

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

### Section 35, Pages 1021 - 1050

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

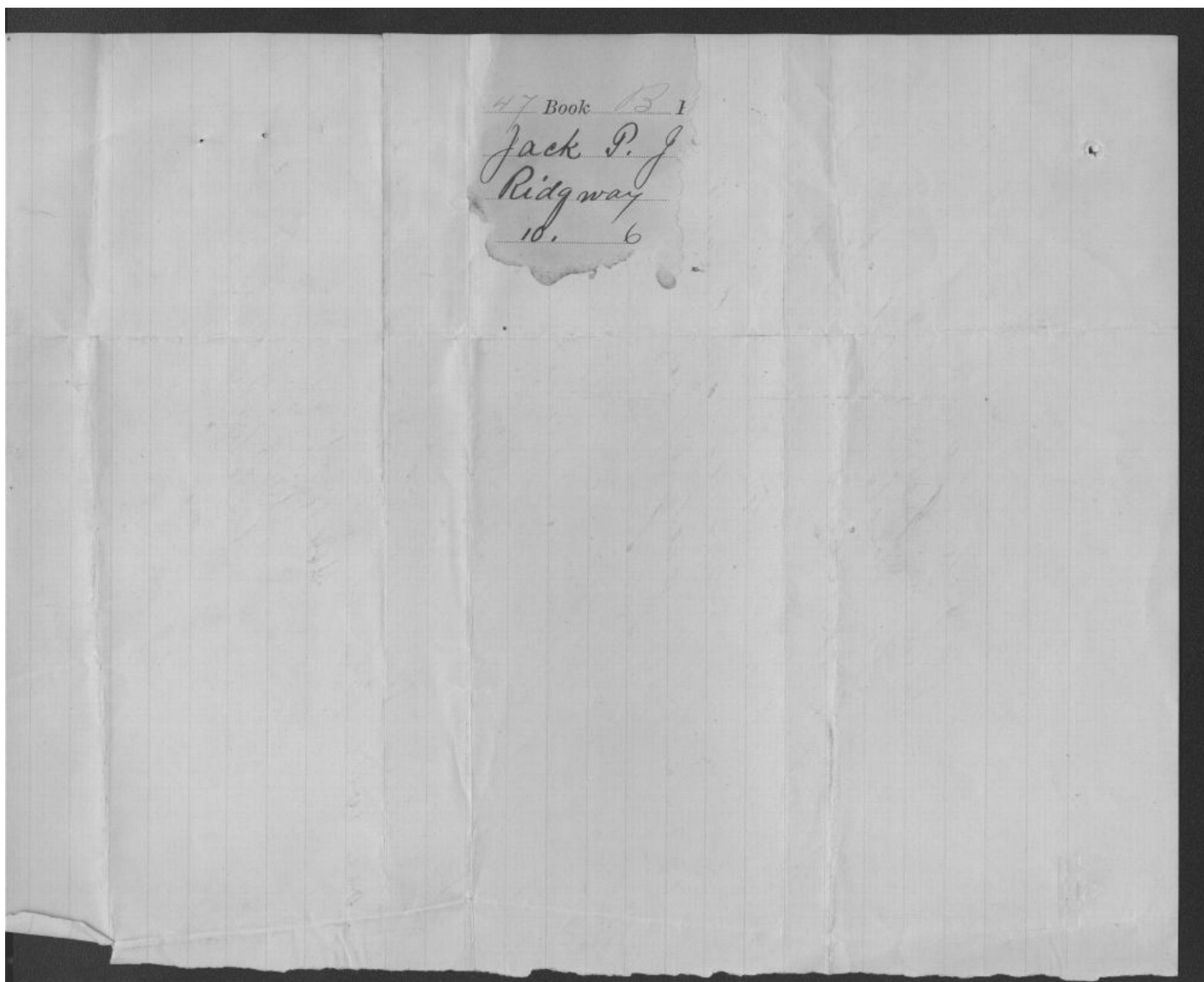
Callnumber: Governor's Office, St. John, Correspondence Received-Subject File, Box 13-15

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 210296

Item Identifier: 210296

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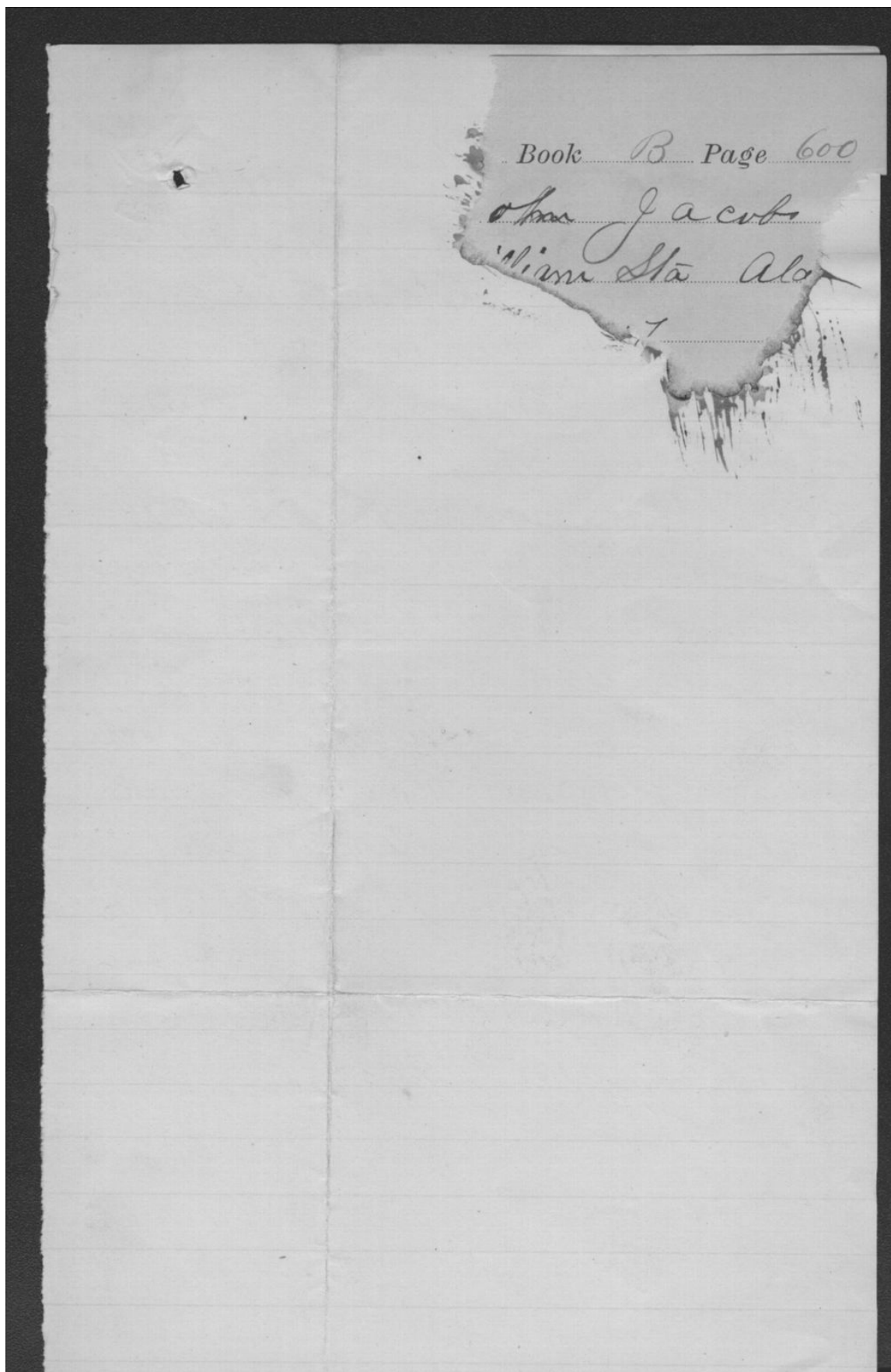
## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



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Oct the 1<sup>st</sup> 1879  
At Co  
William Station Escombia  
Honorable Governor St John  
Dear Sir here is a great many  
Colored people that want to go to  
Kansas If we know what step to  
take so we ask you will you please to  
let us know as we have a point to  
you and please to tell us how much  
it will take to carry us from Mobile  
we will pay any way for the sake  
of leaving there as they all aint  
got the money to come with the work  
hard and get on them for it please  
to give us sum word soon as you can  
Res John Jacobs

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Platte Kansas.

October 8th. 1879.

For J. P. St John.

Dear Sir -

Can

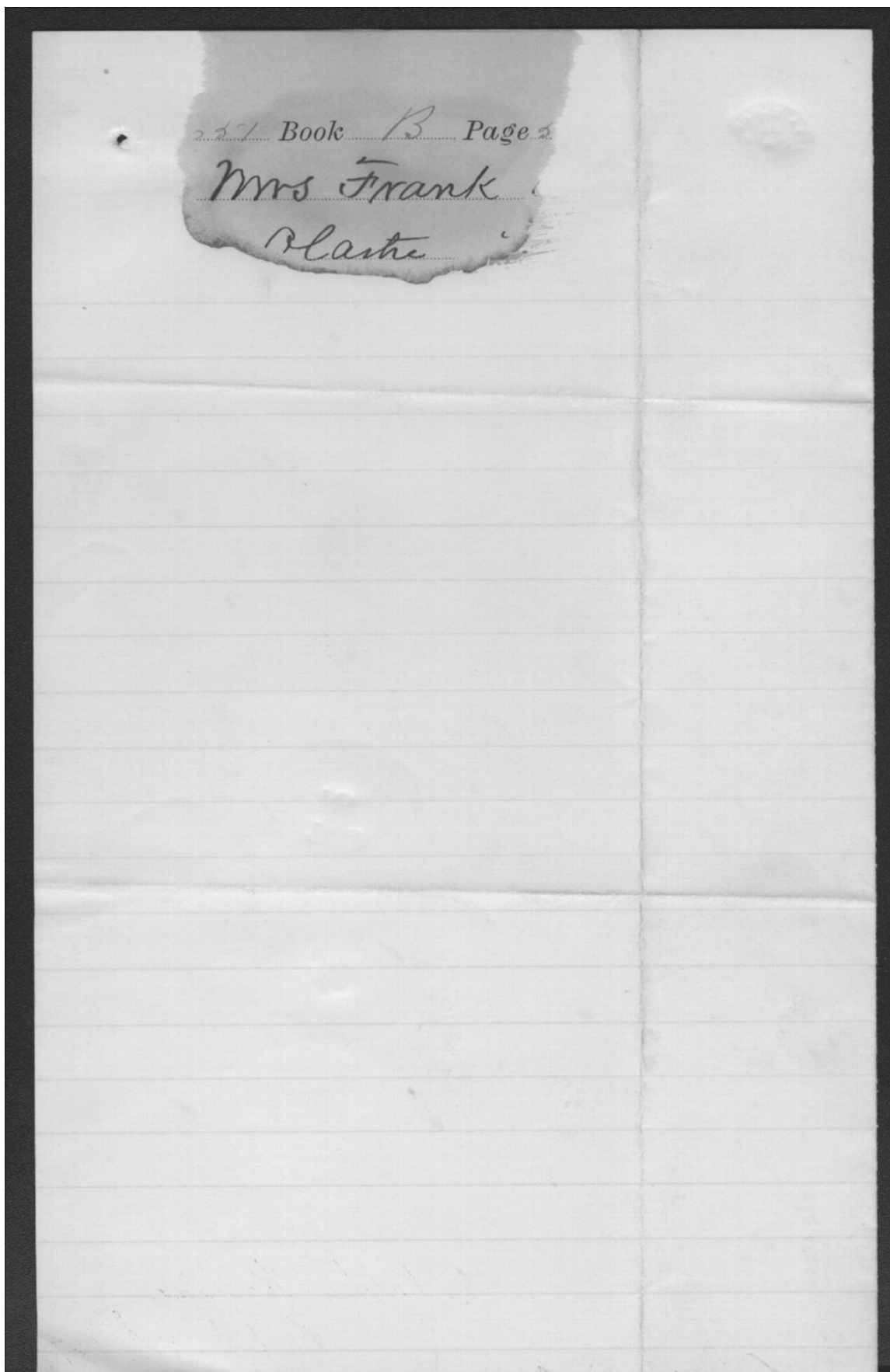
you send me down one of your  
"exodusters"? I am sadly in need  
of a girl to tend my baby, and  
wash dishes etc - and will be  
satisfied with almost any kind  
if she is able bodied - if you  
have any choice, one with as few  
"sisters cousins and Aunts" as  
possible - My kindest regards  
to Mrs St John.

Wm Frank O'g.

O.S.

Burch & I are having a  
small post office "Mr" Come down  
a settle for us! Frank

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Hurricane Creek Post Office

Landersdale County Miss  
Mr. John P St John

Dear Sir We send  
up a postistian for a word of information  
as we take you for our friend We as  
man of people of the above said county  
& Choctaw County Alabama think of  
Emigrating here and we expect coming  
nigh 2000 We Spring Please send us  
the general sanction of thing how Land  
sell also what arrangement have been made  
for helping people here we hear there  
are some in St Louis if you can make  
an arrangement to get to Vicksburg or  
Memphis Please do so for some of  
us can come through our selves But  
some can please for god sake come little  
over some of us got enough money  
to help pay for the expenses Tell us  
how the Land is here also about Wood  
& Hog & Cow I am here looking  
for answer from you (Committee  
Joseph Fortman & Osborn  
Johnson & Ben Phillips & Thomas Young  
& Stock Hunter

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

We are banded to come if there is  
any way hide from them as thousands of  
of people that would come if the  
only had saw instruction from  
some of the party We Pray God that

Harmonia Creek P.O.

Laurelville Conn.

Minist. St.

Joseph

Sporckman

Sporckman

13 Page 5874  
John Sporckman  
1 case P.O. Trip



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Victor Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>  
1879

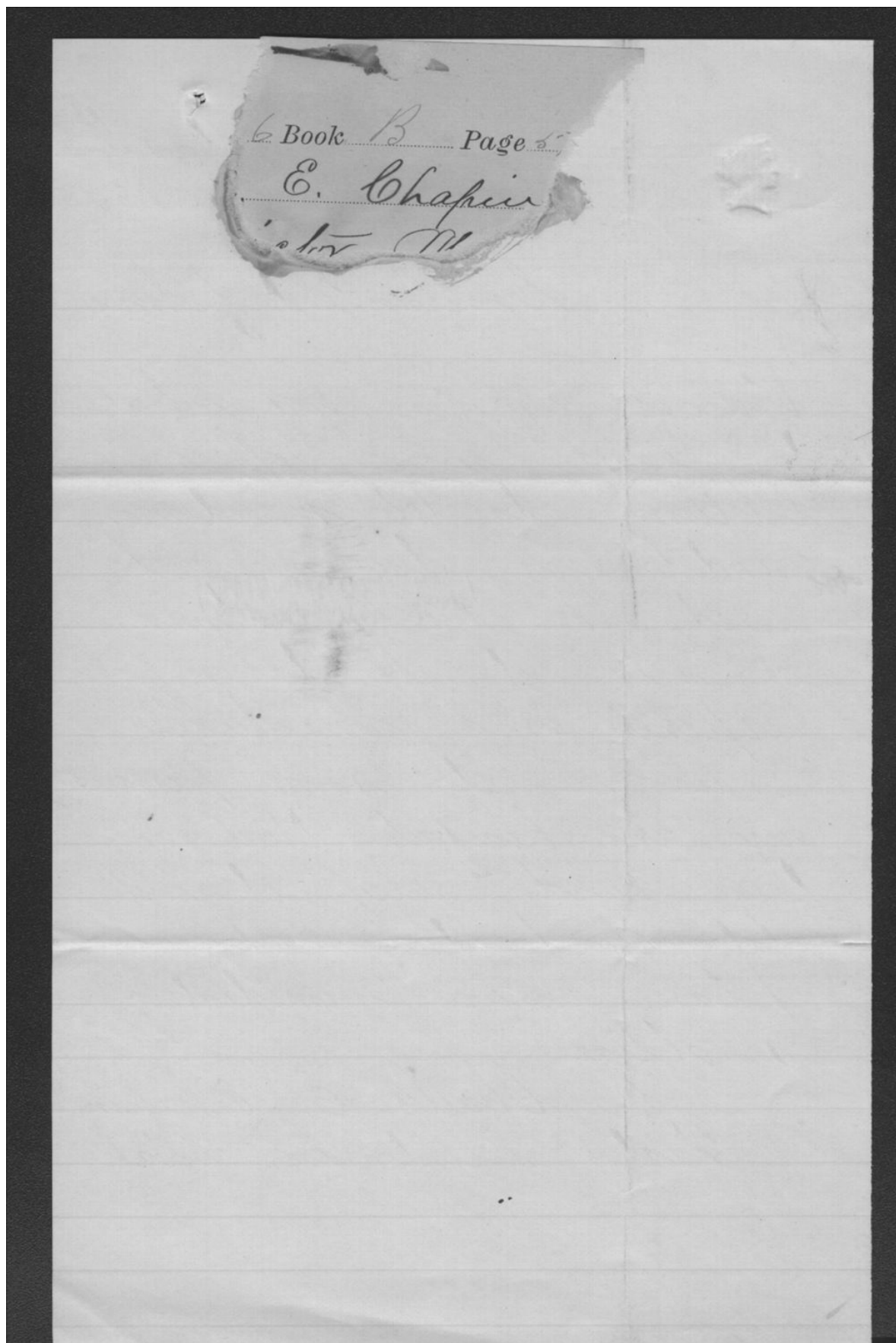
Governor St. John

Please inform me where  
to send money off or  
clothing to the Freed-men.  
and will the money be  
used for the Freed-men,  
or will it be taken for  
expenses, as a considerable  
share of it; some persons  
here are fearful that if  
they send relief it will  
not reach the needy.

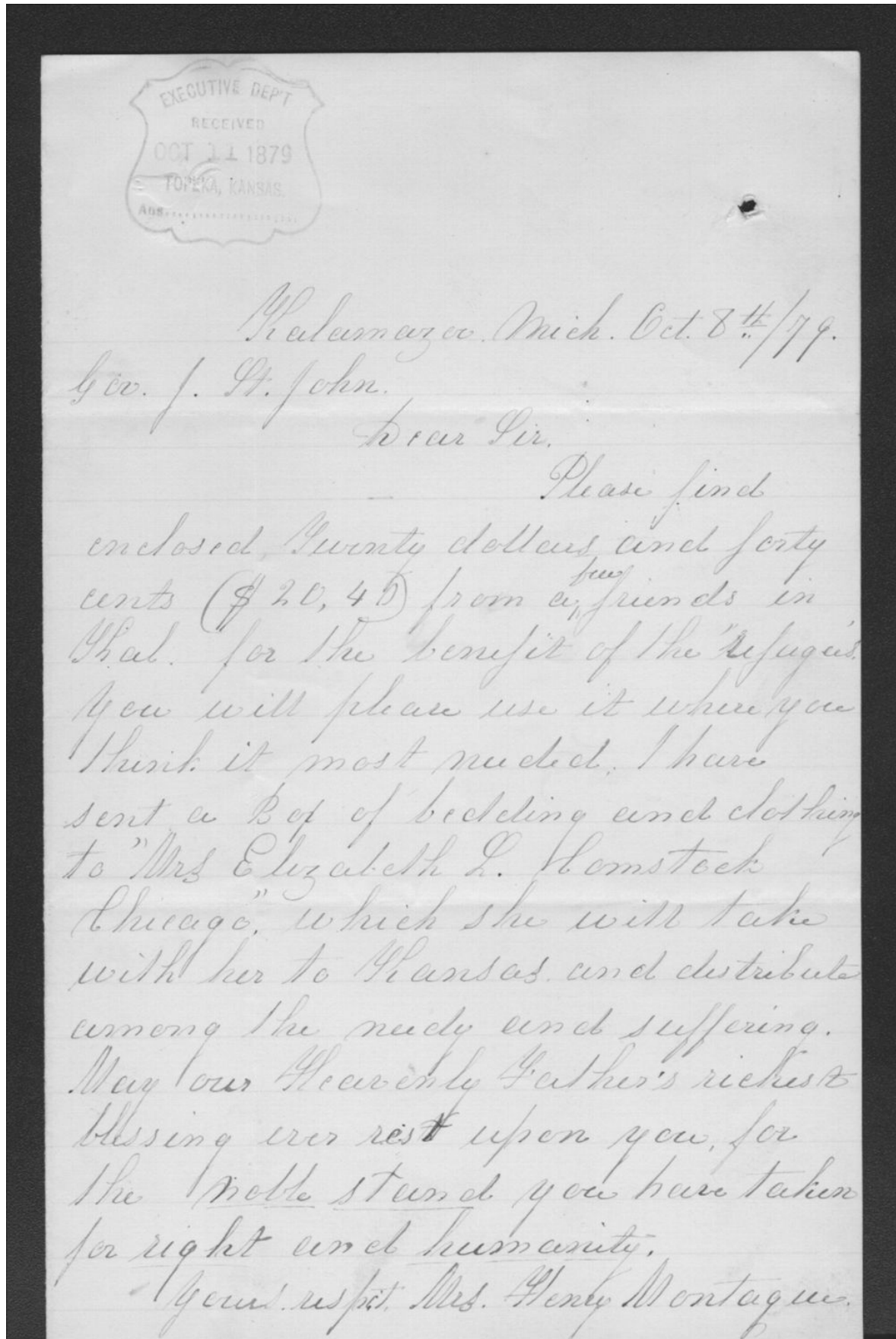
please answer immediately  
Y<sup>rs</sup> oblige

Charles C. Chapin  
Victor Clinton Co. Mich-

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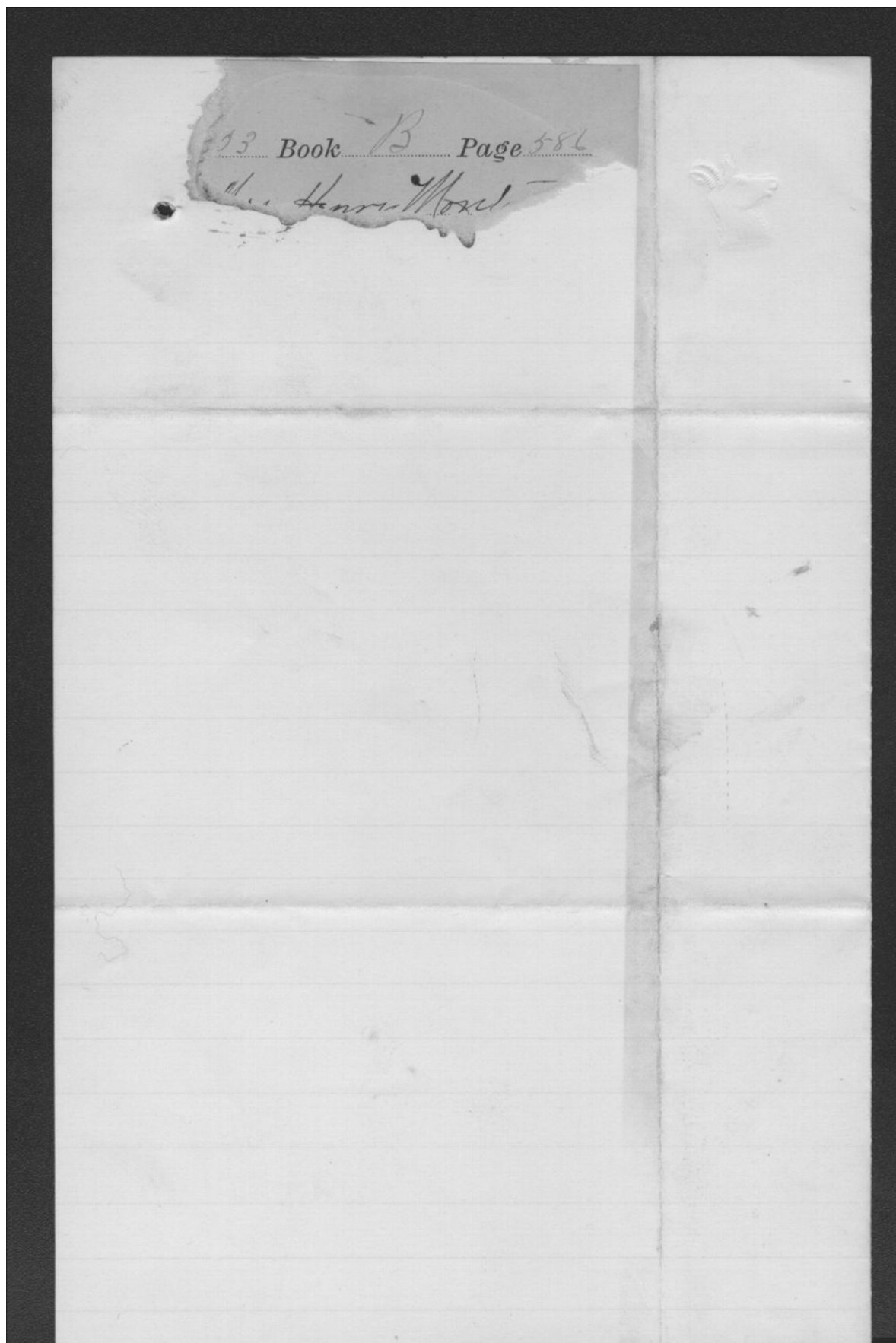


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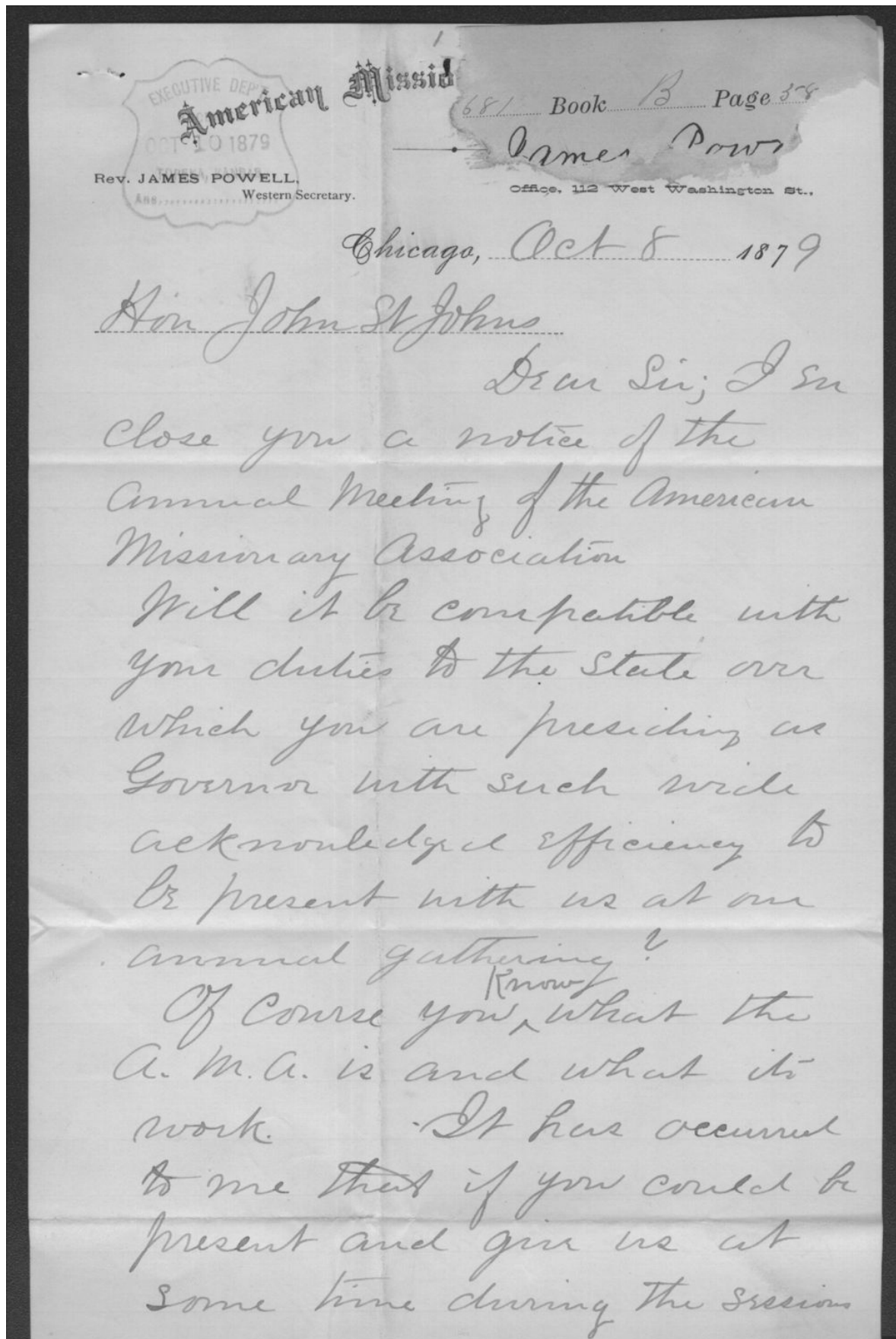


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An address say 30 minutes  
in length on The Negro  
Exodus you might accom-  
plish a good of such  
wide and important  
bearing as to justify you  
in making a special  
effort to be present.

(1) The Congregational churches  
of the country will be largely  
represented by their ministers  
and delegates, thus afford-  
ing you an opportunity  
to place over upon them  
the convictions that I am  
constrained from what I  
have seen from your pen  
you cherish deeply and  
profoundly.

(2) It will afford a very  
rare opportunity of giving





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

<sup>2</sup>  
American Missionary Association.

Rev. JAMES POWELL,  
Western Secretary.

Office, 112 West Washington St.,

Chicago, ..... 187

To the religious public accurate information regarding matters of which that public is ignorant, and of which they cannot easily obtain reliable information.

(3) If it be true that in the future there is to be a yet larger movement of the colored people from the South to the North you shall have prepared the way for enlisting a band of men and women for the work that must be done who cannot easily be reached by a mere communication to the secular press.

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

(4) Speaking at that meeting you will reach through the published reports in The Advance and Congregationalist the religious press of the country.

If you come I will see to it that you have a good hearing at such time of the day as you may elect to be heard.

I had hoped to see you when I visited Kansas last spring to attend the Gen. Assn. of the Congl churches, but lack of time prevented me from going up to Topeka.

May I hope from you the favor of an early reply.

My Cordial Yours  
Jas Powell



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Oct. 7, 1879

To his Excellency  
Gov John St John  
Hon Sir I received your kind  
& favor of the 18 of Sept. on the 27  
of the same. and you cannot imagin  
the satisfaction it give. I thank you  
a thousand times for your Book and  
letter. We are all laboring men and all  
we want is protection of the law  
please t send us a copy of your General  
laws of the State I hate to trouble you  
so much. So if you will point me  
some one <sup>for me</sup> to write to, it will be a favor  
to me. all we want is to show us the  
work or the land and we will make  
our own living. We are going to  
ask the general Government to aid  
us to the N. W. States and Territories  
and also ask you if you think that  
would be the proper step to take, you  
and no one else know our conditions  
here





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

I will pay the Postage & on  
the General laws of your State  
if I can find out what it is,  
for we want to see a copy of the  
laws of Kansas. the men who do not  
want us to Emmergate tell us all  
kind of tales. If we do not come  
to Kansas this year we want to come  
next. we want to know if we can  
git or rentt land and houses if we  
come next Spring. I may come out to  
Kansas in a few weeks if I can get off  
if not I hope that you will not  
fail to write to me and let  
me know the facts in  
this better

So I will say no  
more at this time I remain  
your humble servant,

Nathan Ring

Buena Vista Shelby Co Texas  
Oct the 7 1879

Ms. Book 18 Page 608

Nathan Ring

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



[Oct. 7]

Indian Bay Ar. & Sept. the 8<sup>th</sup> 1879

Mr. St. John, Governor of Kansas,

Dear Sir I write for information  
as I am here in the South oppressed with Persecution & desire  
to get from under them I find in Reading the Chicago Inter Ocean  
that Kansas is a better country for poor people than this a man  
can be a free man there and can exercise his Privilege as a citizen,  
will you tell me how I may get a land best if I come up there  
will it be better for me to come in a crowd or by myself, I  
Read something concerning of societies constituted in the  
South and emigrating up there I want to know if that  
would be the best way or not, also I would be glad to know  
what time in the year would be best to start up there and  
what kind of a start can I make towards farming that year  
there is a great many of my people that would be glad to get  
the straight powers from that country all of which desire to  
come up there, please let me know what it will cost a head  
to get there one by himself or in a crowd, please let me know  
all about the situation of that Republic as I expect to  
come up there some time during the coming year  
myself & several others if it will be best to constitute a



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Society I think My influence is Good enough among My  
People to go so, and as soon as I hear from you I will  
go to work and get it up according to direction, we are  
anxious to get in a country where we can be Reconciled according  
to our capacities, with This I Beg for an answer soon,

I am Sir yours Respectfully,  
Jas. E. McDade,

1690-Book 13 Page 13

J. E. McDade

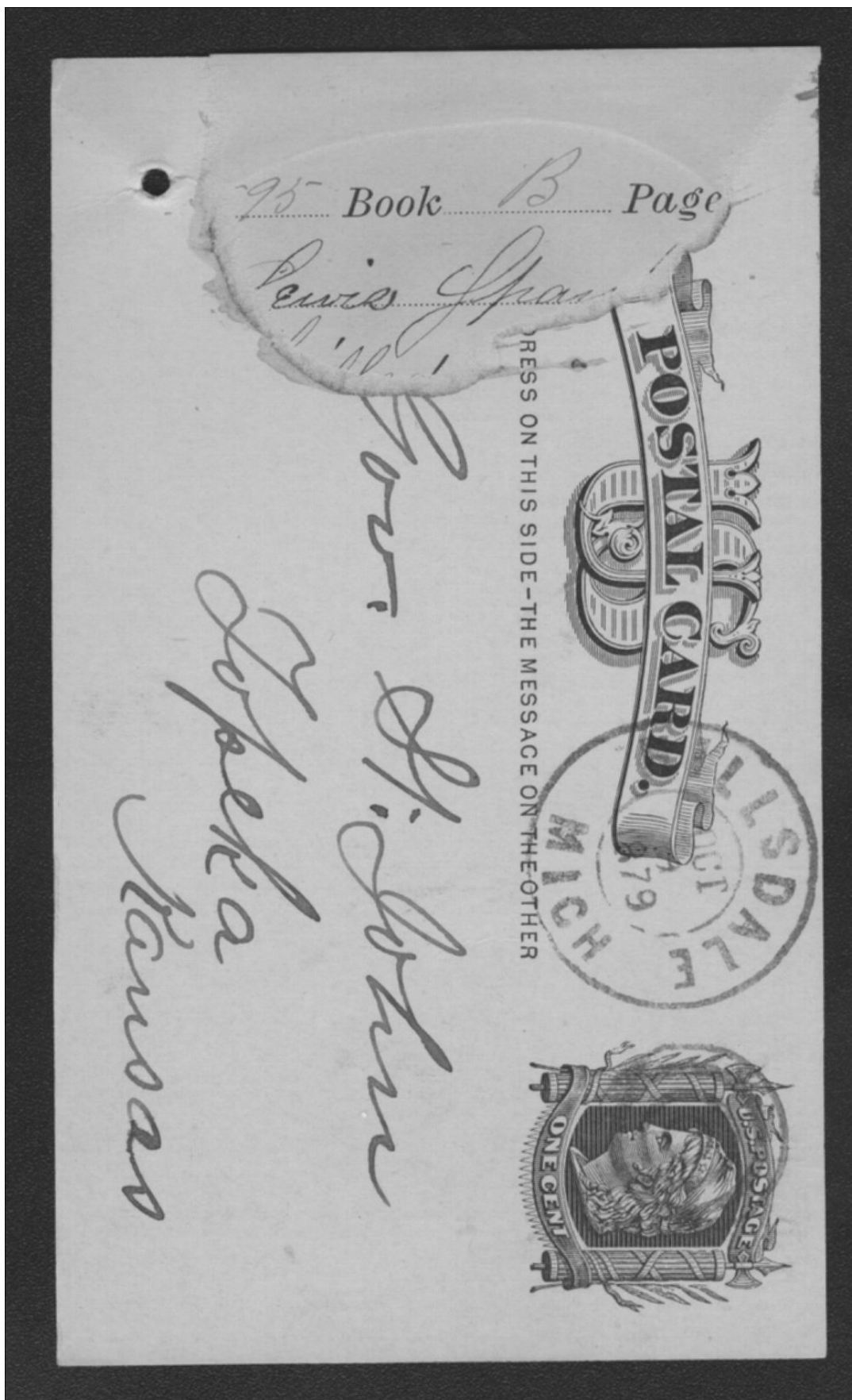
Indian B.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Hillsdale Mich 10/9  
Your acknowledgement  
of money sent is received.  
If you have any need  
of a plan for collecting &  
distributing second hand  
clothing please let me  
know & oblige Lewis Spaulding

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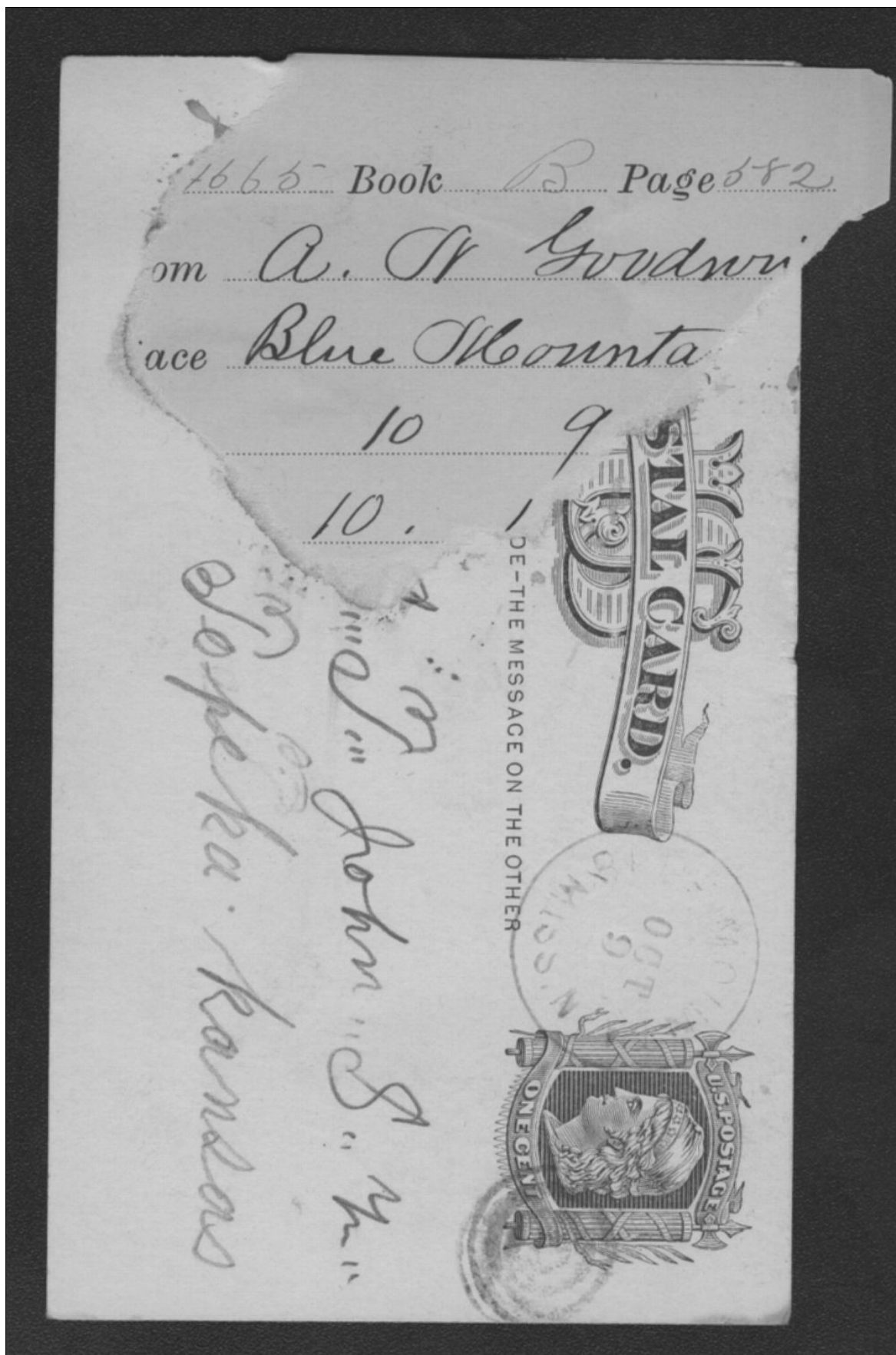


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Blue Mountain Miss Diph  
 602 to the 9 the 1879  
 You Sir John Sir  
 I wish that you would  
 give me some great  
 in charge of coming  
 to Topeka Kansas  
 I would like for you  
 to tell me what  
 for crops you all have  
 made in this year  
 tell me that labor  
 & per. month and the  
 best time to come  
 Kansas Write me all  
 the news so I hope  
 to hear from you  
 soon Respectfully  
 A. N. Godwin



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 Huntsville Tex Oct 9 1879  
 Governor St John Dear Sir address to you  
 For a few questions please to inform <sup>me</sup> some of  
 Advantages of the colored people emigrating  
 to Kansas some of them thinks that  
 This emigration is a trap is set to catch them  
 We dont get jesters in law there in Texas  
 And they thinks that it will be the same way  
 there because the way that the democrats laws  
 is ~~now~~ here if a freed man commites a little  
 crime that he might be found a small sum of  
 money and turned loose they will pick him up  
 and send him to the penitentiary for some  
 number of years they have got a law now when  
 a colored man or a colored woman commites  
 a little crime they makes a big crime of it  
 they puts him or her <sup>up</sup> on the block and sells  
 them from two to three dollars per month  
 Will you please write all of the information of  
 Kansas so that I can recel them <sup>to me</sup> to my people



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Dear Sir I say to you I do believe that it a good  
 thing for all the Colored people to migrate to  
 Kansas because from what I can learn the  
 Colored people will get a equal share in land  
 Please write to me how we can to get land <sup>of the</sup>  
 Get there and on what terms if I live I do  
 expect to come there my self if I live please  
 Write to me as soon as you can if we  
 Give and have good luck by the tenth of  
 March the next in 1890 some of our Society  
 of Walker County Texas wants to start to  
 Kansas by Rail Road Road then we want  
 to begin to migrate to Kansas I do believe  
 it is a good idea my self but some of my  
 People is rather Skittish of it and so I ask  
 you for some informations to Read to them to  
 Enlighten them all that I can we do expect  
 to send a delegate to Kansas before long  
 to look over the country for us and to see  
 where we will locat at so that when we leave  
 Texas we will go write to it at once  
 Write to me as soon as you can



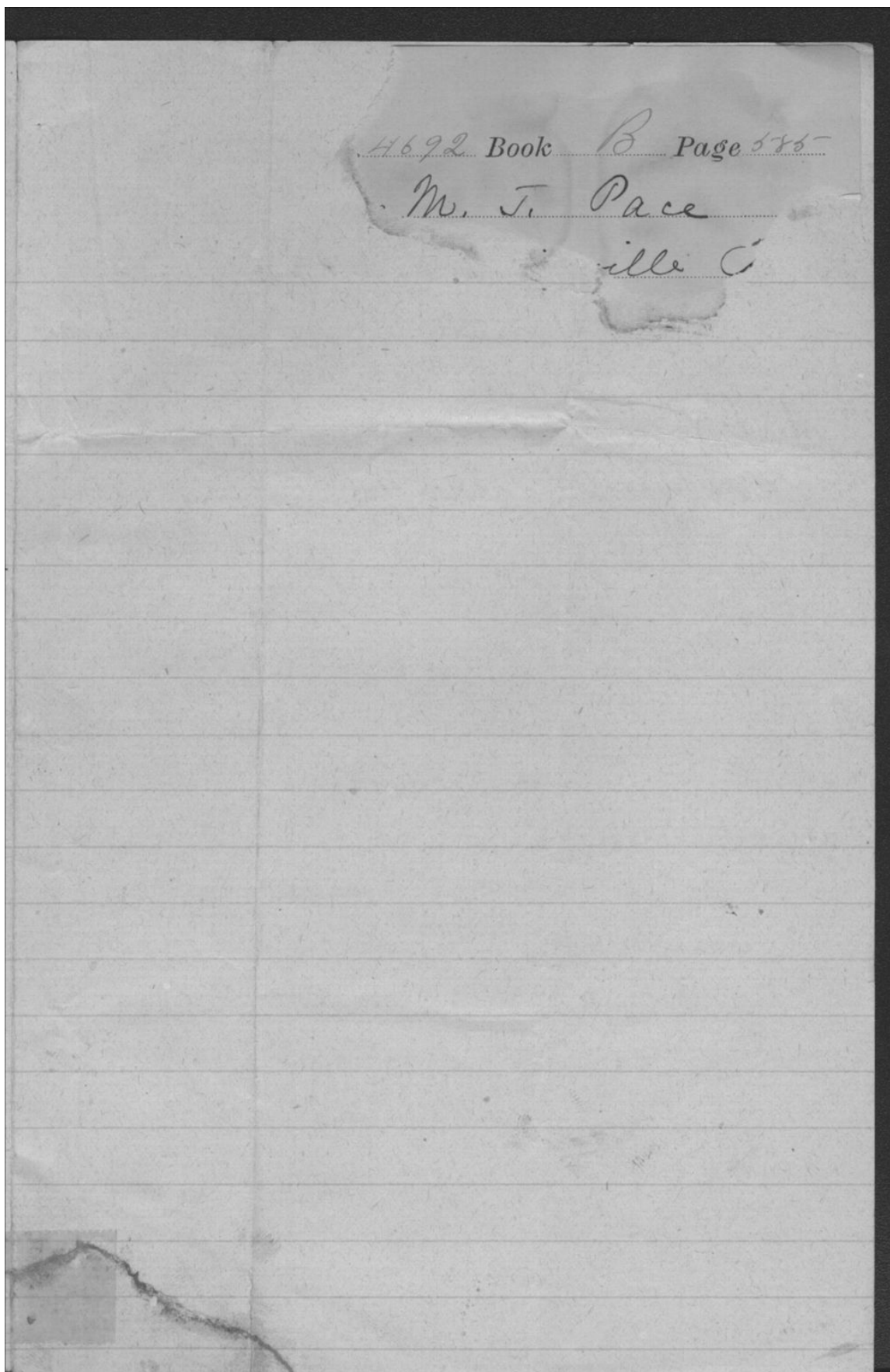
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I will close for the present time  
untill a Return from you  
Gov St John Kansas Topeka

Mr T. Pace  
Huntsville Walker County Texas



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## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Washington County, Texas.  
Brenham. Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 1879.

Dear Gov. After writing the enclosed, I concluded to write you only a short letter from Richmond, and to withhold the enclosed and full particulars, untill my arrival home. I arrived at home on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. being detained several weeks longer than I expected. I shall return to my colony next week, and will probably remain there untill the latter part of Nov.

New purchasers are pouring in to my colony, and from present indications, I will perhaps dispose of several thousand acres of land by the latter part of next month. White planters and large landowners in the lower Counties are very anxious for me to colonize colored people there because they have learned that it is the only way by which they can retain good labor and sell their wild lands. The "Exodus" has had a very beneficial effect, because the white people of the South begin to realize the fact that the colored people are by no means fixtures in the South, and that they will surely migrate elsewhere



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if necessary to escape persecution and class legislation. I have been informed by many intelligent colored tenants, that their landlords are offering to rent them lands for the coming year, or for a number of years, at from two to three dollars per acre, and in settling up the present years rents they are not near so exacting or oppressive as they have usually been. Besides this landlords in many instances are offering to divide up their large plantations into small tracts, and sell them out <sup>to</sup> colored tenants at prices ranging from ten to twenty dollars per acre, payable in ten annual instalments.

This is truly some good accomplished by "the Ex-dus." already, but it is only a small beginning for what I yet hope it will secure for the general good of colored people. They must be colonized in large numbers in sections of country adapted to their labor and best interests, and unless this is done, and if the great masses of them continue to remain tenants, and the more intelligent and thrifty classes of them buy homes here and there among the white people, they will continue to remain

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in a condition of penury and vassalage to their former masters. A well organized system of colonization well sustained by capital, controlled by active earnest white friends of the colored people can alone successfully colonize them, for as I have repeatedly explained to your Excellency, and other leading Republicans, — the colored people if thrown upon their own resources, can never colonize and become a selfsustaining progressive people. I believe that Texas, can be made one of the most practicable and secure section of the Country for colored colonization, and as I have already in former communications, fully explained to you my reasons for so believing, I will not now reiterate them. I know what I have done in colonizing colored people here, in the face of opposition from both white Republicans and planters, and if I were only properly backed now by capital and active friends, I could <sup>settle</sup> 5000 colored families in Southern Texas, within twelve months. I could obtain 100,000 or more acres of as fertile lands as the Sun ever shone on, at one dollar per acre, and the colored people would res-