

Exodusters in Kansas

"Exodusters" - The Exodusters were approximately 20,000 African Americans who migrated to Kansas from Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, and Tennessee in 1879-80. With the end of Reconstruction in the South, ex-slaves were fearful that they would be re-enslaved when Democrats gained control of the government. Exodusters headed for Kansas, which they knew as the quintessential free state, in hopes of homesteading on free government land and becoming independent farmers. Called at the time the Kansas Fever Exodus, as Kansans they were able to achieve more economic and political autonomy than they would have in the South.

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