

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 60, Pages 1771 - 1800

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

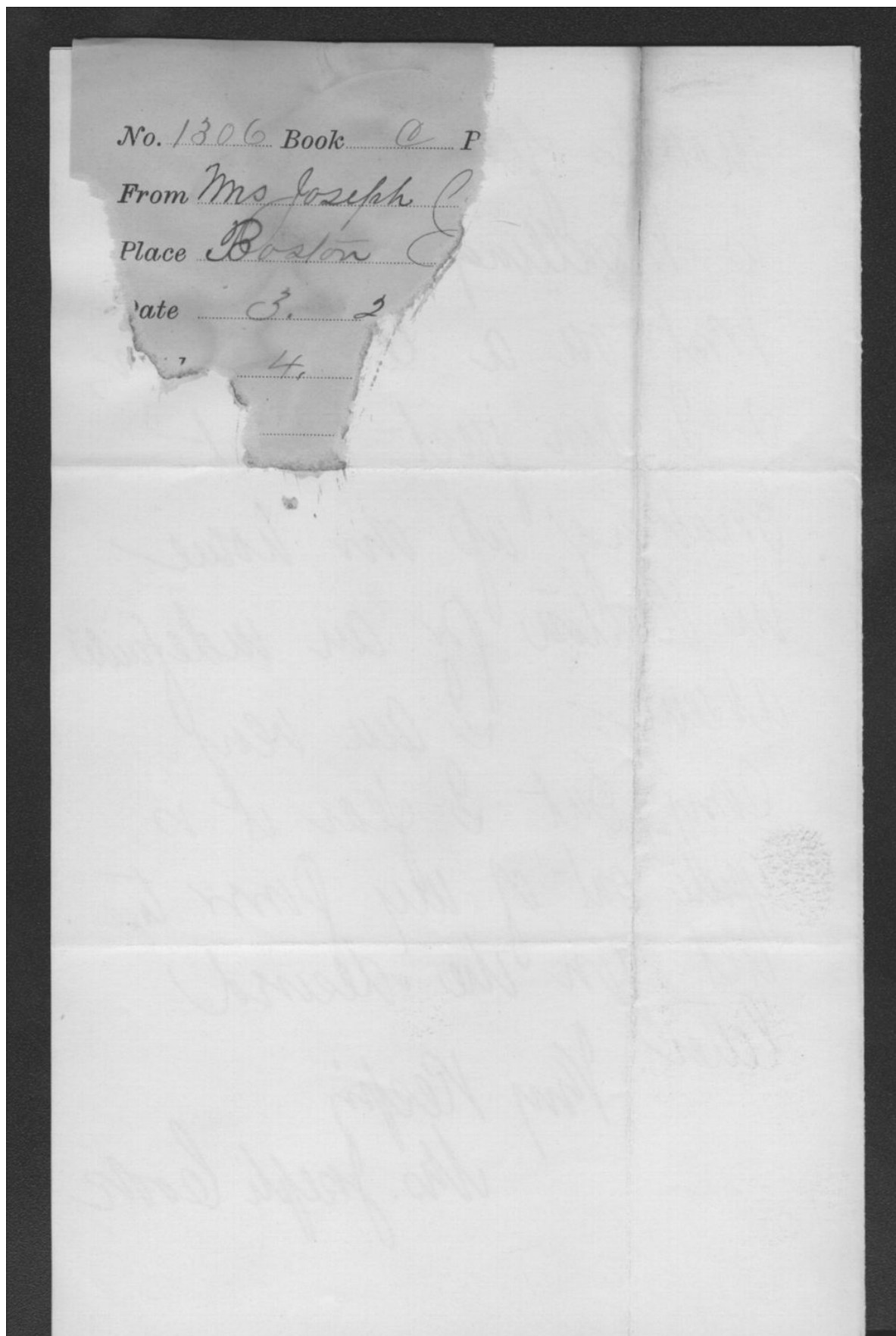
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www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296

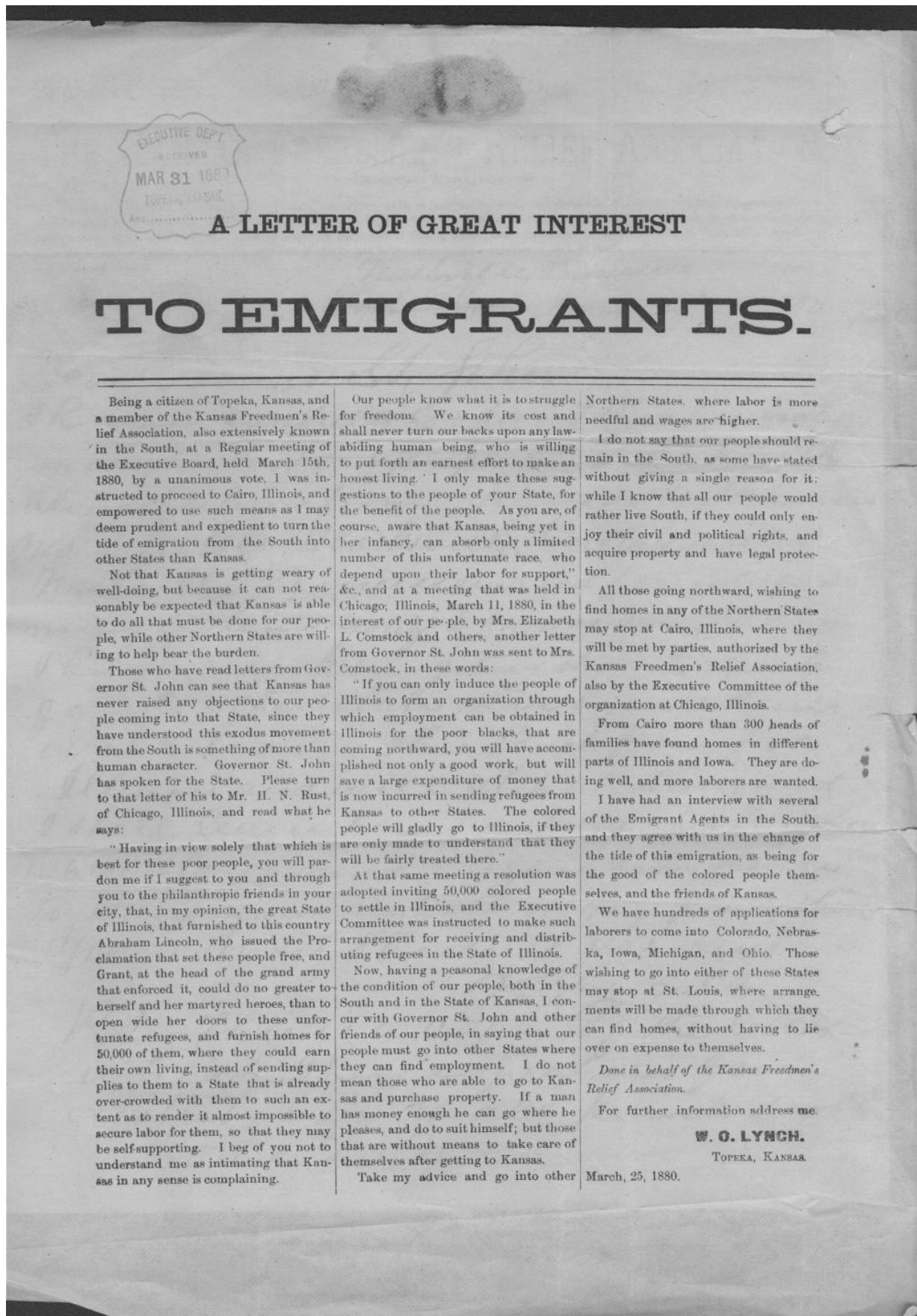
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

months yet. Mr. Cook
is travelling in the
West on a lecture tour,
& I am just about
packing up our home
in Boston for an indefinite
absence. I am very
sorry, but I fear it is
quite out of my power to
get you the desired
letter. Very Resping
Mrs. Joseph Cook

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A LETTER OF GREAT INTEREST

TO EMIGRANTS.

Being a citizen of Topeka, Kansas, and a member of the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association, also extensively known in the South, at a Regular meeting of the Executive Board, held March 15th, 1880, by a unanimous vote, I was instructed to proceed to Cairo, Illinois, and empowered to use such means as I may deem prudent and expedient to turn the tide of emigration from the South into other States than Kansas.

Not that Kansas is getting weary of well-doing, but because it can not reasonably be expected that Kansas is able to do all that must be done for our people, while other Northern States are willing to help bear the burden.

Those who have read letters from Governor St. John can see that Kansas has never raised any objections to our people coming into that State, since they have understood this exodus movement from the South is something of more than human character. Governor St. John has spoken for the State. Please turn to that letter of his to Mr. H. N. Rust, of Chicago, Illinois, and read what he says:

"Having in view solely that which is best for these poor people, you will pardon me if I suggest to you and through you to the philanthropic friends in your city, that, in my opinion, the great State of Illinois, that furnished to this country Abraham Lincoln, who issued the Proclamation that set these people free, and Grant, at the head of the grand army that enforced it, could do no greater to herself and her martyred heroes, than to open wide her doors to these unfortunate refugees, and furnish homes for 50,000 of them, where they could earn their own living, instead of sending supplies to them to a State that is already over-crowded with them to such an extent as to render it almost impossible to secure labor for them, so that they may be self-supporting. I beg of you not to understand me as intimating that Kansas in any sense is complaining.

Our people know what it is to struggle for freedom. We know its cost and shall never turn our backs upon any law-abiding human being, who is willing to put forth an earnest effort to make an honest living. I only make these suggestions to the people of your State, for the benefit of the people. As you are, of course, aware that Kansas, being yet in her infancy, can absorb only a limited number of this unfortunate race, who depend upon their labor for support,"

&c., and at a meeting that was held in Chicago, Illinois, March 11, 1880, in the interest of our people, by Mrs. Elizabeth L. Comstock and others, another letter from Governor St. John was sent to Mrs. Comstock, in these words:

"If you can only induce the people of Illinois to form an organization through which employment can be obtained in Illinois for the poor blacks, that are coming northward, you will have accomplished not only a good work, but will save a large expenditure of money that is now incurred in sending refugees from Kansas to other States. The colored people will gladly go to Illinois, if they are only made to understand that they will be fairly treated there."

At that same meeting a resolution was adopted inviting 50,000 colored people to settle in Illinois, and the Executive Committee was instructed to make such arrangement for receiving and distributing refugees in the State of Illinois.

Now, having a personal knowledge of the condition of our people, both in the South and in the State of Kansas, I concur with Governor St. John and other friends of our people, in saying that our people must go into other States where they can find employment. I do not mean those who are able to go to Kansas and purchase property. If a man has money enough he can go where he pleases, and do to suit himself; but those that are without means to take care of themselves after getting to Kansas.

Take my advice and go into other

Northern States, where labor is more needful and wages are higher.

I do not say that our people should remain in the South, as some have stated without giving a single reason for it; while I know that all our people would rather live South, if they could only enjoy their civil and political rights, and acquire property and have legal protection.

All those going northward, wishing to find homes in any of the Northern States may stop at Cairo, Illinois, where they will be met by parties, authorized by the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association, also by the Executive Committee of the organization at Chicago, Illinois.

From Cairo more than 300 heads of families have found homes in different parts of Illinois and Iowa. They are doing well, and more laborers are wanted.

I have had an interview with several of the Emigrant Agents in the South, and they agree with us in the change of the tide of this emigration, as being for the good of the colored people themselves, and the friends of Kansas.

We have hundreds of applications for laborers to come into Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio. Those wishing to go into either of these States may stop at St. Louis, where arrangements will be made through which they can find homes, without having to lie over on expense to themselves.

Done in behalf of the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association.

For further information address me.

W. O. LYNCH.

TOPEKA, KANSAS.

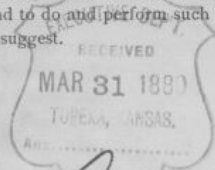
March, 25, 1880.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

THE KANSAS FREEDMEN'S RELIEF ASSOCIATION.

—Incorporated May 8, 1879.—

The purpose for which this corporation is formed is to relieve, as far as possible, the wants and necessities of destitute freedmen, refugees and immigrants coming to this State; to provide necessary food, shelter and clothing for them when unable to provide for themselves; to succor the aged, the feeble and the sick; to aid and assist them in procuring work, and in finding homes, either in families, or when they wish to locate on Government or other lands; and to do and perform such other acts of charity and benevolence as the necessities of such freedmen, refugees and immigrants may require, and humanity suggest.



*Nashville Tennessee
Topeka, Kansas, March 22. 1880*

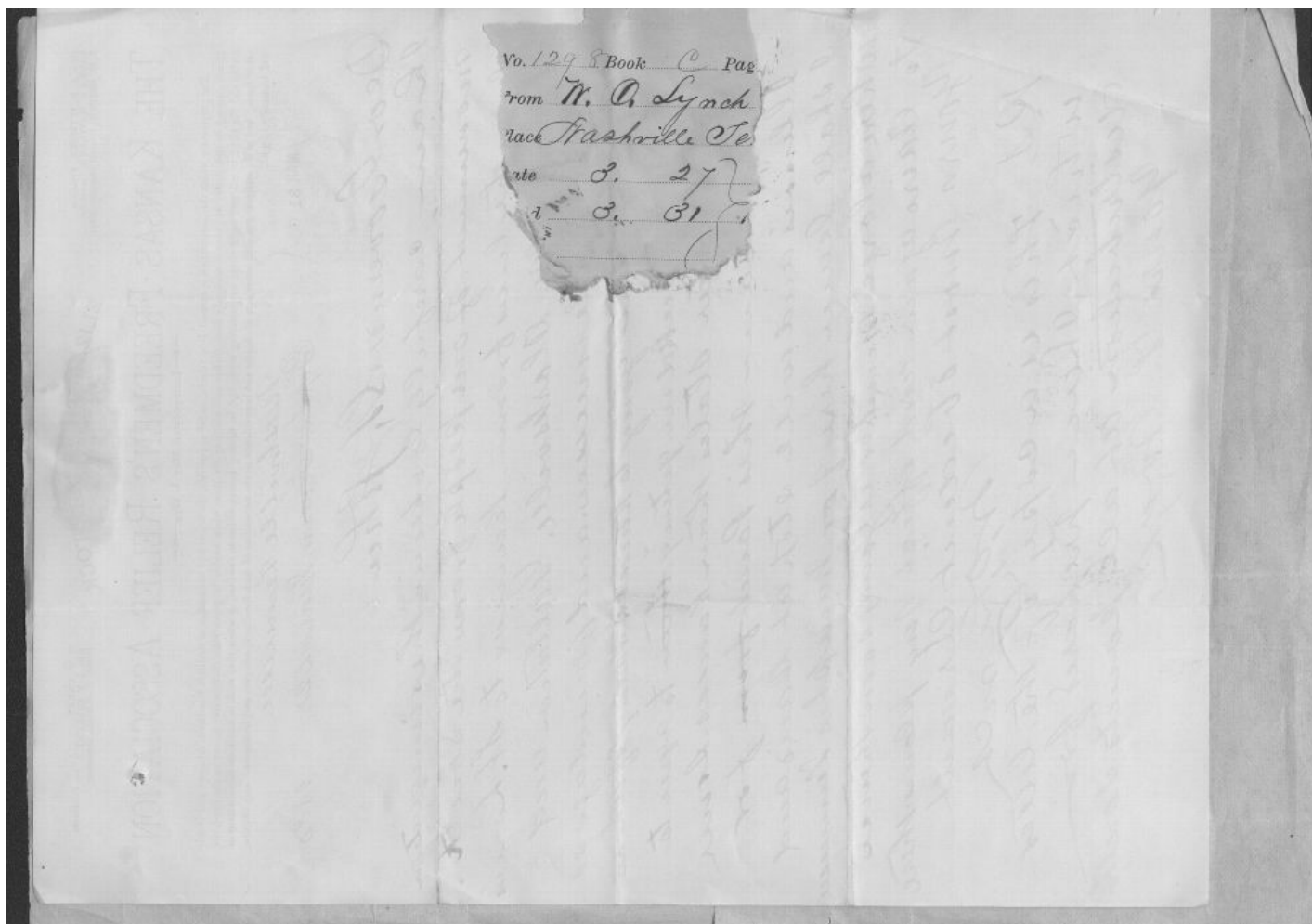
Dear Governor St. John.

*I have carefully looked into this emigration
movement of our people from the South.
along the line from Kansas to St. Louis
Mo. Cairo Ills. Clarksville. Gallatin and
Nashville Tennessee, and found a good
many of them going to Kansas many of whom
I have succeeded in getting them to agree to
go into other States than Kansas. Some
will leave this point from for
Illinois and will stop at Cairo and
I shall leave here for Memphis Tennessee
where a large number is going soon thence
to Cairo again and effect my plans there
Yours most obedient servant*

W. D. Lynch

*R.S. This is a copy of the letter
which I have prepared for
distribution at all points South
Yours L. W. G.*

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



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Wallace Pratt,
Jeff. Brumback,
Watson J. Ferrey.

Pratt, Brumback & Ferrey,

Attorneys & Counselors at Law.

Kansas City, Mo. Mch 29 1880

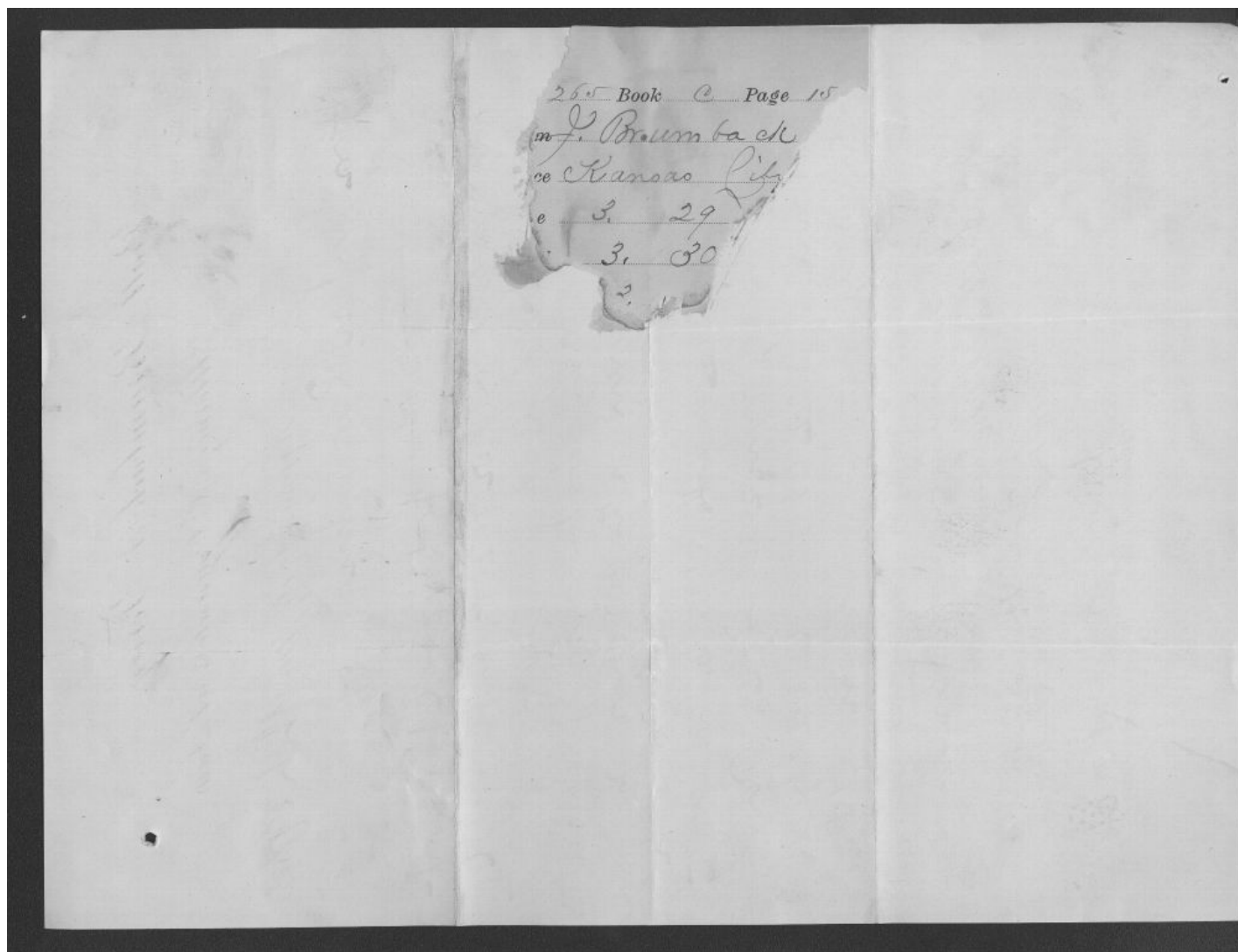
Hon John P. St. John.

Sir: A friend has sent me a check for \$200, to be used for relief of needy negro emigrants in Kansas. Not having definite information as to persons or associations engaged in such charitable work, I take the liberty of asking your advice. To whom shall I send the check to carry out the intention of the giver most effectually? An answer will be a favor to my friend and to

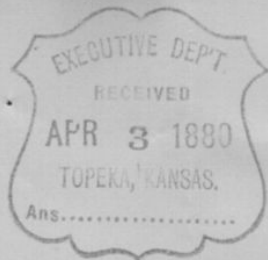
your obt. servt.

J. Brumback.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

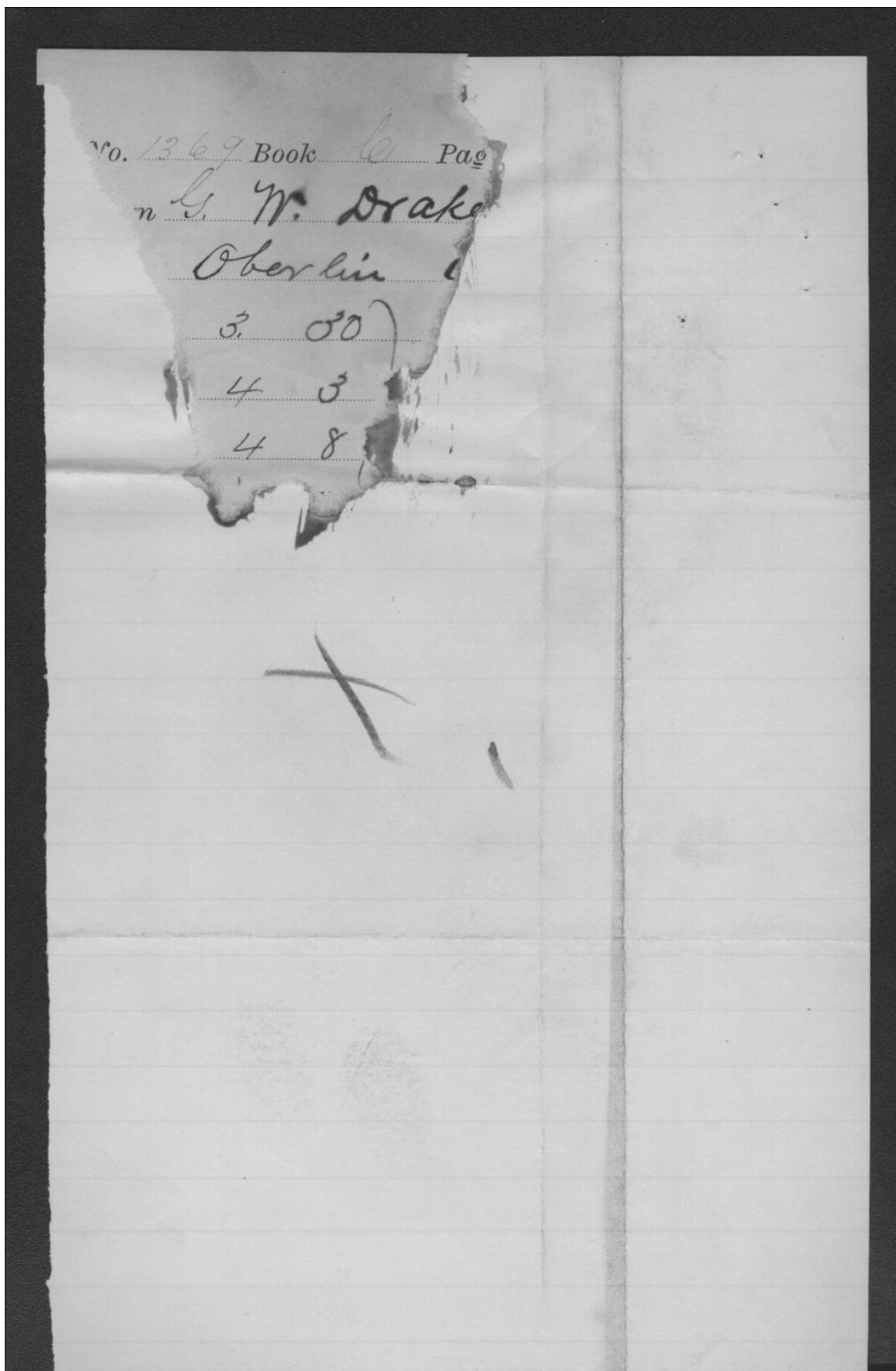


Oberlin Mar 30 80
Gov St John
Sir

Enclosed

please find order for two
dollars contributed by Mrs Phil
Mc Weeks from what she feels
that the Lord has given her
for the help of the fugitives
With prayers for the spiritual
welfare of the recipients, she
thanks you for being the almoner
of her gifts and prays that the
Lord will reward you
Yours for the outcast
Geo. W. Drake

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



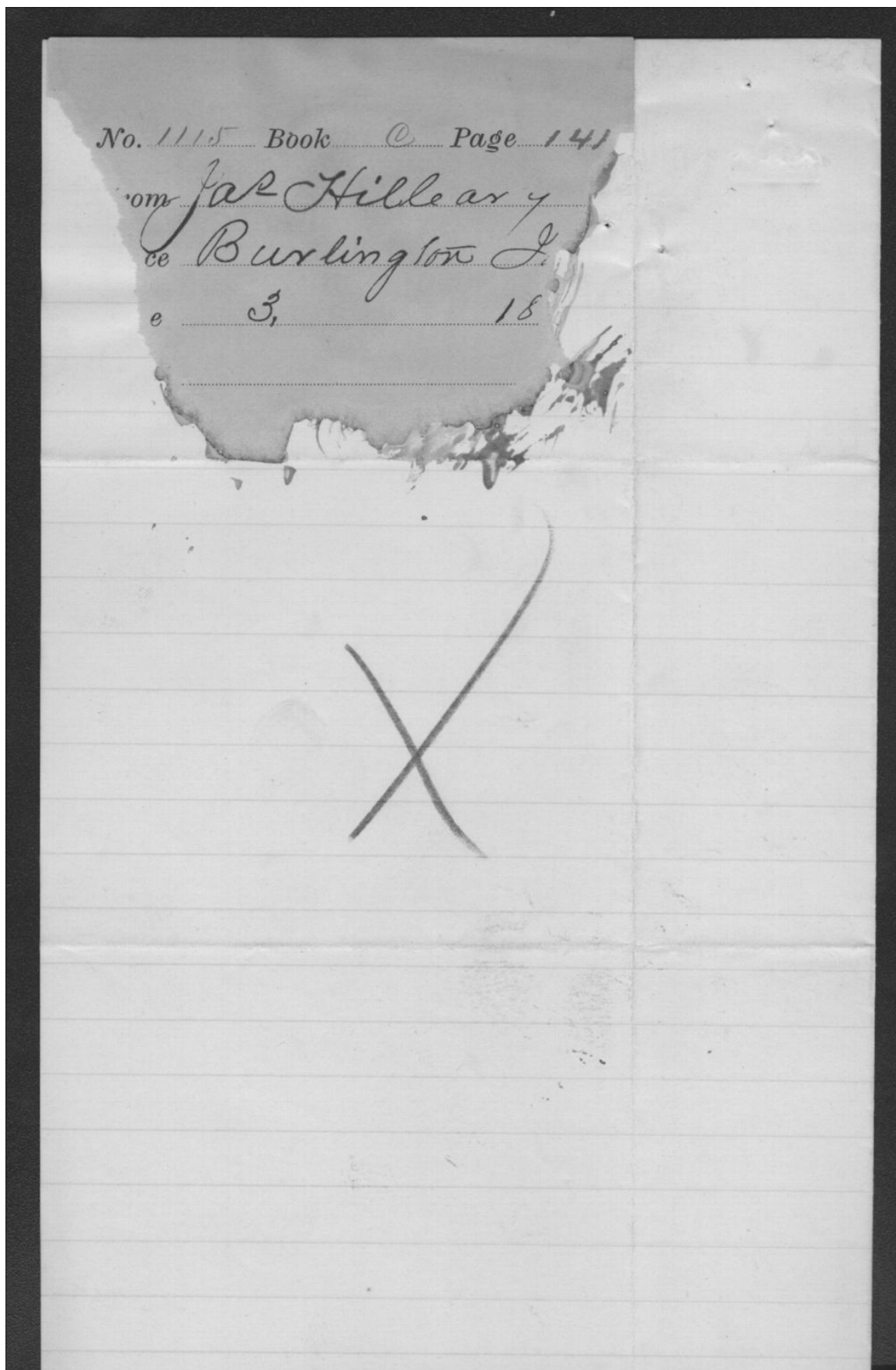
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Burlington Iowa
March 1880
Gov St John
Topeka Kas-
Dear Sir

I enclose
you Postal Order for
five (5) dollars which
you will please use
for the benefit the negro
emigrants coming into
your state & oblige
Yours Truly
James Hilleary



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



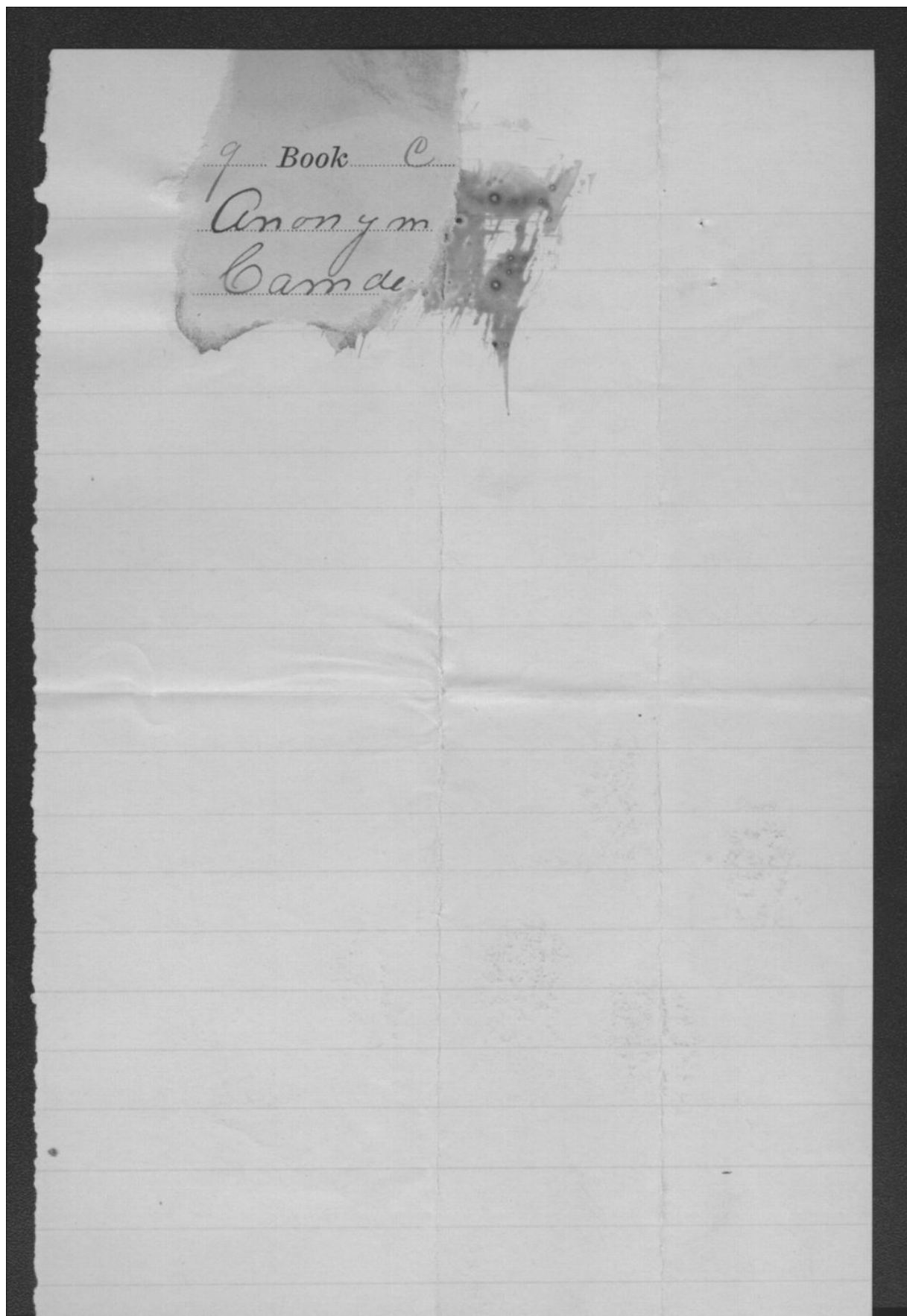
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

[No Date]

Enclosed I send five
dollars which I would
like to have used for the
benefit of the poor negroes
who, I understand are in
great need. I do not
wish any acknowledgment
made so I withheld my name
assured that you will
use the money judiciously
Very Respectfully

Camden St. G.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Yrk, Perm., April 4, 1880.

W
Gov. St. John,
Dear Sir,

Noticing in the papers that great suffering and want exist among the col-
ored refugees from oppression at the South,
in your State, I beg leave to enclose
to you a small amount to be ap-
plied towards their relief.

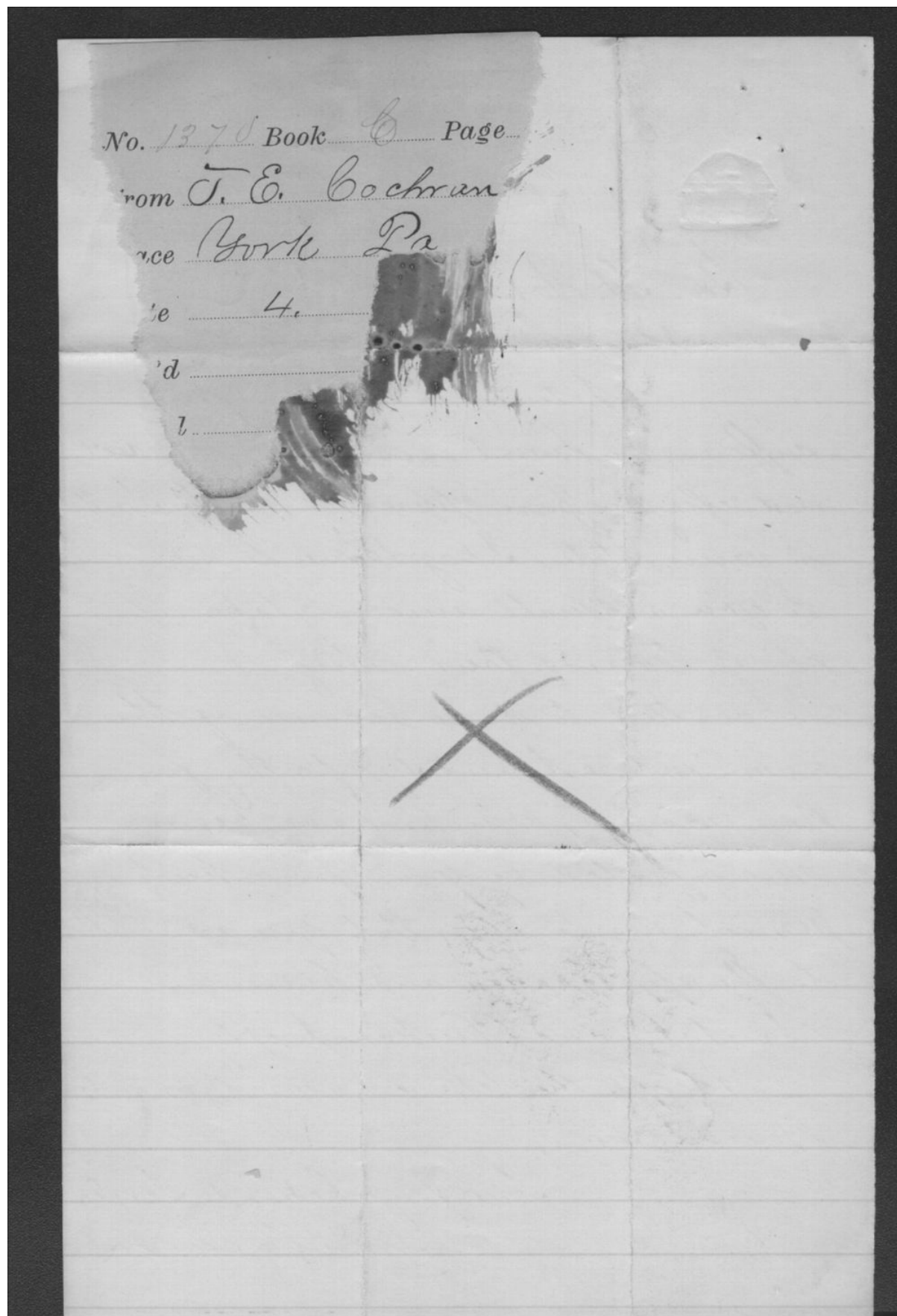
I venture to do so because of the
warm interest and sympathy for
those people, which have been
manifested by you, for which,
permit me to say, that you are entitled
to the approbation and praise of all
charitable and Christian people.

Accept the like acknowledgements,
Honored Sir, of

Yours Very obedient Servant,
Thos. E. Cochran

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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Governor, St. John,
Gurnett Kansas

April 7th 1880.

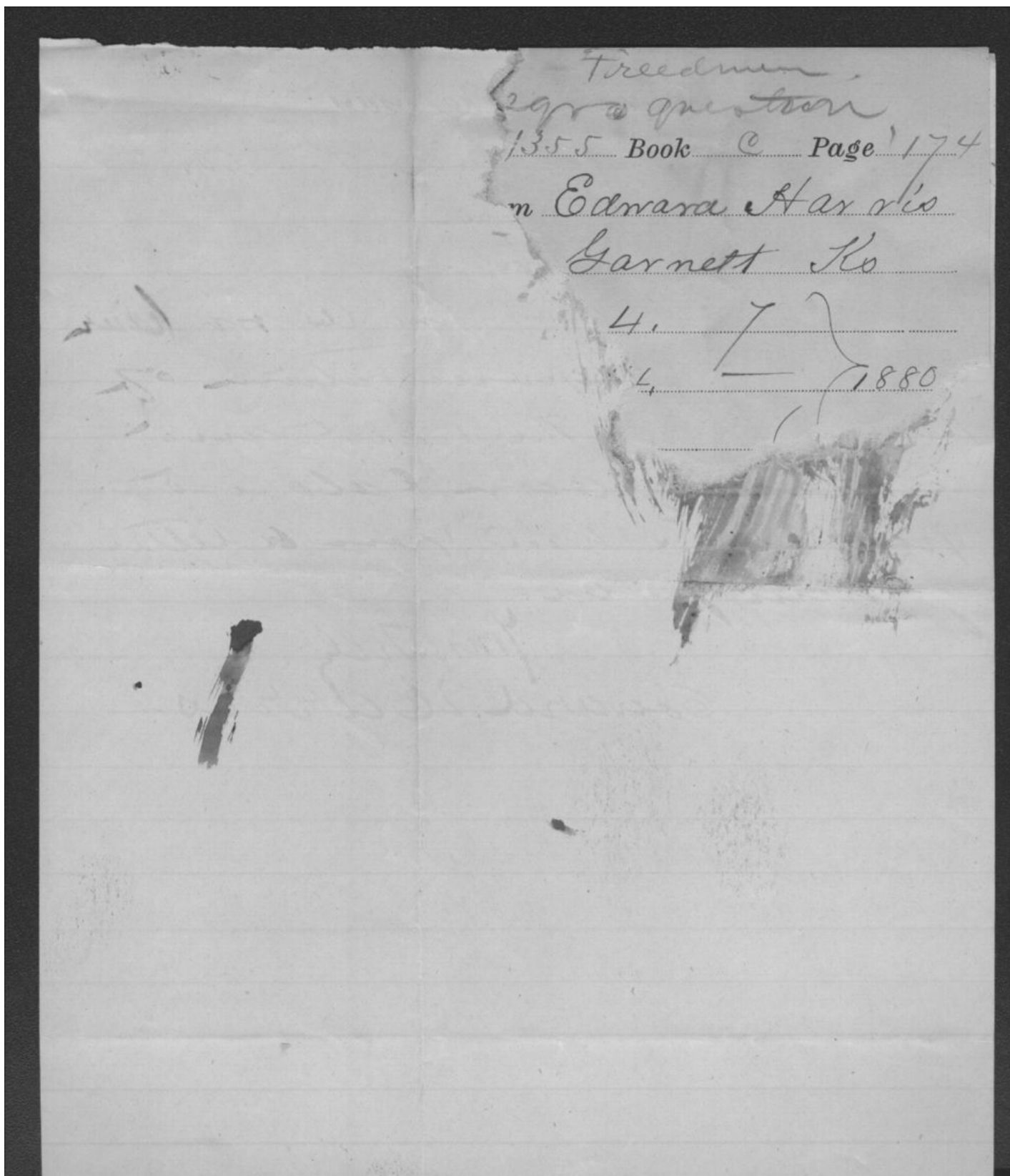
Hon J. St John -

Gov of Kansas.

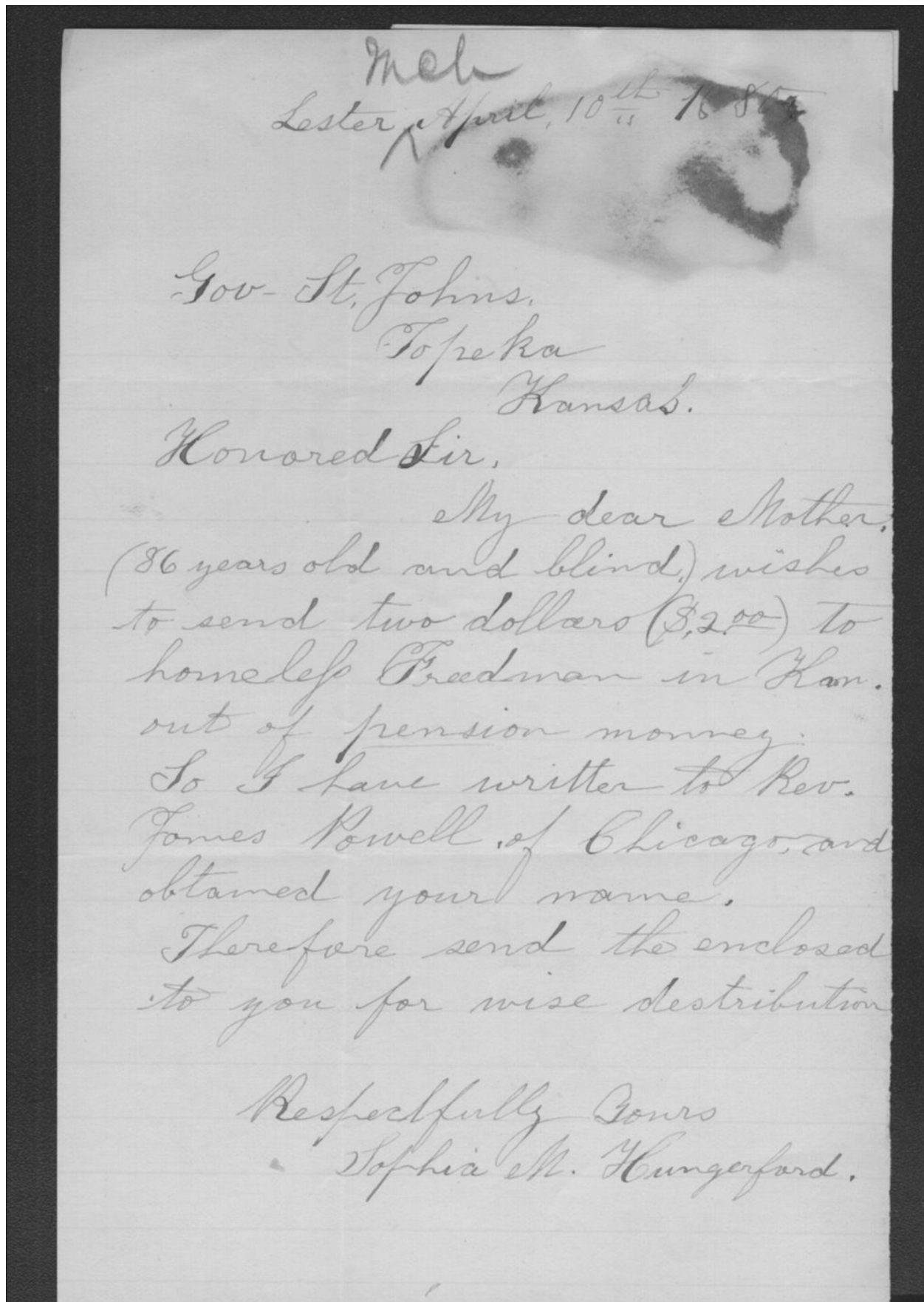
Sir: As you have
been a worthy Representation of
Kansas: as to the wants and
distresses of our colored
people. I hand you a letter
of mine, printed.

Yours truly
Edward Mcorris -

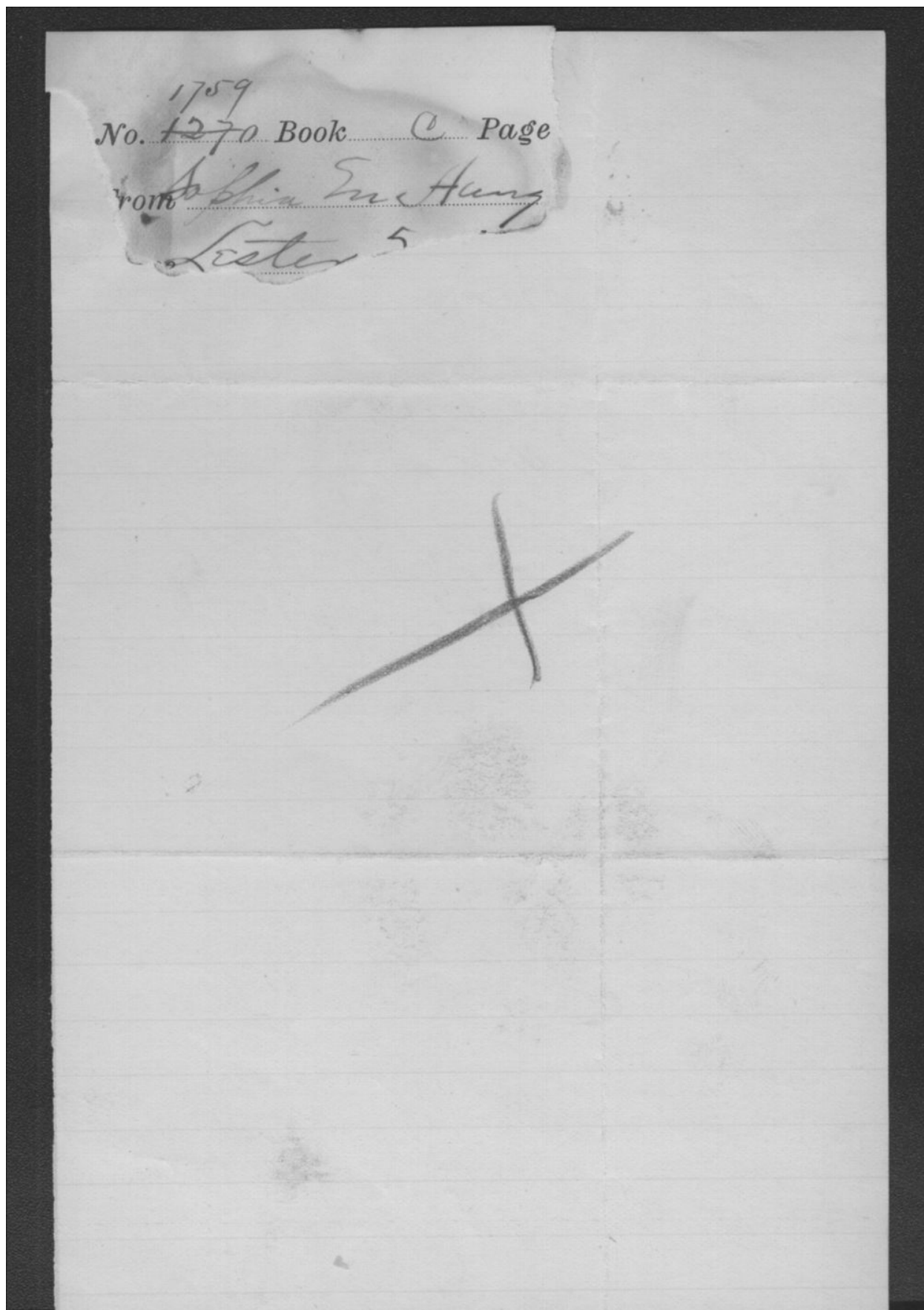
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



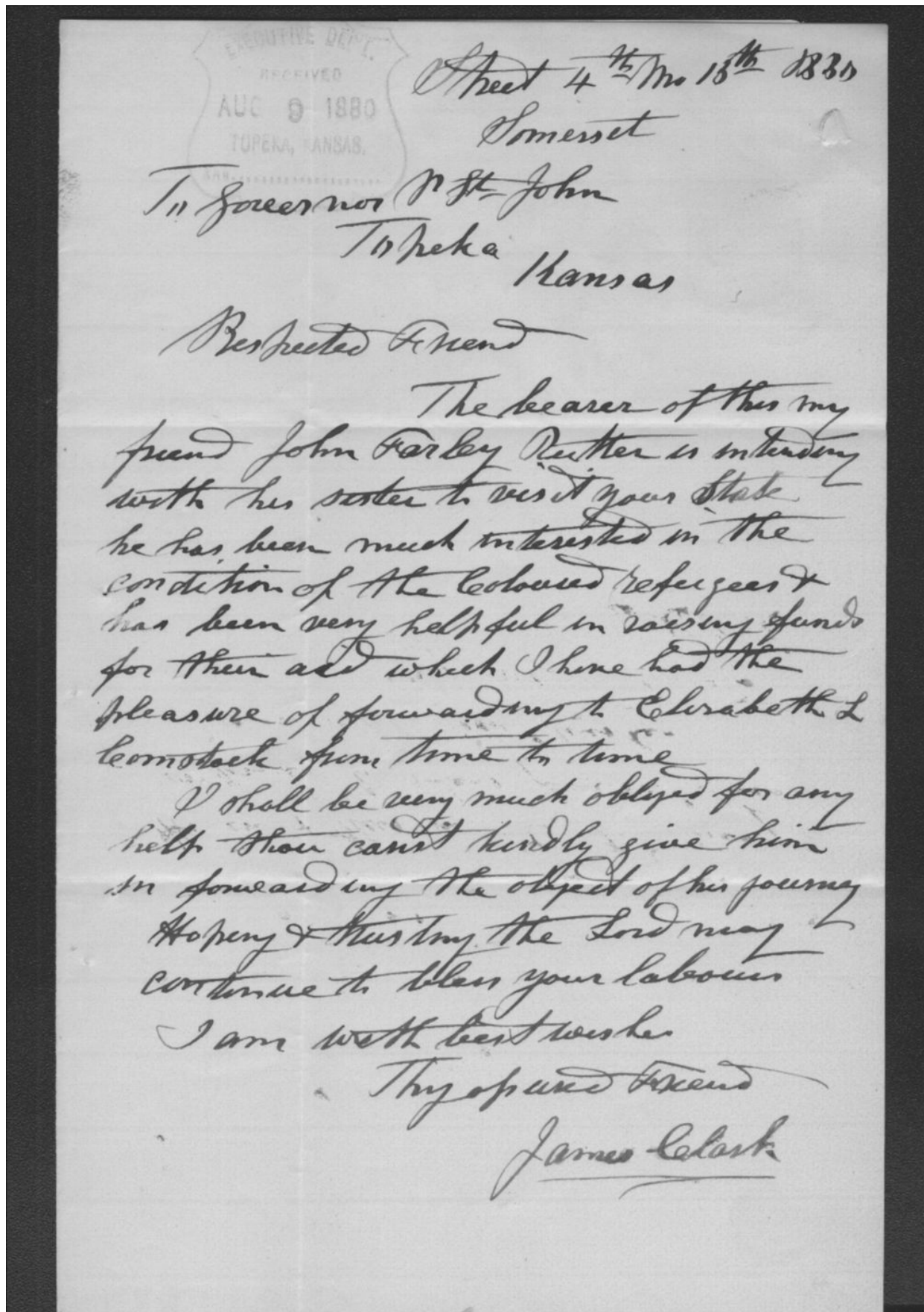
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



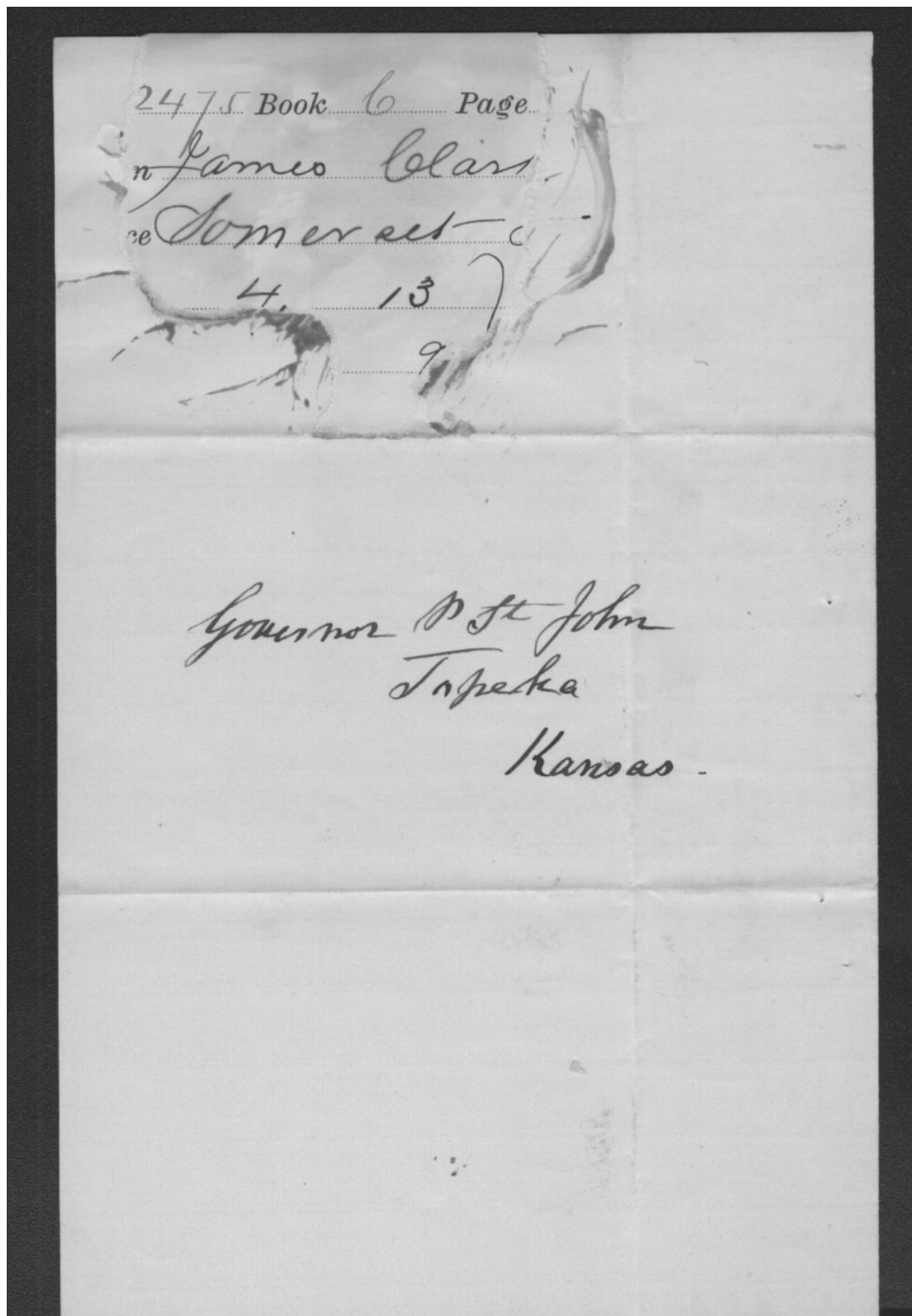
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

FREEDMEN'S EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

Incorporated February 7, 1880.

OBJECT.

"The purpose for which this Corporation is formed, is to give to the colored people, especially to the adults, in Kansas and elsewhere, so far as the funds of the Society will permit, instruction in the elements of education by means of night schools and other fitting instrumentalities; to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship; and prepare them, so far as possible, to properly discharge such duties and responsibilities in an intelligent manner; to work zealously for their moral and intellectual improvement, whenever and wherever opportunity may offer."—
Act of Incorporation, Article 2.

President, REV. J. E. GILBERT.

Cor. Sec'y, MRS. JULIET M. CLARK.

Vice President, F. W. GILES.

Sup't, MRS. M. E. GRIFFITH.

Treasurer, A. PRESCOTT.

The payment of Five Dollars, annually, constitutes a Membership; Twenty Dollars, at one time, a Life Member.



Topeka, Kansas, April 20 1880

Governor J. St. John,

Dear Sir,

Having now twelve Adult Lodges in Kansas we will hold a State Convention at Lawrence, on Wednesday P.M. & Thursday of next week; for the purpose of organizing a Grand Lodge. Mayor Benson of Ottawa Mr. Griffin & Judge Pipher of Manhattan - several white ministers; & other good white citizens are officers in our Subordinate Lodges with the colored officers; they show a Christ-like spirit in their trying to elevate a race so long oppressed. Can you not run over to Lawrence & give us an address Wednesday eve? The colored people would be so much encouraged by it, & you might gain many votes for Amendment. I had not time to call, as you asked me to do before leaving Topeka.

The Leavenworth people have offered me a salary, to return here (after I go home to Ohio for a month or two) & labor among the colored people, & whites also, until next November. Had I better do so? or will there still be opposition? I have not heard of much for a long time now.

You will oblige me by replying at your earliest convenience, that I may arrange programme.

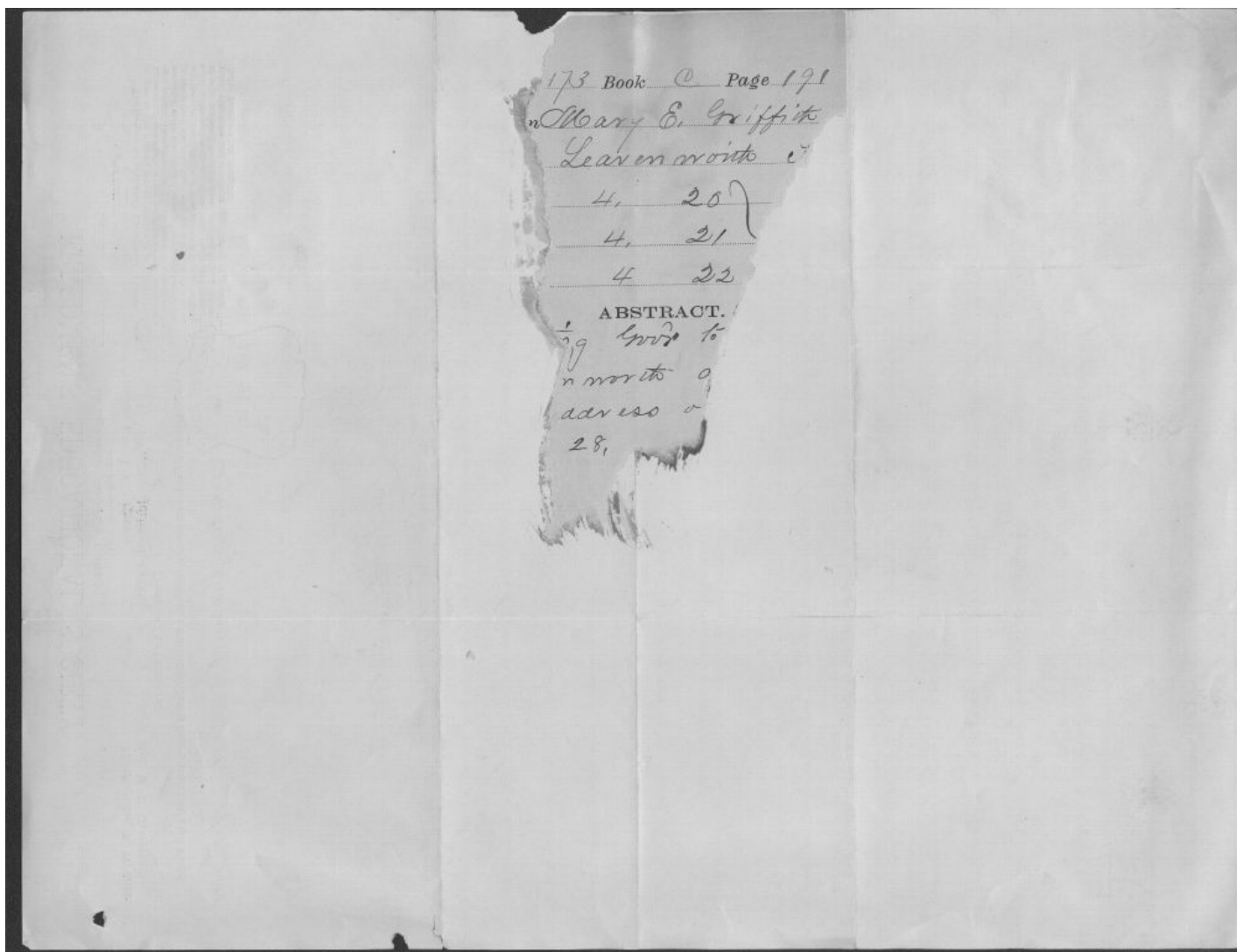
Address Care of S. North

Leavenworth Kan.

Your friend, in our common cause

Mary E. Griffith.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Apr. 16, 1880

Blank No. 1.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

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Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message back to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not hold itself liable for errors or delays in transmission or delivery of **Unrepeated Messages**.
This message is a **UNREPEATED MESSAGE** and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

A. R. BREWER, Sec'y. 46 NORVIN GREEN, President.

Dated Atchison Mo 4/16 188

Received at TOPEKA, KANSAS. 4/16 = 335-Rs

To Gov St John

READ THE NOTICE AT THE TOP.

If you know whereabouts
of Mrs E. L. Comstock
Please advise here I
have car lumber consigned
to her disposition of same
is desired

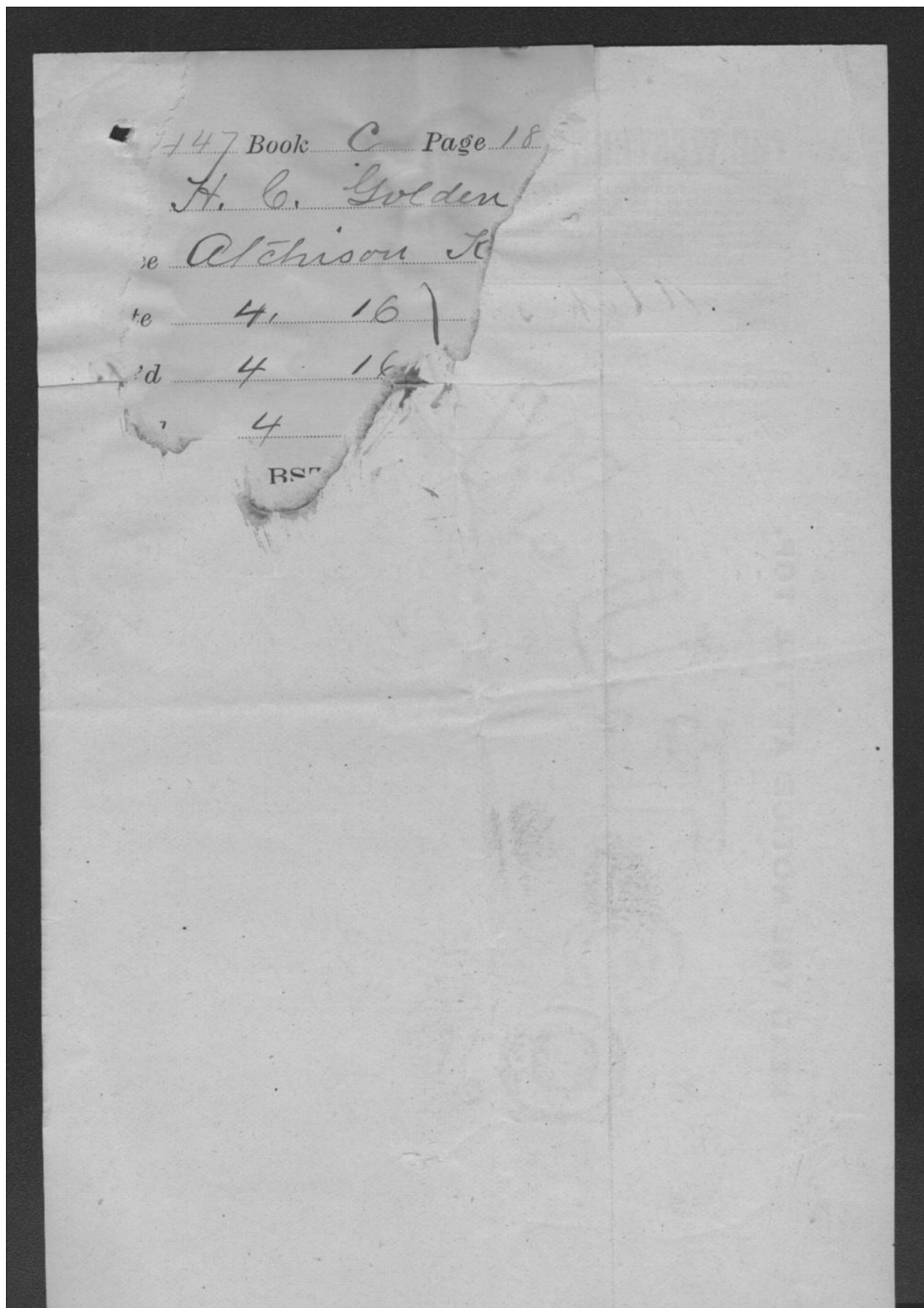
H. C. Gorden

Ag't C. R. & A. Ry

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
APR 16 1880
TOPEKA, KANSAS.

5 X w

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

April 16, 1880

By Mr St John

This is to the adoring Jubilee
1880

Allys Kansas April the 16th

Dear friend I have taken the pleasure
of returning you all the thanks for
your last kindling letter and when
in you have helped us in the time of need
as I will say in as much as you all
God being an all kindling friend
that fulfill this much of God's
will I hope you may be able
to succeed your heavenly journey
that I hope you are now pursuing
as I say if you are diligent to full
fill the will of God as you have
promised to fulfill the last commandment
you will receive a great reward
as I hope that you will pray for
me in your private hour
Respectfully yours
B. J. Jackson

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Can't be read

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

arwego Kansas April the 11 1890

Mr J T John Dear Sir
 Taken the pleasure to write you
 and god bless friends a few lines
 Thank you god bless friends for
 your goodly Obedience that you all have
 made to ward us for we are the
 old folks of the apostles & and
 are thankful that god's people is
 more skillfully then judging for they
 have the word that the nation is
 Do not render the thanks for
 my life but for my fellow man
 and fellow woman that are wander
 over the country (Garnet) of J John
 is not name of J John but he is not
 the pleaser of god's will and a keeper
 of god's commandments and a lover
 of the poor and is gay blessed
 are the doer of these things and is
 Must say that they have clean
 hearts

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

and i think that g^d has
 Placed of J John in the
 Jan gate that he places Joseph
 in blarsted are they that have no
 respect of person but are the
 Regarded in deare as color i
 Preserue that they have the love
 of god as it beable that are Worsen
 for the game and i Will say
 that my people should the people
 of this Jubility for the good work
 that they have done for them
 and thank god that he have
 inabbe the people to
 Help us and i hope that
 the Lord Will sell this caple
 When they are enter and Will
 Chalde them as go i say to you
 of J John Dear wife if you
 have any expression nebe
 Plert becomle a capray of it
 Respectfully yours
 B D Jackson



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Mr J J John

A Governor of Kansas

B J Jackson and

W J Newlan