suggest that Mathews' chances in Coles and Edgar counties were not closed.

Phocion Howard, of Danville, fixes up the slate for this congressional district and says that Gen. Mitchell, of Charleston, postmaster of that city, owns the county of Coles, and that Jacob Bell, of Paris, postmaster there, together with Asa Barber, the first national banker, carry the county of Edgar in their pocket, and that Mr. Cannon is fortunate in having these men on his side. These men will, no doubt, be surprised that they are the proprietors in fee simple of the republican party of their respective counties. And

it is possible the republicans of these counties will take the statement as news.

On February 20th, the Champaign Daily *Gazette* ran an extended story on “What Seems to be the Sentiment of this County on the Congressional Question.” The pros and cons of Cannon and Mathews were explored in each of the county’s townships. While Mathews appeared to have many friends in his county, many also thought it was not his time in light of Cannon’s stature. The prevailing opinion was to stay with Cannon.³¹ One voter in Pesotum thought that Lincoln “was right about trading horses in mid-stream.”

Coles County appeared to make the first move to quash any thoughts of Horace Clark challenging Cannon when the Charleston *Plaindealer* endorsed Cannon.³² On February 27, 1884, the Danville *Daily Commercial*, reiterating its support of Cannon, published a profile of Clark, finding him qualified for the job. Clark apparently decided not to actively seek the nomination except at the nominating convention, where if “the lightening of a nomination strike him he will gird on the armor and to the fray. Should he fail, he is not one to sulk in his tent, but in his loyalty to Republican principles will be found in the front of the fight for the whole ticket.”

On February 27th, the Champaign County *Herald* reprinted a column from the Chicago *Inter Ocean* (February 20th) that added a new twist as to why Cannon might be in trouble.

In the first place the Hon. J. G. Cannon, the present M.C., has served twelve years, during which time he has not only gained political acumen and standing among his associates in congress, but he has largely increased his worldly possessions, and is a banker of influence among bankers. It is freely and fully granted that such increase in wealth has been through the legitimate growth of well put investments, but while growing rich he has also moved further away from the minds and hearts of his constituency. It is a principle among the plain common folk of the district, that while the senate becomes from year to year more aristocratic and

³¹ See summary in Danville *Daily News*, February 22, 1884.

³² February 22, 1884.

wealthy, it is common prudence to keep the house filled with men fresh from the fields, shops, and offices of the masses. For this reason a large number of voters hereabouts are restless and seek a change.

The present incumbent has an unbending hauteur that seems to say: 'I am sorry for all; you cannot reach me, but it is a matter of the fates and not my concern. As an iceberg in the Gulf Stream is his presence among the common people; tall, symmetrical. Dazzling, over-topping, but chilling and dangerous to the unwary.

Perhaps anticipating some dissatisfaction with the veteran vote in the district, the Danville *Daily Commercial* opined on Cannon's full throttled support of pension legislation. It noted

His efforts, however, have not been confined to voting alone. He has made himself thoroughly acquainted with the pension laws and has found that the numerous instances they operate, by requiring the impossible in certain cases, in such manner as to prevent many meritorious disabled soldiers from receiving the meager allowances of pension they are justly entitled to. To meet cases of this kind Mr. Cannon has introduced in Congress a bill. . .we believe will meet the approbation of all men who believe that the country's defenders in the late war deserve all the consideration in the way of pecuniary benefit. . . ."³³

The *Daily Commercial* published the bill for its readers to see for themselves what Cannon was proposing. Was it a coincidence that Cannon introduced the bill on February 26, 1884?³⁴

The Fifteenth District's Congressional Committee met in the law offices W. R. Lawrence in Danville on February 22nd, and set the congressional nominating convention for April 9, 1884, in Danville. It was an unusually early date³⁵, and presumably was designed to obtain Cannon's re-nomination so he could concentrate on his House Appropriations Committee responsibilities until the end of the Forty-eighth's first

³³ February 29, 1884.

³⁴ Forty-eighth Congress, First Session, *Congressional Record*, pages 1444-45 (1884).

³⁵ Four months early. *St Louis Globe Democrat*, March 6, 1884.

session. It also had the benefit of resolving fairly quickly the rebellion developing against Cannon in the party. Phocion Howard observed

The republicans of this, the fifteenth congressional district, have led off first by calling the primaries³⁶ [for the selection of delegates to the nominating convention]. The reported candidacy of Col. Henry Van Seller, of Paris, has no foundation, as he tells me personally he will not try to defeat Mr. Cannon in the convention. M. W. Mathews, of Champaign, and Horace Clark, of Coles, are still canvassing, however, and the opposition to Mr. Cannon's re-election is beginning to assume a personal and vindictive shape.³⁷

Perhaps the Chicago *Inter Ocean's* staff correspondent Curtis was a Cannon man. Perhaps he wanted to counter the allegations against Cannon that were encouraging the developing rebellion in his district with a positive profile. The Danville *Daily News* reprinted³⁸ his profile of Cannon at work in Washington, and it is set forth here as remarkable reporting of Cannon at work for his constituents and his country in 1884, nineteen years before he became Speaker Cannon in 1903.

Congressman Cannon, by the length of service and legislative prominence, is the dean of the Illinois delegation, and there is no man in Congress more industrious or influential than he.

He came here in 1873 and has been in continuous service since that time. He has affected legislation to a greater extent than any man Illinois has sent to Congress for many years, and has a better reputation throughout the country than the people of this district are aware of. Cannon divides with Hiscock, of New York, and Reed, of Maine, the leadership of the Republican side of the House, and

³⁶ For a discussion of the role of primaries in the selection of delegates to nominating conventions {"the beauty and glory of a representative form of government"}, see Danville *Daily Commercial*, March 3, 1884.

³⁷ Campaign *Daily Gazette*, March 3, 1884. Phocion also noted that the Democratic opponent to Cannon appeared to be Hon. William A. Day of Champaign, the present mayor.

³⁸ March 6, 1884.

his long experience, his resources as a debater, his courage and fighting abilities, eminently fit him for the position.

During the last four years he has been a member of the Committee on Appropriations, and is therefore prominent and influential in legislation. His hobby is intelligent economy, and, with Mr. Hiscock, of New York, in the last House of Representatives accomplished more genuine reforms in public expenditures than have been secured for ten years. He is in constant consultation with the President and the members of the Cabinet, and is recognized as the mouth piece of the administration on the floor of the House. If a vote were taken to decide who is the most useful man of the Republican side I think Cannon would be elected. His election as chairman of the Republican caucus was a well-deserved testimonial of the confidence of his fellow-members in his judgment and ability. The demands upon Cannon's time and attentions are very large, and he is perhaps the hardest worked man in Congress except Morrison. Cannon devotes himself to his committee work six or eight hours a day and is compelled to employ the entire time of a private secretary in order to attend to his correspondents and business before the departments.

Mr. Cannon occupies modest but comfortable apartments on the fourth floor of the Riggs House, where he has his wife and oldest daughter with him. The youngest daughter is attending a private boarding school in the city. Mrs. Cannon is not much of a society lady, but has a large acquaintance, and is very popular.

The above is precisely the testimony borne as to Mr Cannon's standing and ability by every one who knows him. To displace such a man at this time by a new member devoid of experience would be the greatest possible folly.

The people who elect a congressman to serve them, and who know that only a tried man of experience, unimpeachable honor and large common sense can serve them best, will not make the change at [a] time so critical as the present.

On March 5th, the Champaign County *Herald*³⁹ published two rare insights into the behind the scenes role that brother William (Bill) P. Cannon played in Congressman Cannon's campaigns. The first clearly suggests that Bill Cannon used the Cannon indirect economic power (the Tuscola First National Bank⁴⁰) in their old county to hold a quick Republican congressional primary to stop Clark and Mathews from gaining any ground in their pursuit of delegates.

The Danville dictation to Douglas county calling their primaries on a week's notice, when there was plenty of time for three week's notice to have been given is creating considerable excitement in that county. They want to know whether Bill Cannon owns them or whether they are entitled to take their time and have something to say about it themselves. The 'kick' against being run by Cannon's Danville and Tuscola banks. If they had three weeks time in Douglas, Mr. Cannon would be snowed under there, and even on the short notice given, the opposition [Clark and Mathews] will make a lively time for the machine managers and we shall not be surprised to hear of Mr. Cannon's defeat there.

In the same March 5th edition, the *Herald* accused Bill Cannon of buying the support of the Champaign *Times*.

The Champaign Times and its correspondents seem to be booming Mr. Cannon for congress just now. Being the only democratic paper in this county it ought to [be] able to help him among democrats who attend republican primaries. It also alludes to Bill Cannon's barrel[money[]]; it cannot be-no, banish the thought-it certainly has not received any of its contents. It is no doubt controlled by an unselfish desire to have the republicans nominate their 'strong mam,' so that the calamity of a democratic congressman may not overtake us. Smyser is smooth, but the people can read him through and through.

³⁹ March 5, 1884.

⁴⁰ The personal property tax records in Douglas County show that only Joseph Cannon owned stock in the bank. He and his other banking partner bought William's shares when William moved to Danville in 1873..

In its efforts to support Mathews, his *Herald* published the following commentary, suggesting Cannon was not as strong as some thought.

The Hon. W. A. Day [Mayor of Champaign] shows his hand in last week's Times, in an article headed 'Whom the Gods Would Destroy they first make mad.' Brother Day's stereotyped form of expression when he desires to be particularly sarcastic is very plain. It has been conceded by Phocion Howard, now corresponding for the Chicago papers, that W. A. Day is to be democratic nominee. If Mr. Cannon is the strong man the hiring newspapers would have us believe, why should Mr. Day rush into print in the Times in an attempt to down M. W. Mathews. That Mr. Day wrote the article there is no doubt; the same language, he has used in the presence of two republicans at least. Mr. Day evidently wants Mr. Cannon nominated.⁴¹

The personal attacks on Cannon by the Mathews and Clark supporters, while not specified in the extant Republican press of the time, received a cautionary warning from the Bloomington *Pantagraph*.

The aspirants for the nomination for congress in the fifteenth district against Mr. Cannon would help their cause a good deal if they would give attention to their own case and cease making assaults on Mr. Cannon. If there is a republican in Congress from Illinois who is emphatically not a boss and who is willing to abide by the action of the people without undue dictation on his part that man is Joseph G. Cannon. He is at this time quietly attending to his duties in Congress, notwithstanding the efforts that are being put forth to defeat him and allowing the campaign to take its own course. He is willing that the Republicans of the district should settle the matter between him and his opponents, and we suggest that his opponents in the same spirit of fairness allow the contest to be made on the merits of the candidates and without attacking the record of Mr. Cannon. The more Cannon's record is ventilated the better we imagine it will be for him, and the best fight any man can make against him is to go in the best he can for himself and let Cannon alone.

⁴¹ March 12, 1884.

What were the attacks against Cannon? One was the allegation that his “influence and usefulness in Congress is very small in comparison with what it should be considering the length of time he has served.”⁴² This perhaps has its origins in Cannon’s failure to obtain the internal revenue collectorship for Champaign’s Wilcox in 1883.

Even with all the positive endorsements of Cannon, the rebellion seemed to have “legs” as the days of February progressed into the days of March, enough so that Cannon left Washington during the first congressional session, without obtaining a formal leave of absence, and returned to Champaign on March 6th to deal personally with the matter.⁴³ When he returned to Washington City is unknown, and who he saw and where he went within the district also remains unknown, but it appears he resolved the difference with the opposing candidates. How he did it remains off the record.

The nastiness of the Republican primary campaign appears to have included those working for Cannon. The *Mattoon Journal* complained that Cannon supporters Bostwick & Co published slanderous articles against Clark under the names “Sincerity” and “Justice,” with large numbers scattered over the district through the government mails.

But now the last step of the desperate is taken. The private circular without a name, the coward’s dodge, the stroke of the dark, is printed and is being circulated just before the primaries.⁴⁴

By March 12th, the *Champaign Gazette* reported

Mr. Cannon carried every township in Douglas county but one. In Vermilion county he had no opposition. This virtually gives him the nomination, as it is now conceded that neither Clark or Mathews will have a delegate in the convention.⁴⁵

⁴² Danville *Daily Commercial*, March 7, 1884.

⁴³ *Mattoon Gazette*, March 7, 1884. “Hon. J. G. Cannon came home yesterday to see what this little wind-storm in his district means.”

⁴⁴ Champaign County *Herald*, March 19, 1884.

⁴⁵ Danville *Daily News*, March 15, 1884.

The Democrats, as will become apparent, were watching.

When Cannon carried the votes for re-nomination in Coles County, with his delegates from Vermilion and Douglas Counties in hand, he became assured of re-nomination.⁴⁶ Champaign County became academic, but as it turned out he received most of its delegates as well.

The Indianapolis *Journal* opined that with Coles County in his hand

. . .his nomination as a candidate for representative in Congress. . .is thus placed beyond question. Mr. Cannon is a man of national reputation, and the voters of the district have acted wisely in demanding his renomination.⁴⁷

The Chicago *Inter Ocean* noted, perhaps a bit prematurely, as of March 18th, that Cannon's assured re-nomination made him the first

member of the present congress whose return is assured. . . .The only people who regret Cannon's return are the government clerks, who have not forgiven him for increasing their hours of duty in the last congress. Although they are better paid and have shorter hours than the employes [sic] of any private institution or corporation anywhere in the country, they look upon more than six hours a day as a hardship, and resent Cannon's action in increasing them to seven.⁴⁸

When the votes were cast in the Champaign County Congressional Delegate Selection Convention, Cannon received 52 votes and Mathews, 45, thereby obtaining all of the County's delegates for Cannon at the congressional nominating convention. As was expected Mathews was called upon to give a speech, and he attempted to explain why he had become a candidate.

At the earnest request of almost three hundred Republicans from Champaign and Homer, consisting of the representative men of these two banner Republican townships of this magnificent

⁴⁶ Danville *Daily News*, and the Danville *Daily Commercial*, March 24, 1884.

⁴⁷ March 24, 1884.

⁴⁸ Danville *Daily News*, March 18, 1884.

county, I reluctantly became a candidate for congress, some six weeks ago. I was led to believe that this county was in a frame of mind to assert the rights in a district that had assigned her a back seat for a quarter of a century of Republican rule. Her thrifty and intelligent population had, during all these years rallied to the flag of Republicanism with unfaltering tread. Her splendid majorities rolled up at each election for the Republican ticket, I thought entitled her to be recognized in the distribution of party favors.

To have refused to be made the instrument of testing a commendable county pride, at the request of so many tried and true Republicans whose character as citizens gave weight to their demand, would have been political suicide. I therefore accepted the call and allowed my name to go before the people of this county. It was met with bitter, well-organized and ceaseless opposition from quarters least expected. The result is shown; practically it has resulted in defeat on a vote by townships. It is with pride, however, that I point you to the fact that on the popular vote, I am the choice of the rank and file by a majority of 134.

I therefore tender my thanks to the majority of the Republicans of Champaign county for their generous endorsement and expression of confidence.

The practical result of this contest retires me to private life, but you can not retire me from that grand old party that has been for a quarter of a century the bulwark of liberty and the preserver of the republic.

Men may rise, or men may fall, but the principles of that party which has shed lustre [sic] upon every page of history since his birth will live on, the pride of the present and the hope of the future.

You may tell me, as you have today, that you do not want me for captain, but you have no power to expel me from the ranks. You can not stifle my voice upon the stump urging my friends to vote the ticket without a blot, a blur, or a scratch. You can not paralyze

my pen that shall speak for the Republican ticket to an audience of ten thousand each successive week.

The hottest contest ever witnessed in this county between Republicans has closed, and to every Republican who has not stepped outside of the pale of honorable warfare, I here and now extend the hand of friendship and challenge each and every one to surpass me if he can in working night and day for the success of the entire ticket.

And now to those who have manfully stood up for Champaign county in this contest and who, without remuneration or hope of reward, have labored for my success and the pride of our county, I extend my heartfelt thanks. Though defeated now, be not cast down, for as sure as the Lord lives, and he surely does, your just demands will in time be conceded. Let none be more loyal than you to the decision of our party tribunals. Let us join hands with all good and true Republicans in the contest that is to come, and form a resistless phalanx that shall carry dismay into the ranks of the common enemy.⁴⁹

Mathews' speech was interrupted several times by applause, "some of it came from those who were opposed to his nomination."⁵⁰

As for Clark,

It was reported that Mr. Clark, of Coles county, who was Mr. Cannon's opponent, takes his defeat as a good Republican should, and declares that he is ready for hard work for the grand old party.⁵¹

The Republican Congressional Nominating Convention for the Fifteenth District convened in the Vermilion County Circuit Court room on April 9, 1884.⁵² Cannon was not present, being in Washington City attending

⁴⁹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, March 28, 1884.

⁵⁰ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, March 27, 1884.

⁵¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, March 29, 1884.

⁵² It was several floors above the Cannon's Second National Bank on the ground floor of the courthouse.

Congress. Cannon was nominated by acclamation after being presented to the convention by F. M. Wright of Champaign.⁵³ Even though the Democrats would not nominate their candidate to oppose Cannon until early September, the Republican's view of the importance of the soldiers' vote in the coming election is evidenced in the resolution adopted at the Convention.

Resolved, That it is the sense of this convention that we recognize the right of our soldier friends and would urge our representative in Congress to use his influence to help pass the revised pension bills as recommended by the committee of the G. A. R. to this committee in the House of Representatives as a just and deserved claim.

That this convention heartily endorses the course of Hon. J. G. Cannon in Congress; and especially commend his efforts in facilitating the pensioning of disabled Union soldiers.

That the delegates and alternates to the Republican National Convention from this Fifteenth Congressional District, be instructed to use their influence and all honorable means to secure the nomination of Senator John A. Logan for the Presidency of the United States.

That this convention endorses the Republican National platform of 1880; and

We ask that the National Republican platform of 1884 shall declare in favor of securing to all citizens of the United States full political and civil rights.

⁵³ Francis (Frank) Marion Wright would be nominated and confirmed as the United States District Court Judge, sitting in Danville, in the newly created Eastern District Court of Illinois in 1905. In Wright's nominating speech, he noted Cannon was not a soldier but "has been the active, laborious and successful friend of the soldier, and he will continue to be so. He is a man who has acquired so much experience by long service, that he will serve us better than any inexperienced man who can possibly be elected." Danville *Daily News*, April 10, 1884.

Perhaps as a reminder to the Champaign delegates of their folly in opposing Cannon, L. S. Wilcox (of the internal revenue collector's matter) was selected as a delegate for the national Republican convention that summer.⁵⁴

It did not take long for the Democratic press to come out swing. The Paris *Times* opined

As predicted in the columns of this paper three months ago, Joseph Graballhecan Cannon was, on Wednesday, unanimously nominated as the republican candidate for congress in this district.⁵⁵

Judge Clark landed on his feet. He received the Republican nomination for State Senator. The Danville *Daily Commercial* noted

The Judge made a good fight four years ago, and downed that famous straddle Mal. Jones [whose congressional campaign in 1878 was managed by Phocion Howard and whom Cannon defeated for Congress in 1878]. He represented his district with honor to himself and his constituents. If the people elect Judge Clark they will have a representative that is capable of working successfully for their interest. . . His voice would be heard on the right side of all important questions.⁵⁶

It would be five months before the Democrats in the Fifteenth Congressional District selected their candidate to oppose Cannon. Ultimately, General Black would accept the congressional nomination in September, but before that happened the General enjoyed a lot of politicking unrelated to his upcoming congressional campaign.

BROTHER BILL CANNON RUNS FOR OFFICE

With Cannon in Washington City, and the "little wind storm" now blown over, the congressional campaign left the spotlight of coverage in the district's newspapers. But Joseph was not the only Cannon seeking

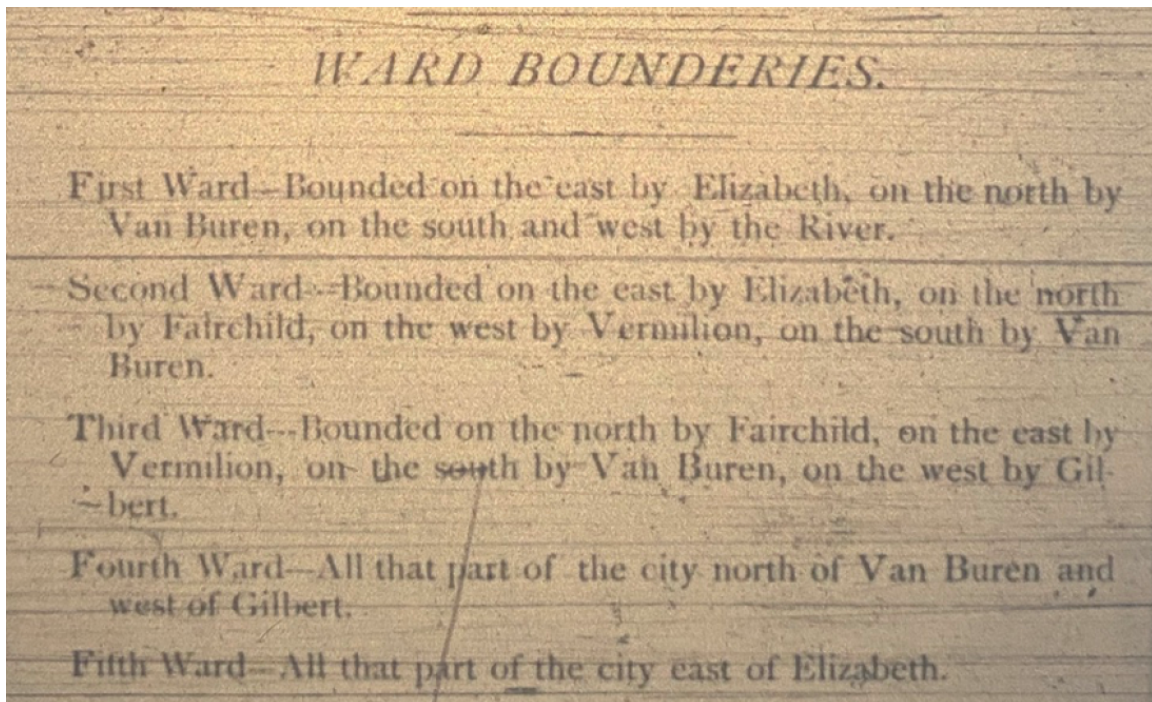
⁵⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, April 9, 1884.

⁵⁵ Danville *Daily News*, April 16, 1884.

⁵⁶ April 25, 1884.

political office in the spring of 1884. Younger brother William P. Cannon, *inter alia*, President of the Second National Bank of Danville, announced his candidacy for Alderman in Danville, Third Ward. The *Danville Daily News* observed

[i]t is not necessary for us to state that if elected he will make an excellent guardian of the interests of his constituents-every voter in the ward knows that such would be the case. Mr. Cannon is a representative citizen in the highest sense of the word.⁵⁷



Cannon resided on the northwest corner of the intersection of Williams and Vermilion streets, a half block to the north of Brother Joe. Three candidates sought the job: Cannon, L. M. Moore, and R. W. Gillett. On April 16th, the *Danville Daily News* reported Moore had 139 votes, Cannon 120, and Gillett 73. Lindley M. Moore, a partner with John F. McCoy, was a contractor and builder, whose home was two lots south of Fairchild on the west side of Vermilion street. Gillett was a physician.

⁵⁷ March 25, 1884.

THE INTEREIM BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS-APRIL TO JULY 1884

In 1884, there were four men of Danville, Illinois, who enjoyed national political reputations and operated on the national level. The first, of course, was Cannon, but it is arguable that newspaperman and political reporter Phocion Howard was better known throughout the land. Jesse Harper had started out as a Republican but became a national leader of the Greenback party by traveling throughout America, making speeches on its behalf. Last, but not least, was John Charles Black. By the beginning of fall 1884, Black would be known as one of the men who facilitated the nomination of Democrat Grover Cleveland for President and who declined the Democratic nomination for Vice President.

Cannon remained in Washington City with the first session of the Forty-eighth Congress. He paid a brief visit with his family on his way to the Republican National Convention in Chicago in the beginning of June, and did not return to the Danville and the district until the middle of July. But even then the Democrats had not yet nominated a candidate to oppose him, so he went about the district, not formally but still substantively campaigning until his Democratic opponent was selected.

PHOCION HOWARD. Phocion Howard first appeared in Cannon's political life as the campaign manager for Malden Jones in the 1878 canvass. Prior to that time, he had developed a national reputation as a bohemian reporter, whose name on a column was sure to attract readers because of his wit and style. Shortly after the 1878 congressional canvass, Howard removed with his family to Danville permanently until his death in 1893. It was in Danville that *Tribune* columnist Eugene Field made Phocion famous for his farming activities at Barataria. During his residency in Danville, he also became a community leader in its economic development. In 1883, Phocion had been elected to a one-year term on the Vermilion County Board of Supervisors. In 1884 he decided not to run again for the Board and instead ran and won election to a school board in Vermilion County.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ The Decatur *Herald* reported this, describing Phocion as "irrepressible." April 24, 1884.

As a Democratic newspaper correspondent, writing for several State newspapers, Phocion would go wherever the political action was in the State, as well as places not so active, and report on the political activities of the principal political parties and their leaders in Illinois. An example of this appeared in the Rock Island *Argus*.

Phocion Howard, the great newspaper correspondent, was in our city this morning, enroute to Peoria to attend the democratic state central committee meeting. Phocion is now attached to the Chicago Inter Ocean, although he is an old line democrat, and he is busy writing up the different congressional districts. He assured us that he has been all over Fulton county and that Johnny Gray does not want to go to congress. The end and aim of Phocion's ambition at present is to kill the dogma of free trade. 'The democratic party must cut loose from it, me boy,' said he, 'or they are gone. All the manufacturers, all the wealth and intelligence in the country is on the other side, and the democracy cannot afford to disregard the sight of the times. The people want protection, and they are going to have it.'⁵⁹

The Decatur *Herald* also took the opportunity to poke some fun at Phocion's roving reporting style.

The State Republican committee members have gone home, but Col. Phocion Howard lingers behind to not with eagle eye from this point the result of the committee's action upon the country at large. . . .it is understood that in the matter of the Presidency he is in favor of Logan with a leaning toward Blaine, while his preference is for [Illinois Congressman] Morrison, and McDonald is his second choice first, last and all the time. But Phocion has not been as talkative since he went down to Washington to serves as [Illinois Democratic Congressman] Bill Springer's committee clerk and got left.

The last sentence in this report is the only reference to the fact Phocion had sought a congressional clerkship from Springfield's Springer and

⁵⁹ March 6, 1884.

been disappointed. This may have played a role in Phocion's leaving the Democratic party later in the year, *infra*.

In early April, Phocion spoke at a soldiers' gathering in Springfield. He could be very entertaining.

He kept the boys in good humor for some minutes. He rung in 'hard roads' and closed with a song of his own composition.⁶⁰

After Phocion's death in 1893, the *Inland printer* asked its readers

An inquirer desires THE INLAND PRINTER to ask its readers if any one can supply the complete words of the song entitled 'Illinois,' which was composed and at times sung by Mr. Phocion Howard, of happy memory, now deceased. Inquirer knows but a fragment of the ballad, as follows:

'Way down upon the Wabash such land was never known-
If Adam had come over here he'd claim it for his own.
He'd sworn it was Eden he'd played in when a boy.
And straightway named it Paradise-the State of Illinois

Then bring your family westward, good health you will
enjoy
And you'll find wealth and pleasure in the State of Illinois.

T'was here the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon of old,
With an ass load of pomegranates, sweet incense and fine
gold
And when she viewed the country o'ver her heart was filled
with joy.
She said she'd like to be a queen and reign in Illinois.

Then bring your family westward, bring all your girls and
boys
And you'll cross the Shawnee ferry to the State of Illinois.

⁶⁰ *Illinois State Journal* (Springfield) April 3, 1884.

In May Phocion ventured to Texas, where the Peach Springs, Arizona, *Champion* observed

The 'bravest man in the republic' has just been heard from.
'Phocion' Howard is wearing a plug hat in Texas.⁶¹

In June, Phocion contributed the following to the Chicago *Inter Ocean*. It demonstrates the prevailing feeling in the early summer of 1884 that Cannon was the sure winner in the fifteenth district.

Mayor Day, of Champaign, writes me [Phocion] that he has declined to be a candidate for Congress against Congressman Cannon, of the fifteenth district, in favor of ex-representative McKinlay, of Edgar. Past Sir Eminent Commander, K. T., Robert N. McKinlay, of Paris, writes me that he will accept the nomination of his democratic friends for congress in the fifteenth district if they will hold the convention not earlier than the 1st of October prox. The Past S. E. C. K. T. X. Y. Z. High Cockaloram Grand Mogul McKinlay, evidently does not want the hungry horde of democratic strikers to have a very long pull at his little keg. How would it suit the gentlemen with the alphabet annex to hold the convention on the fifth of November instead of the first of October. It is only 34 days later and would probably be a fine stroke of economy and result about the same.⁶²

A similar feeling appeared in a *Herald* article published at the end of June,⁶³ but this article also revealed what the ultimate Democratic candidate was doing politically as June merged into July.

We have been asked something less than a thousand times, 'who will run for congress against Mr. Cannon?' We are not in the confidence of the democratic bosses and do not speak by the card, but we know a great many things by intuition. If the state convention should not send a bolt of double-gear'd lightning down Charley Black's little rod, he will be a candidate for congress, unless the national convention should get acquainted

⁶¹ May 17, 1884.

⁶² Champaign County *Herald*, June 4, 1884.

⁶³ June 25, 1884, as republished in the *Herald* on October 8, 1884.

with 'Phocion' Howard and take his advice and nominate Black for vice-president. Black would rather be beaten by Logan [potential Republican Presidential candidate] or Oglesby [Republican candidate for Governor] than by Cannon; the wound would be deeper and of more magnificent proportions; he would prefer that Dick should carry his scalp than his neighbor Joe. If God in an hour of wrath should conclude to punish the country with a democratic administration, Charley would stand nearer the throne. We know that means defeat, no matter which he does, for this district intends to keep a republican in congress, and 'when the band begins to play,' us fellows who were knocked down and dragged out during the late 'unpleasantness' and commanded to take a back seat, will bear aloft the cheering motto, an 'unscratched ticket' at the head of the procession. We are no George William Curtis-Miss Nancy-now you see it-and now you don't see it-republicans. We are clean cut-dyed in the wool fight it out on the line-stalwart-stay in the ring-hit a head when you see it-straight-outs; and don't let any aspiring democrat forget it for a holy minute. If there is any democratic prospective candidate that expects to draw on us for consolation, we serve notice upon him now that the draft will go to protest. There is nothing to your credit in this bank.

We say this much in order that some poor, unsophisticated democrat, as he sails his rickety boat upon the brackish brine of that proverbial river, to whose lead waters so many Bourbon boats have steered, may not shake his briny locks at us as he disappears amid the windings of the mystic river.

On June 14th, the Danville *Daily Commercial* published a column suggesting Phocion was having problems with the Democratic party.

Phocion Howard has been interviewed since Tilden stepped aside [in the Presidential race], and when asked what the Democrats would do at Peoria [State Convention] and Chicago [national convention], replied, 'The Lord only knows.' This sounds as though Phocion was despondent. He says the Democrats should not touch, taste or handle the tariff, for he believes it to be an unclean thing. He says, 'You can not make an Irish Nationalist a free trader,

and the agitation of the subject in Congress lost us at the last spring elections the Democratic cities of Springfield, Peoria, and Danville, and lost us the manufacturing and business cities of Bloomington, Decatur and Freeport, which we had almost redeemed from Republicans. Look the situation square in the face: What will the Democrat party amount to without the Irish vote of our large cities?’

What was going on with the tariff in the Democratic party? The Danville *Daily News* provided its readers a brief update.

CONFUSION IN THE CAMP

There is confusion in the Democratic camp on the tariff. There are all sorts of resolves from the resolve of Vermilion county Democracy, led by General JOHN C. BLACK, to the resolve of the Ohio Democracy for a higher tariff on wool. Then there are all sorts of efforts to carry water on both shoulders, of which the resolutions of the Indiana Democracy is a fair specimen.

There must be an effort made to reduce this confusion to order in the Chicago Convention. The country awaits with expectation the result.

In the meantime the voters of this vicinity have the pointed declaration of the Vermilion county Democrats that they are for tariff for revenue only; that is the same old plank of 1880 which was voted down by such a heavy majority; and the voters who believe that America should be Americans, can prepare their ballots to again vote down this English doctrine [a/k/a “free trade”] applied to American politics.⁶⁴

The June 26, 1884 Danville *Daily Commercial*, Republican in its politics, reported on the Vermilion County Democratic party’s convention results.

⁶⁴ June 27, 1884.

Gen. Black, chairman of the committee on resolutions reported a platform, a rehash of the Democratic platform of former years, which are so familiar that we deem it unnecessary to give it space and time.

After announcing the Democratic ticket and the selection of delegates (and alternatives) to the various conventions. G. Wilse Tilton resolved that

[w]e hereby instruct our representatives to the State Convention, to be held at Peoria, July 2nd, 1884, to present as a candidate for Governor of the State of Illinois, the honorable name of General Charles Black, of Vermilion County, Illinois.

It was adopted with cheers. The speeches then followed.

GENERAL J. C. Black addressed the convention. . .for a few minutes, complimenting [it] for bringing together such representation of the industries and professions, scored the Republican party from a Democratic standpoint, and bitterly opposed the educational bill of John A. Logan, characterizing it as a vast political bureau, established for the advancement of the Republican party, and especially John A. Logan. The General's remarks were frequently interrupted by cheers and other demonstrations of approval.

JOE MANN made one of his characteristic speeches, pitching into Blaine in regular New Jersey Democratic style, couched in the most delicate and refined language-just as Joe is noted for all over the State-attacking his religion, calling him a Presbyterian, Unitarian and Catholic, introduced Mr. Blaine's grandmother for a funny part, and said many other things that perhaps he will wish he had not said before the Ides of November. Mr. Mann also alluded to certain bolters in the Republican party in Massachusetts and the east, and said they were called dudes because they did so, and said 'they had more brains in the ends of their little fingers than the accusers have in their heads.' This is Joseph's [Mann] opinion from a New Jersey standpoint. Massachusetts and New Jersey are not far apart.

The *Daily Commercial* then noted that the convention had unfairly “slaughtered” E. R. E. Kimbrough,⁶⁵ speculating it was because of his supporting the Harper bill (requiring state-wide high liquor licenses) when he was a state representative in the General Assembly.

On the evening of the June 26th, the Young Men’s Republican Club formally opened the 1884 campaign with a speech by M. W. Mathews at the Armory. Music was provided by the I.O.O.F. band and a glee club consisting of Drs. Leseure and Gillett,, J. B. Samuel, and Charles Smith. Mathews spoke for an hour. In the process, he praised President Arthur “by his level head, kind and honest heart, great brain and wise, practical statesmanship” who had guided America through the aftermath of Garfield’s assassination. He characterized the Democratic party as one of opposition and likened it to an Irishman who was washed ashore in a strange land and asked a native

‘Have yees a government?’, and being answered in the affirmative he replied: ‘Then I’m agin it.’ So the Democratic party is against the Republican party on general principles.

Phocion’s long affiliation with the Democratic party came to an end at the close of June 1884, when he “burned his bridges”⁶⁶ at the end of the Vermilion County Democratic Convention.

One day later, the Danville *Daily News* reported, “It seems PHOCION regarded the late Democratic County Convention as flimsy.”⁶⁷ The next day the Danville *Daily News* reported, perhaps gleefully within their

⁶⁵ Kimbrough stated at the convention that “He had fought under the Democratic banner when it was in the dust; it is now in the heavens, and we intend to keep it there.” Danville *Daily Commercial*, June 26, 1884.

⁶⁶ Danville *Daily News*, June 27, 1884.

⁶⁷ June 27, 1884. To put this rebuff in context, on May 7, 1884, the Danville *Daily News* reported that E. R. E. Kimbrough, was prominently mentioned as a candidate for Lieutenant-Governor at the State Democratic Convention in July. “General Black is among the number named to head the ticket for Governor.” See also the wonderings of the Danville *Daily Commercial* on June 30, 1884, *inter alia*, what Kimbrough “thinks of the ‘shabby’ treatment and the conduct of Black, Mann and Barton.”

editorial rooms, Phocion's very public break with the Democrats. Before reprinting his speech in its entirety, the *News* noted

We publish in this issue the philippic of Phocion Howard against the present time-serving Democracy. He claims that he is an old-time Bourbon Democrat, and that he has not left his party, but his party has left him; that he cannot join the Republican party, and hence he is an orphan.

PHOCION, with all his eccentricities, is a ready, accurate, witty and eloquent man. INGERSOL, STOKES and WENDLING do not excel him. The address which follows is as classic, as radiant with brilliant sallies, as tart with withering wit, as any oration of equal length delivered by either of the orators above-named.

The manner of its delivery was in keeping with the address. His broad face smooth-shaven, his coat buttoned over his broad bust, in perfect self-possession, he hurled his glittering lances from the platform with force into the bosom of his old mother, the Democratic party, encouraged by thunderous applause by the audience.

Our people have often paid a dollar to hear a lecture not as good as PHOCION'S.

PHOCION, why don't you quit politics and the press and take the lecture platform?

Under the headline

THE SAGE OF BARATARIA

**A Classical Address Full of Facts for Free-Trade
Democrats-Phocion Howard Reads General Black, Joseph B.
Mann and Dr. Barton Out of the Party**

the Danville *Daily News* reprinted Phocion's speech as it was given at the Danville Armory⁶⁸, filled with citizens, after Hon. M. H. Mathews [the primary challenger to Cannon] gave his address to the Young Republican Men's Club.

FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND CITIZENS---

Every public meeting in Athens was opened with a curse on anyone who should not speak what he really thought. That Athens which, founded by Theseus twelve hundred years before the birth of our Savior-that Athens which gave laws and liberty to Greece with varying fortune for more than a thousand years, and then fell under the rule of Aristion the tyrant; so stand I here, invoking the right and baring my brow to the curses of my countrymen, should I fail in speaking what I believe to be the truth.

Aristotle tells us that Theseus was the first ruler who inclined toward Democracy. He gave up regal power and settled the commonwealth under the benign sway of perfect peace. The Oracle at Delphi thus applauded him: 'From royal stems thy honor, Theseus, springs; By Jove beloved, the sire supreme kings. See rising towns, see wide extended states; On thee dependent, ask their future fates.'

Nor was it to the Athenians alone that he gave liberty. His proclamations to all the world began, 'Come hither, all ye people!' To know how perfect was that liberty, how happy and prosperous its people, let the historian teach.

We know, now, that our fathers, in framing this great Republic, modeled and shaped it after that of Athens, the Wonder City of the World; hence, 'these rising towns, these wide extended states.'

For more than a thousand years, Athens flourished. And yet, the historian tells us, hardly had the infant commonwealth been launched upon the sea of liberty than **THE DEMAGOGUE WAS FOUND** reaching out for the helm. In Menestheus did Theseus find

⁶⁸ It stood on the southeast corner of Harrison and Hazel streets in Danville.

his demagogue, the first of man-kind that undertook his eloquence, to ingratiate himself with the people and lead them astray.

Hardly an hundred years has this free government of ours buffeted the waves of prejudice, contended against the insidious power of tyranny, and not only one but ten thousand Menestheus demagogues are grasping for the helm of state.

That ancient democracy, comprising the substance of liberty and equality-THE DEMOCRATIC THESEUS is now, here, in what we are wont to eulogize as the model Republic of the world, nothing save a synonym for spoils and monopoly.

As the Jew turns his face towards Jerusalem, as the Mohameian [sic] turns his face toward Mecca, so does the latter-day Democrat turn his face toward Washington; not with reverence, be it said, but with the inflamed eye of greed. But, thank heaven, his temple was rent in twain, while the corpse of his last President hangs suspended in mid air, denied by his indignant countrymen decent sepulture.

The creed of the latter-day Democrat is comprised of two words: Get office. His confession of faith-What is office? Answer: The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. [Great laughter.] Solon, the great law-giver, summed up the duty of citizenship by declaring that man infamous who stands neuter in the time of sedition. Is not sedition abroad in the land today? Can a good citizen stand neuter, or be indifferent, when he sees one half of the Capitol at Washington under the control of men who for four long and bloody years fought to raze it to the ground? And who are these men? Democrats, Democrats every last one of them.

When the War of Rebellion closed, where did these rebels go?

Isham G. Harris, Governor of Tennessee, now a United States Senator, Sterling Price, ex-Governor of Missouri, Macgruder to be its next Governor, went to Mexico; Loring, of Massachusetts, a graduate of West Point, but a Confederate General, went to Egypt;

Benjamin, of Louisiana, a United States Senator, afterward in the cabinet of Jefferson Davis, went to England; John Surratt-hisses-one of the conspirators who prompted Wilkes Booth to assassinate Abraham Lincoln, went to Italy. And from all the south such representative men went abroad, declaring that they would never live in a country that floated the American flag. When did they return? When their northern doughface allies held out the hope that with a solid South and a divided North the good old days of James Buchanan and Jefferson Davis, with all the spoils of office, would be returned to them. And so they are back from their WEARY WANDERINGS among the cactus of Mexico, the lice of Egypt, the lazzaroni of Italy-back again in Washington as Senators, as Representatives, as office-holders. These men, I say, are Democrats, but what kind? To paraphrase a gifted American orator, every man who hates his brother is such a Democrat-the kind of Democrats who compose the Solid South and who make up that vast crowd of Northern doughface allies. [Applause.]

In their greed for office, in their proud posturing before the people for power, they remind one of the story told by the historian Lucian. A band of monkeys had been trained to wear clothes and strut upon the stage in feeble imitation of performers. One day when the monkeys were at their best a Roman wag threw a handful of nuts upon the stage. Instantly each monkey forgot he was half human, and began scrambling, monkey-like, for the nuts. So it is with these fellows. No matter how learnedly they may talk, no matter how eloquently they may decant upon liberty, only throw some humble crumbs of official patronage in the way, and the cupidity of the old pro-slavery days o'ermasters them.

Recall, if you please, how often guided by the one ambition of getting office-has this party, chameleon-like, changed its principles. Do you ever hear, now, of a Democrat orator talking about the Monroe doctrine, of manifest destiny? Ever allude to the resolutions of '98? Ever of 54 degrees 40 minutes or fight? Ever of a distribution of the proceeds of the public lands? Ever of squatter sovereignty? Ever of the Constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the laws?

All there is of that party to-day is embraced in a scramble, monkey like, for the nuts of office, and an idiotic parrot-like cry of Free trade. [Laughter]

FREE TRADE! When was the National Democratic party a free trade party? Where do these latter-day leaders-these Horizontal Bill Morrisons and Speaker Carlisles-get their notions of free trade from? They say from the cry of the toiling millions from the laboring man and the agriculturalists. I say No. They get it from England, from the Cobden Club. Nor is free trade an English thought. She stole it from a full-blooded negro, Toussant L'Overture, of St. Domingo. In 1800, this black man instructed his committee who were drafting for him a constitution: 'Put it at the head of the chapter on commerce that the ports of St. Domingo are open to the world.' That was 45 years before the English Government under Sir Robert Peel ventured upon free trade. [Applause] So, today, we find this once great National Democratic party scudding along under the one bare pole of free trade and that stolen from a negro!

But what will a Southern Democrat not do for office?

If there were any merit in the proposition, which it has not, as a Northern, loyal Democrat, I could not support it. Why? Because, when this Nation was assailed by foes within, England was our foe without. My English friend says No, I say Yes. Did she not confess her guilty connivance with the Southern Confederacy and pay the United States millions of dollars indemnity for damages inflicted upon our commerce by rebel privateers? [Cheers] I am that much of an Irishman that I hate England; I am that much of an American that I will never favor a commercial proposition that will benefit England. Nor am I disposed to concede all, or one-half, or even any part of this country to the men who made war upon us of the North.

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON is all well enough to point a religious moral and adorn orthodox tale, but there is nowhere in my Democratic pasture any fattened calf ready for this returning prodigal. [Laughter.] I would not, like Caius Marius, lead these

Jugurthas in chains up to the triumph; I would not, like fiendish England, shoot these worse than Sepoy rebels from the mouths of mortars; I would not, like the brigands of Italy, hold them for ransom, as they are not worth ransom. But I would say to them: Here are your brothers whom you have sinned against grievously. Half the land is yours. Learn to work, a thing you never learned before. Learn to let politics alone, a thing you never learned before. We, loyal men of the North, saved this Union from your fratricidal hands, and by the living God we'll run it to suit ourselves, not you! [Cheers.]

When I look back over the history of this Democratic party I find its every step marked by concessions to the South, from the christening of Virginia as the Mother of Presidents to the election of John G. Carlisle as speaker of the Federal House of Representatives. Who is Carlisle, and who elected him? Who are Morrison, Shaw, Neece, Worthington, Moniton, Riggs and Townshend? Third rate politicians, northern doughfaces. Was there no Northern Democrat congressman worthy the support of these fellows, that so soon upon the rehabilitation of the rebels, they were so ready to bow the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift might follow fawning? Where William M. Springer, who stand nearer and dearer to the Democracy of the capital district than ever stood Stephen A. Douglas-for Mr. Springer has been elected and re-elected six times in succession?

Citizens, sedition is abroad in the land. The Republican party is not pure. It needs reformation. But can these men who profess to be Democrats reform it? No, a thousand times No! The George William Curtis dudes can't reform it; the nasty, Northern doughface William B. Morrison cannot reform it! The people alone are sovereign. They can, they will, reform this government. It is too great, too prosperous, too happy to be destroyed by any party. [Applause.]

JESSE HARPER Harper's role in the 1884 Fifteenth Congressional District election was marginal since he concentrated on the national efforts of the Greenback party and its presidential candidate, Benjamin Butler.

In early May, the Illinois Central Committee of the Greenback party held its meeting in Bloomington, and “Colonel Jesse Harper, of Danville, among others, was named as a delegate to the party’s National convention in Indianapolis.”

The State Committee are almost unanimously for B. F. Butler for the head of the ticket. It is announced that Butler will deliver the Fourth of July oration at this place.

Danville, as the home of Harper, enjoyed a speech by General J. B Weaver on the evening of May 23, 1884.

This gentleman, so prominently known throughout the United States as the great greenback champion and expounder, and at one time the presidential nominee of that party, spoke in this city last evening at Lincoln Opera House. The house was comfortably filled by some of our best citizens, the Republican, Democratic and National [Greenback] parties being about equally represented. The meeting was presided over by our fellow townsman, H. A. Coffeen.

Gen. Weaver is a man that will attract attention at all times, being a large, fine-looking middle-aged man, of splendid physique and robust health. He has a strong and flexible voice, and his manner of addressing an audience is calculated to win the close attention of his hearers. . . His address was somewhat over an hour in length, and in this time the speaker, from a Greenback standpoint, smashed monopolies of all kinds, gave the bondholders and national bank men a severe drubbing, explained the modus operandi of establishing national banks, made a strong appeal to the working men throughout the country to affiliate with the Greenback or National party, etc. . . .⁶⁹

H. A. Coffeen joined Harper at the Greenback convention in Indianapolis at the end of May.⁷⁰ Coffeen, after the convention, returned to Danville, and as the Danville *Daily News* reported

⁶⁹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, May 24, 1884.

⁷⁰ Danville *Daily News*, May 28, 1884.

MR. H. A. COFFEEN. . .is a well known [political] jobber in small political parties. He came into the temperance convention, yesterday, and made it a bid to join with the greenback anti-monopoly-woman suffrage-Democratic party on a common platform, irrespective of party technicalities, to defeat JOE CANNON for Congress.⁷¹

The adopted colors of the Greenback party for 1884, as evidenced by a badge seen on the streets of Danville, was red, white and green.⁷²

On June 19th, the Danville *Daily Commercial* identified Phocion and Harper as “Birds of a Feather.” It took the opportunity to poke some fun at both men. It must be recalled that Harper’s principal lectures when political season was no longer upon him was Temperance, and his abandonment of the Greenback party was not likely.

The Bloomington Bulletin informed that Hon. Jesse Harper and Col. Phocion Howard will attend the Prohibition State convention which meets in that city today, and that they will attend as delegates. Mr. Harper was voted for in the Greenbackers’ national convention as a candidate for President, but General Butler defeated him. We presume that, soured by this action of his Greenback friends, Mr. Harper at once took to the Prohibition party and that he will now become the leader of that little but true body of good men and true women. The presence of Col. Howard in the convention cannot be explained by soreheadedness but by pure cussedness. Phocion is a member of all parties, and will pass from the prohibitionists by the next convention that meets anywhere for any purpose.

Harper left Danville at the end of June for Independence, Kansas, to deliver a Fourth of July oration. He was also going to speak at Mexico, Mo., Kansas City, and Topeka locations in the interim.⁷³ Harper spoke

⁷¹ June 10, 1884.

⁷² Danville *Daily Commercial*, May 31, 1884.

⁷³ Danville *Daily Commercial*, June 27/28. 1884.

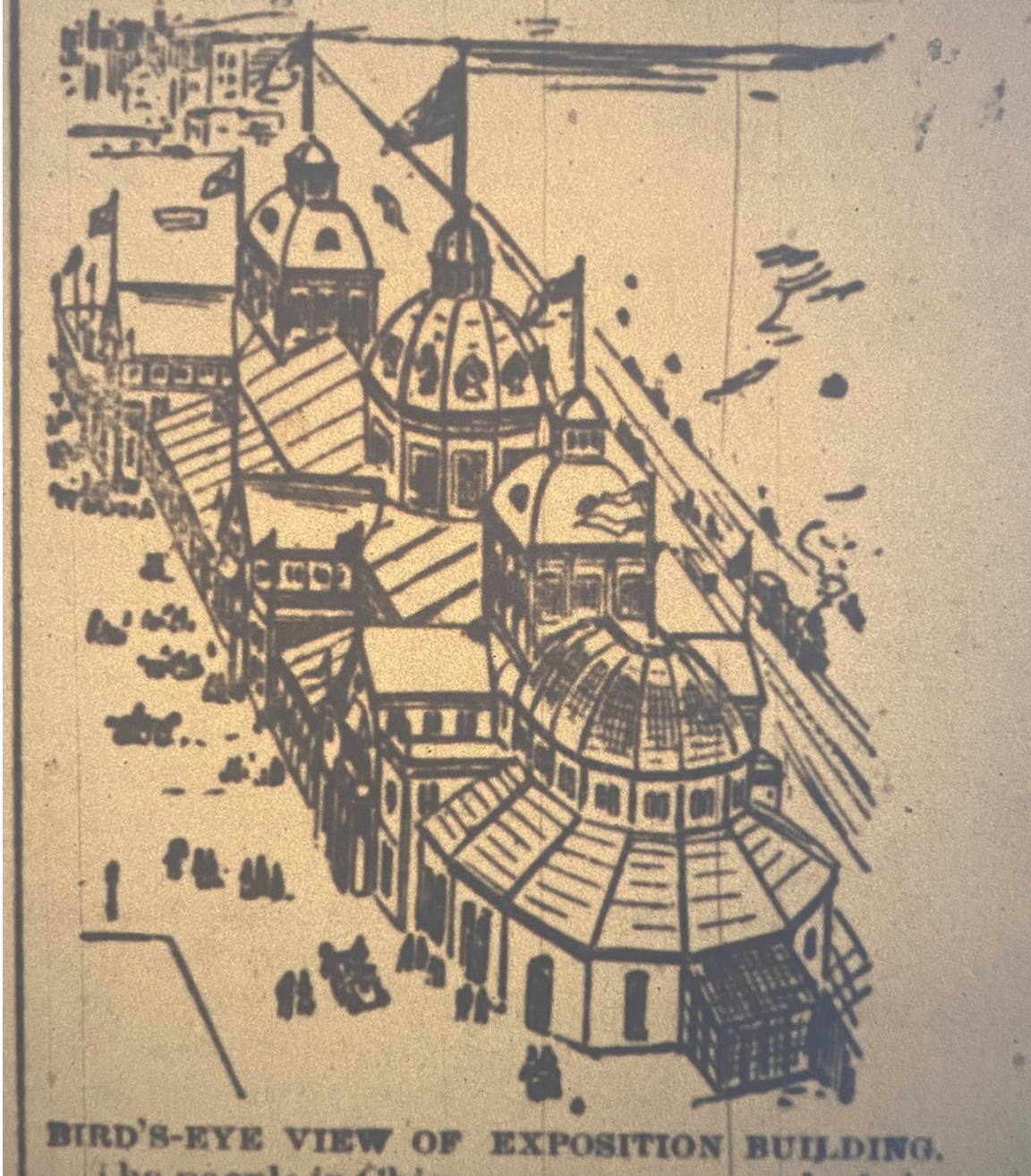
before ten thousand people at Independence, and left there for Chicago “to assist the Butler boom.”⁷⁴

The National Conventions

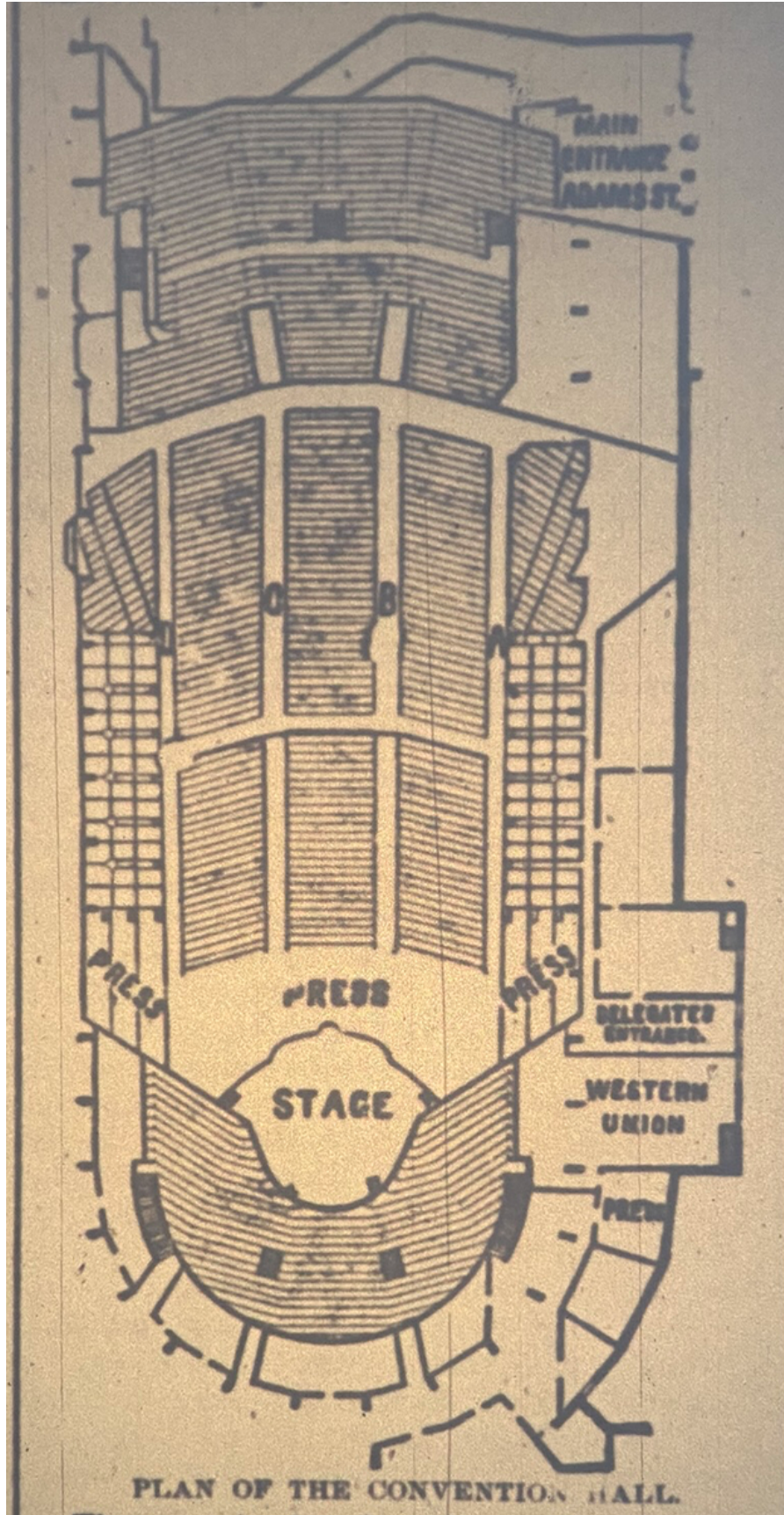
Both conventions were in Chicago at the Exposition Building.

A picture of the hall and diagram of the convention floor for the Republican convention appeared in the Danville *Daily News* on May 29, 1884. It is presumed it remained in the same configuration for the Democrats one month later.

⁷⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, July 7, 1884.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF EXPOSITION BUILDING.



PLAN OF THE CONVENTION HALL.

Republican National Convention-Chicago-June 3 to 6, 1884

Cannon, as Chairman of the House Republican caucus, helped by the fact he was the ranking Republican congressman from Illinois, received a formal leave of absence from the House for ten days to attend the Republican convention in Chicago. He passed through Danville, visiting his family on Sunday, June 1st, before heading to Chicago.⁷⁵ When he arrived in Chicago, he confirmed that he was for Illinois Senator John “Logan tooth and toe-nail.”⁷⁶ The Champaign County *Herald* reported this as well, and complained that it, as a newspaper, was not known well enough to get a convention press pass, but felt better when

we met Postmaster Jewell, of the Danville *News*, and learned he would have to work bulletin boards and telegraph his paper as if he were one of the favored ones. We promised Jewell not to give it away; so I trust our readers will say nothing about it. Frank Robeson cornered Congressman Cannon this afternoon and told him how everybody was for Blaine in his district and advised him to act accordingly if he had any influence over Wilcox and Eckhart. We could not tell from the cast iron expression on his face whether he would take his word for it or not.⁷⁷

It appears the Illinois delegation stuck with Logan, but when President Arthur received 275 votes, Blaine 375, and Logan 60 on the third ballot, Logan telegraphed the Illinois delegation and instructed it to vote for Blaine. Blaine received the nomination with 414 votes, and the convention went wild, making it unanimous.⁷⁸ Logan joined Blaine on the ticket for Vice President.

Cannon was back in Washington City on June 10th.⁷⁹

The reaction in Danville was a “Glorious Jollification.”

⁷⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, June 2, 1884.

⁷⁶ Chicago *Inter Ocean*, June 3, 1884.

⁷⁷ June 4, 1884.

⁷⁸ Danville *Daily News*, June 6, 1884.

⁷⁹ *Washington Post*, June 10, 1884.

When Blaine reached 414, two large flags were thrown to the breeze from our windows, and a shout went up all along Main street that could almost be heard from Maine to California. Immediate preparations were made for an enthusiastic jollification. About 8 o'clock a bonfire of indescribable dimensions was started on the public square, the Odd Fellows' band enlivened the occasion with the choicest music, a section of Battery A fired forty rounds, the electric lamps were lighted, the tower was hung with tro[i]-colored Chinese lanterns, sky rockets flitted through the air, and fire-crackers, large and small, were bursted [sic] on every hand, and the wildest enthusiasm prevailed. Fully three thousand people assembled about the bon-fire and shout after shout went up for Blaine and Logan. Speeches appropriate to the occasion were made by W. R. Lawrence, C. M. Swallow, F. Bookwalter, H. B. Blackburn [Gen. Black's law partner], E. E. Boudinot, and H. W. Beckwith. G. F. Tincher acted as master of ceremonies. . . .⁸⁰

Democratic National Convention-Chicago, Illinois-July 8 to 11, 1884

The Illinois Democrats held their State convention (1,400 delegates, largest in State history) at Peoria at the end of June. Gen. Black, with Illinois congressman W. R. Morrison, John Palmer, and Lambert Tree were selected as delegates at large to the National Democratic Convention.⁸¹ Black's early efforts to obtain the nomination for governor ran into the machine of Chicago Mayor Carter Harrison, and when Black arrived at the Convention he announced, "he was not a candidate for Governor, but coveted the honor of being a delegate-at-large." The *Chicago Tribune* noted that it was all but settled that Black would receive that honor, and he did.⁸² Black nominated Harrison for Governor and he was approved by acclamation.

The Illinois delegation stayed at the Palmer House in Chicago, which also served as the party's headquarters. General Black, with several other

⁸⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, June 7, 1884.

⁸¹ Moline *Review-Dispatch*, July 11, 1884.

⁸² July 2, 1884.

prominent Democrats, had headquarters for themselves. Black's was in room 637.⁸³

Danville's delegate to the convention was J. B. Mann, with Mayor William A. Day of Champaign.⁸⁴ The Champaign *Daily Gazette* quoted Phocion Howard in sizing up these two delegates.

"The fifteenth district sends J. B. Mann, of Danville, a crazy free-trader, and William A. Day, of Champaign, a prohibitionist." We are glad to hear that our mayor has a better reputation as a temperance man away from home than he has here.⁸⁵

On July 9th, the Danville *Daily Commercial* noted

A. C. Daniel, H. S. Forbes and E. R. E. Kimbrough were added to the Democratic hosts in Chicago today.

Phocion Howard also went to Chicago to cover the convention.⁸⁶

There were a number of candidates for the nomination, and Gen. Black, early in 1884, made it clear he supported Senator Joseph McDonald of Indiana. Another Indianan, former Governor Thomas A. Hendricks (who had been the Vice Presidential candidate with Tilden in the 1876 election, but was in poor health in 1884), and New York Governor Grover Cleveland, were perceived as the leaders in the group.

When the convention opened, the McDonald supporters appeared to wane. McDonald had a room at the Palmer House, and observers thought

McDonald's friends are not more active, and people say they are as though the nomination was going to seek their candidate. Their attitude so far has been in strange contrast to the energy and activity of the Cleveland. . .men. The two chief backers of McDonald are Henry Watterson and Gen. J. C. Black, and they are

⁸³ Chicago *Tribune*, July 1, 1884.

⁸⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, July 3, 1884.

⁸⁵ July 7, 1884.

⁸⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, July 5, 1884.

making themselves felt among the Southern and Western delegates who are coming into the city. All hands agree that when Senator Voorhees [McDonald's fellow Indiana Senator] arrives an aggressive campaign will be started and with fair prospects of success, in view of the increasing bitterness⁸⁷ of the contest in process in New York.

Anticipating a celebration in Chicago on the evening after the nomination, the National Veteran's Association organized a parade that would end at the Exposition Hall. It was expected Gen. Black would join other generals in making a speech.⁸⁸

The story of the convention may be found elsewhere, but Gen. Black's role in securing Cleveland's nomination played a material role in Black's life upon the inauguration of Cleveland on March 4, 1884.

Black played a leadership role in the Illinois delegation. As a McDonald supporter, he had the opportunity, at the request of fellow Illinois delegate Joe Mann, to be allowed to second the nomination of McDonald for President. Black's speech may be found in the *Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, 1884*.⁸⁹ In Danville, the Republican *Danville Daily News* noted

GENERAL BLACK made an eloquent speech in seconding the nomination of McDONALD. But water and eloquence are not saving powers in the Democratic party.⁹⁰

It was on the third day that Black would rise to Cleveland's thankful eyes. Before that, however, Joe Man would raise a point of order on a resolution thanking Tilden and Hendricks for their sacrifice in 1876 due to the "fraud, force, and violence" that deprived them of the offices conferred upon them. . . in 1876"⁹¹ , but it was overruled.⁹² As the voting

⁸⁷ *Chicago Tribune*, July 6, 1884. This was the Tammany Hall feud mentioned by Nevins, *supra*.

⁸⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, July 8, 1884.

⁸⁹ Page 104. It may also be found in the July 10, 1884 *Chicago Tribune*.

⁹⁰ July 11, 1884.

⁹¹ *Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, 1884*, page 187.

⁹² *Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, 1884*, page 188.

began on the nominations of Cleveland or Hendricks, *the Indianapolis News* summarized the action.

When, on the second ballot, Illinois was called, yesterday morning, Gen. Palmer began the announcement of the vote by stating: 'Hendricks, one vote.' When Reading-Clerk Bell repeated this announcement and stopped for further indication from Gen. Palmer, shouters mistook the Illinois vote for the arranged signal, and started the great demonstration, during which the chairman of Indiana delegation announced the change of Indiana's thirty votes from McDonald to Hendricks. Gen. Black, the original McDonald man in the Illinois delegation, got angry when he heard that McDonald was to be dropped. The vote of Illinois was not yet announced, and he saw the opportunity to check the Hendricks boom at its very conception. He urged the men whom he had won over to McDonald to go back to Cleveland, and this enabled him to announce 38 votes for Cleveland where only 34 were expected, and in that way to turn the tide. This sudden and fatal check to the Hendricks boom would not have been possible had it started, as proposed, on the vote of Indiana⁹³

With the nomination of Cleveland, who would become the party's Vice Presidential candidate came front and center. A. O. Bacon,⁹⁴ an at-large delegate from Georgia, nominated General Black for the Vice Presidential nomination:

I am commissioned by the Delegation from the State of Georgia to present the name of a man who has been eminent in war, and who is no less eminent and worthy in peace. He . . . belongs not to the past. Those of us who belong to the present generation are looking to the future. We wish that the dead past with its bitter memories

⁹³ July 14, 1884. The Hagerstown *Exponent* described Black at this moment: 'The intoxication of excitement over the name of Hendricks gradually reeled away and ceased to vex the air. Then Gen. Black's voice announced, with icy calmness, that Illinois cast 38 votes for Grover Cleveland. . . . Slowly but surely [thereafter] the Cleveland column advanced. . . .' July 16, 1884. In Allan Nevins magnificent biography of Cleveland, he describes the Illinois increase in votes for *Cleveland as accomplished by an "Illinois delegate."* Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage, ISHI Press, first published in 1932, at page 154.

⁹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus_Octavius_Bacon

shall be forgotten and that our faces may be set towards the morning. As an ex-Confederate soldier, I am glad to say, has receded so far in the past, and which, except in its glories, I hope may be forgotten-in behalf of a State that comes here proposing to give everything and to ask nothing-in behalf of a State which recognizes in the whole galaxy of States but one rival in the grand majority which we propose to give to the nominees of this Convention, I have the honor to nominate for the position of Vice-President the eminent citizen, the distinguished orator, the gallant soldier, Gen. John C. Black of Illinois.⁹⁵

Black obtained the floor and advised the Convention that he came as a McDonald man, and as long as McDonald was a potential candidate for national office "I cannot appear in any sense to rival him for any position, and therefor I respectfully decline." This got Joe Mann to the floor:

Mr. Chairman: I realize to the fullest extent the peculiar position to which my friend from Illinois is placed. He, like me, has come here with no double tongue; he, like me, has come here to represent, in behalf of the Democracy of Illinois, one of the grandest statesman and the noblest men whom we have ever been called upon to present to a Convention; and while that is true, I feel that I would not be doing justice to this great man from Illinois, to the gallant soldier who bears upon his person the evidences of his devotion to the service of his country, if I allowed Illinois to be passed in the call of the States without declaring that the declination which he has made shall not be received by this Convention. I know the gentleman from Illinois. Nobody knows him better. I have stood by him while I have seen the surgeon operating upon his arm, taking out the elbow joint, and yet he declaring, while that was being done, that, notwithstanding he lost a joint, his whole body yet was firm and true for the Union and firm and true for the Democracy. I know my friend from Illinois.

At this point a delegate from Michigan raised a point of order, it was overruled, and Mann continued.

⁹⁵ *Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, 1884, page 256.*

If there is anybody here who does not appreciate the fact that I am from Illinois, allow me to introduce myself. Illinois has been called in the roll of States, and I arise here in behalf of the sterling, honest Democracy of Illinois to present the name to the Convention of the most gallant son, without exception, which Illinois possesses today, General John Charles Black. [Cries of 'Time,'] No, there is no time. No question can be out of time when we present to a Democratic Convention the name of a soldier honored and honorable as the name of Gen. Black in the State of Illinois. I speak to you, gentlemen, you Delegates of the Convention, in the belief that you will honor yourselves, you will honor your ticket, you will make it successful, when you incorporate his name as a constituent part of it.

A few minutes later Bacon of Georgia obtained the floor.

Mr. President and gentlemen, I desire to say that the nomination of Gen. Black was made by me in behalf of this Delegation in the utmost sincerity, and with the intention of pressing his name in the vote; in spite of his declination we had intended to do so. In view, however, of his repeated requests that his name should be withdrawn, and in view of what seems to be the spontaneous outburst of the Convention at the name of Thomas A. Hendricks, I yield to the solicitations of the gentleman of this Delegation and withdraw his name.⁹⁶

Let the Hagerstown, Indiana, *Exponent* describe the end of the Democratic Convention.

⁹⁶ *Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, 1884*, page 264.

Then such a scene was witnessed as has not been seen in Chicago since Garfield was nominated. Everybody became enthused. A gray-headed Democrat declared that he had not had a ticket to suit him so well in 24 years, and he joined in singing "Hail Columbia" with tears of joy in his eyes. The Banners of the States were taken from their sockets by grave, gray-headed men, and made to dance a basket cotillion around the Indiana delegation and in front of the chair. Then the band struck up "Auld Lang Syne," and governors and yeomen Democrats paraded the hall to the music of a thousand voices, which ended each verse with a shout that started the nails from the sounding-board. Joe Mann, who had coupled himself with Gen. Black in half a dozen "He like I" rhetorical flights, walked in the procession, and seemed to forget that he was there to shout for McDonald first, last, and out of time. Then the vast chorus of 6,000 voices joined in singing "Home, Sweet Home," and everybody who had retained a grip of his senses was pleased to see that it had a soothing effect. As the delegates sank into their seats Chairman Vilas reminded the convention that it had done good work and beseeched it to finish it in good order. The strain of nervous excitement was over, and the convention quietly gathered up the loose ends of its labors, thanked itself, its officers, and everybody, and adjourned sine die.

Back in Danville,

[t]he nomination of Cleveland for President fell like a wet blanket on the Democracy in this city. Scarcely a Bourbon could be seen on the street this afternoon, and not a shout of approbation rent their air.⁹⁷

On July 15th, the Danville *Daily News* opined

The South came to the rescue in the Democratic Convention in time to defeat HENDRICKS and nominate CLEVELAND. The South yet wags the dog, and if the Democracy should succeed it will wag both dog and tail.

On the 15th, the Danville *Daily News* also reported under the headline **NOT A COLORED DELEGATE**

There was not a colored delegate in the Democratic National Convention, yet the Democrats claim the Solid South, where a large majority of the colored people live.

Why should not the colored people have a few representatives in the National Democratic Convention? Simply because the Democracy do not believe the negroes fit for self government, and have decided in advance that the South shall be solid for the [Democracy] No need of having the colored people represented when they are to be compelled to vote the Democratic ticket or stay away from the polls.

It was just a matter of time before Vermilion County Democrats enjoyed their jollification of Cleveland.

The Democrats of our city held a meeting Saturday night for the purpose of ratifying the nomination of Grover Cleveland and Thomas Hendricks. . . . [After careful preparation] an immense crowd gathered on the square at the time set for the meeting,

⁹⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, July 11 and 14, 1884.

although we must say in all candor that a very large portion were Republicans.

The electric light tower was very tastefully decorated with Chinese lanterns⁹⁸, and two large pieces of canvass completely encircled the tower, having on them in large letters “Cleveland and Reform,” and “Hendricks and Retribution.”⁹⁹ A wagon, with a platform erected upon it, decorated in an appropriate manner, placed in the southwest side of the square, was used as the speakers’ stand. Seated on this platform was the Hon. Carter H. Harrison, Gen. J. C. Black, Hon. J. H. Oberly, and Hon. Jos. B. Mann. The windows of the Leader office [the Democratic paper in the city] were illuminated, and considerable bunting was displayed. The Fairmount cornet band, employed by the delegation from Fairmount, and Harry Osmus’ Vermilion cornet band furnished the music.

Gen. Black, on opening the exercises of the evening, made a few remarks, after which he introduced [Oberly] editor of the Bloomington Bulletin, and also perpetual chairman of the Democratic central committee.¹⁰⁰

After Oberly commented on the general Democratic principles and highlights on Cleveland, Black introduced Carter Harrison, Democratic candidate for Governor, as ‘the only good mayor Chicago ever had. . . .’ for his comments. Harrison made a specific pitch for the German and Irish vote. The *Daily News* critiqued Harrison’s speech as self-centered, an “eulogy upon himself and an apology for Cleveland’s mistakes in the two short years in which he was governor of New York.”

Black and Mann made short speeches, neither of which was recorded by the local papers. At a time when political jollifications were rousing, the

⁹⁸ The crowd probably did not appreciate the irony that Black, in his seconding McDonald’s nomination, touted his man for closing the borders to Chinese immigration.

⁹⁹ Pictures of Cleveland and Hendricks on the sides of the speakers’ platform. Danville *Daily News*, July 21, 1884.

¹⁰⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, July 21, 1884.

Daily News gave the evening a polite “kiss of death:” “As a quiet and attentive political gathering, the ratification was a success.”

The Presidential Tickets in 1884

Republican:

James G. Blaine, Maine, President
John A. Logan, Illinois, Vice President

Democratic

Grover Cleveland, New York, President
Thomas A. Hendricks, Indiana, Vice President

American Prohibition

S. C. Pomeroy, Kansas, President
William Daniels, Maryland, Vice President

Greenback Labor

Benjamin F. Butler, Massachusetts, President
A. M. West, Mississippi, Vice President

Prohibition Labor

John P. St. John, Kansas, President
William Daniels, Maryland, Vice President

Anti-Monopoly

Benjamin F. Butler, President
No nominee for Vice President

HOW DID THE DANVILLE REPUBLICAN PAPERS VIEW THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND ITS TICKET IN 1884

Under the headline **A FEW QUESTIONS FOR AMERICA'S STATEMEN**, the Danville *Daily News* posed the following questions to highlight the principles of the Republican party. Guarantying the right to vote was paramount for the Federal Government's sovereign creators: its citizens who exercise that sovereignty through their right to vote in a republic.

Has the Government of the United States power to guarantee to its citizens a free ballot?

Does that clause of the constitution which declares that the United States shall guarantee to each State a republican form of Government, confer power on the General Government to secure for its citizens the right to vote as they please, and to protect them from violence for exercise of that right by the punishment of those who violate that right?

Does a republican form of Government mean one in which citizens can be driven from the polls, shot down at the polls, whipped and killed for voting their sentiments and killed for voting their sentiments, and perpetrators of the deeds go unpunished?

Does a State have exclusive jurisdiction in deciding what a republican form of government is?

Is not a republican form of Government one in which the unalienable rights of its citizens are enforced by law? In a word, a 'Government of the people, for the people, by the people?'

The answer to the above questions must be made speedily. Affairs are approaching a crisis which will not allow them to be overlooked, laughed down or trampled down.

There are a large number of newspapers and politicians who declare that these are merely questions pressed by the republicans to make votes, that all things are lovely in the old Slave States, and, perfect freedom reigns there.

This was the tone of the Democratic press and politicians before the war, they set down every fact about outrages against persons and all expressions of treason, as Republican lies, manufactured on purpose to make Republican votes.

This 'you lie, you lie,' was kept up until Sumpter [sic] was fired upon, then many of the loyal Democrats, who had been deceived

by their press and leaders, found it necessary to take arms and aid to put down the rebellion. But during all the bloody rebellion there were Democratic papers who didn't believe the South was treasonable, didn't believe that it was a rebellion, that it was a LINCOLN lie, under cover of which Republicans had cruelly inaugurated an abolition war.

And even in the very moment of victory; when SHERMAN was marching through Georgia, when GRANT had his iron grip on the throat of LEE, when victory was attending our arms at every point, the Democratic party met in National convention and solemnly declared the war a failure.

The Democratic party accepts no principle, believes no fact, makes no declaration which it thinks will lose it, the support of the old slaveholding element, or the present bulldozers, the Solid South.¹⁰¹

In August, the *Danville Daily Commercial* presented the opinion of the *New York Tribune* as to the nature of the Republican party and its national ticket.

A TICKET REPRESENTING IDEAS

It is amazing to some friends that the ticket of the Republican party is received with such extraordinary enthusiasm. Apparently they have forgotten what the Republican party is. Any great party that has life in it is roused to enthusiasm and effort beyond measure when it has a ticket which represents its strongest ties, its greatest works and its noblest hopes.

Five ideas have made the Republican party the grandest and most powerful in our history. Freedom for All, National Equity, Equal Rights, Honest Money and Protection for all have won every Republican victory and inspired all the achievements of twenty-four glorious years. Not one of them is dead. Slavery is down, but the intent to have in some form a subject race and a

¹⁰¹ April 29, 1884.

dominant white race still lives. The union has been saved, but the question whether it shall be a Nation or a Confederacy is as sharply contested and vital as ever. Just equality of rights has not yet been secured. Honest payment of the public debt, and honest money for all labor, are threatened every hour. Protection is demand which today moves more hearts and more votes in this country than any other.

Parties usually contain two elements which threaten their dissolution. The creatures of selfish greed are of all grades. The lowest cares only for the dollar or the drink; the highest is too pure to support a ticket unless a cabinet place can be secured. But the whole mercenary crew ever threatens to destroy any party cursed by its support. Very different in character are the men of isms. They have each a pet idea, and are ready with most conscientious conviction to subordinate everything else to that, whenever they can see a chance. Some worthy men who have free trade on the brain, for instance, supported the Republican party because they were loyal, or because they wanted honest money, or for other reasons. But they were all the time prone to think that 'old issues were dead,' and that now free trade could be pushed with success. When a party makes a ticket to please these minor elements, it is weak with the great majority of its voters. When it names a ticket to fit the deepest convictions and strongest purposed of the great body of voters, then it suddenly leaps into new life, and displays startling vigor.

James G. Blaine and John A. Logan peculiarly represent the great ideas of the Republican party. Blaine was one of the young men whose hearts were fired by the earlier songs of Freedom. Logan was one of the heroes of the war for the Union. Both have labored for years to secure equal rights. Both gave powerful aid in the long struggle for honest payment of debt, specie resumption and honest currency, for though General Logan leaned at times toward Western views, his votes will be found recorded for the vital measures of Republican policy. Both have been supporters of the protective system and Mr. Blaine especially, because of his great power as Speaker in the days when that system was consolidated

and defended against the strongest assaults, has been recognized as a mighty champion of faith.

To Republicans who believe in the great ideas of party, therefore, this ticket appeals with irresistible power. It was not forced upon the party by placemen or spoilsmen [sic]. It was not framed to please the minority who long for British free trade. It does please nine-tenths of the Republicans, because it represents their deepest convictions, their most glorious achievements, and their most ardent hopes.-N. Y. Tribune.¹⁰²

It was common in the Republican party of the 1880s to use the phrase “Solid South” as a metaphor for the white supremacist, ex-Confederate, Democratic dominant political party in the Southern States. But there were some Blacks who had the courage to vote when allowed, and the Danville *Daily News* advised its readers on July 7, 1884, of the status of such men.

SOLID FOR BLAINE AND LOGAN

Prof. R. T. Greener,¹⁰³ the well-known colored scholar, has recently made a tour of the Southern States, and speaks very encouragingly of the mental, moral; and material improvements of the colored people. He says they are a fixture in the south, and that as time moves they will gain and hold their political rights.

Being asked if there is any truth in the report that the colored people are following the independent bolt he replied:

Nothing could be more absurd. The leading colored men of the South will support the Republican national ticket. General Logan always their second choice. Mr. Deney, a colored Republican of North Carolina, seconded Logan’s nomination at Chicago in an eloquent speech. Naturally they were for Arthur at first, but having done their duty to him, and shown that they were not mere political vines, they are now solid for the whole ticket. Bolts, kicking and independent movements do not affect them, and I am

¹⁰² August 1, 1884.

¹⁰³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Theodore_Greener

glad of it. They know what the Republican part stands for, and they are unanimous in its support. Our people respect Mr. Curtis for his anti-slavery service, but they cannot follow his political lead. The colored people of the South will vote for Blaine and Logan, because they are standard-bearers of the party-if they get a chance to vote at all. They know that as no respectability of candidates can ever make the Democratic party respectable, so no criticism on Republican leaders can change the record of the Republican party. Every colored man I talk with holds this view. The negroes are much more practical politicians than the Independents give them credit for.

‘But there are some colored independents at the North it is said.’

‘Where? Not a handful; not a baker’s dozen [illegible] and character in the United States. We have just enough of them to prove our humanity and that all the [illegible] are not confined to the white race. We have representatives in the jails and asylums [sic], and, of course, we must have some independents and fewer Democrats. I believe our canvass ought to be pushed at the South. If Mr. Blaine could speak at North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama, I think he would revolutionize those States. There is great curiosity at the South to hear and see him. I know the colored people and am sure they may be depended upon, first and last, to support the Republican ticket.

ODDS AND ENDS OF POLITICAL INTEREST IN VERMILION COUNTY DURING THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1884

The Democratic newspaper in Danville, the *Leader*, in 1884, does not survive,¹⁰⁴ but for two special editions published just before the election in November, and through comments made by the two Danville Republican newspapers about the *Leader’s* positions and opinions in their editions during the fall campaign.

¹⁰⁴ Also one column retained by Cannon in the 1884 scrapbook in the Joseph G. Cannon Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

At the end of June, a small item appeared in a number of district newspapers that must have caught the eye of Cannon's constituents.

Hon. J. G. Cannon is reported the richest man in Danville, and perhaps in the county, has property being estimated in value from \$250,000 to \$300,000.

There is no way from the extant records to confirm this assertion, but it was more than likely not true. Cannon was in fact wealthy, not because of his congressional position, but because of the efforts of his brother William, President of the Second National Bank of Danville (in which the Cannon brothers held the principal interest). Cannon also held the principal interest in the First National Bank of Tuscola. Joseph G. English, co-founder and President of the First National Bank of Danville, investor in several mining interests and business ventures, and a member of the Board of Directors of the C. & E. I. Railroad, more likely than not had a worth in excess of Congressman Cannon at that time.¹⁰⁵

In June, a non-partisan club modeled on those established in Bloomington, Decatur and Peoria was established in Danville. Its object was set forth as follows:

Whereas, In view of the present political campaign, and in the absence of any general headquarters, we, the undersigned, believing that there should be some one common headquarters where our friends from abroad may be respectably and courteously entertained while visiting our city, resolve that we will pay the sum annexed to our names for the use of the two front rooms in Cavanaugh's block, Vermilion street, for such headquarters during our campaign-the same to be used for reading and conference rooms for the members of the Danville Club.

The names of the members, as they appeared in the *Danville Daily Commercial*, on June 14, 1884:

¹⁰⁵ Decatur *Daily Republican*, June 25, 1884. When English died in 1910, the *Danville Press-Democrat* noted that from the founding of the First National Bank "English became one of the city's most prominent financiers and was interested in many large enterprises." January 18, 1910.

To this are appended the names of Joseph B. Mann, Elliott E. Boudinot, George W. Daines, John B. Samuel, Phocion Howard, W. J. Calhoun, H. P. Blackburn, T. H. Myers, Joseph M. Dougherty, E. R. E. Kimbrough, L. T. Dickason, Charles L. English, John P. Norvell, Henry Brand, Will C. Johnson, G. F. Tincher, W. M. Carnahan, W. R. Jewell, Wm. F. E. Gurley, E. C. Dague, Alvin Robinson, John Beard, John G. Holden, George W. Flynn, Leonard Myers, J. H. Insley, A. S. W. Hawes, James Knight, Fred Wortman, and fifty others. This is something that is useful and ornamental, and we wish the gentlemen interested success.

In late spring, President Arthur nominated Coles County attorney James A. Connally, who was serving as the U. S. Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, to the "vacant solicitorship of the Treasury." Both Illinois Senators Logan and Cullom had advised President Arthur he was their choice. The Senate confirmed him, but Connally did not want the job. His Republican credentials were solid as evidenced by the fact he had recently presided over the State Republican Convention in Peoria. Connally traveled to Washington City to meet with the President to

formally decline the appointment. His reasons were simple: “his present salary of District Attorney, together with his private law practice, is double that of Solicitor, and besides, he does not want to quit his associations in the Prairie State for an uncertain period of residence in Washington as an office-holder. The Major has a wise head, which politics has not upset.”¹⁰⁶

Vermilion County had a contingent of Belgian immigrants thanks to the initial recruitment of Belgian miners by Joseph and William Kirkland. One day a reporter from the Danville *Daily Commercial* overheard a conversation between two Belgians:

Two Belgians were having a little misunderstanding this forenoon, while standing under our window. They were conducting their conversation in their own language, when one of them said to the other, ‘talk English, so everybody can understand what we are saying.’ That’s right, gentlemen, always talk English, for it is the language of the best and freest country the sun ever shown on, the haven of rest to the oppressed of all classes and conditions. Yes, talk plain English, and vote for Blaine and Logan, and you will indeed be happy.¹⁰⁷

With the Democratic National Convention completed, Black returned to Danville where the Danville *Daily Commercial* reported

Since General Black was laid upon the shelf by Carter Harrison’s eagle, it is now pretty generally agreed that he is to sacrifice himself upon the alter of the 15th Congressional district Democracy. . . .¹⁰⁸

Four days later, the *Daily Commercial* pointed out that the Bloomington *Bulletin*

notes the probable candidacy of General Black in this district in opposition to Hon. Joseph G. Cannon, and says if he can be induced

¹⁰⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial* and Danville *Daily News*, May 3, 1884.

¹⁰⁷ July 15, 1884.

¹⁰⁸ July 8, 1884.

to allow his name to be used in that connection, he will push Mr. Cannon very hard.

The *Daily Commercial* then opined

He will most likely push as hard as he can but the push will not hurt much, nor will [it] crowd him anywhere near a corner. Mr. Cannon has made too good a record in the National House of Representatives to be pushed aside by such a man as General Black.¹⁰⁹

The *Danville Daily Commercial* informed its readers on July 3rd

Danville is well supplied with an excellent quality of campaign timber among her young attorneys. Among those most prominent we list the following names, whose services will undoubtedly be called during the pending canvass: W. J. Calhoun, F. Bookwalter, H. P. Blackburn, B. E. Shawhan, J. D. Benedict, P. C. Cronkhite, Frank Tincher, G. G. Mabin, Dewitt Frazier, J. G. Thompson and Mort Thompson.

Who Was General John Charles Black?¹¹⁰

John Charles Black was born January 27, 1839, in Lexington, Mississippi. Charles, as he chose to go by in his years of majority, was the son of Pennsylvanians John Black (1809-1847) and Josephine L Culbertson (1813-1887). Service in the ministry by the male Blacks went back several generations, and John Charles' father followed his father's path and became a Presbyterian minister, who practiced his ministry in the South until a year prior to his death¹¹¹. The marriage produced four siblings: John Charles (1839-1915), Mary Elizabeth Black Hart (1841-1920), William Perkins Black (1842-1916) and Josephine LaRose Black (1845-1863), the latter three born in Kentucky. Prior to his

¹⁰⁹ July 12, 1884.

¹¹⁰ Much of this section first appeared in Timothy O. Smith's *The 44th Congress and the 1876 Congressional Campaign: "Wheel Horse" Cannon Begins To Show His Stuff*-OCLC 1235971161

¹¹¹ He was Pastor at Fifth Presbyterian Church of Alleghany City, Pennsylvania. Beckwith, Hiram, *History of Vermilion County*, page 401 (1879)

passing in 1847, Rev. Black “obtained a wide repute as a preacher of unusual power, eloquence and fervor, and was made a Doctor of Divinity when thirty-six years of age.”¹¹²

When his father died, Charles’ mother removed herself and her children to Danville, Illinois, where Charles received his early education in the “common schools.” His mother married Dr. Fithian, and as a result Charles grew up in the home of one of Vermilion County’s Founding Fathers. Abraham Lincoln would stay from time to time at the Fithians when his circuit riding brought him to Danville. The home still stands as the Vermilion County Museum.

Charles entered Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, as a freshman in 1858. When Lincoln was elected in 1860, “Charly” wrote to his Mother

And now comes the proudest moment of my letter writing moments: I can and do set my hand to the statement that Lincoln is Elected! The boys & especially the Illinoisans were wild with joy & the halls resounded with glad cries and yells. I could not tell my delight, Mother, in the proud consciousness that I have helped, however feebly, to obtain the glorious result. Now can I speak my satisfaction that I am from the “Eelinois”-Mother of the first Republican president! I think the last hour of the revolution of ’76 has come & the result will soon be perfected. God guide & hold Lincoln in his administration of affairs (I like to have added, We’ll hold the Southerners). . . Charly¹¹³

Black, who was at the end of his junior year, with his brother William P.,¹¹⁴ enlisted for a period of three months in Lew Wallace’s Montgomery Guards on April 13/14/15, 1861, the days after the attack on Fort

¹¹²Hiram Beckwith, *History of Vermilion County*, (1879), page 401.

¹¹³ *Lincoln: Twenty Years on the Eastern Prairie*, Donald G. Richter, United Graphics, Mattoon, Illinois (1999), page 270.

¹¹⁴ William would also become an attorney and would be described in *The Chicago Legal News*, Volume 31, pages 67-74, (1898-1899), as a “God-made orator; he is logical, has an unusual flow of language and is one of the ablest speakers at the bar. He stands in the front ranks of the legal profession.” He served as a defense counsel for defendants in the Haymarket Riot Trials.

Sumter.¹¹⁵ Charles was made Sergeant-Major of Lew Wallace's 11th Indiana Volunteers. The Black brothers fought with this regiment at the battle at Romney, West Virginia. Upon their release, the brothers returned to Danville, Illinois, and recruited Company "K" of the 37th Illinois Volunteer Infantry.¹¹⁶ Upon the formal organization of the 37th, Charles was elected Major (August 15, 1861) and William commissioned a Captain.¹¹⁷ Charles was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on June 9, 1862, and to Colonel on November 20, 1862. He was promoted to Brevet Brigadier General on March 13, 1865, and was released from active duty on August 15, 1865. William was mustered out on September 29, 1864.¹¹⁸

The brothers demonstrated extraordinary bravery and leadership during the War. They served together through the War in the 37th Illinois, and both received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their bravery during the conflict.¹¹⁹ Charles was wounded twice during the War. During the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, on March 7, 1862, he received a gunshot wound through an arm, with the second wound received at the battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, on December 7, 1872.¹²⁰ William, too, was wounded at Pea Ridge, both falling within five minutes of each other, thirty yards apart.¹²¹ President Lincoln followed their career and their wounding closely through the auspices of Ward Hill Lamon.

¹¹⁵ Approximately 75 miles directly east, Joseph G. Cannon, the newly elected state's attorney in the Illinois 27th Judicial Circuit, was trying his first murder trial in Urbana, Illinois.

¹¹⁶ While there are numerous histories of the 37th, an easily accessible one is in the *Chicago Tribune*, June 22, 1866.

¹¹⁷ *Memorials of Deceased Companions of the Commandery of the State of Illinois, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*, Chicago (1901-1923), page 263.

¹¹⁸ Illinois Databases of Illinois Veterans Index, 1775-1995.

¹¹⁹ One of five sets of brothers to accomplish this honor.

¹²⁰ Beckwith, *supra*, page 402.

¹²¹ *Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, 1847-1865*, Ward Hill Lamon, ed. By Dorothy Lamon, Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company (1895), page 104.

Upon his release from active duty, Charles¹²² studied law in Chicago with the firm of Gookins and Roberts.¹²³ At some point in 1866 Black returned to Danville to run for Congress against Republican (Radical) incumbent H. P. H. Bromwell in the Seventh congressional district.¹²⁴ In 1866, the Seventh consisted of Macon, Piatt, Champaign, Douglas, Moultrie, Coles, Cumberland, Edgar, Vermilion, Iroquois, and Ford counties.

The campaign did produce an unusual act of cooperation between the two candidates. It appears that these affairs were structured with each man given an hour to make his points, and after each had their turn, the other was given time to respond.¹²⁵

The *Chicago Tribune*, on September 17, 1866, stated its views on Black in an article recounting a speech given by Black in Chicago in 1863: “Colonel Black is the [Andrew] Johnson candidate for Congress in the Seventh.”

In a letter to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* published on October 4, 1866, “A SOLDIER” reported

The Seventh Congressional District is all right. H. P. H. Bromwell will beat the renegade soldier, General Black, so badly that the young man will scarcely ever be heard from again. He has fallen into bad company, and has already begun to discover the sad fact, and hence he hobbles on badly in the race. What a pity for himself, that this young man of some promise, was, in an evil hour, induced to sell out at such a low price. He was heretofore a Republican, and you may know he makes an awkward [sic] out fighting a veteran Republican with old Democratic arguments, such as abolition, negro equality, sectionalism, &c.

¹²² Charles participated in the last battle of the war in Alabama at the assault on Fort Blaknely. During that assault, 1890 successful challenger to Joseph Gurney Cannon, Samuel T. Busey, of Urbana, fell, severely wounded.

¹²³ Admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1867.

¹²⁴ Charles was raised in the home of a high profile, wealthy, close friend and client of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln knew the two Black brothers well, having watched them grow up in Dr. Fithian’s household.

¹²⁵ *Chicago Tribune*, September 26, 1866

H. P. H. Bromwell defeated General Black, 17,410 to 13,352.

By 1868, Black had moved his practice from Danville to Champaign.¹²⁶ In April 1868, Black attended the Illinois Democratic State Convention in Springfield and was nominated by the Democrats to be a Presidential Elector in the Seventh congressional district.¹²⁷ The State ticket that year was led by Sullivan, Illinois' John Eden (for Governor). During the 1868 campaign, Black appeared in Macon County to make a speech for the Democratic ticket, and the Decatur *Weekly Republican* noted

Charles Black, the other speaker, has been a good soldier and is a man of fair ability. Deceived, however, by the promise of office from the democrats he deserted the republican ranks, and has waded so far into the filthy sough of copperheadism that he cannot retrace his steps. He is an object of pity if not contempt.¹²⁸

In June 1872, the Danville *Times* floated Black's name as a candidate for Congress to oppose Cannon, who was running for his first term.

The Danville *Times* says General Charles Black, of Champaign (anti-administration) will probably run for Congress in the Fourteenth District, against Joseph G. Cannon (Administration candidate), and we may add, be elected. The *Times* says: 'A change of 426 votes would elect him (Black) allowing the voting population to be unchanged in numbers. We must keep our organization well in hand, and not attempt to proscribe [Horace] Greeley Republicans, or drive them from us, or we shall see the

¹²⁶ Initially he entered into a partnership with W. D. Somers, but that ended in February 1869 when that partnership dissolved and Black formed a partnership with J. M. Culbertson, with offices in Rooms 1 and 2, Marble's Block, Champaign City, Illinois. *Champaign Gazette and Union*, February 24, 1869. The *Champaign County Gazette*, in announcing the new partnership, opined, "We bespeak for them the greatest measure of success, and as they are a couple of energetic, studious and talented gentlemen, they will no doubt be entrusted with much legal business." March 3, 1869.

¹²⁷ Chicago, Illinois, *Evening Post*, April 16, 1868.

¹²⁸ August 20, 1868.

splendid Republican majority to which we are rightly entitled dwindle to a mere handful, or be turned against us.’¹²⁹

On June 18, 1872, Black had the opportunity to mix with the Illinois Press Association at its annual meeting in Champaign-Urbana. When J. H. Oberly,¹³⁰ editor of the *Cairo Bulletin*, the regular orator, did not attend, an “invitation to address the convention was extended to Gen Charles Black, of Champaign, who responded in eloquent and appropriate remarks, all the more enjoyable because made only upon shortest notice, and entirely extempore.”¹³¹ If Black was not known before by newspaper editors outside of east central Illinois, this last minute opportunity allowed him to present himself to a room filled with newspaper editors (all of whom practiced politics in earnest) from throughout the State. But Black’s anonymity (if any remained after this convention) would disappear a week later, when Black became the State Democracy’s candidate for Lieutenant Governor.

Black joined Gustavus Koerner, the Democratic candidate for Governor, at the head of the 1872 State ticket. Black was describes as a “soldier, scholar, orator and lawyer” who “will bring to the office the requisite qualities, and cannot fail to receive the approval of the people.”¹³²

The *Chicago Tribune* printed a letter from a “Fellow-Soldier” dated Chicago, July 1st, which provided a gruesome, but highly sympathetic, picture of Black on the political stump.

Sir: Regarding your candidate for Lieutenant Governor, some Chicago papers ask ‘Who is General Charles Black?’

He is an able, popular, rising young lawyer, and a fine orator, well known on all platforms in the Seventh Congressional District of Illinois. No man thereaway [sic], as a public speaker, can equal General Black.

¹²⁹ Reprinted in the *Chicago Tribune*, June 19, 1872.

¹³⁰ In 1884, the head of the Illinois Democratic Central Committee, *supra*.

¹³¹ *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, June 24, 1872.

¹³² Clinton, Illinois, *Semi-Weekly Register*, July 2, 1872.

If his platform manners have a fault, it is their one-sidedness. His right arm gestures, but the left hangs limp. The apology for this is to be found in the fact that a couple inches of his left arm were dug out ('excision of the' something-or-other) in a hospital at Port Hudson (I think it was), just after the capture of the place, wherein he assisted. Besides, bits of bone, enough to set up a small anatomical museum, have been coming from the same wound at intervals since that occurrence."

On July 6, 1872, the Ottawa, Illinois, *Free Trader* noted

Gen. John C. Black, of Champaign County, the nominee for Lieutenant Governor, is a democrat, and one of the most eloquent orators in the West. He was a brave soldier in the war for the preservation of the Union, and is immensely popular in the southeastern portion of the State.

Black's candidacy on the State ticket gave him the opportunity to speak at venues throughout the campaign outside of East central Illinois.¹³³ But Champaign was never far from his stomplings. On September 14, 1872 a "grand Liberal demonstration" was advertised on the old Fair-Ground, adjoining the two cities. It was an old fashioned barbecue at which "an ox will be roasted whole."¹³⁴ Black joined, *inter alia*, Governor Palmer, John Eden, W. E. Nelson (who was running against Cannon for Congress), and J. B. Mann of Danville. In a hint of what was to come eighteen years later, General S. T. Busey (when Busey challenged and beat Cannon for Congress for one term in 1890), acted as Marshall.¹³⁵

One of Black's last appearances in the campaign was in Rockford. In a special report to the Chicago *Tribune*, it was noted Black

made one of his usual brilliant and telling speeches. The audience throughout gave him their undivided attention, and the hearty applause which he constantly received demonstrated clearly that

¹³³ For list of State-wide appointments, see Chicago *Tribune*, September 28, 1872.

¹³⁴ As well as Republicans metaphorically.

¹³⁵ Chicago *Tribune*, September 12, 1872.

he was fully appreciated. A large number attended the meeting, and all seemed well pleased with the speech.¹³⁶

Black's removal of his residency back to Danville brought him back to his boyhood home.

In 1876, Black unsuccessfully ran against Cannon for Congress. For a detailed analysis of this campaign, see Timothy O. *Smith's The 44th Congress and the 1876 Congressional Campaign: "Wheel Horse" Cannon Begins To Show His Stuff*-OCLC 1235971161. At its conclusion, he returned to the practice of law. In 1879, Black sought the Illinois U. S. Senatorship as a Democrat, but lost. Shortly after the campaign ended, Black's war wounds required substantial and lengthy treatments, and the report of his condition clearly indicates that Black had conducted his campaign against Cannon in a state of continuous pain.

Black's residency in Danville through the 1884 election was high profile. He built a home on the southwest corner of Harrison and Gilbert streets, just to the north of his boyhood home (in 2022, the William Fithian House and Vermilion County Museum). Black was actively involved in working for the economic development of Danville and Vermilion County, and enjoyed a high profile legal practice that took him all over the State. He had the joy of having Hiram Blackburn (a Republican) handle his legal matters for him as he traveled for political and legal reason. He served on several local Danville boards, including the library board and the waterworks company board. Whenever an opportunity developed for Danville to acquire a new business or manufacturer, Black was a part of the community leadership helping to bring it to Danville. And most importantly, Black, throughout the years leading up to and during 1884, appeared at soldiers' reunions and gatherings throughout Illinois and the mid-west, where he became known not only for his military exploits, but also his oratorical skills.

Black was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School in Normal, Illinois.¹³⁷ It served as a children's'

¹³⁶ Chicago *Tribune*, November 2, 1872.

¹³⁷

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Soldiers%27_and_Sailors%27_Children%27s_School

home for orphans of civil war veterans. It was established in 1865, *inter alia*, by Jesse Fell and David Davis. In June 1884 Black attended the annual meeting of its Board of Trustees.¹³⁸

Black was also appointed by resolution adopted by the U. S. House and Senate, to the Board of Managers of the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.¹³⁹ These homes were for the care of the disabled soldiers, and Cannon would arrange for one of the last homes established to be in Danville, Illinois.¹⁴⁰

THE 1884 CAMPAIGN BEGINS IN EARNEST-“DANVILLE HAS ONE CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR, TWO CANDIDATES FOR CONGRESS, TWO CANDIDATES FOR THE STATE LEGISLATURE; YET DANVILLE IS NOT PROUD, BUT FEELS HER OATS A LE-E-TIE BIT *Danville Daily News*, September 11, 1884

Cannon returned from Washington City on July 11, ready to begin his campaign for re-election, but without a Democratic opponent in the field.

Black’s campaigning in east central Illinois after his return from the National Convention concentrated on helping Carter Harrison’s run for Governor. Harrison came to Danville for its jollification of the National and State tickets, and Black served as his host, along with Joe Mann. The *Chicago Tribune* saw this as Carter’s start of his campaign, and opined it opened with a “boom for Democrats.”¹⁴¹

On July 29th, the Democratic Congressional District Committee went into session in Danville.

¹³⁸ Bloomington *Pantagraph*, June 19, 1884.

¹³⁹ Joint resolution #29, Forty-eighth Congress, Session I, May 16, 1884. See *Danville Daily News*, April 28, 1884, identifying the home at Dayton, Ohio.

¹⁴⁰ For a history of the Homes, see *Creating A National Home: Building the Veteran’s Welfare State, 1860-1900*, Patrick J. Kelly, Harvard University Press: 1997.

¹⁴¹ *Chicago Tribune*, July 20, 1884. *Danville Daily News*. July 21, 1884.

It is understood that Gen'l Black will give his decision to this committee as to whether he will make the race in this district for congress or not.¹⁴²

Black's thoughts on the 29th were more likely than not with his wife as the couple prepared for a lawn social at their home that evening.

The grounds will be lit up by the beautiful electric light. A cordial invitation is extended to all.¹⁴³

But that did not stop the Democratic District Congressional Committee from getting Black's answer. It was not what they hoped.

Gen. J. C. Black, of Danville, was labored with yesterday [the 29th] by the democratic congressional committee, assisted by Joe Harnet, who represented the greenbackers, to allow his name to be used as a candidate for congress, but he positively declined to make the race. The democrats are now all at sea for a candidate, and there is some talk of having John S. Busey and Victor Arnold draw cuts for the place.¹⁴⁴

The next day it was also reported

The lawn sociable at the residence of Gen. J. C. Black, Gilbert street, last night, was a delightful affair. Excellent taste was displayed in the beautifying of the grounds, and being lit up with the electric light lent an additional charm to the surroundings.¹⁴⁵

The Committee also decided to hold their 15th Congressional District Convention on September 5th. The Champaign *Daily Gazette* thought

They don't want their candidate to worry himself long.

Two other names popped up as potential candidates: H. A. Day of Champaign and Rev. Mr. Lacy.

¹⁴² Danville Daily Commercial, July 29, 1884.

¹⁴³ Danville Daily Commercial, July 29, 1884.

¹⁴⁴ Champaign Daily Gazette, July 30, 1884.

¹⁴⁵ Danville Daily Commercial, July 30, 1884.

The Danville *Daily Commercial* announced it was glad Black had said no.

Not because of any fear of his beating Hon. Joseph G. Cannon, but because of personal good feeling for General Black. His defeat would be absolutely certain, and to escape that defeat is why we are truly glad that he has decided to let some other fellow carry the empty honor of a candidacy for the Democracy of the 15th congressional district.¹⁴⁶

Black spent the evening of July 31st, after his decision not to run for Congress and the Blacks' lawn party, giving a lecture on the French statesman Mirabeau before the Vermilion County teachers (majority were women)¹⁴⁷ in the circuit court room.¹⁴⁸

Several days before Black made his decision known on the congressional race, the Danville *Daily News* asked

WHAT WILL THE ISSUE BE THIS YEAR IN THIS DISTRICT?

We have been asked the question above. The reply is, 'tariff for revenue.' That is the platform made by GEN. BLACK, Hons. J. B. MANN, E. R. E KIMBROUGH and other leading Democrats of this county.

They made it and took it to Peoria and merged it with Hon. Wm. MORRISON'S 'tariff for revenue only' platform.

That will be the issue in this district. Those who are for the English tariff system will vote for the Democratic nominee for Congress, whoever he may be.

¹⁴⁶ August 1, 1884.

¹⁴⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 1, 1884.

¹⁴⁸ His presentation appears in the August 1, 1884 Danville *Daily News*. It was described as 'masterly and highly interesting of an hour's duration. Many passages . . . were sublime and expressed in . . . eloquent language." Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 1, 1884.

Those who are for the American system-a tariff so laid as to protect American labor and wages-will vote for Hon. J. G. CANNON.

The issue is joined and there can be no dodging.

Eight years the Democratic Congressional nominee in this district was also the fiat or Greenback nominee. The issue was mainly on our financial system, which the Democrats and Greenbackers at that time stoutly opposed. The strongest man nominated in opposition was against Mr. CANNON, and he made a strong fight in favor of repealing the resumption act, destroying national banks and issuing large volumes of fiat money.

Specie resumption has long been an accomplished fact, and the Democracy find the national banks so fully entrenched in public confidence and favor that they dare not attack them. Fiatism is dead and lies prone with many other old and dead Democratic hobby-horses. With PENDLETON killed and buried the cry of reform is mockery.

Tariff for revenue only is the single issue left.

Mr. CANNON in 1876, then but one term in Congress, made a square, honest, solid fight in favor of Republican policy, and won the contest. He is much stronger in experience and with the people than at that time. He is able to handle all public questions in a masterly manner. His opponent will have no chance to evade or quibble.¹⁴⁹

Who was the opponent in 1876? General John Charles Black.

AUGUST 1884

As July ended with the Black's lawn party under an electric light, and Black finally deciding not to run against Cannon, the Congressman spent several days in Champaign and Urbana shaking his constituents' hands.

¹⁴⁹ July 28, 1884.

He returned to Danville on August 1st.¹⁵⁰ His next venture was as a member of a local commission for river and harbors that went down the “North Fork from the foot of slack-water navigation at Crystal Lake to a spot opposite the poor house, to see about recommending to the next congress an appropriation for improving the navigation of that stream”¹⁵¹ The trip was not without adventure for members Col. J. S. Wolfe and T. A. Lewis (of Alaska)¹⁵². Wolfe’s boat overturned going over the dam, spilling its occupants into the water. Lewis lost a pair of \$13 boots when his boat sank. The group concluded that making the stream navigable was possible and that it should be recommended to the next Congress.

Alvin held a Democratic ratification event on Saturday evening, August 2nd. A correspondent to the Danville *Daily News* reported

The Democratic ratification meeting at Alvin took place Saturday night. One of the most conspicuous things was a banner bearing the motto, “STATE SOVEREIGNTY.” Mr. Mann said Cleveland is a pure man and a reformer, and has given the utmost satisfaction in the Empire State. Said he: They say he is a man of no experience. How in the world can a man get Presidential experience but by being President? Now, Blaine has too much experience; and in proof of fact he said a Dutchman went into partnership with a man, he furnishing the money and the man the experience. At the end of the year the Dutchman had the experience and his partner the money. Blaine is from the land of bigotry. There they propose to say what a man shall eat and drink. I am not a prohibitionist and do not claim to be a Christian. Blaine is not opposed to the English, but Logan is. See how he butchers the English language. Neither Blaine nor Logan is the first part of a statesman. They are Know-nothings. Blaine’s record is being ventilated.

¹⁵⁰ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, July 31, 1884; Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 2, 1884.

¹⁵¹ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, August 2, 1884.

¹⁵² Lewis, of Urbana, with the help of Cannon, had been appointed Clerk of the U. S. Court in Alaska, and left shortly after this voyage to assume his duties there. Champaign County *Herald*, July 9, 1884; Champaign *Daily Gazette*, August 21, 1884.

Now, the tariff was not what we all wanted at Chicago. It was a compromise with incidental protection. The Republicans want a protective tariff with incidental revenue. The Republican Congress four years ago enacted many bad laws, but did not say what they were. (I had thought the Democrats had a majority in Congress at that time).

In some way a pebble fell on the Hon. Joe Mann during the exhibition, thought to have come from some boy's hand. Mr. Mann said, 'I can whip the man who threw this stone.' A voice was heard to say from the crowd, "I will back you.' "don't need any backing,' said Mr. Mann.

There was some other disturbance, all of which came from boys shouting for Blaine and a few young men who were a little tipsy.

Mr. Kimbrough is reported to have made a nice little speech, but not in a Joe Mann way. The audience was good, and quite a number of women were present. OCCASIONAL

At a rally in Springfield, a banner carried during a Republican meeting suggests what would become, in reverse, a part of the Democratic campaign against Cannon. The banner was a sword with two edges, and by the middle of September, Cannon, who served as State's Attorney, and not in the army, during the war, would have this Republican mantra used against him.

The soldier's ticket;
Richard J. Oglesby, 8th regiment;
John C. Smith, 96th regiment;
H. D. Dement, 13th regiment;
Charles P. Swigert, 42th regiment;
George Hunt, 12th regiment.¹⁵³

Danville African-Americans were not going to be left out of the politicking in 1884.

¹⁵³ Danville Daily Commercial, August 9, 1884.

The colored Republicans will organize a Blaine and Logan club Wednesday night in Beyer's hall.¹⁵⁴ The meeting on the evening of the 6th produced a "good representation of the colored voters". It elected W. M. Johnson as President; W. F. Cousins Vice President; Edward Grant, Secretary; W. H. White, Assistant Secretary; Nelson Chaffin Treasurer; and W. M. Vance Sergeant-at-Arms. White was elected chorister of the club.

The club was addressed in short and stirring speeches by Rev. E. Sumner (colored) and W. R. Lawrence [Chairman of the Vermilion County Republican Central Committee] and B. E. Shawhan. The Black Eagle cornet band was present and furnished some lively patriotic airs. They were heartily cheered. The club numbers fifty-two members at present, and starts out under favorable auspices. Let every colored voter interest himself in the club and make the Black Eagles felt in the present campaign.

The club adjourned to meet next Wednesday night.¹⁵⁵

Lawrence was a Danville attorney, described as "a man of keen judgment in political matters. . . . He is quite a fluent speaker from the stump, and will perhaps make a number of speeches in this and other counties in the district during the progress of the campaign."¹⁵⁶

The same evening, at the same location, the regular meeting of the Young Men's Republican club was held. A glee club consisting of Mesdames E. D. Marsch, J. G. Cannon, E. E. Bouinot and Elliot, and Messrs. Segner, Samuel, Shawhan, Fares and Graham sang some "stirring campaign songs." The topic for conversation for the evening was "Is the mission of the Republican party fulfilled?"¹⁵⁷ At the end of the meeting the club announced it would next meet in Tinchertown under its electric light, with a torch light public procession from the public square to the electric light.

¹⁵⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 4, 1884.

¹⁵⁵ Danville *Daily News*, August 7, 1884.

¹⁵⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 4, 1884.

¹⁵⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 5, 1884. On the 6th, the Commercial reported that Fares, Segner and Shawhan sang, *inter alia*, "Marching Through Georgia".
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAFEWL0-1sc>

The Blacks enjoyed a lull in the campaign cycle by traveling first to Norwalk, Ohio, where they visited his brother-in-law, W. W. Graham. From there the Blacks traveled to Chautauqua, New York, but his wife was the principle reason for attending the event.¹⁵⁸ Contemporaneous with the Chautauqua meeting was a gathering of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

General J. C. Black, Democratic elector of Illinois, and Governor Farnham, of Vermont, are here with their wives, who were graduated with the class of 1884. Illinois General Logan, Republican Vice Presidential nominee, was the principal speaker at the event.¹⁵⁹

On the 15th the Republican County Central Committee held its meeting at Republican headquarters, and it was announced that ten Blaine and Logan clubs had been organized in the county. It was a hot night, but there was good attendance. Ferdinand Bookwalter provided the evening's speech, which lasted about an hour and a half. The *Danville Daily Commercial* reported that Bookwalter

made one of the best speeches-on the tariff question-of the campaign in this county. All who heard the speech were loud in their praises. The speaker reviewed the tariff question from the colonial history of this government to the present time, showing the effects of the low tariff of the Democratic party upon the country and the great benefit of the protective system of the Republican party. He followed up the administrations of both parties from their incipency, showing conclusively by sound argument and abundant historical facts, that the country under the low tariff, or free trade system of the Democratic party, suffered many serious financial crashes and was otherwise reduced to very sore straits. That under the protection system of the Republican party it had made this one of the greatest manufacturing and agricultural countries, and the richest nation on the globe; that our working men were the best paid for their

¹⁵⁸ For an account of her experience, see the *Danville Daily News*, September 17, 1884.

¹⁵⁹ *Chicago Inter Ocean*, August 17, 1884.

labor, and the happiest, freest and most intelligent on the face of the earth. He argued that the policy of the Democratic party was unsafe and a great injury to the country, but on the other hand the principles and policy of the Republican party were reliable, and that the people cannot and will not abandon it and take up with a party whose political career when in power has been one of double-dealing, and one which has only brought to this country great financial distress and discontent. The speaker presented several other very interesting arguments and points which we cannot make note of here. We will just say all those who did hear the speech missed a grand treat. The points were well taken and the arguments conclusive.

Congressman Cannon was in the audience, and he was pleased with it.

Hon. J. G. Cannon, at the conclusion of the speech, proposed three cheers for Mr. Bookwalter, which were given with a hearty good will.¹⁶⁰

What was Jesse Harper up to in August? On the 15th he travelled to Detroit, Michigan to 'aid in pushing the Butler boom. A large meeting of the Butler party will be held there next Monday.'¹⁶¹ It was a meeting of the Knights of Labor, and Harper attended in the capacity of Chairman of the National Committee of the Greenbacker party. Earlier, Harper spoke at a National County Convention in Detroit.

[Harper] said that since 1856, when he voted for Fremont and Dayton, he had stood up for the principles which he regarded as best serving the interests of the people. He said the people were to-day more free to hear and determine for themselves than at any time since the great canvass of 1860. The great questions known before the people were telegraph, railroads, land, labor, debts and banks. The Republican and Democratic parties stand on identical ground on these problems. Butler is the only man who is on the side of the people. The Democratic party of Jefferson and Jackson was a gift of the Lord. The Republican party of Lincoln was a gift of

¹⁶⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 15, 1884. The Danville *Daily News* observed that the speech was frequently cheered. August 15, 1884.

¹⁶¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 16, 1884.

the Lord. Both have outgrown their usefulness and we would be thankful if what the Lord giveth He would take away.¹⁶²

The day before, the *Detroit Free Press* had described Harper as a “campaign hustler of the approved type. He tells unctuous stories in capital style, grimaces, is rough and powerful. As he rose he laid his watch upon the rail in front of him, whereupon Mr. Trevelick remarked that would do in Detroit, but God help him if he should do it in Chicago. [Roars of laughter].”

It’s not often Jesse Harper’s speeches are presented verbatim in the newspapers, but the *Detroit Free Press* did so for Harper on August 17, 1884. What follows is how Harper’s speech to the Knights of Labor¹⁶³ appeared in that edition of the *Free Press*.

¹⁶² *Detroit Free Press*, August 18, 1884.

¹⁶³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knights_of_Labor

Col. **Harper** said that greater unity of action is needed in labor circles. The highest earthly relation is that of marriage, and he had observed that unless there was unity in that, there is likely to be trouble around. To bring about harmony and concerted action was his purpose. Butler and Weaver are not here, but on the 30th they are to be at a great meeting in New York to organize the campaign of Honest Labor vs. Arrogant Capital. Capital and labor should move together in as kindly relations as man and wife. Any Legislature that makes a law that makes it harder for a man to earn his bread is doing a wrong, and that law must go down.

You can never settle a question until you settle it right; if you do, it will come up again. When settled in the right way it can never again be agitated, and you can get up no more excitement over it than you can over the multiplication table. If we learn things in the wrong way we may learn them in the right way afterwards, but a doubt remains and it is very uncertain when we shall get rid of it. John Wesley regarded slavery as the foundation of all wrong, and yet that evil got into the Constitution, and it remained there until it tore the country asunder. It divided the Methodist Church, and his four years and a half in the army showed him that the Methodists who had their guns pointed toward the north could shoot just as soon as those who aimed the other way.

This government makes or unmakes its support-

This government makes or unmakes its support-
 ers. There are two ways to get rid of a bad law—
 the ballot box and the cartouche box—and he be-
 lieved it best to let no law get into the statute books
 that you cannot get out except by shooting it out.
 Prohibition is a great question, but it is not so vital
 as the distribution of bread. Acquiring wealth
 without giving an equivalent is a wrong. Labor is
 not arrayed against capital, but capital has long
 been arrayed against labor. All capital is earned
 by labor, and when the offspring of labor becomes
 arrogant, hops upon labor's shoulder and declares
 that it is going to ride, there's going to be trouble.
 The yearly product of labor is three per cent., and
 if we give one man sixty and another thirty-eight
 per cent., somebody has got to get
 along without even three per cent. If
 we give the thirty-eight and sixty per cent., then
 they want the earth. In continental Europe seven
 men out of each 100 own all the land, and ninety-
 three are tenants. In England 160 men own one-
 half of the land, three-quarters of Scotland, and
 115 own all of Ireland. We are going down the
 same road. Not content with owning Great Britain
 English dukes have bought immense tracts of land
 in this country, and can now raise wheat in the
 United States with which to feed their soldiers while
 they are whipping us.

When all the property is owned by ten per cent.

M

M

M

M

A

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T

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J

C

M

they are whipping us.

When all the property is owned by ten per cent. of the people civilization will go down in death and darkness. The railroad system of this country is more dangerous than slavery ever was. So are the telegraph, debt, banking, land, importing and exporting systems. The railroad owners are but a small fraction of one per cent., and yet one per cent. of the people own your President, your Senators, your Representatives, your press and some of your churches. There was never a millionaire slaveholder. Since 1863 we have had freedom and ought to be able to see good results therefrom. Instead, we can show 500 millionaires, made since the war. We had in 1860 in the United States 105,000 miles of railroad that cost \$1,700,000,000. The little handful of men who own them have issued \$7,000,000,000 worth of stocks, sold \$5,000,000,000 of it to a confiding public, got their invested capital, \$1,700,000,000, all back, and over \$3,000,000,000 more with it, and pay eight and one-third per cent. in dividends upon the watered capital, which is forty-two per cent. upon the real capital. They have also been given \$6,000,000,000 worth of land, more than three times as much as the railroads cost them, or a total of \$11,000,000,000 profit upon a \$1,700,000,000 investment.

Back in Danville, the Black Eagle cornet band serenaded the family of Congressman J. G. Cannon on Friday night (August 16th). The Danville *Daily News* observed on the 18th that it "[executed] some very nice music. Under the efficient leadership of Mr. Reynolds, they have made excellent progress in the science of harmony."

Just why did the Democrats delay their Fifteenth Congressional District Convention until September 5th? The Champaign *Gazette* speculated on that by responding to the Champaign *Times'* thoughts on it,

The Times says that in order to give the people time to think over the matter of Mr. Cannon's successor, the committee has placed

the time of the Democratic nominating convention rather late. The Times is too Guileless. No one need be deceived by any such pretext. The time fixed for the convention is after the Maine election, and should the Democrats carry that State, they will nominate the strongest man they can find, in hopes of getting him in on a popular boom; if Maine goes Republican, as it assuredly will, then the Democrats will put up any one who will take the nomination.¹⁶⁴

On August 13th it was announced that Cannon would speak at Rice's Grove, near a settlement called Charity, on Saturday, August 23rd, at 2:30 p. m. "There will be a poll raising and a good time generally. All are invited, especially the ladies."¹⁶⁵ Charity's sister settlement was Hope, about two miles to the west, both in Vermilion County's Pilot Township. The first settler in the area was Robert Butz, and by 1884 his son, J. K. Butz "has one of the best improved farms in the county."¹⁶⁶ Beckwith also notes in 1879 that "[i]n politics, Pilot is not only Republican, but radically so. In all state and national elections, Pilot heaps up majorities for the regular republican candidates."¹⁶⁷ The area was served by a post office at Hope, with J. K. Butz as the first postmaster.¹⁶⁸

John J. Rice, whose grove was to serve as the Cannon "grand rally"¹⁶⁹ epicenter, was born in New York in 1812, the son of a Revolutionary War veteran. Rice arrived in Vermilion County in 1835, first settling in Salt Fork, and then moving to Pilot Township. An 1889 profile of Rice places

¹⁶⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 18, 1884. Our crystal ball knows that the Republicans carried Maine with increased majorities. Passaic, New Jersey, *Daily News*, September 9, 1884.

¹⁶⁵ Danville *Daily News*, August 13, 1884.

¹⁶⁶ *History of Vermilion County*, H. W. Beckwith (1879), page 908.

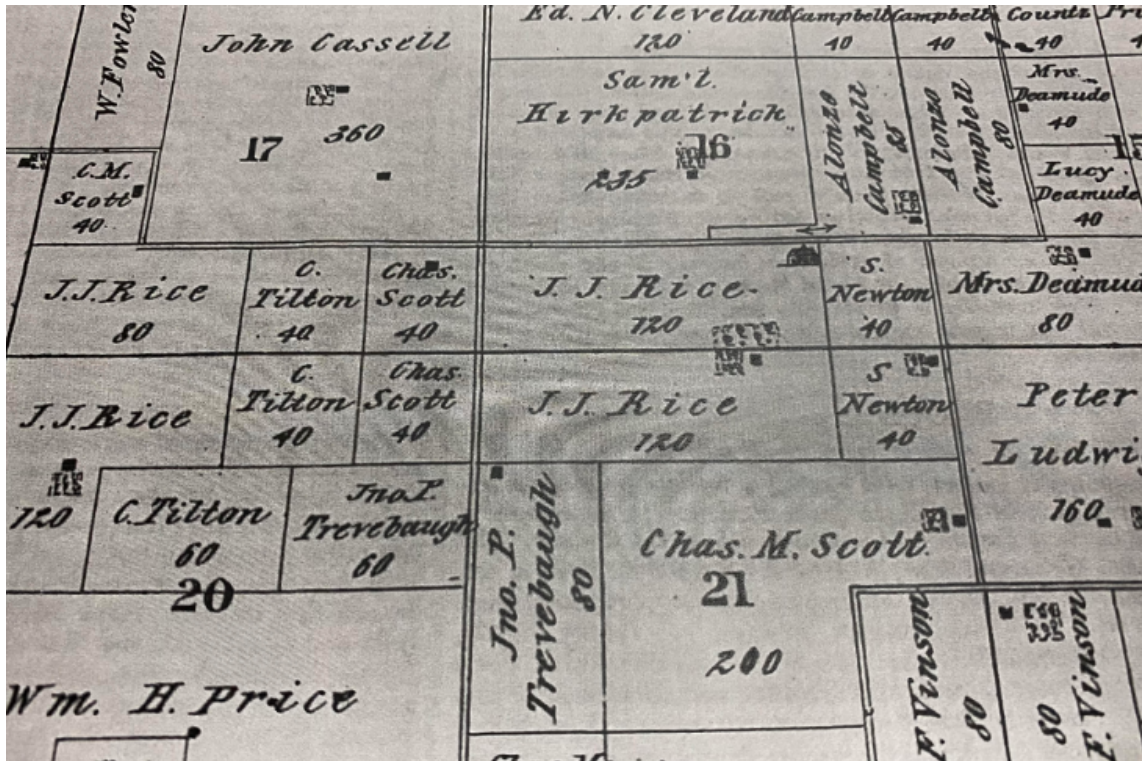
¹⁶⁷ Beckwith, *supra*, page 912.

¹⁶⁸ J. K. Butz was the grandfather of Carl and Mark Van Doren, both born on a farm just to the west of the church in Hope that was dedicated at the crossroads in November 1884. Danville *Daily Commercial*, December 10, 1884. Carl (September 10, 1885 to 1950) and Mark (June 13, 1894-1970) Van Doren are the only brothers to have received a Pulitzer Prize, Carl for his biography of Benjamin Franklin, and Mark for his poetry. Carl Van Doren's wonderful account of growing up in Hope during the years 1885 to 1900 can be found in his *An Illinois Boyhood*, Viking Press, 1939.

¹⁶⁹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 14, 1884.

him as one of the best citizens of the Township and a member of the Prohibition party.¹⁷⁰

Rice's Grove, on Rice's land, was on the border of Sections 16 and 21 in Pilot Township.



The Danville *Weekly Press* reported

An enthusiastic Republican pole raising and meeting was held at Rice's Grove Saturday. A very large Blaine and Logan pole with a very large Union flag at its top was raised in front of Rice's store. At 2:30 p. m. the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who had been attracted thither from ten miles around, repaired to the beautiful grove known as Rice's Grove, where the Hon. J. G. Cannon,¹⁷¹ very

¹⁷⁰ *Portrait and Biographical Album of Vermilion County, Illinois* (1889), page 683.

¹⁷¹ Cannon's farm was just to the east of Muncie, making him, arguably, a fellow farmer with the residents of the area. On July 14, 1884, the *Danville Daily Commercial* noted "Hon. J. G. Cannon is spending a few days on his farm in Oakwood township."

ably and fully discussed the political issues of the day. He was followed by W. R. Jewell, editor of the [Danville] NEWS.

The Muncie band discoursed harmony to the satisfaction of everybody. The order was excellent. The meeting was eminently successful, and great credit is due to the managers and all are grateful to Mr. Rice for the use of his grove.¹⁷²

Phocion Howard was in Chicago on August 21st. Did he go up to explore the dust-up in the Illinois State Republican Central Committee? The Chicago *Inter Ocean* took A. M. Jones, Chairman of the Committee to task because he held a federal office at the same time in violation of the federal civil service act. The *Inter Ocean* demanded Jones resign from one or the other position.¹⁷³ It didn't help Jones when Wm. H. Robertson, Collector of the New York port, resigned his committee position on the New York Republican Central Committee to keep his federal job.¹⁷⁴ Several other federal employees served on the Illinois Republican State Central Committee, including J. H. Clark, as postmaster in Mattoon. It was reported¹⁷⁵ that Cannon had attended the recent Central committee meeting and "[is] known to have urged Mr. Jones to conform to the law by resigning." The Danville *Daily Commercial* suggested it was hardly likely that Clark would not follow Cannon's advice but there is nothing in the newspapers indicating Clark did resign. Jones, in September, was still acting on the Committee.¹⁷⁶

The shabby treatment of E. R. E. Kimbrough at the Vermilion County Democratic Convention did not hinder his becoming the Democrat's nominee for the Illinois House. Under the minority representation rule of the Illinois Constitution, his nomination guaranteed his reelection. Kimbrough's support of the Harper Bill (high liquor license fees) was

¹⁷² While there is no evidence that Carl and Mark's father and mother attended the rally, Carl recalled his grandfather Butz's "very friendly relationship with Cannon, the community's political hero. *An Illinois Boyhood*, supra, page 24. Van Doren recalled his grandfather Butz as a Whig and conservative and his grandmother Butz Republican and radical. At page 11.

¹⁷³ See Chicago *Tribune*, August 8, 1884 discussion of the reasons why resignation was appropriate.

¹⁷⁴ Chicago *Inter Ocean*, September 8, 1884.

¹⁷⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 23, 1884.

¹⁷⁶ Chicago *Inter Ocean*, September 24, 1884.

noted by the Danville *Daily Commercial* as an obstacle to his support of Carter Harrison for governor since

Carter Harrison [runs] for office on a platform which means free whiskey if it means anything.¹⁷⁷

The role of the soldiers' vote in the upcoming election appeared in a humorous item in the August 26th Danville *Daily Commercial*.

A one-legged Illinois soldier upon being asked whether he would vote for Cleveland and Harrison, replied: 'Not till that leg grows out,' and added: 'I don't propose to fight on one side and vote on the other.'

Jesse Harper (with C. B. Fenton and E. H. Langhans) attended the Illinois State Greenback Convention in Bloomington at the end of August. When he returned to Danville, Harper held the Greenback Party's nomination for Illinois Governor. The Greenbacks refused to endorse Carter Harrison and picked Harper instead. But,

[n]o electoral ticket [Presidential electors] was nominated, and a committee was instructed to fuse with whichever party will give the best terms on the electoral ticket.¹⁷⁸

The Danville *Daily Commercial* speculated Jesse's earlier prediction that Harrison would win the governorship because of Harper's extensive travels over the State.

Uncle Jesse is not the best authority in the world, and now that he is a candidate for gubernatorial honors he has probably changed his notion. Greenback goggles are deceptive.¹⁷⁹

Meanwhile, Cannon went to Douglas County at the end of August. As the principal owner of the First National Bank of Tuscola, he not only had

¹⁷⁷ August 22, 1884.

¹⁷⁸ Danville *Daily News*, August 29, 1884.

¹⁷⁹ August 29, 1884.

business interest to attend to, but also canvass opportunities, including the Douglas County fair.¹⁸⁰

Even though Black had said NO to his fellow Democrats in facing Cannon, the Danville *Leader* was still pushing him to run.

The Leader is trying to force Gen. Black to make the race for Congress, notwithstanding his positive declaration that he would not run. In an article in yesterday's issue the Leader says 'We want good and honest men now more than ever before. Gen. Black is one of these, and the Democracy of this 15th district calls upon him to lead them to victory and to good and honest government.' In the same paragraph with the above we find the following sentence: 'It is now for him to say if he has been bought, and his candidacy silenced.' It is rather a hard job to reconcile these two declarations, and there is perhaps no one but a Democrat who would attempt it. The Democracy of the 15th district must be put to a very severe strait to compel a man to make a canvass for the honorable position of Congressman against his positively signified will, and then hold so severe a lash over him as the last quoted sentence from the Leader. If General Black would do himself personal justice, he should publically denounce the above utterances.¹⁸¹

SEPTEMBER 1884

Cannon traveled to Macon County in the first days of September to speak at a rally in its courthouse.

¹⁸⁰ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, August 28, 1884.

¹⁸¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, August 30, 1884. On September 1, 1884, the Danville *Daily Commercial* noted "The *Leader* says General Black MUST run for Congress. This reminds one of the ground-hog story. He MUST catch the ground-hog because the family were out of meat. Gen. Black MUST run for Congress, for the Democratic family are out of meat, and if the General will not run, it leaves them without timber also."

RALLY! RALLY!

Hon. J. G. Cannon,
OF DANVILLE,

Will speak at the Court House, in
this city, on

Saturday Evening, Sept. 6th,

The Blaine and Logan glee club will
be on hand to enliven the meeting with
their choicest songs.

EVERYBODY COME.

Ladies are specially invited.

Decatur Daily Republican, September 5, 1884

It was Cannon's first visit to the county as a speaker (since Macon County was no longer in his congressional district). The heat caused the venue to change from inside the courthouse to an impromptu platform at the corner of South Water street and Main streets. A crowd of about one thousand men and women listened to a two-hour speech by their former congressman. "He dwelt almost wholly on the tariff question, showing clearly the injurious effects of the democratic free trade policy." He reviewed the three modes of taxation under the Constitution: Internal taxation (substantially gone) with the tax on whiskey and tobacco remaining; Direct taxation, apportioned according to congressional districts; and Tax on all goods made in foreign countries

and sent into America to compete with the manufactured articles of this country.

Both parties agree that those are the best ways of getting money. We pay \$200,000,000 annually for imported articles. The Republicans say that all articles produced abroad that cannot be made or purchased in the United States come in free of taxation, but goods that are made here shall be protected by taxation on similar goods made in foreign lands and sent here for sale. . . The Republican party is for a tariff for revenue to protect American labor. Here the speaker gave the history of the democratic party, and showed that all along previous to 1860 when it went out of power, it had legislated against the working classes and in the interest of capital and cheap labor. He put a number of pointed questions to the working people, and called upon the 600,000 foreigners who come to America annually to answer: Why did you leave your native soil? Why did you come if not to better your condition? Are you not prospering here? Why do you stay? And why do you keep on making money and sending back to England, France and Germany for your friends to come over? Europe is a country of 150,000 square miles, and within that area are massed 250,000,000 people. In the United States, not including the mountains and Alaska, there are 150,000,000 square miles, and we have 56,000,000 people, a population nearly five times less than that of crowded Europe. Under free trade as the Democrats want to introduce, the American laborers would be compelled to lay down their tools, for they could not compete with the teeming millions of slave-ridden laborers of Europe. Our factories would be closed and business everywhere would be paralyzed **** This is the country for the laborer in which he can earn a decent living, get a home, clothe his family, and have rest and recreation. The Republican party has been in power years and this country has witnessed more prosperity in these years than it has known since Christopher Columbus discovered it. We don't have to theorize. We know the record of the party and it suits us and it shall not and will not be wiped out while grass grows and water runs. In closing Mr. Cannon alluded in glowing terms to Blaine and Logan and urged all to close up the ranks and vote. . .the straight Republican

ticket. The speaker was frequently interrupted by approving applause and was given close attention to the end.¹⁸²

The Republican campaign coverage in Vermilion County began to highlight the other candidates for office as fall began. W. J. Calhoun,¹⁸³ himself destined for national service in the diplomatic corps in the 1890s and early 1900s, was running for Vermilion County State's Attorney. Calhoun addressed the people at Uncle Ben Zeigler's grove, one half mile south of Cheneyville. It was a torchlight affair, attended by both Republicans and Democrats.

At about 8:30, after a song from the glee club, Captain Miles Odell introduced the speaker, who held the closest attention of the audience for nearly two hours. Everybody knows that Cal is one of the best speakers in the State, but this time he fairly outdid himself. He began by explaining the superiority of our government over that of any other, and explained the relation of the two great parties to each other and to the country. He fairly outlined the past history of each party and showed their present attitudes in his own inimitable way that even a child could understand. His explanation of the tariff which is the principal issue now between the parties, was the simplest, most comprehensive and strongest argument in favor of protection we have ever heard. He closed with an eloquent and brilliant peroration that held his audience almost breathless until the close.-Hoopeston Chronicle¹⁸⁴

The *Leader's* campaign to push Black into the congressional canvass against Cannon was visited by the Danville *Daily News* when it reminded it that it knew

a few years ago General BLACK was a Republican and strenuous advocate of protection. He is now the acknowledged leader of tariff for revenue only, and had it put into the Democratic platform

¹⁸² Decatur *Daily Republican*, September 8, 1884. The Danville *Daily Commercial* reported the speech in detail on September 13, 1884.

¹⁸³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_J._Calhoun

¹⁸⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 5, 1884.

of this county, and aided to put it into the Democratic platform of this State.¹⁸⁵

While the two Republican newspapers and the Democratic newspaper in Danville were snipping at each other over Black, the General was in Edwardsville, Illinois, on the evening of September 1st delivering a “political speech” at the Madison County Democratic Convention¹⁸⁶ On his way down to Edwardsville, he spoke at a soldier’s reunion in Paris, Edgar County, before 7,000 to 8,000 people.¹⁸⁷

Black then headed north to Woodstock in McHenry County to attend its county fair. He arrived on the same train as General Logan, who was attending a republican rally and speaking at the fair. This set up a sequential encounter between the two Civil War Generals, one of who accepted his party’s nomination for Vice President, and one of whom declined the nomination. Black went first. He claimed he had come to deliver an agricultural speech

but as farming had been done at long range, his remarks would be very general. Then Mr. Black took occasion to drag politics into his speech by suggesting that Farmer Logan, Farmer Fairchild, and Farmer Torrence had come here to study incubation-the incubation of Republican votes. This sally was not well received, and thereafter the speaker confined himself to farming matters, and was very entertaining.

When he sat down Gen. Logan, who was by his side, laughingly observed, ‘I’ll have to give it to you when it comes my turn.’ There were loud calls for Logan at this time, and he was introduced, the shout of applause with which he was greeted lasting several moments. Gen. Logan spoke only three or four minutes. He said he thought a short speech would be the most pleasing one. Referring to the ‘able and eloquent orator’ who had preceded him and to the incubation scheme, Gen. Logan said, ‘I was invited one year ago to attend this fair today and promised then to do so, but Gen. Black says he rushed here in response to a telegram. [Laughter and

¹⁸⁵ September 2, 1884.

¹⁸⁶ Danville *Daily News*, September 2, 1884. Chicago *Tribune*, September 2, 1884.

¹⁸⁷ Decatur *Herald*, September 3, 1884.

applause] Now if he can make such a good speech on what he knows nothing about what kind of speech can he make on a subject that he does know something about.' [Renewed laughter. Mrs. Logan turned to Gen. Black and said: 'That's real mean.'] Gen. Logan then referred to the prosperity of the country, congratulating the farmers on the advancement they had made, and predicted for them continued prosperity and abundance. He was loudly cheered at the close.¹⁸⁸

After the barbs had passed, the four Generals, Logan, Black, Fairchild and Torrence, enjoyed dinner together at the fair grounds.¹⁸⁹

The politicization of tobacco did not take long. Tengen's in Danville sold Cleveland and Hendricks plugs, as well as Blaine and Logan plugs.¹⁹⁰ The role of the campaign song caught the eye of humorist Bill Nye, and he shared his thoughts on it through the New York *Mercury*.

Along with the blessings of freedom and the divine right of suffrage comes the incubus, the blot upon our glorious institutions, known as the campaign song. Dynamite under the throne is bad, but when the shattered monarch is gathered together in a royal gunny sack and buried, peace once more reigns over the kingdom, but in a republic we know that every four years we are overshadowed by the campaign song, set to the tune of John Brown's Body, which is supposed to be marching on.

Four years ago I had the honor of inventing and hurling forth upon the nation a song which did much to deepen the horror of the campaign. It consisted of a song which was known everywhere as the adjustable campaign song, to be warbled to the tune, 'Empty Is the Cradle, Baby's Gone.' It could be used both by Democrats and Republicans equally well, and has a vacant space left in the chorus, where by means of a slat and adjustable thumb screws the names of either candidate can be inserted. This song was cast in solid plates, and hawked about the country along with the jail-bird

¹⁸⁸ Chicago *Tribune*, September 5, 1884.

¹⁸⁹ Woodstock *Sentinel*, September 11, 1884.

¹⁹⁰ Danville *Daily News*, September 3/4, 1884.

wood-cuts of the candidate, and did much damage where no precautions were taken against ravages.

The campaign song of the present great war is now upon us. Let us be watchful and evade it whenever it is possible. It runs to the tune of 'Mother, Is the Battle Over?'

To be perfectly candid, I am a little down on manufactured enthusiasm. Hired bands, hired encore, supes [sic] and convention boomers, receiving so much a day and board, do not strike my fancy, no matter by which party they may be hired. But the campaign song, jerked out of the grave or garret every four years and new store teeth put in fills me with nameless gloom.

I call to mind a campaign song and a glee club, several years ago, we trained under a most deserving candidate on the other side. He told the glee club that he couldn't afford to pay its expenses, and tried to get out of it that way, but the chairman of our central committee heard the club sing that campaign song, and he paid the expenses of the club out of our funds, while it traveled around through the country, leading the hordes of our enemies and leaving a trail of horror wherever it went. . . .

The trouble is that the campaign song does not bring out our best talent. It is the same with the wood-cut of the candidate. Campaign portraits are generally engraved on basswood with a double-barrel shotgun. It is an impromptu affair. So is the campaign song. Sidney Lanier and Baron Tennyson do not write campaign songs. Neither does the sweet singer of Michigan. Only the high board fence poet ever writes campaign songs that are sung to the tune of John Brown's remains lie mouldering [sic] in the grave, while his soul is in the act of marching on. Very few writers of campaign songs ever die a natural death. They generally die mysteriously and suddenly, with some other man's boots on.¹⁹¹

In August Black attended a soldier's reunion in Chicago. One has to wonder what impact their overwhelming support of Republican Blaine

¹⁹¹ Danville *Daily News*, September 3, 1884.

had on him, and whether the report of his encounter with his fellow soldiers appeared in the Danville newspaper in an effort to suggest to Black that he should not change his mind on running.

At that gathering the General met fifty members of his old regiment. Among these fifty comrades of the General's forty-nine were wearing Blaine badges. They were sorry their former leader [was] training with the political element which they so strongly resisted during their military service, and which were responsible for the shooting and shattering of the General's limb.¹⁹²

By September 4th, the Democrats had labored hard to find a candidate to oppose Cannon, yet had not succeeded.

They are getting rather desperate, as last week's Leader plainly indicates. But all those who have railroad passes will go to Tuscola next Tuesday and make a last effort. Major Miller lives there.¹⁹³

Black appears to have not cared, at least if you looked at his speaking schedule. He continued on the stump in northern Illinois, spending the night in Chicago at the Palmer House (as reported on the 5th), and traveling to Freeport to speak on the evening of the 6th.¹⁹⁴ The *Chicago Inter Ocean* noted the General would speak at Hodges Park, Alexander County, on September 13th, and at a big barbecue at Shelbyville, Indiana, in the near future.¹⁹⁵ These are hardly the movements of a man anticipating campaigning for Congress in the Fifteenth District.

And then the pressure on Black to change his mind increased. A hint came in a report in the *Chicago Inter Ocean* on September 9th.

Champaign, Ill., Sept. 8.-An important private meeting was held here to-day of leading Democrats of the county over the question of securing a candidate for Congress against the Hon. J. G. Cannon, General J. C. Black having positively declined to run. The sentiment was unanimous to-day that he should be nominated and the party

¹⁹² Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 4, 1884.

¹⁹³ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 4, 1884.

¹⁹⁴ The Racine, Wisconsin, *Journal Times*, September 8, 1884.

¹⁹⁵ September 6, 1884.

support him without his consent. Some named Colonel J. S. Wolfe, of this city [Champaign] as second choice. Careful reports were obtained of the party's strength in nearly every precinct in the county. They will make a desperate struggle.

The Democratic Convention was scheduled for September 9th at Tuscola. Outside of Vermilion County talk as to who the candidate might be centered on Rev. W. C. Lacey. Lacey, a Democrat with Greenback tendencies, might affect a fusion with the Greenback party. Champaign's W. A. Day was apparently fading since many believed the honor of opposing Cannon was an empty one.¹⁹⁶

Vermilion County's delegates to the convention left Danville at 6 a. m. on the morning of the 9th.¹⁹⁷ The *Chicago Tribune* tells what happened.

TUSCOLA, Ill., Sept. 9.-[Special]¹⁹⁸ The delegates to the Democratic Congressional Convention of the Fifteenth District met at the opera house [next to Cannon's First National Bank of Tuscola] today to nominate a candidate for Congress and for the State Board of Equalization. The Hon. O. B. Ficklin [who had been on the platform with Lincoln and Douglas at the 1858 Charleston Debate] was selected as Chairman. Prior to assembling of the convention the delegates were at sea as to who should be nominated for Congress, but on the arrival of the Vermilion County delegation, for whom the convention waited, it was ascertained that Gen. J. C. Black of Danville was anxious for the nomination. After the usual routine matters had been gone through with General Black was put in nomination. Before a vote could be taken a motion was made that a committee of five be appointed to confer with a committee of Greenbackers for the purpose of fusing. The committee returned without having accomplished anything. A motion was then made and carried that the nomination of Black be unanimous. . . . This is the third time that Gen. Black has been nominated for Congress, having been

¹⁹⁶ *Chicago Tribune*, September 6, 1884.

¹⁹⁷ *Danville Daily Commercial*, September 8, 1884.

¹⁹⁸ Was this Phocion Howard reporting?

twice defeated, once by the present nominee of the Republicans, J. G. Cannon. Black's defeat is a foregone conclusion.¹⁹⁹

The Greenbackers also held their convention in Tuscola on the same day, and nominated Willis Jones of Camargo as their candidate for congress. Jones was a

small farmer and fruit raiser, and is considered cranky by his acquaintances and honest by his friends. He has no ability or fitness for the position he aspires to, and he is not supposed to be particularly in the race. His candidacy will have some effect on the vote for Gen. Black, but not enough to count either way.²⁰⁰

It's clear Black was not present in Tuscola.²⁰¹ It's also clear that the Vermilion County delegates had Black's consent for the nomination before their arrival in Tuscola, and thus he took it voluntarily. He still had to formally accept the nomination, but the record is empty as to what made or why Black had changed his mind. That did not stop the Danville Republican papers from speculating why. One item suggested that Black changed his mind "rather than rest under the charge of having been bought off by the Republicans." Another suggested

General Black has concluded to make the congressional race again as a penalty for being an eminent Democrat. It seems a tolerably severe penalty, but then the Danville Leader said he had to suffer it, and that settled the matter. If it would only take back that little charge of the General's probable 'see out,' the penalty wouldn't be half so great. It may be induced to do so, now that its point has been made.²⁰²

The Danville *Daily News* took a softer approach. After noting Black was "our esteemed townsman,"

¹⁹⁹ September 10, 1884. The Arcola Record noted "Gen. Black was nominated for Congress. . . . This will be a painful surprise and source of regret to many of his best friends and well-wishers." Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 15, 1884.

²⁰⁰ Indianapolis *News*, September 15, 1884.

²⁰¹ Danville *Daily Commercial* reported on September 10th that Black was in Chicago.

²⁰² Both points were made in the Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 11, 1884.

the General had expressly declared that he would not accept the nomination, but there was no one else to take the thankless burthen and it was thrown upon his shoulders.

The Greenbackers, who aided the Democratic party so valiantly eight years ago, when General BLACK was a candidate, were at the convention and asked twice to fuse with the Democrats, but were each time snubbed, and the last time spoken of in contemptuous language, as our report has it, and called 'a traitorous party.'

Gen. BLACK was a stronger candidate eight years ago than he can possibly be now. He was as well known then and as highly esteemed and as eloquent on the stump as now. Besides he had the support of the Greenback party, and was its greatest champion in this part of the country. The greenbackers were faithful to the fusion and voted for him, and yet he was defeated.

The people of this district will not send any man to congress who will uniformly act with the Democratic party, however well they may like him personally. For that reason they will nor send General BLACK.²⁰³

The allusion to serving in Congress with the men against whom northern men and women fought a bloody war had the *Danville Daily Commercial*²⁰⁴ remind its readers of the military service of the Illinois State Republican tickets during the war. While this may have been State and Nationally oriented, it takes only a brief review of the list to note the absence of Joseph G. Cannon; and if he had been included, he would have had "home guard" after his name.

²⁰³ September 10, 1884.

²⁰⁴ September 9, 1884.

The Tickets.

The difference between the Republican and Democratic State tickets is shown by the following:

REPUBLICAN.

James G. Blaine, home guard;
John A. Logan, Maj.-Gen. of Vols.;
Richard J. Oglesby, 8th regiment;
John C. Smith, 95th regiment;
H. D. Dement, 13th regiment;
Charles P. Swigert, 42d regiment;
George Hunt, 12th regiment.

DEMOCRATIC.

Grover Cleveland, home guard;
Thomas A. Hendricks, copperhead
and K. of G. C.;
Carter Harrison, home guard;
Henry Seiter, home guard;
Michael Dougherty, home guard;
W. E. Carlin, home guard;
Robt. McKinley, home guard.

At first flush, this tactic of affiliating Republican candidates with their military service for attracting the soldier vote had worked in past elections, but it also offered Democratic War Hero Disabled by Act of War General John Charles Black the potential to use Cannon's lack of

military service against him. Therein lay the irony of the 1884 Congressional campaign in the Illinois Fifteenth District. The importance of Black's status as a soldier rose to prominence when it was reported

Upon their return to Danville, the Danville delegates acknowledged that it would be a mighty big job to beat Joe Cannon, and they had no idea of accomplishing it. Gen. Black was nominated simply because there was no other soldier on the ticket, and the Democrats must have at least one soldier or they can't pose before the country as the soldier's party.

But the Danville *Daily Commercial* took one last shot for the day.

Gen. Black must feel highly gratified to be placed upon the ticket with Tom Hendricks [Vice Presidential nominee], the famous rebel sympathizer.

The Danville *Leader*, at least in its published columns, still wondered if Black would accept the nomination.

The Leader hopes General Black will accept, considering the fact of his being nominated by acclamation. It doesn't intimate the actual condition of affairs, which was that no man could be found before the meeting of the convention who would signify his willingness to make the race. If there had been any one in the district who wanted the job, it would not have been given out so easily. Because of the eminence of General Black, he is forced to suffer, if he will. If he does accept, the Leader says 'there will be such a storm of enthusiasm throughout the district as never before existed.' And after the storm, a great calm will come to the Democracy in this district.²⁰⁵

Black accepted the nomination, and upon doing so, released his political creed. The following is a draft of those beliefs in his papers at the Abraham Lincoln Library, Springfield, Illinois.

A GOOD POLITICAL CREED.

²⁰⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 15, 1884.

I believe in a government simple, efficient, inexpensive – one devoid of pomp and display, expending its wealth for the good rather than the empty glory of the people; one that is administered with the least expense consistent with efficiency and safety, and that shall exercise its ultimate powers of taxation only for the governmental needs. If this be a true rule, then the various economic and financial questions that arise may surely be adjusted in accordance therewith.

I do not believe it to be a proper function of government to tax the whole people for the especial benefit or bounty of any class of the people who have not been service rendered to themselves can never entitle those who perform them to taxation in aid.

I do not believe that any system of industry or investment established in pursuance of law, even on a false basis should be exposed to reckless or sudden change in governmental policy. The true rule should be applied and necessary changes made by such gradual processes as to enable those who have invested labor or capital, to conform to such true rules with the largest practical notice and the least possible loss. I believe in wise, steady, sensible reduction of taxation.

It goes without saying by me who have been so largely benefited by the pension system of the Government, that its great functions should be used for worthy veterans, their dependent fathers and mothers, and those widowed and orphaned by the sword and the sad exigencies of war, so that to those entitled thereto the aid extended by a grateful people shall be fairly and equitably paid, as partial compensation for loss of health and natural support. I believe that the fact that a man has been accepted by the Government as a soldier after a due examination by a Government surgeon, should be conclusive as to his physical soundness at that time.

Labor and capital should be the recipients of just treatment; no man and no government can thrive by inequity. Capital has always efficient methods for securing its voice in national affairs; labor

may well ask that full and especial regard be paid to its interest and especial efforts should be made to remove from all fields of competition convict contract labor or imported contract labor.

I believe that every unearned or forfeited acre of public land should revert to the Government and that all the public domain not fairly granted away, should be reserved to actual settlers; that the entire system of land grants to corporations is a mistake in policy and wrong in results; and that all the ungranted lands still within Government control should be held in sacred trust for the people.

I believe that honest is the only true policy for men and officers and Governments; that the representatives of the people should closely guard their interests; that a Congressman is a watchman as well as a law-maker; and that he should exercise the full powers of his high position to prevent fraud, check imposition, reduce expenses, restore the old-time tests of capacity and honesty. I do not believe that any man has the right to vote for or against any measure wherein he is financially concerned, directly or indirectly.

I am for such a tariff as will raise the necessary revenues to pay the Government expenses and obligations.

I hold with the United States Supreme Court that no system or scheme that raises one dollar more than this is robbery.

I hold that in the levying of this tariff it should be so adjusted as to afford the most benefit to the American laborer and investor, having in view always the Government.

It should never be so levied as to foster monopolies or put the American people at the mercy of combination, protected in their outrageous plans by the tariff.²⁰⁶

It was too good to be true as far as the Danville *Daily Commercial* thought.

²⁰⁶ General John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois. You essayist thanks Michael Eberhardt, Esq., for finding and providing this political creed for inclusion in this essay.

GENERAL BLACK has formally accepted the nomination of the Democracy as their candidate for Congress in this district. His letter of acceptance is about the same length as Cleveland's, and the heading of it, says it is perfect and unassailable. The General believes a great many things, which he sets forth in his letter, among which is 'that a man who enjoys office by purchased votes is the enemy of his country.' From this we take it that the General will make no effort to purchase any votes. He also believes 'that every unearned or forfeited acre of public land should be reverted to the government.' He also believes 'that honesty is the only true policy for men, and officers, and government.' This belief ought by rights to take the General out of the Democratic party, for entertaining such a belief with that party will naturally cause him to be lonesome. He closes by saying that he will 'not be able to devote time or labor to the canvass at home earlier than the second or third week in October.' He also thinks that the matter of the canvass is not very important, which, in his case, is very likely correct. His undoubtedly reasons that it would be time and thought wasted for naught.²⁰⁷

The addition of the belief as to "purchased votes" appears to have been added to Black's last draft, as released to the public. The *Danville Daily Commercial* nicely twists the real import of Black's assertion of vote purchasing that rested on reports that the wealthy bankers Cannon, both Joe and Will, routinely bought votes within the district.²⁰⁸

Black's decision not to campaign in the district until mid-October may have been based on another reason: his speaking commitments for the State and National Democratic parties. For example, Black was in Cairo, Illinois for a speech at Hodges Park on September 13th.

General Black will be there to address the public, and as the General is one of the finest orators in the country, and a man of national character, he should be honored with a grand turnout.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ September 23, 1884.

²⁰⁸ This implied assertion would become blatantly assertive in the 1890 election canvass of Cannon and Busey.

²⁰⁹ *Cairo Bulletin*, September 12, 1884.

With Black now officially in the canvass, Cannon offered Black the opportunity of a joint canvass of the district.²¹⁰ The following is how the letters appeared in the Hoopston *Chronicle* on September 23, 1884. This exchange suggests just how nasty the campaign might become.

²¹⁰ The editors at the Champaign *Daily Gazette* opined to Cannon when he informed them of his offer, that “the general would not accept, that he wouldn’t descend to discuss practical questions, but would continue to hold up the Egyptian Pyramids, the Appian way, the Coliseum, the Gracchi [Gracchi] and other heathens to the delectation [sic] of his audiences because they know nothing about those things. . . .” September 23, 1884.

POLITICAL DISCUSSION DECLINED BY GENERAL BLACK.

Danville News.

Editor News:—I hand you three letters for publication covering correspondence between General Black and myself touching a joint canvass in this district. J. G. CANNON.

DANVILLE, ILL., Sept. 15, 1884.

GEN. J. C. BLACK, Danville, Ill.:

DEAR SIR:—I notice your nomination by the Democratic party in the 15th district as its candidate for Congress. I have to suggest that we hold joint meetings in the district for discussion of the political issues—say at least one such meeting in the principal town or city in each county. If my suggestion meets your approval W. R. Lawrence, Esq., will act for me in arranging as to the number and places for the meetings and all details touching the same.

With respect, etc., Yours truly,

J. G. CANNON.

DANVILLE, ILL., Sept. 18, 1884.

HON. J. G. CANNON:

DEAR SIR:—Your favor of Sept. 15th inviting me to make a joint canvass of this district with you is at hand.

In reply I beg to say that the peculiar situation of affairs in this district is such that I deem it best not to accede to your request.

As I am informed, there are matters at issue between you and many of your former supporters that if brought into discussion between us might provoke an unpleasant warmth of feeling and disagreeable vigor of expression. I hate a family quarrel. I cannot look with favor on any interference in your troubles; I prefer to keep the even tenor of my way, while you writhe with the resolute men of your own party, who have determined that in this district this year there shall be "a change of measures and a change of men." Very respectfully yours,

J. C. BLACK.

J. C. BLACK.

DANVILLE, ILL., Sept. 22, 1884.
GEN. J. C. BLACK, Danville, Ill.:

DEAR SIR:—On Monday, 15th September inst., I wrote you inviting a joint canvass of this District. This was a week after your nomination, and, although you had not formally accepted, it was an open secret that you would do so. Your answer, dated the 18th inst., was not delivered to Mr. Lawrence for me until late on the day of the 19th inst., and on account of my absence did not reach me until to-day, although a prompt answer was specially solicited by Mr. Lawrence who delivered my letter to you. In the meantime your letter of acceptance was published on the 18th inst. You are the nominee of the Democratic party for Congress, and are in harmony with its principles and policies; you support its candidates from president to coroner. While I am in harmony with the principles of the Republican party, and support its candidates. If you are elected to Congress and Blaine is elected President, you would not co-operate with the President in carrying out the policies of the Republican party, without which co-operation, in voting appropriations of money and legislation by a majority of the National House of Representatives and the Senate, the President would be absolutely powerless in the premises.

If I am elected to Congress, I will in the future as in the past, by my votes and to the extent of my ability, support the policies of the Republican party.

I believe the prosperity and welfare of the Republic is at stake at the approaching election. In good faith I desired to discuss the issues with you fully and frankly in the presence of the people of the District before whom we are candidates and before whom our respective parties' policies are upon trial.

I know you have extended physical courage

I know you have splendid physical courage, and supposed you had the courage of your political convictions; that you were ready to defend them, especially as you are appealing to the people to be intrusted with their proxies in the National Congress. It appears I was mistaken, for you decline a joint canvass, where you would be compelled to defend as well as attack. You disingenuously put your declination upon the ground—"that you are informed there are matters at issue between me and many of my former supporters that if brought into discussion between us might provoke an unpleasant warmth of feeling and disagreeable vigor of expression."

You have suddenly grown solicitous for my welfare, and hesitate about using your boasted strength and power to my discomfiture.

If I have done aught in my political career that is not worthy of approval, it is your privilege and duty, as the opposing candidate, to overwhelm me by developing such improper action, and that, too, by manly, direct statements, while common fairness demands that I have an opportunity to answer you, face to face, to the same audience before which you make your charges.

Now, I will make a statement, and make it

audience before which you make your charges.

Now, I will make a statement, and make it specific. I am informed that some of your friends are giving out that while it is true you are the nominee of the Democratic party, if elected you would not antagonize the Republican administration in carrying out its policy. While other friends say you have been in full harmony with the Democratic party since 1866, which, with your nomination, is sufficient guaranty that you would act with the Democratic party in opposing the policy of a Republican administration. Now, one or the other of these friends of yours are mistaken. If you should be elected upon such representations by Democratic and Republican votes, one or the other would be grossly defrauded.

There is no fraud so injurious to the country as that which deceive the elector in the performance of his duty at the ballot-box.

I am greatly mistaken if you profit with the fair-minded men in your effort to please two classes of people who hold different views upon important public questions.

In conclusion I am willing that the public should judge of the tone and substance of your letter declining my invitation. I have at this date given the letters referred to, with this letter, for publication.

Yours truly,
J. G. CANNON.

The Danville *Daily News* saw Black's refusal in a different way.

It had been more than hinted, at various times that Mr. CANNON would not dare to meet Gen. BLACK in joint discussion. How far this boast was an element in determining Mr. Cannon's action in sending the polite invitation to Gen. Black, we know not, and it matters not. All who know Mr. Cannon have no fears of his

meeting Mr. BLACK, or generally anybody else, in joint debate.²¹¹
Mr. CANNON states the real object of his challenge in his rejoinder to Gen. BLACK.

No one can read Gen. BLACK's reply without at once seeing that he made a studied effort to accomplish a strategic movement and gain two points.

1st. To evade a public discussion with Mr. CANNON.

2nd. To evade it in a letter which Mr. CANNON would not dare to publish.

In the first he has succeeded. In the last he has failed, finding Mr. CANNON to be too courageous to be frightened by the General's insinuations of a family quarrel.

Mr. Cannon's rejoinder is, like the man, direct, clear, courteous and fearless.

The public will not fail to see that General Black's fear of a family quarrel is an excuse to evade the discussion, and will not fail to correctly decide that he evades it because he is conscious that, with all his eloquence and rhetoric, he cannot maintain the Democratic platform and record-its sins and its history-before the people of this district by the side of a man so fully armed with facts and ability as Mr. CANNON.²¹²

The *Leader's* predicted 'storm of enthusiasm throughout the district as never before existed' faced a quick dissipation after it became known Black had rejected Cannon's offer for a joint canvass.

The *Chicago Tribune* noted

²¹¹ This can be confirmed in the Congressional Record for the six Congresses in Cannon's career. An examination of his exchanges in debates with Democratic Congressman Holman of Indiana will disabuse this belief.

²¹² September 21, 1884.

Danville, Ill., Sept. 22.-[Special]-Gen. Black, in declining a joint discussion with Mr. Cannon, is following the plan laid down for him by his political friends, and he will not speak at all in this campaign in this district."²¹³

Three days later, the *Tribune* reported

They had no doubt when they nominated [Black] that he would 'beard the lion in his den,' but this he is afraid to do. He hesitates at no abuse of the Republican party and its candidates, but when asked to prove his charges in the face of the representative of the party he accuses [Cannon] he does not do it.²¹⁴

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, under the headline **Showed the White Feather**²¹⁵, observed

The promise of a lively canvass in the Congressional race in this (Fifteenth) Congressional District had a serious set back in this city [Danville] to-day. The Democrats nominated Gen. J. C. Black to oppose the present incumbent, the Hon. J. G. Cannon, who has been renominated by the Republicans, thinking that he (Black) would draw enough votes from the Republicans to beat Cannon. As soon as Black was nominated Cannon sent him a challenge for a joint discussion. Black has a national reputation as a speaker, and his admirers never doubted but that he would march boldly up to the Cannon's mouth. But this morning Mr. Black declined to enter a joint discussion and votes are rapidly drifting away from the 'white feather.' The republicans are now more than ever determined to carry out their threat to 'skin Black alive.'²¹⁶

Champaign County Republicans saw the "no speech" tactic as a trick to lure Republican votes for Black.

²¹³ September 23, 1884. This tactic was actually adopted by Democrat Samuel T. Busey in his successful campaign against Cannon in 1890.

²¹⁴ The report is a "Special" from Danville. It reads like a Phocion Howard piece, suggesting its author was Phocion.

²¹⁵ Symbol of cowardice.

²¹⁶ September 23, 1884.

A very ingenious scheme is now being worked in the interest of Gen. Black, the Democratic candidate for Congress in this district. A personal canvass is to be made and the General himself will not make any speeches here. His henchmen, however, will urge Republicans to vote for him because he was a soldier, was wounded, is a good fellow, and assert that, as the Democrats have over eighty majority in the House, one or two more or less won't make any difference.

This is all very fine, but it is only bait on the Democratic hook. The Republicans are under no obligations to Gen. Black because he was a soldier. He deserted the party to which he belonged for a congressional nomination at the hands of the Democracy, a party that did all it could to hinder and get him killed while he was a soldier. The government has made very good provision for him for the General's comfort by giving him, as we believe, the largest monthly pension given to any general officer who was wounded. That he is a good fellow, a genial gentleman and a pleasant companion, we concede. That the Republicans will be in the minority in the next House of Representatives, we don't believe. At any rate, every vote counts one in reducing the Democrats to a minority, and we are in favor of firing every one out that it is possible to beat by votes. The prospects now are that there will be a Republican majority in the next Congress. While General Black is a good fellow, he would be just as bad a Democrat, once elected to Congress, as Bob Toombs or Bill Morrison. He would vote for every Democratic measure that came up, and whatever the caucus said he would do. As a citizen of Illinois, Gen. Black is all right; but as a Democratic member of Congress he would be all wrong. Let Republicans beware of making any trades whereby they are to vote for Democratic congressmen, for members of Congress are of more importance than even a President. Don't swap votes for anybody.-Champaign Gazette²¹⁷

The Illinois State *Journal* took Black to task in a column reprinted by the Danville *Daily News* on September 27, 1884.

²¹⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 20, 1884.

Really and at heart, we suspect there is a much wider difference between General Black and his expected supporters than there is between Mr. Cannon and any individual Republicans of his District. The principles of the Republican party are tangible and so clearly defined that they are the same in all latitudes and under all meridians. On the other hand, Democracy is an uncertain quantity-being construed to mean one thing in one place and quite another thing in another locality. This is especially the case in reference to the tariff and all the issues growing out of the late war. Upon these issues Gen. Black is unwilling to go before the people of his District as a Democrat, even while consenting to accept a Democratic nomination. Is this courageous, is it just to the party which has chosen him as its champion?

The *Mattoon Gazette* directly took on the "vote for Black" because he was a soldier tactic in its September 19, 1884 issue, and in the process identified the precise reasons why the district should keep Cannon in his job.

Although it is possible that several other parties may arise with their candidates for popular favor before November, yet the Fifteenth district is a poor field for "independents" of any political creed. If a voter in this district expects to carry any influence he must either be a whole republican or a whole democrat-in action at least. However disaffected he may feel at heart, or whatever breadth of doctrine he may conceive in advance of his party, he is lost when he attempts any middle ground. The leaders of the congressional forces, Joseph G. Cannon and John Charles Black, are both personally known to be men of ability in their respective ways. Gen. Black was always a man of great personal popularity, and it is whispered that as a last resort in this soldier year the democrats hope to whip Cannon with Charley's shoulder-straps. Now Charles was a handsome youth, who turned the heads of all the girls twenty-five years ago; he made a fine-looking officer, and soldiers have a wonderfully friendly feeling for one another after they have tented on the same field and slept in the same blanket. But when John Charles comes to the soldier's love feasts has any testimony of mule meat and southern prisons in his repertoire?

If his army service had brought him deeper experiences he might not now be training with that party which, in the South, regards service in the confederate army as a special card for political preferment. The bravery that faces death in a conflict of arms is in a large degree physical. Gen. Black was, in his early manhood, regarded as one of nature's best efforts in physical development. But manly beauty, personal popularity, or soldierly bravery, will not turn the heads of old soldier voters who fought to conquer the traitors that Gen. Black is now attempting to assist to power. They may love and esteem their old comrade as they did many a confederate friend during the stormy days of the war. They can chat over their walnuts and wine now as they did over hardtack and coffee then, but now as then, when election day comes, each voter will get within his own lines to win victory or defeat for the principles he represents, with little thought of sentimental friendships.

Joseph G. Cannon, regardless of the criticism of the few who are consumed with ambition themselves, is as popular a representative in his own district as any mortal man can be. He is not specially skilled in grace and suavity of manner, but he is thoroughly well versed in business affairs and all the hard facts and careful minutia that go to create a practical lawmaker. Oratory has been the bane of many a legislative body, for the reason that too often oratory in man, like beauty in woman, is 'only skin deep,' and it has been too much the custom formerly, to give precedence to the tongue. But Mr. Cannon has shown to the satisfaction of three hundred representatives from other states, that he has ability of which any district may well be proud. By his painstaking methods and never faltering industry, he has won his way to a leadership which he will keep if the republicans of the district do their duty this fall. He triumphed over General Black eight years ago when the democrats were aided by greenbackers, and General Black was just as eloquent, just as handsome and just as popular then as now. There is no good reason why this district should not follow the example of Maine and pile up a republican majority this year that will even satisfy the highest expectations of the democrats, and the Gazette believes it will be done.

The Danville *Daily News* asked Black to “set the example of voting for soldiers simply because they are soldiers, before he asks soldiers to vote for him simply because he was a soldier. Until he is magnanimous enough to treat his comrades as he would have them treat him neither he nor his friends must expect Republican soldiers to vote for him.”²¹⁸

An original column of the Danville *Leader* on the controversy surrounding the “joint campaign” as proposed by Cannon was retained by Cannon and put in his scrapbook²¹⁹ as a “memento” of the campaign. It appeared in the September 26, 1884 *Leader*, under the headline CANNON’S WHINE:

²¹⁸ September 30, 1884. See also the Danville *Daily Commercial’s* analysis of this issue for Black in its late September editions.

²¹⁹ Joseph G. Cannon Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois, Scrapbook 1884-1902.

CANNON'S WHINE.

Mr. Cannon challenged General Black to a joint debate in this district. Gen. Black refused to accept the challenge. The challenge was not made in good faith. The pretense made by Mr. Cannon that it was desirable that the people should hear the political issues of this campaign discussed in joint debate is a false pretense. Mr. Cannon has been a candidate for election to congress six times before the present year. He has never before deemed it desirable that the people should hear the political issues discussed in joint debate. Gen. Black once before contested the congressional election with Mr. Cannon. The latter was then as dumb as an oyster concerning the question of a joint debate. Mr. Cannon's present challenge is actuated by other motives. He knows that there are a large number of his former political friends who have concluded that they must bear the necessity of being misrepresented in congress by Mr. Cannon unless they can succeed in beating him with a democrat. These people have decided that Mr. Cannon is not a fit or proper representative of honest men. These people have declared that Mr. Cannon's modes of securing nominations and elections are calculated to debauch the political morals of the district and to jeopardize the purity of the ballot. Mr. Cannon knows of this feeling. He knows that his only hope of election lies in the possibility of drawing party lines with the utmost rigor and stirring to their deepest depths partisan prejudices. This is the explanation of the stupendous efforts now being made by the party in this county which ought to be good for fifteen hundred republican majority. This is the cause of the marching and counter-marching of the Plumed Knights, plug hats and other organizations of the republican party. It is all done for Mr. Cannon, at his suggestion and partly at

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will of the people. Joseph G. Cannon
has again been foisted upon the party.
Al Hawes, W. J. Calhoun, E. E. Boudi-
not and C. A. Allen must come down
with their means, and must devote their
time, and contribute from their abilities
in order that in a county surely republi-
can, J. G. Cannon may not get left. In
the hope that a joint debate, notably one
of the most acrimonious contests in
political warfare, might aid in arousing
partisan prejudices, and thus create a
cloud under which his political deformati-
ties might be further hidden, Mr. Can-
non issued his challenge. It is not true
that the challenge was issued in good
faith, and Mr. Cannon knows it. Gen.
Black did right in refusing to accept the
challenge. His course will meet the ap-
proval of his political and personal
friends as well as of those who do not
mean to vote for Mr. Cannon but who
will otherwise vote for the republican
nominees. Gen. Black will in this con-
test exercise the right which Mr. Cannon
has heretofore exercised of making his
own canvass in his own way, and the
challenge to a joint debate under the
circumstance was a piece of impertinent
hypocrisy which was fittingly rebuked
by Mr. Cannon's gallant and talented
opponent. Mr. Cannon's whining, petti-
fogging letter in which he seems to
insinuate that Gen. Black is afraid to
to meet him in debate upon any ques-
tion, will excite nothing but derision
among those who know the two men.
Messrs. Cannon, Lawrence and Jewell
must get up some less transparent
scheme before they can entrap General
Black or his friends into doing anything
to assist in foisting Mr. Cannon again
upon the people of this district.

Leader

By the end of September, another problem arose for Black. It was reported in the *Tuscola Journal*

The soldiers are not taking kindly to Gen. Black, owing to his having charged them \$25 for orating to them at their reunion at Sidney.²²⁰

The Republican press, recognizing an opening of attack in Black's refusal not only to debate Cannon, but also not speaking in the district, if at all, until October, continued to nip at Black's heels on the matter. The *Danville Daily News* pointed out that Black's tactic to ask the veterans of the Fifteenth District to vote for him, just because he was a soldier, and not because of the policies of the Democracy, "counts as nothing with General Black politically; the fact a man is a Democrat counts everything with him politically. . . ."²²¹ Noting that Black's managers are engaging in a 'still hunt,' it appears they think "it is best for General Black to keep his mouth closed lest he should say something that would drive away his soldier friends."²²² The *Mattoon Gazette*, spot on in its analysis, noted that Black's declination of a joint canvass "could not gloss over the glaring inconsistencies of his party, so the General showed his shrewdness in golden silence."²²³

In early August, it was announced that Black would speak at the G. A. R. reunion at the fair grounds in Delavan, Tazewell County, the third day of the fair, on September 17th.²²⁴

Black's silence extended beyond the State. He had been scheduled to speak at a monster Democratic gathering in Shelbyville, Indiana on September 25th. Vice Presidential candidate Hendricks, former House Speaker Randall, and other national Democrats, were advertised as speaking. Over 30,000 attended and enjoyed thirty steers and fifty sheep, but the luminaries, including Black did not show up. That may have been wise, though: the barbeque was "followed by a rip-roaring

²²⁰ *Danville Daily Commercial*, September 30, 1884.

²²¹ September 24, 1884.

²²² *Danville Daily Commercial*, September 24, 1884.

²²³ September 26, 1884.

²²⁴ *Danville Daily Commercial*, August 11, 1884.

drunk, and accompanied with a score of fights, and robberies innumerable. . . .” Such a show did not help the Democrat party.²²⁵

While the fuss over Black’s refusal to debate Cannon played out in the newspapers, the other Vermilion County candidates went about their business. The African-American Blaine-Logan Club, the Black Eagles, held a meeting in Beyer’s hall on September 18th, where Joseph Grant and William H. White spoke. The Star band provided the music.²²⁶ While Phocion Howard was not a candidate, his role as a newspaperman covering the campaigns kept him busy. He went to Belleville on September 19th to cover General R. G. Oglesby’s speech as the Republican Gubernatorial candidate.²²⁷ Jesse Harper went to Robinson, Illinois on September 15th to speak there and at Carmi on the 16th.²²⁸ and also told the *News* Harper would speak in Burlington Junction, Iowa, during the next week.²²⁹

Cannon was not “letting any grass grow” under his feet as he waited for the Democrats to pick a candidate and accept the nomination. His speech in Decatur, as recounted above, appears to be his standard “stump speech” for the canvass, modified as required to meet the time limitations (if any) in his political appearances. In early September it was announced that Cannon would spend September 15th to the 20th speaking in Champaign and Ford Counties at Ivesdale, Seymour, Urbana, Fisher, Mahomet, Rantoul, Homer, Orizaba, Gifford and Ludlow.²³⁰ He then went to Edgar County, where, *inter alia*, “spoke in Paris, Ill., on [September 22nd] to 4,000 people. He showed, in an able manner, the fallacy of the free-trade doctrine and the effect of the policy of protection.”²³¹ He was back in Urbana for a speech on September 26th.²³² The Champaign County *Herald* reported “Hon. J. G. Cannon talked to the people at this place, last Friday evening [26th], and told some good truths, and showed the polygamy plank in the democratic platform, and

²²⁵ Indianapolis, *Journal*, September 26 and 27, 1884; Boston *Globe*, September 26, 1884;

²²⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 18/19, 1884.

²²⁷ Danville *Daily News*, September 20, 1884.

²²⁸ Danville *Daily News*, September 16, 1884.

²²⁹ Danville *Daily News*, September 16, 1884.

²³⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 4, 1884.

²³¹ Indianapolis *Journal*, September 24, 1884.

²³² Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 25, 1884.

told the boys how Grover Cleveland got his collars off.” The Urbana courthouse was “filled to overflowing.”²³³ “There were 500 torch bearers in the procession”²³⁴ held, in inclement weather,²³⁵ with Cannon’s speech. On the 29th, Cannon spoke to over five hundred people in Sidell.²³⁶

The line of travel for Cannon suggests he was staying close to Danville in the last days of September, and there was a reason. A GRAND RALLY was organized for Danville on October 1, 1884.

The greatest political demonstration that has occurred in Danville for many years will be the Oglesby rally October 1st. Invitations have been extended to all clubs in the county to participate. In addition there will be clubs here from Paris, Chrisman, Eugene, Newport, Homer, Perrysville, Covington, Attica, Williamsport, Watseka, West Lebanon, St. Joseph, Urbana and Champaign. Following Oglesby in the address in the afternoon, Hon. T. H. Nelson [the attorney who defended Cannon’s father in the 1847 prosecution for harboring an African-American], Terre Haute; Col. Van Sellar, Paris; Hon. M. W. Mathews, Urbana, and Hon. J. G. Cannon, this city. The number of torches that will be in the procession will reach up into the thousands. There will be all the way from ten to fifteen bands in the line.²³⁷

Gen. Lew Wallace, with Hon. Mike White (“one of the leading speakers in the Wabash valley”) were added to the speaker’s list for the rally on October 1st.²³⁸

The I. B. and W. is selling round trip tickets for \$1.05 good on any train going or coming. The committee having the matter in charge will run an excursion train for Champaign and Urbana by the Wabash, leaving at 5 o’clock and returning after the [rally]. It is

²³³ Danville *Daily News*, September 27, 1884.

²³⁴ Bloomington *Pantagraph*, September 27, 1884.

²³⁵ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, September 27, 1884.

²³⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 30, 1884.

²³⁷ Danville *Daily News*, September 24, 1884.

²³⁸ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 29, 1884.

expected that about one thousand persons will go from the two cities, while a large number will be added at Sidney and Homer.²³⁹

Black, perhaps wanting to get out of Danville to avoid the onslaught of Republicans, went to Bloomington on September 30th in anticipation of a large Democratic rally at Lexington. He joined Texas Governor Hubbard, Carter Harrison, and Indiana Senator McDonald. "The speeches were each about an hour in length, and contained but little new."²⁴⁰ Fifteen thousand people attended.²⁴¹

As September came to a close, there was at least one event that showed that even in the seriousness of presidential and congressional campaign, some fun could rise to entertain the politically inclined. The following story appeared in the Danville *Daily News*, and while it may seem to be a bit fluffy, it also illustrates just how seriously those who had "dogs in the fight" took even the slightest hint of intelligence and turned it into what ultimately was a day's worth of entertainment over nothing.

Trouble in the Camp

Early yesterday morning the NEWS reporter snuffed the battle from afar. There seemed to be trouble all along the line in seven or eight of the political camps. On one corner leading republicans were knocking heads together in close conversation. On another corner representative democrats were whispering, looking solemn and gesticulating. In the back room on East Main the greenbackers were consorting. In a front room not far from the public library the St. John prohibitionists were in solemn confab. Col. Johnson of the Commercial, was dodging, Shoaff, of the Leader, and Cronkhite, of the Ledger, was chasing Al Harper and the NEWS reporter around to 'get on' to the trouble.

Early in the morning Mrs. Col. Jesse Harper drove to the postoffice [in the east wing the first floor of the courthouse, with the Cannon's Second National Bank and brother Bill as President in the first floor west wing] and mailed a peck of letters. W. P.

²³⁹ Champaign County *Herald*, Wednesday October 1, 1884.

²⁴⁰ Bloomington *Pantagraph*, October 3, 1884.

²⁴¹ Monrroeville, Indiana, *Breeze*, October 9, 1884.

Cannon, H. P. Blackburn, W. R. Lawrence, Col. Johnson, F. Bookwalter, and Col. Calhoun [all but Johnson, lawyers], watched Mrs. Harper's movement with detective's eyes. In the meantime Joe Mann sent his hoodlum for Dr. Barton and Howard Myers and then telephoned General Black. Carnot B. Fenton rushed out the rear door of his hardware store and waylaid Leverenz the shoemaker and Freeman the painter.

The NEWS reporter made several efforts to run the sensation down, but no sooner would he appear in the midst of one of these crowds than they would vanish into thin air. By ten o'clock all sorts of rumors were in circulation, all kinds of suspicions were engendered. Mr. Joe Mann openly challenged Mr. W. P. Cannon to deny his receiving a message announcing that Mr. Blaine had withdrawn, and Mr. Cannon dared Mr. Mann to deny, on his honor as a man, that he had not received a message from Thomas Hendricks giving the particulars of Mr. Cleveland's withdrawal. Mrs. Col. Harper refused to talk to anyone, though Mr. Murphy of Western Union Telegraph said he would neither deny nor affirm that Mrs. Jesse Harper had received a dispatch. Upon the part of Mr. Fenton, he was equally reticent. Still he would say that it might be possible that Carter H. Harrison would withdraw from the canvass and that the Democratic State Committee would substitute our own distinguished citizen, Jesse Harper, as its candidate. 'In which event,' continued Mr. Freeman [Fenton], Danville will have a Governor.'

Thus the day wore on, it being observable that the only calm and dispassionate politicians were the St. John Prohibitionists. Park Martin kept his nose close to his books, and the W. C. T. U went about distributing charity as usual. There was a 'hen' on somewhere, but if any eggs were laid our reporter couldn't find them.²⁴²

Vermilion County Democrats also had to survive a sex scandal involving one of its county committeemen. Noting that he "has no equal,"

²⁴² September 18, 1884.

He has got into another of his numerous 'affairs' with women. This is the second case within a year in which he has caused the parting of husband and wife. The latest occurred last Sunday night. It is reported that he says he was 'seduced,' that he was out in his barn lot feeding his hogs, when Mrs. W., his next door neighbor, called him over to talk with him, and that in a short time her husband returned from church and found him there. The circumstances and appearances showed to the returning husband the immoral actions of his wife and the Democratic committeeman too plainly to allow any parleying. The husband ordered his wife to leave, and the D. C. sneaked out the best way he could. The wife has since left town. Our readers can do their own commenting.-Potomac News²⁴³

Informal polls on trains filled up some space in the papers. On the train from Danville to Hoopeston on the evening of the 25th, the poll revealed 49 for Blaine, 20 for Cleveland, St. John 1 and 2 for Butler, with "most of the Cleveland men in the smoking car about three sheets to the wind."²⁴⁴

On September 29th, the St Louis *Globe-Dispatch* reported on the state of the congressional campaign in the Fifteenth. It noted that many in the district saw Black, formerly a Republican during the war, as a man who had switched parties in order to obtain office, and who seeks soldier's votes yet dares to charge veterans \$25 for a speaking engagement and receives a pension of \$100 per month. The Democrats, like 1876 when the Greenbacks did support Black for Congress, in 1884, were again trying to force the Greenbacks to support him by forcing the congressional Greenback candidate out of the race, going so far as to fraudulently broadcast throughout the district that he had withdrawn when, in fact, he didn't. That has put the Greenback candidate to "unsheathe his scalping knife [and put him on the] warpath. His followers are actively organizing in all parts of the district and none of their votes worth mentioning will be cast for Gen. Black."

OCTOBER 1884

²⁴³ *Hoopeston Chronicle*, September 15, 1884.

²⁴⁴ *Hoopeston Chronicle*, September 26, 1884.

Danville's planning for the Republican rally on October 1st was intense. The Reception committee consisted of thirteen Danvillians, with two parades, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. The afternoon parade would begin at 1 o'clock, form on east Main, march west to Vermilion and then north to the fair grounds. The evening parade would form on west Main, march to the Wabash depot, then countermarch on Main to Vermilion, north on Vermilion to Williams, west to Franklin, south to Madison, west to Gilbert, south to North, east to Vermilion and south to the public square.²⁴⁵ H. P. Blackburn was appointed President of the Day.²⁴⁶

Anticipating a large number of veteran soldiers who were members of the Grand Army of the Republic, ["G. A. R."], the G. A. R. Commander John S. Kountz, from its headquarters in Toledo, Ohio, sent a letter to the Danville *Daily Commercial* reminding its members that it was strictly NON-PARTISAN, and that

No officer or comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic shall in any manner use the organization for partisan purposes, and no discussion of partisan questions shall be permitted at any of the meetings, nor shall any nomination for political office be made.

The wearing of a Grand Army badge or uniform at a political meeting is in the highest degree improper, and comrades should refrain from so offending against the spirit of our Rules and Regulations.²⁴⁷

An exhaustive account of the rally appeared in the October 2, 1884 Danville *Daily Commercial*. R. J. Oglesby was the featured politician and gave the principal speech. He spoke for two hours. General Lew Wallace spoke at night, while Cannon, among others, gave brief speeches in the afternoon. In the evening,

It was admitted by every candid and fair-minded person, that it was decidedly the largest and most enthusiastic political gathering ever before seen in Danville, and that the number of torches in the

²⁴⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 30th.

²⁴⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, September 30, 1884.

²⁴⁷ Published in the September 30, 1884 edition.

procession numbered not less than 4,000. There were hundreds of Republicans that would have marched in the procession had there been sufficient torches.²⁴⁸

Under the headline A GREAT DAY FOR DANVILLE, the *Chicago Tribune* reported over 15,000 people in attendance.²⁴⁹ Eight bands provided entertainment, as well as several glee clubs.²⁵⁰ While this rally was a big deal for Vermilion County Republicans, a bigger deal came upon the horizon on October 4th.

It is now definitely arranged that Hon. James Gillespie Blaine, the next president, will be in Danville an hour or more on the morning of Friday, Oct. 24th. He will be enroute from Indianapolis to Springfield and will be received here by the State Central Committee. Preparations are now pending to properly receive the distinguished visitor.

The Hon. Emory E. Storrs,²⁵¹ of Chicago, will probably speak in Danville on that day.²⁵²

Black's appearance at the Democratic rally in Lexington, Illinois received some criticism. Noting that General Black's declination letter to Cannon suggested he had no time for speeches,

Yet he has time to meet Governor HUBBARD of Texas, a prominent ex-rebel of Texas, at Lexington, Illinois, and speak for free trade and the Democratic party with the ex-rebel, and unite with him to defeat the two gallant wounded soldiers, OGLESBY and General SMITH, and all the other Union soldiers opposed to General BLACK and Governor HUBBARD.²⁵³

²⁴⁸ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 2, 1884.

²⁴⁹ October 2, 1884.

²⁵⁰ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, October 2, 1884.

²⁵¹

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo1.ark:/13960/t9s18j49j&view=1up&seq=57&skin=2021&q1=Storrs>

²⁵² Danville *Daily News*, October 4, 1884.

²⁵³ Danville *Daily News*, October 6, 1884. The NEWS pointed out that Hubbard was an unreconstructed rebel, holding the same views today that he did during his service as a rebel soldier.

On October 3rd, Cannon spoke at Tolono, Illinois, where the Champaign County glee club provided the music.²⁵⁴ Between 1,500 and 2,000 people attended, and Cannon spoke for two hours, confirming “he is solid with the people here.”²⁵⁵

At some point Black promised to correct all kinds of abuses against the people. The Danville *Daily Commercial* asked

Does the record of the past give good promise of such a career? Ask some of the soldier boys for whom he has done business in a legal capacity, and the Grand Army Posts he has spoken to. Does forty or fifty per cent. for the collection of soldiers claims [his fee for legal services] show a disposition to improve the public service by his being installed therein? When he charges \$25 for a Grand Army speech among his old soldier neighbors in an adjoining county, will it inspire them with a belief that he above all others should represent them in Congress? . . . There is also a report tolerably current that the General not many years ago ‘received’ [acted as a court-appointed receiver for the Springfield, Effingham & Southeastern narrow-gauge road²⁵⁶] an Illinois railroad not far distant from his home, and up to the present date it is said that he hasn’t let go of much of it.

Black’s decision not to engage in a joint debate with Cannon would not go away. On October 7, 1884, the Danville *Daily News* published excerpts from various newspapers in the district commenting on such refusal. In what the twenty-first century would call “disinformation,” The Democratic *Organ* opined

While thousands of people will assemble to hear Gen. Black discuss any subject, only hundreds come to hear Mr. Cannon. It was wonderful presumption on the part of Mr. Cannon to think he could catch Gen. Black off his guard and engage him in a contest where his position would be that of a cat’s-paw pulling chestnuts out of the fire for his (Cannon’s) benefit.

²⁵⁴ Danville *Daily News*, October 6, 1884.

²⁵⁵ Danville *Daily News*, October 8, 1884.

²⁵⁶ Illinois *State Journal*, January 19, 1882.

Black did speak within the Fifteenth District on Saturday night, October 4th, in Charleston, Illinois. More than 5,000 people listened to Black, and ex-Governor Hubbard, of Texas.²⁵⁷

While Black ventured south, Cannon worked Vermilion County, appearing in Rossville on October 9th and Marysville [Potomac] on October 13th.²⁵⁸ Cannon then went west, appearing in Gifford on the 14th, Philo the 15th,²⁵⁹ Rantoul on the 16th, and St. Joseph on the 17th.²⁶⁰ Later it was announced he would speak at Somer school-house on October 17th at 7. p.m.,²⁶¹ and in Champaign on October 25th.²⁶²

The Black assertion of a Republican intra-party dissatisfaction with Cannon had some, if not a limited basis. M. W. Mathews, as editor of the Champaign County *Herald*, published a column on October 8th attempting to put that matter to rest, but in the process revealed some of the hardball tactics used by some Cannon supporters against Mathews. Mathews noted that Cannon personally knew that he supported Cannon's reelection, even after he lost his challenge of Cannon in March, but some Cannon supporters, without Cannon's support, were writing letters to various parts of the district asking Republicans there not to invite Mathews to speak. Mathews wanted to set the record straight, asserted that he stood by Cannon, and attacked Black in the process.²⁶³

Where did Vermilion County local miners fit in this election? The Democratic bill sponsored by Illinois Representative Morrison put coal on the free list of tariffs. The Danville *Daily News* reported this would

²⁵⁷ Danville *Daily News*, October 7, 1884.

²⁵⁸ Danville *Daily News* and *Daily Commercial*, both October 7, 1884.

²⁵⁹ The Danville *Daily News* had a "a special by telephone to the *News* [saying] the audience was the largest of the campaign, and the enthusiasm was unbounded. There was a delegation of over 200 from Tolono present." October 16, 1884.

²⁶⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 6, 1884.

²⁶¹ Both the Democrats and Republicans held a rally at the school. Wm. B. Webber and judge W. D. Somers, were the principal Democratic speakers before a full house. Cannon's speech two nights later included a "larger crowd." Champaign County *Herald*, October 22, 1884.

²⁶² Champaign *Daily Gazette*, October 15, 1884.

²⁶³ October 8, 1884.

result in coal pouring in from foreign sources, reducing its price and wages for miners as well the need to mine it in the Illinois. Surely, the miners knew for whom to vote for Congress in the upcoming election.²⁶⁴

On October 9th, the weather was perfect and the Democrats took advantage and held a rally in Danville. The principal speaker was Governor Hubbard of Texas. The marshals for the Democratic party were W. P. Davis, John R. McReynolds, Thomas O'Neil, and J. D. Cummings. The party formed a parade on east Main at 1 o'clock, and marched to Vermilion, and then north to the fairgrounds. Some carried signs that read "30,000 Business Failures in 5 Years;" "Hendricks and Revenge;" "Burn this Letter;"²⁶⁵ "Remember My Wife and Children;" "Our Liberties we Prize;" "Our Rights we Will Maintain; and "State Sovereignty [sic]." One wagon in the parade had a cage with a man chained inside and two guards, under a sign "No Irishman Need Apply." It was intended to illustrate McSweeney in an English prison and Blaine's refusal to help him. Speeches were given at the fair grounds, and after Hubbard talked Gen. Black made some brief comments, suggesting that the people of the district should vote for him just to show that the people retained the right to replace Cannon. Black also ended his "still hunt."

The General also announced his purpose to make a number of speeches in the county, as Mr. Mann had announced them before the General began to speak; he says he is armed well with facts and J. G. Cannon is also well armed with the same weapons, and it occurred to many that it would be interesting to hear them in joint discussion, but all remember that the General declines.²⁶⁶

An evening parade also celebrated the Democrats and it was estimated about 1,200+/- participated in it.

Black's first recorded speech in the County was in Hoopston, October 13, 1884.²⁶⁷ In it, the General played on his weak string of a change of

²⁶⁴ October 8, 1884. See also its October 31, 1884 edition.

²⁶⁵ Blaine's admonition to destroy a compromising letter in the Mulligan scandal.

²⁶⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 9, 1884 and Danville *Daily News*, October 10, 1884.

²⁶⁷ Danville *Daily News*, October 11, 1885.

measures and a change of men.²⁶⁸ Cannon appeared in State Line City, Indiana, speaking in support Eugene Bundy (New Castle) Republican Lieutenant Governor candidate, and J. T. Johnson, the Republican congressional candidate.²⁶⁹ Danville contributed three marching clubs, the Plumed Knights, the Plug Hat Brigade, and Young Men's club, with the Tilton band. They went on a special train that left the Wabash depot at 7:15 and returned at 11:15.²⁷⁰

The *Daily News* reported in the same edition

Mr. John T. Downing, formerly a teacher of this [Danville] city, now of Washington, D. C., in a private letter to a friend says 'the people of Washington speak of our J. G. Cannon as one of the ablest men in Congress. And are anxious to have him returned.'

As to Cannon's work in Congress, the *Danville Daily Commercial* published an extended report on Cannon's accomplishments during his first five Congresses. It noted that at each election people ask, "What has he done?"

The question is usually a stumper to the masses of voters and supporters of Mr. Cannon, because so very few of them ever looked into the records of congress or heard them spoken of.

The paper then summarized, using the *Congressional Record* Indexes as a guide, all that Cannon had done starting in the 43rd Congress, and concluded, the record "gives the lie to the statement that he has done nothing."²⁷¹

A grand Democratic rally occurred in Paris on October 14th, and Black went down on the train with Carter Harrison, who spent the night in

²⁶⁸ Danville *Daily News*, October 22, 1884.

²⁶⁹ Cannon went on to Indianapolis, with H. P. Blackburn, and returned to Danville. on Sunday. Danville *Daily News*, October 14, 1884.

²⁷⁰ Danville *Daily News*, October 13, 1884.

²⁷¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 14, 1884.

Danville at the Arlington.²⁷² He came and went in peace, i.e., no political comments, and Black breakfasted with him.²⁷³ It was reported

Carter Harrison and Gen. Black had a meeting in Paris on Tuesday last. Of the meeting the Paris correspondent of the *Terre Haute Express* says: The city has never witnesses such a crowd, as records to disorderly conduct in its history. Several were howling drunk, several fights, one man had his ear bit completely off, one poor fellow shot in the stomach and it is thought will die. When the news from Ohio and this action closed they started for home, making the night hideous with yells. Some yelled for Jeff Davis. Carter Harrison and J. C. Black lost many votes here yesterday. The result from Ohio settles their hash.²⁷⁴

Black and Harrison spoke in Champaign at a Democratic rally on October 18th. A special train was arranged to carry a delegation of Danville Democrats, leaving from the I. B. & W. depot at 5 o'clock, with a round trip ticket costing fifty cents.²⁷⁵

The miners' vote in Vermilion County was addressed by the *Danville Weekly News* on October 17, 1884. It published a letter from the New York Labor Delegation itemizing the reasons why laboring men were against Cleveland.²⁷⁶

In a first of its kind inducement to attend a Republican rally in Milford and Watseka, their Blaine and Logan clubs "Swooped Down Upon Us" with a twenty-four piece band and paraded the Danville principal streets, asking people to attend their rally. During their parade, they serenaded the Cannon home on Vermilion Street.²⁷⁷

Black's campaign was accused of a "little game" that "Won't Work." A circular was sent out to the soldiers all over the district "pleading with

²⁷² *Danville Daily News*, October 14 and 15, 1884.

²⁷³ *Danville Daily Commercial*, October 14, 1884.

²⁷⁴ *Danville Daily Commercial*, October 16, 1884.

²⁷⁵ *Danville Daily News*, October 18, 1884.

²⁷⁶ October 17, 1884.

²⁷⁷ *Danville Daily News*, October 16, 1884.

them to vote for him.” This tactic was described in a *Danville Daily News* column on the 17th.

The Democrats of this district are attempting to play a small, sharp trick. They are trying to induce Republicans to sign a paper pledging themselves to vote for General BLACK, even if they vote for no other Democrat.

The paper reminded its readers “Gen. Black is as bitter a partisan bourbon Democrat as lives; that he is the deadly political enemy of all old soldiers who are not Democrats.” Further,

Cannon is just as able and just as willing as BLACK to do for the soldiers what is best; and he has much more experience in Congress. And above all he works with the Republican party which has done all that has ever been accomplished for the soldiers, while BLACK would have to work with the Democratic party which has systematically opposed legislation for the soldiers.

The *News* emphasized the point of Cannon’s work in Congress for the soldier by printing a letter from M. F. Holderman in Washington, D. C., responding to a letter asking how Illinois Congressmen voted on July, 6, 1884, on a motion to delay consideration of the pension bill until December, 1884. He reported Cannon opposed postponing the consideration.²⁷⁸

In a speech in Charleston, Black told the audience he hoped to be put on the Post office committee if elected so he could “carefully watch the star route thieves,” thereby suggesting Cannon had not done so. In fact, Cannon had done a great deal in reforming the law to limit such steals, and it was noted Black “must slip around in the corners of the district and peddle this cheap kind of talk to Democratic gatherings where no one is disposed to dispute with him.”²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ October 17, 1884.

²⁷⁹ *Danville Daily Commercial*, October 18, 1884. In the *Danville Daily News* on October 20, 1884, the newspaper included a summary of what Cannon did to reform the star route scandal. The *Danville Weekly News* opined black was imputing dishonesty on the part of Cannon. October 24, 1884.

Campaign appearances, particularly when “stars” from outside the district were to be included, were announced as they were confirmed. On the 18th,

Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, [Illinois] Governor Hamilton and Hon. J. G. Cannon are announced as speakers at a Republican meeting to be held at Mattoon on Wednesday, Oct. 22d.²⁸⁰

In Mattoon, Cannon spoke for about an hour on topics not covered by the other speakers.

The audience was in full sympathy with him and responded to his telling hits with frequent applause. It is considered by everyone who heard it the best speech our esteemed member of congress ever made to a Mattoon audience. His points were all excellent and nothing better than the shallow pretense of friendship for the soldier on the part of democrats in supporting Black, while nearly the entire republican ticket is composed of as good or better soldiers than the lone democrat hen is keeping up such a furious scratching and clucking.²⁸¹

The Decatur *Herald* reported that Lincoln, Governor Hamilton, and Cannon arrived there on their way to Springfield “in a special freight from Mattoon at 2:30 yesterday. They left for Springfield yesterday morning at 6:40. The P, D. & E. railway had no coaches available at Mattoon, and the party had to come from there in an ordinary freight caboose,”²⁸²

Lincoln would speak to large crowds in Illinois. The local population was augmented by excursion trains.²⁸³

Robert was not a fanciful speaker full of flourishes and orotund dramatic rhetoric; rather, as the Chicago Tribune characterized, he

²⁸⁰ Danville *Daily News*, October 18, 1884.

²⁸¹ Mattoon *Gazette*, October 24, 1884. Unmentioned is the fact Cannon was not a soldier; but then Cannon was in Charleston on April 15, 1865, when Lincoln died, acting as state’s attorney at the court term.

²⁸² October 24, 1884.

²⁸³ Chicago *Inter Ocean*, October 22, 1884.

presented facts, drew deductions logically, and appealed to the judgment and reason of the audience. He believed in the Republican program and was not afraid to jab at partisan emotions and waive the 'bloody shirt'-he decried the Democrats as the party of corruption and rebellion, as the one seeking to give former Confederate soldiers a pension and to bankrupt American businesses and increase wages by lowering or eliminating the import tariff. He vilified the Democratic suppression of black votes-even shootings and hangings of black voters-in the southern states. . . .

The crowds erupted for Secretary Lincoln at every stop he made²⁸⁴, for he was not only a cabinet member but, perhaps more important to them, his father's son. At his first campaign rally in Mattoon, Illinois, it was reported the people felt 'repaid for coming just by seeing the son of Abraham Lincoln;' every time Robert made a good point in his speech, remarks could be heard throughout the audience, 'That's like Old Abe. Secretary Lincoln toured Illinois to receptions like a modern movie star.'²⁸⁵

On his way to Mattoon to join Lincoln, Cannon first spoke in Fairmount on the 18th, where he was joined by M. W. Mathews.²⁸⁶ He also spoke in Newman on the afternoon of the 21st. He appeared before an "immense audience in the opera-hall here. . . ."²⁸⁷ He then went to Howe's Grove on the 22nd, Camargo on the 23rd, and was scheduled for Arcola on the 24th, but he did not make it because James G. Blaine came to Danville.

²⁸⁴ The Champaign *Daily Gazette's* (October 30, 1884) account of his arrival in Champaign confirms the crowd's enthusiasm for him. He rode down in the mail car, and when it crossed the I. B. & W. junction a cannon boomed, and upon arrival at the depot "the crowd surged around. . . .Women screamed and strong men with difficulty kept their feet. . . .The crowd was simply immense. . . ." It was comparable to the crowd in 1876 when Bob Ingersoll spoke between the two towns. Lincoln spoke in Champaign Park. Cannon also made a speech "equal to the one he delivered in [Danville] on the 24th." Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 31, 1884.

²⁸⁵ *Giant in the Shadows: The Life of Robert T. Lincoln*, Jason Emerson, Southern Illinois Press, Carbondale (2012), pages 258 to 259.

²⁸⁶ There were between 1,200 and 1,600 people present, with 250 torches in the parade. The Fairmount Crescent band and the Indianola glee club provided music. Danville *Daily News*, October 20, 1884.

²⁸⁷ Indianapolis *Journal*, October 23, 1884.

On the 22nd, Black spoke at West's Grove, six miles northeast of Fairmount (a Democratic pole was raised.)²⁸⁸ On the 22nd, Congressman William M. Springer²⁸⁹ of Springfield, one of the House's leading Democrats, spoke on the public square and discussed the "political issues from a Democratic standpoint."²⁹⁰

Some Democrats in the district circulated the old claim that Cannon was a part of the salary grab in 1872/73 in late October. The *Danville Daily News* shot it down under the headline ANOTHER OLD LIE.²⁹¹

In a small "lick" at the General, the *Danville Daily Commercial* asked

If General Black is elected to Congress, will he raise the price of Grand Army speeches? This question should be answered before the election, so the soldier boys will know how to calculate. The soldier claim business [Black, as attorney, represented soldiers seeking pensions as part of his legal practice]²⁹² would be cut off in the event of his election, for he wouldn't have time to attend to star route thieves and soldier claims, and do them both justice.²⁹³

In early October, it was announced Blaine was coming to Danville on October 24th.²⁹⁴ Blaine intended to leave his home in Augusta, Maine, and travel by train through the Midwest, campaigning along the way. His itinerary included passing through Danville on his way to a large reception and rally in Springfield. Cannon was scheduled to be one of the speakers in Springfield.

On October 11th, leading Vermilion County Republicans met to determine if Danville should make a "grand demonstration" for Blaine while he was in Danville. At the organizational meeting, Cannon "stated

²⁸⁸ *Danville Daily News*, October 22, 1884.

²⁸⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_McKendree_Springer

²⁹⁰ *Danville Daily News*, October 21, 1884.

²⁹¹ October 23, 1884.

²⁹² The principal Danville attorney that handled pension claims was Benjamin Franklin Cook, who commanded African-American troops in the Battle of Franklin, Tennessee.

²⁹³ October 22, 1884.

²⁹⁴ *Danville Daily News*.

that Mr. Blaine will arrive in Danville at 10 o'clock on a special train and will make a thirty minute stop. Enthusiastic five minute speeches were made by Capt. B. F. Cook, Mayor Dickason, H. P. Blackburn, H. W. Beckwith and others, all favoring the greatest demonstration in Eastern Illinois."²⁹⁵ They decided on a "grand demonstration in the afternoon and a torch light procession at night."

It was initially anticipated that 40,000 to 50,000 would be in Danville, along with twenty to thirty bands and "half that number of glee clubs." The speakers are Hon. James G. Blaine, Hon. R. W. Thompson, ex-Secretary of the Navy, Hon. Thomas H. Nelson,²⁹⁶ Minister to Austria [sic], Hon. J. G. Cannon, and many others."²⁹⁷ A letter was prepared and sent to newspapers in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana inviting all to come to the event on the 24th in Danville. Early results revealed

Every railroad will bring in great excursions, and from present prospects many of the trains will be run in two sections, and it is possible more. Word was received yesterday that about one hundred were coming from way over at Harveysburg, Parke county, Indiana. From the south will be clubs from as far as Robinson and Marshall.

The hotels and restaurant men are preparing on a big scale to accommodate the thousands that will be here.²⁹⁸

On the 20th, the Danville *Daily Commercial* published the names of the Assistant Marshalls²⁹⁹ and formation of Divisions for the march.

Mr. Blaine's march through the city will be from the Junction, where he is taken off the cars into a carriage and brought down Junction street to Williams, thence to Vermilion, thence to the

²⁹⁵ Danville *Daily News*, October 13, 1884. Following the meeting, an executive committee anointed thereat met and established sub-committees responsible for organizing the event. The list of persons appointed to the sub-committees reveals the crème de la crème of Vermilion County Republicans.

²⁹⁶ The attorney who defended Cannon's father in the Harboring a Negro trial in 1847/1848 in Parke County, Indiana.

²⁹⁷ Danville *Daily News*, October 15, 1884.

²⁹⁸ Danville *Daily News*, October 17, 1884.

²⁹⁹ The Marshal was Mayor Dickason.

public square, and from there to the Wabash depot, where he again takes the cars. . . .The balance of the day will be a grand love feast, in which everybody is expected to participate.³⁰⁰

To encourage people living near the Wabash road who might just go stand by the tracks to see him, they were advised that they would be disappointed “as the train would not stop. By coming to Danville on Friday you will not only see Mr. Blaine, but the largest and most enthusiastic demonstration in the State.”³⁰¹

The formal reception committee to receive Blaine included Judge O. L. Davis, Judge D. D. Evans, J. G. English, W. W. R. Woodbury, L. T. Palmer, J. G. Leverich, Samuel Frazier and Peter Beyer.³⁰²

With the coming of Blaine, and the increasing belief he would be the next President,

A firm here started out to sell clothing to be paid for when Cleveland was elected. The demand was greater than the supply.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 21, 1884.

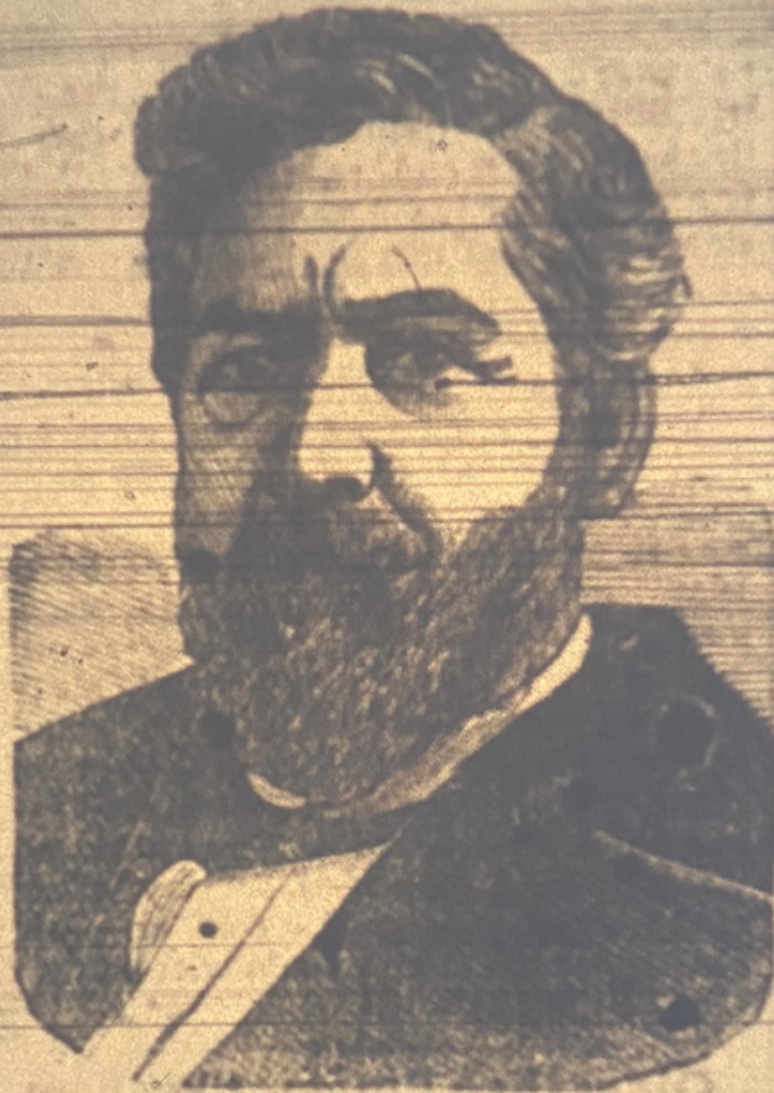
³⁰¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 22, 1884.

³⁰² Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 22, 1884.

³⁰³ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 22, 1884.

1861.

1884.



JAS. G. BLAINE!

Danville, the Last to Pay
Homage to Lincoln and
the First to Welcome
Blaine.

Hon. David T. Litler of Springfield, and Judge David Davis [also Illinois Senator and President of the U. S. Senate] had “full charge and control of Mr. Blaine’s movements from the time he leaves Lafayette until he reaches Springfield,”³⁰⁴ and Danville was the only place he would get off the train.

Thirty thousand people welcomed Blaine to Danville on the 24th. The day opened cold and cloudy. Trains arrived through the night loaded with people. People from Vermilion County began arriving at 4 o’clock A. M.

³⁰⁴ Danville Daily News, October 21, 1884.

The procession was formed as nearly according to the programme as possible, each division being formed on the streets assigned respectively. The following delegations were in the line:

Ringgold Band of Terre Haute.
Danville White Hat Brigade, Capt. Ed. Winter.
Danville Plumed Knights, Capt. J. H. Madden.
Danville Young Men's Republican Club, Capt. G. G. Mabin.
Odd Fellows Band of Danville.
Danville Blaine and Logan Cadets, Capt. Frank P. Irwin.
Pilot delegation of ladies and gentlemen on horseback.
Blount delegation of ladies and gentlemen on horseback.
Ogleby Guards, Danville, Capt. James E. Jones.
Indiana's Plumed Knights, Capt. Anderson Goodwin.
South Danville Blaine and Logan Club on horses with five wagons containing young ladies and boys in uniform.
Crawfordsville, Ind., Drum Corps.
Tilton Blaine and Logan Club on horseback, with two wagons laden with ladies in uniform.
South Danville Club on horseback, Capt. John H. Taph.
Tilton Band.
Georgetown Plumed Knights, Capt. Alfred Lewis.
Georgetown uniformed ladies' delegation on horseback.
Georgetown Blaine and Logan Club on horseback.
Georgetown delegation of light wagons with ladies uniformed.
Georgetown Band.
Westville Horse Company, Capt. Wm. Duke.
Gessie Band.
Gessie Horsemen, Capt. Wm. O. Talbot.
Catlin White Horse Brigade, Capt. David Shaver.
Catlin Blaine and Logan Clubs, on horseback, Capt. John Newlin.
Catlin Band.
Middle Fork Blaine and Logan Club on horseback.
Oakwood Blaine and Logan Club on horseback, Capt. John Kirsch.
Muncie Band.
Watska Republican Club.
Perrysville Blaine and Logan Club.
Eugene Blaine and Logan Club.
Newport Blaine and Logan Club.
Chrisman Band.
Then followed citizens in carriages and wagons.

Blaine' train ran late, arriving at 12:30 o'clock P.M. When the train stopped, Blaine came out on the rear platform,³⁰⁵ but did not get off the train. He made a short speech.

To one who has been addressing crowds in what they call doubtful States, it gives me great pleasure to address such a crowd in a State that is not known as a doubtful State. Illinois has always been Republican, and since under the leadership of a man now enshrined in history (Lincoln), has always proved true to the Republican party. I am not here to speak for the success of the National ticket, but to say a word in favor of my friend, Joseph G. Cannon, your candidate for Congress. The people who desire for the perpetuation of a republican form of government, should vote for their Congressional candidates. (Cries of 'We will do it, Blaine.')

I have been in the habit of speaking to half acres of people, but here there seems to be sand-lots full of people. He did not intend to make a political speech, as there were other gentlemen present here who will speak to you, and I will bid you good bye.³⁰⁶

Cannon stood next to Blaine on the rear platform.

Illinois Senator Cullom and Congressman McKinley of Ohio [a future President] then made short speeches.

Danville was fully decorated, with houses and buildings displaying patriotic décor and pictures of Lincoln, Garfield, and Blaine.

The electric light tower in the public square

Was covered with flags and garlands of green, and mottoes were suspended on the four sides of the square, as follows:

'Danville-The last city in Illinois to bid good-bye to Lincoln; the first to welcome Blaine;' 'Where Industries are protected, Labor is

³⁰⁵ But did not walk on to the platform where the reception committee stood. *Danville Daily News*, October 25, 1884.

³⁰⁶ *Danville Daily Commercial*, October 24, 1884. For the verbatim transcript of the speech, see the *Danville Daily News*, October 25, 1884.

rewarded.” “Protection builds up factories and Cottage Homes.’
“The South in the Saddle makes a Solid North.’ ‘Illinois opens her
gate to America’s Statesmen.’

After Blaine’s train left, the afternoon festivities began, and those
included a speech by Tomas Nelson in the southwest angle of the public
square .

He said he had the pleasure of delivering one of the first
Republican speeches ever made in this city [Danville] against the
slave-power years ago, and many who heard me and were in the
early movement have gone to their reward. Times have changed,
hostile majorities have given way, as they will soon again, placing
the Government under Republican, progressive principles. . . .

TRIBUTE TO HON. J. G. CANNON, of whom he said: He was a
student³⁰⁷ in our city; I have known him during his long service as
your representative, and know that he is able, honest, and faithful.
He is one of the eight or ten men who can always command
attention in the House, and who shape the legislation of the
country. He should by all means be returned, as he will aid Mr.
Blaine in all your efforts to give the country a magnificent and
prosperous administration. This district has never failed, and it
will surely not fail on this year of grand republican success.³⁰⁸

During the evening celebrations, Danville experienced “the largest
torchlight procession ever seen in eastern Illinois, and over \$700 worth
of fireworks were set off.”³⁰⁹

In a bullet point summary, the Danville *Daily News* observed on the 25th,
inter alia,

The committees did nobly.

The great crowd has gone.³¹⁰

³⁰⁷ When he read law with John Palmer Usher in the late spring and summer, 1857.

³⁰⁸ Danville *Daily News*, October 25, 1884.

³⁰⁹ Hoopeston *Chronicle*, October 25, 1884.

³¹⁰ The last train left at midnight.

Nearly everybody decorated.

No serious accidents yesterday.

Only eleven more days to the election.

For so great a crowd, it was an orderly one.

There was but little drunkenness, and no fights.

And it was a warm time, if the day and night were cold.

The ladies of the different churches worked hard and did well with their eating tables and stands.

The German Escort Club turned out seventy-five strong and made a solid appearance.

Still in the glow of the rally, the Danville *Daily News* opined on the 25th.

Never before in the history of this county-and for that matter we believe it extends all over the country, has there been so enthusiastic and inspiring campaign as the present one. That much of it is due to the splendid abilities, magnificent leadership and personal magnetism of the candidate, is proved by the enthusiasm and vast multitude here yesterday. Everywhere it is the same way. It will stand in history preeminently as the campaign in which the whole people were interested and active participants.

On October 27th, the Danville *Daily News* reprinted Cannon's campaign speech give on the 24th. In all likelihood, this speech was close to his stump speech for the 1884 campaign, and illustrates his mastering of the principal issues, the tariff, and soldiers' votes in his response to General Black's attacks. No similar stump speech survives for Gen. Black.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:- It is now almost four o'clock, and you have listened to Indiana's magnificent orator for an hour and a half, and I hardly feel that I can say aught to interest you, (voices go on!) I should perhaps say, by way of explanation, as I had the honor to be one of those who went to Lafayette to meet Mr. Blaine, and return with him as far as Danville, that you do not regret more than he does that he could not leave the train, drive through our city and return to the train again. When we called on him this morning we found him, after weeks of travel, and meeting millions of republicans, weary and yet sleeping, having contracted a very bad cold; so much so that his physician did not think it wise for him to come into Illinois. But when it was urged upon Mr. Blaine that 175,000 people were gathering from the eastern line of the State to Springfield, anxiously awaiting to see him and that they would be sadly disappointed if he should fail to come, he said, if you will excuse me from exercising and from exposure, I will go into the State of Lincoln and say HOW DO YOU DO AND GOOD BYE TO THEM.

We made him that promise and we kept it, and I know that, with this explanation, you will feel disappointed no longer.

I am for JAMES G. BLAINE for President of the United States, for he always knows the spirit and wants of the people, and receives his inspiration from them, and stands squarely upon the platform and history of the republican party; and he knows that there is no living man stronger than the platform and history of the republican party.

I am for Blaine for another reason, for twenty-three years of his life he has been in public service, and has been on the right side of all great questions; and if you measure time by progress we have lived a century in that period. Our manufacturing and agricultural industries have multiplied by three; new and ample markets have been opened, and the laborers' wages are double in the United States what they are for similar labor in the old world. We know that if Blaine is elected the democratic party will not be permitted to turn the hand back on the dial and give us a tariff for revenue only. [Voices, no, never!]

I am for Blaine because he can and will maintain our present home markets and pursue that policy which will extend our commerce upon this hemisphere.

I am for Blaine because our home markets have been multiplied by three in twenty years, and 92 per cent of our farm products are now sold and consumed in our home markets to the men who work our mines, who swing the hammers and do the work of the Nation in various avocations, while only 8 per cent of our farm products finds a market abroad. If Blaine is elected-as he will be-we will retain these home markets and enlarge them until the remaining 8 percent will be consumed at home.

By-the-by I sometimes wonder at this democratic party-at its stupidity, its lack of common sense in matters of economy. Suppose you have ninety-two fine cattle in one herd and eight in another, and both were threatened with destruction, which herd would you protect first? Answer me that question. You would protect the ninety-two first; but the democratic party would leave the herd of ninety-two exposed to destruction and protect the herd of eight [Cheers and laughter, and shouts of bully for Cannon!]

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND BLAINE believe in protecting the ninety-two per cent of your products which are sold at home, and in adding 8 per cent to it.

Col. Nelson has told you about the contradictory history of the democratic party and its platform on the tariff question. It is contradictory in that respect, but in one thing it is consistent, and that is, it has never gotten full control of the government since 1830 that it has not taken steps for the tariff for revenue only, and against the republican American doctrine of protection to home labor, its efforts always bring disaster to the business of the country. We have had recent troubles in the manufacturing, business and labor interests of the country. You will remember there was not much before the present democratic House of Representatives met on the 1st of December last, but as soon as it met, with its seventy majority, it made the revenue tariff reformer Carlisle of Kentucky, speaker, and Morrison, of Illinois, was made chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, and it was heralded abroad as a grand revenue reform victory, and the cry was reform the tariff to one for revenue only.

It was said that the President would not sign the tariff bill of Mr. Morrison, but the democrats proposed to attach it to important appropriations and give him the alternative to sign the bill or do without the appropriations to the obstruction of public business and conveniences.

WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

Why in this, the greatest agricultural and manufacturing nation in the world, the result was anticipated. Manufacturers said they could not afford to continue to fill their ware houses with products when threats were made that business should be unsettled by tinkering with tariff legislation. Merchants said they could not afford to lay in stocks of goods that might soon have to be sold below cost. Thus with the democratic party in the saddle, with seventy majority, threatening the industries of the Nation, the manufacturer took alarm, some slowed down to half time, others shut down altogether, and many thousands of operatives were thrown out of employment. And the consumers throughout the country being alarmed at the disturbance reduced their purchases. Thus the democratic party created PUBLIC DISTRUST, which continued and increased until the 9th day of last July, when that congress adjourned. From that day, as we recede from that session, public confidence and business have gradually improved and grown better. If a democratic House of Representatives brought all this trouble, what would be the result if that party had both House and the president? (a voice, "what *would* it be?) It would be most disastrous to all the interests of this country. Gen. Black and other democratic orators say that the tariff robs the farmer. Is there any truth to this? It is claimed by the republicans that it is a wise economy which bring the farmer and the manufacturer close together. Lets take THE CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR '80 and we find that New York is the greatest manufacturing state, Pennsylvania is second, Massachusetts third and Illinois fourth. Thus our own state is first in agriculture and fourth in manufactures, and the third state in the Union. In this state as in others, farm products have kept steady increase with manufactured products, and work and wages have increased correspondingly. Yet we are told that the tariff robs the farmers.

You farmers here, today, do not look very poor; you look better and feel than you did in old democratic times. Two dollars now have as great purchasing capacity for manufactured articles as three dollars had in 1860, and you get better pay for your work, and your crops; the statistics show it, and your memories verify it. When I was a boy with pork at \$1.25 per 100, it took a hog to buy eight yards of English calico to make a woman's dress. This was under democratic revenue for tariff policy. Now a hog of the same weight will buy 150 yards of better calico, made in the United States, under the Republican's system of protection. And this American calico is made by labor which receives twice the wages of labor in the old world, and at the same time consumes the producer of the farmer who buys it. (Cheers, and 'go in Cannon, that's so.')

Yet it's a robber tariff, and robs the farmer? Where's your democratic party? Three-fourths in the South. You democrats say you are certain the 153 votes from the solid south, and you need but forty-eight more from the North to elect Cleveland. Now, let's examine the prosperity of the North, where there has been a diversity of labor for many years, and compare it with the South where for many years they were almost exclusively agricultural. We call on the census of '80 for the facts, and WE COMPARE OHIO AND KENTUCKY.

Nature did much for Kentucky. Some Kentuckians believe that when the Maker of the world looked upon his work, well pleased, that Kentucky was the first spot on which his eye rested. It is splendid State. Let's look at a few figures of the census.

In Ohio forty out of every 100 are engaged in agriculture, the other sixty being engaged in manufactures or other non-agricultural pursuits. The average value of farm land in Ohio was \$45 per acre. Over in Kentucky, seventy out of every 100 of the people are engaged in farming, and the average value of farm land is \$13.43, being \$31.57 less than the value in Ohio. In Ohio each person engaged in working farm lands makes a product of an average of \$400 per year; while in Kentucky each person so engaged makes a product of but \$199, only about one-half of the amount produced in Kentucky. There is no reason why there should be this difference, except that Ohio has a diversity of industries and Kentucky has not.

The women have a hard time; for they not only have to take care of themselves, but of the men also. It is so with republicans, for they not only have to take care of themselves, but of the democrats too.

[Laughter] Three-fourths of the democratic party is in the southern states, which for years have kept poor because they had agriculture only. The republican party has given them a protective tariff which is gradually spreading manufactures among them, but the democratic party proposes to ruin the tariff and ruin with it this rising prosperity.

A DIVERSITY OF LABOR will add wealth to any State. Look at New Jersey which some have said to have been formed of a cart load of sand which the Creator had left over after making the world, and dumped it and called it New Jersey. Yet on account of its diversified industries, its farm products yield three times as much as those of Tennessee. And we find it thus throughout the North. Many come up from the South to the North, hoping to be benefited by our more constant employment and better wages; yet as soon as they get here they partake of our prosperity, vote the democratic ticket for revenue reform, and try to bring the North to the condition of the States they left. [Cheers] Are there ANY FARM LABORERS HERE? [Voice, 'Lots of 'em.] Well, why do you not farm laborers and mechanics go South for work? One seldom goes, and the further south he goes the worse wages are. Farm labor in Kentucky is worth 20 per cent less than it is in Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois. The same is true of mechanical labor. Yet the democratic party claims to be the friend of the laborer, and appeals to him for support. The fact is, it is not the friend of the laboring man, and never was.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE

In speaking of Mr. BLAINE'S statesmanship, Mr. CANNON said:

The Panama canal will soon be completed, and when it is, the distance to the Pacific will be greatly shortened by the length of the journey around Cape Horn. A railroad is being pushed into Mexico, and it will ultimately reach into the central South American States. The United States says to the powers of the Old World, 'You may settle your boundary lines as you please between yourselves, and we will not interfere; but on this Continent we propose that you shall not acquire all such territory, and

that we will maintain all such territory, and that we will maintain the right to dominate the Panama canal, or any other canal!' This is the policy of the republican party, as set forth vigorously by Blaine, when he was Secretary of State, as to the Panama canal, when he gave notice to Europe, in the name of the United States, that it made no difference at all as to who might construct the canal, yet in time of war the United States should have the exclusive right to control it. This policy is absolutely necessary to the welfare of the country, when it is recollected that we have 8,000 miles of coast line to protect, and that our possessions reach from Ocean to Ocean.

The Monroe Doctrine had been a matter of theory with the democratic party, but Blaine showed that as a republican doctrine it is to be a matter of fact. These great questions are upon us, and we want a strong man to stand with his hand on the helm of the Ship of State, and hold it steadily on its course of victory and progress.

After years of acquaintance with public men, I can heartily say that Blaine is the highest, the greatest, the best representative of a broad progressive American policy I have ever met.

WHAT'S AGAINST BLAINE? Why, a Solid South, reinforced by Great Britain, Austria, France, Spain and other European governments, because they know, he has the nerve and the ability, as your representative, peaceably if he can, forcibly if he must, to enforce the Monroe doctrine against all comers. We know that he has all against him in the Old World, except the poor men who expect to come to this country and make it their future home. Thank God that the Old World gives no electoral votes; for if it did, we would not have a chance of success. [Great applause.]

Is Cleveland a safe man to trust with these questions? He has no experience, and he has no statesmanship. If any single respectable democrat had to be responsible for electing him, and could elect him by his single ballot, he would pause a long, long time before he would do it. [Applause] I can sum Cleveland up in a sentence; he's the only man in the country who can pull his collar off over his head without unbuttoning it. [Laughter and applause.]

SPEAKING WITH A FORKED TONGUE.

Gen. Black, my opponent, said before the democratic platform was made that the democracy would speak with no forked tongue in this campaign. Yet the national platform is so constructed that it can mean a tariff for revenue only in Kentucky and Illinois, in the West and South, and protective in Pennsylvania. And Gen. Black himself speaks with a forked tongue; in strong republican neighborhoods he talks nice, plucks a star from the skies where it belongs, and puts it into the brim of the cap of the man in the moon. He is for a revenue tariff in one place, and for protection in another-good Lord in one place and good devil in another-as he thinks it may catch him votes and mislead the people; and in this he is in harmony with the democratic party. [Cheers, and cries of 'That's so.']

But neither the democratic party nor Gen. Black can gain the victory that way; when the horoscope of the democratic party was cast it was decreed that it should never get power again in this country while water runs and grass grows. [Great applause]

SOLDIER VOTES

We have on the republican ticket Gen. Logan, with a magnificent military and civil record; Dick Oglesby-splendid Dick Oglesby-a noble, honest man; Gen. Smith, Capts. George Hunt, and C. P. Swigert-all the State ticket soldiers. They have upon their ticket Hendricks, of copperhead record, Harrison, who is supported by the brothel and gambling den. Yet they ask you to vote for Gen. Black for Congress because he was a soldier, while Gen. Black will vote against Gen. Logan and for Hendricks; vote against Oglesby and for Harrison; vote against all soldiers who are not democrats, and vote for all democrats who were not soldiers even if they were copperheads during the war. Gen. Black is about the only exception of a soldier on the democratic ticket, and I'm about the only exception of a civilian on the republican ticket. Yet the democrats are making as much fuss over him as an old hen makes over one chicken. You have seen a hen with a large brood of chickens on one side of the fence, scratching and feeding them without much ado, while on the other side was a hen with one chick-on her feathers all turned the wrong way, in a fret, running to and fro and wearing her one chicken out. The hen with

one chicken is the democratic party with Gen. Black. The hen with the great brood is the republican party with its numbers of soldier nominees. [Cheers-] The republican party in its platform says that we will prefer soldiers for office, and other things being equal, and it goes no further than that. In this district [Champaign, Coles, Douglas, Edgar, and Vermilion Counties] there are about 4,000 old soldiers, almost all of whom are republicans. Is it not easier for Gen. Black to come the 4,000, if he wants their votes, than it is for the 4,000 to go to him? [Cries of 'Yes, yes!]

SINCE THE YEAR 1866 Gen. Black has been a bourbon democrat. Mind you, since that time the two last constitutional amendments have been adopted, and all the legislation necessary to make them effective has been enacted. During all these years J. C. Black has been no better and no worse than the democratic party. [Cheers, and cries of 'That's so.'] He has opposed all this splendid work, which alone could make the wars a success. Is there a democrat here who has supported Hendricks and Black, for these eighteen years past who can tell what measure Hendricks has favored or opposed that Black has not also supported or opposed? I will yield my time to him to prove that Black has been better than Hendricks or the democratic party. Can any one prove it? [Voices, "No. No."]

COL. NELSON has ably discussed the necessity of firmly standing together-of harmony of action and closeness of organization; also the necessity of giving Blaine a Congress which will stand by him and aid him to give us a splendid administration, which will be with him in peace and war. You can all see that to elect him and then give him a democratic Congress would be like putting a ball and chain upon his leg. [Voices, 'We'll not.']

DEMOCRACY AND PENSIONS

Are there any soldiers of the late war here? [Voices, Yes, lots of them!] I will tell you what the present democratic House of Representatives refused to do for your benefit. A majority of the soldiers of the Mexican war are in the South; all who are disabled have been on the pension rolls since the close of the war. Following the precedent of the war of 1812 and the Revolutionary war, the time has about come to place all of them

on the pension roll. The House of Representatives passed a bill, under the suspension of the rules, for that purpose, excepting, however, those who had been engaged in the late war and who had procured the removal of their disabilities under the fourteenth amendment to the constitution. The bill was not perfect, but the republicans, including myself, voted for it, hoping that a Republican Senate would make the proper amendments. When in Washington I received from fifty yop seventy-five letters per day from soldiers of the late war, asking me to assist them in their pension claims. I have always complied with these requests cheerfully and promptly, and, not infrequently, successfully. It came to my knowledge that a large number of soldiers cannot make the proof under the present pension laws, passed nearly a century ago.

Among the best soldiers in the late war are those without a hospital record-who refused to go to the hospital unless they were carried there. With approaching age the seeds of disease planted during their service are developing. These soldiers make application to the Commissioner of Pensions, who, under existing laws, asks the Surgeon General what the medical record of such applicant is. The Surgeon General makes search and finds no hospital record at all, and so replies. The Commissioner then asks the applicant to find the Surgeon of his regiment and prove that the disability for which he claims a pension was contracted in the line of duty. Generally the Surgeon is dead; or, if living, has forgotten and cannot testify; so the applicant fails to establish his claim.

I INTRODUCED A BILL last winter which substantially provided to place the name of this class of applicants upon the pension roll. It was referred to the democratic Committee on Pensions of the democratic House, and there sleeps the sleep of death. The republican Senate ascertained from the Commissioner of Pensions that there are at least 50,000 worthy soldiers who ought to be upon the pension roll; so the Senate put an amendment upon the Mexican pension bill, against the solid vote of democratic senators, which provides, in substance, that ALL SOLDIERS OF THE LATE WAR who had three months' service are now disabled and dependent upon their own labor for support, shall, without further proof, have their names written upon the pension roll according to their disability. The Senate amendment also provided that the pension of soldiers' widows should be increased from \$8 to \$12 per month, and that the name of the dependent parents of deceased soldiers who are

now dependent, shall be placed on the pension roll With these amendments the Senate passed the bill, the democratic members opposing and sent it back to the House for concurrence. I desire to be fair in the discussion of this question. The republicans in the House, and the northern democrats desired to pass the bill with the Senate amendments, and they composed a majority of the House. But the southern democrats said the bill should not pass; and by dilatory and filibustering motions continued through three days and nights, prevented its consideration and passage.

Last Congress, the republicans, with only four majority, and the democrats filibustering to prevent the passage of a bill DECREASING TAXATION, amended the rules, so as to prevent filibustering. The democrats then denounced such action on the part of the republicans as revolutionary, and when the democratic House was organized last December reinstated the filibustering rule under which a minority of the House can prevent a majority from legislating. The republican members stood ready to assist northern democrats in replacing such rule, but the northern democrats failed and refused to take such action. The result is that the bill, with the Senate amendments, sleeps the sleep of death upon the speaker's table, and with a full treasury these worthy soldiers go without pensions simply because the northern democrats in the House had not the nerve to join the republicans in doing an act of simple justice to Union soldiers, their widows and children who are in sore need of aid to which they are entitled.

The truth is, the southern democrats constitute three-fourths of the democratic party, and the one-fourth of that party from the north have not the nerve and manhood to antagonize the majority of their party. Gen. Black's friends claim that if he were in Congress he would legislate for the benefit of soldiers. Parties, like republicans, are controlled by the majority; it takes a majority of the representatives on a full vote to appropriate money or to legislate. The party in power in the House holds the caucuses and individual representatives can only accomplish legislation by co-operating with the party to which he belongs, and subject to caucus determination. Gen. Slocum and other democratic members of the House who are just as good Union soldiers as Gen. Black, and possessed of much ability, had not the nerve to overrule the southern democrats in their opposition to the Senate bill. And I say

again, the reason is patent-the northern democrats only hope to furnish one-fourth of the elective vote to get possession of the presidency, while they rely upon the south to furnish the other three-fourths. The one-fourth never has, and never will control the three-fourths. All that has been accomplished, or even will be accomplished in pensioning the soldiers of the late war, has been under the lead of the Republican party. Let me say here, that I may not be misunderstood, I do not claim that Gen. Black is not in favor of pensioning the soldiers; but I do claim that if he were in Congress like Gen. Slocum and other northern democratic representatives, he would not antagonize the majority of his party. He has never done the like since he became a democrat, and never will do the like.

In this State THE DEMOCRATS HAVE NO HOPE of giving Cleveland the electoral vote, or electing their state ticket. In this district their principal fight is to elect Gen. Black, hoping to assist in capturing the coming House of Representatives. There is no slander they will not resort to for that purpose. They stand ready to swap any man on the democratic ticket-from Cleveland down to coroner for votes for Gen. Black. I trust republicans will refuse all such offers. We have the votes to elect our whole ticket. Let's stand together, elbow to elbow, like the old guard and TAKING THE ADVICE OF OUR GREAT LEADER, James G. Blaine, let us each, like men of courage, like men of principle, who vote, for principle and from principle, vote for every nominee on the ticket, National, State, Congressional, Legislative and county, and when the sun sets on November 4th, we shall have scored one of the grandest victories in the history of the party. Prolonged cheers, rounded up by three cheers for Hon. J. G. Cannon and the whole ticket.)

.....

After he left Danville, Blaine's train stopped at Decatur, where ten thousand listened to his short speech, then Springfield, where the greatest number appeared at the rally. He then travelled to Bloomington, and on to Chicago. After a day trip to Milwaukee, he returned to New York.³¹¹

³¹¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 27, 1884.

In the aura of Blaine's visit, the *Danville Daily Commercial* reminded its readers that the 28th was the last day to register to vote.

There are four voting precincts in Danville township.³¹² The first precinct poll is at the wooden building on the south side of the square, in Good's harness shop. The second precinct poll is at John G. Holden's old lumber office on Hazel street. The third precinct poll is at the city building, on Walnut street. The fourth precinct poll is at W. J. B. Lister's livery office on South Vermilion. The registry board will be in session at each one of the above polling places tomorrow during the entire day. Every voter should see to it that his name is on the list tomorrow, because if it is not, he must swear in his vote on election day, which consumes time and is considerable trouble, however well he may be known to the election board.

Who could vote?³¹³

The Republican State Central Committee furnishes the following as the principal features of the laws regulating the naturalization of voters and the qualifications of voters in the State of Illinois:

Qualifications

Every person having resided in the State ONE YEAR, in the county where he offers to vote, NINETY DAYS, and in the election district where he offers to vote, THIRTY DAYS next preceding the election, who was an elector in this State on the first day of April, 1848 (whether naturalized or not), or who obtained a certificate of naturalization before any court of record of this State before the first day of January, 1870, or who shall be a male citizen of the United States above the age of 21 years, shall be entitled to vote.

Disqualifications

³¹² See the *Danville Daily News*, October 28, 1884, for a description of the boundaries of the four districts.

³¹³ A copy of the registry book was also available at the post office [on the ground floor of the Vermilion County courthouse] for all to see who was registered and confirm their own registration. *Danville Daily Commercial*, October 16, 1884.

No person who has been legally convicted of any crime, the punishment of which is confinement in the penitentiary, shall be permitted to vote at any election, unless he shall be restored to the rights to vote by pardon.

Naturalization

Aliens are entitled to be admitted to citizenship after having resided continuously in the United States five years; but must, at least two years before applying to the court for admission, have declared before a court of record, their intention to become citizens, except in the following cases:

1. If the alien came to the United States before arriving at the age of eighteen years, he may, after having resided therein continuously five years, be admitted a citizen thereof, after arriving at the age of twenty-one years, without having made the previous declaration of intention, but may make such declaration at the time of admission.
2. If the alien has served in the army of the United States and been honorably discharged, he may be admitted to become a citizen without any previous declaration of intention, and shall not be required to [prove?] more than one year's residence within the United States previous to his application to become a citizen.

In all cases the alien must prove his residence within the United States and his good moral character by the oath of two citizens of the United States.³¹⁴

After Blaine's visit, Cannon went to Champaign to campaign.³¹⁵ At a rally on the 30th, he joined Robert T. Lincoln, Secretary of War; Hon. Thomas H. Nelson; Hon. David Davis; Green B. Raum; M. W. Matthews; Jos. C.

³¹⁴ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 21, 1884.

³¹⁵ Chicago *Tribune*, October 27, 1884.

Glenn, and Dr. H. J. Detmers.³¹⁶ Ten passenger cars of Danvillians went over for the rally.³¹⁷

On the 28th, he spoke in Charleston before 6,000 persons.³¹⁸

The Danville *Daily News* informed its readers that General Black's first choice as a speaker in Vermilion County was Texas Governor Hubbard, "who was a democrat before he went into the rebel army, and who was a democrat during the time he was in the rebel army, and who has been a democrat ever since he came out of the army . . ." His second was Senator Joseph E. McDonald from Indiana.³¹⁹ McDonald appeared in Danville for his speech on the 28th. His rally was at Ellsworth Park, and was attended by a "few hundred people, republicans and democrats." J.B. Mann introduced him. The only notable thing about the speech, in the Republican report of it, was McDonald said nothing about Hendricks.³²⁰

As Black headed to Edgar County on the 28th, Danvillians were reminded, yet again,

Soldiers, remember that when General Black received the wound for which he now draws a pension, he was a Republican. His whole record as a soldier was made while he was a member of the Republican party. Does he deserve your support since he has turned his back upon that record?³²¹

Black's charge of \$25 to speak at a Grand Army gathering was denied by his campaign. In order to rebut that denial, the Danville *Daily News* published a letter from the adjutant, B. R. Hefley, of the post that paid the sum, who confirmed that Black had said "My price is twenty-five dollars at night."³²²

³¹⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 29, 1884.

³¹⁷ Danville *Daily News*, October 30, 1884.

³¹⁸ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 28, 1884. Champaign *Daily Gazette*, October 29, 1884.

³¹⁹ October 28, 1884.

³²⁰ Danville *Daily News*, October 29, 1884.

³²¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 28, 1884.

³²² October 29, 1884.

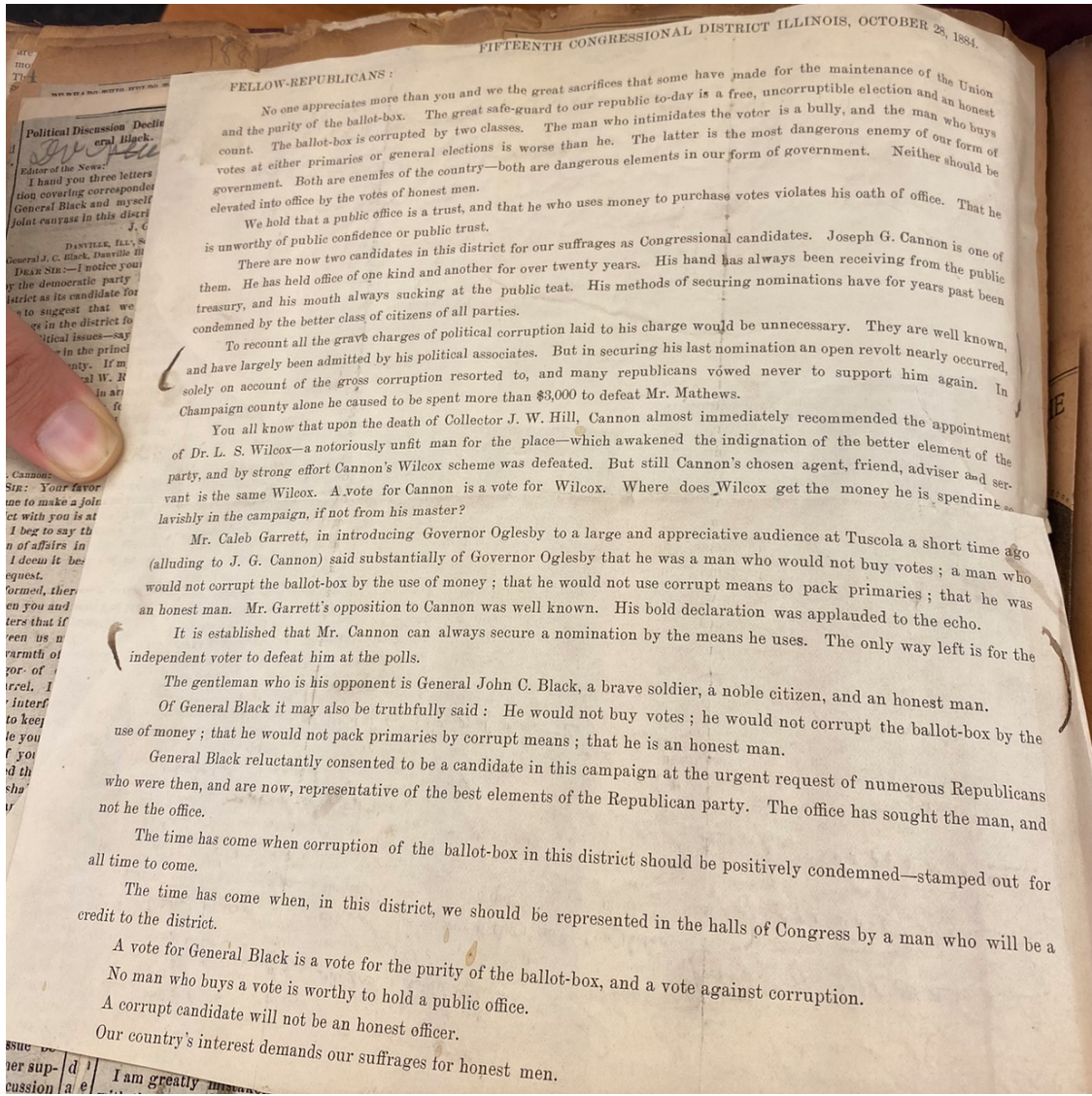
On November 1st, the Danville *Daily News* came to the defense of General Black. Under the headline FALSE REPORT AFLOAT, it was reported some Cannon zealots had circulated that Black had been in the rebel army. The *News* expressly denied it, and noted Cannon “would prefer defeat forever rather than to hint such a falsehood on Gen. Black or any man.”

Black, however, had his own circular, and it was authorized by him.

A circular addressed to ‘Fellow Republicans,’ and signed ‘Many Republicans,’ has been scattered broadcast through the district. It urges voters to vote for Black because he is honest, as against Cannon, whom it charges with being dishonest. The circular is a bastard; it has no home, no father, except the democratic party of this district. The man who is ashamed or afraid to sign his name to such charges like those made in the circular is a sneak, a coward, a libeler, and would, if not afraid of being caught, steal chickens. The circular will fall flat, but it shows the desperate efforts of the democracy to elect their man Black. . . . The circular was printed at the Times office in [Champaign], and was mailed by a democrat, and no republican is mean enough to have had a hand in it. . . .³²³

The markings in the margins highlight the claims that Cannon felt were the most defamatory.

³²³ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, November 1, 1884.



The Black circular, as preserved in the Joseph G. Cannon Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois, Scrape Book for 1884, page 24. A magnified copy can be found in Appendix A.

condemned by the better class of citizens of our parties.

To recount all the grave charges of political corruption laid to his charge would be unnecessary. They are well known, and have largely been admitted by his political associates. But in securing his last nomination an open revolt nearly occurred, solely on account of the gross corruption resorted to, and many republicans vowed never to support him again. In Champaign county alone he caused to be spent more than \$3,000 to defeat Mr. Mathews.

You all know that upon the death of Collector J. W. Hill, Cannon almost immediately recommended the appointment of Dr. L. S. Wilcox—a notoriously unfit man for the place—which awakened the indignation of the better element of the party, and by strong effort Cannon's Wilcox scheme was defeated. But still Cannon's chosen agent, friend, adviser and servant is the same Wilcox. A vote for Cannon is a vote for Wilcox. Where does Wilcox get the money he is spending so lavishly in the campaign, if not from his master?

Mr. Caleb Garrett, in introducing Governor Oglesby to a large and appreciative audience at Tuscola a short time ago (alluding to J. G. Cannon) said substantially of Governor Oglesby that he was a man who would not buy votes; a man who would not corrupt the ballot-box by the use of money; that he would not use corrupt means to pack primaries; that he was an honest man. Mr. Garrett's opposition to Cannon was well known. His bold declaration was applauded to the echo.

It is established that Mr. Cannon can always secure a nomination by the means he uses. The only way left is for the independent voter to defeat him at the polls.

The gentleman who is his opponent is General John C. Black, a brave soldier, a noble

Below is Cannon's hand-written note on the back of the circular: "This was issued by the Democrats of Champaign Co & mailed over the district-printed at the office of Champaign Times-Black knew of it"

The circular suggests the bitterness that Cannon had against Black for the personal attack, *inter alia*, against Cannon's honesty.

Black also caused to be printed in democratic papers “a card to explain his position on the tariff.” “His card is, like the democratic platform, a double-ender. . . . In Danville and other industrial centers he is representing to the artisans and laborers that he is not a free trader. In agricultural districts he is telling the farmers the stale falsehood that their products are not protected, and that thus the farmers are robbed, and tariff for revenue only is the thing for them.”³²⁴

As the campaign came to a close, the Tolono correspondent to the *Chicago Tribune* gave a status report on Black.

“Gen. J. C. Black does not show himself upon the stump in this district but he weakens his cause. His appearance at Paris and Danville with that famous old rebel, Gov. Hubbard, of Texas, disgusted every Union soldier who was present. Black is posing before the district as the soldiers’ candidate and the soldiers’ friend. Hubbard did all in his power to destroy the Union, to perpetuate slavery, and to kill off these very men whose votes Black is after; and he expects to get them by bringing Hubbard into the district to denounce Cannon and tell the veterans to vote for Black. Saturday the people of this county [Champaign] were called upon to witness a scene still more repulsive. Carter Harrison was at Champaign, and the roughs were with him. The crowds which gathered at the saloons were immense, and almost blockaded the streets in front of them. Fights were an every five minutes’ occurrence. The drunken mob held high carnival late into the night and then fell into gutters, wandered into alleys, crowded behind boxes, and went to sleep. The great porch west of the Doane House at the depot was one mass of intoxicated humanity, lying thickly and promiscuously about. The depot platforms were but little better. Many of these persons were too helpless to get upon their trains and remained all night. Some of them were still in the city yesterday. Such terrible debauchery was never before seen in Champaign. But it is a fit ending to this event in which Carter Harrison was the royal high boss and to whom Gen. Black played only second fiddle.

³²⁴ See the Danville *Daily News*, November 3, 1884, for an exhaustive analysis of this development.

'Some people deny Harrison's or Black's responsibility for all this dissipation, but the decent people of the county had their eyes opened to the character of the following of these two men. Union soldiers who heard Harrison's shameful utterances applauded by the same crowd who became enthusiastic over Black's tributes to Democracy and his denunciation of everything Republican were awakened to the fact that in following Black they had been led into the wrong crowd.

The Democratic press of the district is industriously explaining why General Black charged \$25 for his speech at the Sidney reunion, but their excuses have only led to further investigations, which show that it has been his custom to demand the most exorbitant fees from individual soldiers who have sought his services in any capacity. When General Black made his military record he was a Republican. Disappointed in office-hunting led him into the Democratic fold. When he changed politics he swapped friends, and he has worked more industriously for Democracy and the destruction of all that was accomplished by the war than he ever did for Republicanism or for his country on the field of battle. He has supported every Democrat who has been nominated for office in the Nation, State, and district, notwithstanding the Republican may be soldiers and Democratic candidates copperheads. He lauds Carter Harrison to the skies and ridicules old Dick Oglesby. He gives cordial support to Tom Hendricks and abuses John A. Logan. The soldiers of the district are beginning to understand him, and from this on it may be safely said that the private notes he is secretly sending out to them will fail in every instance to bring back the pledge of a vote which he asks.'³²⁵

Cannon brought his campaign back to Vermilion County at the end of October. He spoke in Hoopeston on the evening of October 31, 1884. On the evening before the election, Cannon had a rally at the Armory. A delegation of leading Republicans met him at his home and escorted him to the Armory with a band playing in its front.³²⁶

³²⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 30, 1884.

³²⁶ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 3, 1884.

Despite the stormy night, Hon. Joseph G. Cannon was greeted with an immense audience at the Armory last evening. He gave a good farewell talk to the assembly, who were well pleased. A great many ladies were present.³²⁷

Black's final shot at Cannon appeared in a special edition published by the Danville *Leader* on November 3rd and 4th. Below is the November 3rd edition. Both editions may be found on Roll I-293 in the microfilm archives, Danville, Illinois, Public Library, under CAMPAIGN EXTRA, Nov. 3-4, 1884.

The right hand column starts out "Tomorrow is the day on which a soldier or a "Stay-at home" will be elected Congressman in this district. It continues emphasizing Black's military service and why he deserves their vote.

On November 4th, the Danville *Daily News* responded to the stay-at-home argument.

J. G. CANNON stayed at home, but he was loyal, true, steadfast. He with thousands of other good republicans, stayed at home and kept the Knights of the Golden Circle from falling upon the rear of the army. . . .The insult offered Mr. CANNON because he did not enter the army is an insult to every loyal man who didn't enter it.

If it's a reason CANNON should not be elected to office it's a reason why any other loyal man should not be elected to office.

³²⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 4, 1884.

THE CAMPAIGN EXTRA.

VOL. 1.

DANVILLE, ILL., MONDAY EVENING, NOV. 3, 1884.

NO. 1.

THE CAMPAIGN EXTRA.

No. 500.

The News is out this morning in big letters charging the democrats with issuing a Forged Circular, and that Gen. Black is privy to the same. The News says "it is signed 'Many Republicans' when no republicans signed it." THIS IS A LIE. The circular sets forth and condemns Cannon's methods of securing office, and received the signatures of Rev. Andrew Copeland of Potomac, Henry Hall, J. S. Ankrum of Danville, and other republicans of the district.

- Vote early.
- Watch closely for bogus tickets.
- The right wrongs no man, but it de-hates Blaine.
- Congressman Black after Tuesday, if you please.
- Watch to-morrow's News for a big batch of lies.
- A vote cast for Cannon is a vote cast in favor of corruption.
- Blaine wants a protective tariff on any more Mulligan letters.
- The republican campaign liar is working extra time now.
- The republicans held a secret caucus in the city building Sunday afternoon.
- An issue all along the line in this campaign is honesty against corruption, or Black against Cannon.
- Let every democrat constitute him-self committee of one to see to it that every voter is brought out.
- Republicans yell: "Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine!" Democratic cry: "Burn, burn, burn this letter!"
- Cannon and his peculiar methods of securing a nomination will be justly rebuked at the polls on Tuesday.
- Close up the ranks for Tuesday's election. We have a splendid ticket in the field, worthy the earnest and hearty support of every voter in the county.
- Dispatches were sent to republican headquarters in this city last week that money and aid must be sent to Fairmount at once, or the township would be lost to Cannon.
- Dr. Fithian says that the statement in the Commercial that he will vote for Blaine, is false! That he expressly said "I have read the Mulligan letters and I cannot vote for Blaine."
- Let every democrat see to it that a full vote of the party is polled in this county next Tuesday. The chances are that we will carry Illinois, therefore a full vote is essential.
- Gen. Black bears the wounds received in his country's service—received in noble services for you. For his great services for us, he asks only for our votes, and he shall have them.
- General Black's meeting at Kansas was an evasion. Many old soldiers were present and promised their help and votes on election day as against "Damn-it-there ain't enough money in it" Cannon.—(Paris Gazette.)

"THE PARTY OF RUM, ROMANISM AND REBELLION!"

An address was presented on October 29, 1884, to JAMES G. BLAINE, by the preachers of New York City, on behalf of the Protestant sects, and it contained the following disgraceful language:

"We are very happy to welcome you to this city. You see here a representation of all the denominations of this city. We are your friends, Mr. Blaine, and notwithstanding the calumnies that have been urged in the papers, we stand by your side. We expect to vote for you next Tuesday. We are Republicans; we are loyal to you, and don't propose to leave our party and identify ourselves with the party whose antecedents have been RUM, ROMANISM and REBELLION."

This language—insulting as it is to every fair-minded citizen of the Republic, and the more especially so to every Roman Catholic, and degrading to the memory of Mr. Blaine's own Roman Catholic mother, who now sleeps her last sleep in a consecrated grave—shocked even the Chicago Tribune, as "an indignity and an impropriety," but was not distasteful to the man to whom it was addressed, or scorned or criticised by him, but received *his undoubted approval*, and was responded to by him in the following terms:

"This is altogether a remarkable assemblage—remarkable beyond any which I have known in the history of political contests in the United States, and I am deeply impressed by it. I do not feel that I am speaking to these hundreds of men merely. I am speaking to the great congregations and the great religious opinion which is behind them, and as they represent the great Christian bodies. I know and realize the full weight of that which you say to me and of the influence which you tender to me; were it to me personally, I should be overcome by the compliment and the weight of confidence which it carries, but I know that it is extended to me as the representative of the party whose *creed* and whose *practices* are in harmony with it."

No word of hesitation or scorn for this insult to his dead mother—to his country's Constitution—to the thousands of the patriotic Roman Catholics who have died on every battle-field of the Republic; but the shameful words are accepted by Blaine as a "compliment," and endorsed as expressing "the *creed* of the Party which he represents."

Nor is this all—but in his response to this fanatical address, Mr. Blaine could not forego the privilege—being in the midst of such sympathizing friends—to air his ancient Know-nothingism, and declare the policy of the United States to be to "enlarge the *civilization* of the Anglo-Saxon until its limit shall include the most Southern point of the Continent."

These are the old cries. "Down with Romanism," and "None but Americans on guard;" not the civilization of the Republic—of its Irish, and its Germans, its Scandinavians, and other foreign peoples—but that of the "ANGLO-SAXON," as will take care to extend!!!

Citizens who love the Republic—*adopted citizens*—native-born Americans—what shall be your response to these ideas of Proscription and Hate which place the Church of God on a par with "Rum" and "Rebellion," and exalt the Anglo-Saxon above all others in our Free Land?

LET YOUR BALLOTS ANSWER TO-MORROW.

SOLDIER'S CHOICE

Between the Man who went into the Army and the Man who said, "Damn it, there ain't Money Enough in it."

To-morrow is the day on which a soldier or a "Stay-at-home" will be elected Congressman in this district.

To-morrow is the day on which the voter must make his choice between the man who went into the army in the ranks, was wounded eight times, death, rose to the rank of Brigadier-General—and a man who staid at home during that time giving as a reason, "damn it, there ain't money enough in it."

The choice must be made between a poor veteran soldier, a man who is noted for his honor, integrity and gentlemanly bearing, with a national reputation as a splendid orator, and on the other side one whose whole life has been marked by methods the best people don't approve, one who has made politics his method of livelihood and who in 12 years has amassed a colossal fortune on a salary of \$4,000 a year.

John Charles Black is deserving of, and entitled to the vote of EVERY honest man in this district. He is that sort of a man himself and would reflect much credit on the district. He has fought the enemies of his country on the field of battle and bears on his person the marks of their lead.

Jo Cannon don't deserve the support of people who don't believe \$20,000 a year can be made out of \$5,000. He does the enemies of his country where there ain't any danger and bears on his person the spoils of 10 years of political life.

Soldiers, choose between Charley and the man mentioned in this address!

STATE OF ILLINOIS, 1st District.
Major A. Van Dusen, one of the 7th Illinois Veterans, being duly sworn, deposes and swears that while he was at camp in Texas, on the 10th day of August, in the year 1862, he had a conversation with Joseph V. Cannon, in the presence of John C. Black, and that he (Cannon's) name, or whose the following is the substance of what was said to him: "Joe, you ought to go into the army; you will get a promotion, and we will make you a major; and if you don't go that way, you will get ahead of you in no other way as you get ahead. I know you are a good man, and I will give you \$5,000 to go into the army, and I will make an impression on the minds of the boys and the officers. This amount of money will get you into the army, and you will get a promotion, and you will be a major, and you will be a general, and you will be a senator, and you will be a president, and you will be a king." "Joe, you ought to have been in the army," he (Cannon) said, "I know that I ought to have gone, but I ain't got no money enough in it."

WITNESSED and sworn before me, a Notary Public, in and for the County of Adams, this 10th day of October, A. D. 1884.

STEVENS COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

DON'T STAY IN THE DARK.

To you that are in sympathy with the nation's defenders—practice what you preach," by voting for a soldier that won fame and distinction in the dark days of the war. Consider Gen. Black favorably at the ballot box. Dare to do right, that your family may call you blessed. To you of the "new generation," be a Jefferson, a Jackson in spirit, and hoist your national flag, by showing your patriotism at the polls. Vote for its defender that passed through fire, and is worthy that your days might be many in a land of peace and plenty.

U. K. LAMB, an old Soldier.

Indiantown, Ill.

—Cannon has more than once made the assertion that he could not be de-bated. But with the assistance of all good and true republicans, he has exposed in prohibiting the ballot box, by the corrupt use of money, we expect to give him the 10 point-blink on Tuesday.

"My candidate is J. G. Cannon."—
SAYS, BURNETT AND HAMBELTON?
—Dr. Burnhart.

"Vote for my friend J. G. Cannon. I
have only come to the state to ask you
to do this; not to talk general politics."
—J. G. Cannon at Danville, Oct. 24th.

REPUBLICAN stump-speakers claim
there are no soldiers on the state ticket.
There are three—Sellers, Dougherty and
McKinley. The reason this is not gen-
erally known is that they carried a gun
instead of a sword.

It is not, and will not, abuse Gen.
Black personally, but only fellow-citizen,
as J. G. Cannon is, and neither merits
personal abuse.—[News, Id. But eternal
lying and misrepresentation is worse
than this.

Gen. Black and the Sidney Post, G. A. R.

A good deal has been said in demo-
cratic and republican papers, about an
address delivered by General Black
before the Sidney Post, G. A. R. The
following explains itself:

SECURITY OFFICE, SIDNEY POST, No.
10, S. A. R.—SIDNEY, ILL., Oct. 25, 1891.
COMRADES—In reply to numerous inquiries
that have been made of me as adjutant of this
post, in regard to charges made against Gen-
eral J. G. Cannon, I mail you the following
statement of the facts about General Black
speaking here at our reunion, on August 23
and 24 last, and his subsequent services.

Two weeks ago General Black had spoken
here at a reunion of the 1st Cavalry, and had
been so enthusiastically, and paid his own bills
and disbursements, and the request was repeated
at that a committee was sent personally
to urge his attendance. He told the com-
mittee that he would be absent in New York
and Ohio at the time and that if he came it
he purposely to make the address, and that his
expenses must be paid and that they would
be paid at once, to cover all outlay.

He came and spoke and gave such satis-
faction that he was called to conduct the
evening session. His speech was the subject of
frequent rejoicing, being one of which he paid his expenses from New York,
and for his backer to his committee's stand-
from the depot; he gave up to the rolls and
contributed to the last when it was passed
around.

The committee on management and expense
not only took up contributions on the ground,
but needed a large number of booths, shows,
games, etc., to make money. Thousands of
people came to hear General Black who would
not have been here had it not been for
his own speaker who was present.

No one would ever have thought that in ad-
dition to the labor of speaking, General Black
should have been called on to travel from
New York, expressly to speak to us, and to
pay his own expenses, if this had not been a
year of politics. No one thinks so now, what
ever he may say.

I send this statement for the reason first
given, and in justice to a comrade.

Yours to G. A. R.,
T. D. JERHAULD, Adj't.

SIDNEY, ILL., Oct. 8, 1891.—To any inter-
ested Comrade. The understanding I had
was that if General Black came to speak here
he would be paid for his expenses, as I be-
lieve. The matter was fairly under-
stood between the post's committee and Gen-
eral Black previous to his coming, as I be-
lieve.

F. McLEARY, G. O. D.
W. H. YORKER, Secy.
J. N. FREEMAN, Post-Commissary.

A Warning.

TOLOGNO, ILL., October 28.
Anti-Cannon republicans should be
warned. The air is full of schemes, and
what stupendous and infernal lies may
be started at the last moment to de-
ceive us, it would baffle an angel of light
to guess. These contemptible Cannon-
watchpapers have at last hit upon a
scheme by which they expect to win us
back to helping Cannon through; that of
employing our friend, M. W. Mathews,
to canvass this and Vermilion counties
in Cannon's interest.

They ought to hear these bull doners
chattering over us. They think they
have done it. And because we "will not
lift our eyes in air and shoot at sight of
that great ruffian," we are branded as
democrats, traitors to party, etc.

What vote for Joe Cannon just be-
cause he forced himself upon us by
force? No! Never again shall his name
appear in the fair ballot we vote.

A. S. BERTHELEMY.

An Appeal to the Gallantry of the Men and Women of Vermilion County.

General J. G. Cannon, who has been
forced into this congressional contest
by repeated and incessant calls of the
democrats and indignant republicans of
this district, is single-handed making
his fight. He is backed by the warm
hearts and earnest labors of many of
the people of all parties.

Mr. Cannon has all the postoffices,
route agents and the officials, as well as
his two banks at his back, and is in a
district which formerly gave four thir-
ty-and republican majority, but which,
since he became congressman, he has
slowly reduced the majority.

General Black has been campaigning
only three weeks.

Mr. Cannon, three months.
General Black has not been able, for
lack of time, to organize the people in
his support, and they are voluntarily at
work.

Mr. Cannon for months has been try-
ing to "rally" his supporters and whip
the independents into line. He has
frantically failed. But in his despera-
tion he has called to his help the presi-
dential candidate, who has twice spoken
in this district, and avowedly in Can-
non's behalf, and not on national polit-
ics.

He has called the secretary of war
from his post of duty, who has twice
spoken in the district, begging for Can-
non.

He has called the secretary of the
navy to beg for him.

He has flooded the district with or-
ators, high and low, all begging for har-
mony and Cannon, and imploring the
honest, indignant republicans in revolt
against corrupt caucuses and elections
to fall back into line. They will not do
so; but it is a sight to stir the generous
hearts of all to see a man, compelled, as
Black is, to make such a fight against
such tremendous money and official
power.

Independent republicans, remember
that you demanded that he should be
nominated! Nationals, stand by your
committee's action! Let the people of
this district show that they can choose
their own representative, without so
much outside pressure.

Soldiers! you believe in fair play.
Help a comrade!
Citizens, who believe in honest pri-
maries and clean elections! stand by
your vows of emancipation.

After all his years of service in the
army and in private life, Black is a man
of only moderate circumstances.

After twenty years of office-holding
Cannon is immensely rich.
Which is the people's now?

A Mistake.

L. Platt received a sheet of posters
with the name of John G. Smith, repub-
lican candidate for lieutenant governor,
on them. They sent them to the wrong
man. Mr. Platt is a full-fledged dem-
ocrat.

SOLDIERS, General Black asks your
votes because he was a soldier. Does he
deserve this favor? We say no.—[News.
He deserves the votes of all, not en-
tirely because he was a soldier, and a
good one too, but because he personates
a better era in politics, a purer admin-
istration, honest primaries, and, withal
the simple will of the people whose
hearts are in the right place.

THE News begs for Mr. Cannon, be-
cause he is the "honored friend of James
G. Blaine." That settles it. His ap-
pearance is cast to windward. Burn this
other.

At A. S. WILLIAMS,
\$20,000.00

STOCK OF
QUEENSWARE
TO BE SOLD THIS WINTER

Preparatory to putting up a New Building next Spring.

THE LARGEST STOCK OF
China, Glass, Silver, Queensware
AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Ever offered for sale in the city of Danville.

WHEN YOU ARE IN THE CITY
DON'T FAIL TO CALL AND SEE!

The Immense Stock
That has been bought for the Holidays is arriving daily.
Toys, wedding and Birthday Presents, and
everything new and nobby will be
offered for sale at

A. S. WILLIAMS',
15 West Main-st., Danville.

Don't Forget the Place if you want Bargains.

INAUGURATION

OF THE GREATEST

BANKRUPT SALE

Clothing,

Bought from the late firm of Kahn, Wolff & Son, Louisville, Ky., at

L. PLATT & CO'S.

We will sell this stock at less than 50 cts. on the Dollar of actual COST.

NOTE A FEW OF THE FOLLOWING PRICES:

- CLOTHING will be sold at LESS than 50c on the Dollar. Note a few prices:
- 500 Men's Pants at 50c, worth \$1.00
- 500 Men's Pants at \$1.00, worth \$2.00
- 500 Men's All-wool Pants, heavy weight at \$3.50, worth \$6.00.
- 300 Men's Working Suits at \$3.50, worth \$7.50.
- 300 Men's Dress Suits at \$6.50, worth 12.00.
- 1,000 Boy's Odd Vests only 25c each.
- A good Hat for 25c, worth 75c.
- A good Hat for 50c, worth \$1.00.
- A fine Fur Hat for \$1.00, worth \$2.00.
- Stiff Hats at 25c, 50c, 75c, and \$1, worth \$1, \$2 and \$2.50.
- A good Working Shirt for 25c, worth 50c.

Overcoats! Overcoats!!

At LESS than HALF Regular Prices.

Come and be convinced. The goods must be sold at once.

L. PLATT & CO.,

CORNER MAIN AND HANEL STS.

The River and Harbor Bill Steal!

The Testimony of Cannon's Republican Opponent.

\$19,000,000 of the people's money scandalously misappropriated.

Mr. Cannon not in "Harmony" with President Hayes.

He votes against the passage of the bill at first. Then when President Hayes had vetoed the bill he votes to pass it over his veto. Why?

Read again what Mathews said about the River and Harbor Bill and Cannon's vote in favor of it.

"In the issue of the Urbans Herald of July 13, 1884, was said:

THE RIVER AND HARBOR STEAL.
has passed the senate. It is said that Senator Edmunds, Boscoe Conkling and other distinguished republicans have advised the president to veto the measure and in his message to suggest the passage of a bill for the improvement of the Mississippi and for the improvement of the harbors and let the duck ponds and goose creeks go without any money. If the president will do this, he will cover himself with glory. Both senators, however, voted against the bill. The president took the advice of the best republican sentiment of the country and on August 1 vetoed the measure. In the issue of August 1, 1884, the Herald published President Arthur's message vetoing the river and harbor bill. In full. In its editorial columns, under the heading, "It is a steal," it said among other things condemning the measure: "We are of the opinion that the president, in exercising his veto, to intercept the steal, did that which two-thirds of the people of this country will approve."

The resolution in the various counties had, under the very skillful management of Mr. Cannon, been called respectively Cannon counties, had been listed for Mr. Cannon's nomination before his vote upon the bill became known; and he had been nominated for congress before he cast his vote to pass the bill.

OVER THE PRESIDENT'S VETO.
The convention having been held July 13. In the issue of the Urbans Herald of September 27 we published the carefully-weighed speech of Mr. Cannon for that occasion, which occupied five columns of newspaper, two columns upon the river and harbor bill; but so copious a quantity of material to use against Mr. Cannon did we secure that vote. We had plenty of material to use against Mr. Cannon, but we were without anything Mr. Cannon's opponent Mr. Cannon, not for that vote, but simply overlooked it, like which a great many republicans did not do.

Another Lie.

The report is circulated that the LEADER office has printed republican tickets with the democratic electors on them. This is false.

RANKERED.—At the democratic rally in Tolono, Saturday, which was large and most enthusiastic, composed of democrats and independent republicans, Gen. Black was presented with a magnificent banner, the work of the independent republican and democratic ladies, inscribed: "Black: Our Choice." It was presented in a neat way by Col. J. S. Wolfe, a recent republican, and now an independent one.

The News says that Gen. Black is apologizing for the defeat of the Pension Bill of the last Congress.

Gen. Black has not in his whole career spoken of it.

The News says Cannon tried to have it made a law.

The News is wrong!

Joseph G. Cannon was one of those who by "dillbustering," that is, not voting when his name was called, prevented a quorum and kept the measure from becoming law. The Leader has already referred to page and date of Congressional Record. So that the News's falsehood is incontestable.

VOTE for the man that will represent you. Black is opposed to all measures in the favor of relieving the situation in regard to carrying out the provisions of the act.

This editorial "we" is responsible for every a gross offense. Like the cover will be without any and then conduct divine services the next day and preach from the story of Lazarus.

The issue of the News of this date is blattered with falsehood.

Being the last issue before election day, it binds together and rebarbates many false and exploded stories.

It renews its singular fight with citizens, because it says Cannon is a pure man.

Read what M. W. Mathews says of his methods; remember what you know yourselves.

It renews its singular and false attacks on Black because it seeks to prejudice him in the eyes of friendly voters.

In spite of most public solemn and clear statements it renews its charges against him of duplicity in regard to revenue questions.

It fulminates most false, foul and outrageous charges against Carter Harrison only to turn others against Gen. Black.

It forgets and ignores Hoxsey, Longstreet and Chalmers, the benefactors of Mr. Cannon, in order to advance the interests of that sterling patriot and approved supporter of the flag.

It all but ignores Blaine, Logan and Oglesby; its fight is for Cannon, who is largely interested in the control of the rural and manioculous columns.

Every other citizen and every soldier may and will be sacrificed to advance the cause of his stay at home master.

WHEN the editor of the News appears at heaven's gate, the venerable Saint Peter will say:

St. P.—Who are you?

J.—The Rev. W. R. Jewell, of Danville.

St. P.—Don't know you. Take a seat a moment; wish to inquire if you ever heard of the editor of the News.

J.—Never, since the campaign of 1864.

St. P.—Was such a chap as in Danville about that time, who was also a P. M., and who sold the truth for pay.

St. P.—(Wail, Rev. W. R. Jewell, you can come in, being a stranger and entitled to the benefit of all doubt; but I tell you I'm ready for the News man whenever he appears. I've got his old file, especially that of Nov. 24, 1864, and the orders are when he arrives to put him on the back track, wrap the News about him as a robe and let him down. He'll land right by the fire and nothing between, not even the eternal "we."

And St. Peter chuckled and rubbed his nose with the golden key as Rev. W. R. stepped in and scooted for a high seat.

THERE is no man alive who knows Gen. Black who does not know that no party caucus could ever bind him to a cause or measure that was harmful to the people or the country.

There is no man alive who knows Mr. Cannon who does not know that any party caucus will bind him to any measure.

Think of the river and harbor bill! The difference between the two men is that Cannon will be bound in any event by party caucuses; he subserves ends and glories in it; while on the other hand Black will only acknowledge their action when it is right, and will oppose it when wrong; he has always been free and independent.

THE Ohio democrats bid fair to make it solely hot for Blaine to succeed. With his resources out of the state and the republicans, however, they will have to carry the day.

Ohio wants to be in the lead.

—Now that the big rallies are over, let every voter prepare his ticket as his conscience dictates. He should let the main thing back to the spring-time, when the republican primaries were held. He will remember that, after witnessing the high-handed manner in which the Cannon bill was carried through, he is absolutely determined that he would not vote for Cannon under any consideration; that he said he would vote for Black if he were brought out; he will also remember that, when any one doubted him, he indicated his determination to vote for Black. Now, next Tuesday is the time for action—the time to make his word good. Every effort has been made to whip the anti-Cannon men into line. Has the effort been successful? We think not; but Tuesday's election will tell. If the men who declared they would vote for Black were honest, the gallant General will be the next congressman.—(Campaign Times)

—At the conclusion of General Black's speech at Kansas, Friday, an old veteran came forward and taking him by the hand said: "General, I saw you at Fort Riden. I have never voted anything but the republican ticket, but I am going to vote for you this time. Any man who withholds what you did in that fight deserves the support of every soldier."—(Paris Gazette)

—Voters, are you in favor of a man who considers the ballot-box as a sacred treasury, not to be despoiled in any respect, or are you in favor of a man who boastfully brags that money can do anything, even corrupting the ballot-box? If you are in favor of a free and pure ballot, vote for Gen. Black; if not, take Mr. Cannon.

—We have it from the best republican authority that parties in Newell, Flint, and the local only knows how many more townships, have received from two to three hundred dollars each to buy votes for Cannon. Depend on this as a fact.

—Boston Conkling, Bristol, Tilden and Kelley, viewed the monster democratic demonstration in New York city Saturday night, 75,000 people were in line. "Burn, burn, burn this letter" was shouted from every man's mouth.

—Postmaster Dale Wallace, of Hopkinton took John Norvell, Ben. Bandy, T. B. Sheoff and Dr. Thompson that he had bet \$50 that New York would go democratic, and was bound to win it.

—George Hunt, honest and able, will be our next attorney general.—(Newspaper) Minors, how do you like that? "Able and true" because he voted always against your interest while in the legislature.

—Campaign Times: "It took the Danville portion of the republican torchlight procession 45 minutes to pass a given point after the parade was over. That point was a saloon.

—There are plenty of Republicans who don't admire Joe Cannon's methods and don't propose voting for him. If every democrat in this district votes for Charles Black he will be elected.

—Campaign Times: "The hills said Danville would bring over 1,000 torch-bearers to the republican rally. What a joke! There was only 1,000 in the whole procession.

—A republican undertook to bluff a democratic publisher that New York would not go democratic, and \$100 went up into Al. Stevens' hands very quick.

—The republicans may accuse Tom Russell of saying 'vote in mass' if they wish to, but the fact is, the republican candidate is a no.

—A vote against Cannon means a rebuke to corruption of the ballot.

Mr. James Spain.

CAMBRIDGE, Vt., Oct. 27, 1884.

In compliance with the request of the congressional committee of the National party, held at Fairmount, Ill., Friday, October 17, it was decided that it would be for the good of our party in the future for me to withdraw in favor of Gen. J. C. Black, as it is a principle we are contending for and not party.

We will be found contending for our principles until they come to the front.

Mr. Cannon has been the representative of the national bank interests of the fifteenth congressional district, but not representative of the people.

With three candidates in the field Mr. Cannon would again be elected, and these people would say I was working in the interest of Mr. Cannon.

I am not working in the interest of any man, but for principle; and as Gen. Black is the only man in the two old parties who has placed himself on paper in favor of the supreme court decision of March 5, 1884, upon the legal tender case; and in his letter, he says the government alone has the power to issue money to the people; and again, that the national banks should be reduced to their legitimate banking functions; and also that he is opposed to the land grant steals.

Therefore, for the good of the whole people of this district, I feel it my duty to withdraw from the race in favor of Gen. Black.

I hope that every lover of the principles of the People's Party will vote for him at the coming election.

In doing this I feel that I have done no more than my duty.

WILLIS W. JONES.
Congressman.

It is sufficient reason, if for no other, why every democrat, and republican, too, for that matter, should vote for Gen. John C. Black for congress and senator, that Joe Cannon has misappropriated the district long enough. Too long in office and always liable to corruption. If the election of a majority of the people of this district was honestly expressed, there is no doubt it would be that Mr. Cannon should be retired. Then, Gen. Black is a battle-scarred soldier, which fact should not, and can not be fairly ignored in this campaign, however partisan their feelings may be. That our candidate is an able man, and would honestly and conscientiously represent the people of this congressional district no one can for a moment doubt. His record is clean. No irregularities or corrupt motives can be laid at his door. Those who know Gen. Black best—as a neighbor and a public man—speak in the highest terms of his sterling integrity and a most excellent man in every respect. In political discussions he is fair, and does not deal in the ordinary abuse of his opponents. Vote for him and we will elect him next Tuesday.—(Paris Gazette)

—Black, Harrison and Cleveland.

—No democrat does his whole duty who don't stay at the polls all day.

—Look out—the republicans have lots of money and are already using it.

—We have lots of money, was the expression of a republican hostess yesterday morning. Look out for it.

—The voters should remember that Hunt's record and name their names against him. He is their worst enemy.

—Vote as quick as you can in the morning. Some deputy marshals may shoot your fellow voter, and if you haven't voted your vote would be lost.

—The republican ticket will be the choice of General C. Cannon, and they are going to trade Ogden's vote for votes for Cannon.

To the Voters of Vermont

Before casting your ballots call at the

Merchant Tailoring Establishment

OF

WM. J. MITCHELL

ATNA HOUSE BLOCK.

And leave your order for a stylish suit of

Clothing.

He has just received his Fall and Winter Stock of

PIECE GOODS

of the very

Latest Importation.

He employs none but first class workmen, and guarantees a perfect fit or

NO PAY.

Wm. J. Mitchell
ATNA HOUSE BLOCK

Snow flitted in the air, the first of the season, on election day, November 4th. It passed without any bad blood.³²⁸ The election workers moved the

³²⁸ Danville Daily Commercial, November 4, 1884.

voters through their polls in a good rate, understanding the cold made it uncomfortable to stand outside. Business was generally suspended.

General Black voted in the forenoon [at the city building-Cannon voted at the same location], and just behind him in the line was an aged colored man, who deposited the silent expression of his choice. Joe Mann escorted the venerable Dr. Fithian to the poll, and the Doctor dropped his ballot in the box and retired.³²⁹

Two days after the election, the Danville *Daily Commercial* opined that the rapid increase in Danville's population required one or two more polling places. It noted at some voting places voters had to stand in line almost an hour.³³⁰

But Republicans had been warned about tricks democrats were using to favor Black and Carter Harrison.

Printed slips with 'For Governor, Carter Harrison,' on them, are to be used by Democrats in this city. Look at your ticket and see there is none of them. Several bushels have been received by Republicans, who will take care that they will never see the daylight next Tuesday.³³¹

Besides those who received Harrison stickers to paste over Oglesby's name, yesterday, today's mail brought circulars printed in German and addressed to a number of leading Germans, both Democrats and Republicans. These circulars enclosed small gummed strips bearing the words "For Governor, Carter H. Harrison.' The substance was that these people should paste the strip above over Dick Oglesby's name and thus fraudulently record one vote for Carter. The trick is an old one and the Germans generally indignant at being picked for Carter's political suckers. It won't work.³³²

³²⁹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 4, 1885.

³³⁰ November 6, 1884.

³³¹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 1, 1884.

³³² Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 1, 1884.

There will probably be tickets out which will be republican with the exception that they will have on them the name of J. C. Black instead of J. G. Cannon. Look out for them.³³³

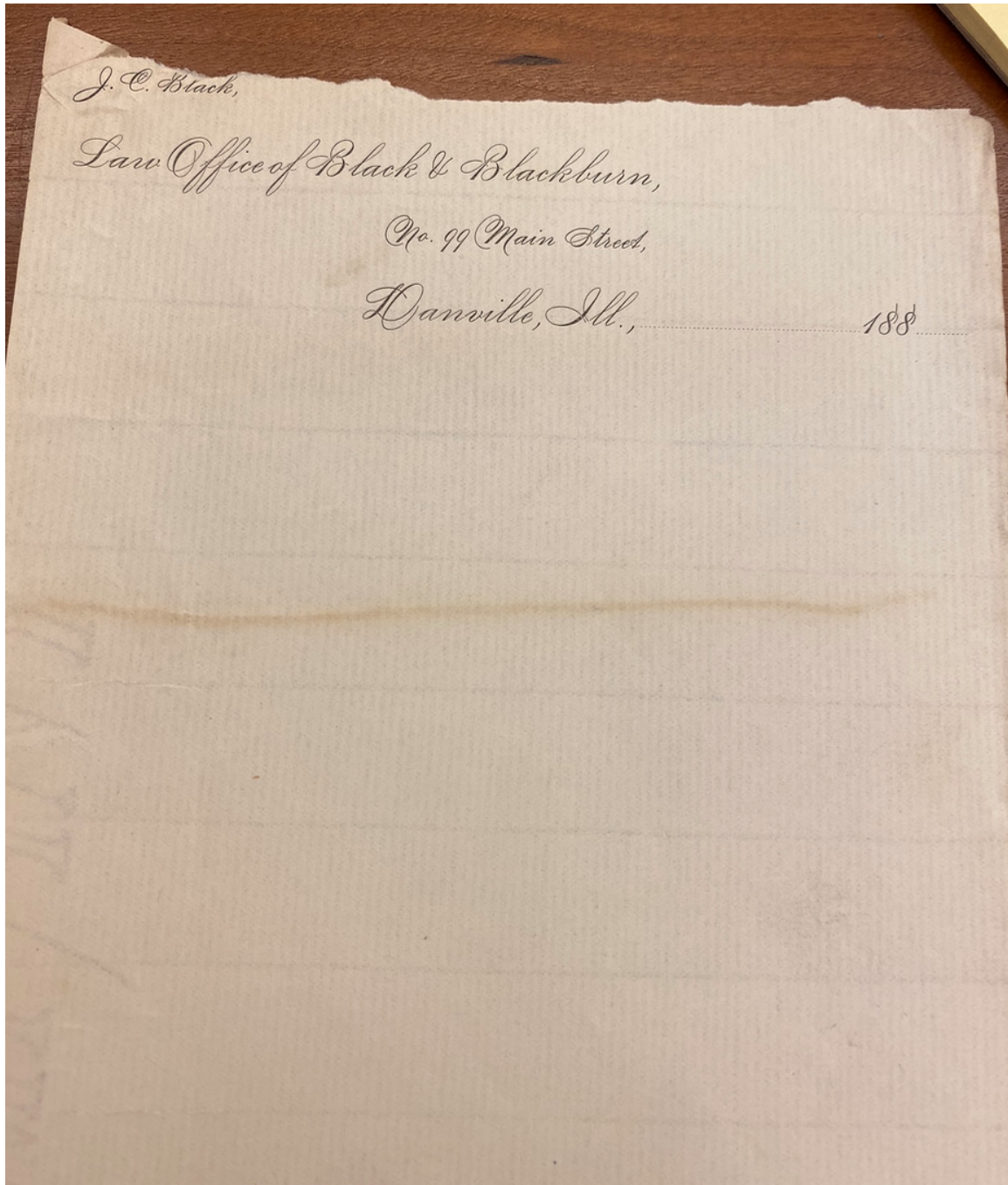
AN INTERESTING ASIDE FOR GENERAL BLACK'S LAW PARTNER

Black's law partner in 1884 was Hiram P. Blackburn, who was an active Republican. Blackburn, a leader in the County party, enjoyed making speeches for Republican candidates, and sometimes the habit of the stump seeped into the courtroom.

Here is one on Mr. Blackburn: While making a plea before a jury in the Circuit Court, Tuesday, he went off into the following strain: "My fellow citizens, the tariff, as you all know, is one of the main issues in this campaign"-At this juncture he noticed a smile creeping over the faces of the jurors and others around, and looking back he saw Judge Davis shaking all over with laughter. He excused himself by stating he was out the night before making a stump speech, and had hardly gotten over it yet. After the laughter had subsided he went on in the regular course of his argument.³³⁴

³³³ Champaign Daily Gazette, November 1, 1884.

³³⁴ Danville *Daily News*, October 16, 1884.



**Letterhead of the law firm of Black and Blackburn in the 1880s.
John C. Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library,
Springfield, Illinois, Correspondence Files, 1874-1886.**

ANOTHER CANDIDATE “FOR CONGRESS” AT THE LINCOLN OPERA HOUSE, OCTOBER 10, 1884-“A HEALTHY TONIC FOR REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS”

“A new candidate will present himself for Congress to represent this district next Friday evening, Oct. 10, at Lincoln Opera House, in the person of Mr. John T. Raymond. This gentleman, although well known to our readers as a favorite in the popular character of ‘Col. Sellers’ in ‘The Gilded Age,’ [Mark Twain’s novel] is unknown as a politician and an aspirant for Congress. He has a different way in presenting his claims to the public from other candidates. He does not go around making speeches, but simply ‘hires a hall,’ charges a small admission at the door for the purposes of defraying campaign expenses, and then he gives a little show in which Mr. Raymond acts his part in such a manner that he is not only convincing in his arguments but he makes his hearers laugh until they can scarcely laugh any more. He always draws large crowds, and all swear, after hearing him, that they will support him. His campaign bits are the funniest and best, and if you don’t believe it go and hear him next Friday night.”³³⁵

See Appendix G for a contemporary review of the play.

³³⁵ Danville *Daily Commercial*, October 4, 1884.

THE RESULT

THE following is the official vote of
the Fifteenth district:

COUNTIES.	Blaine, R.	Cleveland, D	St. John, P.	Butler, N.	Cannon, R.	Black, D.	Thornton, P.
Vermilion	3650	4111	210	147	5502	4474	123
Douglas	1924	1704	73	36	1874	1749	45
Coles	3193	3234	73	72	3108	3402	48
Edgar	2912	3195	92	47	2844	3315	66
Champaign	4854	3800	166	232	4524	4370	55
Totals	18533	16044	614	534	17852	17360	337
Pluralities	2489				492		

Remarkably, the congressional result was close, mirroring the presidential popular vote at the national level. It was much closer than Republicans anticipated. Cannon won by only 1.3%. While Cannon enjoyed a 1,028 majority in his home county, the rest of the district that traditionally voted Republican reduced their support for Cannon, while the Democratic strongholds of Edgar and Coles clearly showed they favored Black. The reduced Republican support for Cannon outside of Vermilion County probably reflected the same objections to him that generated his primary challenges in the Spring, but it was not enough to overcome Cannon's margin in Vermilion County.

In Danville, official returns revealed that the farmers, merchants, laborers and miners outside of Danville Township gave him the margins

that overcame his deficiencies in the rest of the district. The figure in parenthesis following Cannon was Blaine's vote and that following Black was Cleveland's vote in the township. Cannon took Danville Township by 208 votes. The remainder of his Vermilion County majority, 820, came from outside Danville Township.

First precinct, Cannon 207, (218)-Black 393 (376)
Second Precinct, Cannon 496 (517)-Black 448 (418)
Third Precinct Cannon 638 (638)-Black 319 (284)
Fourth precinct Cannon 333 (333)-Black 306 (279)

Interestingly, the First Precinct matches the area called Rabbittown, and its' voters would have included a number of men who worked the mines in Grape Creek.

The Danville Township precinct boundaries follow:

township, divided as follows:
DISTRICT NO. ONE
 shall constitute all that part of the township of Danville lying east of Vermillion street, in the city of Danville, and between Main street in the city and the Covington road on the north and the Vermillion river on the south.
DISTRICT NO. TWO
 shall constitute all that part of the township of Danville lying north of Main street and the Covington road, and east of Vermillion street, extended north to the north line of township.
DISTRICT NO. THREE
 shall constitute all that part of Danville township lying west of said Vermillion street, extended to north line of township and north of the center line of Main street, extended to the north fork of the Vermillion river, thence up north fork to center line of right of way of I. B. & W. Railway, thence westerly on the center line of the right of way in the line of the township.
DISTRICT NUMBER FOUR
 shall constitute all that part of said Danville township commencing at the south side of public square, in the city of Danville thence west on the center line of Main street, extending to the North Fork of Vermillion river, thence up North Fork to center line of right of way, thence westerly on the center line of right of way to west line of the township, thence south on township line to the southwest corner of the township, thence easterly to the line of township to Vermillion river, thence up the Vermillion river to a point immediately south of the center of the public square thence north to the place of the beginning.

The Ottawa, Illinois, *Free Trader* observed at the end of November

Gen. J. C. Black, the warrior of Illinois who, among other things, distinguished himself at the July convention by his unswerving

friendship to Joseph E. McDonald, made a phenomenal race for Congress in the Fifteenth Illinois district. He was defeated by Cannon by only 492 votes, but he excelled Cleveland's by 1,216. General Black's gain of votes over those cast for Hunter, the democratic nominee in 1882, was 2,709, while Cannon's gain over his vote the same year was only 1,984.³³⁶

The Democrats in Vermilion County could celebrate Cleveland's win, and Republicans Cannon's win, Oglesby's win, as well as all of the other Republicans on the county ticket. Included among the latter was W. J. Calhoun as state's attorney. Calhoun beat his opponent, George Tilton, by "1,751 votes and received the largest majority of any candidate on the ticket."³³⁷

Jesse Harper's campaign for Governor was overwhelmed in the noise of the Oglesby/Harrison contest, with Harper receiving 10,057 statewide votes. Oglesby and Harrison received a total of 653,781 votes between them.

When the Democratic pundits started their post-election analysis, one of their first targets was the Greenback party's failure to support Black. The November 10, 1884, Danville *Daily News* suggested that the Democrats chose not to support Black this time, unlike in 1876, because of the Democrat's attitude toward greenbackers: "A democrat never did think a greenbacker was fit for anything else but to take hold of the foot of a democrat and help him into office." Cannon kept only four items from the 1884 campaign in his scrapbook.³³⁸ The first was the *Leader's* article on his whining, the second the infamous and slanderous circular attacking Cannon's honesty, and the third was the article in the November 10, 1884 Danville *Daily News* on the role of the Greenbackers in the election, set forth below.

³³⁶ November 29, 1884.

³³⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 10, 1884.

³³⁸ Joseph G. Cannon Papers. Scrapbook containing 1884 matters, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

PERHAPS THIS HELPS TO EXPLAIN IT.

Gen. BLACK and his friends, who are thinking that there is ground for contesting the election of Mr. CANNON, should read the following, and they will discover one cause of his defeat. A democrat never did think a greenbacker was fit for anything else but to take hold of the foot of a democrat and help him into office. Mr. JOHN SANDERS, secretary of the greenback party in this county, a few days before the election, issued the following :

ATTENTION, GREENBACKERS !

Why are you going to vote for Gen. Black? Is he not a straight out and out bourbon democrat? Did he not vote down Gen. Butler's minority report at the National Democratic convention? Did he not try to hiss the brave old General out of the convention? Is there one promise in their platform to the laborer? Does not the republican national platform promise nearly as much to the laborer (except to the financial question) as does the greenback platform? Did not the seven republican judges of the Supreme Court vote for the recent legal tender decision, and the one democrat judge against it? Do not the greenback and republican platforms contain about the same views on the tariff question? Do you not think the greenbackers are making a mistake in voting solid for Gen. Black?

Since that by declaring that you intended to vote for Gen. Black you compelled Mr. Jones to withdraw, and that since I held on to him until he did withdraw, do you not think I am a better greenbacker than you are? Do you not think you ought to be ashamed of yourselves? Do you not think that under the circumstances I am showing my fidelity to the greenback cause by voting for and supporting Hon J. G. Cannon? I do, and shall this day cast my vote for him.

JOHN F. SANDERS,
Secretary Greenback County Central Com't.
Fairmount, Ill., Nov. 4th, 1884.

Of Mr. SANDERS' work on election day, the *Veto*, the greenback organ of Fairmount, says :

John Sanders was the most noted character in town. He was secretary of the National party, but came out for Cannon, which he had a right to do, since his party had no candidate. But he furthermore issued a circular denouncing the Nationals for supporting Gen. Black, which was freely distributed, and posted everywhere. This excited the Nationals and caused great commotion among them, and resulted in two or three altercations.

It is more than likely that Mr. SANDER'S circular and work caused many hundreds of greenbackers to resent the base attempt made to sell them out in this county. The attempt to make them jockey to take the democratic dirty foot in their hands to aid the democratic nominee to mount the official horse was resented by many greenbackers all over the district,

Truth is, it has broken up the greenback party in this district, and ought to do so. Mr. JONES' withdrawal was a small bit of political maneuvering which shows to the dullest comprehension that its managers are running it in the interest of the Democratic party.

Mr. SANDERS and men like him, cannot be thus traded off.

The fourth item was an unattributed article on Black's thoughts on contesting the election (see below)³³⁹. Rumors began to circulate shortly after the election in the district that Black was going to contest the election. His managers were thinking that if the Democrats controlled the House in the Forty-ninth Congress, they might be willing to remove Cannon for Black. In fact, Black did protest to the board of canvassers claiming irregularities in the Danville Township precincts.³⁴⁰ But only as to votes in the second Danville precinct.³⁴¹ He declined to contest the entire election.

³³⁹ Joseph G. Cannon Papers. Scrapbook containing 1884 matters, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

³⁴⁰ Danville *Daily News*, November 7, 1884.

³⁴¹ Danville *Daily News*, November 8, 1884.

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A CONTEST.

Probability that there will be one in this Congressional District—General Black's friends claiming that he was defeated by the free use of money—What General Black says about the matter.

The returns, so far as received, from the counties comprising the Fifteenth Congressional District, indicate a majority of from 400 to 500 for J. G. Cannon, Republican, over J. C. Black, Democrat. It is known that in certain quarters a contest in case of Mr. Cannon's success, was hinted at pretty plainly before the election. Since the election the matter has been canvassed in certain circles, and usually with favor.

The Democrats will have a considerable majority in the House of the next Congress. That body is the sole judge of the election and qualification of its own members, and will have it in its power to unseat Mr. Cannon if sufficient cause can be shown, or even if only a pretext can be found.

Upon being questioned as to the probability of a contest General Black replied that he did not yet concede Mr. Cannon's election, and would not do so until the returns were received from certain precincts from which he expected to receive a very large vote. He said that if he should believe that it was the wish of the people that he should represent them in Congress he would make a contest and would have the seat; if he should believe that it was not their wish that he should serve them in that capacity, he did not desire the office and would make no effort to possess himself of it.

So far as could be learned, the grounds of the prospective contest will be fraudulent votes cast at certain precincts, and a charge that money was illegally used to influence the result.

In Republican circles a contest is considered very probable, and it is generally conceded that with a majority in the House, which might be satisfied with only a pretext for doing a thing which they might desire to do, it would be a very easy thing to convince them that at least a half of Mr. Cannon's majority consists of votes

In the speeches above cited he boldly and severely denounce

THE JOLLIFICATION

On November 7th, it was reported “Wm. P. Cannon took a ride on Steve Thompson’s back on the square this afternoon. Steve feels happy.”³⁴² It was also reported “hat men enjoyed a big run on business Saturday, as a result of betting on the election.”³⁴³

For those lamenting Blaine’s loss, the Danville *Daily Commercial* advised

Don’t take too much to heart. The sun will continue to shine, the gentle rains to fall, and the crops to grow. There will also be marrying and giving in marriage, with consequent replenishing of the population. The world will hardly come to an end yet awhile. Business will be resumed at the old stand and a good many things will happen before we die.³⁴⁴

It also noted on the same day that if Cleveland was elected³⁴⁵, there would be ninety-nine applicants for the Danville postoffice. On the 19th, the Danville *Daily Commercial* speculated

The scramble among the Democrats for the Danville postoffice promises to be lively and energetic. Applicants are coming to the front thick and fast. Peter Voorhees, of Newell, seems to be a formidable candidate. He will go there by the energetic, formidable influence of the tall sycamore of the Wabash, D. W. Voorhees, his brother.³⁴⁶

The Democratic celebration of Cleveland’s victory was set for Saturday evening, November 8th. The date was selected by W. H. Barnum, a/k/a in Indiana, as “Mule Barnum”, who “ordered” a grand ratification throughout the United States and the “Solid South.”³⁴⁷

³⁴² Danville *Daily Commercial*

³⁴³ Danville *Daily News*, November 17, 1884.

³⁴⁴ November 8, 1884.

³⁴⁵ There was a controversy in New York as to the election results.

³⁴⁶ In fact, John P. Norvell, Elisa Terry’s son-in-law, received the appointment. He received the notice of his appointment from General Black.

³⁴⁷ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 10, 1884.

The old McCormick House in Danville, the temporary Danville home of Abraham Lincoln, David Davis and so many others of the Old Eighth Circuit lawyers, was in poor shape. On November 8th it was rumored that

A. C. Daniel had promised to sacrifice the old McCormack House by allowing the democrats to tear it down and burn it providing Cleveland was elected.

But it was not to be.

We have been positively informed by undisputable authority that Mr. A. C. Daniel will not permit the McCormack House, or any part thereof, to be used for a bonfire tonight. He has sold the building to private parties, and the lumber will be removed in a few days and used for building purposes.³⁴⁸

The Danville *Daily Commercial* reported on the jollification with Republican colored glasses.³⁴⁹ It viewed the National celebration as the Democratic effort to “throw off the surplus wind that had been accumulating in the ‘old Democratic carcass’ for the last twenty-four years.” The Democrats built a bonfire in the public square “out of timber furnished from the demolition of a part of the old McCormack House.”³⁵⁰

The crowd on the square was first addressed from the First National Bank steps by Gen. J. C. Black, in a short speech. The General made some very pointed remarks. He was sure Cleveland was elected and that he would be seated or there would be blood. He said several other very imprudent things for a man of his known ability and standing. We are afraid the General is a little bit ‘torn up’ over his last defeat by Mr. Cannon, and that there is

³⁴⁸ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 8, 1884.

³⁴⁹ Five thousand people attended the event. Danville **Daily News**, November 10, 1884.

³⁵⁰ One wonders how many saw the burning of a portion of the McCormack House as a metaphor for burning the traces of Abraham Lincoln, David Davis and his Republican cohorts who managed the nomination of Lincoln in 1860. See Guy C. Fraker’s *Lincoln’s Ladder to the Presidency: The Eighth Judicial Circuit*; Southern Illinois Press, 2012.

considerable 'blood in his eye.' He will get over this, however, in time, for time effaces all things.

Mr. J. B. Mann also addressed the multitude.³⁵¹ Joe made the same old speech he made in Indiana a few days before the election, adding thereto that 'Cleveland was elected,' and he would be seated or there would be 'blood on the moon,' or words to that effect. Joseph's speech was greeted with yells of approval. . . .

During the jollification on the square a portion of the crowd, headed by the Tilton cornet band, marched to the residence of Mr. A. C. Daniel, serenaded the gentleman and called for a speech. After the boys had been quieted, Mr. Daniel made a few remarks, assuring the boys that 'he was with them,' which were received with considerable applause, and at the conclusion the speaker was widely cheered. The residence of Mr. Daniel was handsomely illuminated and presented a very beautiful effect, as was also the residence of General Black [just to the north of Daniel's, on the other side of the Fithian house on Gilbert Street].

The party then went from there to Gen. Black's residence, where they serenaded that gentleman. In response to calls the General said that he appreciated the honor very much, but had said all he wished to say in his speech down town. After a rousing three cheers the General was left alone to figure out Cannon's majority in this district, and wonder, 'what was the matter with me?'

The crowd then went to E. R. E. Kimbrough's residence to celebrate his victory for the Illinois House. Kimbrough had a sure victory as the minority member of the House district that included Vermilion County. The reporter noted only a few old time Democrats in the crowd,³⁵² and ended his report by noting "the ratification, as far as a crowd and noise

³⁵¹ The Danville *Daily News* reported that while both Black and Mann spoke from the First National Bank's steps, each also gave a ten-minute speech on the southwest corner of the public square. November 10, 1884.

³⁵² This may have reflected the fact that they were against the celebration since New York's result, which would guaranty Cleveland's election, had not been finalized. Danville *Daily News*, November 10, 1884.

were concerned, was a success, and there was but little drunkenness and no fighting.”³⁵³

The Danville *Daily News* did not escape the Democrats’ joyful reaction.

A delegation of one hundred or more headed by the Tilton band, marched to the front of the NEWS sanctum [northeast corner of Vermilion and North streets] and went through a regular Comanche war dance. They pawed the earth, yelled and bellowed like mad bulls. They enjoyed it apparently to the utmost. Why, Gen. Black’s mimic, known as, ‘And Gentleman, I am Here,’ got down on his knees and pounded the curbing with a club, and rolled his eyes and shouted, ‘glory, glory-hurrah for Cleveland,’ and the Lord only knows what he didn’t hurrah for. We must say we enjoyed the serenade first rate.³⁵⁴

GENERAL BLACK GETS A TICKET TO WASHINGTON, D. C. TOO

At the end of November, General Black joined David Davis and the other members of the Illinois State Bar association’s executive committee in Springfield to fix January 13 and 14, 1885, for the annual meeting of the Association in Springfield.³⁵⁵ The principal addresses would be given by David Davis, and E. B. Washburn would deliver an oration on the late Isaac N. Arnold.³⁵⁶

It did not take too long for Black’s name to rise in speculations as to how Cleveland might reward him. The Kansas City *Times* mentioned Black as a potential candidate for Secretary of War.³⁵⁷

³⁵³ Danville *Daily Commercial*, November 10, 1884.

³⁵⁴ November 10, 1884.

³⁵⁵ St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, November 26, 1884.

³⁵⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_N._Arnold

³⁵⁷ December 21, 1884.

On December 20th, it was reported General Black had left Danville for Washington, D. C.³⁵⁸ He returned to Danville on the 24th, and “during his absence he called on President-elect, Grover Cleveland.”³⁵⁹

When the Illinois General Assembly gathered in Springfield in January, Black, who was “very much admired by the party,” made an effort to obtain the Illinois Federal Senate seat. Once again his opponent was Carter Harrison of Chicago.³⁶⁰ In early February, it was reported Black publically withdrew his name from consideration.³⁶¹ In fact, he did so in a letter dated January 23, 1885, to E. R. E. Kimbrough, a fellow Danville attorney. Kimbrough was the district’s minority member (Democratic) of the Illinois House.

Hon. E. R. E. Kimbrough
Member from Vermilion
House of Representatives
Springfield, Illinois

January 23, 1885

Dear sir + friend

In my judgment the time has arrived in the senatorial struggle + in the efforts to organize the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois when all personal considerations should be laid aside by the various aspirants for the great office which is the real prize in all contests we are witnessing, to the end that a united front may be presented by the Democratic party + that all resources may be [concentrated] in one direction + in this one interest. This can scarcely be the way while many candidates remain + press their individual claims.

[Crossed out sentence] so believing [illegible] I withdraw my name from the consideration of my friends for the position of United States Senator. I should have been deeply gratified at the [illegible] of confidence & esteem that would have been implied in

³⁵⁸ Danville *Daily News*.

³⁵⁹ Danville *Daily Commercial*, December 24, 1884. He saw Cleveland on the 22nd. *New York Times*, December 23, 1884.

³⁶⁰ Memphis, Tennessee *Public Ledger*, January 13, 1885.

³⁶¹ San Francisco, *Examiner*, February 4, 1885.

my choice, if the favor of the legislature of the State had been extended to me. But I am unwilling [illegible] the general good of my associates & party friends by continued division.

What ever I can do to aid in electing the man the Democratic party may chose for their leader I shall be glad to do.

I thank you & those who have heretofore supported me most warmly & [illegible] for their friendship & profuse aid-and I remain your and their most obedient

J. C. Black³⁶²

This kept the door open for a Cleveland appointment. On February 6th and 26th, Black's name was still being mentioned in the context of Secretary of War.³⁶³

During all this speculation, the 37th Illinois Volunteer Infantry set a reunion on the anniversary of the Battle of Pea Ridge at the Palmer House on March 6, 1885 at 2 o'clock P. M. Black was the President of the organization.³⁶⁴

On March 3, 1885, the news broke that "in the event of the appointment of Lamar to be Secretary of the Interior, it is understood that General John C. Black will be appointed Commissioner of Pensions."³⁶⁵

It is desired to place an ex-Union General at the head of the Pension Bureau in order to dispel the unfavorable criticism that might be caused by the appointment of an ex-Confederate to the head of the department under which the pension service of the Government is administered.³⁶⁶

³⁶² John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois, Correspondence Box. 1874-1886, Box 2, Folder 13. See Appendix B.

³⁶³ Buffalo, New York, *Commercial*, February 6, 1885. Rochester, New York, *Democrat and Chronicle*, February 26, 1885.

³⁶⁴ Bloomington *Pantagraph*, February 25, 1885.

³⁶⁵ Reno, Nevada *State Journal*, March 3, 1885.

³⁶⁶ Somerset, Pennsylvania, *Herald*, March 4, 1884.

It was fitting that General John Charles Black would receive the notification of his appointment as Commissioner of Pensions while in the company of his comrades of the 37th Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

Chicago, ILL., March 5.-General John C. Black of Danville is in the city in attendance on the reunion of the Thirty-seventh Illinois infantry. The following telegraphic correspondence is self-explanatory:

Washington, March 6.-To General John C. Black, Palmer House, Chicago-The President thinks your official connection with this administration will contribute to his success and desires me to ascertain if you will assume the duties of commissioner of pensions. I cordially join in his request. L. Q. C. LAMAR³⁶⁷

Chicago, March 6.-To L. Q. C. Lamar, Secretary of the Interior-I thank President Cleveland and yourself. If my appointment will contribute to the success of the administration I will accept the position. Telegraph me when I should arrive in Washington. J. C. Black.³⁶⁸

General Black says the appointment was unsolicited.

How was the appointment viewed? The Lincoln, Nebraska *Journal Star* was typical: "No selection more satisfactory to the old soldiers of the country could have been made." The Philadelphia *Times* opined

The appointment of General John C. Black, of Illinois, as Commissioner of Pensions will bring into the public service a man of vigor and ability. Still a young man-only forty-six-he was old enough to make a most creditable record and to rise to the brevet rank of brigadier general in a war which closed twenty years ago. Severely wounded in some of the severe engagements his scars

³⁶⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Quintus_Cincinnatus_Lamar

³⁶⁸ When Black passed through Pittsburg on the way to Washington, the *Daily Post* described him as a "well proportioned man, with iron gray hair and chin whiskers and mustache, of the same color. His manners are very open and agreeable. A wound received in the late war has crippled his left wrist, and he has not much use of that member." March 11, 1885.

give him a picturesque aspect and his appearance on the stump is demanded in some of the Western States in each campaign, because of his popularity with the soldier element. He is an honest man, a good lawyer, and, as he has been successful in whatever work he has undertaken, there is no reason why he shall not make the same record in the Pension Bureau.³⁶⁹

The Brooklyn, New York, *Daily Eagle*, commenting on Black's appointment, observed

Secretary Lamar has taken the first affirmative step toward accomplishing what every intelligent person expected him to accomplish, namely, placing the Department of the Interior, and particularly the Pension Bureau, upon a sound business basis. To bring about this desirable result a better selection than that of General Black could not have been made. It is a long step in the right direction.³⁷⁰

And so, in March 1885, two lawyers from Danville, Illinois, assumed their duties in Washington City, one as a seventh term Congressman, and one as Commissioner of Pensions.

As to General Black getting over his loss to Cannon, one can imagine that had occurred by May 1885, when Black accompanied President Cleveland to the battlefield at Gettysburg. General Black gave the principal remarks in remembrance of that battle in the presence of President Cleveland.³⁷¹

General John Charles Black no longer had to wonder (if he ever did) 'what was the matter with me?'³⁷²

³⁶⁹ March 8, 1885.

³⁷⁰ March 8, 1885. See the Chattanooga, Tennessee *Daily Times* for the departmental context of Black's appointment and replacement of the preceding Commissioner. March 9, 1885.

³⁷¹ Mount Carmel, Illinois Register, June 25, 1886 for a transcript of the speech.

³⁷² The Washington, D. C. *Critic* reported "J. C. Black, Illinois" at the WILLARD on March 11, 1885.

AN EXAMPLE OF BLACK'S STRATEGY TO ENTICE REPUBLICAN VOTES

On November 29, 1885, an item appeared in the Indianapolis *Journal* illustrating the success of Black's attempt to obtain Republican votes in the canvass. It also shows he knew how to reward such Republicans with the patronage that came with being Commissioner of Pensions. The voter was Danville Doctor Ezra Peters.

A VALUABLE REPORT.

The Soldiers' Home Investigation by Mr. Fritz and Dr. Peters.

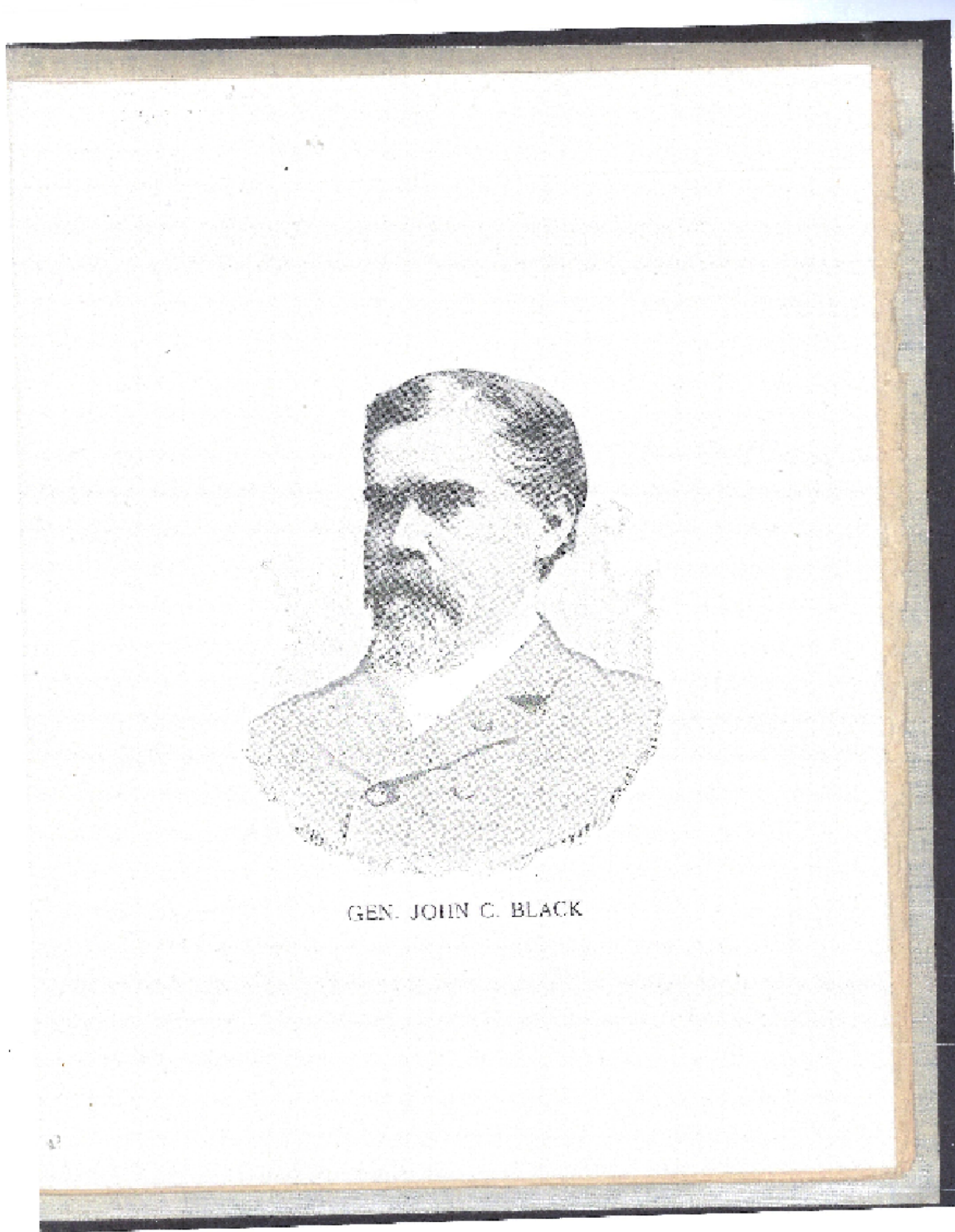
Special to the Indianapolis Journal.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 28.—James Fritz, of Gosport, Ind., and Dr. Ezra Peters, of Danville, Ill., members of the commission that inspected the national volunteer soldiers' homes, and who have just returned from their trip, which took them through twenty-one States, representing the four sections of the country, and consumed nearly three months, are very enthusiastic in their descriptions of soldier life as they found it at the different homes, and their official report will be of much interest and great value. It will call attention to the proportion of foreign-born inmates of the homes, there being over 70 per cent of that class. The manner in which pensions are paid to people in foreign countries will also be treated, as there is no system in it, and no safeguard against fraud. Pensions are paid in large aggregates to widows who have remarried, and for persons who have long been dead. Mr. Fritz and Dr. Peters were both valuable members of the board, one being a lawyer of distinction and the other an oculist and aurist of ability, well known throughout western Indiana and eastern Illinois. Dr. Peters was appointed on the committee by Gen. Black for the purpose of examining pensioners basing their claims upon diseases of the eye or ear, and in that capacity he has proven himself invaluable. He was a gallant Union soldier, and has long been a pronounced Republican, but says he supported General Black for Congress, last year, against Representative Cannon, because he knew General Black had rendered eminent service to his country on the battle-field and is the soldier's friend.

SAMUEL T. BUSEY GOES TO SCHOOL ON HIS FELLOW GENERAL IN 1890

In 1890, Urbana's Samuel T. Busey used Black's election strategy in successfully challenging and defeating Cannon in his re-election. While the 1890 campaign provided Busey with additional opportunities³⁷³ against Cannon, it, too, had a Republican rebellion against Cannon through local newspapers, claims of corruption in buying votes and newspaper editors, Busey making no campaign speeches, presenting a soldier wounded in the last days of the war, and attacking Cannon for his lack of military service, during which he made his initial fortune.

³⁷³ The McKinley tariff and Cannon's alleged vulgarity on the House floor in opposing a Democratic filibuster.



**John C. Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library,
Springfield, Illinois (undated)**

APPENDIX A

FIFTEENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ILLINOIS, OCTOBER 28, 1884.

FELLOW-REPUBLICANS:

No one appreciates more than you and we the great sacrifices that some have made for the maintenance of the Union and the purity of the ballot-box. The great safe-guard to our republic to-day is a free, uncorruptible election and an honest count. The ballot-box is corrupted by two classes. The man who intimidates the voter is a bully, and the man who buys votes at either primaries or general elections is worse than he. The latter is the most dangerous enemy of our form of government. Both are enemies of the country—both are dangerous elements in our form of government. Neither should be elevated into office by the votes of honest men.

We hold that a public office is a trust, and that he who uses money to purchase votes violates his oath of office. That he is unworthy of public confidence or public trust.

There are now two candidates in this district for our suffrages as Congressional candidates. Joseph G. Cannon is one of them. He has held office of one kind and another for over twenty years. His hand has always been receiving from the public treasury, and his mouth always sucking at the public teat. His methods of securing nominations have for years past been condemned by the better class of citizens of all parties.

To recount all the grave charges of political corruption laid to his charge would be unnecessary. They are well known, and have largely been admitted by his political associates. But in securing his last nomination an open revolt nearly occurred, solely on account of the gross corruption resorted to, and many republicans vowed never to support him again. In Champaign county alone he caused to be spent more than \$3,000 to defeat Mr. Mathews.

You all know that upon the death of Collector J. W. Hill, Cannon almost immediately recommended the appointment of Dr. L. S. Wilcox—a notoriously unfit man for the place—which awakened the indignation of the better element of the party, and by strong effort Cannon's Wilcox scheme was defeated. But still Cannon's chosen agent, friend, adviser and servant is the same Wilcox. A vote for Cannon is a vote for Wilcox. Where does Wilcox get the money he is spending so lavishly in the campaign, if not from his master?

Mr. Caleb Garrett, in introducing Governor Oglesby to a large and appreciative audience at Tuscola a short time ago (alluding to J. G. Cannon) said substantially of Governor Oglesby that he was a man who would not buy votes; a man who would not corrupt the ballot-box by the use of money; that he would not use corrupt means to pack primaries; that he was an honest man. Mr. Garrett's opposition to Cannon was well known. His bold declaration was applauded to the echo.

It is established that Mr. Cannon can always secure a nomination by the means he uses. The only way left is for the independent voter to defeat him at the polls.

It is established that Mr. Cannon can always secure a nomination by the means he uses. The only way left is for the independent voter to defeat him at the polls.

The gentleman who is his opponent is General John C. Black, a brave soldier, a noble citizen, and an honest man.

Of General Black it may also be truthfully said: He would not buy votes; he would not corrupt the ballot-box by the use of money; that he would not pack primaries by corrupt means; that he is an honest man.

General Black reluctantly consented to be a candidate in this campaign at the urgent request of numerous Republicans who were then, and are now, representative of the best elements of the Republican party. The office has sought the man, and not he the office.

The time has come when corruption of the ballot-box in this district should be positively condemned—stamped out for all time to come.

The time has come when, in this district, we should be represented in the halls of Congress by a man who will be a credit to the district.

A vote for General Black is a vote for the purity of the ballot-box, and a vote against corruption.

No man who buys a vote is worthy to hold a public office.

A corrupt candidate will not be an honest officer.

Our country's interest demands our suffrages for honest men.

MANY REPUBLICANS.

I am greatly interested with the fair-minded men in your efforts to please two classes of people who hold different views upon important public questions.

conferrees objected and delay has been over the the house of represent criticizing the

with their means, and must devote their time and contribute from their

APPENDIX B

Black's letter withdrawing his name from consideration for the Illinois U. S. Senator position, January 23, 1885.

J. E. Black,
Lawyer,
Danville, Ill.

January 23^d 1885

Hon E. R. E. Kimbrough
Member from Danville
House of Representatives
Springfield Illinois. Dear Sir & Friend

In my judgment the time has arrived
in the Senatorial struggle & in the efforts to
organize the House of Representatives of
the State of Illinois when all personal con-
siderations should be laid aside by the
various aspirants for the great office which
is the real prize in all the contests we are
witnessing, & the end that a united front
may be presented by the Democratic party
& that all its resources may be concentrated
in one direction & ^{in this} one interest. This can
scarcely be the case while many candidates
remain & press their individual claims -

~~I do not believe that a majority of the members~~
~~elect to the great assembly favor my proposition~~
~~and so believing I withdraw my name from the~~
consideration of my friends for the position of
United States Senator. I should have been

deeply gratified at the mark of confidence
& esteem that would have been implied in my
choice, if the favor of the Legislature of the State
had been extended to me. But I am unwilling
to impair the general good of my associates &
party friends by continued division.
Whatever I can do to aid in electing the
man the Democratic Party may choose for their
leader I shall be glad to do.
I thank you & those who have heretofore
supported me most warmly & anxiously
for their friendship & proffered aid - and I
remain your most obedient
J. C. Black

**John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library,
Springfield, Illinois.**

APPENDIX C

General Black's efforts to dampen the boom for Indiana's Thomas A. Hendricks at the Democratic convention by announcing additional votes for Cleveland probably earned Black the position of Commissioner of Pension's upon Cleveland's victory. Hendricks, however, received the Democratic Vice Presidential nomination, and with Cleveland's victory, became Vice President of the United States on March 4, 1885.

During the campaign in the Illinois Fifteenth Congressional District, Republican papers vilified Hendricks' conduct during the Civil War as an avid Copperhead, and tied General Black to Hendricks as often as possible. Cannon paired Black with Hendricks in his speech on Blaine Day in Danville. But was Hendricks the Devil? A surviving note of condolence from Hendricks to Mrs. Black in the Black Papers in Springfield suggest that there was, in fact, not only a political friendship between the Blacks and the Hendricks, but also a personal relationship.

The Blacks vacationed as a family in Elmira, New York, in September 1885. Their daughter Josephine Livona, age 5, died of diphtheria on September 24, 1885.³⁷⁴ One report suggests that their other children may have had the disease since the Blacks delayed their return to Danville until they could safely travel.³⁷⁵

The Blacks arrived in Danville on October 12, 1885, and their daughter's remains "were taken at once to Spring Hill cemetery." A large group of friends met the family at the Wabash Depot. General Black, shortly after internment, returned to Washington, D. C. On the same day, Vice President Hendricks, himself in poor health in Indianapolis, sent a note of condolence to Mrs. Black. Hendricks' tender remembrance of Josephine reveals much about the man. Hendricks would himself die on November 25, 1885.

³⁷⁴ Black was traveling to Topeka, Kansas, to attend a reunion of one-armed soldiers, when his daughter died. Salina, Kansas, *Semi-Weekly Journal*, October 17, 1885. See also Atchison, Kansas, *Daily Patriot*, September 28, 1885.

³⁷⁵ Champaign *Daily Gazette*, October 5, 1885.

~~United States Senate,~~

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

1885

Indianapolis [1885]
October 12. 1885

Dear Mr Black

I understand that
you have lost one of your
children, and that it is my dear
little friend, whom I loved
with the greatest tenderness.

She more resembled me little
by than any child I have ever
seen - Mr. Hurdick joins
me in most sincere sympathy

Truly
Yours
J. A. Hurdick

**John C. Black Papers, Corresspondence 1874-1886, Box 2, Folder
13, Abrahaham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois**

APPENDIX D

General Black assumed his office in March 1885, and in September, he joined his family in Elmira, New York, for some rest. The Blacks would suffer a heavy loss in September while in Elmira with the death of their daughter Josephine from diphtheria, but in July 1885, another resident of Elmira, who had recently published his new book *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, had some fun at the expense of General Black with a bureaucratic snafu by Commissioner of Pensions' Black office.

John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

Knoxville, Tennessee *Daily Journal*, July 18, 1885:

MARK TWAIN'S PENSION.

He Advertises Himself in a Characteristic Letter.

Special to THE JOURNAL.

BOSTON, July 17.—A Washington special to the Herald says: On the 29th of June Gen. Black addressed the following letter to Samuel Clemens:

“Elma, N. Y.—Pension applicant—Replying to your inquiry relative to your pension claim, certificate No. 297,520, it is proper to state that so much therein as is based on rheumatism, piles and sore eyes was rejected May 23d, 1885, on the ground that there has been no pensionable disability therefrom since June 20, 1884, date claimed therefor was filed.” Clements’ claim was being looked after by Senator Hawley, and Mrs. Hawley attends all her husband’s pension office business, and she sent Clements the following card.

“I am informed that your pension is allowed, and I congratulate you, very truly.

JOSEPH R. HAWLEY.

Per H. W. HAWLEY.”

Instead of going to Samuel Clements, of Elma, it went to Samuel L. Clemens, of Elmira, N. Y., and that gentleman replied as follows:

"ELMIRA, N. Y., July 8th, 1885.

John C. Black, Commissioner:

DEAR SIR: I have not applied for a pension. I have often wanted a pension after—ever so often—I may say, but inasmuch as the only military service I performed during the war was in the confederate army, I have always felt a delicacy about asking you for it. However since you have suggested the thing yourself, I feel strengthened; I haven't any very pensionate disease myself, but I can furnish a substitute man who is just simply chaos—a museum of all the different kinds of aches and pains, fractures, dislocations and malformations there are; a man who would regard rheumatism, piles and sore eyes as mere recreation and refreshment after serious occupations of his day. If you grant me a pension, Dear sir, please hand it to general Hawley, United States senator. I mean, hand him the certificate and not the money, and he will forward it to me. You will observe by his postal card, which I enclose, that he takes a friendly interest in the matter. He thinks I have already got a pension, whereas, I have only got rheumatism, but I don't want that, I had that before. I wish it was catching. I know a man that I would load up with it pretty early. Lord! but we will all feel that way sometimes. I've seen the day when—but never mind that, you may be busy—just hand it to Hawley—certificate, you understand—if not transferrable.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) S. L. CLEMENS,
Known to the police as "Mark Twain."

APPENDIX E

At the end of March 1885 (he arrived on March 11th), General Black updated his wife, who remained in Danville, on his adventures in Washington, D. C. Below is the letter. Transcribing Black's cursive handwriting is a challenge, and I leave it to the reader, as a budding historian, to enjoy discovering the General's message to his wife. John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

¹⁰
Mrs J. C. Black
Dumelle, Ill.

Department of the Interior,
PASSENGER OFFICE.

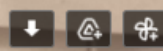
Washington, D.C. March 28th 1885

My Dear. Man was made to move
& in consequence of your letter of postponement
I'm on a short move myself. Two weeks soon
go into the past harbor, & I will do as well as I can
write you condudely you can come. } I fear that you
have not clearly understood my letter heretofore
written. The boarding matter is arranged precisely as
you wish & precisely as we agreed would be wise, before I
left home. That is: we will board until you have had
a chance to select permanent quarters, furnished
or unfurnished as you please. I consider that matter
as settled. } Now for business. My landlady's name
is Bradley. } I don't write as much as I did at home.
I have had my name stenated & it is signed in
that way & Thomas 5 to 6 thousand times a day

but except to private letters & papers that
involve money I don't sign - I have too
-no papers who are in place of two hands and
do all my writing. They sit in my office one
on the right & one on the left & "Keep the" Horatio
? Any of G. English that the orchids are not
distributable but I'll try again with hope of
better success. } The breezy is cheap at 40⁰⁰
? Concerning what might occur in case of delay
in marriage I decline to imagine! Not a safe
thing to do. In rec Miss Knight's letter however
& it has not hurt any ones chances. In their
great office however, many things are to be taken
into view & the office of Pusey is in New York
city is a good one. } Tell Kate I have not read
her letter. It is probably on its way to me. Is
the gentleman of whom she writes related to Pusey
Bullhamison? } Offer the lead pipe to Mr
Carson or let him say what it is worth

that
1000 shil
as and
one
rather
not
the of
at 7500
large
fe
m
ies
s
h
ed
in

I think I am a small balance at the
members - & the product of the paper should be
applied them. Don't sell for less than its value
Do what you please with the proceeds
Be sure to get my fine paper from the office
I have used the thought of Samuel & the Boyd
papers. You must help me to keep some of
these things in mind. Don't worry about me
You see I have wanted paragraphs in a
rather unusual style. I am not going to
or injure myself with work. I am going to do it
That's all! Now as to rooms prices be
at Strickman. Without detail we can have what
we need & good at such prices as I can now afford
to pay. The quarters will be ready when you come.
You can get good nurses for ¹⁰⁰⁰ per week. But
they board themselves. But this would not
answer in case of you visiting. No one could
take Rosy's place in that event. When we



begin to sleep better, you will get as one better
for us than money, so that you had better make
a counter put arrangement with her?

I rec'd a letter from Mr Little which I hope
to answer soon, but not today.

Go in when you can to see Mother & Pa.
It will not harm you in later years to have
some not as you would be done by but as the
father of all would have you do
for my love to Grace John & Joseph
& Allen - Believe me well that in me

Very truly
Yours J. M. Mack

The party at Mr Merritts was very fine.
The only gentlemen not in dress suits were Senator
Payne Senator Lane & myself - The Vice Pres
The Chief & the other score of notables were
in swallow tail checks. I sent you my Bon Selvins
sketches

Yours J. M. Mack

I send you some of my heavy stub pens but
only 3 or 4 in your next

APPENDIX F

General John Charles Black campaign banner from the 1884 Illinois Fifteenth Congressional District campaign. John Charles Black Papers, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.



AC2011-156 Banner Black Our Choice - 1.jpg



AC2011-156 Banner Black Our Choice - 2.jpg

The source of this banner may have been at a campaign rally in Tolono, Illinois, on Saturday, November 1, 1884, as reported in the Danville *Leader's* November 3, 1884 special election edition.

BANNERED.—At the democratic rally in Tolono, Saturday, which was large and most enthusiastic, composed of democrats and independent republicans, Gen. Black was presented with a magnificent banner, the work of the independent republican and democratic ladies, inscribed: "Black: Our Choles." It was presented in a neat way by Col. J. S. Wolfe, a recent republican, and now an independent one.

APPENDIX G

THE DRAMA.

MR. RAYMOND IN "FOR CONGRESS."

ACTORS who succeed in creating a part in the sense of making it essentially their own, appear to be followed by a Nemesis that ever after demands tribute. Thus Mr. Jefferson has so filled *Rip Van Winkle* with his individuality that every other characterization which he essays is flavored with that inimitable essence. Similarly Mr. Raymond, in rendering his own name and that of *Colonel Sellers* convertible terms, has by so much detracted from the originality of his other rôles, and we therefore find it impossible to derive an unalloyed satisfaction from the delineation of *General Limber*, because of the ever-recurring memories of the astute and speculative *Mulberry*. Perhaps this is not to be regretted; and we should scarcely be willing to give up the remembrance of such perfect bits of character-painting as *Rip* and *Colonel Sellers* for the sake of securing a wider field for the powers of the creators. Still the fact would seem to be undoubted, and the inevitable outcome of the application of exceptional talent to the production of specialties.

In "*For Congress*" Mr. Raymond has an excellent opportunity to display his peculiar adaptability to humorous situations in the field of everyday life. He appeals so pertinently and directly to daily observation and

experience that the audience lives with him on the stage, and is necessarily receptive to every bit of satire, every grain of wit, with which the action is so plentifully supplied. The story is one of a shrewd and not over-scrupulous politician, *General Josiah Limber*, who induces a wealthy old countryman to run *for Congress*, to the end that "the boys" may fatten on the spoils of the old man's bank-account. Of plot there is none, for the dragging in of the defaulting brother and the scheming villain who holds his secret over his head is really too antique for notice; yet upon the slender thread of a simple episode in political wire-pulling the author has managed to hang a great deal of humorous dialogue and several exceedingly amusing situations, notably the scene of recognition between *Limber* and *Jemima Grimm*, and the subsequent episode of the three women stowed away in separate closets, and kept in order by a cannonade of books from the hands of the beleaguered *Limber*.

The scene of the distant conversation about the high school

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The scene of the district convention, though a trifle highly colored, can hardly be called an exaggeration, and the man or woman who lives in blissful ignorance of the methods by which nominations are often made may derive a very fair notion of the whole business from this second act of "For Congress." It is, here, too, that a telling effect is obtained by means of a device well known to the playwright; *i. e.*, the placing of the main action out of sight, and so piquing the curiosity and stimulating the attention. The cheers of the convention, the distant noise and bustle of a crowd, an occasional snatch of blatant oratory, come floating in from without, and the audience leans eagerly forward to learn just what is going on; so that, as the New York swell, shaken out of his proprieties, rushes in with a scrap of news as to the progress of the vote, and rushes out again with coat-tails streaming in the wind, everybody feels himself an incipient partisan for the nonce and quite an element of excitement is added to the manifest humor of the action. Cries of "Woolley forever!" and "Miggs, the poor man's friend!" would fall very flat, if uttered by a dozen *supers* in silk hats on the stage; but coming from a dozen *supers* concealed in the friendly wings the effect is realistic and the enthusiasm contagious. Mr. Lloyd deserves credit for his management of this second act. It is the one point which entitles his work to be called a play; for the absence of nearly every dramatic element throughout the piece would otherwise forbid the application of that name to it. That it is a clever bit of satire no one will deny, and that it admirably fulfils its purpose in affording Mr. Raymond the opportunity for much delightful character-acting everybody must be glad to admit, despite the looseness in construction and the frequent lapses in good English which jar on a critical sense.

It is fortunate, too, that Mr. Raymond depends on his own power of command over his audience, rather than upon the assistance of his "support;" for the latter are singularly unmindful of the opportunities offered, and are conventional and mediocre to a degree. All this is, however, tolerable under conditions which keep the principal personage continually before us, and centre the interest almost exclusively in him and in the development of that portion of the action which depends directly upon him. Mr. Raymond nowhere fails in meeting the full demand made upon his resources as a comedian. His naturalism—by which we would be understood as meaning his portrayal of purely unconventional actions by purely artistic methods,—is worthy of unqualified commendation. There is art in the very lifting of the hand to the chin, in the attempt to cover up a smile of amusement; there is art in the exuberant inward laughter at the remembrance of some funny incident of long ago; art in his attitudes; art in the angle at which he wears his hat; art in every gesture; but it is always the art which conceals itself and gives us as its finished product the verisimilitude of nature.

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[The American: A National Journal - Volumes 6-7 - Page 349](#)

Robert Ellis Thompson, Wharton Barker · 1883

FOUND INSIDE – PAGE 349

... the delineation of **General Limber** , because of the ever - recurring memories

Curriculum Vitae of Timothy Ohrea Smith

Birth Information: Son of James O. (Professor of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, University of Illinois) and Frances R. Smith (A. B. History, Judson College, Marion, Alabama) at Urbana, Illinois, in 1948.

Education: Urbana High School, 1966; University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign, Illinois, 1970, AB, Magna Cum Laude, High Distinction in History; University of Illinois Law School, Urbana/Champaign, Illinois, 1973, JD.

Family: Wife, Jane Anne Dighton Smith, 1978 until her passing in 2003; and daughter Jessica Anne Smith, now Jessica Anne Diel.

Bar Admissions: Illinois Supreme Court, 1973; United States District Court, Eastern District of Illinois, 1973; United States Court of Military Appeals, 1974; United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, 1984.

Professional Experience: U. S. Navy (R), Lieutenant, Judge Advocate General Corps, courts martial defense counsel, Virginia Beach, Virginia (1974-1975), and staff member, Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy, Washington, D. C. (1975-1977); Private practice of law, Danville, Illinois, (1977- 2010).

Nature of Practice: My private practice in Danville began in 1977 as general, but over the years narrowed into business transactions, real estate transactions, banking, and creditor bankruptcy work, with excursions into wills and trusts. Retired June 2010.

Lifetime Affiliations: Vermilion County Bar Association, Member and President; Danville Symphony Orchestra, Board Director and Board President; Illinois State Bar Association, Member; Danville Symphony and Danville Symphony Foundation, Board Director and Board President; Springhill Cemetery, Board Director; Osher Life Long Learning Institute, University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign, Advisory Board Director and Board President

Retirement Activities as an Historian:

VERMILION COUNTY REPORT TO THE ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION. The Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission requested that representatives of Vermilion County prepare a report for the 200th anniversary of Illinois statehood identifying the County's important and historic cases in order to preserve and make those stories accessible to the public. I prepared the Report as a committee of one.

JOSEPH JOHN (“Uncle Joe”) GURNEY CANNON:

Upon retirement, I've enjoyed researching and writing about the early years and professional development of Joseph John Gurney Cannon, State's Attorney in the Illinois 27th Judicial Circuit from 1861 to 1868, Member of the U. S. House of Representatives for 46 years (1873 to 1891, 1893 to 1913, and 1915 to 1923) and Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives from 1903 to 1911. Upon commencing of my “retirement” project on Cannon, there was virtually nothing published (but for the official U. S. Government Congressional Records) on his years prior to becoming Speaker. I've attempted to fill that void with my continuing research into one of America's greatest legislators. Early in my research, I determined to provide my resulting essays to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, (Chronicling Illinois), which is the depository of the existing private papers of Joseph G. Cannon, thereby making them available for any persons interested in the professional and business development of not only Joseph, but also his brother, William P. Cannon. Any biography of Joseph must include William, who, as his business partner from 1861 until William's death in 1902, provided the wealth for his brother to survive in the corrupt congressional years of the Gilded Age with an acknowledged reputation of honesty.

Published Essays On Cannon:

The Heritage of Vermilion County (Quarterly Publication of the Vermilion County Illinois Museum Society), *The Parental Influences on Uncle Joe Cannon*
Spring 2014,

The Heritage of Vermilion County, *supra*, *The Cannonballing of Mayor John Beard and the Englishes*, 1891-1901, Parts 1 and 2, Summer 2015 and Autumn 2015

The Heritage of Vermilion County, *supra*, **The Legal Prosecutions Brought by State's Attorney Joseph Gurney Cannon Arising from the August 1863 Copperhead Riot in Danville, Illinois*-in 3 parts, Autumn 2018, Winter 2018-2019, and Spring 2019

The Heritage of Vermilion County, *supra*, **Elis Sampson Terry*, Autumn 2021.

Self-Published Essays on Cannon: Essays with an * have been accepted for deposit and use by researchers as a part of the Joseph G. Cannon Papers at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. They are also available at the Danville, Illinois, Public Library Archives.

:

*The Slander Case That Convinced Joseph G. Cannon to Become a Lawyer: *Rose v Strouse*-OCLC 1264153652

*An Examination of the Estate of Horace F. Cannon and What It Reveals About His Business Dealings, His Wealth and the Inheritances of His Wife GuliElma and His Sons Elisha B. Cannon, Joseph G. Cannon, and William P. Cannon-OCLC 1005740314

*Like Father Like Son: How The Prosecution of Horace Franklin Cannon in 1847 For Harboring An African American Taught His Son Joseph (John) Gurney Cannon About Having The Courage of Your Convictions And Fighting For What Is Right-OCLC 987798032

*The Tuscola Years of Joseph Gurney Cannon and his family: With attention given to the contributions of men from Parke County, Indiana, in the establishment and Development of Tuscola and Douglas County, Illinois-OCLC 1005740162

*The Legal Prosecutions Brought by State's Attorney Joseph Gurney Cannon Arising from the August 1863 Copperhead Riot in Danville, Illinois-OCLC 1048010223

*Joseph G. Cannon: State's Attorney, Twenty-Seventh Judicial Circuit, 1861 Through 1868. This is an analysis of Cannon's years as state's attorney in Ford, Champaign, Douglas, Vermilion, Edgar and Coles Counties (to the extent the records of his 2227 indictments survive) from 1861 through 1868, his family's negative experiences with the law prior to 1857, his decision to go to law school, Cannon's course of study at the Law School at Cincinnati as well as his early civil practice in Shelbyville and Tuscola-OCLC 1131863998 (This copy, at the Archives in the Urbana Public Library) is only a partial copy of the entire essay, limited to Parts I, II, and III for Champaign County only, and IV. The complete essay for all counties in the Twenty-seventh Judicial Circuit is available at Springfield and Danville.

*The Private Law Practice of Joseph Gurney Cannon in Douglas County, Illinois: 1858 to 1873-OCLC 1103323499

*A Star in His Course: The First Congressional Campaign of Joseph Gurney Cannon in 1872-OCLC 1120769521

*Joseph G. Cannon's First Term in Congress: 1873 to 1875
OCLC 1143764467

*The Opening of Joseph and William Cannon's Vermilion County Bank, The Contemporaneous Failure of John C. Short's Exchange Bank, and the Consequences of That Failure for the Investors in the Danville Banking and Trust Company (1873-1878)-OCLC 1183468749

*". . . Are You Going To Vote For Pickrell, His Bull, or Me?" The 1874 Congressional Campaign of Joseph Gurney Cannon-OCLC 1183468182

*The 44th Congress and the 1876 Congressional Campaign: "Wheel Horse" Cannon Begins To Show His Stuff-OCLC 1235971161

*J. G. Cannon in the Forty-fifth Congress and His Defeat of Malden Jones and Jesse Harper in 1878 in the Illinois Fourteenth Congressional District-OCLC 1257787479

*The Real Estate Partnership Dealings of William P. Cannon and Joseph G. ("Uncle Joe") Cannon in Vermilion County, Illinois: 1874 to 1902-OCLC 1257785715

*The Forty-Sixth Congress: Cannon Comes of Age-OCLC 1302206724

Fire Bugs in the Danville, Illinois, Fire Department: Three Years of Turmoil and the Trial of the Fireman, June 1879 to April 1882 [Bound essay available at the Danville, Illinois Public Library, Archives Department-OCLC 1302210983]

*The Forty-seventh Congress: Cannon Begins His Congressional Leadership Role As A Member of the Majority On The House Committee on Appropriations-OCLC-1312348204

Some Tips of the Drift of Historical Icebergs in the Doings in Danville, Illinois, During the Cannon Brothers' Initial Years as Residents: 1875, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881 and 1882--- Being Commentaries on Selected Events and Persons in Danville, Illinois, Originally Published in the Essays For the Early Congressional Years of Joseph G. Cannon-OCLC-1313523843

Danville Doings-1883-The Year Infrastructure Arrived

Video Presentation:

Mr. Cannon Goes to Washington, Danville, Illinois, Public Library presentation on March 16, 2021. This video is an overview of Cannon's campaigns for Congress in 1872 (his first of 23 terms) and 1874, and a brief review of what he accomplished in those Congresses.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZLji-n6o4o&t=173s>

Speeches

The Cannons Before They Arrived in Danville-OCLC 100574162

Some Observations On The Early Political Career of Joseph Gurney
("Uncle Joe") Cannon, Congressman From East Central Illinois, 1860 to
1885-Remarks Given By Timothy Ohrea Smith At The University of
Illinois Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on September 22, 2022

