

1833 COUNTY ELECTION: The first election in the new county was held July 5, 1833, to determine county officers. Farnhamsburg and Hampton supported different tickets; each town wanted to be the seat of county government. Col. George Davenport was on the Farnhamsburg ticket and Hampton supporters feared Col. Davenport would bring the Fort Armstrong garrison to the polls to carry the day. When Davenport waived his handkerchief towards Arsenal Island, the Hampton people took that as the signal for more votes. They grabbed the election box and hastily left confident that they had secured the election for their ticket. Election officials were tipped off to Hampton's plan and switched ballot boxes so that the Hampton supporters grabbed a fake ballot box instead. After the Hampton supporters were out of sight, voting continued and Farnhamsburg supporters were elected. A total of 65 votes were cast. Three days later the newly elected commissioners designated the John Barrel House in Farnhamsburg as the site of the first county courthouse.