

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 51, Pages 1501 - 1530

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

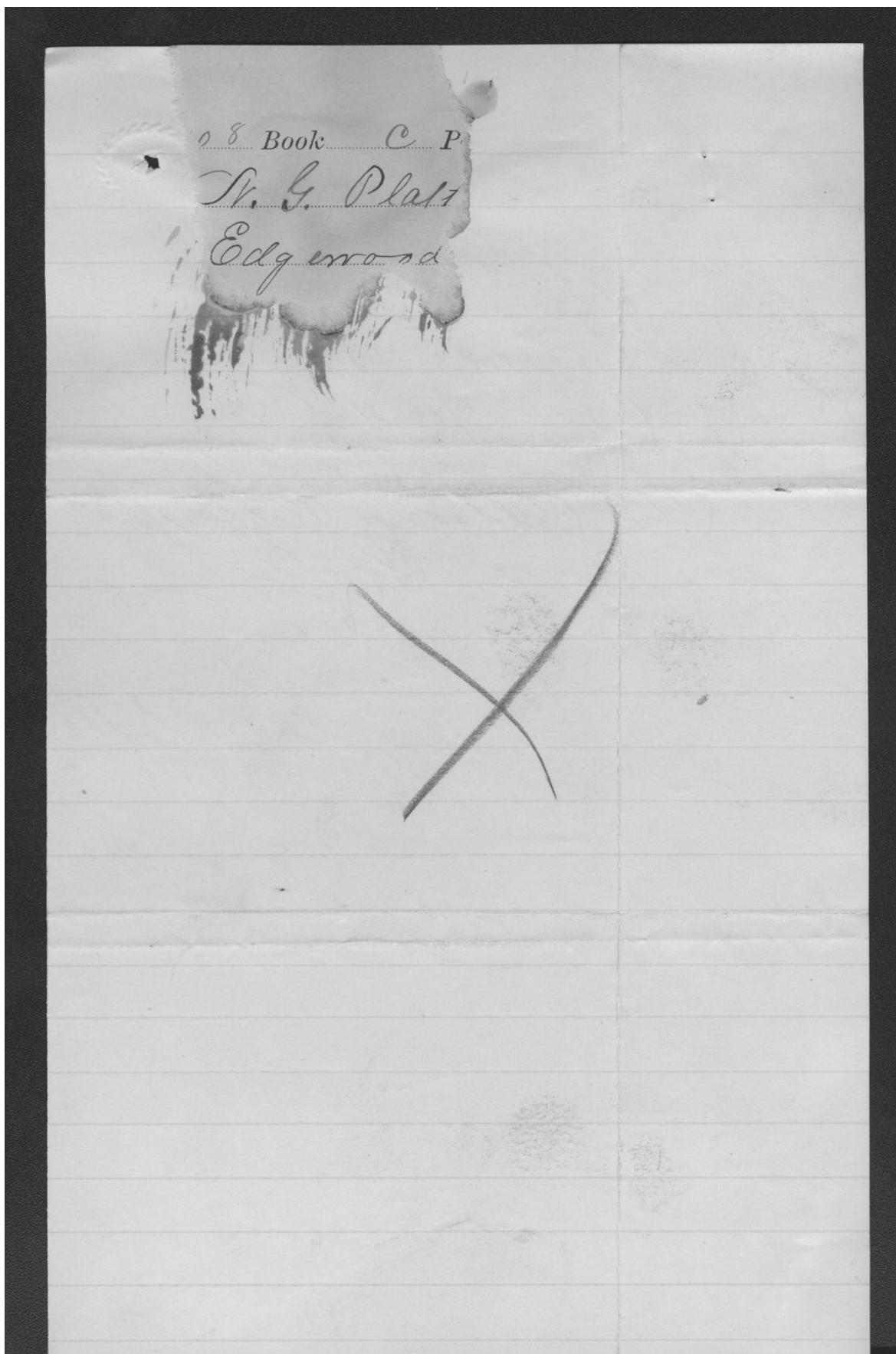
Callnumber: Governor's Office, St. John, Correspondence Received-Subject File, Box 13-15

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 210296

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New Bedford, Mass, Dec 11th 1880.

To Gov. J. P. St. John.

Honored friend

To day I have received
thy favor of 7th inst. acknowledging receipt
of \$35. in aid of the colored refugees
in Kansas.

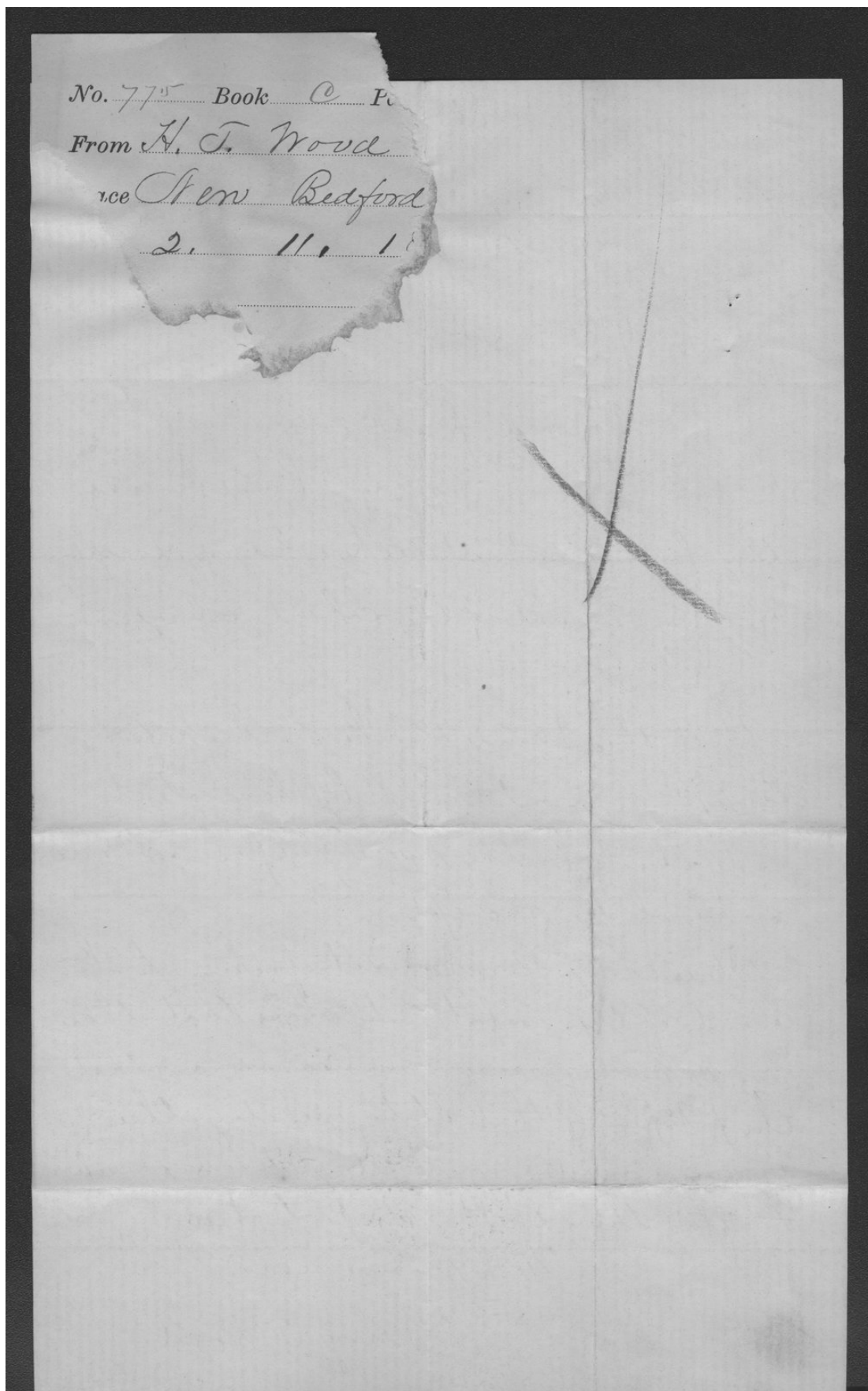
With this I send a cashier's check for
\$56.50, contributed by benevolent
individuals for the same purpose. Please
acknowledge receipt.

It is cause of much satisfaction to the
friends of this unfortunate class that they
are so kindly received in Kansas and that
the ~~people~~ ^{people} of that State including their
honored Governor are willing at some sacrifice
to afford them shelter and protection

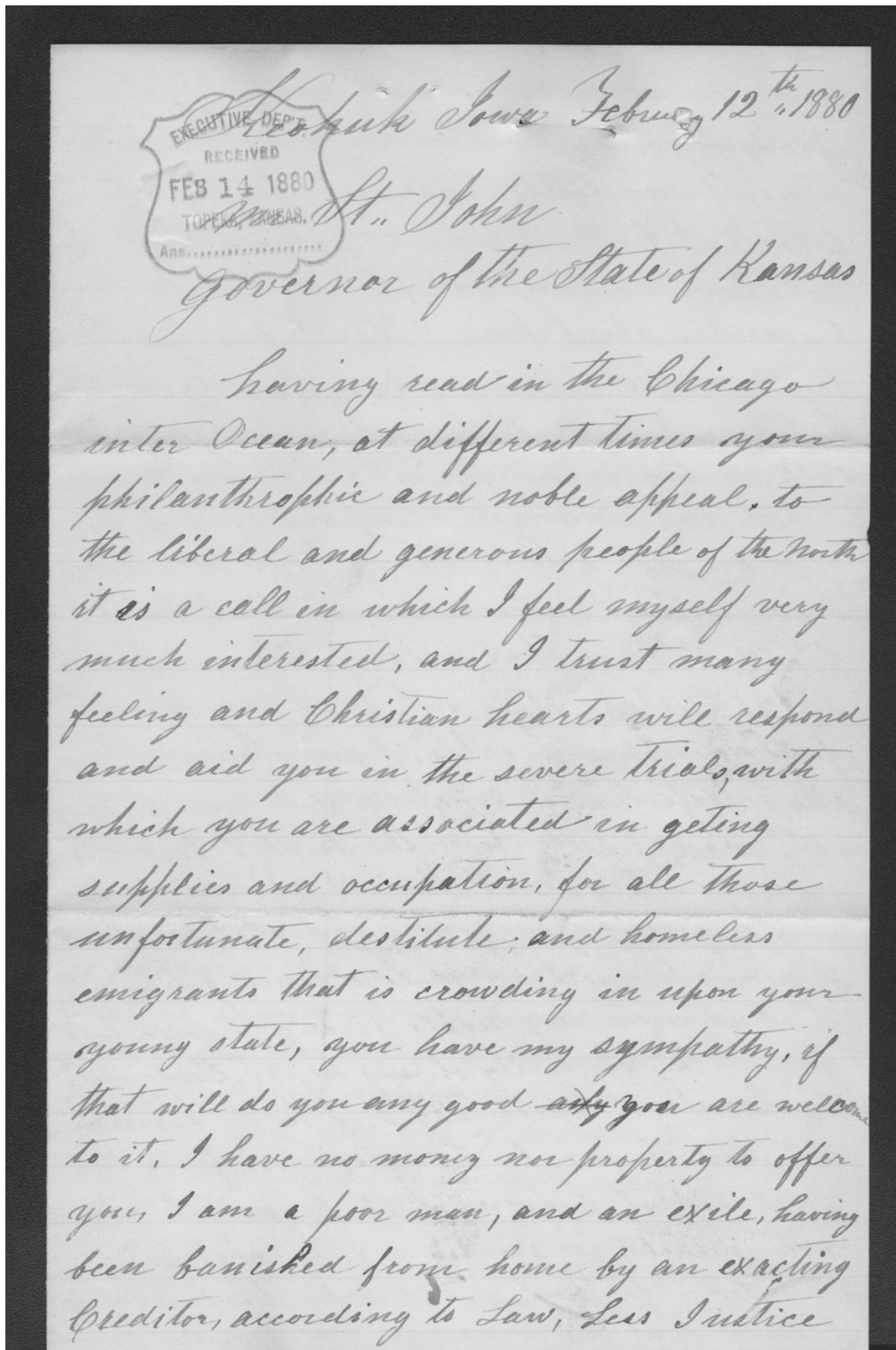
With sincere regard, I am

Henry T Wood

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and humanity in a severe winter season, with snow on the ground, and some of my little ones had their feet frozen, I have a wife and 6 small children and have no home except that of a pilgrim. I wander about from place to place and try to make a living for my family, which I have not been able to do for some years, but still we live in an honest way.

but my unknown compatriot I hope you are not getting weary over the things I have written concern my case, I have heard it said that misery like company but I declare it is not so in my estimation for I am not miserable, I am otherwise, and am satisfied with what the Lord will give me, it was my intention the time I began to write you this letter, that it should be by way of giving you some consolation, but it seems to me I am a long time getting at it, and now my noble friend I will tell you in the sincerity of my heart, that in the month of April 1863. I had a vision delivered to me by a messenger from the Lord god of heaven, but I cannot go into details in giving a full account in this letter for that would take too long, but I know that the messenger that was sent to me

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came from god, and as soon as he touched my flesh I became changed; he took me right into heaven in the spirit and he showed me some things as they are in heaven, and I do not expect that he showed me all, but I became filled with Language inasmuch that there seemed to be no end to the things that I could speak, and that happiness, and joy and glory that is in store for the righteous beyond the grave, and also for those whom the Earth shall not receive is unspeakable, for tongue can not tell it, neither can I write it in this Language or any other Language, for no mortal eye can behold such unspeakable happiness as there is in the Kingdom of God and I said to myself while I was there if I owned the whole world I never could be so happy as I was then, and the last thing that he showed me in heaven was the books, and I saw the whole world and I testify that the world could not contain the books, then he took me out of heaven to show me the things that is to come upon the Earth but I have forgotten much, for I have had a great deal of trouble, I am all broke up but not broke down, and I can only write such things as I remember.

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the first thing that I remember after I came back to the Earth; there came to me a man and he was not a white man, neither was he very black but he was of that race, his eyes looked redish his face looked weather beaten and careworn I asked him where he was going. he did not know, he want to find a home for his people, his clothing was new, he did not travel by any road but went across hill and vale, and his house the time he left me was a little south of west and he had the power of attraction over all the black race of the south, and I saw the cord stretched and it seemed like it was from the southeast towards the northwest, the next thing I saw the steamboats carrying those people from the south, and one of the boats had a stern wheel and that was turning, and the boats had flags on fore and aft and amidships and I do not remember that I saw any of those people travel by any other conveyance except steamboats, now my friend I shall not ^{write} any more of my vision in this Letter but there is much more off it, and the rest is to come, and him that held me and showed these things had his hand on my head about 4 hours, and I have pondereth over these things in my own secret heart many thousand times, and I see some of my vision is being fulfilled my faith has become strong that all the rest will come, wherefore my friend be of good comfort for it is decreed by the lord god of heaven and even so it shall be, farewell Loren Clemenson

it is now 2 o'clock & on 13th



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Congo Center Feb 12th 1880

Dear Sir I inclose
a draft of five dollars for
the colored supper in your state
please ^{except} this and may the Lord
reward your labor and sympathy
for the oppressed race

Yours E. W. Huntington

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Central Warehouse Chicago
Feb 12 1880

Gov J St John
Dear Sir

For some I hope to send you a circular showing what we have done towards a permanent organization. It has taken considerable time and effort to do this but the officers have all consented to run before being appointed.

I hope now to reach and get more money also to provide homes for many of the Refugees. among our farmers. we have applications for 30 or 40 now but do not know what to say to such applications. If we could land them at Cairo and save expense it would be well. I fear we cannot depend upon the society in St Louis. I write in hopes you may provide some way at St Louis so that we can get help from them or better still from Cairo. we shall spread the circular fully now and hope for a generous response. we sent a car

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Load of Lumber last Monday and shall send a
car of Clothing &c to day. I am glad to hear as
often as is convenient of the progress of the Exodus
and will keep all such items before the people by
our daily Paper and circulars. The mass of the
people are very ignorant of the Exodus as yet and
all an astonishingly indifferent

Whenever you can see
the time to come and address a public meeting
here we will be very glad to make the arrangements
and believe it will do good here

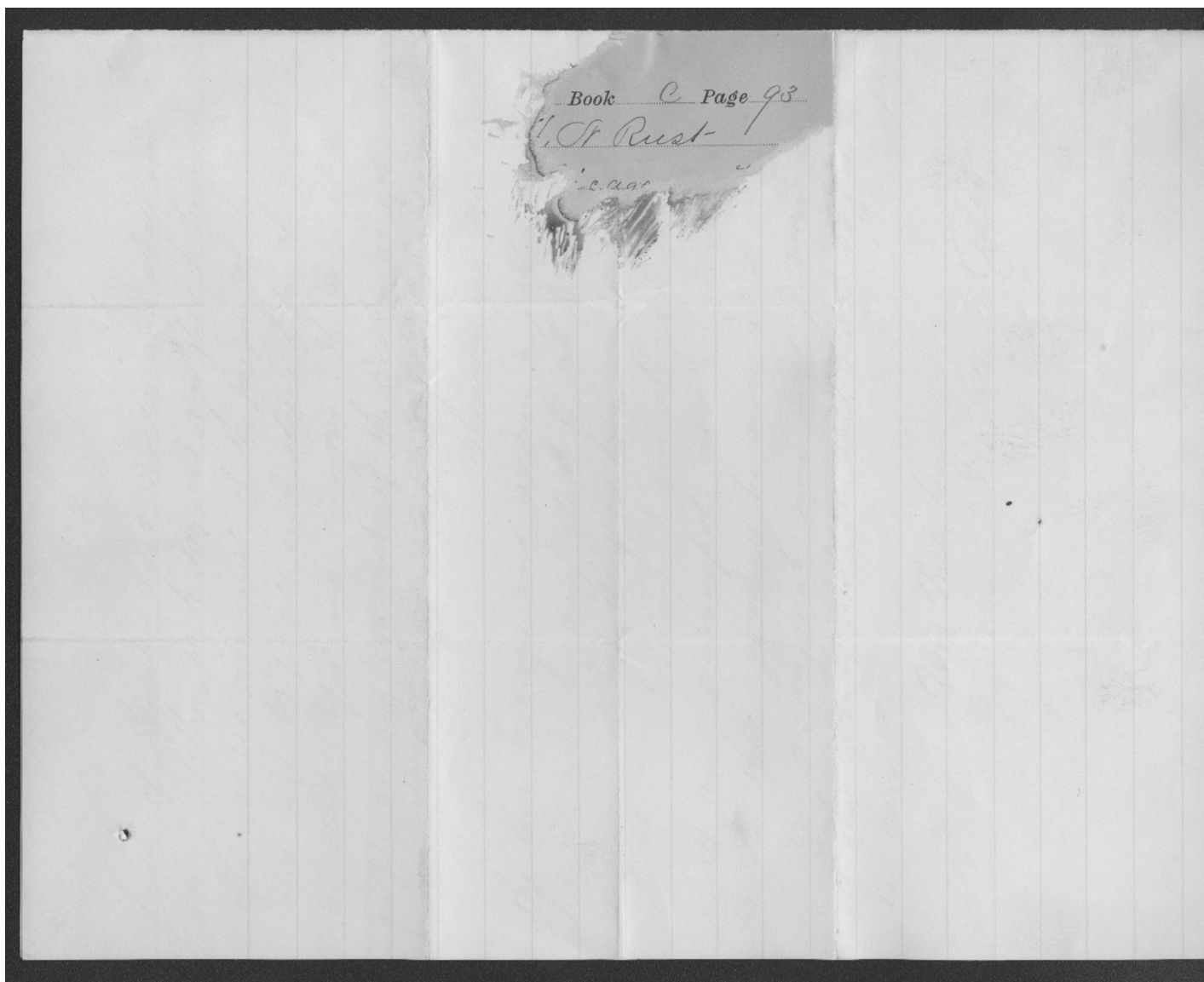
Former I am obliged to go to Indiana
shall visit Indianapolis and see something of the
Exodus there. I shall be away about one week

our arrangements now will put circulars in
all this vicinity and we will reach as far as
we can

Very Truly Yours

Horatio N. Rust

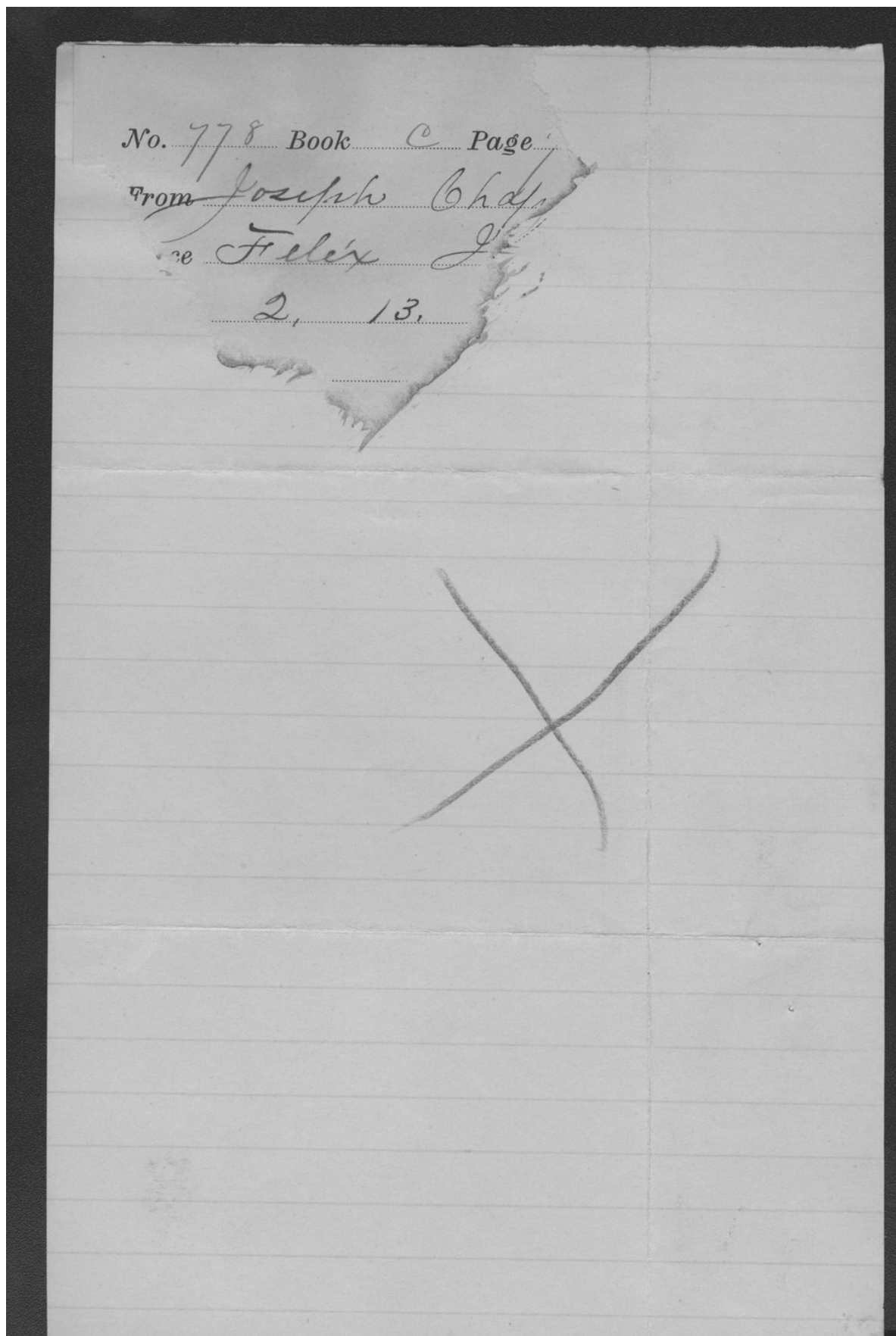
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Feb 13th 1880
Governor St John
Sir I saw an appeal for
the negroes in the Inter
Ocean I inclose five dollars
for their benefit yours
respectfully Joseph Chapin
Felix Warner County, Iowa

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Elwood Ill. Feb. 13th 1880.

Gov. St. John.

Dear sir,

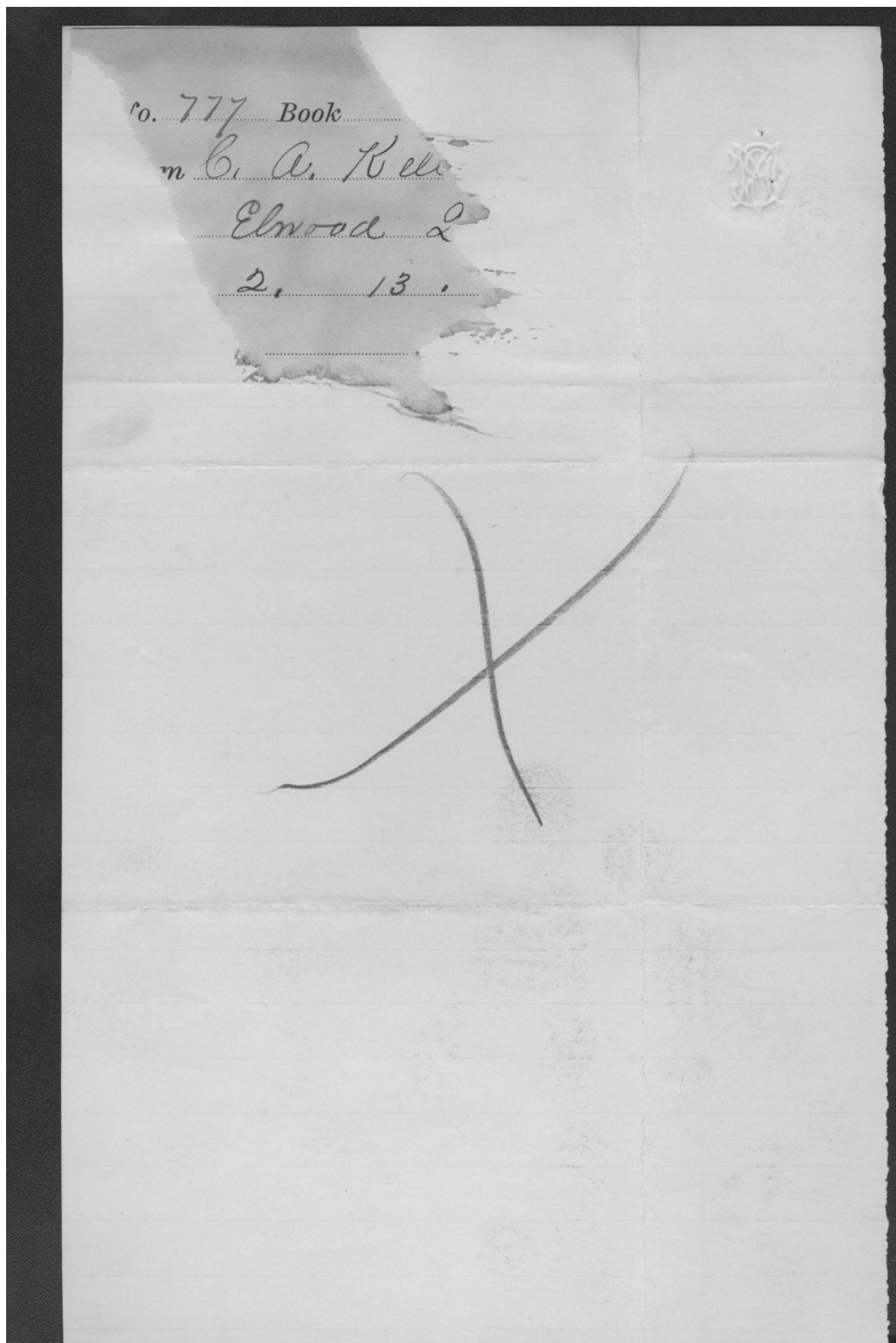
Please accept the inclosed check.
for five dollars. to be used for
the benefit of the Southern Refugees.
we heartily sympathize with you
in your work. & would like
to do more if we could.

Yours truly

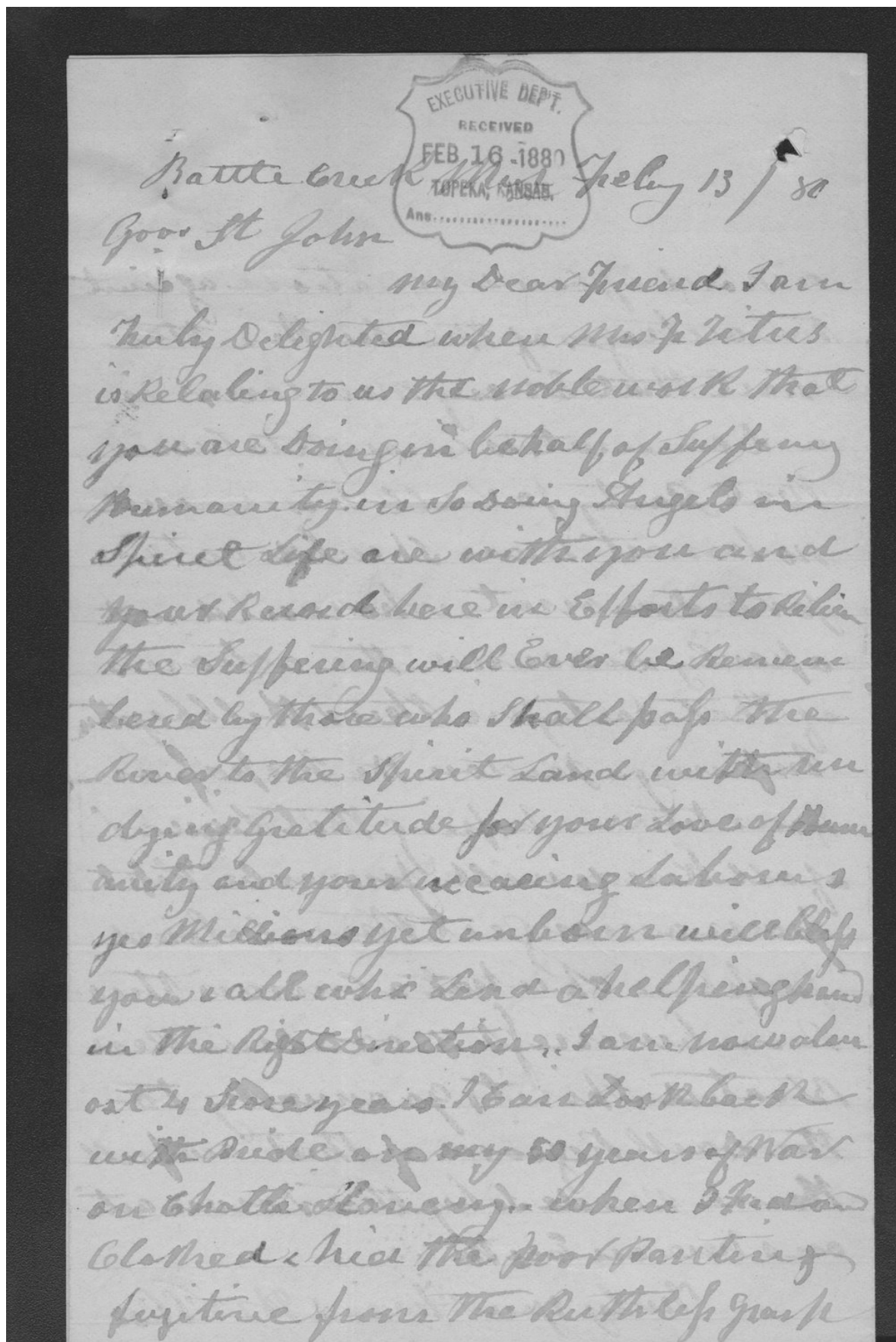
Mr. & Mrs. C. A. Kelley.

Elwood Ill. Co. Illinois.

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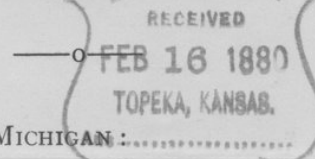
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*This Brief was Read Referred and
Printed in House Journal, but
as Woman is by many considered
of no account here to be the Slave*

Girls' Industrial School.



TO THE LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN:

As the question of the Girls' Industrial and Educational School has been merged in that of a Reform School for Girls, I wish to explain the plan I have advocated and still adhere to in regard to the former. In doing so my object is to draw a line between the two institutions for the obvious reasons that by the plan which I propose, in the establishment of a strictly Industrial School, the number of girls who are daily becoming a public charge will be diminished by taking them from towns, cities and the country while yet innocent of crime, though beset by temptation on every hand, and thus give them a home where industry, morality, economy and honesty shall be inculcated, where the science of cooking, house-work, and every industry pertaining to woman shall be taught, as well as those branches which fit them for successful business. I would ask an appropriation of \$25,000, and recommend: That buildings of moderate dimensions, plain and substantial, be erected; that everything be done with an eye to economy; that sufficient grounds be purchased, to enable the school to raise as much produce as possible in order that it may soon become, in great measure, self-sustaining; to incite girls to greater industry, I would have each receive a certain percentage on everything which she makes and produces for sale, this to be invested for her at interest until she graduates. I am convinced that the Institution may soon be self-sustaining in a great measure, thus relieving the State of a burthen of taxes so alarmingly great as it is becoming.

H. WILLIS.

*of man. I could not get my
mill through - policy men defeated
it but I shall keep at it
I hope to succeed H W*

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ESTIMATE OF THE COST

OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE

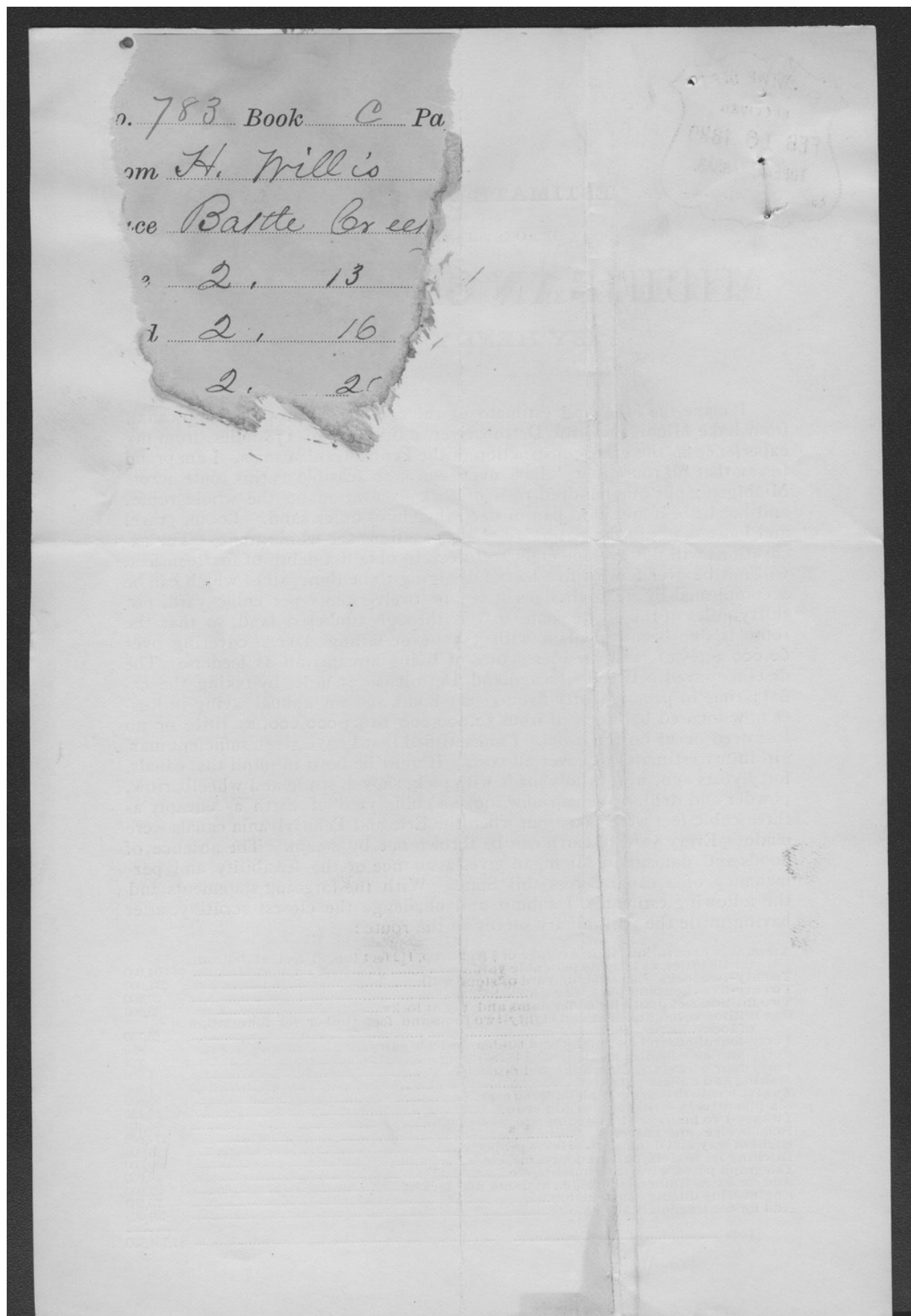
MICHIGAN SHIP CANAL.

BY HENRY WILLIS

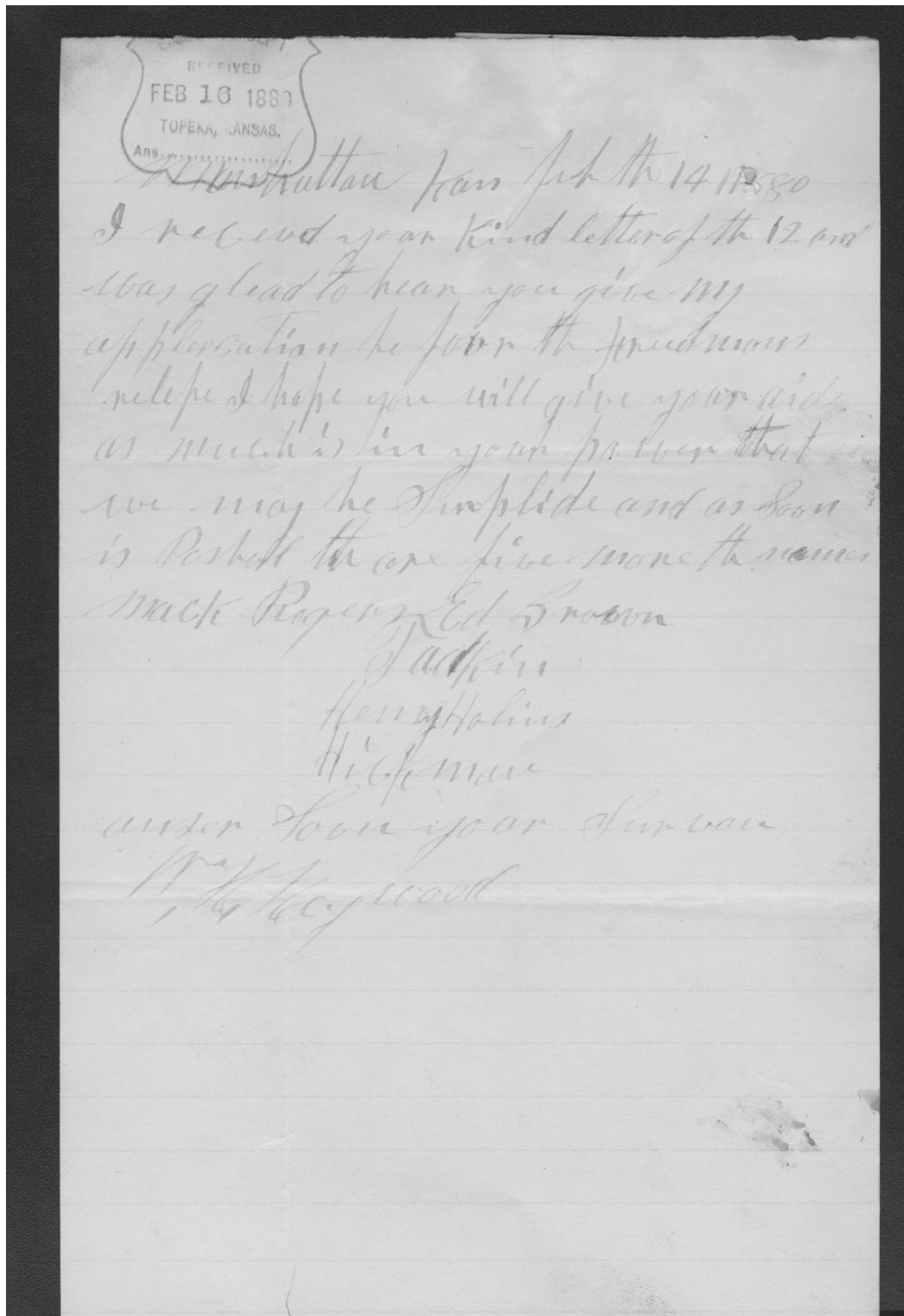
I make the following estimate of the cost of the proposed ship canal, from Lake Michigan to the Detroit river, a distance of 178 miles, from my experience in the early construction of the Pennsylvania canals. I am proud to say that no route that I have ever seen is so feasible as this route across Michigan; not one hundred rods of rock excavation on the whole route, and but little if any hard pan or deep sloughs of quick sand. Loom, gravel and loose sand are the nature of the excavations the whole route. The excavations will not average eight feet deep to obtain a depth of fourteen feet, will not be over four or five feet of dredging to be done, all of which can be accomplished by steam dredges at ten or twelve cents per cubic yard, not thirty miles of the entire route that is through timbered land, so that the route is one beautiful plain with 335 never failing lakes, covering over 60,000 acres of land, besides scores of living streams all as feeders. The distance saved between Chicago and Detroit is 535 miles by taking the canal; time in passing, forty-five to sixty hours and an annual saving in losses now incurred by lakes, of from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000, as little or no loss need occur on the canal. I am satisfied that I have given sufficient margin in my estimates to cover all costs. It must be born in mind that canals, forty years ago, were wholly made with pick, shovel, spade and wheelbarrow, powder and drill. We can now move a cubic yard of earth as cheaply as three cubic feet were taken out when the Erie and Pennsylvania canals were made. Every yard of earth can be thrown out by steam. The absence of floods and damage in Michigan gives assurance of the feasibility and permanency of a canal across this State. With the forgoing statements and the following estimates, I submit and challenge the closest scrutiny, after having made the preliminary survey of the route:

Amount of excavation, at an average of 8 feet deep, 112 feet top, 80 feet at bottom, for 178 miles, at 15 cents per cubic yard.....	\$4,094,000
Twenty-two locks, \$12 per cubic yard of stone wall.....	264,000
Twenty-five thousand piles, \$2 each.....	50,000
Two million feet plank for coffer dams and use at locks.....	30,000
One million seven hundred and eighty-two thousand feet timber for foundation of locks.....	26,780
Forty-four thousand feet plank and timber for lock gates.....	880
Forty-four gote beams, 12x14 inches, 46 feet long.....	720
Forty-four wickets, rods, cranks and ratchets.....	1,000
Making and hanging 44 gates.....	1,000
Twelve steam dredges complete, \$6,000 each.....	72,000
Six pile drivers, with engines and scows.....	15,450
Twenty-two houses at locks complete, \$700 each.....	15,400
Road bridges and culverts.....	174,000
Right of way and damage to private property.....	216,000
Ditching for feeders, culverts, streams, etc.....	50,000
Telegraph poles, wire, instruments, etc.....	46,000
Add for extra timber, stone, etc., at dams and locks.....	22,000
Engineering during construction.....	75,000
Add for contingencies the sum of.....	400,000
Total.....	\$4,754,880

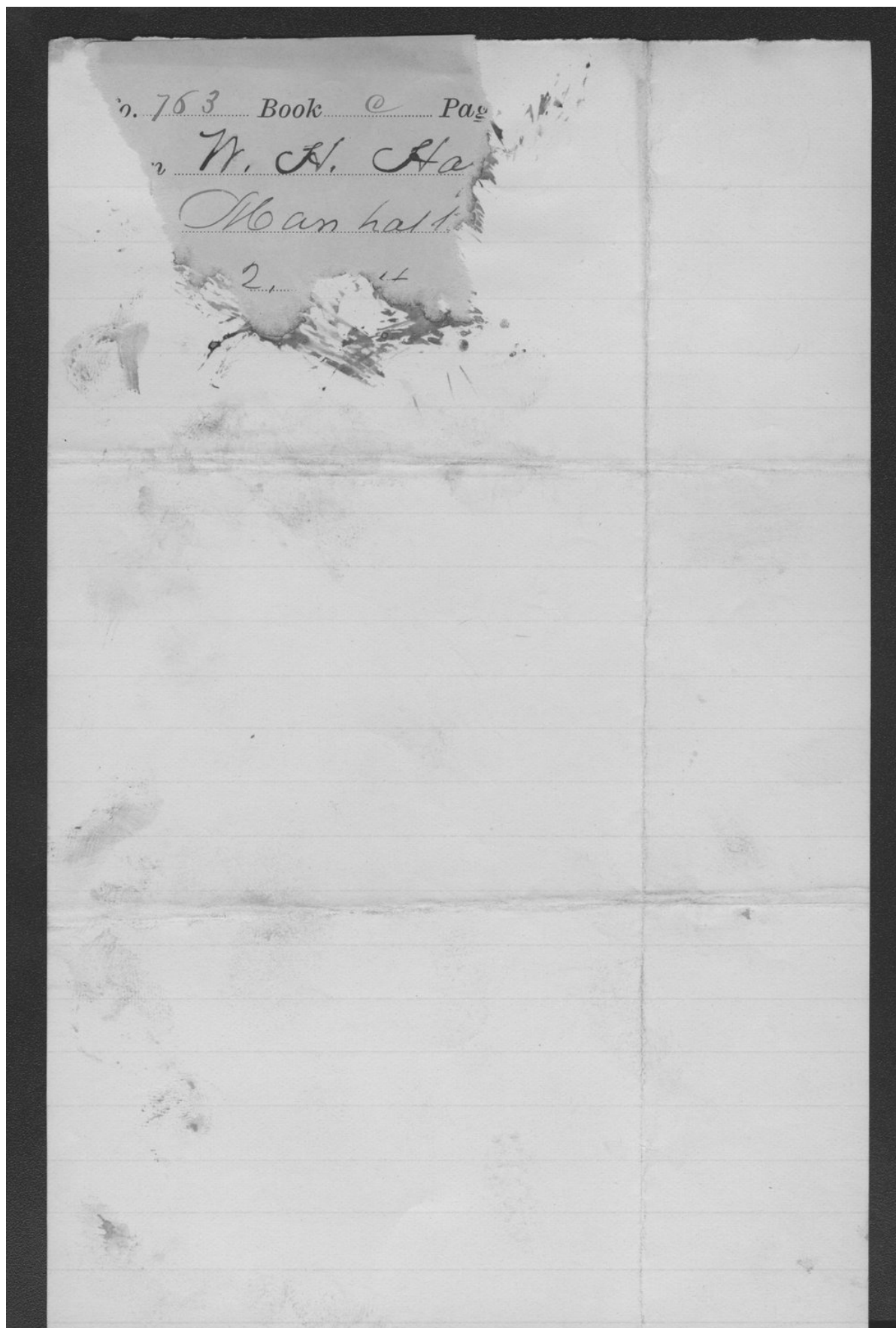
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791 Book C Page...

State of Massachusetts
North Brookfield Feb 16th 1880

To His Excellency Gov St-John

Dear Sir.

My spirit is stirred to its deepest-depth
by the reading of an Article in the Witness
on the state, and needs of the Refugees
in Kansas. and I venture to address a
few lines to you with the feeling that you
will accept it as a desire on my part
to farther inform the people of Massachu-
setts of this great need - The mass though
readers are ignorant of it. Now Honored Sir
we are liberal we are wealthy - we have

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strong sympathy with the suffering, and
I feel me one ready to help. I wish all
papers would copy your letter to Mr Rust.
I wish I could get it. I think that a
good way to stir me up, and another
is to have our Governor request every
Minister to read some appeal from
the Pulpit - and request his people to aid.
What is your Opinion? your signature
will do much to help in the work.

In this my town me one at work, but
oh how slow the whole move. our Ladies
"all are so busy" so many calls on their
time and charities. but still me one
making bedding and clothing. I have
worked hard to get it off early, but it

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will come some time - one of the oldest
and largest Shoe & Boot-Manufactories
in the World are here. how I long to open
the hearts of the Company to send large
shoes to you poor sufferers - what medicine
is most needed: while I was among the
sick and needy four years in Georgia &
Florida, warming remedies were most
used by me and with the best results
also quinating. I know something of Mrs
Comstock's labors - and many times I wish
I were at liberty to assist in ministering
to the sick and needy - but for eight yrs
I have staid home and take care of my
aged Parents - my almost helpless father
&c, and mother &c - but with all my

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care and labors. May a box go
from my humble home freighted with
clothing and bedding for the poor in
the South. and to students in the schools.
Oh! how I long to learn they are supplied. I
will help. perhaps a line from you would have
good effect. The Church on the one hand who
feed the hungry clothe the naked. shall we
not open our doors to these people. will they
not take the place in our Kitchens of the
Biddies who so rule us there?

I am often asking myself what will grow out
of this. Is not the hand of the Lord in it?

I close hoping you will condescend to address
a line to me. a poor Girl. and address me
Miss Abbie W. Johnson. North Brookfield
Mass



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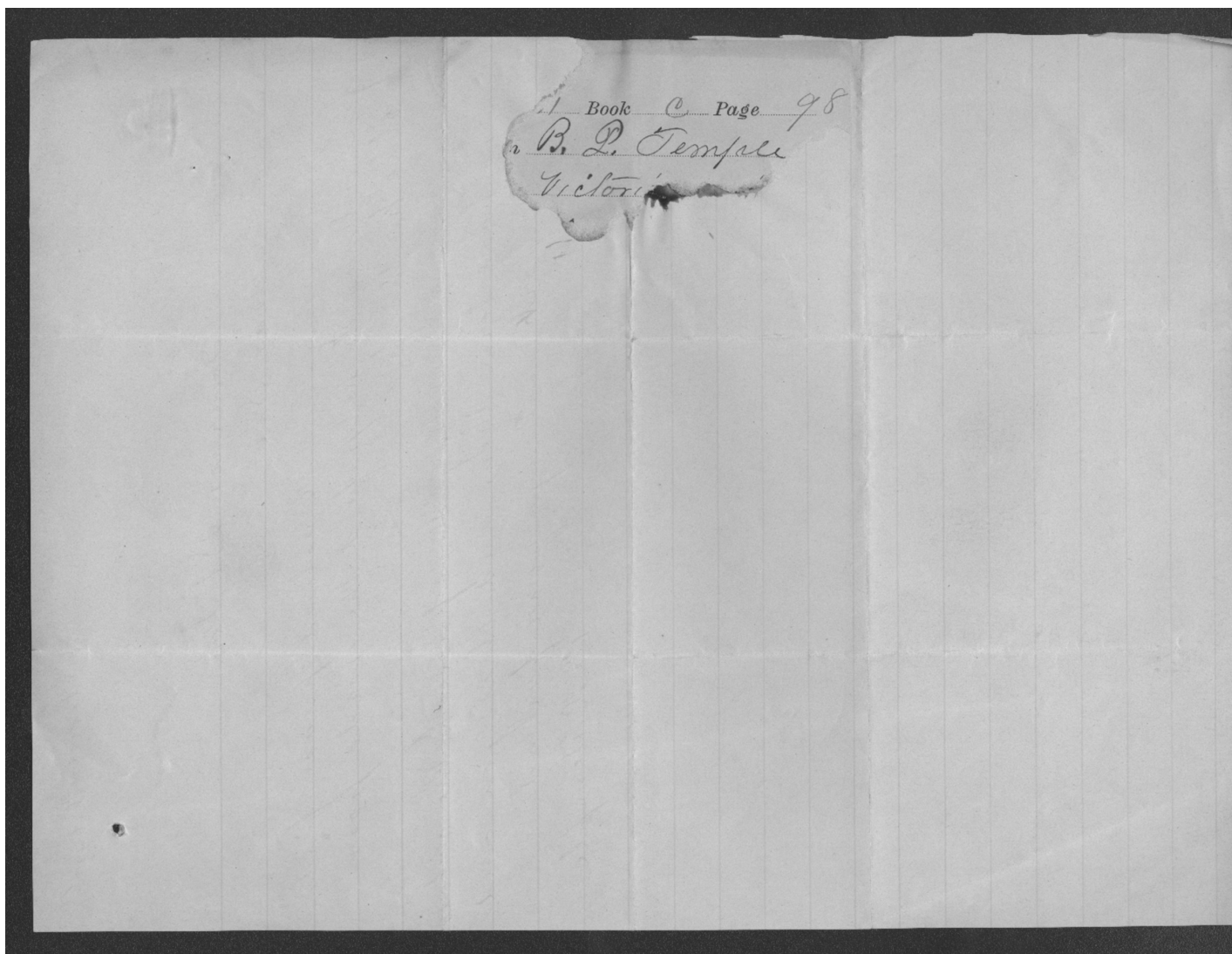
Victoria Feb 15th 14

Governor St John
Dear Sir

Enclosed please find
five dollars to help feed the Lords poor
black sheep

May He punish the wolves
who have torn them and bless you and
your work Prays your friend
B P Temple

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EXECUTIVE DEPT
RECEIVED
FEB 19 1880
TOPEKA, KANSAS.

Dallas, Dallas County
Texas, February 16th 80
to Mr John. P. St John

Kind sir I seat my self in
great trouble to ask you for a
favor, and tell you of my
trouble and that is this. I want
to come to Kansas. but I am owing
some debts, and the White People
says I cant sell my Place un
till they are settled. I offered
I offered to sell the Place for
a wagon and team and they
says if I do they will follow
me and take them away from
me. and I dont know of no
one else in the world to write
to for instruction but you.
and if you please tell me

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what can be done about such things. This all is done in Leon County, and there is where my place is. and I have left my family there, and started to Kansas but if there is any way to be deemed them from there. I would rather go back and bring them with me and so I will remain here in Dallas untill I get ^{an} answer from you. and so I will close by asking you to write soon.

yours with respects.

R. F. Beames