

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 63, Pages 1861 - 1890

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

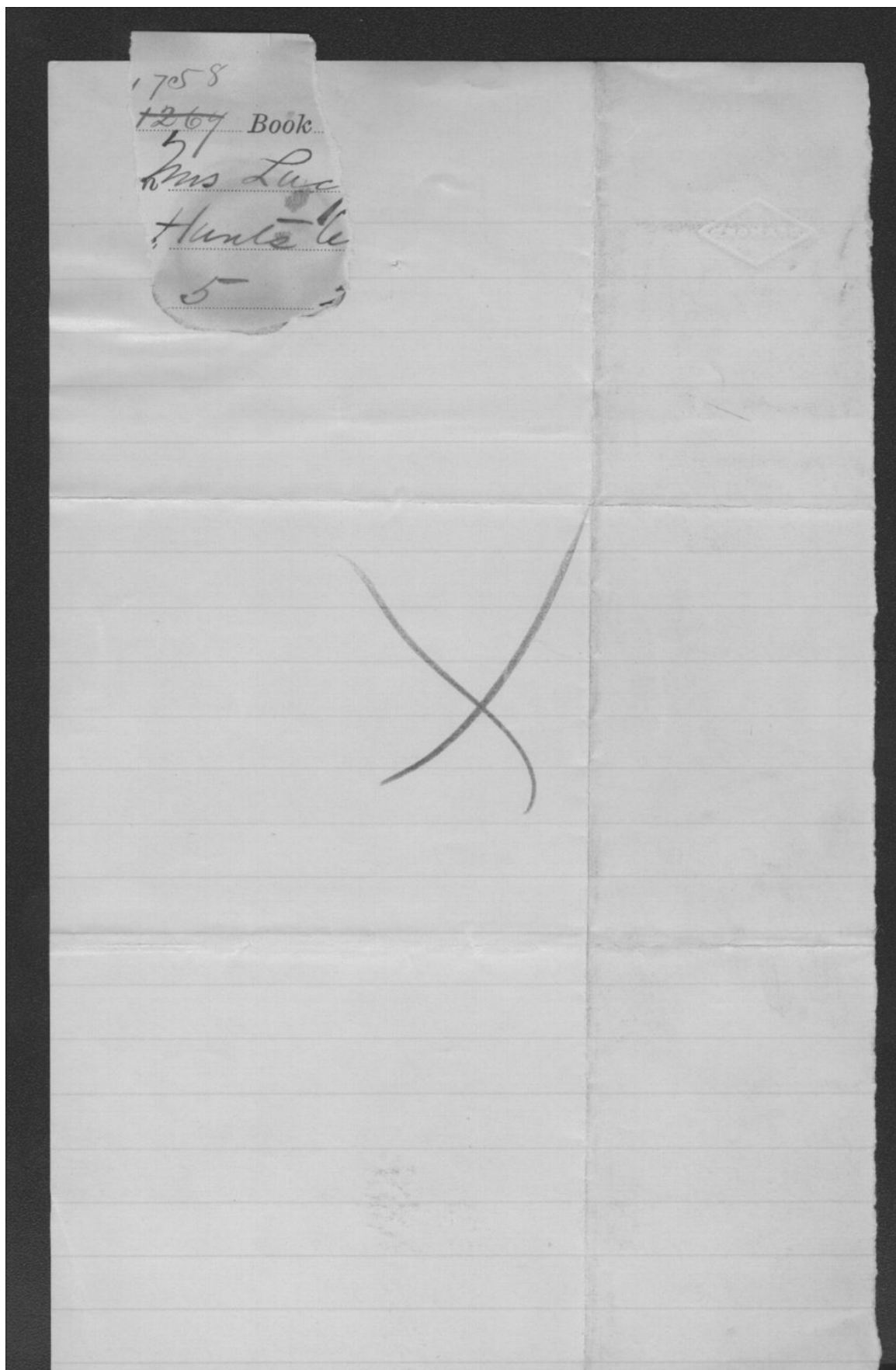
Callnumber: Governor's Office, St. John, Correspondence Received-Subject File, Box 13-15

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Item Identifier: 210296

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Topeka Kansas May 31st 1880

Gov J. P. St. John.

Your Excellency
will allow me I trust, to say
on paper, what I find inconven-
ient to do orally. I have learned
some facts of interest to yourself
since I came from Garfield
here, which surprised me very
much. I feel it to be my duty
to report the same to your
Excellency so as to have the



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matter attended to. I have
called the attention of the
proper persons to the first,
the need of a temporary
home for honest working
women; who come here. I
as I did, & find a hard
chance to live while getting
settled. There is not a
dollar's value of preparation
now made, that is available
for them. Mr Hudson
& Dr McCabe promised
to look after this interest,
& I expect that all will be



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done right. I hope for a better chance to live than I have had since I came here, I must have it, or leave very soon. I am depending on advertisement entirely to get work. I am living in with Miss McCarty, Mr Wymans housekeeper, at no 93 VanBuren St, between Third & Fourth Sts. Anyone seeing my advertisement in the Capital can call on me, or send me word.



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where my services are
desired, & I will call on
them, & save their time.
I shall ^{not} call on any lady
to ask for work again
while I remain here. My
health is not good enough
to stand working by the
day! & I am prepared to
take in work at home!
& will be grateful for a
share of patronage to enable
me to earn a decent living.
I am with respect a
friend & Christian sister.
Mrs M. E. Pedrick,

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I wish to tell you, what I
have learned by the colored women
who have been here. They say
they cannot get any aid
from Mr Brown at all, & do
not know what to do,
to get the means to live on.
They cannot get the
work, or half as much
as they can do to earn a
living. The woman who

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worked here Saturday
said she had seven
children, & her husband
could not get much work
& she could not, & as
she had a husband she
was refused aid. She
needs some everyday
shoes, & clothes badly, &
cannot get anything from
the aid. I told her I
would report to your
Excellency & have the
matter looked up. If
such a family can get no

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aid where does the money
go to that is supplied
by other states for the
colored refugees. Is the
work of distribution all
in the hands of one
man? She told us that
in case of need caused by
sickness in her family
she only received a little
tea & one other article of
food: no sugar, or any other
necessaries. I do not wish
to have my name used
as the party calling attention

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to this fact, as it might
bring me trouble, & the need
investigation can be made
without anyone knowing
I told of it, so please keep
this private, & save me trouble
I would call but thought it
best to write. Miss
my landlady knows these
things, & if anyone asked
her can tell them. I wish
to not be questioned if
anyone calls to ask.
I write this from a
sense of duty, as Mrs
Comstock is absent &
I do not know anyone
to speak to about it.

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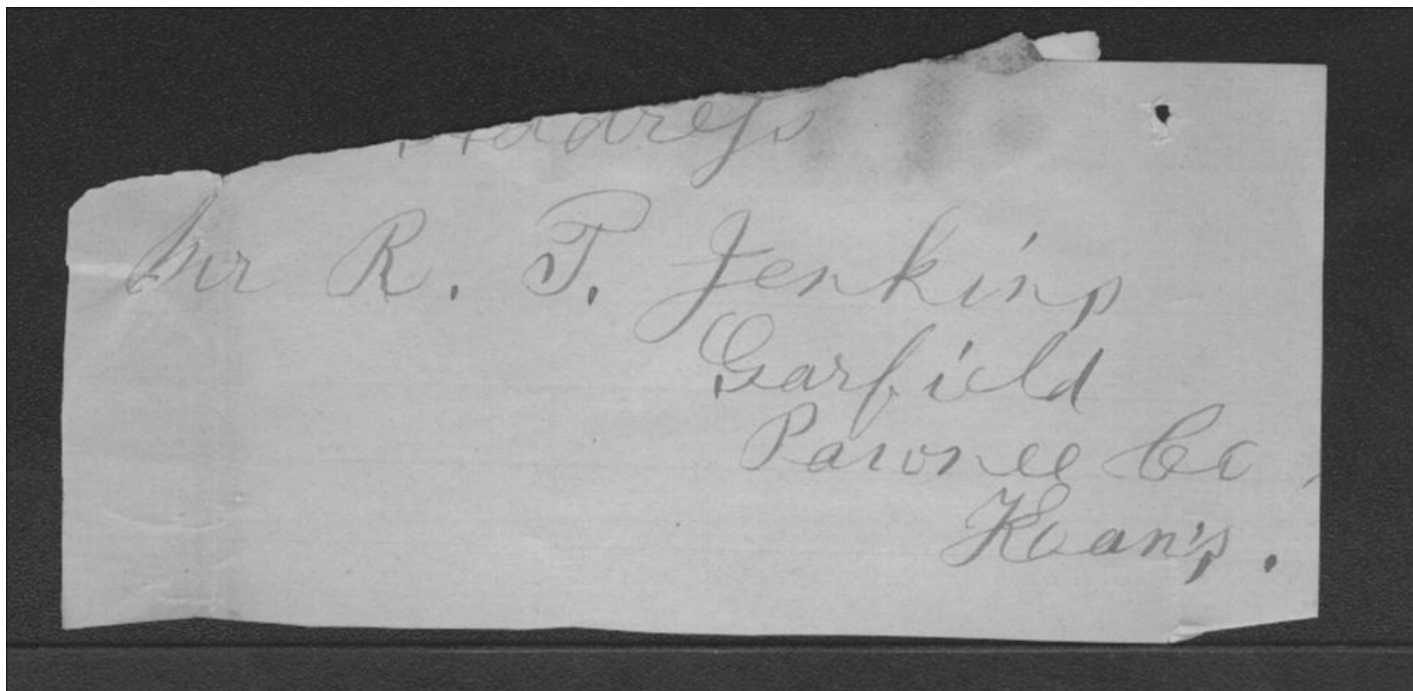
give my brother in law
 Mr R. T. Jenkins of West
 Garfield a chance, as he
 has to stay there until
 next spring before he can
 prove up which is his plan
 & then he can come here & buy a
 home. He is a crippled soldier
 & has a very small pension
 3.00 per month. He was
 in the employ of the R.R.
 as nurse for his brother
 Harris Jenkins, last year
 & so lived there, but closed
 last February. All their
 neighbors are leaving, obliged
 to go, Mrs M E Pedrick

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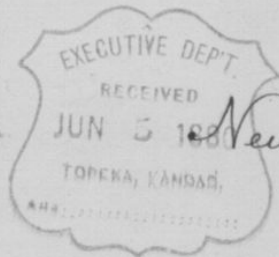
Exoduster Refugees

I just received a letter
from my sister, &
she tells of hard times
I do not see any chance
for them to get a comfort-
able living as they have
four children. If there
is any position to be
given to anyone in
the country there besides
Col. Wolcott, please

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New Bedford 6th mo 2. 1880

To Governor St. John

My esteemed friend

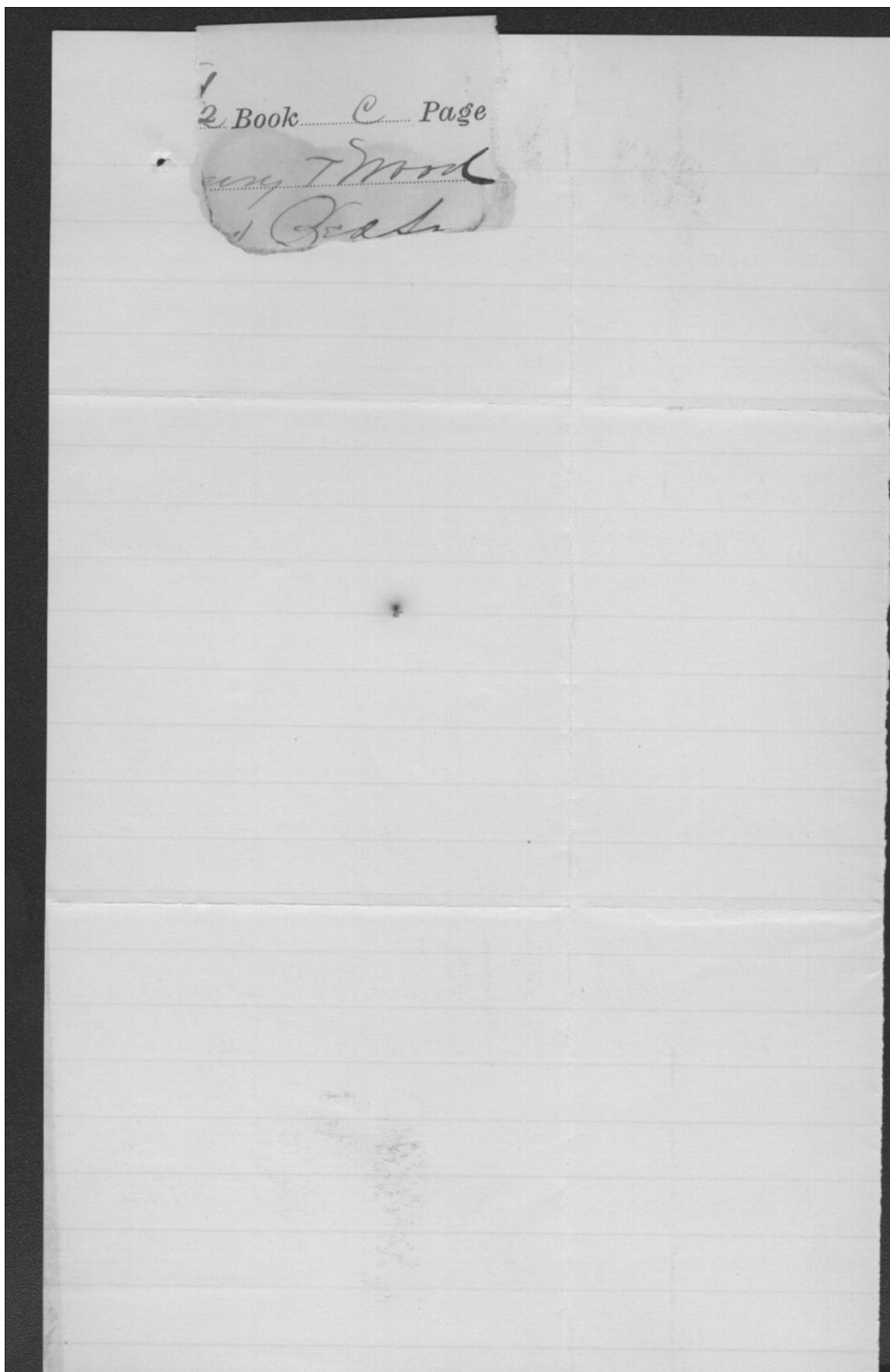
With this I send a Cashier's check for \$66. ²⁵ which was contributed by charitable persons in this community in aid of the colored refugees. I have previously made five small remittances, which at the request of some of the donors were all sent to thee. Only one of these is accredited in the lists of contributions which have been sent to me. It is doubtless unreasonable to expect correctness in a work of this nature and magnitude.

I wish to express my appreciation of thy kindness in this effort to befriend the colored people.

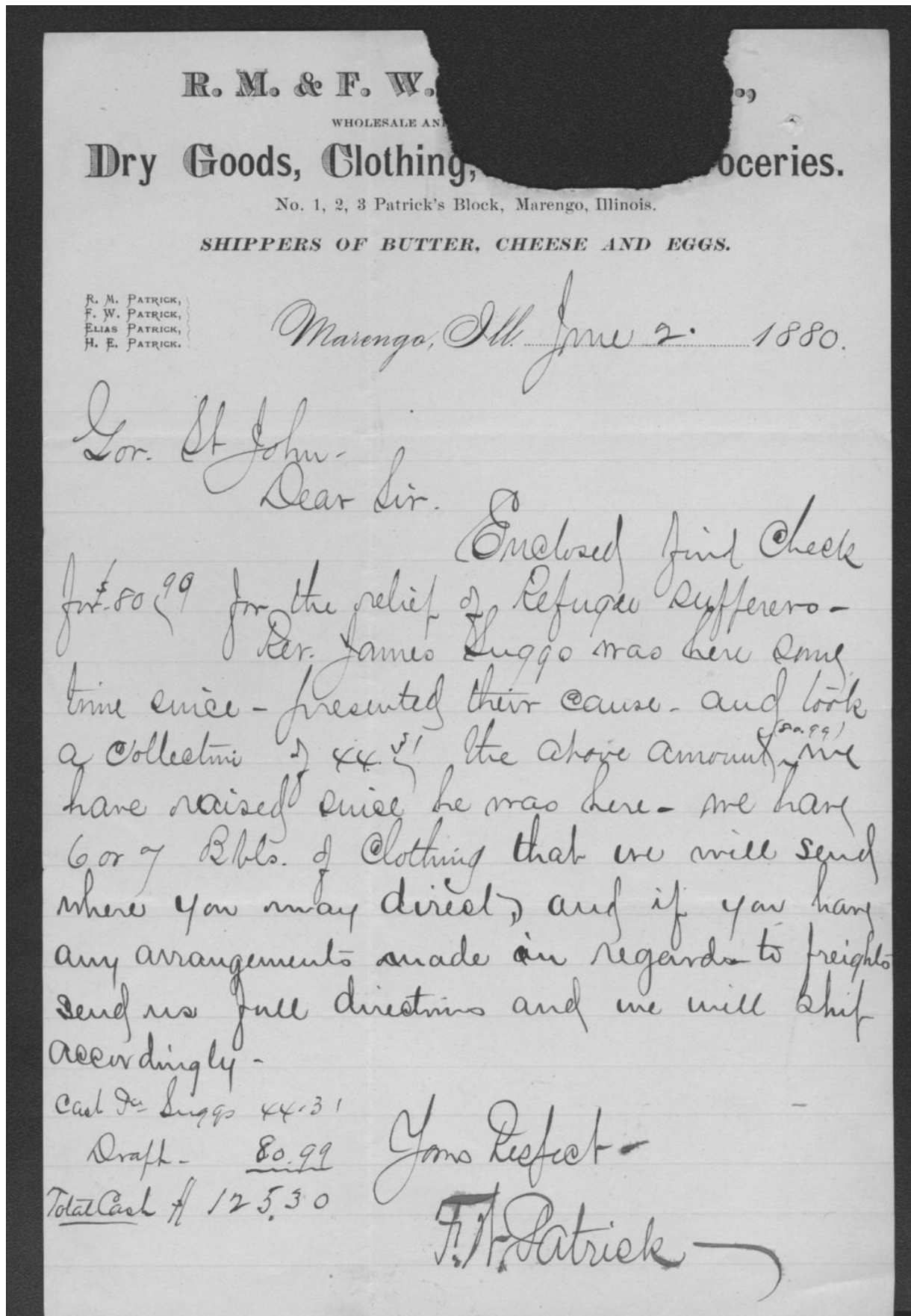
Thine sincerely

Henry T Wood

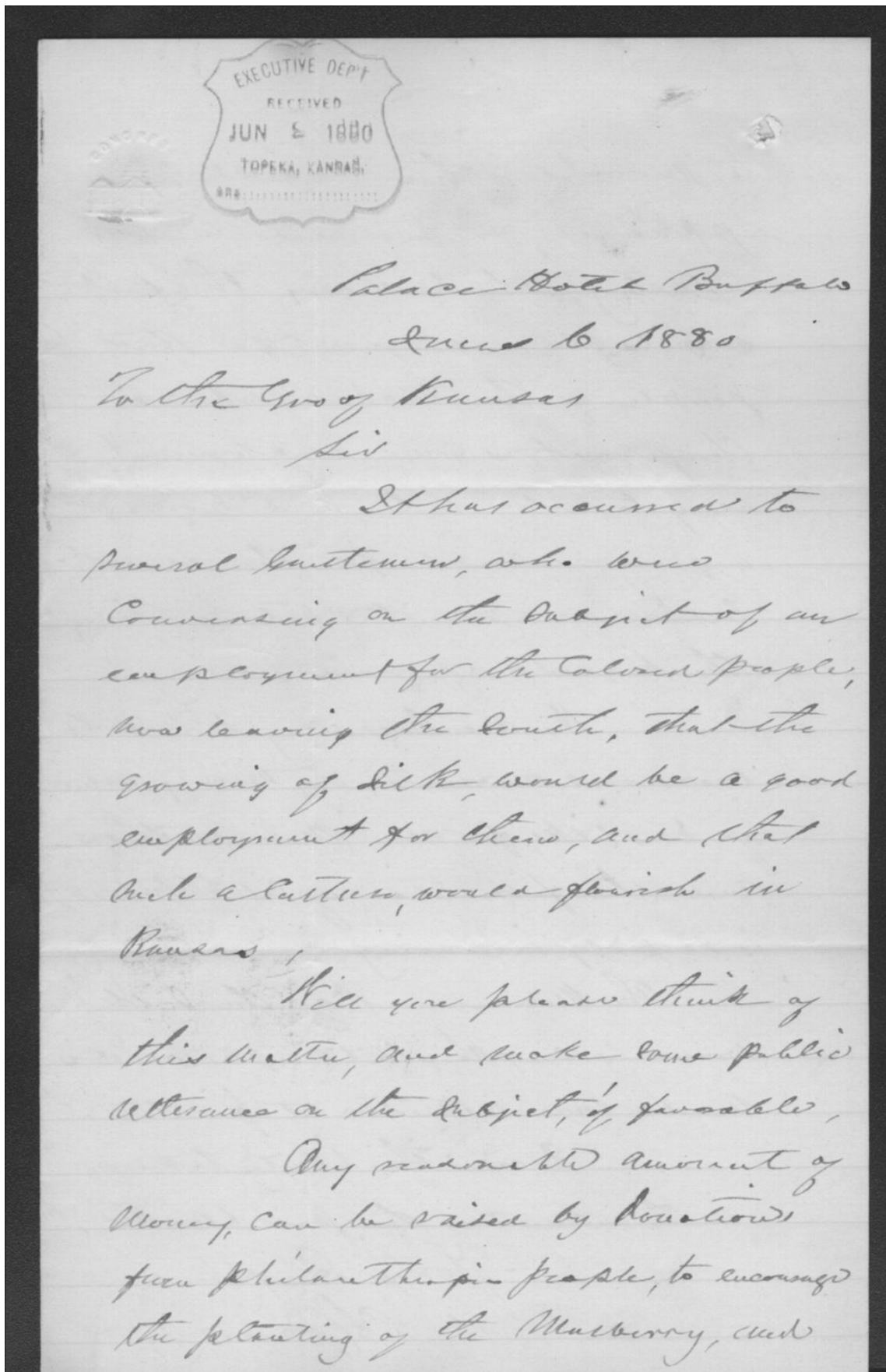
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to provide other necessary
appliances, for beginners in this
industry, which many think is
a suitable employment, for the
people of the Exodus, whose
chief want, is some employment
easy to enter into, and giving
a good reward for the labor
bestowed upon it, & not involving
the hazards of gain growing,

We are beginning to import
enormous amounts, in money value,
of raw silk, for our Manufactories,
and the fabrication of silk tissues,
is rapidly increasing in our country,

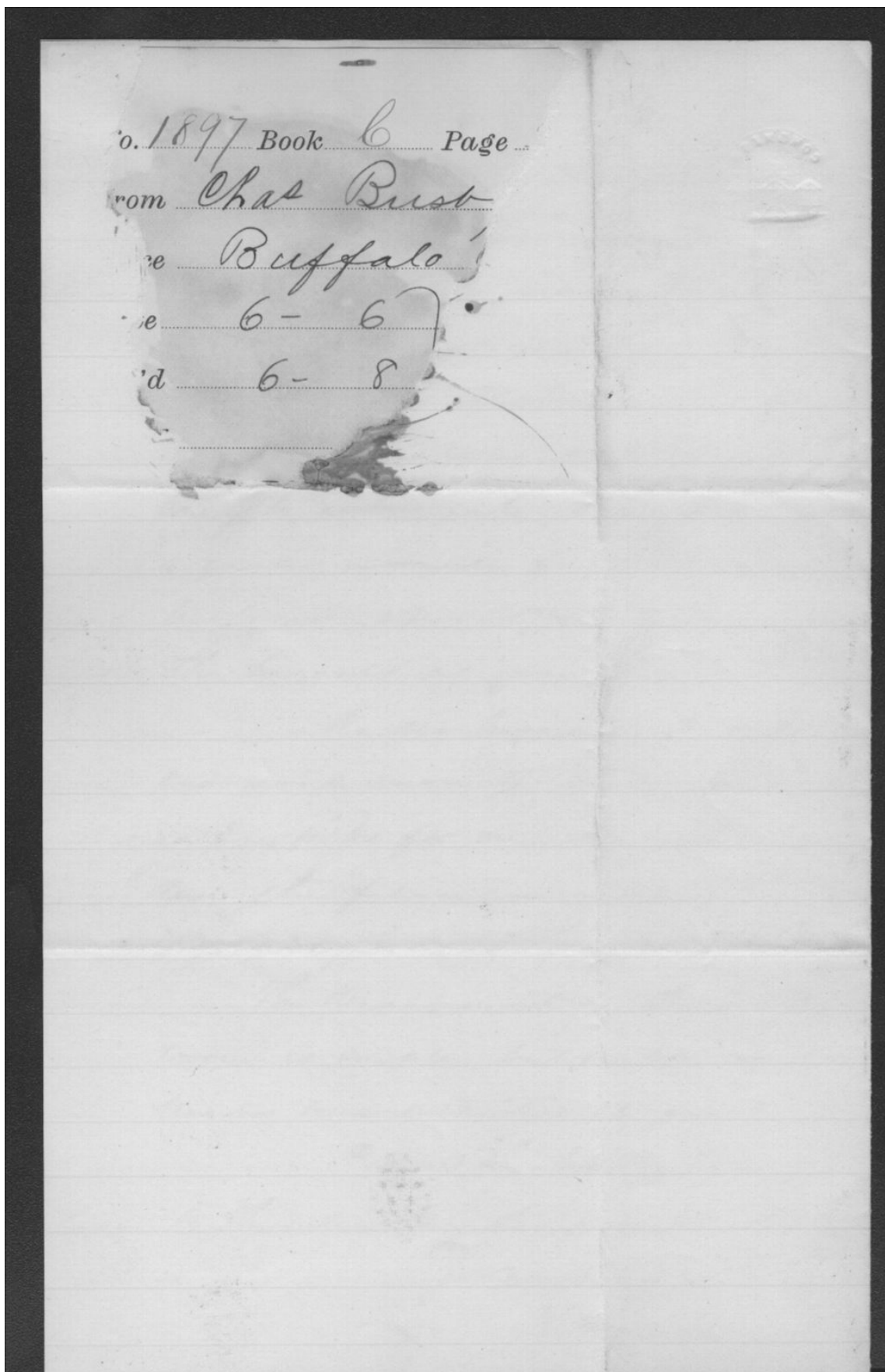
The Management of the silk
worm is simple, but simple as it is,
needs some instruction at first,

Excuse this liberty taken
in the interest of the poor blacks,

Yours deeply
Ch. Deering



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Yours truly
 F. J. Taylor
 May God
 give strength
 and endurance
 for your
 abundant
 labors! The
 reward is
 eternal!

Book 6 Page 27
 F. J. Taylor
 Creators Ill. June 3rd 80
 Gov. St. John,

Dear Sir, there set that
 down to Signer - I should
 have said Hon. Sir,
 For some time we
 have done nothing ostensibly
 for the Exodus, but now we have
 in hand a little fund, some \$40,
 which we expect to increase to
 \$100. or more, proceeds of sale
 of goods by assignment, which
 Mr. S. Plumb and Dr. Evans
 donated our Kan. Corn. Now
 we would like to know if there
 is any special call, for which
 you would like our mite, or
 shall it go to the general
 fund. Please indicate.
 Over,

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2) Besides, this I promised to write enquiring for one Samuels (John I think) who was for a time in the Kansas penitentiary and for whom there was by friends a petition some year since for pardon. The family has come to acquaintance through a suit by his mother for prosecution of a saloon keeper for selling liquor to minors - a son of her own and two grand children. She is a large, strong well hearted Englishman, whose husband came to America with old country habits, injured by work in mines, he has been for years a cripple, and was indeed against his wife's wishes to keep a saloon. The son in penitentiary fell thereby, a daughter married a saloon keeper. Two other sons

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3) were daily patrons of saloons, and the grandchildren
 were following the same dread example. The mother
 had assumed care of finances, banished saloon-
 property, and come to Straton where all the boys made
 good wages in the mines. - The ladies attended all
 the Courts last year, because we found we could influ-
 ence witnesses to tell truth - and juries to decide for
 right. After hearing Mrs. Samuel's Case, we visited
 the family. Induced all but the old father to sign
 the pledge. Gained his ^(son) vote and that of a son-in-law
 to vote for prohibition, and I got the young men
 to come to me two evenings each week for writing
 and reading. They seem noble boys. Have for the
 past four months spent all their evenings in study.
 The eldest Samuel, has now gone to Murfreesboro.
 The grandsons are in my S. S. Class and they brought
 in three other boys last Sabbath. They have all a spirit

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④ of simple candor, and an eagerness for truth that is wonderfully refreshing. They are all anxious about the crying brother, and the poor mother hardly knows how to separate her tears of thankfulness from those of anguish for the lost boy. So I have written these particulars thinking you may communicate with him if still within your knowledge. The whole family here is transformed, and need only to redeem the elder brother to become a unit in home-growth and happiness.

The ladies would gladly have done more for freedmen but the same band upon whom such work must fall is the inspiring genius in prohibition work during our second year of antilicense in this mining town and our work is incessant. — Any word from Samuels will be thankfully received. — We watch all your labors for Temp. and Redemption.

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Prescott Wis. June 13. 1880

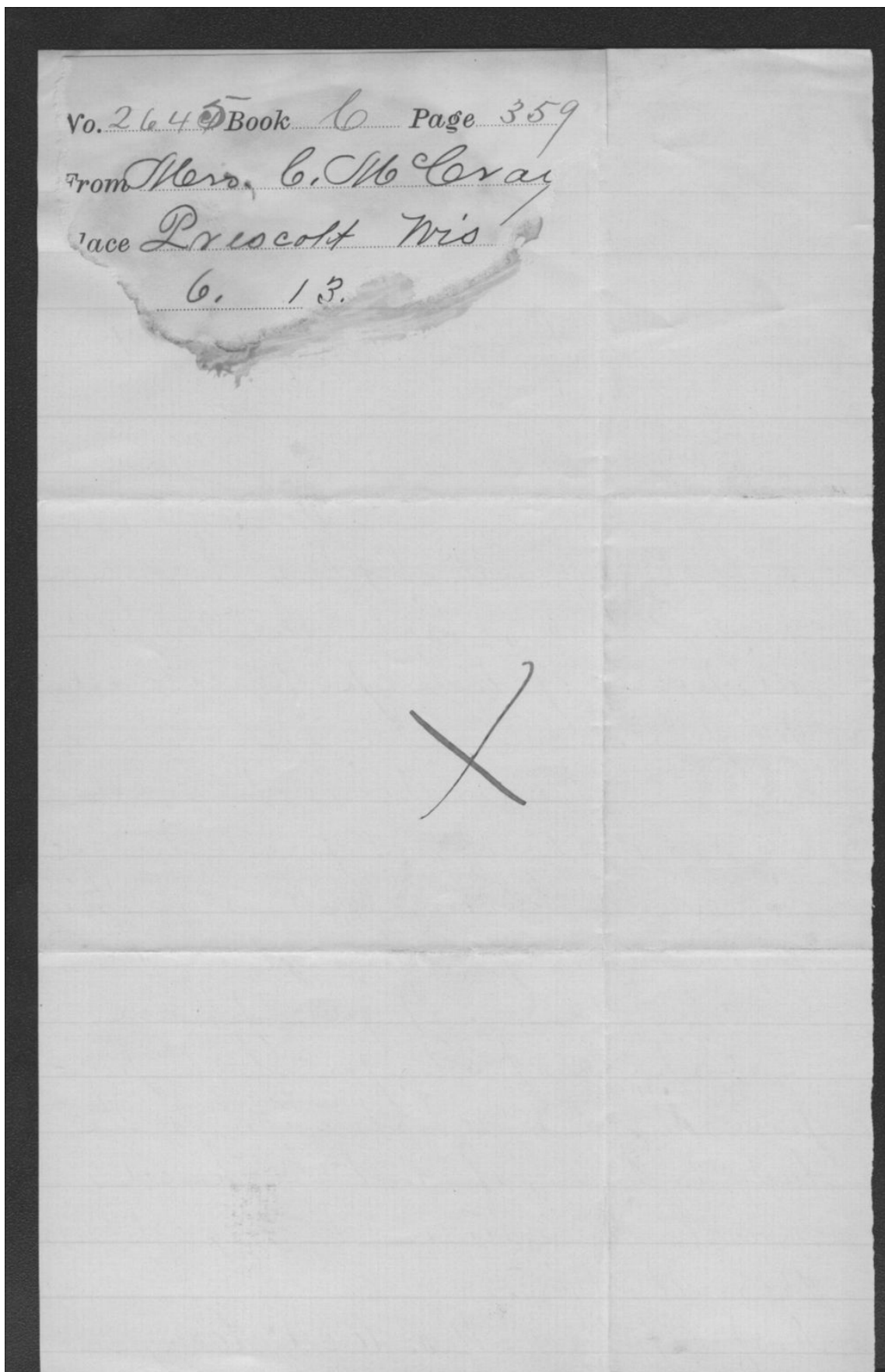
Gov. St. John:

Sir: recently a lady friend left with me forty dollars, which she wished disposed of to help the colored people.

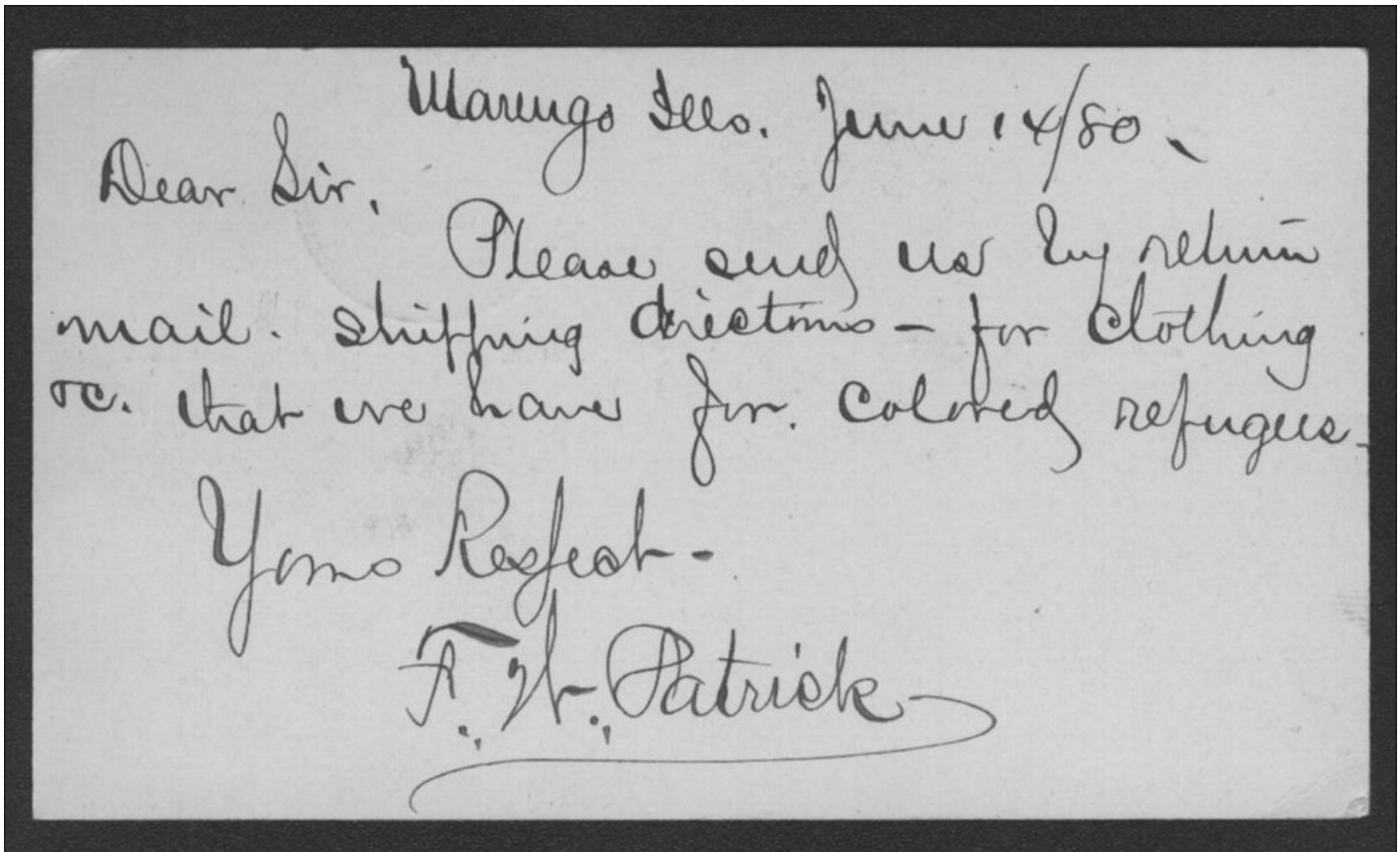
I was advised ~~to send~~ to send it to you for distribution, and having read something of your care for them, I make bold to do so. If you please to dispose of it ^{will} for that purpose it will be a satisfaction to the lady to know, if not be kind enough to return to my address Prescott Wis.

Respectfully Mrs. C. M. Gray.

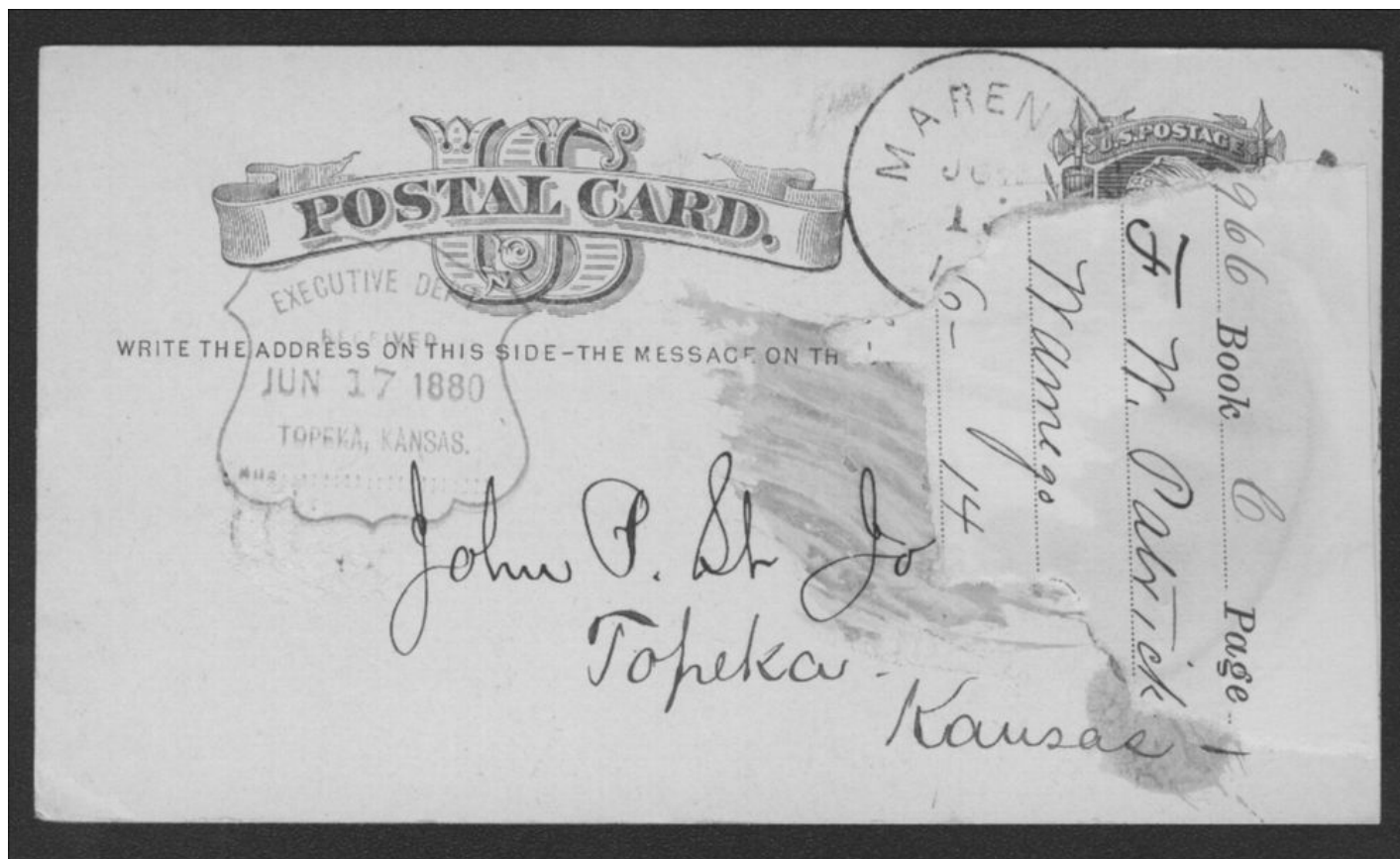
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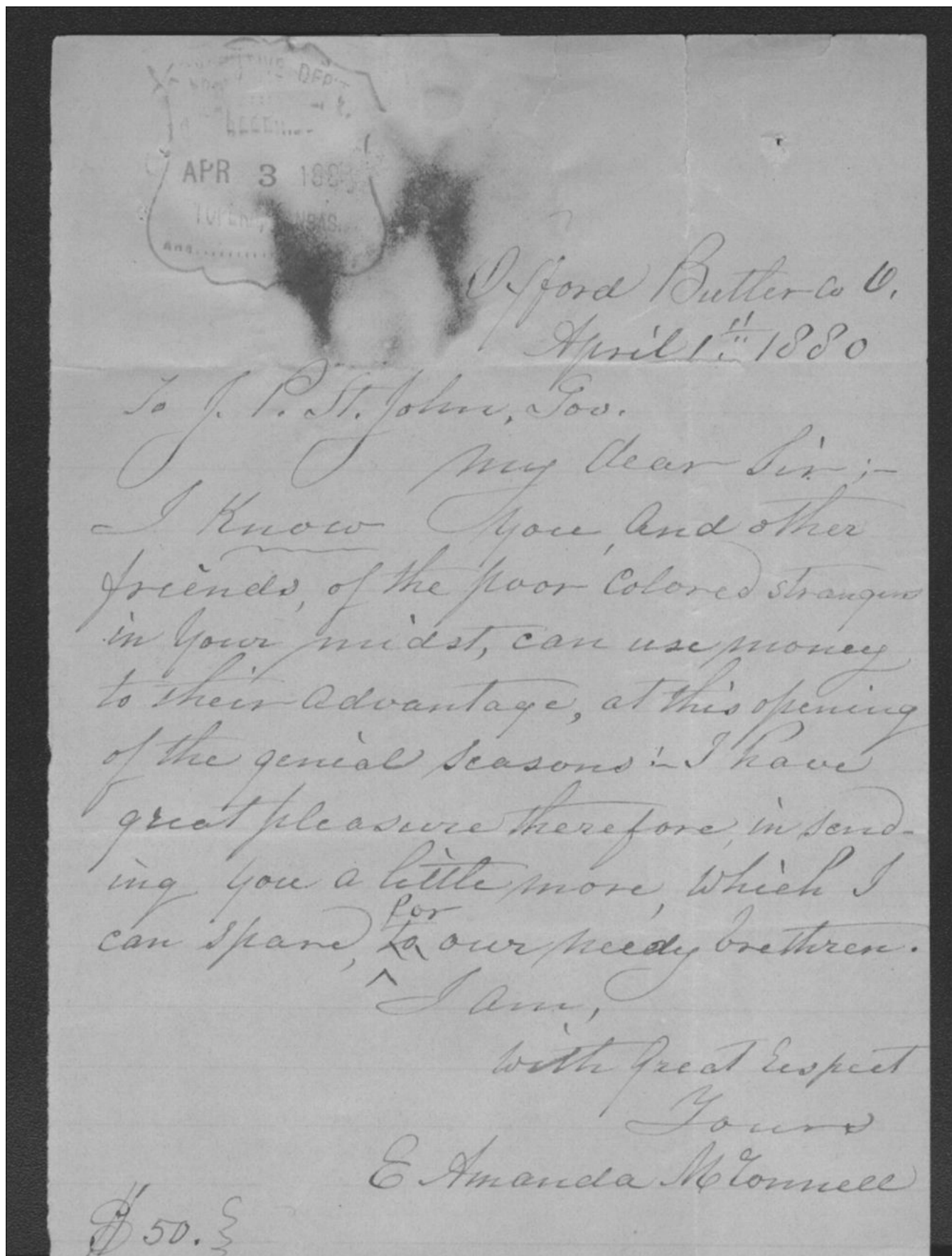
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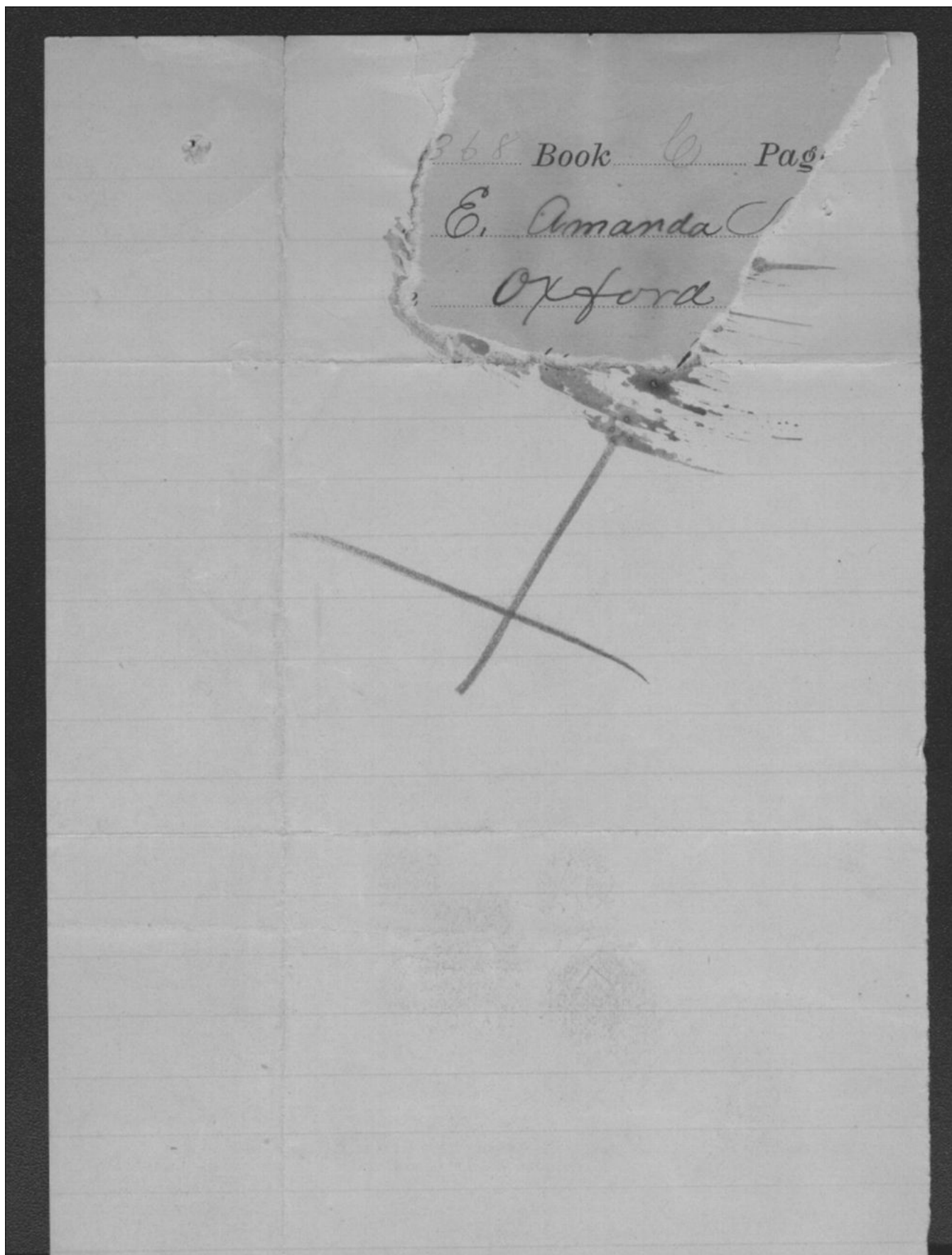
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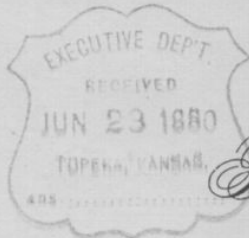
WILLIAM COFFIN.
N. S. YOUNG.

WM. K. COFFIN, Cashier.

THE BATAVIA BANK,

— OF —

COFFIN & YOUNG,



Batavia, Ill. 6/19 1880

Dear Sir:

I enclose oft for $\$1.00$.
It was left here with the
request that we forward it
to the colored refugees in
Kan.

Please see that it is
properly applied.

Rudely

Wm K Coffin

Gov St John
Topeka

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