

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 1, Pages 1 - 30

Kansas Governor John P. St. John (1879-1883) received these letters from persons concerned with the migration of southern blacks to Kansas, commonly known as the Exodus or Exoduster movement. The letters come from blacks considering a move to Kansas, persons assisting with or monitoring the migration, officials of cities along the route, and persons providing for the relief of the migrants upon their arrival. The letters proceed in rough chronological order. Most include remnants of abstracts that were attached to the letter and then partially removed. The top of the abstract includes a reference to the letterpress book and page number of the governor's response. The governors' letterpress books are a separate collection. This collection comprises box 13 folders 13-15 and 20, box 14 folders 1-9, and box 15 folders 1-5 of the John St. John governor's records. The 1879-1880 correspondence was filed under "Immigration, Negro Exodus." The 1881-1882 correspondence was filed under "Freedman's Institute, Relief Association." A link to an inventory of St. John's entire governor's collection is available below. A full transcription is also available under "External Links."

Creator: Kansas. Governor (1879-1883 : St. John)

Date: April 1879 - October 1882

Callnumber: Governor's Office, St. John, Correspondence Received-Subject File, Box 13-15

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Item Identifier: 210296

www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Marwarra P. O. East, Carroll Parish, La.

March 30th 1879.

To his Excellency, the Governor of the State of
Kansas, Dear Sir.

Please inform me, whether your
State has a State board of emigration organized
in it or not. And what inducement does the laws of
your State, provide, for the facilitation of emigration
into your State. [9] Also whether life and property is
secure, the right of franchise respected, public education
facilitated in the interest of all citizens alike. There
is a great number of my race of people in my State,
are deterred to leave it, for the cause of the insecurity
of the above paragraph. They are a poor class of people,
but a hard working class of people, and anything like
a half a shawing they will prosper. Hoping an early
reply. I am your most obedient servant.

Benjamin Fortuin,

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

4/17/79

No. 2947 Book B Page 367
From Cain Sartain
Place Manhattan La.
Date 3. 30. 79
Rec'd _____
Ans'd 4. 4. 79

ABSTRACT.

Asking if there is a
State Board of Emigration
in Kansas and making inquiries
regarding - schools - right of
franchise and whether life
and property is safe.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Wyandotte Kans. April 7th 1879

Gov. St. John }
Topeka Kans. }

Dear Sir;

You have of course heard of the great stream of African immigration from the South, pouring in on us here. Yesterday during that terrific hail storm - though only of a few moments duration, hundreds of poor refugees were without shelter on our levee, except as they helped themselves to lumber in Mr. Walcott's yard.

Some of our Churches are opened, the Freedman's University buildings & grounds at Quindaro are crowded but still they come. We shall certainly be swamped. We are not panic stricken, although the shrill whistle of every boat which comes causes us many anxious thoughts.

You know what Louisiana darkies from the cotton plantations are, and I need not tell you of what they expected to find here. Suffice it to say that most of them are penniless, many are sick, and their dead are scattered along the way. The dead and dying you could see at any time were you here to look about you.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Many of our citizens, white & colored, rich & poor are doing all they can. And it is a very nice question as to how much ought to be done. We of course want them to "move on".

And now comes the point for the Governor and State to consider: If they remain in crowds, in filthy poverty, in actual want, in a very short time malignant and contagious diseases must and will break out. Shall we wait for that calamity which is certain to come unless they scatter? If disease comes it will spread to Kansas City, Lawrence, Topeka, Lawrenceville, Olathe &c.

Our City Wyandotte is already crowded, we are not wealthy, we cannot establish quarantine regulations. We believe as a "war measure", as a public necessity, the State should aid in solving this problem.

Very Respectfully Yours

A. N. Meyer

~~Endorsement by~~

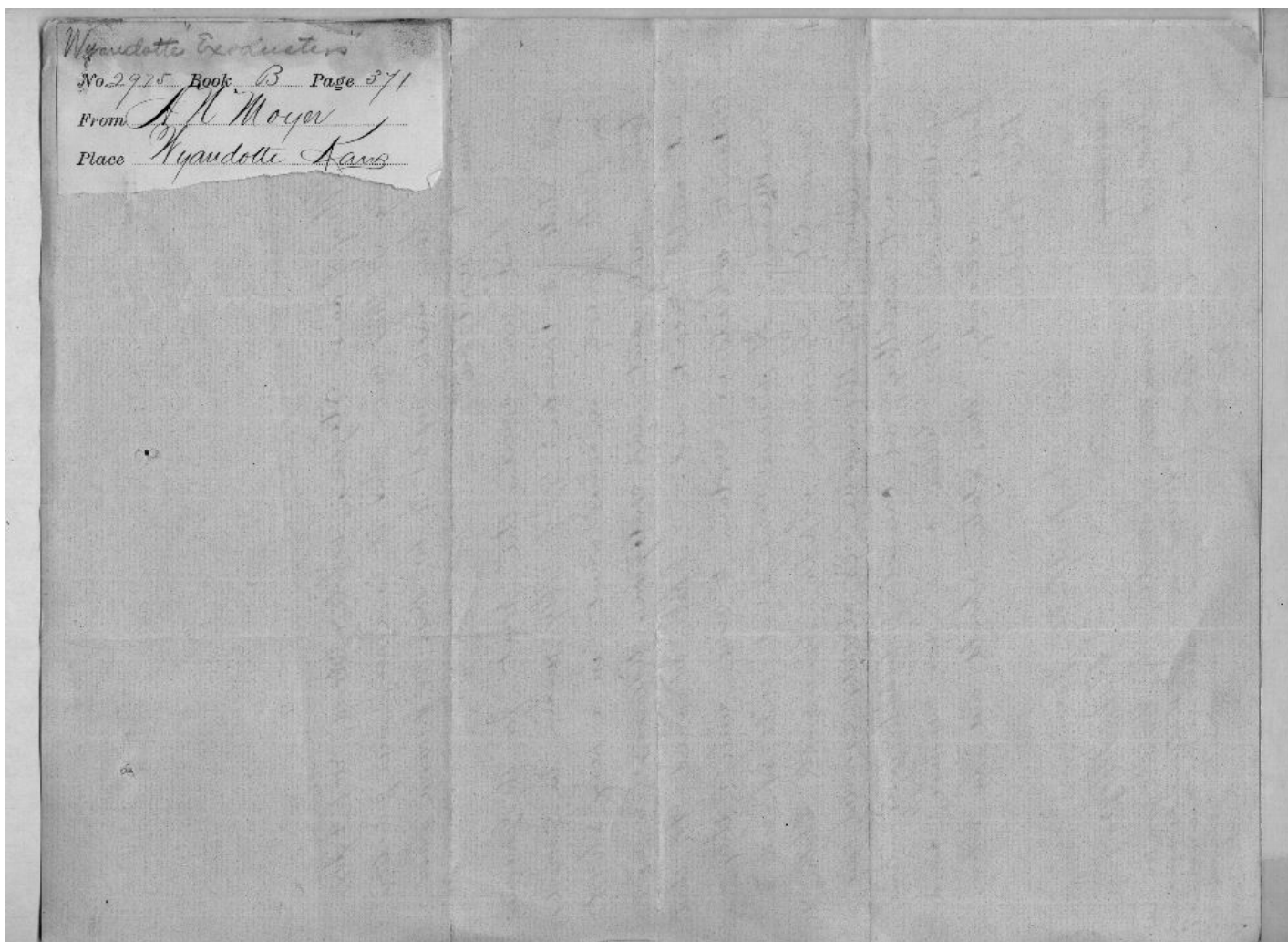
P.S. I shall ask no one to endorse this

shall send it on my own hook

A. N. Meyer

I unite with Mr Meyer in the foregoing. His statements are entirely reliable. The case requires immediate action.
R. M. Russell

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence


Saint Louis
Kansas City and Northern Railway
General Passenger & Ticket Department.
Office, Corner Third & Chestnut Streets.
C. K. Lord
GENERAL PASSENGER & TICKET AGENT.

St. Louis, April 10 1879

Your Excellency
Executive mansion
Topeka Kan

Sir I learn that there is a large crowd of colored people coming in to the city of Topeka with a view of securing homes in western Kansas and that they want assistance in getting on their hands if the people of Topeka or State authorities will assist me in the undertaking I will select a good County western Kansas and get them a Low Rate of Transportation

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence


 Saint Louis
 Kansas City and Northern Railway
 General Passenger & Ticket Department
 Office, Corner Third & Chestnut Streets.
 C. E. Lord
GENERAL PASSENGER & TICKET AGENT.
 St. Louis, 1877

over the Kansas Pacific
 to the place we locate them
 I have the Honor of Locating
 the Freedmen Colony
 of Graham Co and this
 Colony is Prosperous
 they were poor and had nothing
 in the start while at this writing
 they are in far Circumstances
 I am willing to give my
 assistance in Locating them
 if I can have my Expenses
 Paid. in Locating the Freedmen
 Colony I Received \$5.00 for Locating
 Each one, paying \$2.00 to the Gov
 for filing this will not

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

meet my expenses but if the
 citizens of Topeka or
 state authorities will take
 hold of this matter I
 will go to work in earnest
 for all those poor down trodden
 people want is a start
 I can give the Best of
 References from both
 colored and white
 please let me hear from
 you
 address
 W. R. Hill
 Hill City Graham
 Co
 Kansas



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Blank No. 1. 23 Apr. 21, 1879

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

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This message is an **UNREPEATED MESSAGE** and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

A. R. BREWER, Sec'y. 45 NORVIN GREEN, President.

Dated Kansas City Mo 1879

Received at TOPEKA, KANSAS. 1879

To Gov. J. St. John.

What action was taken at meeting last night to provide for colored laborers & hope measures were adopted to dislodge them through the agricultural districts & keep during approaching harvest of an attempt not to be made to stop the Exodus measures should be employed to discourage it at the South before they start but in the meantime take care of those that arrive until settled somewhere I trust the people at large will sustain in you in any appropriate official action

READ THE NOTICE AT THE TOP.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

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WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

Company TRANSMITS and DELIVERS messages only on conditions, limiting its liability, which have
to be sent to by the sender of the following message.
Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Com-
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named above.

A. R. BREWER, Sec'y. NORVIN GREEN, President.

Dated _____ 187

TOPEKA, KANSAS.

Received at _____

To _____

*Grant the embarrassing
question answer to O
Can be informed*

P B Graax

grd H

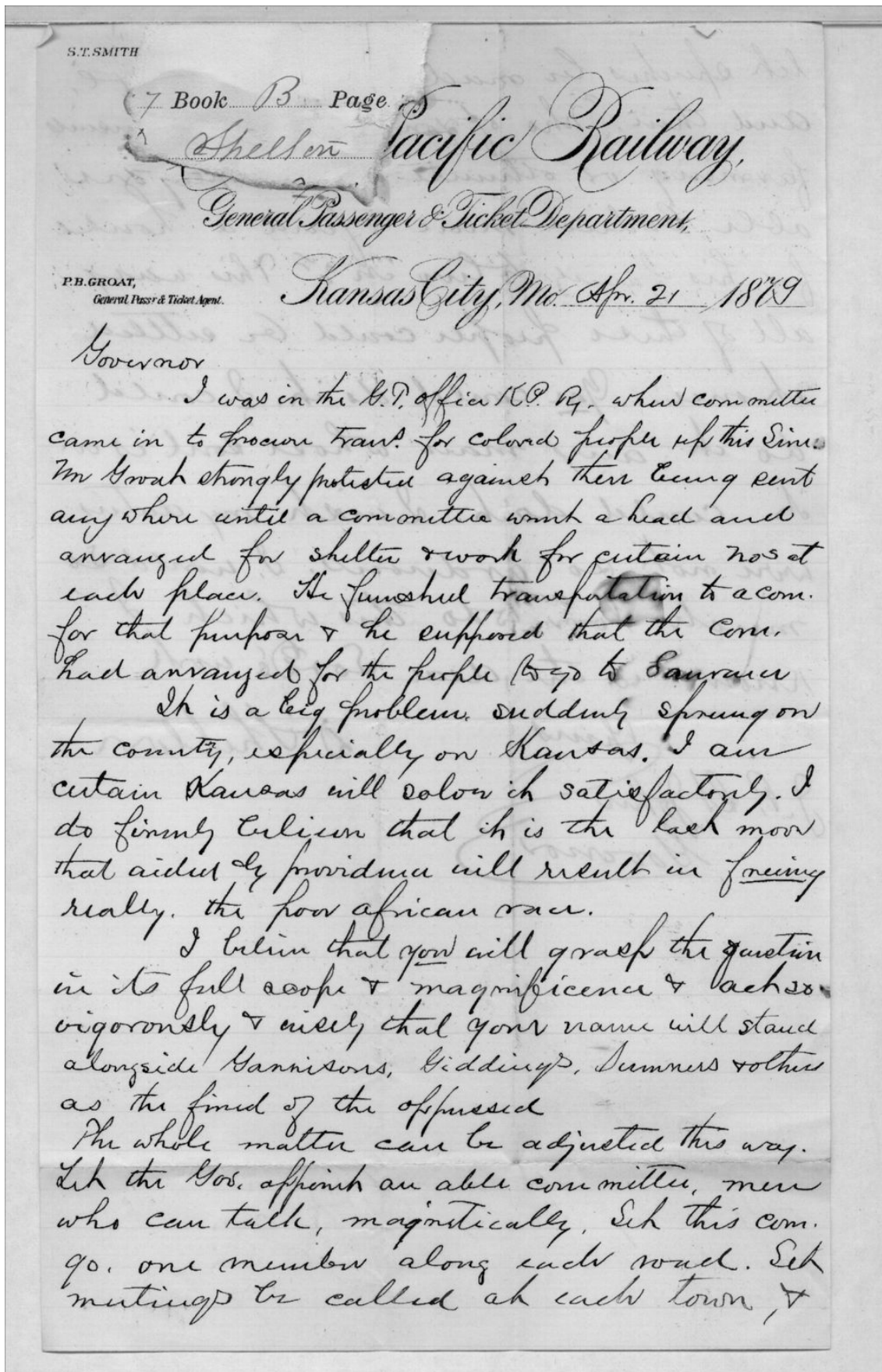
READ THE NOTICE AT THE TOP.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3079 Book B Page 384
From P. B. Goat
Place Kansas City, Mo
Date 4 21 79
Rec'd

[Faint, illegible handwritten text follows]

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

let speeches be made, songs sung, &c,
and then, "Who of you who are in business
farming or otherwise will employ one
able bodied man & find a house
for his family to live in?" This way
all of these people could be settled
abroad. You could do it. I could
do it any man whose soul is in
it could do it. I wish my duties
were not so arduous. I would so
much love to do this which I
know is the dear Lord's work

Yours
J. P. St. John
Governor

D. Shelton



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Blank No. 1. 25 Apr. 21, 1879

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

This Company TRANSMITS and DELIVERS messages only on conditions, limiting its liability, which have been assented to by the sender of the following message.
Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not hold itself liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of Unrepeated Messages.
This message is an UNREPEATED MESSAGE and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

A. R. BREWER, Sec'y. NORVIN GREEN, President.

Dated Washington DC 21 187 9

Received at TOPEKA, KANSAS. 1:35 p

To for St John.

*Message read memorialize
Congress for relief of colored
immigrants gaining numbers
condition arises & probable
results expected arrival
what has been done by our
people thus far and what
assistance is necessary*

*W H Haskell
Geo J Ingalls
H C Collett
H H Mads*

READ THE NOTICE AT THE TOP.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Ingallo, Sen. 1873-1891

No. *3081* Book *B* Page *384*

From *J. J. Ingallo - D. Alaska*

Place *Washington D.C.*

Date *4. 21. 79*

Rec'd

Ans'd *4. 21. 79*

ABSTRACT.

*Telegram received memorial-
izing Congress for relief
of colored citizens -
What has been done by
our people thus far and
what assistance is
necessary.*

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Apr. 20, 1879.

Kansas City Mo

Gov J St John

Ma -

The Citizens of Wyandotte
furnished Transportation
for the colored people
to Lawrence and we as
common carriers forwarded
them. The Citizens of Lawrence
are exercised as to what
can be done with them in
my opinion if some practicable
plan can be devised to
distribute these people they
can be absorbed by communities.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

in Kansas & I have stated to
Citizens of Lawrence that this
question of public interest
should be met in a calm,
deliberate manner & that the
great north & east would
not feel satisfied if Kansas
with its plenty now failed
to provide for a few poor
colored people fleeing from
real or fancied wrongs: instead
of sending them from pellor^{instead}
to port without any definite
destination it would be better
to devise some method of
distribution that would result

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

in their future welfare, in any
event I don't think they ought
to be allowed to suffer for
if they do it will operate to
the disadvantage of the State
in the future

R B Groat



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3093 Book B Page 386

From P. B. Great

Place Kansas City Mo

Date Apr. 20. 79

Rec'd

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Topeka Kan - April 21. 1879

Hon. J. St. John

Dear Sir

Enclosed is the \$10.
I subscribed to the Freedmen's
Fund last evening -

I hoped to see
you this morning - to talk
of Kansas and United States
Citizenship. And the speediest
method to make each and
both the guarantee of equality
of rights to women -

Respectfully yours
Susan B. Anthony



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

P. S. Please acknowledge
receipt at Leavenworth Kan.
on oblige - S. D. J.
Lonsville done 22/79

No. 3094 Book B Page 386
From Susan B. Anthony
Place Topeka Kans
Date Apr 21 - 1879
Rec'd
Ans'd Apr 24, 1879



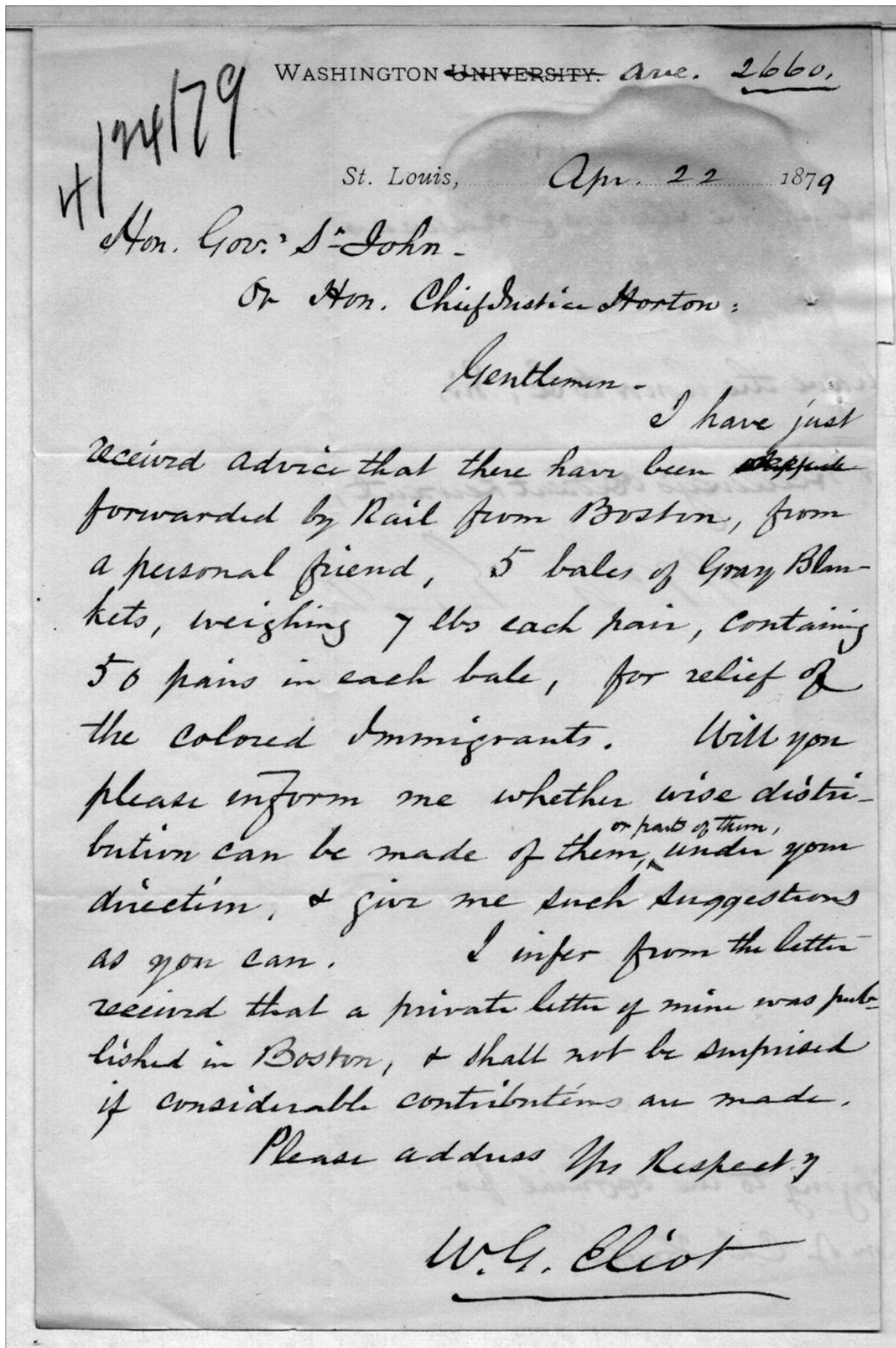
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3094 Book B Page 386
From Susan B. Anthony
Place Topeka Kans
Date Apr 21. 1879
Rec'd
Ans'd Apr 24. 1879

P.S. Please acknowledge
receipt of document from
D.D. St
document done 22/79



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3102 Book B Page 387
From Wm G. Elliott
Place St Louis Mo
Date 4. 22. 79
Rec'd

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Wandotte Kansas
April 22, 1879
Hon J. P. St. John
Dear Sir:

I came here today to look up the negro and migration. The movement is evident wide spread and is likely to be long continued. This local committee cannot take care of it. They are likely to be wiped out by the violence of public antipathy in Wandotte. Something needs to be done at once. A Boat Load of 240 was refused a landing at Wandotte yesterday. Long threats are often made even by the police judge

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

to prevent the violence
of my more emigrants,
the boat was dropped
down and passengers
landed across the river.
The remained until 3 P.M.,
from 6 A.M. without food,
although the mayor
knew at 7 A.M. - for I
told him explicit that
they had not had food
for three days. I found
six sick in a small build-
ing and one corpse. There
had been no physician
with them since Friday
last. It seems to me the
neglect of these people
is in deference to a
contemptible public
sentiment which says

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

That the emigration
 cannot be discouraged.
 I trust for the honor
 of our State that these
 things will not be pub-
 lished abroad. This negli-
 gence and inhumanity can
 only be prevented by the
 organization of a State
 Committee to take charge
 of the work. The importance
 and the extent of the
 work ought to engage
 the serious consideration
 of all good citizens.
 Can you not invite
 twelve or fifteen leading
 citizens of the State to
 meet you in Topeka
 as early as Friday there
 to consider the situ-
 ation and make

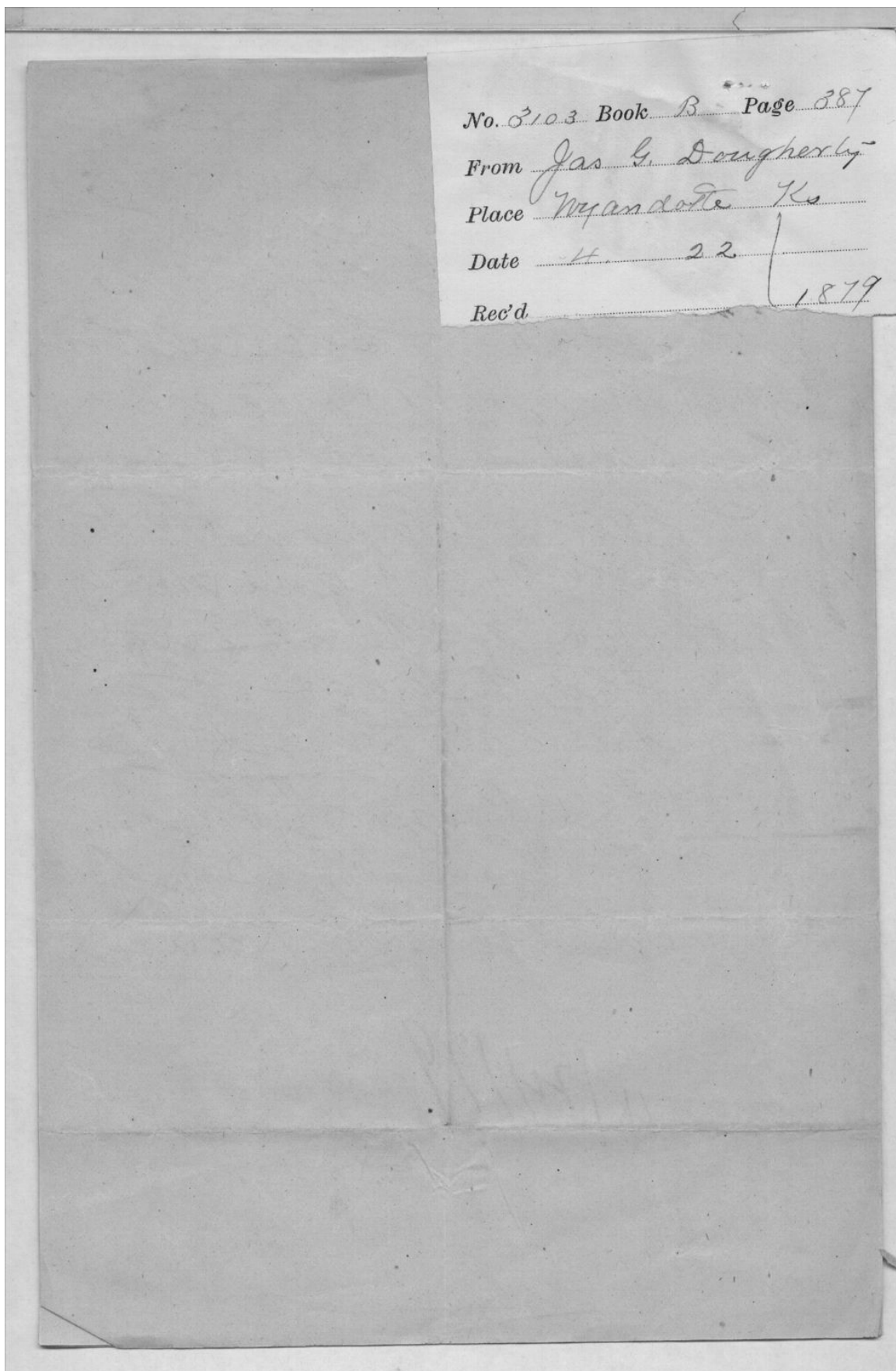
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

I trust it seems to you
 that the good name of
 our State as well as the
 welfare of the Negro is
 at stake. Excuse this
 penning. I write in
 the train, and have
 not been asleep in thirty-
 six hours. I am sure
 that you will at once
 give this subject the
 consideration it de-
 serves. Best Yours,
 James S. Doudley
 of Chama Kansas

4/24/79



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



No. 3103 Book B Page 387
From Jas G. Dougherty
Place Wyandotte Ks
Date 4 22 1879
Rec'd

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

STATE OF KANSAS.

House of Representatives.

Sidney Clarke, Speaker
Wirt W. Walton, Chief Clerk.

Lawrence, April 22. 1879.

My dear Sir:

About 250 colored people from
the North are at Lawrence, and
more are coming. They need help.
Have them all stay and work very
to get on the land and cultivate it.
We have a State Convention
and make a State organization at
once Kansas is in danger of being
placed in a false position before the
country. Even the City Council of
Lawrence passed a resolution last
night requesting the authorities at
Wynandott not to send any more
of their people here, and requesting
the Railroad not to transport them,
thus dishonoring the history of