

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 7, Pages 181 - 210

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

Item Identifier: 210296

www.kansasmemory.org/item/210296

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



La Grange
May 12th 1879

His Excy Gov. of Kansas

Dear Sir Not knowing your name, and yet wanting to receive some information from you, in regard to the immigration Aid Society, I therefore resort to my pen and ink to find out some instruction from you. I have great influence with the people of Iron Co. as a minister of the gospel. Many families besides mine, wants to immigrate with me. We want to enter into a Country, where we will feel free. I would like to have regular Correspondence with you Sir until I get direct information as the people are looking to me as their leader. I have seen the statement of the immigration in the Methodist Advocate and other papers likewise. I liked what I saw of it very much.

Please Answer this as soon as you get it And oblige your humble servant
Rev. Benjamin Burks

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



STATE OF COLORADO.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

Denver, May 14th 1879

Hon John St John
Dear Governor

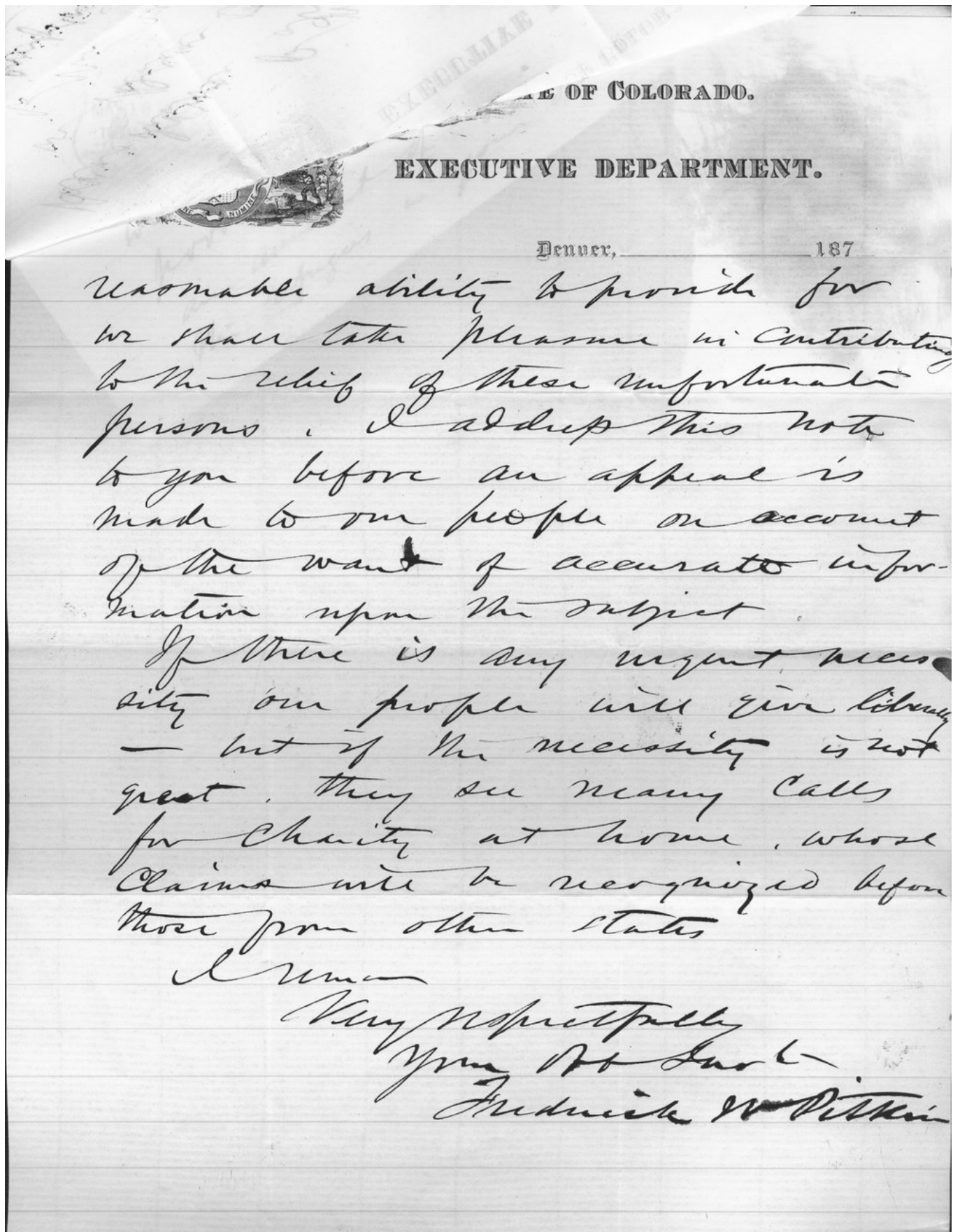
During the past week
conflicting reports have appeared
in the papers in relation to the conditions
& necessities of the colored people seeking
refuge in your State from the South.

In some of our papers they are repre-
sented as extremely destitute — in others
as having been provided for by the
charity of Kansas & other States.

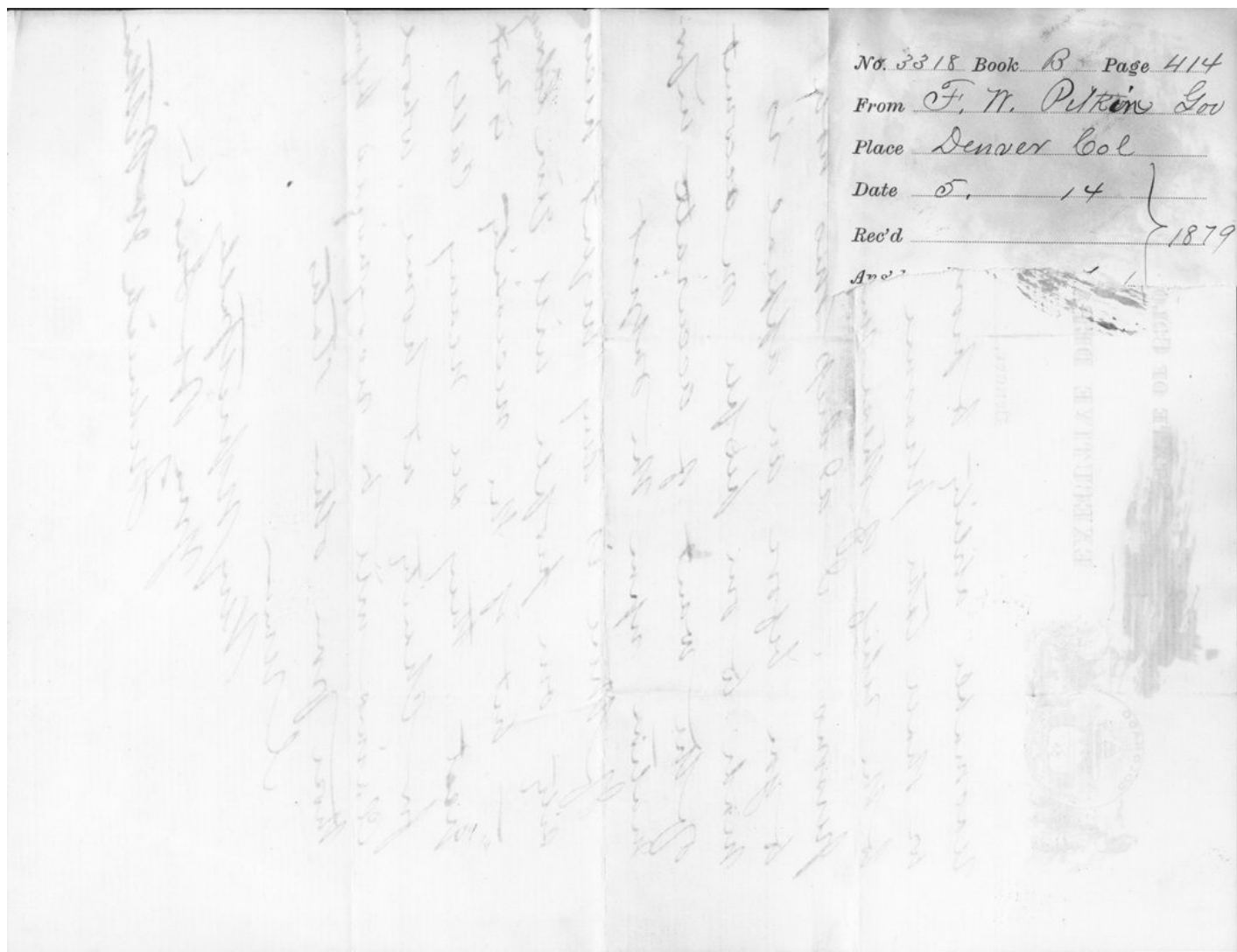
The marvellous tide of immigration
toward Colorado & our mining camps
brings the rich & the destitute.

We are called upon to minister to
the suffering emigrants in our midst
& in spite of our great mineral
wealth we expect to have the
poor always with us. If however
an amount of suffering prevails among
the refugees in your State beyond your

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No. 3301 Book 13 Page 412
 From T. C. Henry
 Place Abilene, Ks
 Date May 14
 Rec'd 1879

Office of T. C. HENRY,
 Real Estate Broker & Loan Agent.
 SOLE AGENCY FOR
 NATIONAL LAND CO., AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE & M. K. & T. P. R. CO.'S LAND,
 Abilene, Kansas, May 14th 1879.

Sir, Mr. West felt compelled
 to send you a telegram from Mr.
 Westland inquiring how many "infirmary"
 we can take. I have replied that we can take
 people there as can supply more. What I do
 know is the case. I know of a number of
 honest severely young men & some men
 of family who are asking work for their
 bread - not bread but over who have
 been induced for various reasons to come
 west to work their fortunes. The whole country
 coming upon land, and the feeling among
 people is very decided upon the point.
 It will be unfair to our people who are there
 and to come there who should be sent there
 to work the land and must depend upon
 daily labor for support. Our country is
 full of farmers here for the last 5 years since
 settled men farmers have on the ground in every

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Office of **T. C. HENRY,**
Real Estate Broker & Loan Agent.
SOLE AGENCY FOR
NATIONAL LAND CO., AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE & M. K. & T. R. R. CO.'S LAND,
Abilene, Kansas, May 14th 1879.

Hon. Geo. P. St. John.

Sir. Mr. Hart of the Chronicle has just shown me a telegram from Mr. Hubbard inquiring how many "refugees" we can take, & has replied that we have more people than we can employ now, which I suppose is the case. I know of a number of honest & worthy young men & some men of family who are asking work for their hands - not tramps, but men who have been induced for various reasons to come West to seek their fortune. He held a meeting evening before last, and the feeling of our people is very decided upon this point. It will be unfair to our people who are here now & cruel to those who should be sent here to swell the class who must depend upon daily labor for support. Our control system of farming here for the past 5 years invited more laborers than we have found in any

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country in the state outside of Leavenworth per-
haps, and in view of the fact that a failure
nearly complete of an wheat crop - spring &
winter both, is now certain you can un-
derstand why we feel that our wishes ~~now~~
should be respected in this matter. I
spent nearly a half day yesterday in so-
liciting funds to be forwarded to the Relief
Comm. & only raised about \$10000. of which
I pledged \$25. & depended on our people for
their crop prospects. I have nearly 1000
acres in wheat & I would be very glad to
know that I shall get back what I have in-
vested for work & seed. Much of it I
shall now cut, & second hundred
acres I have sown to spring crops, & my
case is not exceptional. I desire to
say that the State of Kansas will not
raise 1/2 as many bushels of wheat as
it did one year ago. In view of this
fact I protest against every step
which is or shall be taken at this time
to add to our dependent classes.
I am willing to contribute of my means
& so on our people in proportion to their
ability to aid these poor colored people
& will endorse any action which shall secure
them peace & their rights in the South.

J. St. John

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Emigration Aid Society
Springfield Ohio
May 13th 1879

To his excellency St John
Governor of Kansas

Enclosed you will find a
check for ~~one hundred~~ ^{seventy five} Dollars
~~for the~~ to relieve wants of
the Colord people Emigrating
from the south to Kansas
Also Expressed box of
clothing of various kind
valued at one hundred Dollars
We beleive it the easter way
to send you as we know
of no authorized agent
in Kansas to receive donations
hence our course - hoping
you will give us

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

all necessary
information at your
earliest convenience.

Very Respectfully Yours

Springfield Emigrating Aid
Society

E. C. Jackson Presi
W. S. Newberry Secy
Springfield
Clark Co Ohio



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3323 Book B Page 415
From E. C. Jackson
Place Springfield Ohio
Date 5, 15
Rec'd 1879

Room

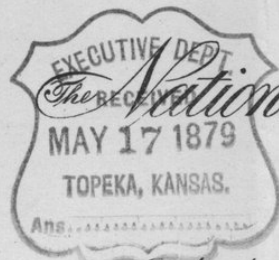


Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Seth Richards, Pres.

Geo. W. Hale, Vice Pres.

E. D. Lindly, Cash.



Oskaloosa, Iowa, May 15 1879

Mr John P St John

Dear Sir

Enclosed find draft for
One Hundred & Eleven ^{80/100} / 100
On this amount I have
collected for the suffering
col people of Kansas
Please acknowledge receipt
of same to me

John Sims



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3314 Book B Page 413
From John Sims
Place Ash Grove La
Date 5, 15, }
Rec'd } 1879

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Washington
Iowa
May 17-1879

Gov J. P. St John

Sir

You will find inclosed a
Draft for Five dollars taken
up by the Congregational Church
of Frank Township Washington Co Iowa
Please acknowledge the receipt
of the same to

John J. McConaughy
Washington

Per A. A. Ferguson - Iowa

P. S. You were suggested as a
good party to send the above to by
your friend A. G. Givens M. D.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3334 Book B Page 416

From O. G. Given

Place Washington Iowa

Date 5. 17

Rec'd 1879

Ans'd 5. 19

ABSTRACT.

Transmitting Draft for
5⁰⁰ to Aid refugees.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



New Haven, Connecticut, May 15, 1879.

His Excellency

John P. St. John,
Governor of Kansas,
Topeka, Kansas.

Governor:

At a meeting of some of our leading citizens held last evening at the Mayor's Office to consider measures of relief to the reported destitute freedmen who have recently emigrated from the South to Kansas, Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon of Yale College, Professor Cyrus Northrup also of Yale College and myself, were constituted a special committee to solicit and as far as possible obtain definite and reliable information as to the real condition and needs of the emigrants already in or on the way to Kansas.

In furtherance of the duty with which we are thus charged, I write in the name of the Committee to inquire of you

(1) about what number of freedmen have recently come from the South to Kansas?

(2)

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

(2) Is the tide of emigration still continuing, or are the indications such as to lead to the inference that it is, as reported in some of our newspapers, already stopping or is likely soon to be abated?

(3) Is the condition of any considerable number of those in Kansas such as urgently to call for philanthropic aid from the kind hearted, Christian people of the North and East?

(4) What kind of aid is most needed for immediate relief, and how and where may it be most effectively disbursed?

The committee would also be glad to learn something of the character of the emigrants, the points in Kansas to which they mostly go, and likewise of their probable immediate future there.

An answer to these inquiries at your early convenience will be of service to those here who desire to fulfill any philanthropic and Christian duty which they owe to their destitute and unfortunate, but deserving countrymen.

I am, Governor, your obedient servant,

Ernest D. Russell

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3321 Book B Page 414
From Eugene D. Bassett
Place New Haven Ct
Date 5 15 }
Rec'd 1879

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



File B Page 418

Henry Smith
Marshall Tex


Marshall Harrison County Texas
1 May 17th 1879

Governor dear Sir I received your letter with great pleasure and was glad to hear from you, but I could not sign it as you signed because I could under it very muchly, these people some of them ~~could~~ ~~did~~ do not believe you sent that letter here but I my self believe it. the people some of them was believing that they would go there and get a fortune. but for my self my self I did not believe it. you answered my letter just as I respected. please write to me what can land be bought for there. please to correct that error which the people had in. them about one 160 acres of land for a family please to correct it

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

the reason the people are quit their farms and come to town and there is not work for them to do, because of the mistreatments of the whites. the people had got it in their minds that they were oblige to go to ~~or~~ Kansas but I said not every time I dont think that there is such a law write to me as soon as you receive this letter so that I can passify the minds of the people that they will have to work when they go to Kansas yours truly
Rev Henry Smith. direct your in the care of Rev W. W. Weeley lock

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Baton Rouge, La. May 17, 1879.
 To His Excellency,
 The Governor of Kansas,
 Topeka, Kansas,
 Sir,

A large number of colored people of this parish are preparing to emigrate from this vicinity and have requested me to write to you and request you to furnish some information upon some points concerning which they desire to obtain knowledge from a reliable source. They wish to ascertain upon what terms land can be procured, & in what quarter of the State it is advisable to settle with a view to agricultural pursuits. They also wish to learn what opportunities and prospects are offered for employment in those and mechanical pursuits. They wish to be informed also if any means of aid and relief will be given those needing it, until they are settled or employed and can sustain themselves. They wish to be informed as to the protection they may expect in your State in the maintenance and assertion of their political principles and rights of citizenship.

Most of these colored men are industrious, hard working farm-laborers, mechanics, engineers etc. and are of the very best of their race. They feel

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RECEIVED

and reasonably and justly, that the future
her holds out no hope, no encouragement,
no light of comfort to them; that to
suffer and die with privation, exposure,
and want under the cheering influence
of freedom and justice than to remain
their slaves in all but name.

I trust you will reply to this at your
earliest convenience.

Yours Respectfully,
J. H. B. Schoonmaker,
Baton Rouge, La.

No. 3351 Book B Page 418
From S. H. B. Schoonmaker
Place Baton Rouge La
Date 5, 17 }
Rec'd 1879
Ans'd 5, 23 }
ABSTRACT.
Enquiries in regard to
prospects for colored
Refugees in Kansas

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

HORATIO N. RUST.

FRANK N. RUST.

HORATIO N. RUST & CO.,

Central Warehouse,

COR. RUSH AND KINZIE STREETS,

Chicago, *May 17th* 1879



Gov St John

Dear Sir

I write for information.

I have been talking with gentlemen here of starting a Colony for the benefit of the Emigrating Negro' and ask how and where we can secure four or more sections suitable for settlement

Montgomerys plan of helping families to 40 acres. I like.. believing that they should ~~only~~ be helped to only so much as they will improve. Let them become self sustaining just as soon as possible. I think we can find a Co here who will stand in together owning one section put a man onto it with teams and what is necessary to go ahead with give employment to such as will hire out and locate families on each 40 breaking the Land for them and in general helping them to help themselves. we here can only have imperfect ideas of how the thing shall be done but I believe we can do it to advantage. we want to try I will be

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Central Warehouse,

COR. RUSH AND KINZIE STREETS,

Chicago, 187

Very glad if you will write me giving such information as you judge will be useful for us and I will endeavor to carry out some plan we do not now understand that there is immediate want of money for those who you have received. If it becomes necessary to put a boat on the river to bring them up. we shall expect to be called upon for cash.

I suppose we can meet in some parts of Kansas my own idea is that the average Negro had better buy on time 40 acres than to present 100. That 40 will improve will soon enable him to buy more but that it is not best they should own over land they cannot improve I think many farmers have too much land

By helping us to information in any way you will confer a favor I do not wish to intrude upon your time and hope you will excuse the liberty taken

Very Respectfully,
Heratio N Rust

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3339 Book B Page 417
From Horatio St. Rush
Place Chicago Ill
Date 5, 17
Rec'd } 1879
Ans'd 5, 19

ABSTRACT.
Asking for such information
as in the judgment of
the Gov will assist them
in starting a colony for
the refugees.
refers to Montgomery's plan
of colonization.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Palisade Hotel

Kansas City Mo.
May 17th 1879

To His Excellency

Governor St. John

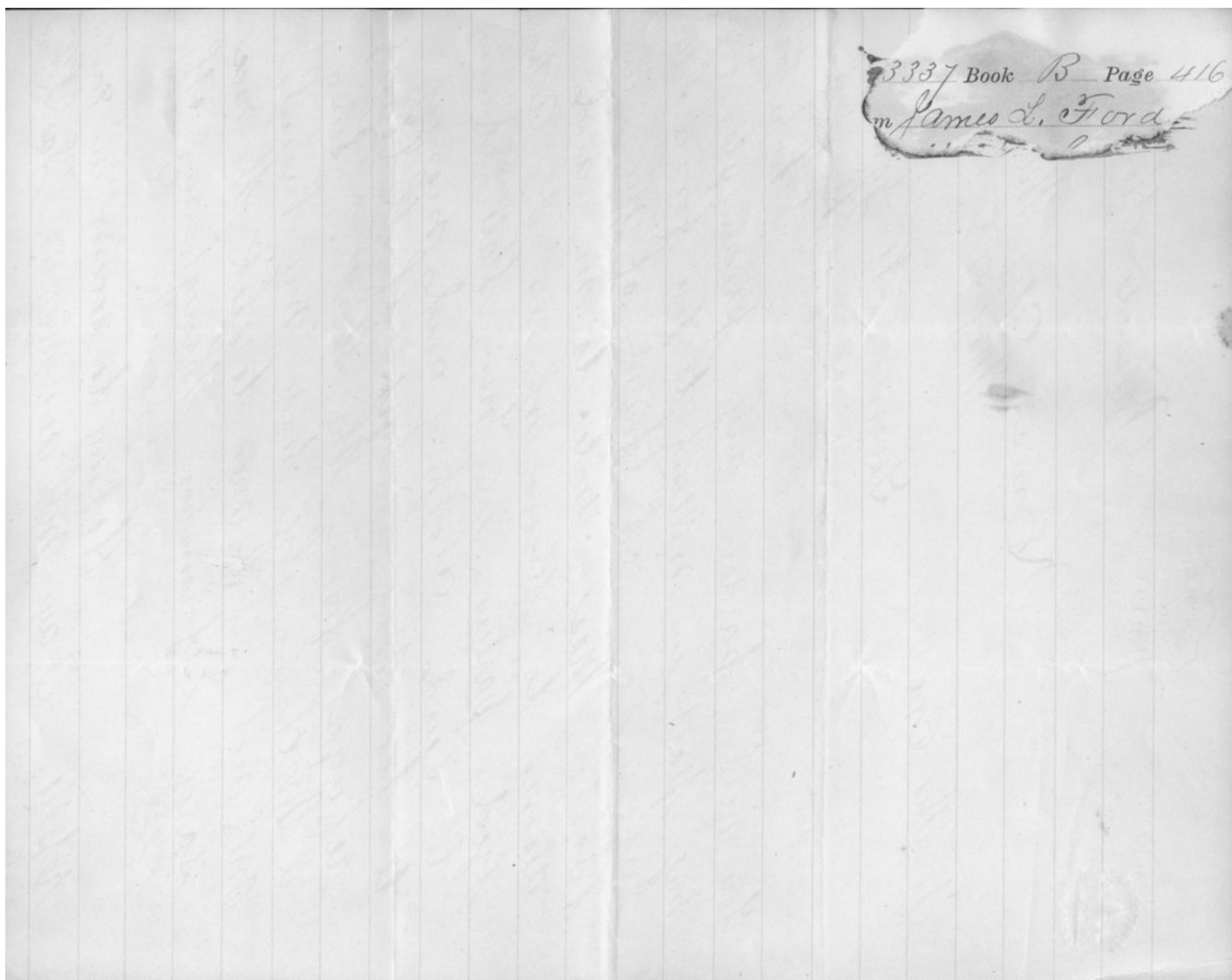
Dear Sir

I hope that

You will pardon any presumption on my part in writing to you for a little information. A friend of mine in Boston Mass. writes to me and desires to know who is the Authorized parties in your State (Kansas) to send clothing and money to for the benefit of the Colored refugees from the South. Being a Mechanic by trade my business will not allow me to seek the necessary information through any other source

Hoping to receive an early reply. I am with due respect Jas. L. Ford

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Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



181819

Print Pleasant Concordia Parish La May
Mister Post Master

Sir

There is a great deal
of talk about Kansas in this country
and we hear so many stories that we
don't know whether to believe them or not
now we would like to hear something
straight about it and we thought it best
to write to you for information
now we want your advice as
to moving we don't want to move
unless we can better our selves
They tell us that the government will
give us a mule a 40 acres of land
and so much money and we believe
it we are an oppressed people, we are
all honest working men and women
are not afraid of work considerable more
intelligence about us than you think
tell us the distance from here there

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3401 Book B Page 42

Elles Jones

and all about the country what you
all raise if you raise any cotton or
not. we have hailed Boats but they wont
stop the Democrats have monopolized the
thing they say you all are Republi-
cans up there and most of us is the same
the most of us is penny less and awhairing
for a government boat. we can stand any
amount of cold weather i was born in old
Kentuck and i tell you it was cold then
but we colored peoples did not mind a
bit. I think we can conduct yourself
up there that you all will be proud
of us they say we colored folk are
a set of thiefs but you will find us
allnight. do what you can for us
and let us know soon and

Oblige many

Elles Jones

Dearst yours to

Famvies Let Concordia Parish La

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Not Private. By the writers

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
MAY 23 1879
TOPEKA, KANSAS.

Kenton, Ky. May 18th 79

Hon. Jno. P. St. John.

Gov. Ill. Ill.

Dear Sir:- I am what is termed in this section of our beloved Country. A Black Radical Republican twenty-one years of age. Though I am a white man, the term Black is applied to me as well as to all other Republicans here. so that they (the Rebel and Hide-bound Democrats) may the more emphatically express their great Abhorrence for us. It is sufficient for me to say that we Republicans feel highly honored by the terms that the Democracy apply to us. We thank them for it. for the reason that it denotes such a strong distinction between them and us. I ask as one favor. that you, of the loyal North whatever else you do that you not class us with the Rebel Democrats.



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

when you speak of the people of the South. Though unable to do as much I assure you that the same patriotic feeling that animates you throbs in the bosom of the Republican south of the Ohio River.

Governor! it is right and proper that you should know the grounds upon which I, an humble citizen of the South only, could have the assurance to trouble with a quite unimportant letter the Chief Executive Officer of a State. I will tell you.

It is words to which you have given utterance on the exodus of the colored people from the South, nearly all of whom have so far stopped in the Commonwealth over which you have the honor of presiding as Governor, and which were lately published in the columns of that true upholder of Constitutional and Republican principles, The New York Times.

That journal represents you as saying that "All the refugees agree substantially that the cause of their leaving the South exists in the fact that they have