

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 33, Pages 961 - 990

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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www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296



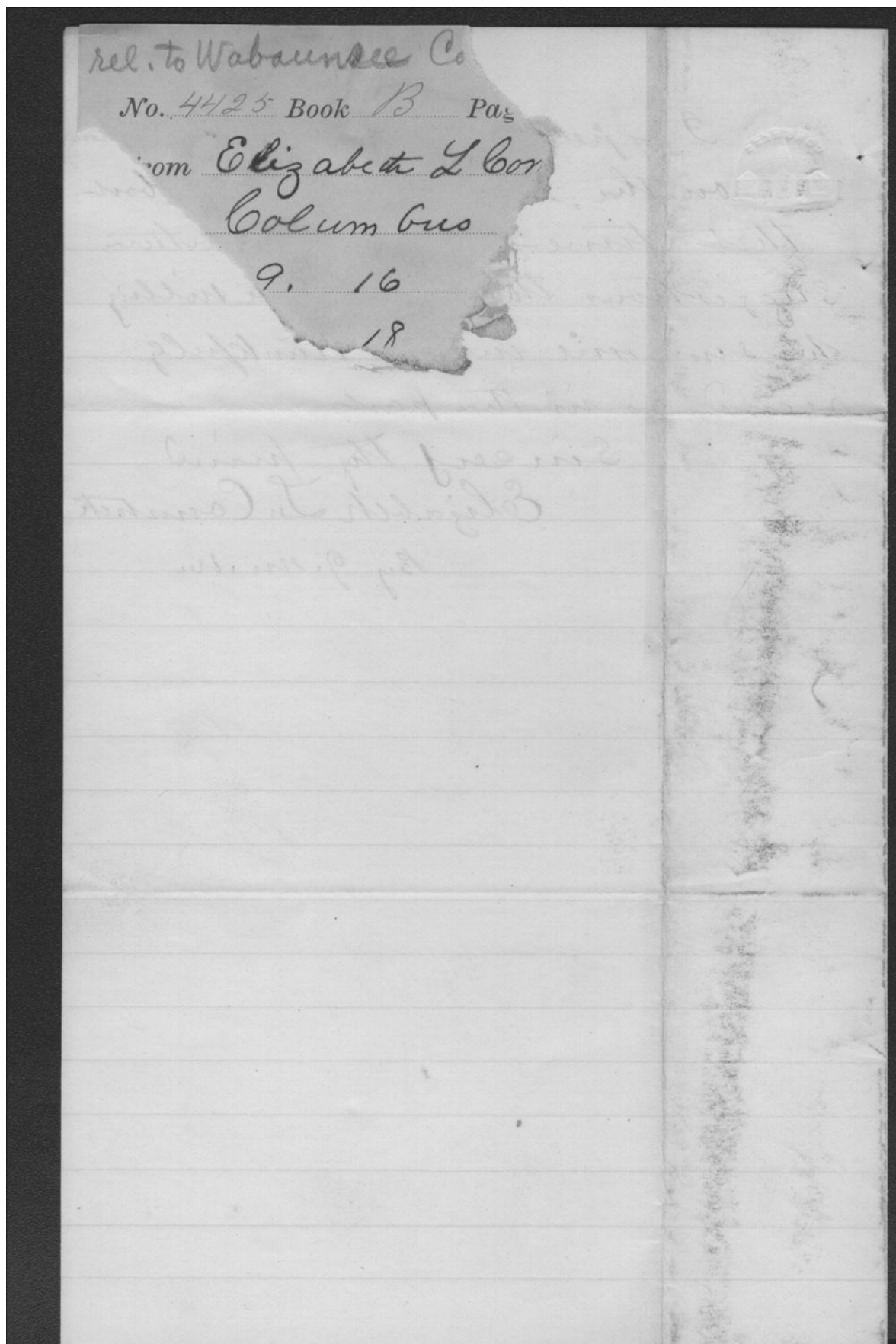
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

I expect to leave for Kansas
on the 8th of next month about
that time - and any further
suggestions thou may be willing
to send me will be thankfully
received as in the past

Sincerely thy friend
Elizabeth L. Constock

By J. M. W.

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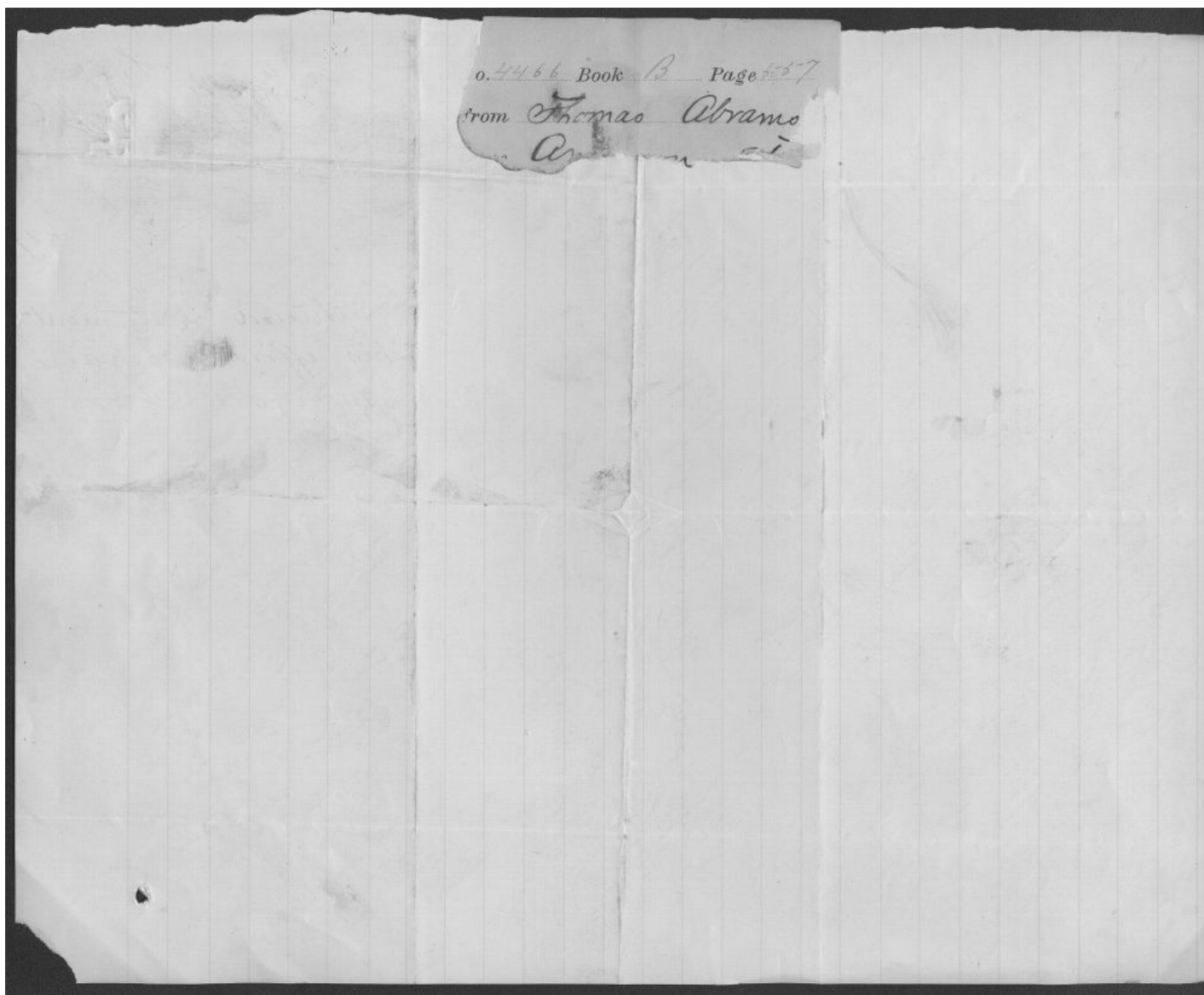
Anderson Grimes Texas 1879

Sep 16 Goven

Sant John Goven of Kansas Dear
Sir We are the poor Colled People
of Texas Dear Sir we of the poor race
of People we air her and can not get
y our Pledge Rites and we want
to know when we can get help of
your hand a great many of us have
the money to come with and her. i
graves Abrahams is now on a starring
Vachaining and we want to get in
some place of bet peeted and if you
can help please help us witness
we air in Sappen Condashen we
air told if we start to come
to that state we will be mad
on the code you is the for
your help write to me and
let me her how the fair
is in Kansas i want to come and
make that home with clos
hoping to her from you in
short time.

Thomas Abrahams

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29 Book B Page 561
 Dear Sir I Recd your Letter of the 13.
 and you ask me for the truth and I will Give
 you all there is 500 who would come to Kansas
 if they had permission and out of the 500
 about 400 is able to pay there way but the
 White people has sed if they start they
 will say they are and take them and
 take all their stock that they don't
 intend for any stock to be carried out of
 Texas therefore the Colored people is
 afraid to make any trip to start we are
 suffering here but cant get a way and from
 the threat of the White people we dont
 know what to do in a town not far
 from here the White people made a
 coffin and put the names of ~~the~~ the
 the leading men on it and sed they Give
 them 10 days to get out of Texas

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Sept. 17, 1879

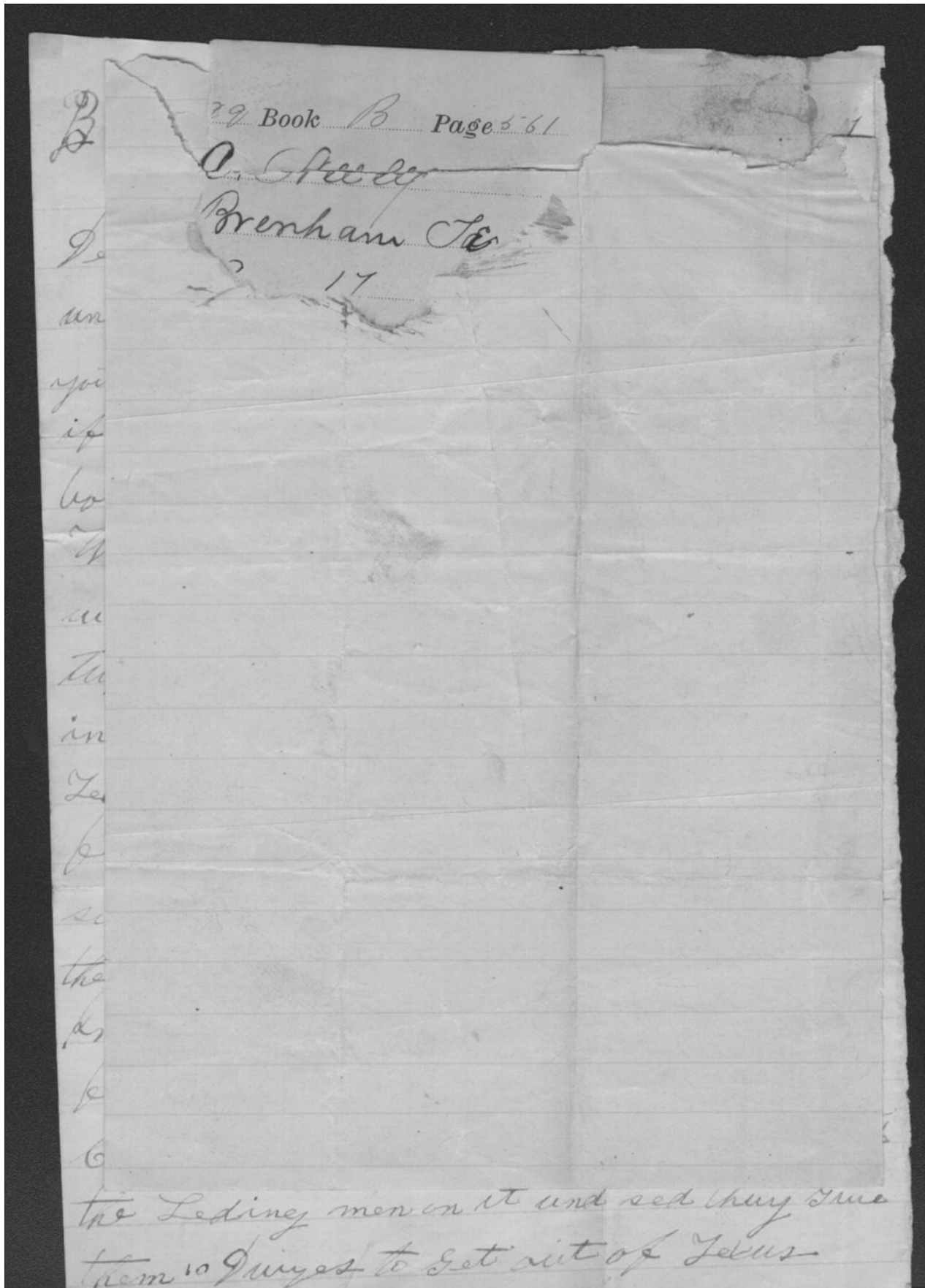
and an old Lady a few Days a So was
on the Crepe fishing a White man came
a circus ^{her} ~~they~~ and sed where are you bound
and she Replid i am fishing and he
sed are you a Kansas Lady and she sed
I am going i^t Line and he dis mounted his
Horse and drew his pistol and feltied her
over the head tel she was not able to Get
Home and the White pepel for bids the
Colerd pepel of to pining a bout going
to Kansas and there fore they are sent to
say what they will do but money are
Lelling there Lots and what you mite
say Giving them a way but since I Resue
your Letter I have stop that and I told
them to stand still tel I can ~~hear~~
from you there is money that owns
burns and the most of them have Wagons
from 2 to 4 head of Horses ^{and} Cuttel
from 2 to 15 head I have stop them from

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selling every thing and the
 White people say if any of the
 Colored people do get left they
 will chase it as hot as hell for
 the Rest that stay behind
 I will close by asking you to
 Excuse my bad composing and I
 will do better the next time I
 Remune yours Truly
 J. St. John

There is a man here from the
 North he tells us that if we
 go North the White people will
 think any more of the Colored
 people than they are dogs but
 I know better for I was Bred with
 Northern people and men is hard
 Warpen men and you can trust them

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Canada Miss. Sept 17th 1879
John St. John
Kansas Topeka

My dear Sir

I Received your letter stating that you had sent me some State agent Reports & but I never have Received them. May be you have made some mistake & if you have please send them to me at once the people here are in an uproar about coming out & don't know what to do.

You said you sent them by mail but I never got them & has been to the office two or three times & asked for them, & they gave me the letter but no Reports. I have even come to me. or I never got them. The white people here seem to be in an uproar about us going away & are making military here every day & we don't know what it means. We are peaceable & obey them in every thing except voting we don't vote to suit them every time but we do every thing else we can to satisfy them & we can't see our next move is to get away from here & they don't want us to do that it seems like.

We are poor & penniless & want to know what now must can be made in getting away from here.



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I now Sir please dont fail to let me hear from
you in short soon send me them reports - soon -
so I can let my people know what to do.
I was very glad you gave my letter so soon attention
it makes me feel I like you feel our case. & I can't
thank you enough for the satisfaction give me
in your short letter. Please excuse me for pestering
you so much I am in distress here with some
advice for from higher authority. I from ^{what} ~~see~~
in the Christian Advocate Southern you
know the condition of us better than I can write.
So please give us your attention. A great deal more
to write but I want disturb you so much - but
I am obliged to. Now please dont fail to answer
soon ~~than~~ this letter & let ^{me} know what to depend upon
very truly &

Yours
Joseph S. Stark
Granada Miss

Book 13
Page 116
J. S. Stark

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Princeton Bureau Co.
Illinois, Sept. 19. 1879.
Hon. John St. John.

Honored and dear sir, -
Doubtless you
are anxious to know of my
prospects in the great-cause
that we are engaged in.

I have received \$90.00
which I have deposited in
the First Nat. Bank of Princeton.
I am devoting my whole
time to this work. I have
appointed committees
everywhere I have been
to solicit clothing &c.,
which will soon be in
shape to send. Now I
desire to ask you where I
shall send these supplies
as I procure them.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

I expected to have a Committee appointed by our Genl. Superintendent at the session of the Kansas Conf. F. M. Church, but he either failed to appoint said committee or to apprise me of such action; therefore I must look to you for advice as to whom and where to send.

Pray that God may
bless me in this great work.

Your Obedient servant
in Christ,
James Suggs.

P.S. In regard to the question you ask "What are the people doing in

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

the way of securing homes for the refugees?" I would say we do not favor the idea of having them emigrate to this state. They are willing to help them there, and they believe it best for them to remain where there is plenty of land that may in time afford them homes. They say on every hand - Our state is already overrun with those who need homes. I see no prospects of making an impression upon the people in this direction but find them generally ready to donate.

Yours,
J. S.



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No. 4465- Book B. Page 3

From James Suggs

Place Princeton Ill

Date 9. 19

Rec'd 9. 21

Rec'd 9. 29

1

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Homer, Calhoun Co. Mich.
Sept 20th 1879
Dear Governor

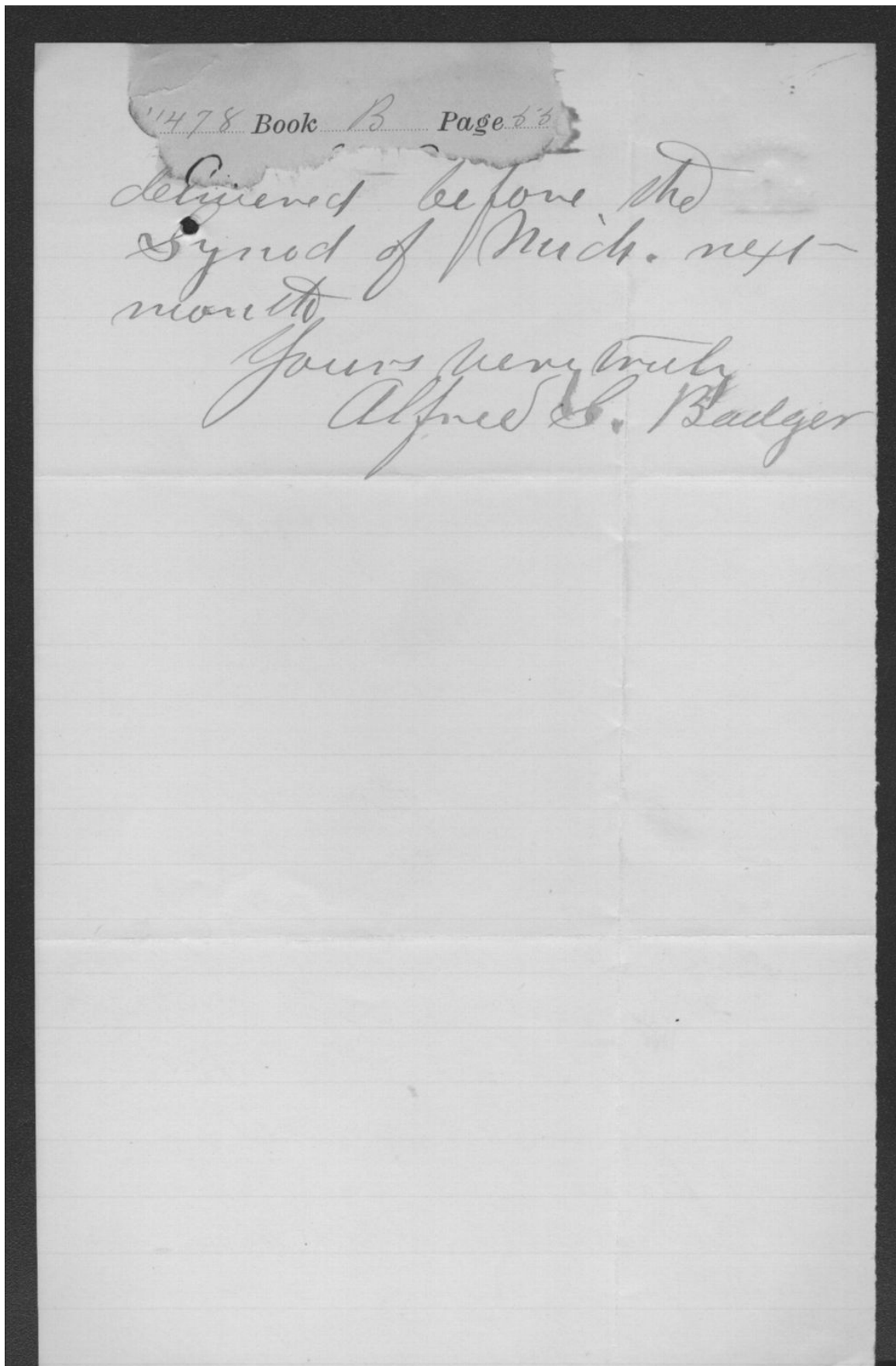
Have you any published documents relative to the condition and prospects of the "Exodusters" that you could furnish me?

Or could you in a word on the enclosed card inform me of their condition and numbers and whether they manifest sufficient energy, or enterprise to succeed?

I would greatly appreciate any information that would help me in the preparation of an address on this subject to be



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Eutam, Greene Co., Ala

Sept 20th 1879.

To His Excellency Gov St John

Topeka Ks.

Sir,

The colored people of this county desire that the writer should address them on 10th Oct on the subject of the Kansas exodus. As a native Southern Republican, possessing their entire confidence, we desire to inform them fully upon the question; and we therefore take the liberty of addressing you, to request that you will favor us with the Auditor's Report, together with any other state papers and general information you may deem proper to send us.

Awaiting your favors and with sentiments of esteem,
we remain

Very respectfully

Your obs servant

Winfield S Bird

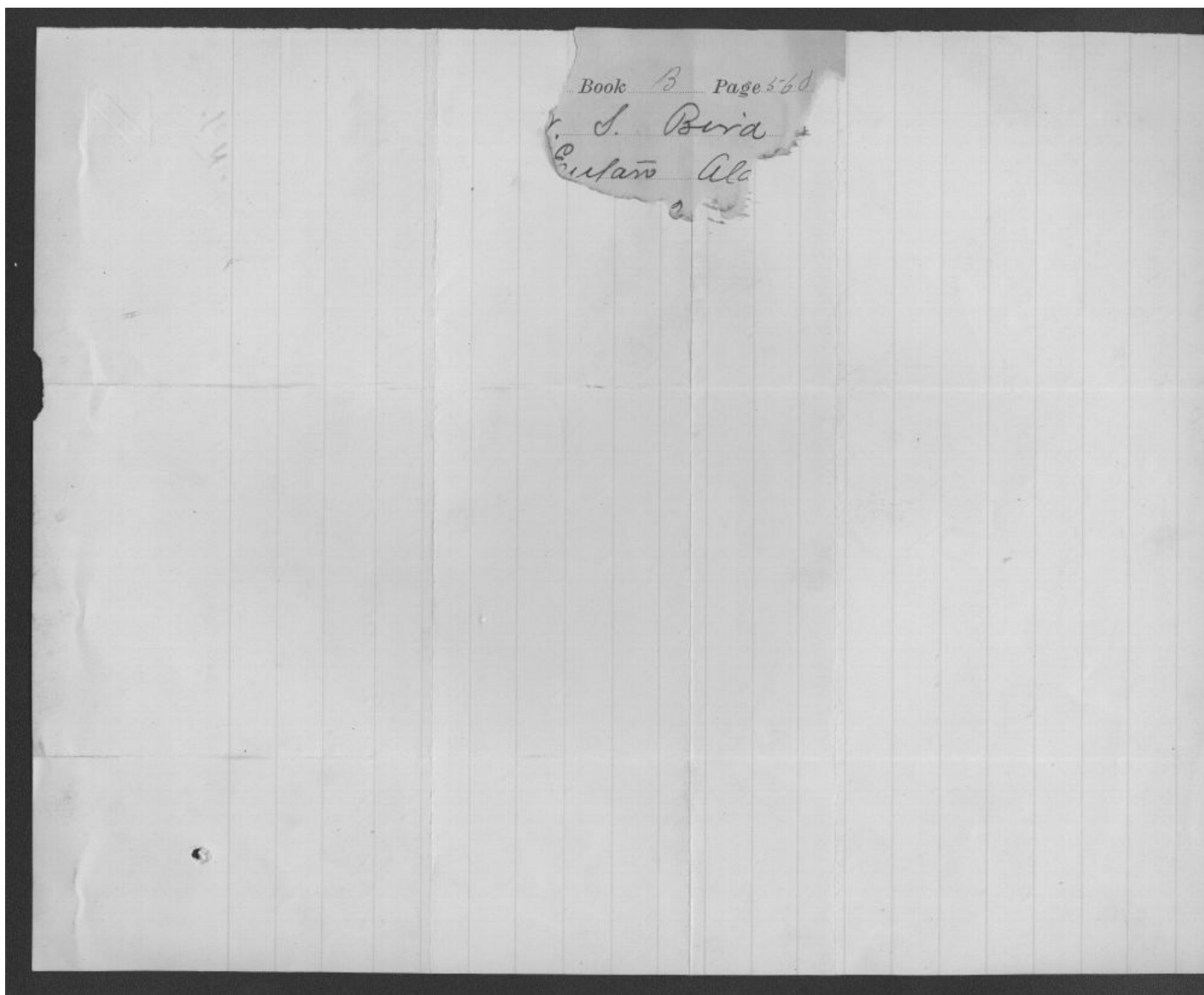
9. 24- 79 sent by mail

1 Copy State Board of Agriculture

1 " State Auditor

1 " Supt Pub Instruction with letter of transmission

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Parsons Kansas Lobbelle Co.
Sept. - 21. 1879.

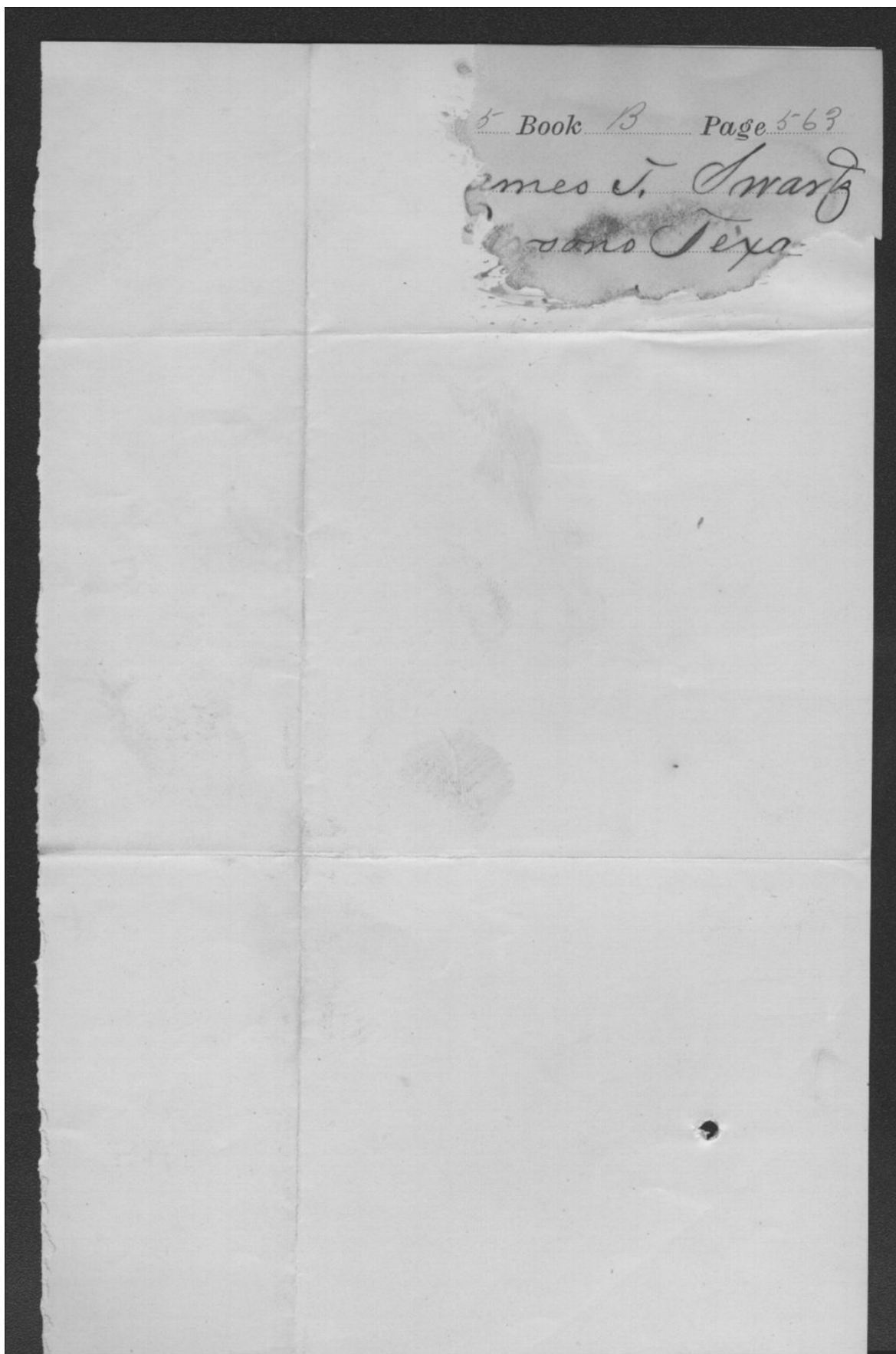
Enclosed please find a letter from Bretham. Texas Explaining
the state of affairs in the Low Star State.

Can any thing be done. If so
Let me know. please.

Yours. Respectfully James T. Swartz.



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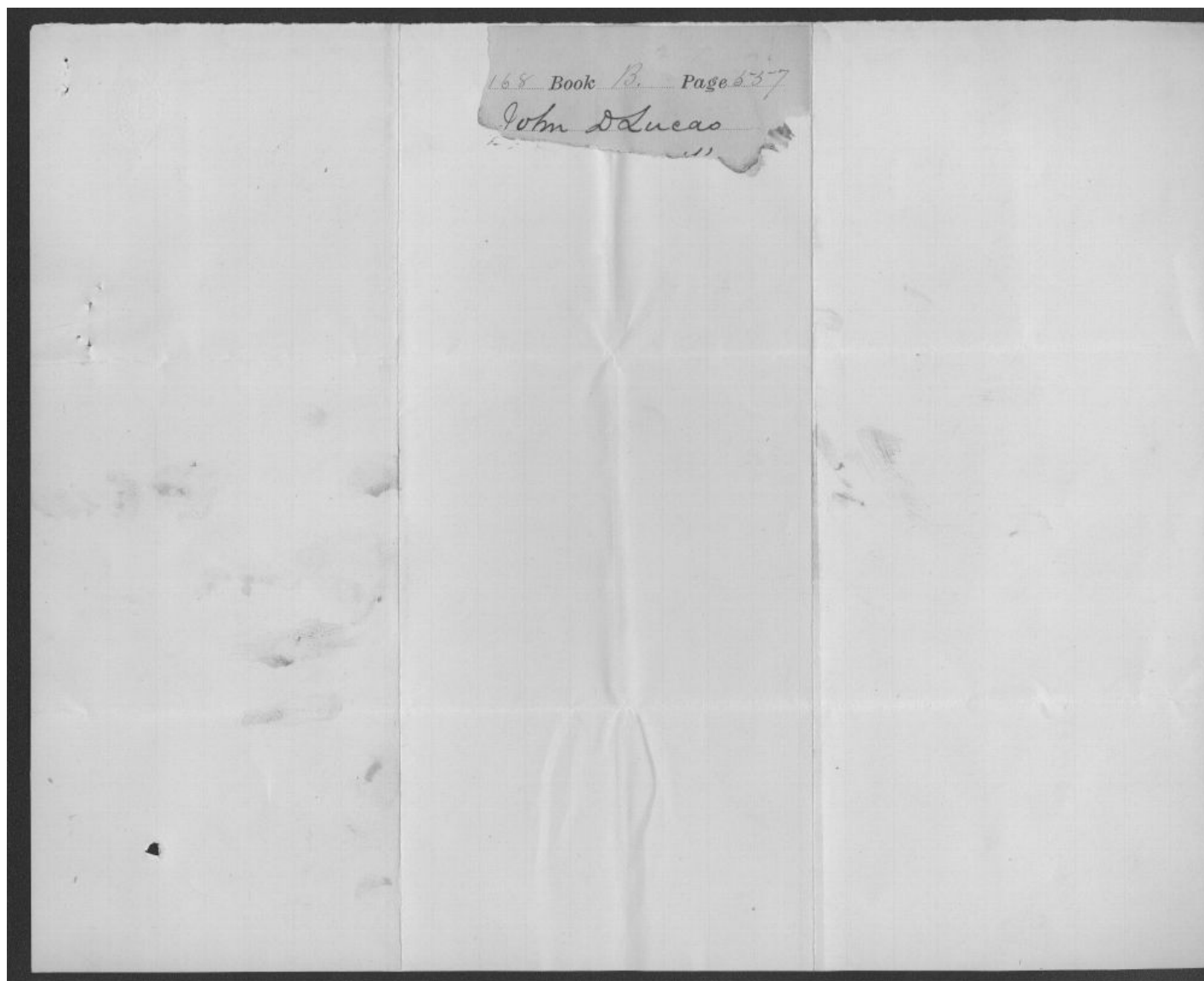
Benjamin Morris Co Kans
 Sep the 21st 1878.
 To the most exelent Governor of the state
 of Kans, and the committee of the
 colony of nabamuse.co. We John D. Lucas
 & George Washington from Davis bend & and
 & and of nabamuse colony. We greet you with
 our best respect. And wish to say
 we new nothing about the letter which you
 received from the Lousianna colony. we are
 sorrow that there is dissatisfaction every
 thing has bin done the very best we new
 how to do with respect and honesty.
 Our wimma are well satisfide and are thank
 ful bouth to you and God for what has
 bin done in our behalf. we are glad to
 say that we struck water on the 20 and
 there is about three foot of water in the
 well this morning. yours respectfully

John D. Lucas & George Washington

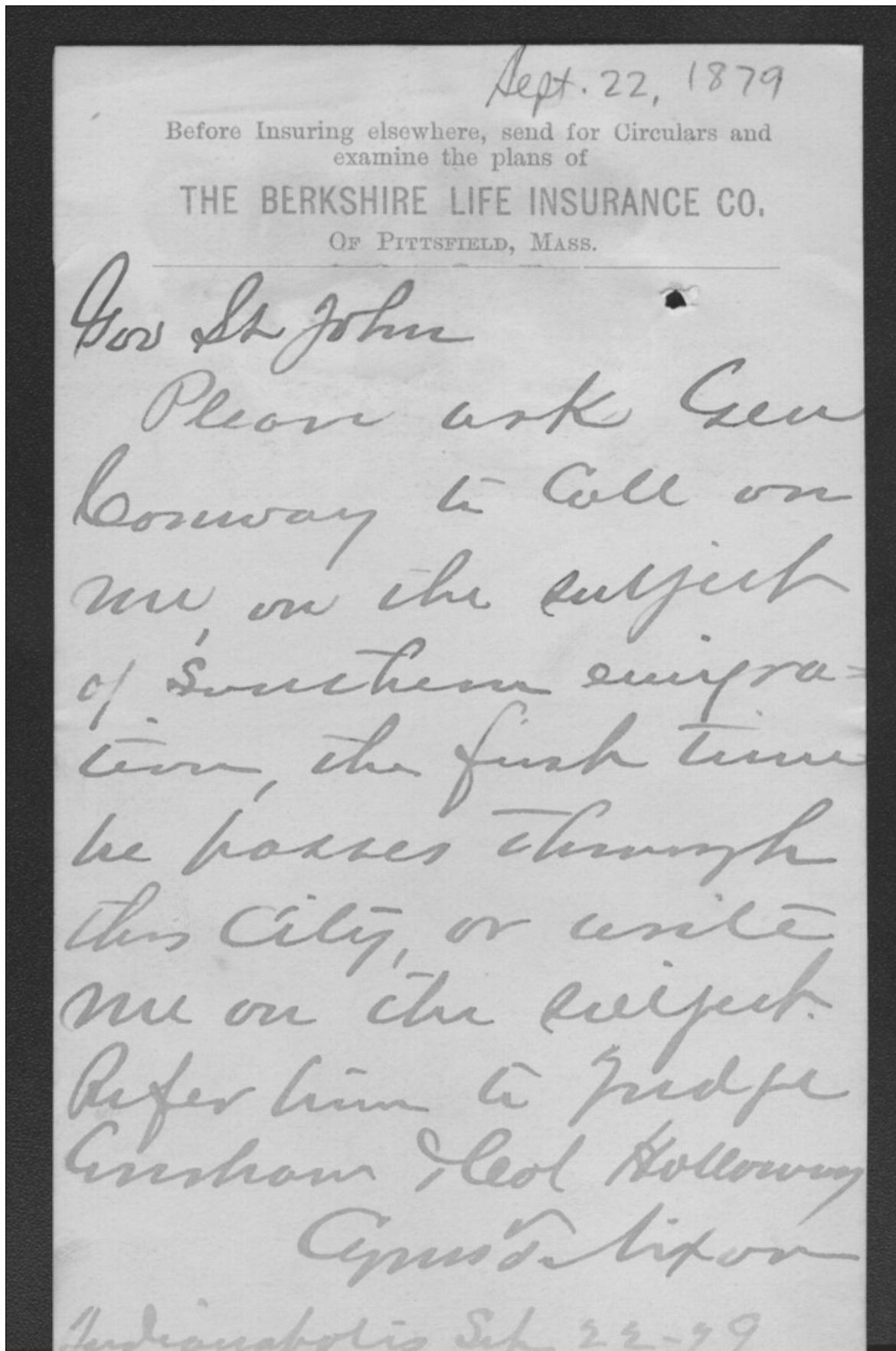
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Mr Brown dear sir
please see H. F. Bungart
about our bounty
yours respectfully
John S Lucas & George Wash
ing St

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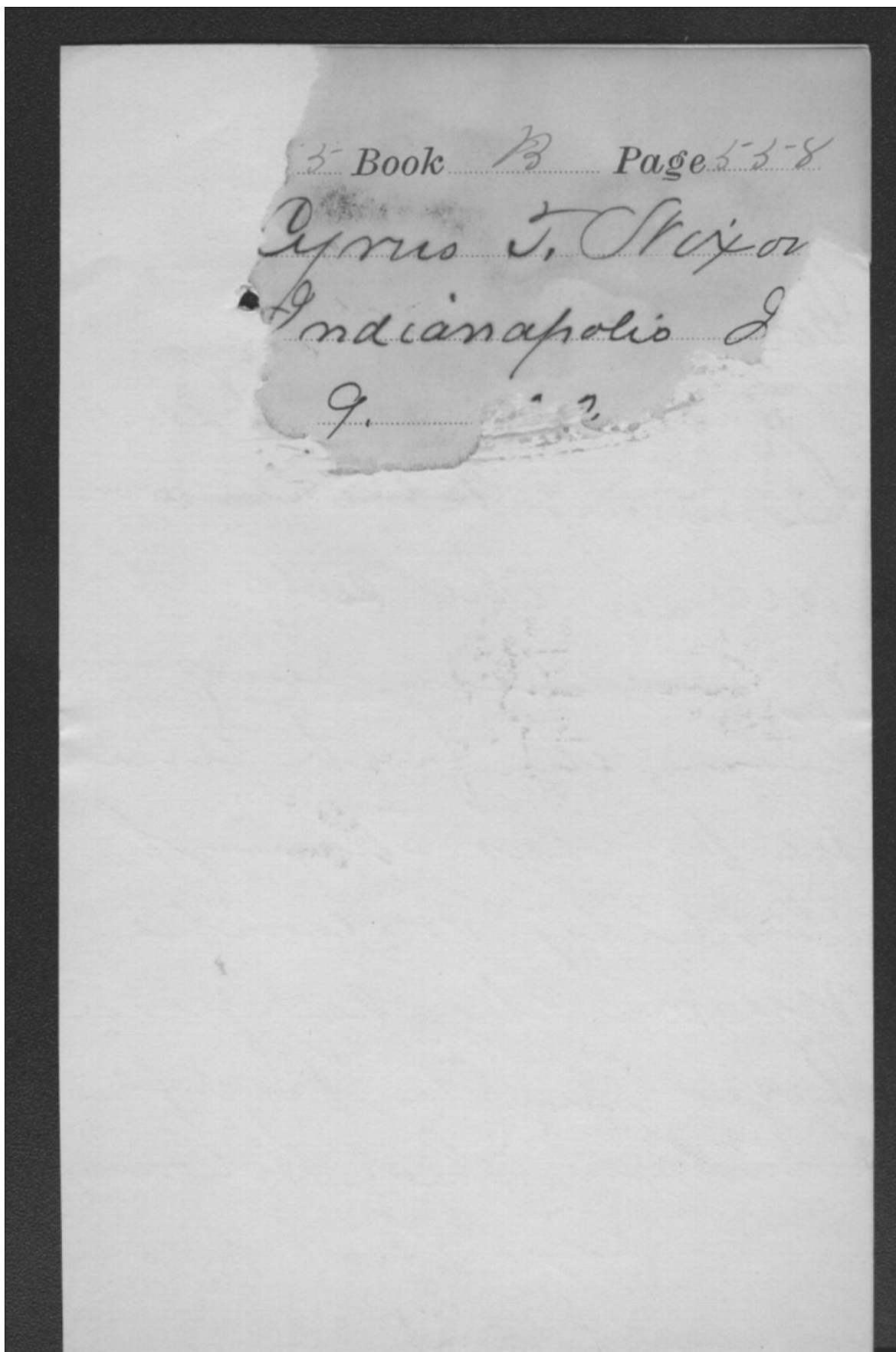


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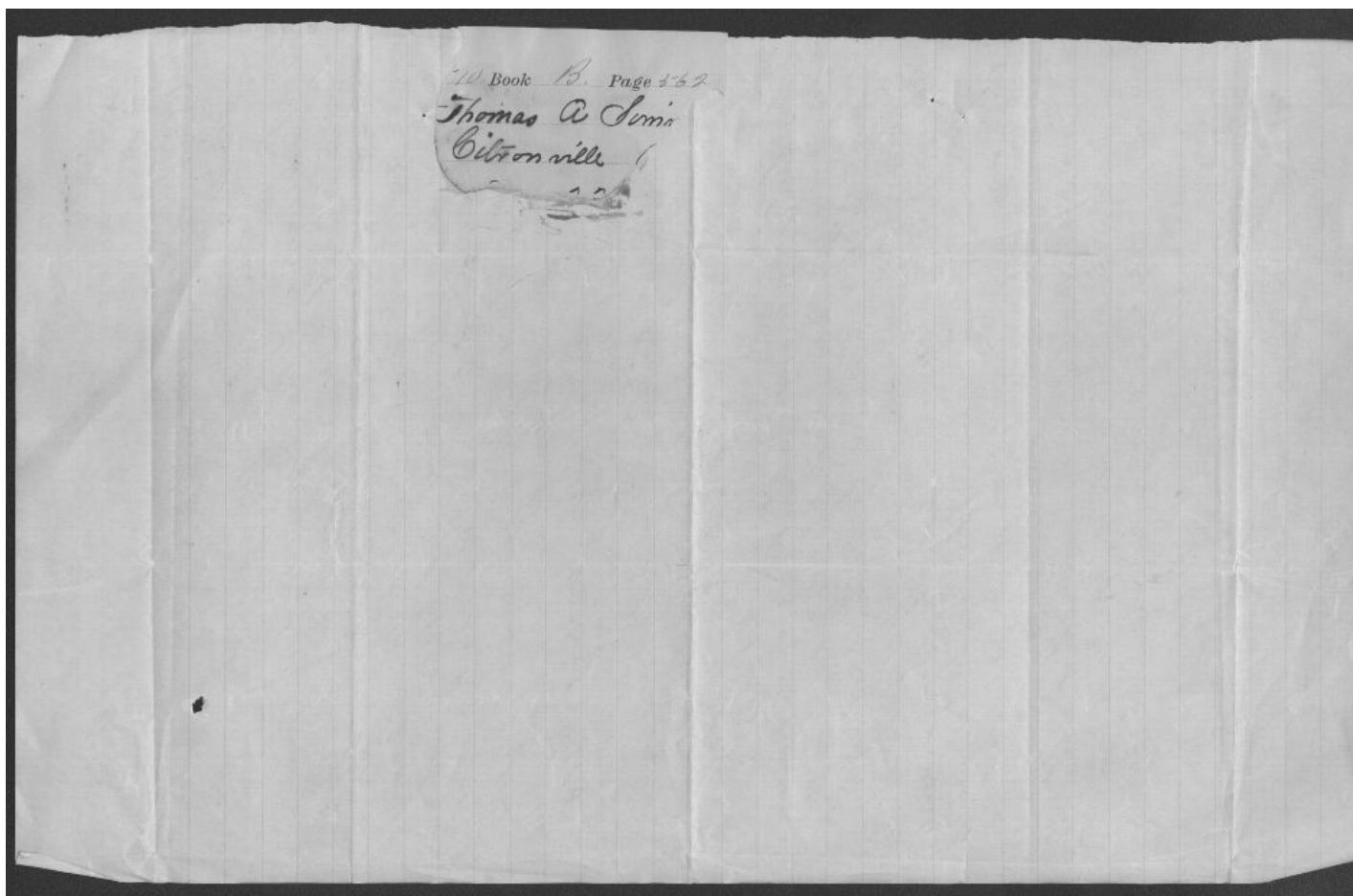
Bitronelle, Ala. Sept. 22nd 1877 -
 My Son in.

Gov. John R. St. John -
 With Pleasure. This Morning I drop you few
 lines. Stating to you that I received your kind &
 welcome letter and were more than pleased to
 receive letter from you, and glad also that
 Kansas is a Rich Soil, and healthy Climate
 and also, glad to know that you will extend
 to any class of Citizens - in my ardor of free
 descent, and Free Schools. I have been
 in rapid, here at this place Teaching Public
 School, but very poor pay - indeed -
 so I want to come there, and buy me
 some Land and go to farming - although
 as I have a very little Capital at this season
 of the year, I concluded that I would wait
 until Spring of the year - and Dear
 Sir I would be glad to get something to
 do in Topeka - Kansas, while I am fixing
 a home to live on - And I am your servant
 at any time - any thing in the Government
 Service - please answer according to what you can
 do - for me - if I can get work for one year - after I
 get in Kansas - I think I can make a good living out of
 Land - please - let me know what does Labor
 cost, in the State of Kansas - for twelve
 months - Yours most humble servant
 Thos A. Simmons

please answer

at your earliest convenience -

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Allegheny City Pa,
Sept. 23, 1879.

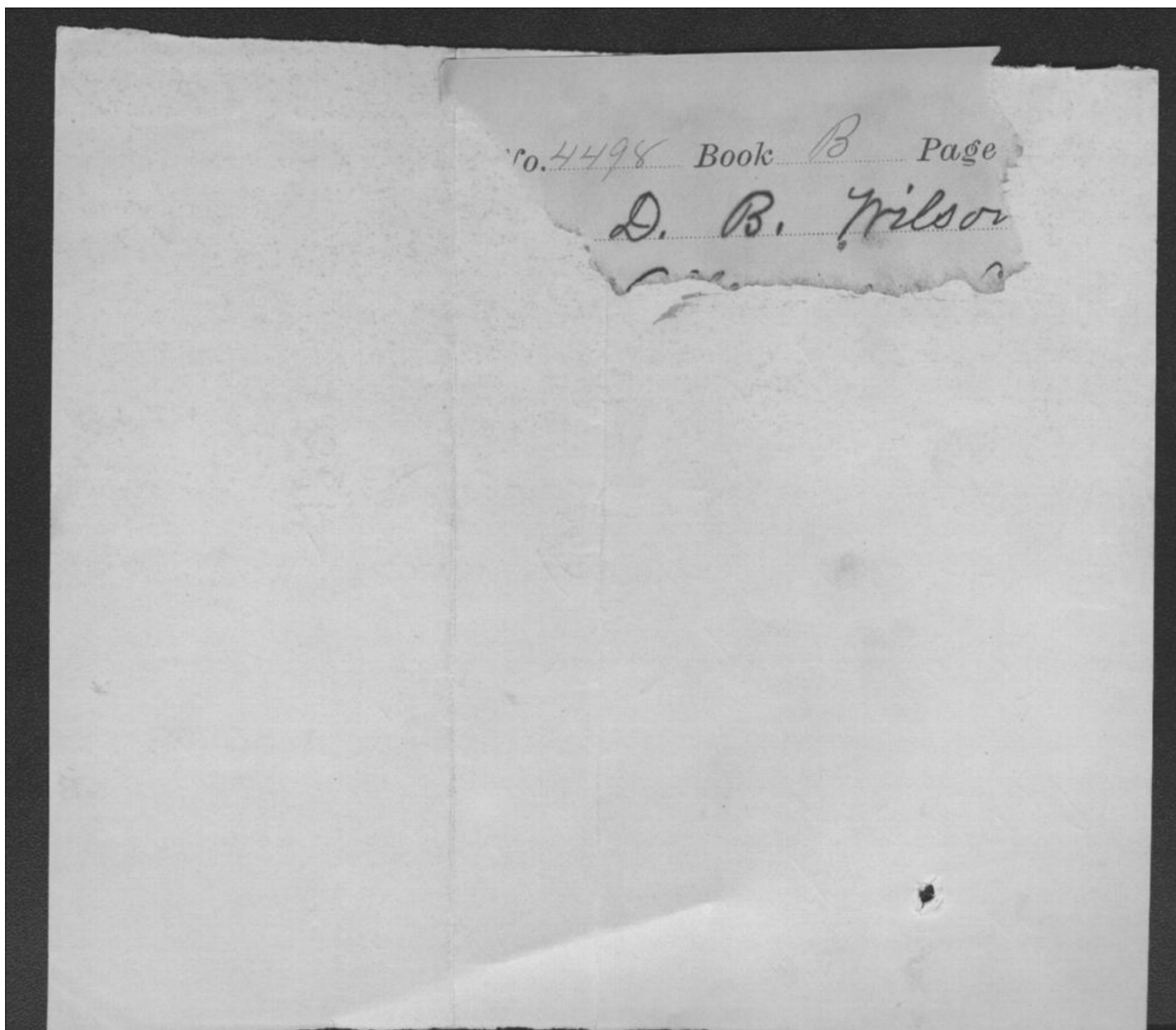
Dear Sir;

I send you enclosed
a Money Order for five dollars -
for the Exodus fund,

Yours truly
D B Willson.

Governor St. John.
Topeka,
Kansas,

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



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REPUBLICAN STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

4TH DISTRICT—JOS. R. DILLIN, Rutherford Co., Chairman.
1ST DISTRICT—THOS. H. REEVES, Jonesboro, Washington Co.
2ND DISTRICT—J. M. THORNBURG, Knoxville, Knox Co.
3RD DISTRICT—W. L. TIPTON, Cleveland, Bradley Co.
5TH DISTRICT—H. L. W. CHEATHAM, Springfield, Robertson Co.
7TH DISTRICT—F. A. MONTAGUE, Columbia, Maury Co.

8TH DISTRICT—L. L. HAWKINS, Huntingdon, Carroll Co.
9TH DISTRICT—JOHN NAIL, Brownsville, Haywood Co.
10TH DISTRICT—IRA M. HILL, Memphis, Shelby Co.
AT LARGE—G. W. LEVERE, Knoxville, Knox Co.
“ H. R. HINKLE, Savannah, Hardin Co.
6TH DISTRICT—J. H. BURRUS, Nashville, Davidson Co., Sec'y and Treas.

Address Chairman and Secretary at Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 25th, 1879

Gov. John P. St. John;

Honorable Sir;

My relations bring me frequently in contact with a number of intelligent colored men who have, by industry and economy, accumulated some property, but who are becoming very anxious that their children shall not be reared in the midst of the unreasonable, relentless and unchristian proscriptions they at present have to suffer in their native state. These persons want to know what the constitution and School-Law of Kansas are as respects them and their rights.

If, therefore, you will send me a pamphlet of each and your last school report you will

Very greatly oblige them and
Yours Truly, J. H. BURRUS