

[This talk was given at the Col. C. Hist. & Gen. Society's fall dinner on November 9, 2002.](#) Much of the basic content comes from the talk given at the Brass Pelican on April 15, 2002. New material was added to the first part dealing with Danville's role in advocating a new county and some minor revisions in the Brass Pelican talk.

THE REMOVAL ISSUE:

Bloomsburg's Political Struggle to Replace Danville as the County Seat of Columbia County

- I. The Pennsylvania Legislature in 1813 passed a bill, signed into law by the Governor Simon Snyder on March 22, 1813, establishing Columbia County. The area that constituted Columbia County came from Northumberland County and officially came into existence on **September 6, 1813**. Columbia County courts opened on March 7, 1814.
 - A. The establishment of Columbia County was not something that was simply a serendipity event. It was not an unexpected development. It was not like one day a group of legislators decided, lets create a new county on the North Branch of the Susquehanna River.
 1. The inspiration, the drive, or force behind the creation of Columbia County came from **promoters in Danville**. It was the Danvillians who promoted the idea to serve their own particular interests.
 - a. Those who back the proposal were also advocates of a turnpike from Bear Gap to Danville, and which was to end there.
 - b. At the same time these proponents were also engaged in buying land in and about Danville. They saw the opportunity for real estate speculation.

2. It was widely believed that unless the campaigners for the new county had not been confident of having the courthouse in Danville, they would never have petitioned for a new county.
 - a. One source described the backers for a new county as “long headed, quick sighted men, possessing influence, likely to succeed in their plans and never would take so much trouble for nothing.”
 - b. It was also widely believed that citizens living in area along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, in the townships of Turbut and Chillisquaque, would never have supported the idea of having Bloomsburg to be the county seat because it was too far away to travel.
 3. In reviewing their petitions for a new county, they did not stated that the county seat of government should be near the center of the proposed county. Nor did they state that it should be in Danville. Purposely, it was left undecided.
- B. The county’s boundaries in 1813 constituted a much larger county than what exists today. Initially, the county had 810 square miles; today it has only 500 square miles, 38% smaller than in 1813.
1. The county’s western boundary in 1813 extended to the west branch of the Susquehanna River and included the townships of Chillisquaque and Turbot.
 2. This would be an area running along the river a few miles south of Muncy to about five miles north of Northumberland. Included in

this territory are the present day towns of Turbotville, McEwensville, Montandon, Milton, Pottsgrove, and Watsonstown.

3. The distance from Columbia County's eastern boundary, Berwick area, to furthestmost point west would be approximately **34.7 miles as the crow flies**.
 4. The northern boundary was near Elk Grove running east to into what is today Fairmount Township for a distance of about five miles. The northeastern boundary included a part of what is today Fairmount Township in Luzerne County.
 5. Southern boundaries were more similar than dissimilar to the present day boundaries – with one exception. **Southeast corner included the area around Ringtown**.
 6. **The key point to remember about the initial size of Columbia County was that it extended west to West Branch of the Susquehanna River.**
- C. One of the important tasks that had to be done in creating a new county was **to choose the site of the county seat of government**.
1. The act creating the county stipulated that the governor was to appoint three “discreet and disinterested persons, not residents of Northumberland, Union, and Columbia Counties . . . to fix upon **a proper and convenient site** for a courthouse, prison and county offices . . . **as near as the center** [of the county] as the situation thereof will admit.”

2. The County Seat Commission, with only two of the three members participating, **picked Danville to be the county seat.**
3. **The decision was based on the following factors:**
 - a. Danville was the largest town in the county on the north side of the Susquehanna River. It was laid out in 1792.
 - b. Remembering, that Columbia County's western boundary extended to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River - Danville was partially half way between Berwick in the east and area below Montandon in the west.
 - Danville was 21.5 miles west of Berwick, the eastern boundary, and 13.5 miles east of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.
 - Danville was much closer to the population base of the county.
4. The opponents to Danville being the county seat, began **sending petitions** to the legislature as early as 1814 asking for the removal of the county seat from Danville to Bloomsburg. There were nineteen petitions signed by 1,046 citizens "praying for the removal of the seat of justice to Bloomsburg." **They advanced the following points:**
 - a. Danville was not an appropriate location since it was too far to the western edge of the county.

- b. Instead, the county seat should be in Bloomsburg since it was more centrally located in the county.
- c. The petitioners asserted that Bloomsburg in close proximity to the river and situated on Fishing Creek, a pure and navigable stream of water, was a more desirable site.

II. The selection of Danville was controversial.

- A. The people in Bloomsburg and in the eastern townships suspected there was some kind of political deal that gave Danville the county seat.
 - 1. Their suspicions surfaced when it was known that the citizens of Chillisquaque and Turbot Townships were not in favor of being separated from Northumberland County.
 - 2. The legislature in May 1815, passed two bills that reduced the size of Columbia County.
 - a. Fairmount township was transferred to Luzerne County – lost of 30 square miles.
 - b. Most importantly, the townships of Turbot and Chillisquaque on western edge of the county reverted to Northumberland County – a lost of 140 square miles.

- c. This moved the Columbia County's western boundary back from the West Branch of the Susquehanna River around 10 miles to the east.
 - d. These two events reduced the size of Columbia County to 640 square miles from 810 square miles – a reduction of 21%.
3. John G. Freeze, the author of *History of Columbia County Pennsylvania*, “the prompt re-annexation of the two townships of Chillisquaque and Turbut . . . provoked a spirit of indignation and opposition in the upper part of the county.”
 4. Specifically, the return of these two townships led many to believe that Danville secured the country seat by unfair means.
- B. Consequently, there emerge a general feeling of dissatisfaction in the townships east of Danville.
1. John Freeze made the following charge: “There can be no doubt that the townships of Chillisquaque and Turbot were originally incorporated into Columbia County in order to secure the location of the county buildings at Danville.”
 2. Danville was now only 3 miles from the county's western boundary, clearly it was not near center of the county as before.
 3. When the legislature in 1815 moved western boundary eastward, it brought forth twenty more petitions asking the legislature to make Bloomsburg county seat.

- a. Bloomsburg was 16 plus miles from the western boundary and 12 plus miles from the eastern boundary.
- b. Whereas, Danville was 3 plus miles from the western boundary and 21 plus miles from the eastern boundary.
- c. However, the legislature refused to endorse the removal position.
- d. The next year, 1816, the advocates of Bloomsburg were encouraged when a legislative committee recommended that citizens of the county be given an opportunity to vote in a referendum on removing the county seat.
- e. However, it did not materialize since the legislature refused to endorse the proposal.

III. Why did the legislature ignore the petitions calling for the removal of the country seat from Danville to Bloomsburg and the legislative committee's endorsement of referendum on the issue?

- A. The reason was due, in part, from an adjustment of the western boundary of Columbia County in 1816. Parts of Chillisquaque and Turbot townships were detached from Northumberland County and annexed to Columbia County.
 1. This action created the Townships of Limestone and Liberty.

2. By making western boundary 9 miles rather than 3 miles west of Danville. It was an effort to undercut the charge that Danville was not centrally located in the Columbia County.

- B. The citizens of Danville basically hammered home two arguments: they were **larger community** than Bloomsburg, and Danville had been **chosen by the governor's site commission** in 1813.

IV. **The removal issue subsided for a few years until 1821** when it again became a dominant political issue. At this time the legislature received 31 petitions asking for removal of the county seat to Bloomsburg. However, to counter this request, the legislature received 29 remonstrances opposing any removal.

- A. The Danville newspaper, *The Republican Press*, printed a number of letters signed anonymously, Friend, that **identified various issues in the removal debate**.

1. Clearly, Danville did not want to lose the county seat for obvious **economic reasons**. There would be a lost of business activity and the feeling that property values would drop.
2. Again, a major argument for removal centered on the issue of having the **county seat centrally located** in the county, and Bloomsburg met this objective more so than Danville.
3. The distance from the western edge of the county to Bloomsburg was nearly the same distance as the eastern edge to Danville. This was not true.
 - a. Danville was approximately 21 miles from Berwick.

- a. Specifically, it was felt that if the county seat were in Bloomsburg, a turnpike would be established to link the town with to the turnpike between Berwick and Towanda. This development would open up internal communication and trade.
 - b. In addition, why should only the four western townships in the county have all the advantages of markets while the remaining nine townships remain economically deprived.
 - c. Should not the county town seat be to the benefit of the entire county or is it only to benefit the ambitions of few greedy individuals?
 - d. Friend, the letter writer, declared: “It is not the rich speculator, the lawyer, or the public officer, that constitutes the pride and wealth of the county, but the industrious laborers, hard working farmer who make it respectable.”
- C. Despite the concerted efforts and the large number of petitions with around 1,500 signatures for the removal proposition and the various arguments supporting it, the legislature committee that addressed this issue rejected the idea of removing the county seat from Danville on December 7, 1821.
- D. After this defeat of the removal issue, twelve years would lapse before it would come again to the legislature in 1833.

- V. However, the issue was far from being resolved nor did it disappear from county politics.
- A. John Freeze wrote: the removal issue was a “. . . subject of constant anxiety within the county, and has always had a **controlling influence in the election of members of Assembly and county offices.**”
 - B. The grand jury in its report to the court in 1833 noted that the **county records were vulnerable to destruction** due the inadequate conditions in the courthouse. Specifically, there were no fireproof offices and which they recommended should be immediately corrected.
 - C. The grand jury’s recommendation revived the public debate over the remove issue. There existed in the upper portions of the county a strong **feeling against spending any tax funds on what was perceived as an inadequate courthouse.** Instead, **money should be used to build a new courthouse in Bloomsburg.**
 1. Again, removal petitions were widely circulated and Isaac Kline, Columbia County’s representative in the General Assembly, submitted thirty-four petitions in 1833 asking the county seat be removed from Danville to Bloomsburg.
 2. However, there were forty-one remonstrances against the removal.
 3. The revival of the removal question basically reiterated the previous issues raised in the debate.
 4. Bills were introduced in both the house and senate of the state legislature. Only the senate bill came to a vote but it was defeated by 15 to 11.

- D. This practice of submitting petitions and remonstrances to the legislature on the removing issue was again repeated in 1835. As in the past, the General Assembly refused to enact any legislation removing the county seat of government from Danville to Bloomsburg.
- E. However, the issue would not go away. In 1837 three different grand juries addressed the issue that the courthouse lack of fireproof offices to protect country records.
1. The county commissioners were under pressure from the Danville supporters to build a new courthouse. Their refusal to do so, was a disappointment to the Danville people.
 2. If a new courthouse had been built, it would have created a strong argument against removing the courthouse to Bloomsburg after the expenditure county funds.
 3. The *Columbia Democrat*, a Bloomsburg newspaper, rejoiced over the decision not to build a new court-house in Danville complemented the commissioners on their stand.

VI. The next major development in the pro and anti-removal campaign centered on the role of Daniel Snyder of Bloomsburg, Columbia County's representative in the General Assembly.

- A. Snyder came to Bloomsburg in 1810 from Northampton County and soon built a tannery near the intersection of what is today North Street and Lightstreet Road.

1. Later, he opened the Forks Hotel at the base of College Hill. He was one of Bloomsburg's very successful businessmen.
 2. He was Democrat, a pro-removal man, and served four one-year terms in the General Assembly during the years of 1841 to 1844.
- B. In the fall election of 1842 for the General Assembly, Snyder's opponent was Richard Fruit from Madison Township.
1. **The contest was not along party lines.** But instead, the overwhelming issue in the election focused on relocating the county seat of government. The choices were **"pro-removal"** and **"anti-removal."**
 2. Fruit declared he would vote against a removal of the county seat of government from Danville to Bloomsburg, should the issue come before the legislature." Snyder's record was clearly in favor of removal.
 - a. **One could easily describe election as a removal referendum.**
 - b. Throughout the county, public meetings, referred to as "removal meetings," were held in various townships such as Roaring Creek, Bloom, Hemlock, Brier Creek, Madison and Catawissa.
 3. **Snyder easily won a decisive victory over his opponent, Fruit, by capturing 60% of the votes.**
 4. Bloom Township and the 5 northern townships strongly supported Snyder's election:

	Snyder	Fruit
Bloom	370	3
Sugarloaf	180	4
Jackson	52	0
Fishing Creek	143	2
Orange	164	24
Greenwood	218	7
TOTAL	97%→ 1127	40 ←3%

5. As would be expected, 64% of Fruit's votes came from five townships around Danville: Mahoning, Valley, Limestone, Liberty, and Derry. In these same townships, Snyder received only 0.4% of total votes.
- C. In his second term, Snyder received numerous removal petitions signed by 2,786 citizens while the number of signatures attached to the various remonstrances came to 1,500.
 - D. As expected, he introduced a bill in the House in 1843 for removing the county seat from Danville to Bloomsburg. **However, this bill failed to pass.**
 - E. Not to be discouraged, Snyder introduced a **second removal bill in the same session that called for a referendum** by which the people of the county could vote whether or not to remove the county seat to Bloomsburg.
 1. House narrowly passed the bill by a vote of 40 to 37.
 2. However, when the bill went to the Senate it never came up for a vote.

3. Snyder attributed its defeat in the Senate due to the “influence of the Danville interest that was so powerful that our friends in that body deemed it advisable not to proceed to its consideration.”
 4. In addition, state Senator Samuel F. Headley, who was from Berwick, opposed the removal bill, and was seen as doing the bidding for the Danville faction.
- F. Snyder in 1843 reintroduce the removal bill for the third time in the House and it easily passed but only to go down in defeat in the Senate in again.
1. As before, Snyder attributed the bill’s defeat in the Senate to the intense lobbying efforts by the Danville faction.
 2. He later wrote that: “misrepresentations of the grossest character, particularly as to the feeling and wishes of the people of Columbia County were made use of by the opponents of the bill to effect is defeat.”
- G. During this effort to get the removal bill passed, there occurred a very interesting political maneuver by Senator Headley, from Berwick, who was allied to the interests of the Danville.
1. He introduced a bill to create a new county, Madison, erected from parts of Columbia and Luzerne counties. The proposed county of Madison would have included the following areas:
 - a. The townships of Sugarloaf, Fishingcreek, Orange, with half of Briarcreek, two-thirds of Mifflin, and the eastern half of Bloom. This amounted to about one-third of Columbia County’s area.

- b. The other townships would come from the lower end of Luzerne County such as Fairmount, Huntington, Salem, and Nescopeck.
 - c. Berwick was to be the county seat.
 - d. Headley, an attorney, had substantial real estate holdings in Berwick. The 1850 census listed the value at \$46,000.
 - e. Headley stood to make a great deal of money if Berwick became the county seat of proposed Madison County.
 - f. This was an important political maneuver on the part of Danville. If successful, this probably would have ensured Danville's retention of the county seat – since Bloomsburg could not longer claim that it was more centrally located than Danville.
2. None of these townships supported the creation of Madison County. Specifically, the Columbia County people saw it as making the county.
 3. The townships in the Fishing Creek Valley were linked to Bloomsburg – not to Berwick.
 4. The Madison County bill passed the Senate by a narrow vote of fifteen to thirteen.

5. In House, Daniel Snyder and H. B. Wright of Luzerne County lead the fight that decisively defeated it on April 17, 1843, by a vote of 49 to 26.

H. Snyder re-elected to this fourth term in the House, again, re-introduced his “removal bill” – which easily passed by a large margin, 65 to 28 in 1844.

1. However, as in the past, the Senate refused to pass the removal bill.
2. One might think that Snyder would have been discouraged by the failure to get the measure passed in the Senate.
3. He was not! Instead, each time the measure came up it garnered more support. Initially, the bill lost by some twenty votes and on his last effort in 1844 it only failed by four votes.
4. Snyder felt that in the 1845 legislative session the removal bill would surely pass. His optimism was based in part of the fact that eight of the senators who voted against it, their term of office expired at the end of 1844.

VII. The October election in 1844 for the House and Senate was crucial for the removal movement.

- A. Snyder decided not to run again as did Headley.
- B. The removal forces were successful in electing their candidates: Thomas A. Funston, a Democrat and a farmer from the Jerseytown area, to the General Assembly. William S. Ross of Luzerne County won the Senate seat.

- C. Thomas Funston on January 13, 1845, introduced the removal bill into the House and it easily passed on January 30 and was referred to the Senate February 3.
1. As expected, the bill encountered opposition.
 2. The anti-removal faction realizing they could not defeat the bill sought to amend it.
 3. First, since the bill called for a countywide referendum on whether or not to move the county seat to Blooms-burg, oppononets proposed a super majority of 60% for approval. The amendment was voted down.
 4. A second amendment proposed that for the removal to pass it would have to have 500 votes majority; this was also defeated.
 5. By mid-February the bill passed the Senate by a vote of nineteen to thirteen. Governor Francis signed it into law on February 24, 1845.
- D. The *Columbia Democrat*, a Bloomsburg newspaper, commented on the bill passage:
1. “The enemies of the bill fought it with unwearing desperation in all the stages of its passage through both house, but all in vain.”
 2. “This long agitated question is now about to be settled in accordance with justice and the wishes of the people of Columbia County.

- E. As might be expected, the editor of the *Danville Intelligencer*, Valentine Best, was critical of the legislature's decision to authorize a referendum on the removal issue.
1. "The legislature . . . [has] thrown the responsibility of deciding the question upon the people – a bare majority to effect, or prevent a removal.
 2. It is an act that may serve as a precedent for much mischief and unjust legislation of this kind, as there are many counties in the state where a bare majority would authorize a removal. In this county we confidently anticipate that the verdict will be against a removal."

VIII. The following were the key provisions of the removal law:

- A. The referendum shall be held at the time of general elections, October 14, 1845; only a simple majority was necessary to approve the removal of the county seat to Bloomsburg.
- B. For an individual to be eligible to vote the person had to reside in the county for at least six months before the election.
- A. If the voters approve removing the county seat to Bloomsburg, then the citizens of Bloomsburg were responsible for providing the necessary funds for one acre of land and erecting the new county buildings -- courthouse, prison and sheriff house. No cost to the taxpayers!
- B. It shall be lawful to solicit subscriptions from the citizens of Bloomsburg to pay for the costs of the new county buildings.

- C. County buildings are to be constructed either of brick or stone.
- F. The removing the county seat must be completed within three years.
- G. The old county buildings in Danville will become the property of Mahoning Township.

IX. What were the various factors that gave Bloomsburg an advantage in the winning removal referendum vote?

- A. County seat will be located near to the geographic center of the county.
 - 1. The citizens of the eastern and northern townships would save many miles and much traveling time when they had to go to the courthouse.
 - 2. Correct a situation in which it was widely believed that Danville became the county seat by deception and fraud.
- B. Replace old and inadequate courthouse and jail in need of extensive repairs, with new and fire proof buildings at no cost to the taxpayers. The land will also be donated to the county.
- C. The population advantage clearly favored the pro-removal movement. Based on 1840 census information, the five townships near Danville, Mahoning, Valley, Derry, Liberty, and Limestone, had only 28% of the eligible voters in the county.
- D. By having a referendum it gave the citizens the right to decide the issue rather than leaving to the politicians in the legislature.

- E. If Bloomsburg becomes the county seat, the law was very fair and generous in allowing Mahoning Township to regain the original outlay for the county buildings.
- F. Danville supporters were viewed as wanting to dismember the county in order to keep the county seat of government.

X. The removal referendum vote:

- A. The removal faction easily won an overwhelming referendum victory, receiving 65% of the votes.
- B. There were six townships that voted for Danville: Mahoning, Derry, Liberty, Valley, Limestone, and Briarcreek (voted 58% against removal). Briarcreek was closely identified with the division issue.
- C. There was only one other township, Franklin, that had a sizeable anti-removal faction, which cast 40% of the votes against removal.

XI. The immediate task facing now facing Bloomsburg was to raise the necessary money for erecting the courthouse, jail, and the sheriff house.

- A. It was a well established fact that the leadership in Bloomsburg was committed to raising the necessary funds to relocate the county government to Bloomsburg.
- B. A little more than two weeks after the election, a committee of citizens chaired by Dr. John Ramsay met on November 1, 1845, and assumed the

- responsibility of organizing the project and raising the money to build the new country buildings.
- C. One of its first acts was to appoint a committee of five individuals, Jacob Eyer, merchant, Daniel Snyder, former state representative, William McKelvy, businessman, Leonard B. Rupert, former county treasurer, and Dr. John Ramsay, to raise funds for the new country buildings.
- D. Elisha H. Biggs, who ran a hotel across the street from the proposed courthouse and William Robison, had operated a hotel on the northwest corner of Second and Center Streets, provided the lots for the courthouse site, each accepting a token payment of one dollar.
- E. Through the assistance of Rev. David J. Waller, the committee secured the services of Napoleon LeBrun, a Philadelphia architect, to design a brick courthouse in an Ionic style. Specifications for the courthouse were advertised in the local newspapers in February 1846, with March 17 deadline for receiving bids.
1. The **courthouse** was fifty by sixty feet, exclusive of a front portico, supported by six white columns, and with a steeple that rose eighty feet above the ground. The new courthouse was one-third larger than the old one.
 2. A flight of fourteen steps led to a vestibule that opened into a large courtroom that had a balcony. The offices of the county officials were in the building's lower level.
 3. The contract for its construction was awarded to George Mears of Franklin Township in early April.
 4. The cornerstone, laid on August 14, 1846, held a box containing a brief history of the county, transactions related to the removal, list

of financial contributors, list of county officials, and official returns of the removal referendum.

- F. The site for the jail and the sheriff's house was on the southwest corner of First and Center Streets. The construction contract was awarded on October 31, 1846.

XII. There emerged a problem in financing all the costs in relocating the county seat.

Through private subscriptions, \$11,000 had been raised for erecting the buildings; however, this amount was less than what was needed to complete the project.

- A. Not only was this a financial problem, it was also a political problem. The removal law stipulated that the entire expense for erecting the county buildings was to come from private funds, not tax funds.
- B. In addition, the campaign for removing the county seat from Danville to Bloomsburg was sold, in part, on the grounds there would be no cost to the taxpayers.
- C. It was decided that the Bloomsburg building committee, county commissions, and the grand jury would jointly submit a memorial to the legislature asking it to permit the county commissioners to spend up to \$2,500 of tax funds to complete the courthouse.
- D. The justifications for the request were the following:
 - 1. The Removal Law stipulated that the construction of the buildings was to be under the direction of the county commissioners.
 - 2. The county commissioners directed the building committee to include in the courthouse three substantial fire proof vaults.

However, the removal law did not require them to be built by subscriptions.

- a. This addition was essential for protection of county records.
 - b. Furthermore, it would cost far more to install the fire proof vaults at a later time than when the building was under construction.
3. In addition, a portico for the front entrance to the courthouse, supported by six columns, floor and steps of cut stone, was added.
 4. Funds were needed to furnish the courthouse.
 5. It was also noted that the citizens had contributed liberally and that the courthouse was more commodious, substantial and beautiful than the old courthouse at Danville.
 6. There was the argument that if the removal proposal had been defeated, that new county buildings would have been built at Danville to replace the old ones and paid for by tax money.
- E. Not surprising -- the **Danville** people through remonstrances to the legislature and in the columns of the *Danville Intelligencer* **strongly objected to commissioners be allowed to spend tax money to complete the courthouse.**
1. They argued that the Bloomsburg leaders made a pledge to the public in a written and published handbill that county buildings would be erected at Bloomsburg without any expenses to the people of the county.
 2. In addition, they claimed the removal law required the Bloomsburg citizens to build the new county buildings at their own expense.

3. Specifically, the provision in the law that referred “to the safe keeping of the country records” would imply fire proof vaults.
4. Danville contended that if this measure is past, there will be more raids on the county treasury.

F. Despite Danville’s protests the bill easily passed the legislature with the Governor Shunk signing it into law on March 3, 1847.

XIII. Nearly two years and one and half months after the voters approved the removal the county seat of government from Danville to Bloomsburg, the courthouse opened its doors for business on November 30, 1847, and the first court session occurred on January 17, 1848. From the viewpoint of a majority of Columbia County citizens after thirty some years, the injustice of having the county seat in Danville was finally corrected.

XIV. In 1850 Governor Johnson sign legislation that took 22% of Columbia County’s territory to create Montour County.

- A. It included the townships of Franklin, Mahoning, Valley, Liberty, Limestone, Derry, Anthony, and parts of Montour, Hemlock, Roaringcreek, and Madison townships.
- B. Charles R. Buckalew was elected Senator to represent Columbia County and he introduced a bill to repeal the creation of Montour County in 1851. It failed by one one.

- C. However, Buckalew was successful in 1853 to get legislation passed and signed by the Governor Bigler, a Democrat, to returning parts of Roaringcreek, Franklin, Madison and West Hemlock to Columbia.
- D. This left Montour County with only 130 square miles of territory, and smallest size county in the state.
- E. According to the 2000 census Montour is fourth smallest county in population in the state.

4th Montour 18,262

3th Potter 18,080

2nd Sullivan 6,556

1st Forrest 4,946

Columbia County population – 64,151