

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 5, Pages 121 - 150

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

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and ~~since~~, but unfitted mentally by generations of association and training to grapple with the necessities of their new situation they must inevitably become a serious charge upon the community for an indefinite period, unless the question is met and practically disposed of.

The proposition to that end which I herewith submit is one which I should not hesitate to grapple as an individual were it not that what capital I possess and control is already invested at the south, and cannot be withdrawn for a long period.

Proposition

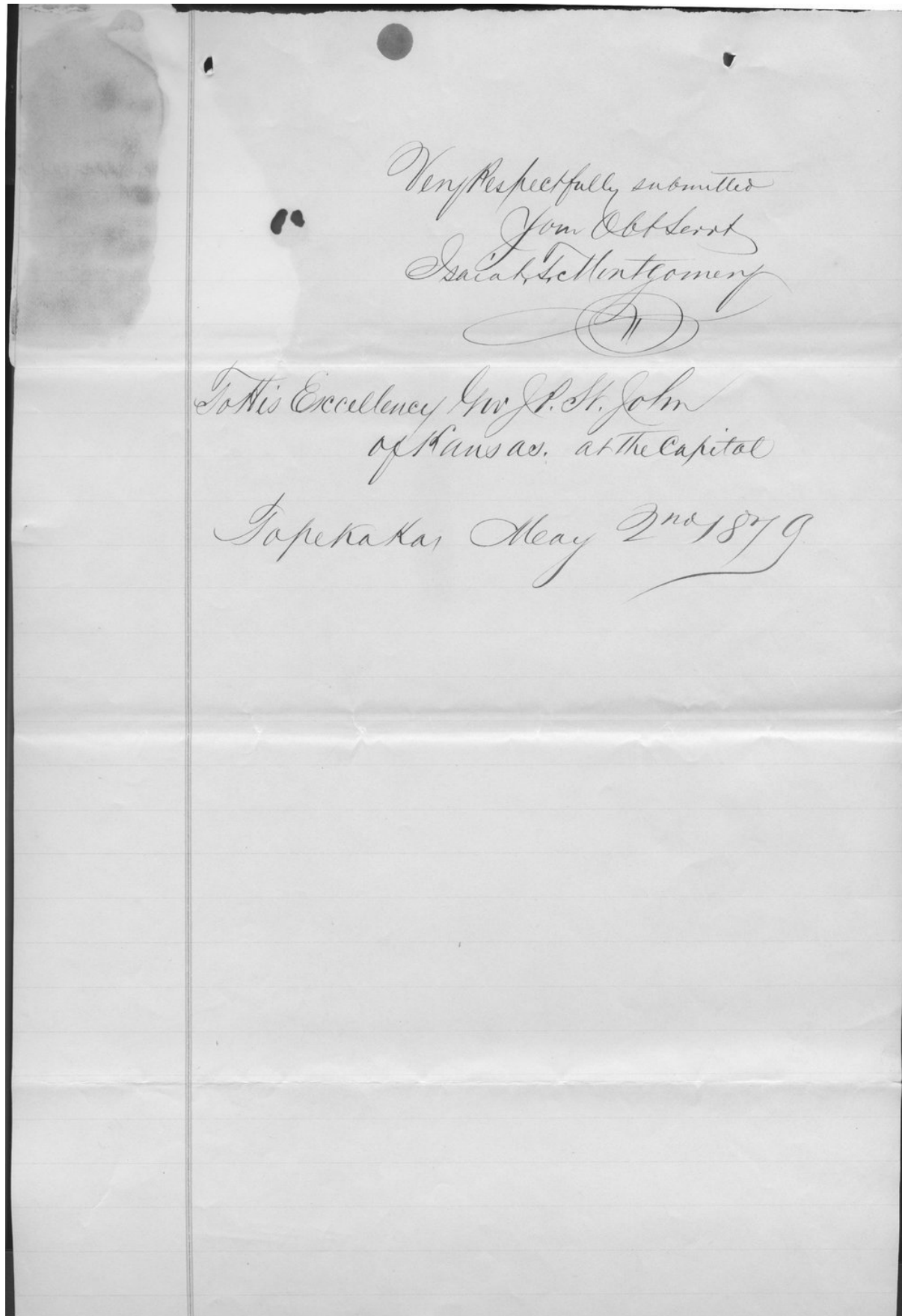
In addition to all the means now exercised to obtain employment, select a good locality and choose from among the immigrants here and as fast as they arrive all who are accustomed and adapted to hard work, said locality should be previously laid off in forty and twenty acre lots, one large cheap building erected as a kind of reception room as the labor arrived on the ground utilize it in building sod houses (of lumber ^{stave etc}) on the different subdivisions, breaking land planting sod corn etc, all who labor to receive support ^{only} and be supplied necessities, ^{only} except they ploughmen (they should be hired) in this manner proceed to break and build houses on the whole tract, as fall approaches —

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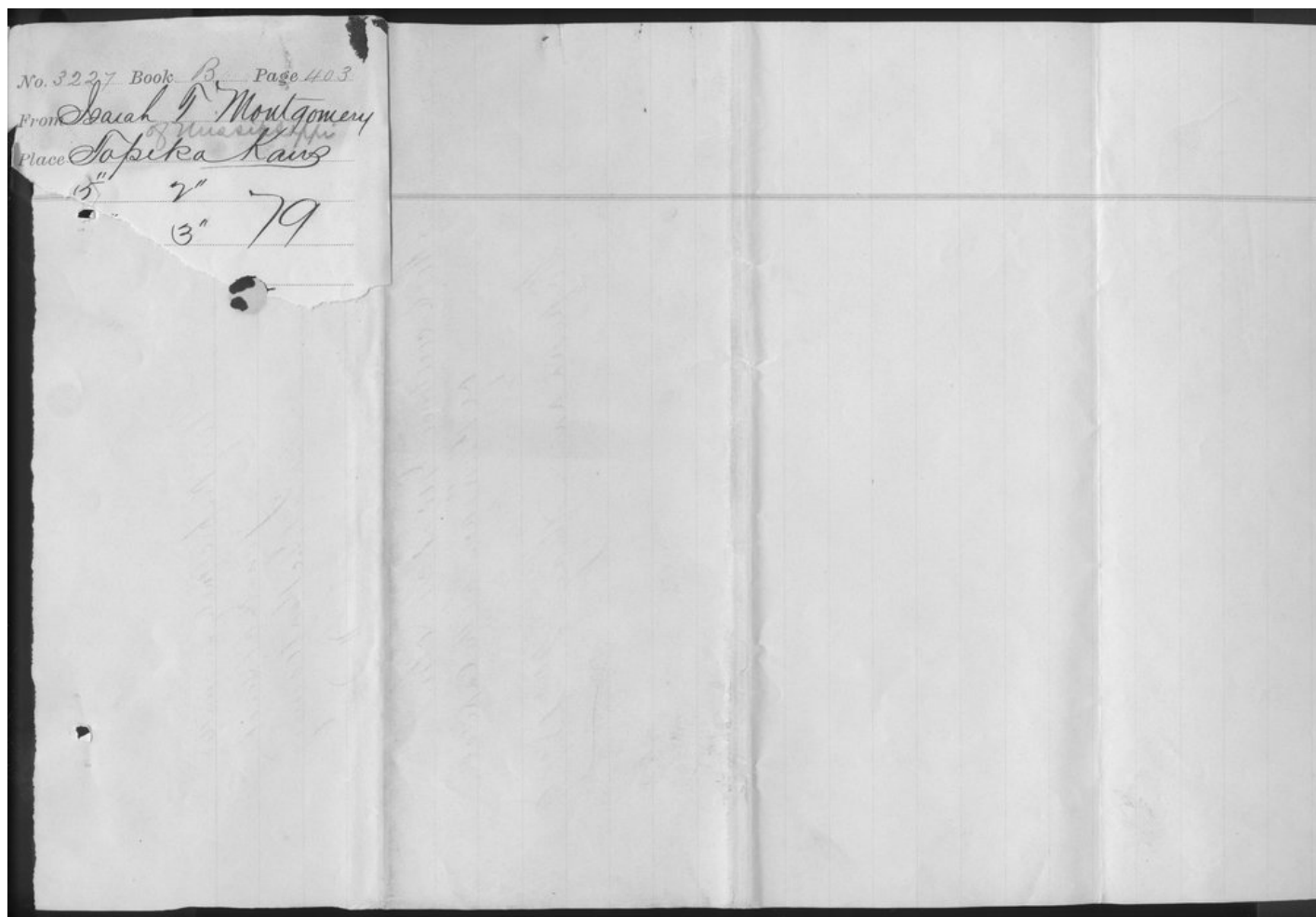
supply teams to responsible parties to crop plough and let each family or squad who will then be situated in their own subdivision ^{plant} a crop of grain. The next season would probably find them in condition to pay something in the purchase of stock and land. besides being self supporting, all who could find remunerative labor would be privileged to accept it, only they would have to provide their own support. by judicious management based upon this theory. I believe the labor of the colored immigrants can be utilized in cultivating thousands of acres of land now unbroken with comparative small outlay. the propositions contemplates that they ^(the colored people) should purchase the lands teams etc, with the exception of the breaking teams reapers, threshers etc. The above does not enter into many minor details, but I trust the main points are sufficiently plain to ^{be} understood. May God speed noble Kansas in the philanthropic effort to provide an asylum for the poor and oppressed. I returned yesterday from a visit to Craig and Lyon County. where I looked at some fine lands much of which is probably underlain with coal. to ^{night} ~~day~~. I shall go out on the Kansas Pacific in company with Mr Dawson. ^{and} on my return will call to see you before departing for Mississippi.



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6/3/79
Mayor's Office,
W. M. FORTESCUE,
Mayor.
Leavenworth, Kansas, May 2 1879
Col. John P. St John
Gov. of Kansas. Topeka.
Dear Sir:
You will confer a
favor by informing me what arrangement have been
made by the State authorities (if any) to forward
into the interior the refugees arriving in our
State.
A number have arrived and this morning
the Steamer Joe Kinney with 300 or more landed
at our levee.
If you have any funds donated for
that purpose, or any arrangements made to
forward them to distinct parts of the State, you
will oblige me by giving the deemed information
or any suggestions you may be pleased make
relative to the case.
Respy
W M Fortescue
Mayor.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3215 Book B Page 401
From W. M. Fortlogue
Place Leavenworth Ks
Date May 2
Rec'd 1879
Ans'd May 13

ABSTRACT.
Asking what arrangement
has been made by the
State authorities to forward
Colored Refugees in the
Mexican part of the State,

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5/5/79
OFFICE OF
TREASURER OF PUEBLO COUNTY.

GEO. W. MORGAN, Treasurer.

Pueblo, Colorado, May 3^d 1879
Gov. St. John
Topeka Kansas.

Dr Sir

Enclose herein First Nat^l

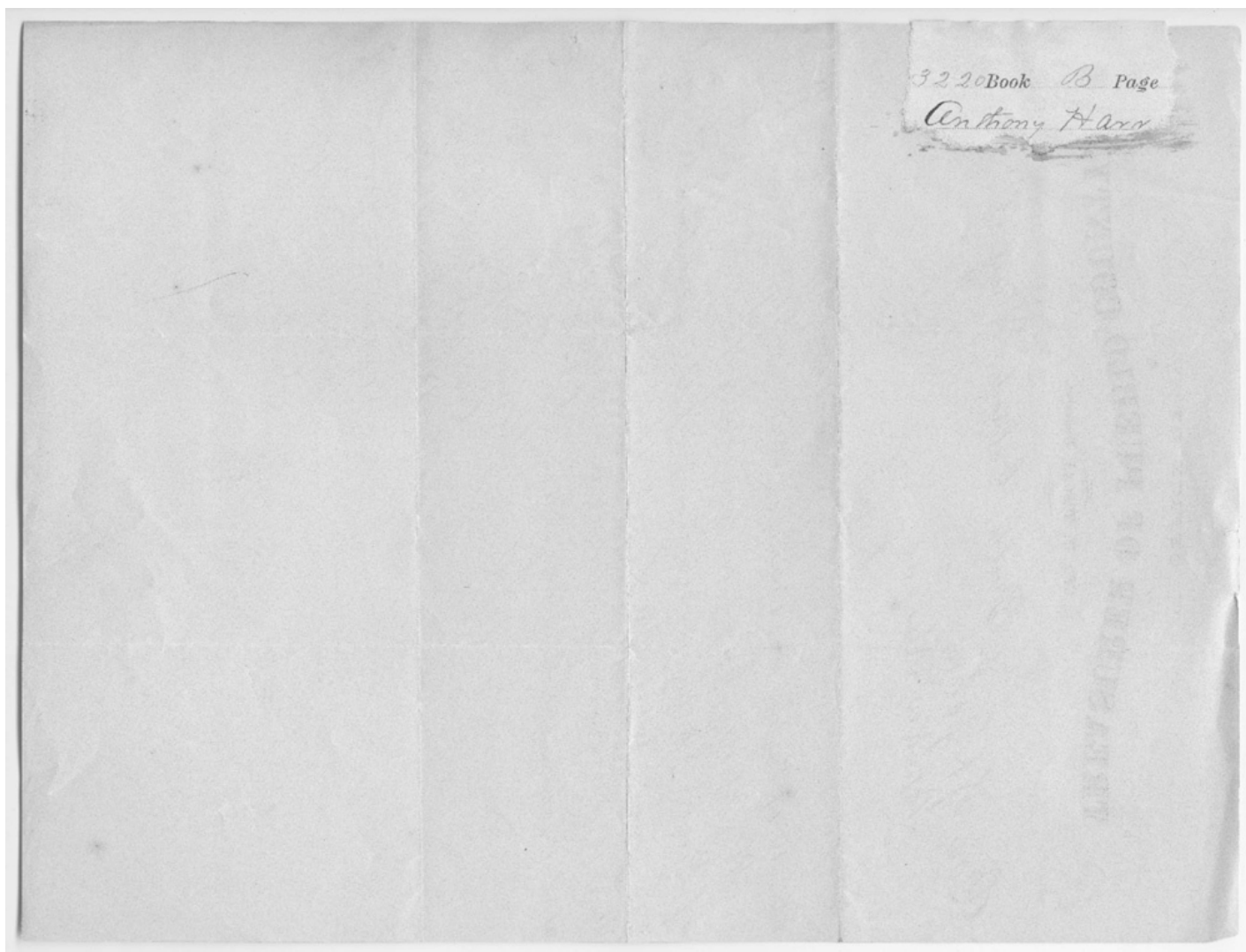
Bank of Pueblo, on Bank of Kansas City. \$50⁰⁰

This Money has been raised by the Colored Citizens
of Pueblo for the assistance of the destitute Colored
Emigrants from the South that are in, and now
coming to Kansas. Please use it as you think best.
and please acknowledge receipt.

Yours Truly

Anthony Harrison
Chairman of Executive
Committee for aid of
Colored Citizens from the
South.

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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

5/17/79

Neuland May 3 1879

Governor

J. P. St. John

Topeka Kansas

Dear Sir,-

I have your respective
letters of the 28th & 29th inst. -
and have through the
press conveyed your thanks
to our citizens. - They
appreciate the attitude
so cheerfully taken by the
State of Kansas, through
you, her Executive
respecting the help so
useful to these poor
people, now seeking homes
among you. - I have

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

now, the pleasure of
handing you, by the
enclosed left on New York,
\$145 - additional, - for the
same object. - which
please acknowledge -
I remain -

Very Truly & Respectfully
George W. Ely
Treasurer -



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3233 Book B Page 403

From G. H. Eby

Place Cleveland Ohio

Date May 3

Rec'd } 1879

Ans'd May 6

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
MAY 10 1879
TOPEKA, KANSAS.

Springfield, O.
May 4th 1879.

To the Governor of Kansas:

Sir, I write you for the purpose of ascertaining the true condition of the colored people now pouring into Kansas from the South. An effort is being made to furnish relief to the needy and the suffering fugitives, by the people in this City; and, that we may act intelligently, it is necessary that we should know their wants, and also that we should know some thoroughly responsible party, or parties, to whom these contributions may be sent for distribution, and I could think of no one so well qualified to furnish the desired information as yourself. You will greatly oblige me by giving such information concerning this matter as you may be able to furnish. Please name the

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2

points where help is needed
most, and, if you can do so,
please furnish me with the names
of such persons as would be suit-
able to attend to the distribution
of such alms as might be sent
them.

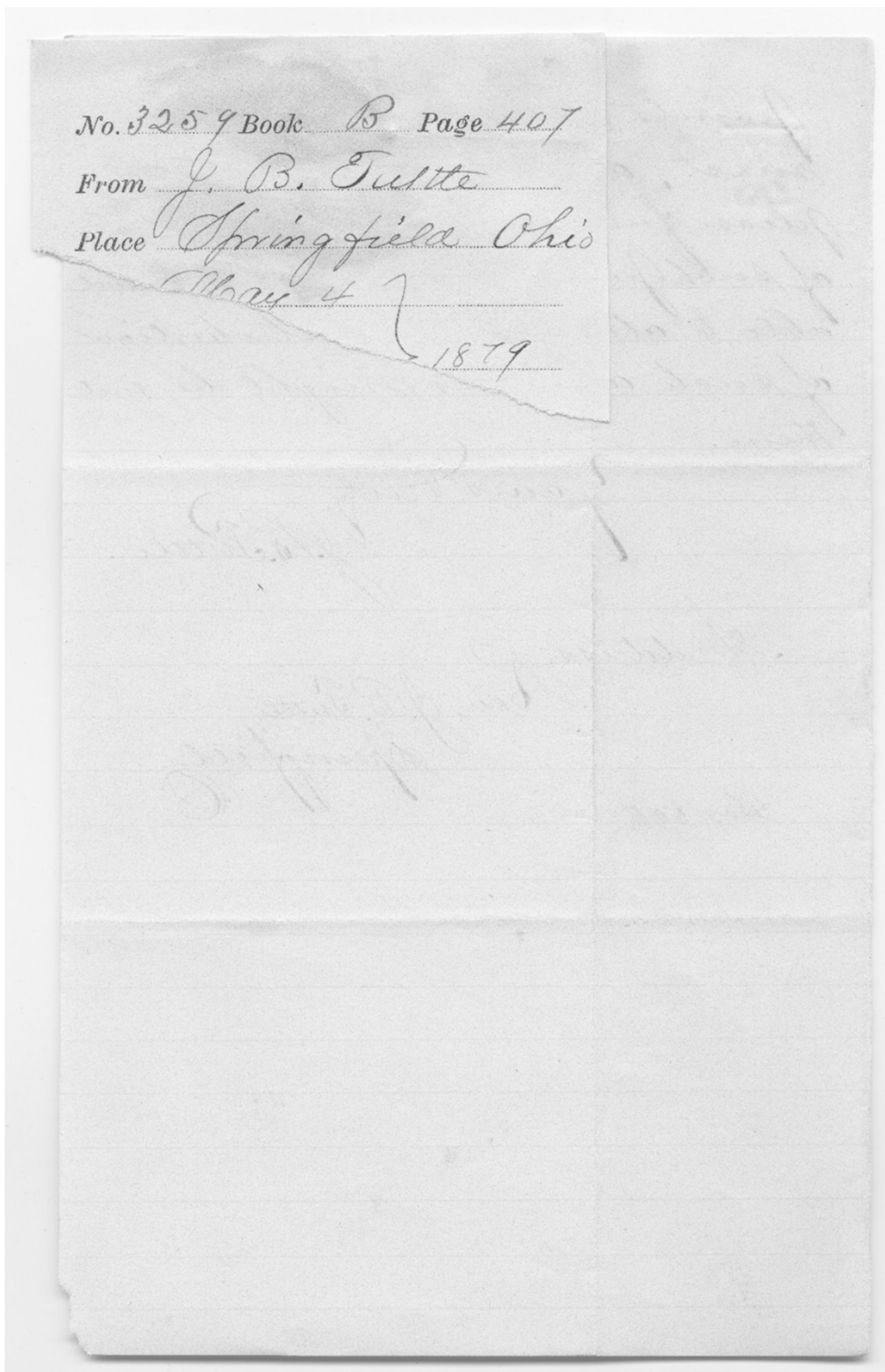
Yours truly,
J. B. Tuttle.

Address: Rev. J. B. Tuttle
Springfield,
O.

Box 804.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

67/79
Bekalona Iowa May 2 79
Governor St John
Dear Sir
I wrote a letter to you one
week ago yesterday & in that I stated to you
that we were taking steps toward raising
means to aid the people of Kansas in taking
care of assisting the destitute refugees that are
now pouring themselves in such large masses in
your state & I have not received any answer
from you now we have some money all ready
on hands for that purpose & the sympathy
of our people in this country is aroused & the
general inquiry is "Have you a plan to send
this money?" I have told the people that I
wrote to you & was looking for an answer
every day & not receiving one until now I thought
I had better write you again the probabilities
are that we can raise considerable money ^{& clothing}
this part of the state if we can assure the
people that the plan we are going to send the money
is reliable & I think that whatever party that
you ^{would suggest} ~~suggested~~ should be reliable hence my reason
for writing to you I assure ^{you} as soon as ever
we get word from you that there will be means
forwarded from this point & that will give
entire satisfaction to the people as to where to.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

and aid please answer this by return
mail & oblige. your obedient servant
John Sims
chairman of Relief Com-
P. O. Box 288.

No. 3234 Book B Page 403
From John Sims
Place Oklahoma Terria
Date May 4
Rec'd
Ans'd May 7 1879

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Office of C. H. HOBART, Proprietor,
NEWTON MILLS,
Manufacturer of Flour and Corn Meal,
AND DEALER IN EVERY DESCRIPTION OF MILL FEED.

Newton, Kas, May 5th, 1879.

To his Excellency
the Governor of Kans.

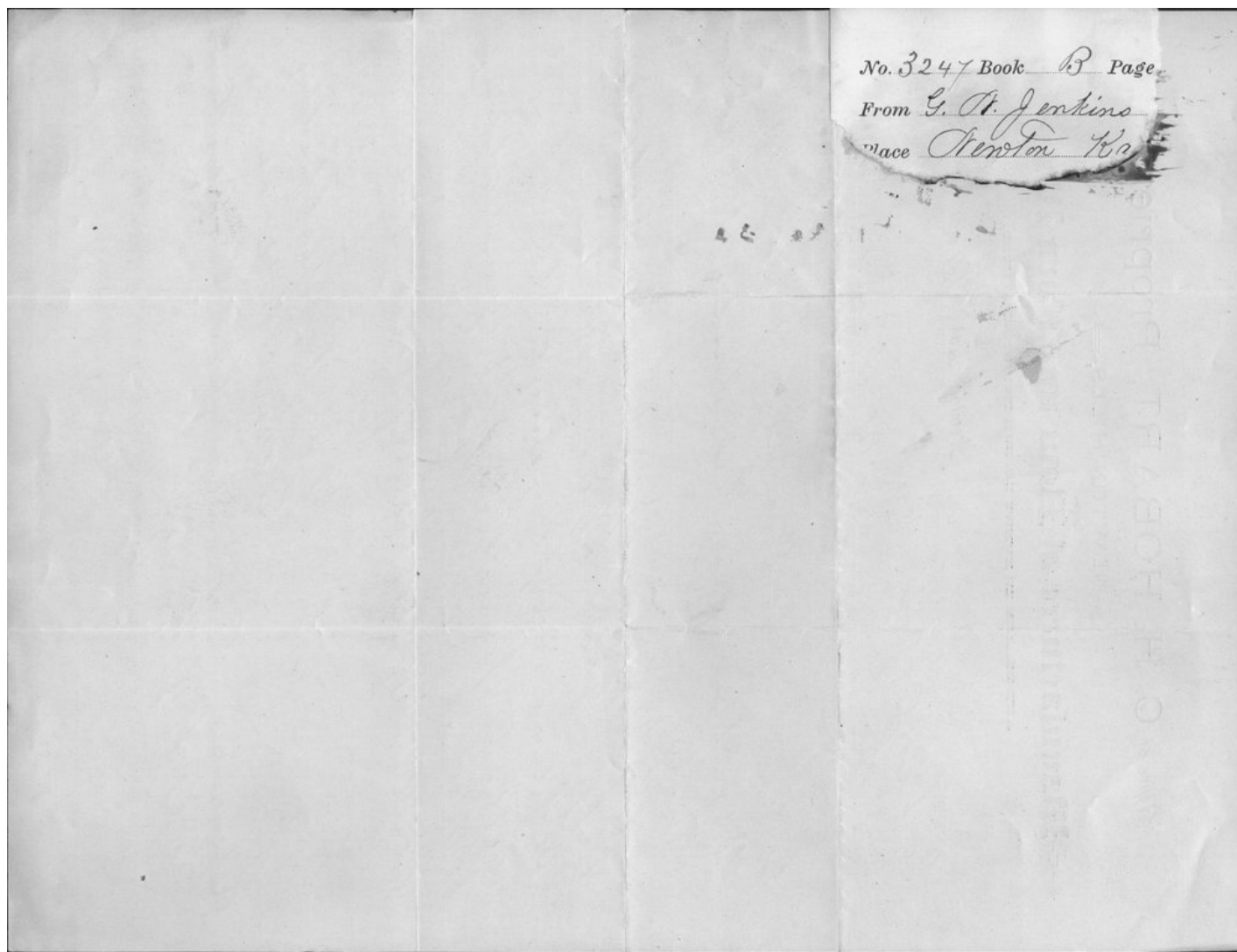
Allow me
herewith, to Enclose a Note to
Mr Hilliard, his initials I do not
know.

My object is to get Colored
help. good house women
I have employment for two
without families 25 years old up
to 35. I want those from the
South who have been Houseworts.

I have the honor
to be. Respectfully
Obernelt Desot
L. M Jenkins

Reference
Capt R. M. Spring

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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



May the 7th 1879

Marshall Harrison County Texas
the Gouner of the state of
Kansas. We will address you with
some of our troubles in the state
of Texas. we colored people o have
heard from that country and
we are very antious to go there
but some of us are too poor to
get there. we make large crops of
cotton in Texas. but we never
realize a nickle from our cotton.
the white folks. take all of our
corn we make here. Men women
and children after farming, goes
nearly naked. some colored people
in the state owns some land but
not very many I dont think. but
they are not recognized in the state
of Texas hardly.

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we want to get some advice, from
how we can get there and leave the
state of Texas. I have traveled
through Harrison County. I have
traveled through Marion County
I have traveled through Titus
County, traveled through Bass
County. through Upsey County.
Gregg County. Smith County.
Wood County. Rusk County. and
have preached in all these counties.
and all the people are oppressed.
the little children that ought to
be going to school are so nigh
naked until they can not go to
school to get a little learning.
God being my helper I expect to be
in that ^{country} in about 3 weeks and as soon
as I receive and answer from you.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



No. 32 61 Book
From Rev J
Place Mar
date Mar

I am a traveling preacher. a
has a very large family. the
excitement is high here in Texas
of emigration. some of the white
days if the colored man leaves
they will follow. I am in
hopes that you will write as
soon as you receive this letter
and give me all the advice you
can that I may comfort and
gladden the hearts of the people.
I will remain yours truly
Rev Henry Smith a poor
preacher of the gospel

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Clara Ann Smith
a student of W
Wiley University
a daughter of the ~~poor~~ ^{preacher} poor

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

5/19/79

Waltou Kansas

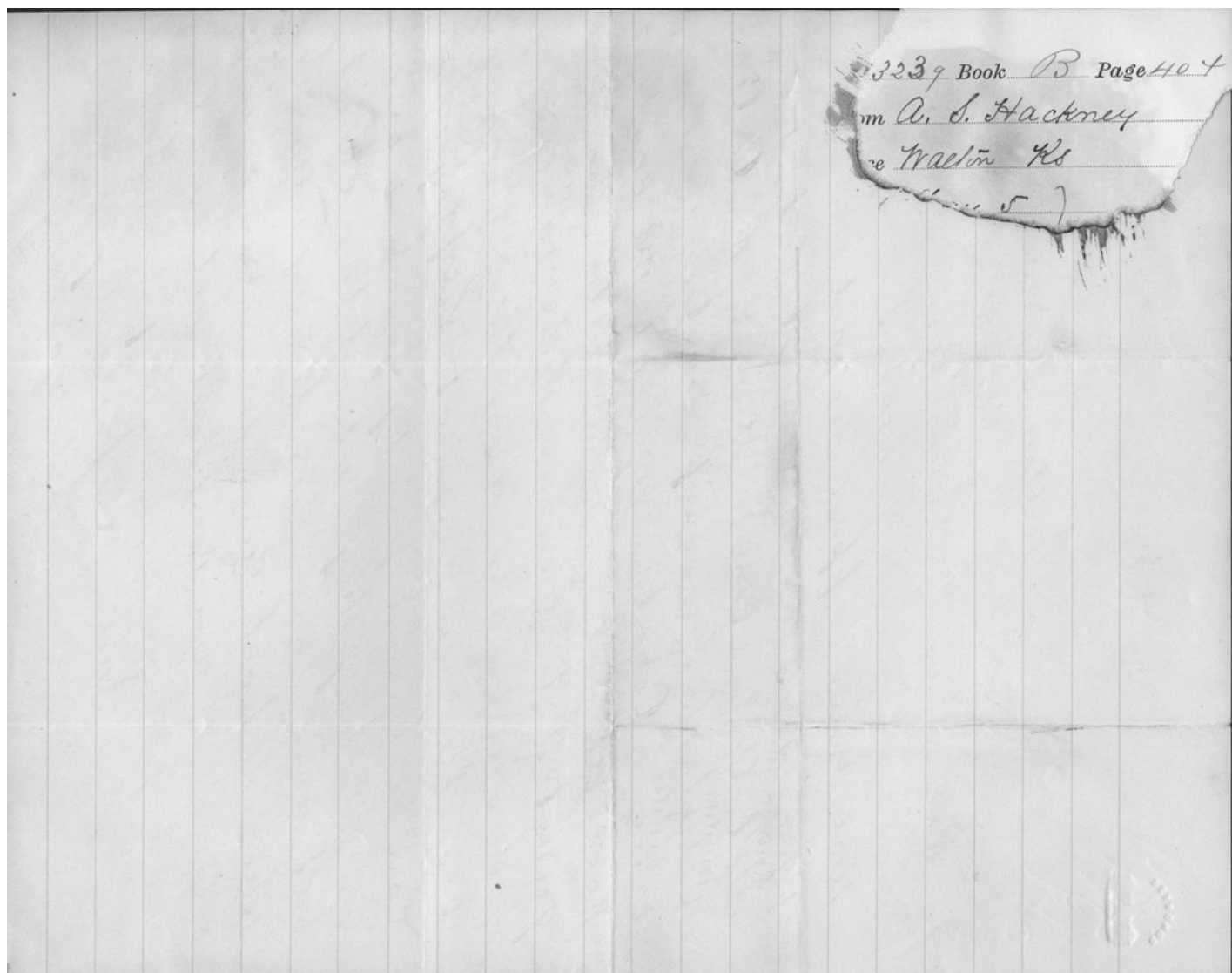
May 5th 1879

Hon. John P. St. John Gov.

Dear Sir having
seen your appeal for aid for the
refugees I would suggest that the
State Com. secure through the Co. Clks
a list of Township Trustees in the
various Counties and at the earliest
possible date said Trustees be re-
quested to canvas their various
Townships and ascertain the greatest
possible number that employment
can be found for. by farmers or others
In this way they need not be a charity
but can earn their living with men
who will teach them some thing of im-
portance. I am confident that several
can be provided for in my neighborhood.

I am Respectfully Yours
A. S. Mackay

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

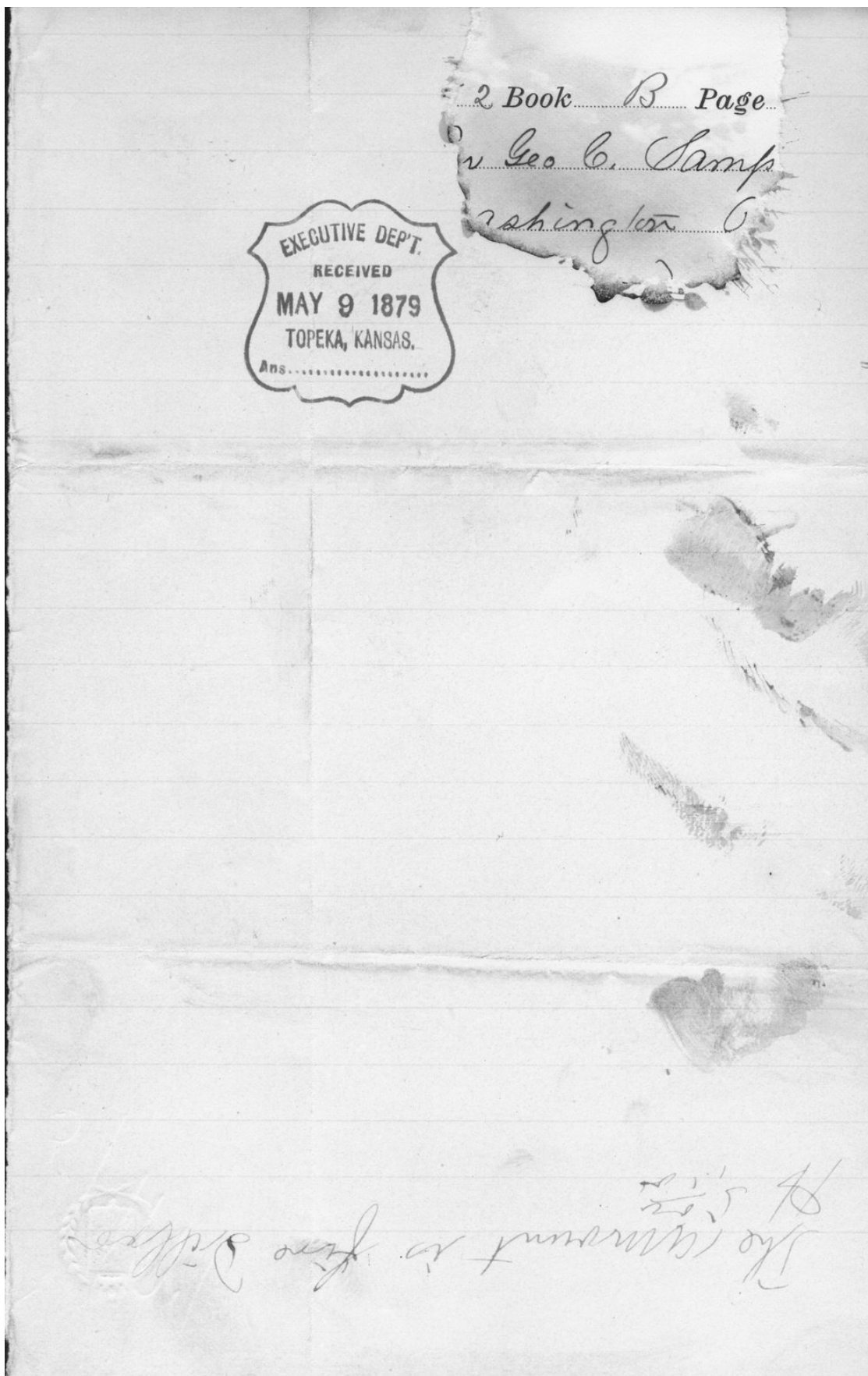
5/19/79 Washington Pa May 6th 1879

Mr. St. John

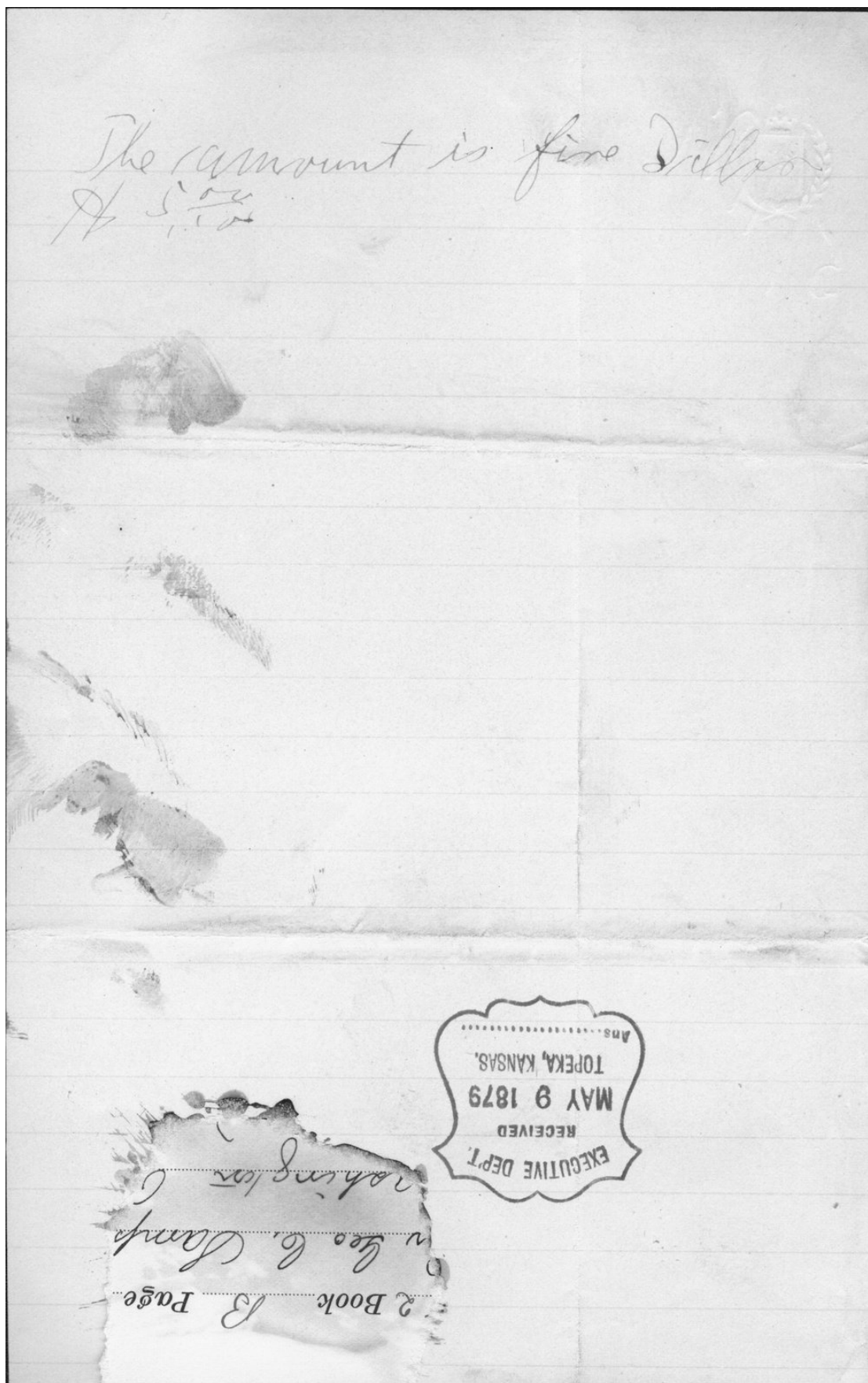
Dear Sir,

Gover^{the State} of Kansas learning
of you as the proper person
to whom we can send means
to help our Brethren who are
emigrating from the South
to your State and under
your Protection, We there-
fore cheerfully send you our
little Mite for ~~that~~ for
that Purpos. which is the
best we can do at this ^{time}
Please accept, and acknowl-
edge the same - We are
a poor people and heavily
in debt Yours Truly
Rev. Geo. C. Simpson
Pastor of the African M.E.
Church of Washington Pa

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

5/7/79
May 5, 1879
His Excellency
J. P. St. John, Governor
Dear Sir. Your
committee's circular was rec'd Saturday and I
have talked with many of the business men and
farmers - and find a desire on their part to do
something in the matter of helping these people
who have - unfortunately for themselves - I fear come
among us. But we have recently been visited by
with a severe hail storm - and our crop prospects
are poorer here than they have ever been - and
it will be impossible to help any in the way of making
It is possible that a limited number of them could
find work among the farmers - but I don't know that
they could - and it might be well for your committee
advertise through the "Commonwealth" or other state
paper the times on which they would go out to work - If
any one wanted their service they could hire them
through you. If I could get a good faithful man and
woman to work for reasonable wages I don't know but that I
could give them a home for a while - or till they could do better
to. I am glad that our noble state has opened her doors
the oppressed of all nations - of even our own nation -
hope that what many look upon as a misfortune may prove a blessing
in disguise
Hutchinson, Kans. B. K. & House over the
M. & N.

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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

57979

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
MAY 9 1879
TOPEKA, KANSAS

Wheeling West Virginia
May 6th 1879

Gov. St. John

Dear Sir

I am directed to send
you a small donation from
a few of our colored citizens
here, to aid the colored immigrants
in your state who may be
in need, we believe that you
would be most likely willing to
apply it to the purpose for
which it is intended, please
acknowledge the same, I inclose
my check for \$7.25. We intend
calling a Mass Meeting soon & try to
make up a handsome donation if this
is received and acknowledged

Yours Respectfully
W. F. Gaskins