

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

### Section 11, Pages 301 - 330

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

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 210296

Item Identifier: 210296

[www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296](http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296)

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

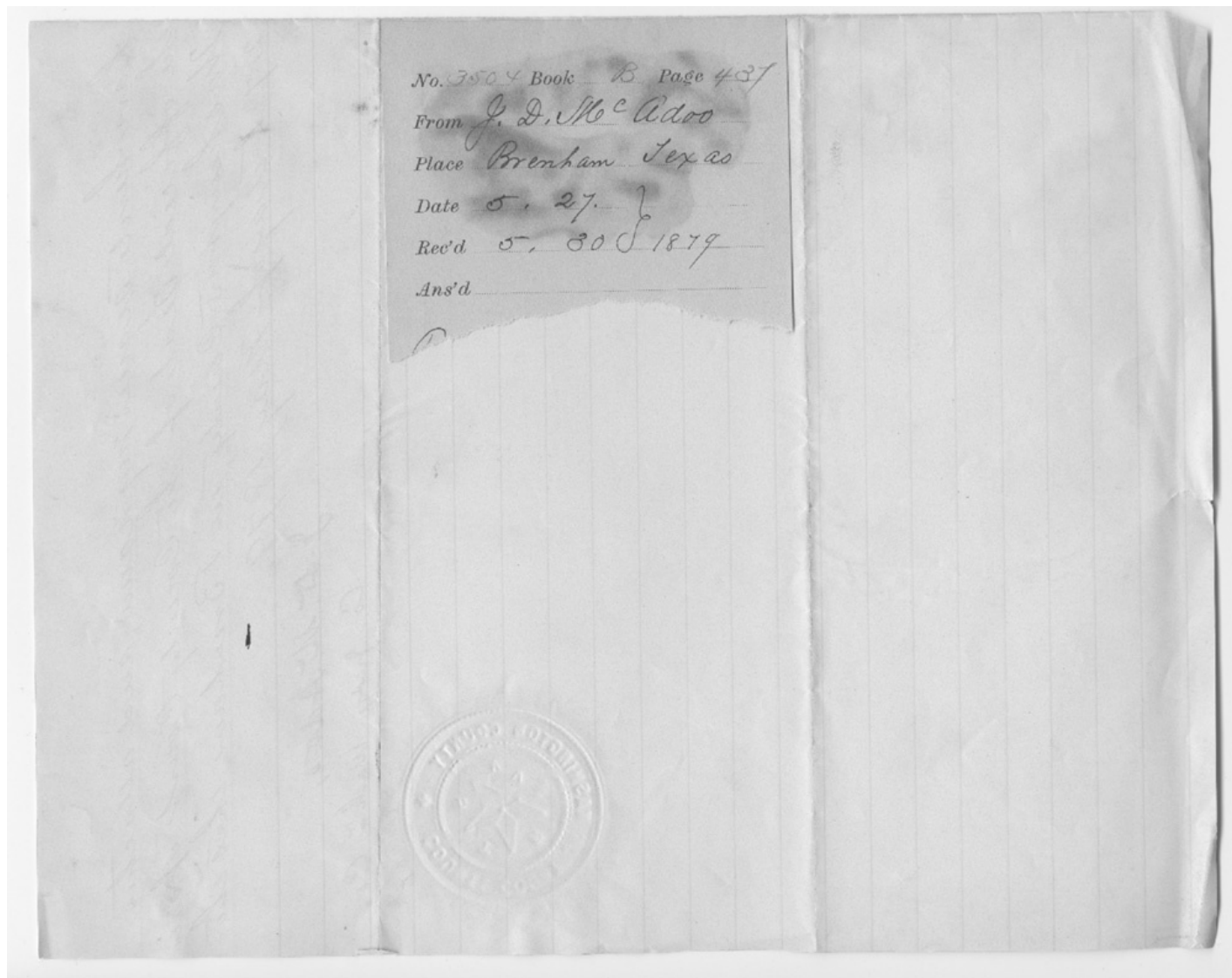
Have hereto signed my name, and attached  
the official seal of the County Court of said  
Washington County, in Arkansas, this the  
27th day of May, 1879.

J. D. McAdoo,

Co. Judge, Wash<sup>n</sup> Co.



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## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Brenham, Washington Co. Texas.

May 31<sup>st</sup> 1879.

Gov John P St John.

Topeka. Kansas.

Dear Sir. In answer to your complimentary letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> inst. recd on yesterday. I have this to say.

1<sup>st</sup> That there exists an absolute necessity to colonize the colored people of the South, because their welfare and future prosperity as a people depends upon their becoming the owners of the lands they cultivate; and that unless the wealthy Republicans of the North, speedily unite in a well organized movement to effect this purpose. the great misery of the colored people will be gradually reduced to a system of slavery or peonage, and the National government will pass into the hands of the Bourbon Democracy.

2<sup>nd</sup> That by colonizing the colored people of the South, the power of the Secession leaders will be forever broken, and that the welfare and best interests of the country depends upon this being done, and unless it is done. the loyal people will learn in a few years that the war for



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the Union was fought in vain and the emancipation of Southern Slaves has virtually proved a force.

Assuming that the history of the past eight years of Southern outrages, together with their forcible seizure of Southern Republican State governments by the old Confederate leaders, and the undeniable facts presented to you in my last letter concerning Boston legislation and their acts: establishes the soundness and justice of my position. I shall now proceed to show how the above and foregoing objects may be successfully accomplished. viz.

1<sup>st</sup>. Select both Kansas and Texas as the two states in which to colonize all of the first and second classes of the colored people of the South.

2<sup>nd</sup>. Buy up the large bodies of alluvial lands of Texas, and the best lands of Kansas, fence in from 1000 to 5000 acres in one body, divide them into 50 acre tracts upon <sup>each of</sup> which build a cheap comfortable house, and sell these tracts at a reasonable profit to colonists, giving them ten years to pay for the same.

In this State millions of acres of our best cotton <sup>and</sup> sugar cane lands could be bought and improved



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at an average price of two dollars and fifty cents per acre. but I apprehend in your State this cannot be done for less than four dollars per acre. for your lands are higher, and it would require better houses etc., than is required in our warm climate. In 1873, when registration of voters was required, <sup>it was shown that</sup> Gov E. Davis. received 40,000 colored votes and about the same number of white votes, and today I believe <sup>if</sup> the Republican Party was properly organized and a vigorous canvass made that the result would show that there are 60,000 white Republican voters in this State. We have about 15,000 German voters, and we have about <sup>a large</sup> ~~the same~~ number of other foreigners who are Republican in sentiment, and I am convinced that we have more white Republicans in Texas, than the other combined Southern <sup>States</sup> have. Mr. Garfield, M. C. from Ohio, in a well written and able article, contained in the March number of the "American Review", declares there is a more liberal sentiment and a far greater spirit of progress in Texas, than exists elsewhere in the South. Texas, like Kan-



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As, is comparatively speaking, a new Country and not more than one fifth of her territory has yet been settled, and the tide of emmigration since the Rebellion has gradually caused a change in the political sentiment of the white population. Now in other Southern States where there has been but little emmigration, and the majority of the white people are exslave owners, and now own the great proportion of the most valuable lands, there has been no change in political sentiment with that class, nor will there be any so long as they have freed labor to support them, and to cultivate their lands. The freedmen owning no lands, they <sup>themselves</sup> are wholly dependent upon those who do own the lands, and so long as persecution, starvation and the bullet confronts them, they are <sup>not likely to have</sup> any political independence nor to show any marked degree of progress etc: but their large voting population whether it is cast at elections for the Democracy or not voted at all, gives that Party a large vote, both in congress and in the electoral college which they would not otherwise have. Thus the freedmen are made an unwilling but a helpless in-



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strument in the hands of the Rebel Democracy whereby that Party will regain all they lost by rebellion, and instead of ruling over a small confederacy of States alone, they may, unless the tide of events is arrested, become the absolute masters of the North. For these and many other sound reasons, I maintain that if it should take several millions of dollars to bring about a final and a complete Exodus of the colored population of the South, the loyal and liberty loving people of the North, should not hesitate to furnish the required amount of capital to accomplish this grand result, and thus secure a lasting victory over the Southern conspirators. Without a well devised system of such emigration, sustained by necessary capital, it will be impossible to accomplish a general exodus of the colored people from the South. Simply to furnish capital to enable the colored people to leave the South, and to enable them to concentrate in large numbers in Northern States and Territories, and then to leave them in a helpless condition, would be a great barbarity and an inexcusable crime.

The colored people are ripe for a general <sup>and</sup> spontaneous movement of this kind, and even here in Texas, where their rights are more respected, and where they have not undergone one tenth of the persecutions and retail and wholesale murders perpetrated upon their

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brethren in other Southern States, yet they too have the Kansas fever, and if the necessary encouragement and aid was given them, they would leave Texas en masse. Of course if the colored people here understood that a large per cent of their race from other Southern States would emigrate to Texas, and that substantial aid would be furnished them all to obtain homes here, the Kansas fever would soon be cured. To return to my argument in favor of colored emigration to Texas, I will submit the following Summary of facts for your consideration. to wit. 1<sup>st</sup> That Texas is a vast empire of itself, embracing 268,684 square miles of territory, with ~~only~~ 190,299 miles of which is only sparsely settled and organized, while there yet remains 72,385 square miles of unsettled and unorganized territory. 2<sup>nd</sup> That Texas embraces the largest area of fertile lands, adapted to every variety of agricultural productions, with the mildest and healthiest climate of any State of the Union. 3<sup>rd</sup> That the ex-slaveowners compose only about one fifth of the white population of the State, and that there are at <sup>least</sup> 50,000 white Republicans here who



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own more real estate and other property than the exslave owners of the State possess.

4<sup>th</sup> That several millions of acres of our most valuable lands belong to the several counties for public and free educational purposes, and our State Constitution further provides for a permanent Free School System by donating and setting aside a part of the State revenue, not to exceed one fourth of the revenue, together with all poll taxes, to <sup>be</sup> distributed annually and equally <sup>to</sup> among the several counties, ~~not~~ according to their scholastic population, without regard to race, color etc. The public school fund appropriated since 1876, amounts to about four dollars per scholar, and our free schools are maintained generally throughout the State, about three months of each year, but by sale of our school lands it is certain that a permanent fund can be secured which will enable our free schools to be taught six or more months per year. Each incorporated city or town, is empowered by the vote of two thirds of the taxpayers, to levy a special school tax to aid with State school appropriations, to es-



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establish and maintain free schools throughout the year. Under this act, this city has maintained since 1876, a thorough system of graded free schools, ten months per each scholastic year, where 480 <sup>colored</sup> and 500 white children have been given equal opportunities, except being taught in separate schools. The recent veto of the appropriation for free schools, by Gov Roberts, has developed the fact, that a large majority of the white people of Texas, favor the free school system, and that its perpetuity is certain beyond all question.

5<sup>th</sup>. That we have a colored population of at least 200,000, about 20,000 of whom own good homes of their own, and that to colonize these people in some other state or Territory, would require a large outlay of capital which can be <sup>saved and</sup> better appropriated by siding the colored people of other Southern States to colonize in Texas.

6<sup>th</sup>. That the climate of Texas, and the varied productions of our fertile lands, are by far better adapted to colored labor, and colonization than any <sup>other</sup> portion of the Union, and that they can be colonized here with only one half of the capital that



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it would require to colonize them in Northern latitudes. 7<sup>th</sup> That by colonizing a large portion of the colored population of other Southern States, in Texas, four Republican States can be gained when a division of the State is made, thereby securing eight (8) Republican Senators and twelve or more congressmen, thus increasing Republican, and decreasing Democratic representation, more largely and surely than can be accomplished by colonizing the Blacks elsewhere.

8<sup>th</sup> That the colonization of the Blacks, in Northern latitudes, will be a doubtful experiment, requiring a large outlay of capital, while on the other hand such colonization in Texas will be no doubtful experiment, because the climate and productions of the soil is adapted to their labor.

9<sup>th</sup> The colonization of the Blacks, upon uplands, and in an exclusively grain growing country, would take their labor into to them a new field of agriculture, where the greater part of labor is done by machinery, and where their labor will come into constant competition and conflict with white labor, just as Chinese

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labor had to do in California: but on the other hand, by colonizing the Blacks upon the alluvial lands of Texas, where cotton and sugar cane are the chief productions, they are placed in a boundless field of agriculture in which they have always been accustomed, and where long experience has proved that there is no other labor that can successfully compete with them. Again such colonization would place them in a position where they would never come into conflict or competition with white labor, because white labor cannot withstand the miasmatic influences of low alluvial lands, consequently such labor naturally seek higher latitudes and a grain growing country.

I have now in a brief and a matter of fact way presented the question of colored colonization in Texas, and all that I ask, is that the reasons and facts presented, may be fairly considered by the real friends of this second - and in fact, real emancipation of the colored people of the South. After this has been done, if it should



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be decided that Texas is not considered a safe  
asylum and home for the oppressed Blacks. I  
shall not oppose any practicable plan for coloniz-  
ing them elsewhere. but will gladly devote my  
time in aiding to secure this desirable result.

Whatever is done to attain this purpose should  
be done by June 1880. so that the freedmen may  
be speedily and effectually relieved from the  
unfortunate conditions and circumstances now  
surrounding them. Besides attaining this land-  
able and desirable result. it will beyond all  
question defeat all chances of Democratic triumph  
in 1880. and for all future time. for the "Solid  
South" would be effectually broken. because the  
labor upon which the Bourbon leaders and their  
supporters live and fatten. would be irrevocably  
lost to them, and the time now spent by them.  
in <sup>politics and</sup> devising means and ways by which to degrade  
cheat and "Bulldoze" the helpless freedmen.  
would have to be taken up in supplying  
the pressing wants and demands of their bel-  
lies by honest labor performed by themselves.

I see that President Hayes. and many others



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are inclined to the opinion that it would be better to distribute the Blacks over the Western States, instead of massing them into one or two States; but they forget that if this was done the freedmen would be deprived of all opportunities to become landowners and to educate their children; for if they <sup>were</sup> scattered here and there among white people, only ten per cent of them would ever buy homes, and the remainder would be tenants and floating labor. The President and others fall into <sup>this</sup> error, by assuming that in La. Miss. and S. C. where the Blacks largely outnumber the whites they have undergone greater persecutions and privations, than in other States where they are in the minority, but these gentlemen forget that freedmen properly colonized would be placed in quite different circumstances to the position they now occupy as a class of impoverished tenants. Therefore I am clearly of the opinion that it would be a great wrong to distribute the Blacks among the white population of the Western States. Colonize + Colonize + the oppressed freedmen + should be the Key note and Watchword untill this grand movement is accomplished. Whatever is done to attain this great result must be done by Northern Republicans, for the white Republicans of the South, as a general rule,



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oppose colored emigration from the South. There will be a convention of representative colored men of this State, held at Houston, Texas, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July next, for the purpose of considering among other things, the necessity and practicability of colored emigration etc, and as I am in correspondence with many leading colored men who will likely attend this convention, I would rejoice to hear of some practicable plan of action being decided upon by you and other friends of colored colonization, by the time this convention meets. I have now submitted to your Excellency, in my communications, a brief account of the general condition etc, of the colored people of the South, and the urgent reasons why they should be speedily colonized, and presented my own reasons as to how and where such colonization can be best accomplished.

In conclusion I respectfully and earnestly urge your Excellency to use your best influences, in promoting and bringing about a thorough organization of Northern capitalists to give the necessary aid in accomplishing this great purpose. Every dollar invested in a well devised plan of such colonization will be



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well secured. for when the freedmen are placed in a condition where they can reap the full fruits of their own labor. I see no reason to prevent them from gradually paying back every cent used to colonize them. I feel so certain and sanguine that they would and could pay back all capital so used to aid them to colonize, that I would not hesitate to invest several millions of dollars ~~in~~ if I had it - in a well devised plan of such colonization. In proof of this assertion I have in the face of all opposition been engaged for several years past in a small enterprise of the kind, in which I have devoted the most of my time and invested all of my limited means and capital. and if the Exodus of colored people is to include Texas, with other Southern States I will lose all that I have so invested. This communication is confidential and not intended for general publicity. for if the suggestions herein contained are to be considered and acted upon, it would be both unwise and unsafe for any one outside of the real friends of this movement to know the plans and purposes to be accomplished.

Sincerely hoping that my communications and humble efforts made in behalf of the colored people



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may lead to some practicable and general plan of  
their colonization. I remain,

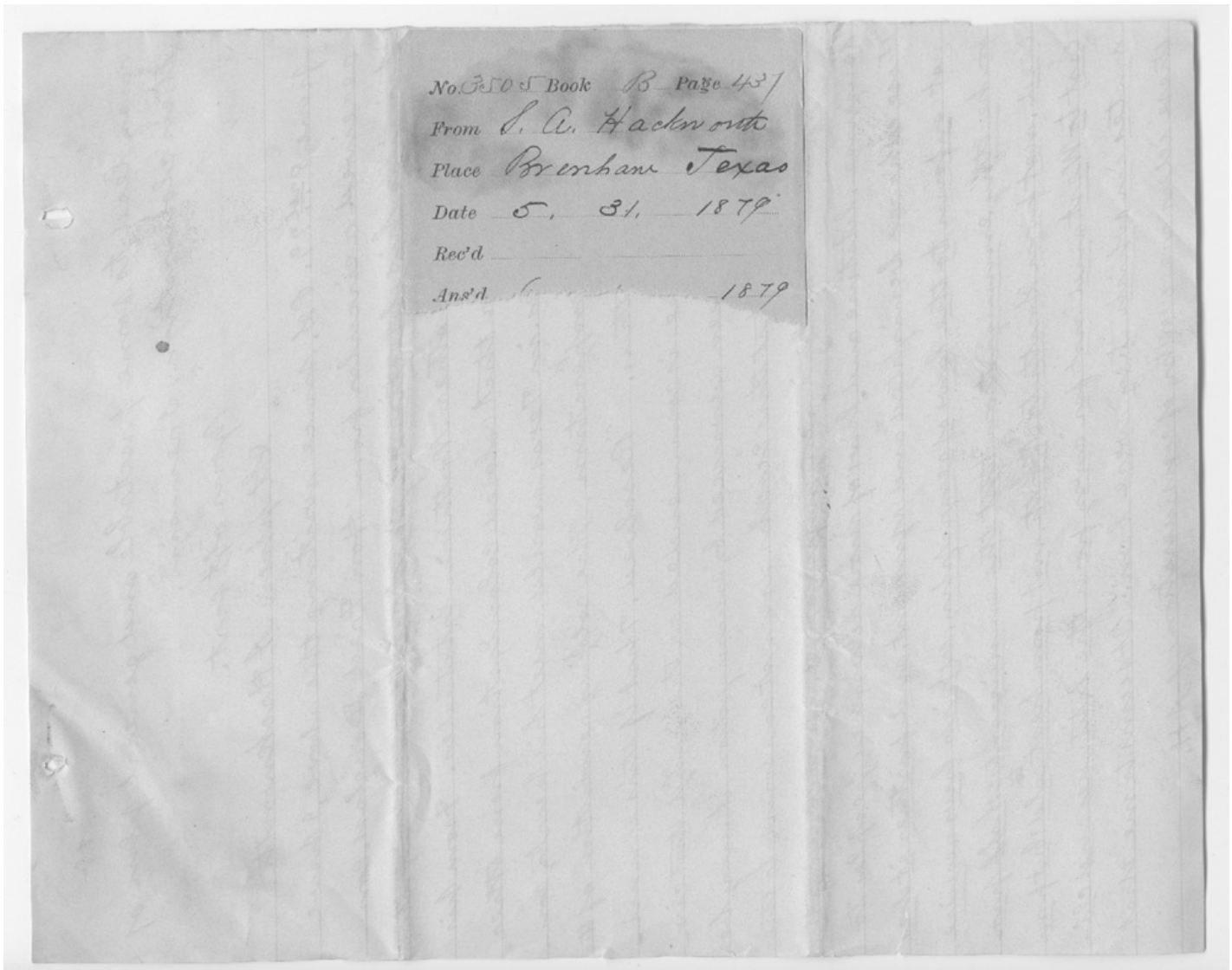
Your obt. servt.

Stephen A. Hockworth.


June 8<sup>th</sup> 79. P.S. Since writing the above, I have  
received a circular from Hon. Fred Douglass, con-  
taining his objections against colored emmigration  
to Kansas, and other Northern latitudes. From his  
circular I infer that colored colonization from other  
Southern States, in Texas, would meet his hearty con-  
currence, and cooperation. The closing resolution of the  
circular reads, thus. "Resolved, That if this emmi-  
gration Scheme is commenced on the ground that civ-  
ilization has been advanced by emmigration, it may be  
safely asserted that this Exodust. does not conform to the  
laws of such civilizing emmigration. Such as carrying the  
language, literature and laws of more advanced peoples to  
those who are benighted and ignorant, and further it does  
not conform to the laws of geography, which laws require  
for healthy emmigration that the emigrants shall pro-  
ceed, not from South to North, not from heat<sup>to</sup> cold; but from  
East to West, and not far away from the latitudes and cli-  
mates in which they were born." It seems to me that  
these ideas are worthy of consideration. S. A. H.



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 To the Hon John P. John Gov  
 Wm Williams Esq.  
 June 20/1879  
 at a meeting held of the united names  
 and authorities was agreed to go West  
 and seek after a locality to  
 assemble our people and build  
 a committee shall have full power  
 to act at other associations in the  
 West and with agents done and looked  
 to select a place for a paper named  
 and shall come and said committee  
 shall hold meetings in Topeka Kansas  
 or other places and then to do it and  
 correspond the same back to their  
 organization open  
 W. H. Harrison Pres  
 of A. E. S. N. C.  
 M. H. Hunter  
 Secy



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No. 3606	Book B	Page 450
From	W. H. Harrison	
Place	Chen Plains La	
Date	6.	2
Rec'd	6.	

Committee  
W. H. Harrison  
James Louis  
Peter Young

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Austin Tex  
June 2<sup>d</sup> 1879

Dear Sir,

I duly rec<sup>d</sup> yours of 29<sup>th</sup> May. I have but lately returned from a trip occupying near two months on the Rio Grande, at Corpus Christi &c., and found quite an accumulation of business and letters to attend to.

I had noticed accounts of the Exodus you refer to, but hoped the fever would not reach Texas.

I don't - See how our colored friends can hope to improve their condition by leaving Texas for any other State. Here they are used to the climate, soil and productions, and their treatment by the whites is at least not unendurable. They are in a minority in politics, but so are many of us whites, and I think they had better stay, and work with us for a change in that respect.

In Mississippi and Louisiana and probably other States they have no doubt been treated so unfairly that life is made a burden to them, but even those can do better by coming to Texas than by going to Kansas. There is need of, and place for them here.

Judge S. A. Hackworth } Very truly yours  
Branham Texas }

Edw. J. Davis



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No. 3506 Book B Page 437  
From Stephen A. Hackworth  
Place Brenham Texas  
Date 6. 4. }  
Rec'd } 1879  
Ans'd 6. 11 }  
ABSTRACT.  
Transmitted 2. 18.  
Gr.

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Westpoint Clay Co. Mo June 18<sup>th</sup> 1899

EXECUTIVE DEPT.  
RECEIVED  
JUN 24 1899  
TOPEKA, KANSAS

To Governor John P. St. John Topeka Kansas

Respected sir

I write a few lines to you for information <sup>about</sup> our emigrating ~~to~~ to your state next fall. We are hard working people but can not reap the benefit of our labor I went to the State of Ohio in 1844 to see if we could not make a better support than in Miss. I found the laboring class of people could it has taught me to know there is better living in a grain fruits and stock growing state than in a cotton growing one. Peter Ephraim Strong my brother served in united states army three years during the War of 1861 and was honorable discharged at its close desired me to write to you for information on making a support in that state. We want to know if we can get any assistance from the government or any society to emigrate to Kansas. We have seen some papers from there and feel if we could get there we could make a better support than we are paid for labor in Miss. there will be very few of us that will be able to come without aid. I have been teaching public schools in the districts ever since they began in Miss. in 1841. When the republican have rule the state I made right good support at it but since the democratic power has got in there we can scarcely board and clothe ourselves but for the love of our race we keep on. I remain in the state of Ohio ten months and saw that it <sup>was</sup> better for a farmer to raise



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grain fruits and stock than cotton and have desired  
to go to a grain growing state ever since to live  
all the people in <sup>distict</sup> I taught are wanting to emigrate  
to Kansas this fall if they can get assistance from  
any quarters and if all do not come if I can get  
information from you that I can get in any business  
for a support and get assistance to get there my  
brother father and husband are and I am coming  
a great many desired me to write to Kansas for  
information I thought it would be best to write to  
you I see in the Mo. Republican that you have a  
freedmen aid society thinking perhaps I we could  
get assistance from it please answer our letter and  
let us know if you can aid us and on what terms  
you would be willing to aid us by doing so you will  
us and a great many more and we will be gratef  
ul in our hearts

Your humble obedient and grateful servant

Roseline Cunningham

No. 3595 Book B Page

from Roseline Cunningham

re West Point, Okla.

6-18



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SOL. H. KOHN, Mayor.  
D. S. MUNGER, Police Judge.  
CHAS. HATTON, City Attorney.  
FRED. SCHATTNER, City Clerk.

### COUNCIL.

A. WIEGAND, 1st Ward.  
M. ZIMMERLY, " "  
GEO. E. HARRIS, 2nd Ward.  
PETER GETTO, " "  
J. M. ALLEN, 3rd Ward.  
CHAS. SCHATTNER, 3rd Ward.  
W. A. THOMAS, 4th Ward.  
M. B. KELLOGG, " "

## Mayor's Office,

Wichita, Kans.,

6/2

1879.

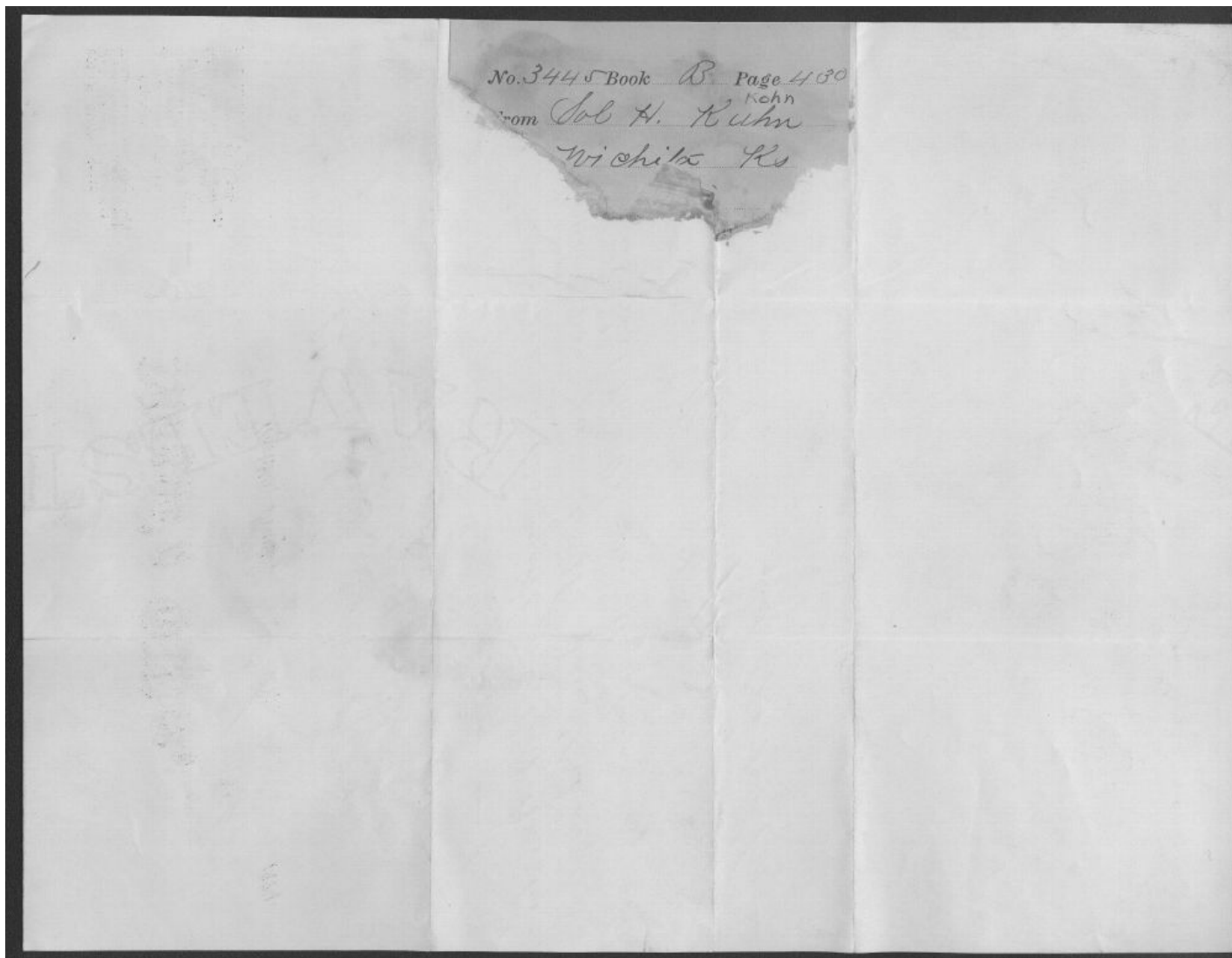
Hon J. P. St John  
Lsksn K

Enclosed please find Draft #26174 — \$22<sup>00</sup>  
which please use in aid of the Colored Exoduster  
\$15<sup>00</sup> of the above was given by the Sam Lucas  
Under Ground Rail Way Co and the balance from  
subscription


Very Respectfully  
Sol. H. Kohn



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 Kenton, Ky.  
 June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1879  
 Gov. St. John  
 Topeka, Kansas.

Honorable Sir:— I must say  
 that your answer to my letter of  
 the 18<sup>th</sup> of May addressed to you, was  
 a very great surprise to me. I did not  
 expect you to consume valuable time  
 in answering an unimportant com-  
 munication from so unworthy a person  
 as myself. But you did so, and to  
 say the least I really felt honored in re-  
 ceiving it. You may rest assured that the  
 Tar-heels and Cotton-heads of the South  
 will not Bull-doze me.

You invite me over into "God's Country"  
 for which you will please accept my  
 thanks. I will come. But I desire  
 first to further educate myself, or as  
 the native Southerner would say "git a  
 little more book larnin'" when I shall  
 endeavor to ascertain the section that offers  
 the best advantages to a young man, and  
 then go thither.

Very truly Yours Chas. M. F. Striker



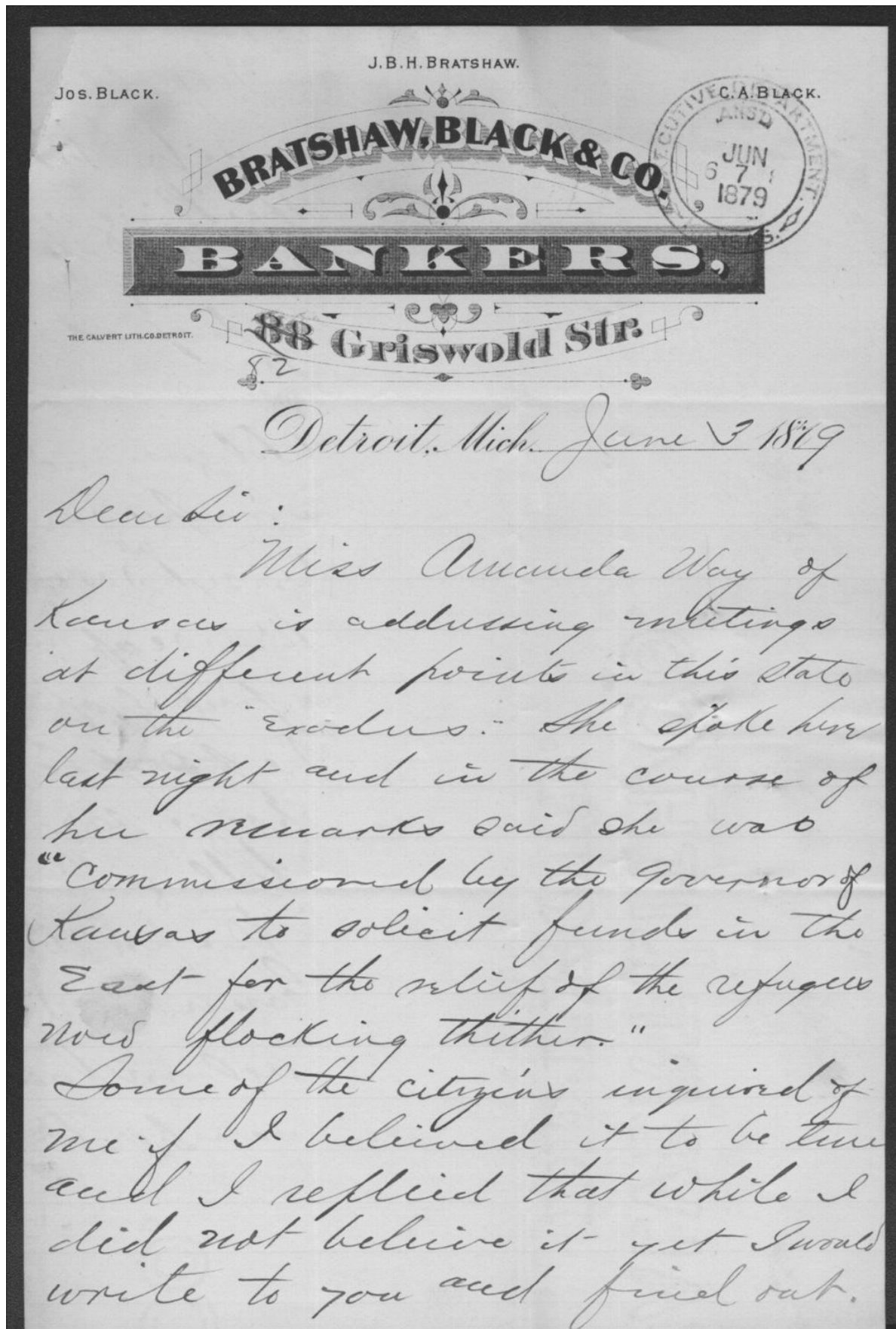
## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3102 Book B Page 482  
From C. McF. Striker  
Place Kenton Ky  
Date 6. 2. 1879  
Rec'd 6. 7. "  
Ans'd

### ABSTRACT.

Thanking Gov St-John for  
a letter, will come to  
Gods Country after a  
little.

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

