

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

### Section 80, Pages 2371 - 2400

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

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

about its actual cost -

If you can do any good with  
this as the rule I name, you are wel-  
come to it and if not no harm  
has been done -

I have only to say "amen"  
to what my wife has written.

Yours truly

A. W. Nowye





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Rockland, July 29<sup>th</sup> 1881.

Gov. J. P. St. John

Dear Sir — Perhaps you remember that I wrote you last winter, & asked you & Mrs. Comstock to be the executors of my will, whereby I wished to bequeath my property to the freedmen & refugees from the southern states. You did not refuse, but gave some advice as to a local executor &c. Being in feeble health I made the will, chose a local executor who was to collect the property, & send it to you & Mrs. Comstock to buy land & homes for the refugees. I beg pardon for so doing before consulting you more particularly; but it seemed necessary to do so at that time. Mrs. Comstock advised me to bequeath my estate to the New York (Missionary Society; she said they paid 8 per cent on your money during life, & at the decease of the testator

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

would do as she will dictated. I wrote to the officer she named, & he replied that they seldom paid interest on money, & never over five percent, & they preferred that a will should be made so that at the person's decease they could make such disposal of the property as they thought best. As I had a specific object I could not accede to such terms. I chose for local executor Hon. Neal Dow of Portland Me., but in case he could not accept I appointed Charles E. Littlefield Esq. of Rockland Me. in his stead. Mr. Littlefield is a young man of integrity & ability. You may know something of him as a Temperance worker. Will you be so kind as to reply to this at your earliest convenience, & tell me if you will accept the trust. I would be so glad that you would take I was in Hammononton N. J. when I wrote you, & where I made the will, but have now returned to Rockland Me. my native state. I regret to take a moment of your





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

valuable time, but if you will just use the en-  
closed Stamp by sending me a brief line, & tell-  
ing me if you & Mrs. C. will accept the trust  
you will or not, you will confer a favor.

I do not know now where Mrs. Comstock is,  
or hear aught of the doings of the Relief Asso-  
ciation. Wishing you health & prosperity, &  
wisdom to guide in affairs of state & of charity  
I subscribe my name Ann F. Jameson,  
Rockland, Maine,



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

*Freedmen*

No. *841* Book *D* Page *123*

From *Ann F. Jameson*

Place *Rockland Maine*

Date *7. 29. 1881*

Rec'd .....

Ans'd .....



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 858 Book D Page 125

Cardington O.  
8<sup>th</sup> - 1 - 1881

Gov. J. P. St. John

I write  
this for information and  
advice in regard to the work  
of E. L. Comstock. It has  
come to our ears from other  
sources that further help as  
in the last two years, would  
be misdirected Charity

As President of the Mission-  
ary Board of Ohio yearly meeting  
of friends <sup>of which E. L. is a member</sup> we have furnished  
E. L. C. with Credentials to  
travel and solicit aid.

We are very desirous that  
what we may do shall  
be the right thing and that

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

it will meet the approval  
of the true friends of the down  
trodden of lease State paup  
ly thy opinions in regard to  
the work to me.

And with a prayer  
that God will establish thy  
work for the elevation of human  
ity - I am truly thy friend  
J. H. Stanley  
Cardington  
Morrow Co Ohio

An Early reply is desirable





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 858 Book D Page 125

From F. C. Stanley

Place Cardington Ohio

Date 8. 1. 1881

Rec'd

Tom O.

8-1-1881

Gov. J. P. St. John

I write  
this for information and  
advice in regard to the work  
of E. L. Constock. It has  
come to our ears from other  
sources that further help as  
in the past two years, would  
be misdirected Charity.

As President of the Mission-  
ary Board of this Yearly Meeting  
of Friends <sup>through E. L. Constock</sup> we have furnished  
E. L. C. with Credentials to  
travel and solicit aid.

We are very desirous that  
what we may do shall  
be the right thing and that



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Rollin, Seneca Co, Mich.  
8 mo 10. 81.

Gov St John

My dear Friend

Canst thou spare  
time from thy numerous  
engagements to read the  
accompanying letter from Judge  
Tougee & give me thy judg-  
ment whether or not it is  
best to accept his offer of land  
upon the terms proposed.

Our friends in the East  
& in England are much  
pleased with the "Agri & Ind &  
Inst<sup>d</sup>" in Cherokee Co, & they  
will sustain it & I trust  
make it a blessing not only  
to the refugees but also to the

+ for the refugees of course.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

State of Kansas which has  
rec'd them so kindly & treated  
them so well.

I regret that there has been  
so much opposition to the  
Institute, but we are not  
very much discouraged on this  
account, as we find it rests  
almost entirely with those  
who lost their salaries, by  
the dissolution of the K. F. R. A.  
These have raised a great  
hue & cry against the closing  
up of the work at Topeka,  
& have sent circulars all  
over the country, representing  
that "terrible suffering is  
the result". That "refugees  
in the Barracks are absolutely



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

furnishing. If this be so, I should like to know, what has become of over \$29,000 (Twenty nine <sup>hundred</sup> ~~thousand~~), left in the Treasury when I gave up my connection with the K. T. P. & A. Also, those valuable buildings in North Topeka, & the barns & stables & fixtures, & all the teams & farming implements, wagons, harness, &c at the colonies & over \$1000 they have had from me since then.

I cannot believe there is such terrible suffering this winter weather, but I credit fully thy assurance that, "the refugees are doing well & there is not much real suffering".



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

My friend John G. Whittier  
writes me, with a kind message  
to thee, that "Gov St John is  
a man of whom any nation  
might be proud," & he "thinks he  
deserves the thanks & commen-  
dation of all good & humane  
men". Amen! say I. A very  
pleasant mention of thee also  
in a letter from Joshua L Bai-  
ly of Phila. a few days since.  
Our friends in Phila. Boston  
& New York are very desirous  
of a visit from thee.

With kind love to thy  
wife & daughter

Thy sincere friend  
Eliza L Comstock.





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

ALBION W. TOURGÉE.

142

Mayville N.J.

June 29 1881.

My dear Mrs Comstock.

Your letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to my husband, reached us yesterday at this place where we are located for the summer. Mayville is at the head of the famed Chautauque Lake and we have purchased a delightful home here where we propose to stay until the cold weather sets to flight its attractions. My husband was quite worn out with his incessant mental labor of the past few years, and needed rest sadly. I am happy to say he is getting rest and health here with his horses and boat and this delightful air. He is very much engaged to day and desired me to reply to your letter



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

As he never heard anything about the lectures he offered to deliver for the benefit of your Exoduster fund, he concluded no arrangements were perfected for them and of course did not deliver them. I was going to write you of a little plan we had to add our mite to aid the great work you are carrying on, but the Judge fears I may not make it plain to you and is going to take time to write it himself, also about the cheap edition of his books. -

Our little daughter is quite well and very happy in her country home, is getting as brown and hearty as we could wish.

May you be abundantly blessed in your labor of love. Is our prayer. -

Yours truly,  
Emma K. Tourgee





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

ALBION W. TOURGÉE.

Mayville N.Y.

No. 993 Book D Page 142

From Mrs. C. A. Comstock

Place Rollin Mich

Date 8. 10. 81

Rec'd

My dear M.

Your letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to my husband, reached us yesterday at this place where we are located for the summer. Mayville is at the head of the famed Chautauque Lake and we have purchased a delightful home here where we propose to stay until the cold weather sets to flight its attractions. My husband was quite worn out with his incessant mental labor of the past few years, and needed rest sadly. I am happy to say he is getting rest and health here with his horses and boat and this delightful air. He is very much engaged to day and desired me to reply to your letter.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

1.  
Dunlap, Kan.

Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1881.

To his Excellency, Gov. of the  
State of Kansas,  
Dear Sir:

Permit me  
to ask your consideration  
of a plan devised for the  
assistance of the Colored peo-  
ple who wish to obtain per-  
manent homes in this lo-  
cality. There are in this vil-  
lage and in the surround-  
ing country, within reach of  
our attentions, about 200  
families of Refugees. Most  
of them first settled here  
about two years ago. Although  
there is here much vacant  
land and much unbroken



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

2

land on claims taken by the Whites, and considerable resources in building rock, timber, &c., which creates a demand for labor, yet for a year after the advent of the Blacks they were the year object of bitter jealousy and opposition on the part of the Whites. About fifteen months ago the Associate Presbyterian Synod sent to this point a missionary, Rev. Jno. M. Snodgrass, a man of talent and experience and of a very gracious disposition. Through his untiring efforts and charity the Colored children of the village district have, in the past year, had the benefit of a free School for seven months under the control of an excellent teacher,



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

3

and many of the adults have had careful instruction. During the past spring, also, he secured the organization of a new district just west of Dunlap, occupied by Colored settlers alone and sustained a school here for a term of 4 months. Thus, beside the constant attention and charity to the adults, the Colored children have had eleven months of public school with houses, furniture, fuel, &c., supplied.

He has also rented a field of 20 Acres and divided it among as many families that the women and children might have profitable employment during the summer.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

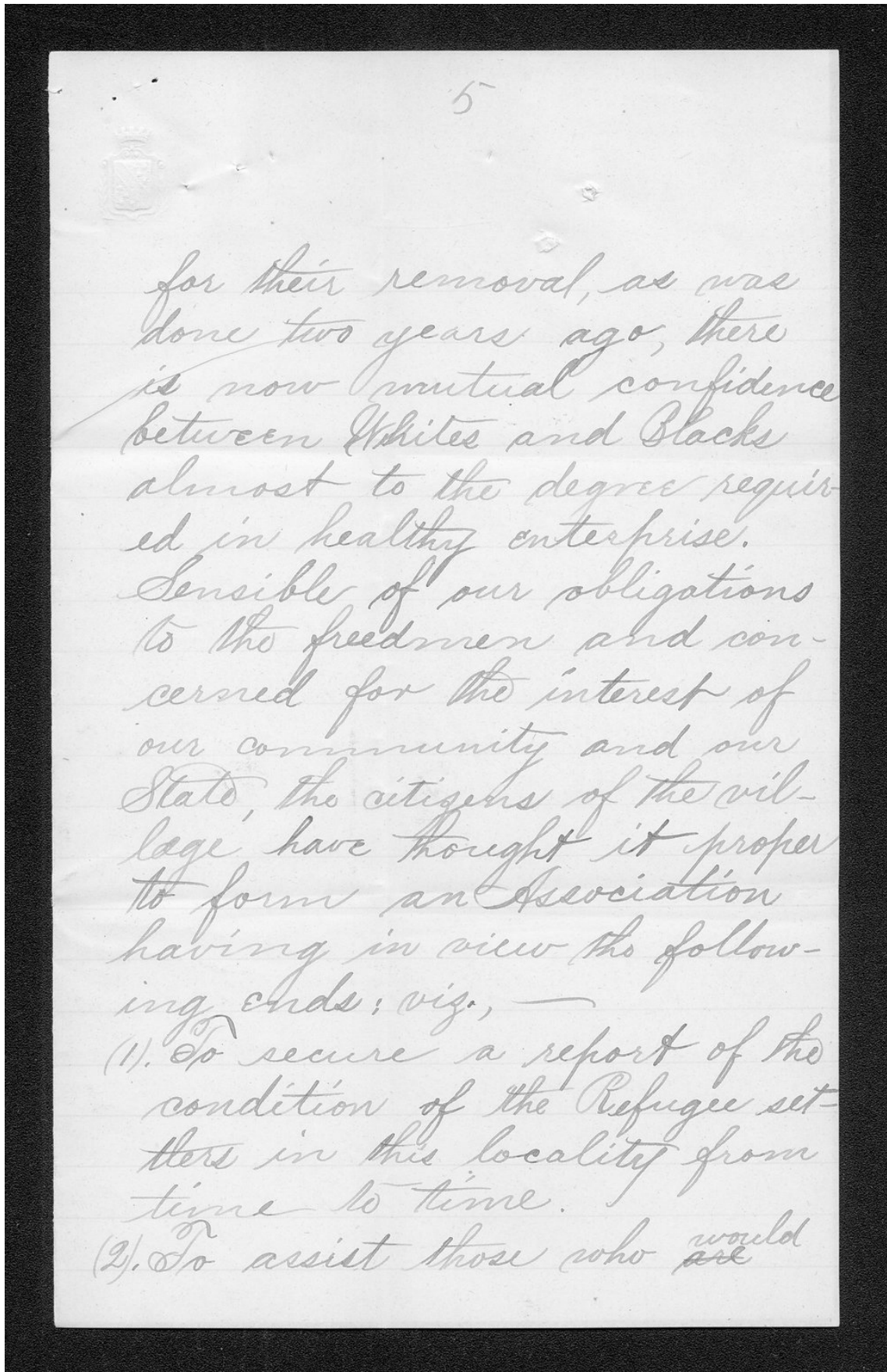
4

Also through his care, with little aid from abroad, the poor and sick were saved from perishing during the past winter.

Now it is very desirable that this work continue in the spirit in which it has been begun. It has doubled the enterprise of the Blacks and supplied the place of luxuries and conveniences and softened the rigors of want and distress by instilling the spirit of contentment and trust in Providence. At present, instead of the Whites abusing the Blacks and threatening violence and petitioning



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



5  
for their removal, as was  
done two years ago, there  
is now mutual confidence  
between Whites and Blacks  
almost to the degree requir-  
ed in healthy enterprise.

Sensible of our obligations  
to the freedmen and con-  
cerned for the interest of  
our community and our  
State, the citizens of the vil-  
lage have thought it proper  
to form an Association  
having in view the follow-  
ing ends: viz, —

- (1). To secure a report of the  
condition of the Refugee set-  
tlers in this locality from  
time to time.
- (2). To assist those who ~~are~~ would



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

6  
otherwise require the care of  
the County.

(3). To assist those who may  
have difficulty in securing  
land claims.

(4). To purchase a tract of  
land near the village of  
Dunlap which shall be  
sold to Refugee purchasers  
in small lots, or brought  
under cultivation to fur-  
nish labor for a short time  
to those who may have  
just arrived from the South.

(5). To encourage and aid  
the Board of Missions of  
the A. P. Church in estab-  
lishing a literary and bus-  
iness Academy at this place  
for the benefit of the Colored  
people of the state.

(6). To solicit contributions for  
the accomplishment of these  
Ends.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

As officers of this Association there have been elected <sup>Rev.</sup> Jno. M. Snodgrass, Pres.; E. Pulen, Treas.; W. M. Johnson, soliciting Agt.; Andrew Atchison, Sec.

The first three persons named, you probably know by reputation; the last has met and conversed with you when both yourself and he served in more obscure stations; he is a graduate of Kan. State Univ. and a brother of your former fellow-townsmen R. M. Atchison.

This association desires to coöperate with the Relief Association of Independence. That Association has not the means to reach effectively the enterprises of



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

8

such an important colony  
as this at Dunlap.  
The good enterprises begun  
here must in a great  
measure fail without the  
cooperation and attention  
of the influential white citizens  
through some effective plan.  
Your opinion, now, is desired  
upon these two points,  
(1) The propriety of obtaining  
a Charter for the Association  
formed here. (2) The  
practicability of establish-  
ing at this point a Busi-  
ness and Literary Academy  
with merely nominal tuition,  
with the course of instruction,  
for the present, reaching to the  
Freshman Class of the State



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

9.  
University, to be thoroughly equipped with teachers and apparatus, and adapted in every way as closely as possible to the wants of the Colored youth of the West.

We will be under especial obligation for an early reply.

Yours Respdy,

Andrew McChisom  
Sec. Aid Association



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Colored colony. Morris Co  
No. 1038 Book D Page 151  
From Andrew Atchison  
Place Dunlap Ks  
Date J. 22. 1881  
Rec'd (Sec. of Freedmen's  
Asso. of Dunlap)  
Ans'd



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Sherwood N.Y. 9.2.81

Hon. J. P. St John  
Gov. of Kansas  
Dear Sir.

We have been and  
are still <sup>doing</sup> much for the "Refugees"  
in your state through re=  
-presentations of Elizabeth L. Com=  
-stock. Now there are stories  
going the rounds that  
she is not trustworthy  
and that what may be sent  
her may never be applied  
as intended - at the re=  
-quest of several in this  
vicinity I write you to  
know if you would be  
willing to give us any



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

information which  
might-satisfy us that  
the object of the  
"Agricultural and Indus-  
trial Institute" proposed  
by Mrs Comstock is  
worthy of assistance and  
if you would please  
give your own opinion  
of her sincerity and what-  
ever her statements may be  
depended upon with regard  
to condition &c of "Refugees"

These stories maligning  
her Character ought to be  
stopped if untrue and  
if true ought to be fully  
known

Very Respectfully  
James B Chase  
Sherwood  
New York





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

rel to Mrs E. L. Comstock.

No. 1083 Book D Page 158

From J. B. Chase

Place Sherwood N. Y.

Date 9. 2. 1881

Rec'd

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Sept- 3. 1881-

Mr St-John

Dear Sir

I shipped to your  
address for the refu-  
gees 2 bbls. clothing  
5 weeks ago. and  
have not heard  
whether they reached  
you or not- please  
report-

yours truly

S. O. Keith

Scotland

Mass-





Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 1133 Book D Page 166

From J. B. Keith

Place Scotland Mass

Date 9. 3. 1881

Rec'd



WRITE THE ADDRESS ON THIS SIDE - THE MESSAGE ON THE OTHER

Gov.  
St. John.  
Exoduster