

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

### Section 69, Pages 2041 - 2070

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

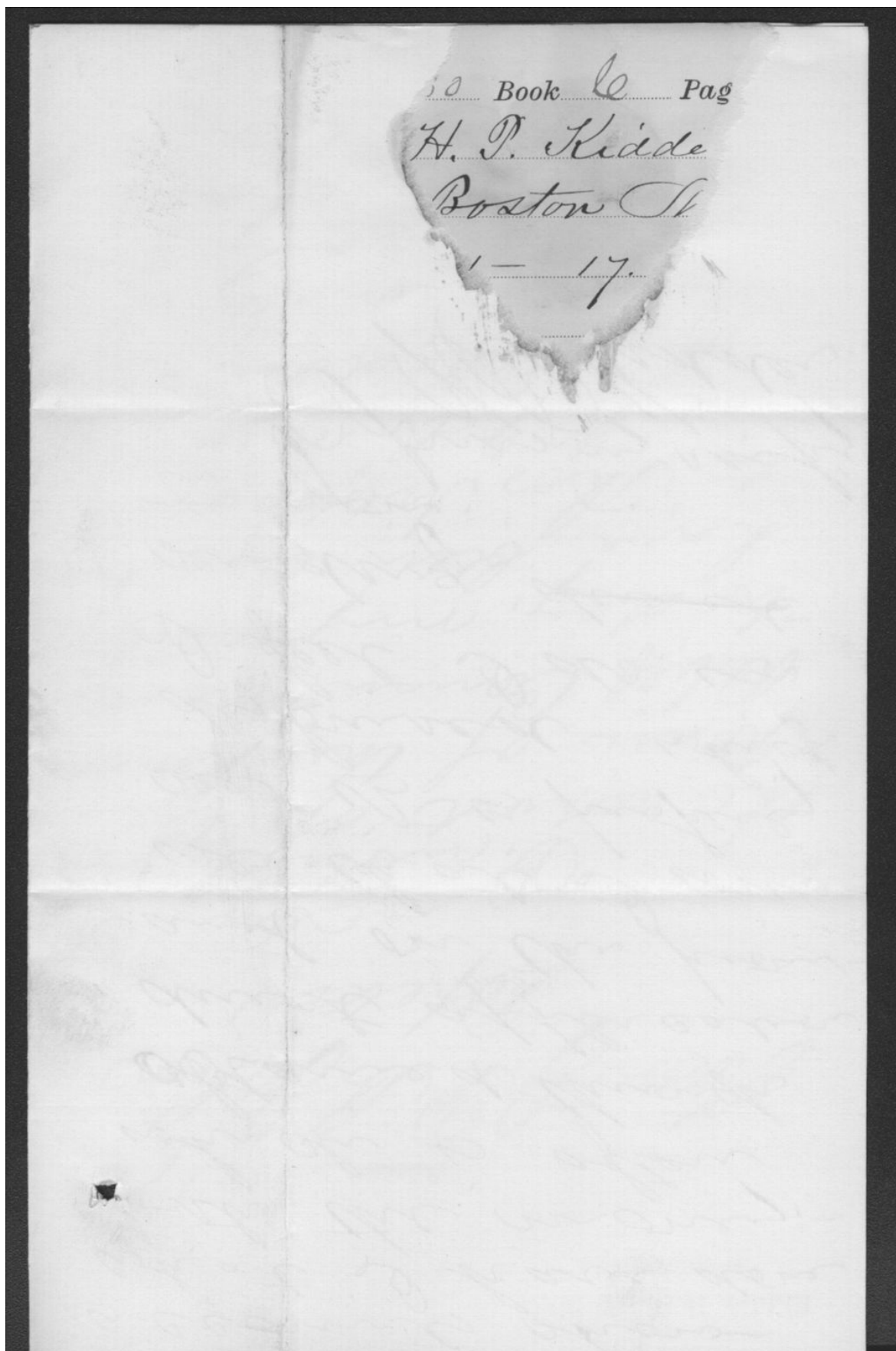
Callnumber: Governor's Office, St. John, Correspondence Received-Subject File, Box 13-15

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 210296

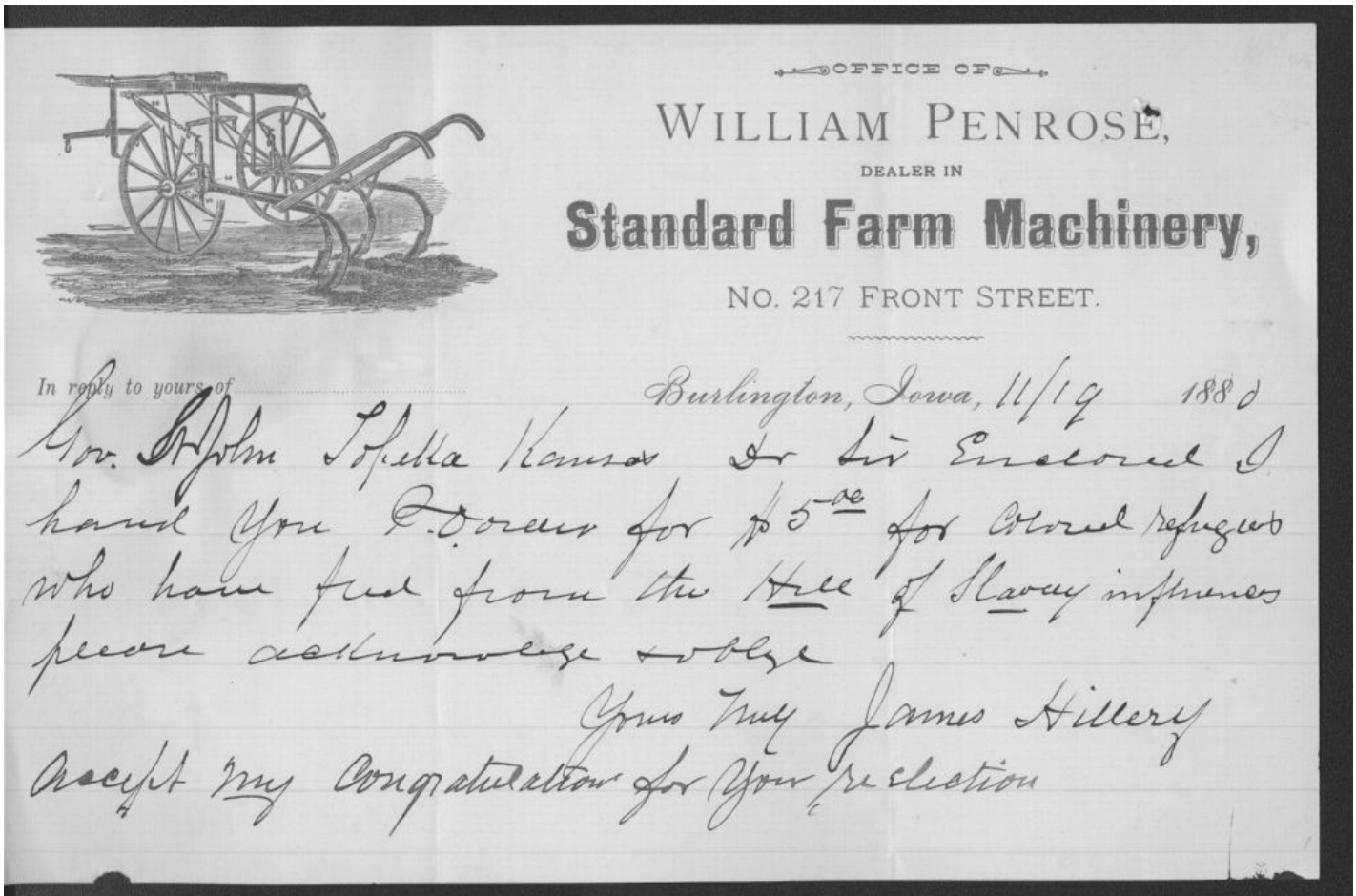
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[www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296](http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296)

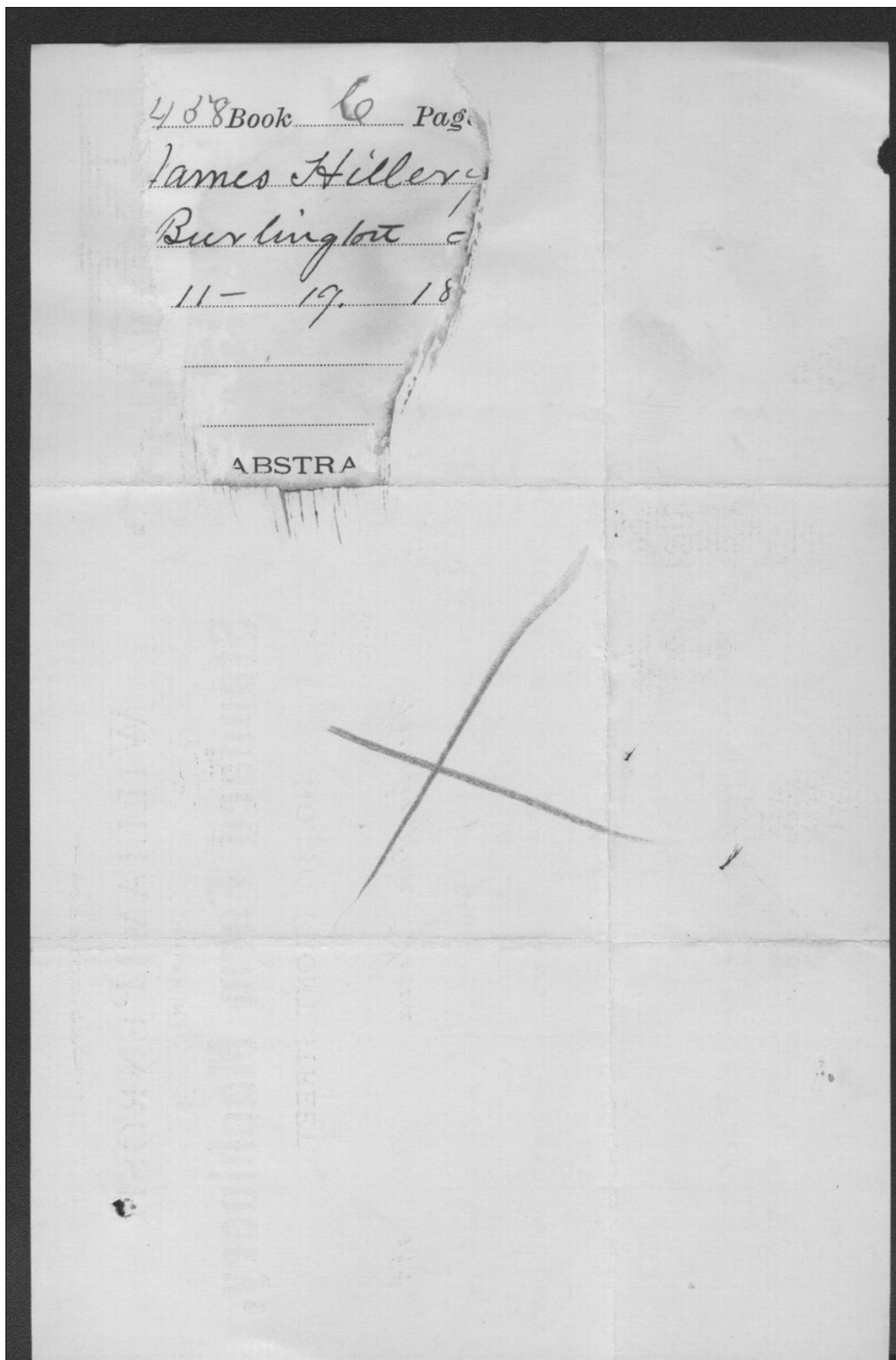
## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



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Lawrence Kansas Nov 19th  
1880

Dear Governor

I am seated this morning to write you for a two fold purpose of one of which, is to thank you heartily for double pass over the A. T. & S. F. R.R. to and from Pueblo Colorado, and the other is to inform you as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the A. M. E. Church, that you are earnestly requested to deliver an address <sup>in</sup> Liberty Hall this city on Saturday morning Jan 1st 1881, which will of course be on the occasion of an Emancipation Celebration which we (the officers of the church) propose holding for the purpose of doing what we can to liquidate the indebtedness of the church which is above five hundred dollars. It may be proper to state that a church fair will be held in the Hall above.

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

mentioned which will continue  
several days. And it may be that we  
may conclude to have the speaking  
on Friday evening December 30th if  
so we will notify you in time  
Again thanking you for your kind favor  
which I shall ever remember. I close  
and anxiously await your answer.

Respectfully yours  
John L. Waller  
Sect. Board of Trustees A.M.E. Church  
Lawrence Kansas  
P.O. Box 1083



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

T. A. BECK, President.  
J. M. BROWN, Superintendent.

LAURA S. HAVILAND,  
SECRETARY

C. A. SPERRY, J. W. BROXTON, Vice Presidents.  
JOHN D. KNOX, Treasurer.

### 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.

Philadelphia  
Topeka, Kansas, 1214 Arch St. W. 20. 1880.

My dear Friend  
Gov. St. John

Enclosed please find New York draft \$110.

Four hundred & 10 dollars, also Philadelphia ditto \$335 and \$100.

Five hundred & 35 and One Hundred making total of 945 (Nine hundred and forty five dollars). Since the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month I have sent to Kansas for the refugees \$2059.  $\frac{47}{100}$  (Two thousand fifty nine  $\frac{47}{100}$  dollars.) I hope for another thousand next week.

The whole of this has been contributed, chiefly in small amounts, from our Quaker Friends for the refugees. Part of it with a view of providing homesteads for the large families as proposed in the paper I sent thee last week, which I hope meets thy approval.

I have begged with some success the uniforms used in the torch light processions in these eastern cities, also the cast off uniforms of City Police & Post men or letter carriers. Today I have the promise of the cast off suits of 7 or 800 boys, Girard College students. The whole of the above will make warm clothing for our poor Exodusters. I have deemed it wise to have 2 or 3 car loads of bedding & clothing shipped to Kansas City, subject to my order, until I can see thee & consult with thee about the best distribution point for



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T. A. BECK, President.  
J. M. BROWN, Superintendent.

LAURA S. HAVILAND,  
SECRETARY

[Nov. 20, 1880] [27]  
C. A. SPERRY, Vice Presidents.  
J. W. BROXTON, Vice Presidents.  
JOHN D. KNOX, Treasurer.

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Topeka, Kansas, 188.

*the same, I have ordered 2 car loads to Topeka to meet present needs, & several barrels & boxes are gone to Independence & Columbus, Kas. as we heard from our agents there, of great suffering & destitution among the recent arrivals there.*

*What shall we do with the vast hordes hurrying pell mell from La & Ala. now? A Friend in this city has been down among them, he has just returned. By his report we conjecture Kas is likely to be inundated & overwhelmed by them.*

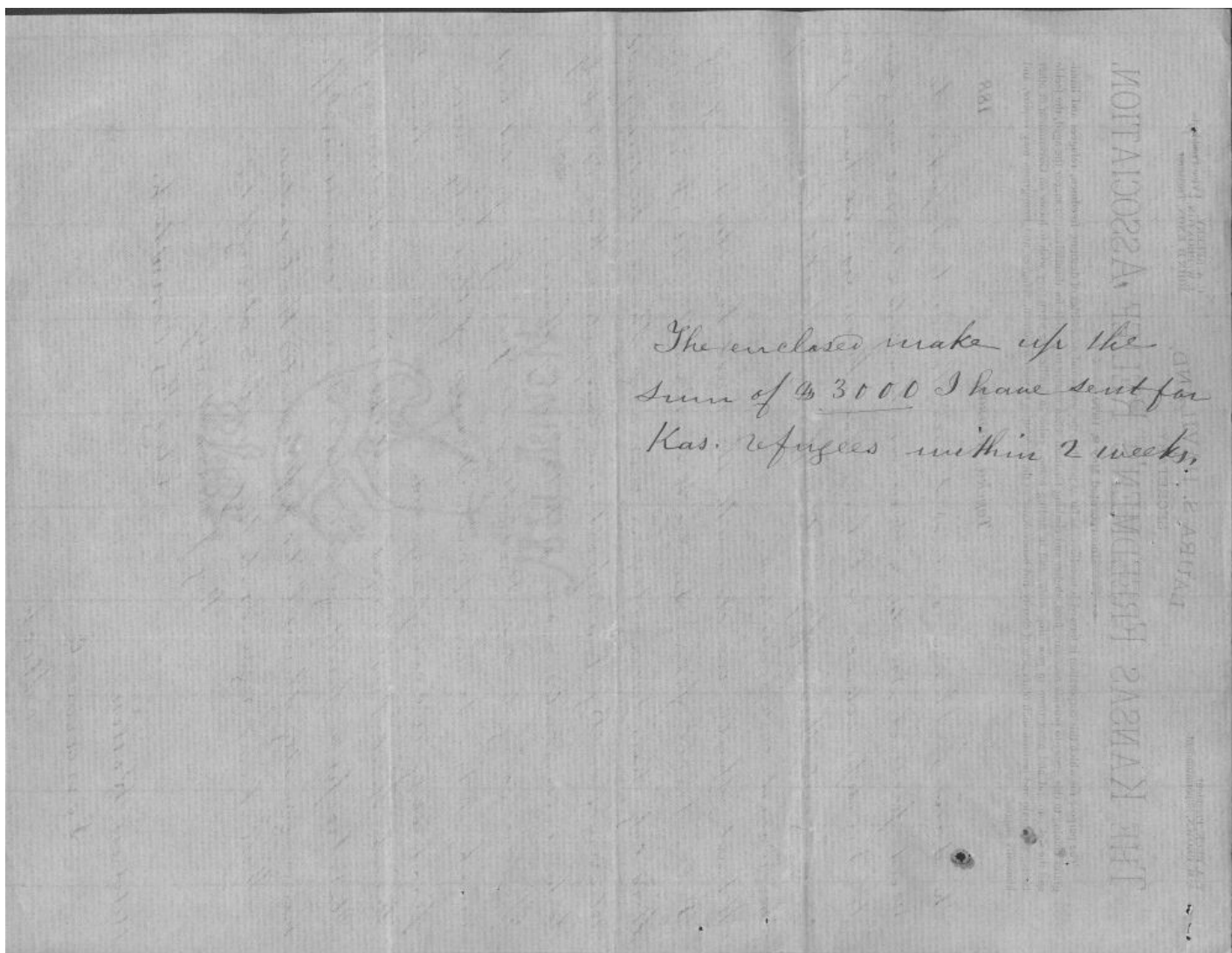
*We are going to see Pres<sup>t</sup> Hayes & Gen<sup>l</sup> Garfield next week. I & some of our friends of this city will probably accompany us. We are inclined to think that Pres<sup>t</sup> Hayes' mistakes in withdrawing the U.S. troops & putting Ex rebels & slave owners in office have greatly stimulated & promoted the Exodus.*

*With kind regards to thy wife & daughter  
Thy friend truly  
Eliza L. Comstock*

*Address Rollin  
Leavenworth  
Mich.*



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Topeka, Kansas,

188

Dear Friend

I have just mailed a letter to thee written amid many interruptions, & I believe in my haste I made a mistake in the amt total of money enclosed. I should have said 3 drafts

one \$410 (Four hundred & ten dollars)

one \$535 (Five hundred & thirty five)

& one \$100 (One hundred dollars)

Total \$1045 (One thousand & forty five)

I had previously sent to Topeka since L. S. Haviland left  
J. S. Winn \$1347 <sup>47</sup>/<sub>100</sub> of which his rectr. have reached me

" John Brown \$500 (Five hundred)

" J. E. Pickering \$100 (One hundred) Columbus Kas

" Sam'l Vestam \$100 (One hundred) Independence

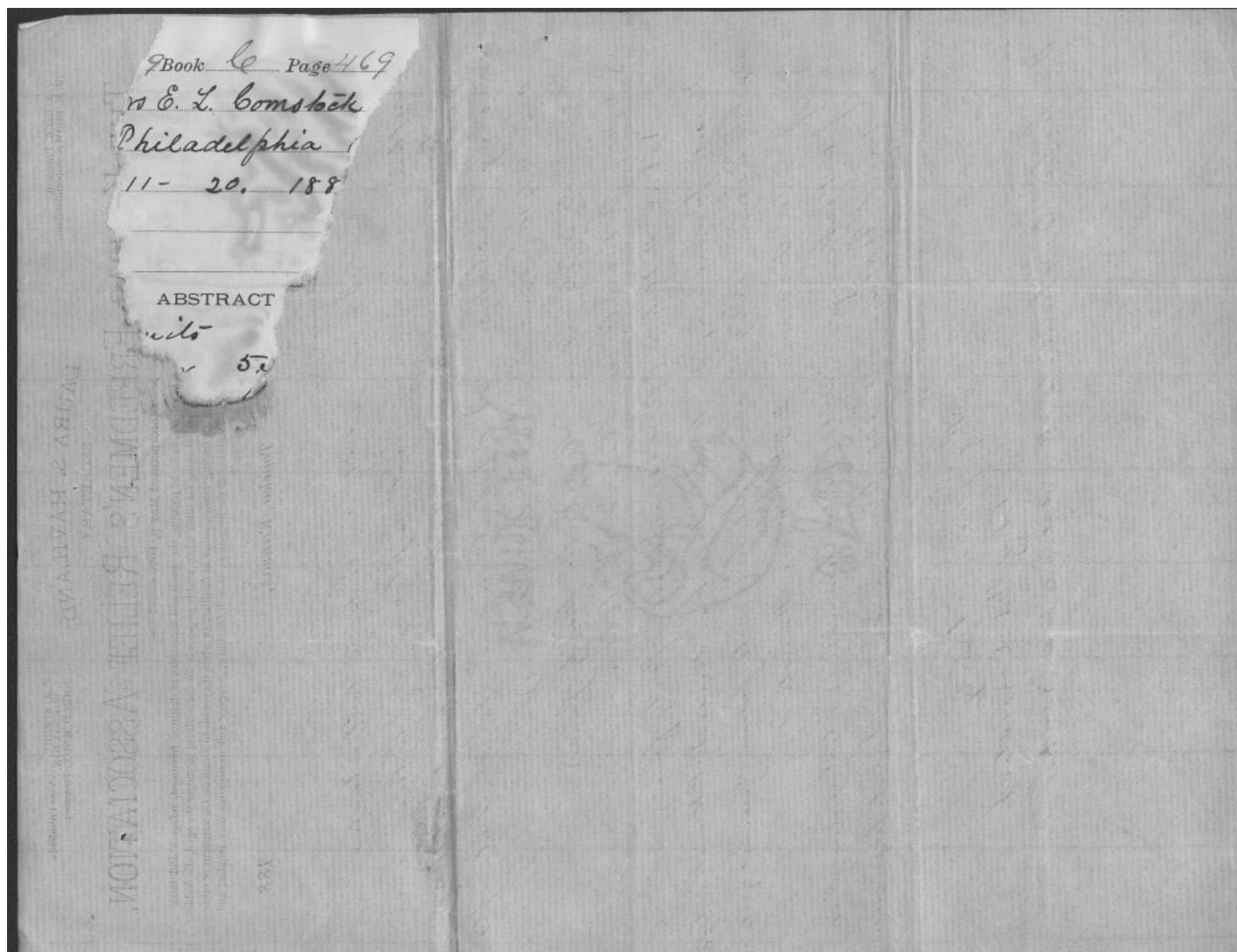
Thy friend truly

Oliver L. Comstock

We hope to return to Kansas in 2 or 3 wks.



## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Mich  
Chelsea, Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> /80

John L St John esq

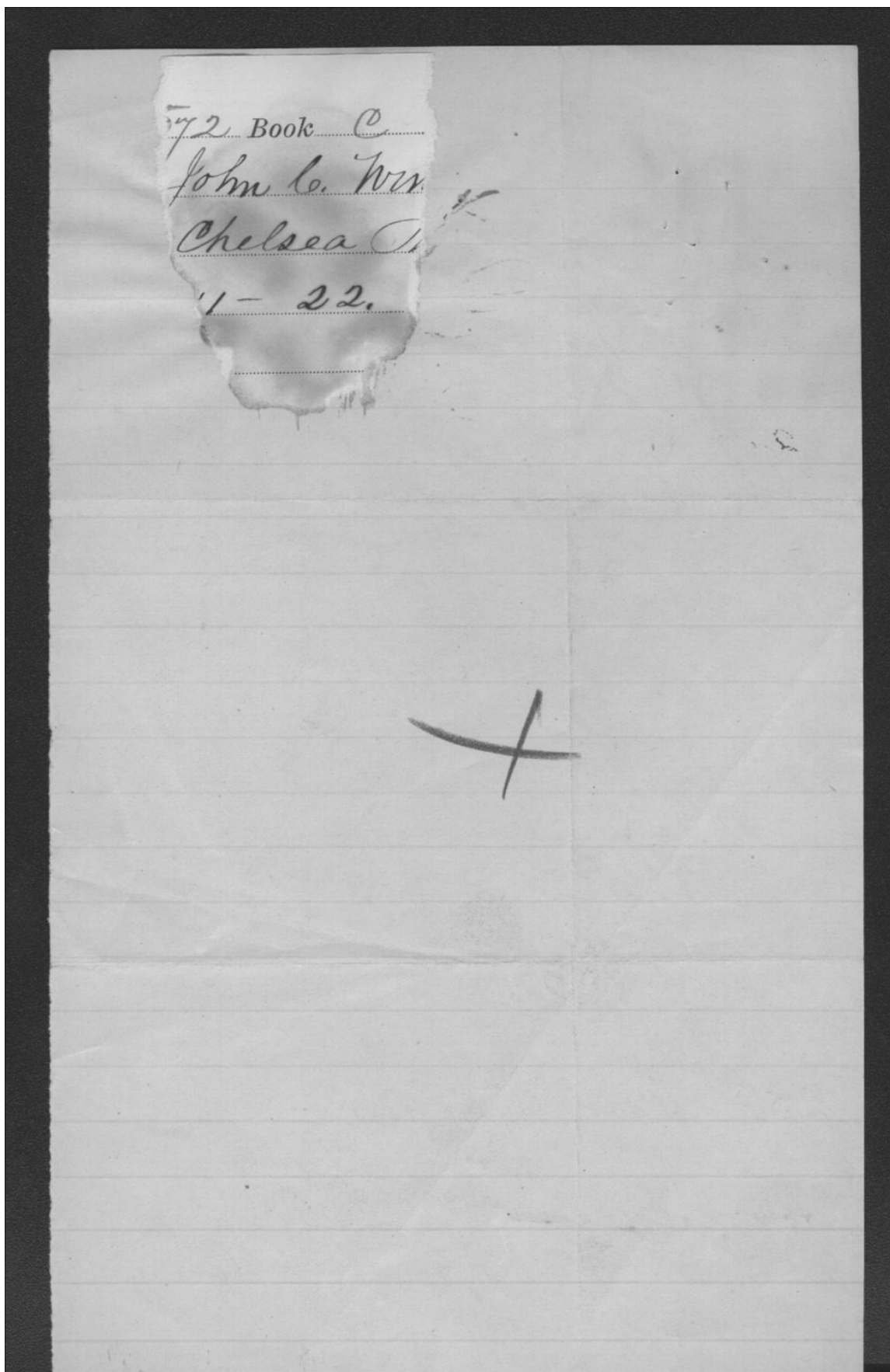
Sir not knowing who the  
committee over of the R.F.R.A I take the  
liberty to enclose you a Post Office M.O.  
for the benefit of the freedmen that  
are now fleeing from the south to Kansas  
to seek homes where they can enjoy the freedom  
of vote and an honest count I saw miss  
Haverlands letter in Detroit Post & Tribune  
of Saturday last setting forth their needs  
at the present time were when it is needed  
most according to the committees judgment  
Respect yours

John C Winans

25.<sup>00</sup> Postal order

How much ~~25.<sup>00</sup>~~

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence







## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

M. W. REYNOLDS, President.  
DR. C. ROCKHOLD, Secretary.

WILMER WALTON, Corr

### The Labette County Freedme

AUXILIARY TO THE STATE RELI

The purpose for which this corporation is formed is to relieve, as far as possible, the wants and State; to provide necessary food, shelter and clothing for them when unable to provide for themself; procuring work, and in finding homes, either in families, or when they wish to locate on Government or of a ... and to do and perform ... lence as the necessities of such freedmen, refugees and immigrants may require, and humanity suggest.

No. 3382. Bo. in  
From Wilmer  
Place Parsons  
Date 11-22  
Rec'd  
Ans'd  
Considered  
AB  
Refugees

Parsons, Kansas, 11<sup>th</sup> mo. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1880.

To Gov. J. St. John

Dear friend:

Thy kind, welcome letter of 11<sup>th</sup> inst. was duly received; and the explanation in reference to S. J. Travis was entirely satisfactory to myself and the few select, personal friends of mine to whom I confidentially showed it. She has left our City, and will probably not return here soon. I have not the least ill feeling towards the woman; but I do not like some of her ways that I have seen, and other reported ones that I have not seen. I hope she may see her errors, and change her course.

I felt gratified to see the majority for the Amendment, and the large majority of votes cast for thee, notwithstanding the great sums of money expended and other influences exerted by the advocates of whisky—through selfish motives—to secure votes upon the opposite side.

The thermometer here indicated 8° below zero one night last week, and last night was supposed to be still colder; snow remains on ground.

I find many of the colored men, women & children around here are shivering for want of sufficient warm clothing; and there are some new-comers still arriving here. A pretty cold winter is anticipated by many; and our supply of clothing here is nearly exhausted. A statement just received from Acting Secy. Mann



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(P. 2)

(of North Topeka) informs me that the Assoc<sup>n</sup> is entirely without clothing. A previous card from the same source stated that 300 new comers <sup>from the South</sup> had arrived there within a short time.

The Refugees arriving at Parsons recently have only been a few at a time; but they report many others on the way, and many more who are anxious to come to Kansas; some of whom are kept back from want of means to pay fare, and others are actually afraid to start, lest the threats of their white neighbors will be executed.

The heads of two families who arrived here lately from one of the Gulf Counties of Texas, told me they could have filled a whole train of cars with colored people in their County, who wished to leave Texas and come North. They told of horrible cruelties practiced down in their County.

After making all due allowance for exaggerations on their part, - I think it is safe to believe that there is still abundant cause for them to leave many of the Counties of Texas. In some Counties they are said to be treated pretty well.

Letters from Eastern relatives and friends express great interest in thee, as the Philanthropic and Temperance Governor; and in the result of the recent election, both in reference to thyself and the noted Prohibitory Amendment.

Kansas is being extensively looked to with increasing interest.

With kindest regards for thy wife, daughter and self,  
I remain sincerely thy friend,  
Wilmer Walton.

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Nov, 22, 1880



Marla Fayette County, Texas

Nov 22<sup>th</sup> 1880

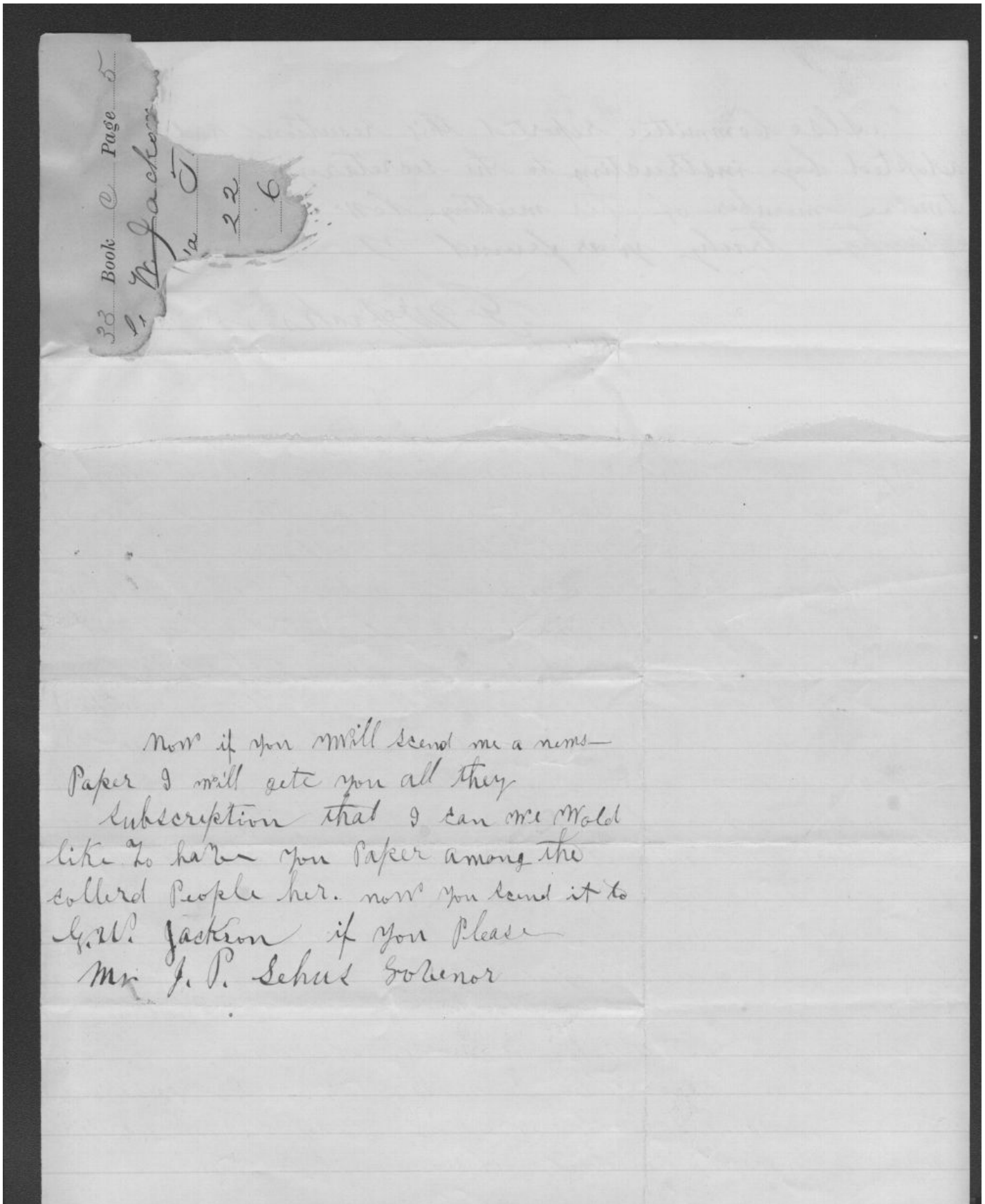
Mr J. P. Schus

I seat my self at this fine opportunity to approach you with a few lines to you know my wishes and desire and not my a lone Bout all the people of this County we wish to know something a bout the <sup>state</sup> of Kansas Dear sir this is the so second time that I have wrote to your state in regard to something a bout sum insturct a bout get in to your state sir ~~we~~ we are Entorested a bout it and if you are Entorested a bout the Colored People Emgraining to your state you will answerd me something about it also you may send us a Book to show

show to ~~that~~ this county that you all love us as you Colored & But we are in a ~~distict~~ distince Land But we wishes to ~~emgr~~ Emgraining into that state providece that the citizes of that state Emcege us By send us some ~~insturcto~~ Emstruction a bout the Country Dear sir I hoped that you will not take me as a ~~harrier~~ harrier to be a decider we are not and if you try us you see that we meane just what we say and nethenelse also I will close by giving you the name of this meeting G. M. Jackson Secretary M. A. M. Denman President A. Denman Chermone.



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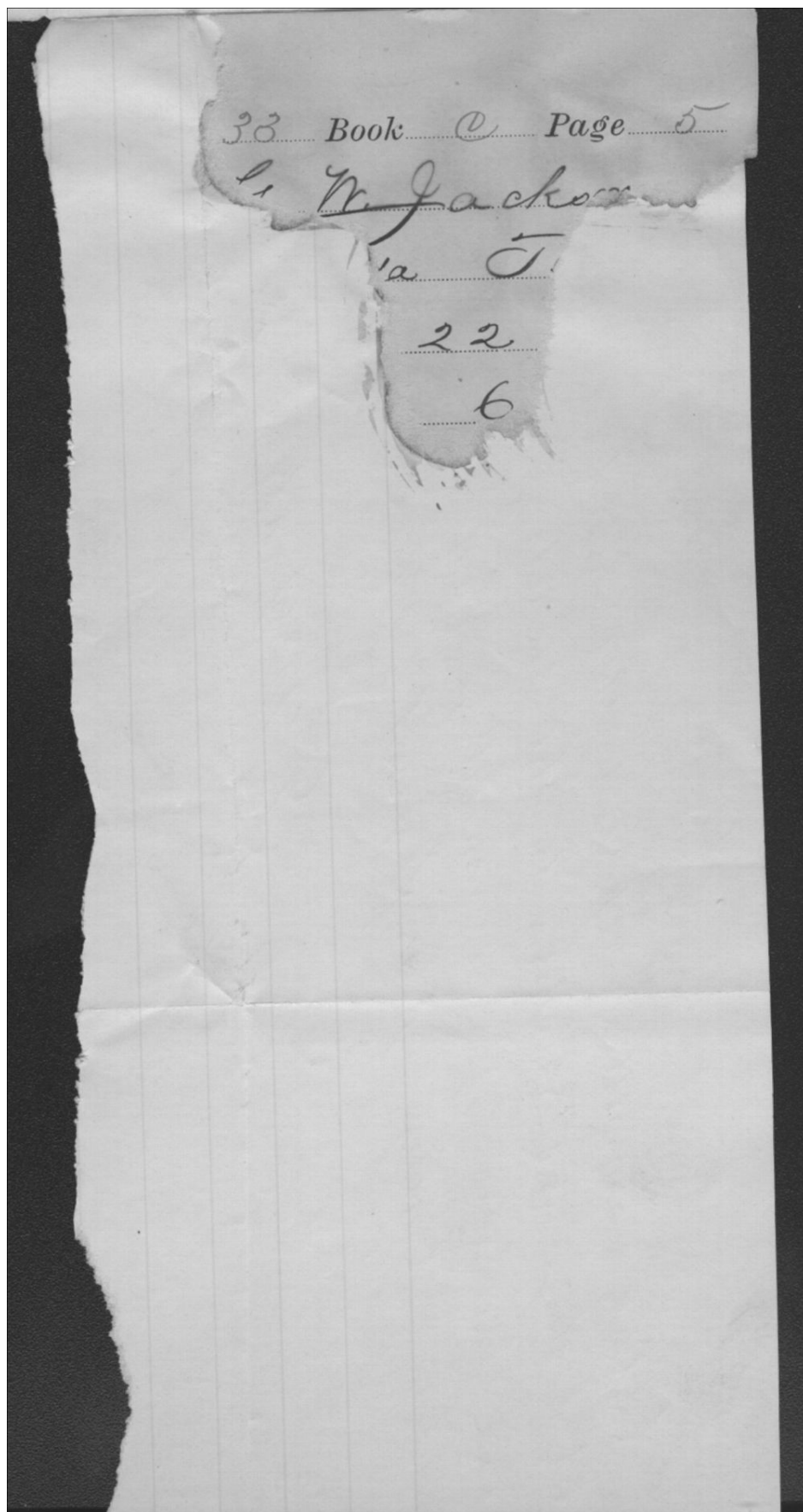




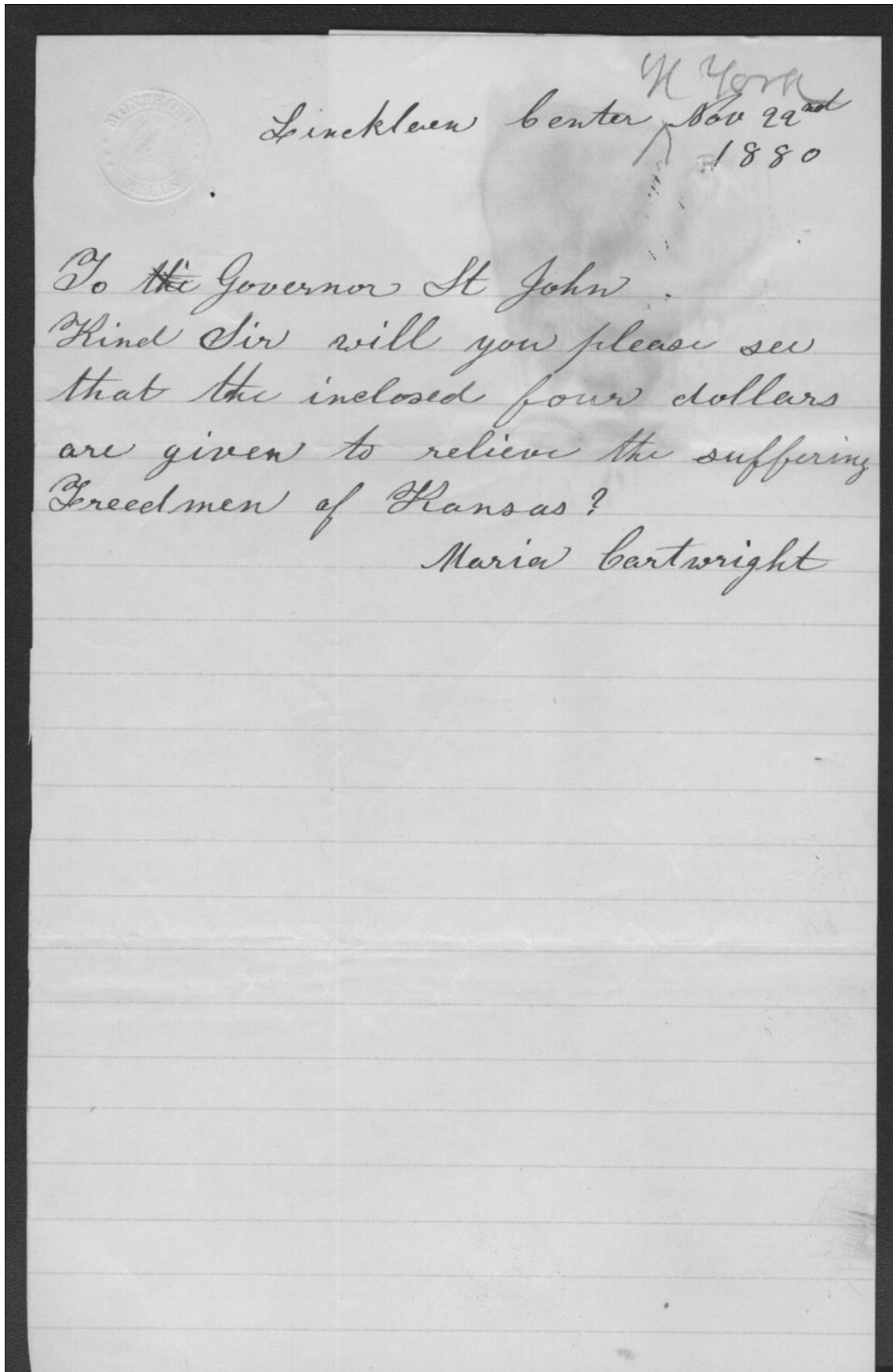
## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Also committee reported this resolution and it was  
adopted by instructing to the secretary. So say they  
twelve member of this meeting. Now I remain  
truly truly your friend  
G W Jackson

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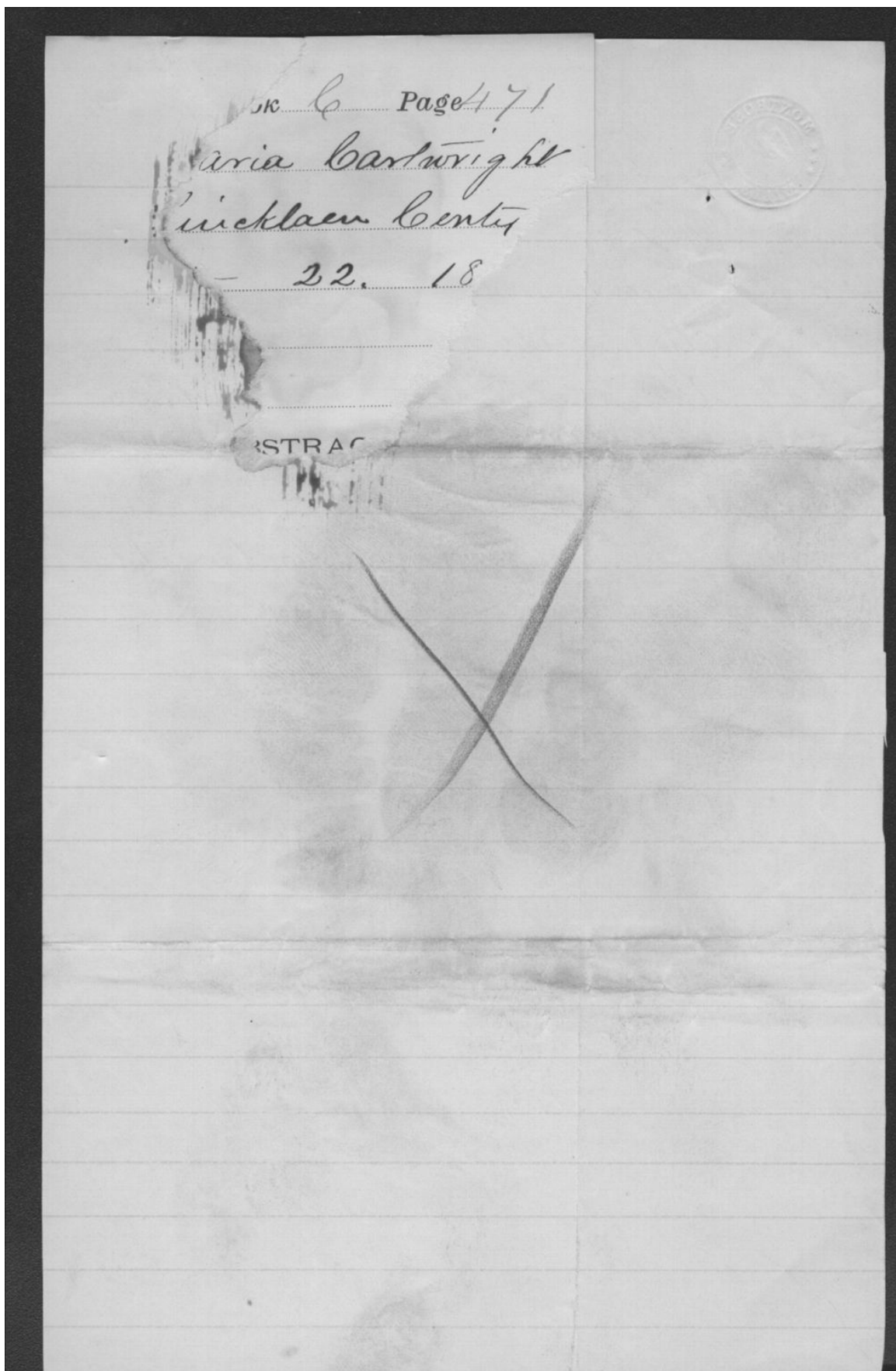
## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence







## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence





## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

3448 Book *le* Pag  
*A. F. J.*  
*Hammon* *Hammon*  
*Hammon*, Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>,  
 1880,  
 Gov. J. P. St. John:  
 Dear Sir — Your letter  
 dated 16<sup>th</sup> inst. is gratefully received,  
 & much appreciated. I like your idea of  
 the perpetual fund plan, giving the freed-  
 men opportunity to refund the money by  
 installments as they are able. This little  
 matter to those who know the laws, seems  
 very hard for me to accomplish as wis-  
 dom & duty require. Of course I have no  
 right to urge you <sup>to</sup> give bonds, but in case  
 of the decease of a trustee or executor,  
 who would know what became of said  
 trust, if his heirs or executors did not choose  
 to tell? Perhaps I can do no better than  
 require the local executor to remit the  
 money to you & Mrs. Comstock to buy land  
 for said people as already specified, whether



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or you give bonds or not, as much as you  
 have had much experience in these mat-  
 ters, & are interested in the welfare of  
 these people, I am very glad that you  
 are willing to cooperate with Mrs. Com-  
 stock; not that I suppose she understands  
 the work any better than you; but I  
 think that perhaps two wise counsellors  
 might hit the right plan, & carry it  
 out better than one alone, especially  
 where both feel alike responsible. I  
 notice by a paper that Mrs. Comstock is  
 now travelling in the northern states solici-  
 ting aid for the freedman. If I knew  
 when she would be in Philadelphia I would  
 try to meet her there, if my health permitted.  
 This place is 30 miles southeast of Phila-  
 delphia & on the direct route to Atlantic  
 City where Mrs. C. would probably obtain some  
 help in her work if she should come in this  
 direction. If I knew where to address her I would  
 write to her. If you could send me her address  
 by a postal card you will confer a favor.  
 Very respectfully yours, A. L. Jameson,

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Nov. 25

Independence Kansas 11, 25, 1880

John, P. St. John

Honored Governor, It appears from  
thy Letters to N.Y. York & other places  
that new arrivals of Refugees are few & that  
there is little needed just now I expect this  
is strictly true in most localities but I  
assure thee that it is quite different here in  
regard to needs about 500 came since ~~since~~  
first of 8th Mo. <sup>last and</sup> 96 in the two last months, there  
is about 60. that our sub Agents reported  
of two weeks ago, who we have not seen. I  
know that not less than 500 of those under  
our care greatly need both food and raiment  
Hundreds are without shoes and so thinly  
clad that the cold is killing them, we have  
had a liberal portion of the goods and money  
donated for this purpose, but those under  
our care are the poorest class who come in wag-  
ons with two or three & sometimes four families  
to the wagon, mostly from east Texas, they  
walk nearly all the way, and when they arrive  
their shoes are worn out and their clothes in



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tatters, and most of them without a dollar  
While others who come on Cars have good shoes  
and generally good clothes and some money  
so they see that it takes two or three times  
as much to make them comfortable as those  
who come on cars. then we have so many, old,  
worn out men, Widow women, & children who  
cannot support themselves, not more than one  
in ten have teams, and much work cannot  
be had. Those who have teams and came in  
time to make crops have done well especially  
those who got their Cotton seed planted in  
season, all the early planting is yielding a bale  
per acre equal to \$50. Some raised from 100. to  
400. bushels of corn but when the new comers  
came in, ~~last~~ <sup>this</sup> fall they camped around those  
who had the corn potatoes &c and have eaten  
up their crops, and they too must suffer unless  
means come to help them through the winter.  
those who visit us who were from Topeka & other  
parts of the west say that we have the most  
destitute of all others to care for They are nearly  
all honest, industrious, moral, religious temperate  
and

## Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Governor St John men to a unite  
We have just recd letters from Aunt Laura,  
Sister Comstock, Cary de Greene &c  
who advise us to write thee our situation  
that nothing may go out that would retard  
the work as all the help we can get will be  
much needed. We are all thy friends and wish  
thy advice. What would thee think of us  
buying some small lots of Land on long  
time without interest. Friends East and  
elsewhere will pay for it, then let them  
pay annual instalments so that any indus-  
trious person can pay for it and the owner  
get his money back without interest.  
would have worthy Trustees to operate.  
Friends offer also to give them money to  
put up small houses to live in. In this  
way we think many homes may be had  
in town and Country. we would like thy  
advice in this matter, maybe thee can give  
us much instruction in this matter.  
I want to say that <sup>as</sup> ~~as~~ this part of the  
State is so new we cannot get any thing



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of consequence by begging food <sup>or</sup> raiment  
or any thing needful for the Refugees  
Almost every farmer is mortgaged, and  
many of them are much straitened to  
pay their interests. My wife travels with  
me and waits upon the women while I  
outfit the men, thus saving the hire of an  
extra man, we were out all last winter through  
snow and storm, in a road wagon without  
even a spring <sup>seat</sup>, are doing so now, have got but  
\$1.<sup>00</sup> per day most of the time, are poor and in  
debt, yet are so much interested in the work  
that we feel paid in the gratitude bestowed  
upon us and upon all the workers & donors  
in this great work. Please excuse me for  
trespassing upon thy time and oblige thy  
Friend in the cause of Temperance and  
Humanity, Answer if consistent, Farewell

Daniel Votaw

P.S. our work is from the Rail Roads  
is the cause of us traveling in Wagon, our  
circuit is 200 miles round We deliver goods  
and have sub Agents to assist who work very  
low, thus diminishing <sup>the No of</sup> our visits D.V.



## 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.

Treasurer, A. PRESCOTT.

Vice President, F. W. GILES.

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

THE PAYMENT OF \$5.00, ANNUALLY, CONSTITUTES A MEMBERSHIP; \$20.00, AT ONE TIME, A LIFE MEMBER.

Topeka, Kansas, Nov 25 1880

Gov. J. P. St. John.

Dear Sir.

I expect to start, first of the week, for a journey east—probably as far as Boston, in the interests of our Educational Society.

You will remember that you told me to notify you about a week before I left the city & you would write me a letter of introduction, that I may use wherever I go.

If you can find time to prepare the letter very soon you will greatly oblige our Society.

Mr. F. W. Giles told me you had rec'd a letter from a lady offering you a donation of \$3,000 for the charities of Kansas; & you declined to accept. Will you please send me her name & address that I may send her our Circular.

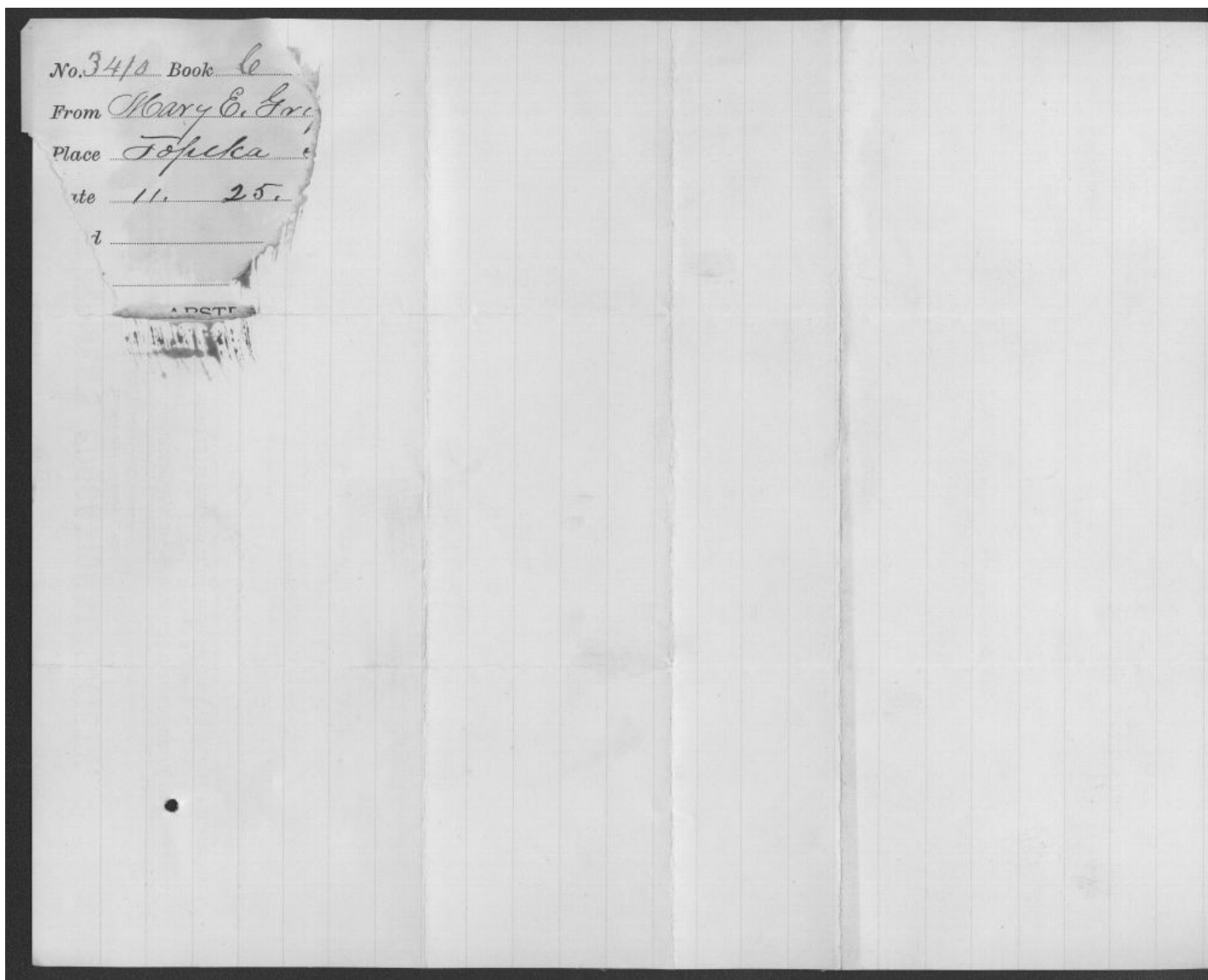
Very Respectfully—

Please mail the letter Mary E. Griffith.

To the following address, Rankin House  
Topeka.



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OFFICE OF

TREASURER MUSKEGON COUNTY.

ROLLIN S. THOMSON, TREASURER.

MUSKEGON, MICH. *Nov 26* 1880

*To His Excellency  
Gov. St John  
Topeka Kansas*

*I am Treasurer for the "Kansas  
Ref. Relief Fund" in this City,  
and have in my hands some  
\$500. to \$600. which was raised  
for the purpose of procuring Lum-  
ber &c*

*Of late something of a Controversy  
has arisen as to the necessity of  
any further donations, either of  
Lumber, Clothing, or money*

*It being claimed upon the  
one side, that officials & others  
in your State have said that  
there was no need of further  
help at present, from people  
outside the State - while on*



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OFFICE OF

TREASURER MUSKEGON COUNTY.

ROLLIN S. THOMSON, TREASURER.

MUSKEGON, MICH. 188

the other side. the exact reverse is claimed to be the true condition of affairs.

The object of this Communication is to learn from you the one fact, as to whether such contributions are needed.

I understand that Rev. Mr. Seaver, who has recently been in Kansas, advises that the funds &c, already raised, be forwarded as was intended, but thinks that further donations are not needed by the Freedmen or desired by your people, at present.

I am sorry to trouble you with this matter. but hope to get a word in reply as early as may be.

Very Respy. Rollin S. Thomson