

Thomas J. Marsh to George L. Stearns

This letter from Thomas J. Marsh to George L. Stearns regards the political delegate convention in Grasshopper Falls, Kansas which, according to Marsh, was well-attended by all portions of the territory. The letter discusses preventive measures that the Free State party planned to take in order to ensure fair elections, including utilizing a poll book. Election fraud was common in the Kansas Territory as Missourians poured into the state on election day in support of proslavery legislators. The letter ends with a note claiming that Governor Charles Robinson gave Marsh \$200 for the Free State cause, which was forwarded on by Amos Lawrence. A searchable, full-text version of this letter is available by clicking "Text Version" below.

Creator: Marsh, Thomas J.

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Thomas J. Marsh to George L. Stearns

Marsh, Thos. J.

Laurence, K. ^{KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. 35507.}
Augt. 27. 1857.

George L. Stearns Esq.
Dr. Sir

Your favor of Augt. 13th. was recd. on the evening of the 24th. It was so late when I recd. it, that I had no time to acknowledge the same until now. I had written a letter to Mr. Williams and mailed it when yours was received. When I commenced writing to Mr. W. I also intended writing you, but found I had not time. I suppose you will have seen it, as I asked him to show it to you. Concerning Judge Conway, I can only add, that the precise policy that I indicated in my letter to Mr. Williams, as being the course he would probably pursue, he declared openly in the Convention at Grasshopper Falls as his, in a speech of an hour or more, and gave notice that he thus, and then, put it upon record that he would not participate in the Election, and for the reasons I named in my letter. The Convention yesterday was well attended - all portions of the Territory was represented. (I send a detail of the same to The Traveller) and notwithstanding the very

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able speech of Judge Conway in opposition to voting. Upon the question being taken, the only dissenting vote was the Judge himself. They voted to go into the Election with all the power they have - and for all the officers. Delegate to Congress, Territorial Legislature, and all the minor offices. The plan I mentioned was adopted of having some one or two men at each voting precinct to keep a poll book - and record the name of every voter, who he votes for, and if refused, upon what ground - so that if there is any fraud their books ^{may} be verified under oath, and such persons as may be elected by fraud, have notice, ~~given~~ and their elections contested. Marcus J. Parrott of Leavenworth, was nominated for Territorial Delegate to Congress unanimously - a Central Territorial Committee chosen, and the usual preliminaries adopted for going into the work in earnest.

X I had acknowledged the receipt of your authority to draw for five hundred dollars &c. I have not yet drawn for any part of it - when I do so I will advise you, I may be long. I find it not best to be in funds all the time, and safe to make but few promises. I think I can tell when the time comes - I had used the Draft

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of Mr. Lawrence, anticipating your reply
which I have in your letter of the 13th.
You speak of the probability of advising me
of more money, some time the first of Sept.
I hope you may - I know it will be need-
ed - there is much work to be done, and
very much depends upon its being well
done - I have thus far paid little else,
than actual cash expenses - this has
been considerable especially in taking
the Census - I had discovered the error
you allude to in authorizing me to draw
for no harm is done, as I have drawn
for nothing save the \$100 in favor of my son.
I suppose the only qualification for
voting will be - a bona fide residence
of Six Months - No Taxes! The Emmi-
grants of this Spring, few only can vote.
Three good Free State men have been
appointed Judges of the Elections in
the Lawrence precinct for the October
election - this is as far as I am informed:

Yr. Obedt. Servt.,

T. J. Marsh

Gov. Robinson has just handed me
Two hundred dollars, to be used for the
free State cause, forwarded by Amos
Lawrence, Esq. No Doubt T. J. Marsh



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