

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Section 8, Pages 211 - 240

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

been unfairly dealt with, really robbed
 year after year of their earnings and
 also not only deprived of their polit-
 ical rights. But for years have been in-
 secure in both life and property."
 I have no fault whatever to find
 with this statement of the case
 only that you failed to express it in
 terms forcible enough to represent to
 the uneducated in the matter the
 true condition of things as they exist
 in the South in regard to the colored
 people. A true statement would
 run something like this. A majority
 of the brutes that compose the Dem-
 ocratic Party of the South are cut-
 throats and midnight assassins.
 Who hold that their highest duty
 is to hunt down and shoot the
 negro as they would the wild
 beasts of the forest. And while the
 majority are engaged thus the minor-
 ity (the leaders, the big men) stand by and
 applaud them for their "noble deeds"
 Governor: did you people of the North
 ever take into consideration what a
 simple request it is of the Negro.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

of the South. that is so obstinately refused by the white livered, cowardly and thieving set of scoundrels that dominate that section. It is this. Allow us to have what we earn, and to cast our ballot for whom it best pleases us. These are Constitutional rights. Rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution. Yet they are not allowed to enjoy them. And a dazed and vacillating President stands by and winks at it. Shaming be to the man who could never have occupied the exalted position that he does today, save by the votes of the men whom he has now surrendered into the hands of a merciless foe. I have only to say that I sincerely believe there is a day of righteous Retribution coming when R. B. H. and his co-workers in the South will be justly repaid. And have only to ask how much longer will the people of the Free North stand this thing.

Governor: wake them up to a sense of the true condition of affairs and let them help the negro from the South to the North immediately.

Very Respectfully, Chas. M. F. Striker

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

No. 3377 Book B Page 422
 From Chas. M. F. Striker
 Place Kenton Ky
 Date 5. 18.
 Rec'd 5. 23 } 1879
 Ans'd 5. 26

of the
 refused
 and the
 domina
 Allow
 and to
 it best

ABSTRACT.
 Giving his ideas of how
 the Republicans as well
 as the negroes are
 treated in the South by
 the Democrats.

is this.
 we earn.
 for whom
 re Constitu-

tional rights guaranteed to
 them by the Constitution. Yet they
 are not allowed to enjoy them. And
 a dazed and vacillating President
 stands by and winks at it. I shudder
 to the man who could never have
 occupied the exalted position that he
 does today save by the votes of the men
 whom he has now surrendered into the
 hands of a merciless foe. I have only
 to say that I sincerely believe there
 is a day of righteous Retribution coming
 when R. B. H. and his co-workers in the
 South will be justly repaid. And have only
 to ask how much longer will the people
 of the Free North stand this thing.

Governor: wake them up to a sense of the
 true condition of affairs and let them help
 the negro from the South to the North immediately.

Very Respectfully, Chas. M. F. Striker

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

*Do not cut this & send
City Clerks Post
Brenham, Washington Co. Texas.
May 19th 1879.*

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
MAY 23 1879
TOPEKA, KANSAS

Dear Sir,

I have read in the "Inter Ocean" of
of the 15th inst. your views upon the "Colored
exodus" from the South to your state, and
believing that you will appreciate and carefully
consider any information which will tend to
aid the true friends of the colored people in pro-
moting their general welfare and prosperity I
herewith take the liberty of giving you my views
in regard to this important ^{movement}. In regard to myself
I am a native of this state, am 39 years of age, and
served one year in the Confederate Army, but I
do not claim any honor or glory upon that score.
My father was a slave owner, and from my ear-
liest recollection I have lived in a portion of the
South, where the Blacks, both as slaves and freedmen
largely outnumber the Whites. My father was an old
Whig, and an Union man, and of course my de-
votion and fidelity has never run very deep for the
secession and Bourbon Democracy. In 1846 I be-
came a Republican, and since that time I have
continued to be an active supporter of Republi-
can principles. In 1870 and 1873, I was elected by
a large majority upon the Republican ticket to
the position of Chief or Presiding Justice of this
Washington County, and served continuously
in that capacity ^{from 1870} untill April 1876. I was a dele-
gate to the national Republican convention held
at Cincinnati in June 1876. In 18 Nov 1876.
I was appointed by President Grant, Postmaster
of this City, but was removed in Jan 1878 by Pres-

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

ident Hayes, and an old Bourbon Democrat appointed in my stead in pursuance of the President's famous "Southern reconciliation policy." This is a brief outline of my history and should you desire to have further evidence of my standing, both as a sincere Republican and an honorable citizen, I very respectfully refer you to Govs E M Pease, E J Davis, and to ex Gen. M C Hamilton of Austin Texas, also to Judge A B Norton of Dallas Tex, and to Judge J D McAdoo of this City.

I believe that I understood the character and know the general condition of the colored people of the South, and in order to fully explain this well, it will be necessary for me to classify the Blacks, and to give the general causes and reasons that has created the different conditions and classes, to wit:

1st Class comprise about one tenth of the freedmen, who as slaves, were owned by masters who made mechanics, Overseers, trusted body servants and confidential Agents of them. In these several capacities this class had opportunities and practicable experience by which they were enabled to learn something about the ordinary business affairs of every day life, and how to be industrious frugal and thrifty. This class are today the trusted leaders of their Race, and they generally own small farms, or else homesteads in the towns and cities of the South, and evince

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

2

the same thrift and intelligence displayed by the best class of white laborers.

2nd Class embrace about four tenths of the freedmen who were formerly owned by masters who fed and clothed them well, never punishing them severely, except for very grave offences, and they were taught to be honest and industrious and were encouraged to attend their churches on Sundays. This class are by far, the best laborers and tenants of the South, and Southern planters prefer them to any other class of tenants, because they are generally industrious and honest, and will live contented in small cheap cabins, which good white tenants would not do. They generally own farm stock and farming implements, and are able to furnish their own supplies with but little assistance from their landlords. but they are extravagant, and if they make good crops, they fall an easy prey to shrewd merchants, peddlers, grasping landlords and others. so in fact if they make good or bad crops the result, so far they are concerned, are about the same.

They spend their money freely for gaudy clothing, shoddy jewelry, attending shows and circuses, whiskey tobacco, building churches and in supporting an army of ignorant fanatical - and often immoral - preachers, and but for these extravagant habits, they would soon become the absolute owners of the most

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

fertile portions of the South, provided they were fairly dealt with by the whites, and encouraged by their leaders and white friends to buy lands. They are intensely Religious, immovable in their devotion and fidelity to the Republican Party, and anxious to educate their children.

3rd Class. Compose about one half of the Black population, and as slaves were owned by masters, who half-fed, half-clothed and punished them severely for the least disobedience or breach of discipline. Worked incessantly from early dawn untill dark, day after day - Sundays often included - often forced by hunger to steal, wives and husbands often sold and thus separated from each other, or perhaps compelled by overseers to exchange wives and husbands with each other. is it a matter of surprise to any one that this class are today thriftless, often dishonest, and entertain small respect for morality and marriage obligations?

They seldom own anything beyond bare clothing, working only as dire necessity compels them to do, and full nine tenths of all the vast numbers of colored criminals now so rapidly filling Southern penitentiaries to repletion, belong to this class. Within the last few years, since the Bourbons, have recovered absolute control of all the machinery of the Southern State governments, the

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

3

most stringent laws have been enacted by which petty offences punishable before the Rebellion by fines or short terms of imprisonment in county jails, have been changed to felonies, punishable by confinement at hard labor in the penitentiaries. Laws have been enacted disqualifying persons who cannot read and write from jury service. Judges, juries, sheriffs, and prosecuting attorneys are generally Democratic. The oath or evidence of any one is sufficient to indict any freedmen, and an indictment of a freedmen is equivalent to his conviction. Under this system, the ignorant freedmen are sent by hundreds every year - ostensibly - to penitentiaries, where they are hired out in squads of five or ten to planters. Here upon plantations, they undergo a second slavery more horrible and cruel in many instances - if the reports of squads and discharged convicts are true - ~~more~~ ~~horrible and cruel~~ than their former slavery. Rents charged freedmen are much too high, and in many instances the rent charged is equal to the cash value of the land so rented, and as rendered by owners for taxation upon tax rolls. This is a brief outline of the real condition of the freedmen of the South, with their general character, together with the circumstances now surrounding them. It can do ^{no} good to conceal facts, and it is folly and absurd for any one to undertake to prove

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

that all freedmen are honest and industrious
or that on the other hand, that they are all
thriftless, immoral, and dishonest. Nor
is it true, that all the planters and courts
of the South deal honest and mete out jus-
tice, or on the other hand, that they all deal
dishonest and corruptly with the Blacks.

Our Southern Bourbons, often point out the
Negroes of 3rd class, as evidence that the ^{entire} Negro
Race, is incapable of making any progress
in civilization, while on the other hand
ultra Republicans, point out freedmen of
1st class as evidence of the theory that all
the Negro Race, are thrifty and progressive.

Both extremes are wrong in fact, but the
truth of the Republican theory, that the
Southern freedmen can be made gradu-
ally progressive and prosperous, is self-
evident in the fact, that the 1st, 2nd and
3rd classes and their different conditions of
life is found with them as in other races
of people. If this theory was untrue, then
all of the Southern Blacks would be
precisely in the same condition with the
3rd class, nor could such talented men
be found among them, as Fred Douglass,
Henry Bruce, Geo Pinchbeck, G T Ruby,
excongressman Rainey, Hon B F Wil-
liams, Wright Curry, and a host of others.

Enclosed you will find a circular
which I am having widely circulated

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

and distributed among the 1st and 2nd classes of the Blacks of this State.

As this circular explains itself plainly, I will not at present occupy space or your attention to further details of this individual colonization enterprise, but what I desire to do is to call your special attention to what I have learned by actual experience to be necessary to make colored colonization a success in Kansas, or elsewhere, to wit:

1st None except the 1st or 2nd classes to be colonized together for the present.

2nd No freedman, belonging to either of these classes, who is known to be quarrelsome, or of bad character permitted to settle in any of the colonies formed.

3rd To not sell less than 40 nor more than 100 acres to any one family, and to charge a reasonable price for all lands, giving from five to 10 years to pay or annual instalments in which to pay for lands so sold.

4th Laws should be enacted and faithfully enforced, prohibiting the selling or giving away of spirituous liquors ^{within} any colony so established.

5th No Prescher, who is not known to be an educated, and a moral and worthy man to be permitted to presch to them.

6th To ~~prohibit~~ licence only such mer-

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

Chants to establish stores among them, who are known to be honest and fair in their dealings, and prevent peddlers, showmen and gamblers from practising their avocations within the colonies.

7th To establish a thorough system of compulsory education, and to employ good moral teachers to teach colony schools.

If these important regulations are carefully observed and enforced there will be but little difficulty in achieving the best of results to the colored people by such colonization, nor will the good people of Kansas find any just cause to complain of colored emigration to their state. The Blacks are easily organized and disciplined and will undergo any amount of hardships and privations, if they believe that such sacrifices upon their part, is necessary to attain good results for their ultimate and permanent good, and that their leaders and advisers are acting in good faith by them. It is necessary for one to be scrupulously honest and exceedingly careful in all dealings and transactions with freedmen, if he desires to accomplish any good results with them, and to secure and retain their confidence. for if any one deceives them either by mistake or intentionally the re-



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

5 9

ults are all the same, for they are not likely to trust him again. Where one cheats or wrongs a freedman in any way it will become generally known among them within a short time, and though he may never hear it mentioned by any of the freedmen, yet he will find it exceedingly difficult to obtain any good colored labor, and if they deal with him at all, they will readily deceive or cheat him. In this way many Southern planters, have so cheated and wronged their colored tenants, that in many portions of the South, freed labor has become so demoralized and disheartened, that they work in a dull careless manner, as if they did not expect to realize anything for their labor. In fact I have had colored people to reply to me, "O yes sir, we could work harder, and make bigger crops than we does, but what good would it do us sir? If we makes much or little, its all the same to us, for we never gets any of it nohow!" Now I know planters who have had no trouble in getting all of the best of colored labor that they needed, and I have ^{them} had to tell me "I am doing as well as I ever did in my life. I ~~hardly~~ seldom fail to make good crops and never have any trouble with my negro tenants." This is because they

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

deal honestly with their colored tenants, and I am satisfied that all planters throughout the South, who have been honest and fair in their dealings with colored labor, will frankly admit, that there is no other labor that pays so well in raising and gathering large crops of cotton and sugar cane upon the alluvial lands of the South. The fact is, that white labor cannot withstand our warm climate and the miasmatic influences of our low fertile alluvial lands, for such labor has been well and often tested and proved a disastrous failure in every instance. It is true that upon our prairie and other rich uplands, white labor does well, but upon the low bottom and other alluvial lands where alone sugar cane and Rice can be profitably cultivated, Negro labor ~~alone~~ only can remain healthy, strong and vigorous; and if the "Negro exodus" from the South should become general, it will be one of the great calamities and a terrible blow inflicted upon the South; for millions of acres of our most productive lands will remain uncultivated for several years to come.

The great question is, Can the freedmen of the South, withstand the rigors of a Northern Winter, and will they leave the South? I believe they will if any

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

aid and a well directed movement is given and begun with them. I sincerely believe, that the colored people has, as a general rule, been better protected and more fairly dealt by in Texas, than in any other Southern State. But even here where there are several hundreds of colored persons owning farms, homes, have neat and well built churches and good schools, yet the "exodus fever" is becoming widespread among them, and to illustrate the ideas and principles that animates and causes this feeling to prevail so generally and quietly among them I will give you the substance of a conversation I had ^{leading} with a colored man not long since, viz.

"O yes Sir, I am doing tolerably well, I own a good home here, but my people can never do well ^{generally} and become landowners in the South. Our old masters will ever regard us as legal property stolen and forcibly taken away from them, and if they cant get our labor for nothing in one way, they will invent some other plan by which they can, for they make all the laws and own all the best lands. Before the war white men who could not read and write could be jurors, but the Democrats have changed that, so a man who cant read and write cant be a juror if he is challenged

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

and they generally challenge us, but a white man is seldom objected to upon that account. The Jury Commissioners who draw the jurors, and the Sheriffs who summons the jurors, never take pains to draw or to summons colored men who can read and write. We know and feel that this jury law was made to keep us out of the jury box, so that white men who cheat, beat and murder us, will if they are sued or indicted, be tried by white juries who do the same things. Thousands of us have been murdered by white men in cold blood since we were made free, but if any white man has ever punished for such crimes I have never hear of it, but if one of us even ~~murders~~ ^{kills} a white man in self-defence, we are certain to be hung for it.

A colored man seldom escapes the severest penalties, for any kind of an offence, but we would not complain of that, if all white rascals were punished in the same way for then we would have the protection of the laws too. It seems to us that white offenders ought to be punished worse than we poor niggers, because they have had chances we never had, to know what is right. We want free schools so that our children can learn how to read and write, for we are too poor to do this ourselves, but our Democratic Governor, has vetoed the free school appropriation, and that

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

7

18

will put an end to free schools in Texas. for the Democratic papers nearly all sustain him. We feel that the white people intend to keep us and our children after us, poor and ignorant so that they can be deprived of voting as well as being jurors. No Sir, I have read too many Democratic papers and heard too many Democrats talk, not to know what they mean to do with our children, and as bad as we old folks fore, it will be ten times worse with our children after we are dead ^{and} gone provided we leave them in the South. We must get out of the South before a Democratic President is elected, for when the Democrats get all the power, they will peon us and our children so that we cant leave here at all. Our labor helps to feed and clothe the Democrats, and our large population gives them 20 more votes in Congress and ⁱⁿ the electoral count for President. This is all wrong, for by our staying with our old masters we are helping them to make shackles, stronger than steel to enslave our children, and to wipe out all that has been done by the Republican Party. We should have been taken out of the South in 1865, for when God set the Jews free, He did not leave them among their old Egyptian masters, because He knew that they would be oppressed by them just as we are oppressed by our old

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

masters today. Yes Sir we must leave the South. and live among people ~~who~~ who will respect and protect our rights. for the longer we stay here the worse it will be because our old masters are raising their children to believe and act as they do. We have been free 14 years and still we are poor and ignorant, yet we make as much cotton and sugar as we did when we were slaves. and it does us as little good now as it did then.

I hardly know how we will get away. but God. will open up a way for us to get homes, as ~~he~~ did to give us our liberty."

This is ~~the~~ wide spread - but quiet - feeling that prevails among all of the better classes of the colored people, and if you meet one of them, who knows you to be a friend and that you will not say anything about what he informs you. he will express himself in about the same way and with the same ideas and meaning; but if he should meet a Democrat who asks him if he wants to go to Kansas, his reply will probably be, "Why Old Boss, you don't suppose I want to go where I'll starve or freeze to death, does you?" The Democrat, will pass on believing that the "Exodus fever" will not become an epidemic in Texas, but unless a great change takes place in the sentiment and ideas of the freedmen, he is destined to wake up some fine mom-



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

17

4

ing, a sceler, but let us hope, a wiser
and a better man. Since 1860, a suc-
cession of terrible misfortunes has befallen
the former wealthy planters of the South. For
four years, their plantations were made bar-
ren wastes, their sons killed by tens of thou-
sands upon battlefields, and at last their
slaves set free. Molested by defeat and
poverty, they sought in 1866, revenge by
the New Orleans, and Memphis massacres
of helpless negroes, and by the enactment
of black codes, which virtually reduced
the colored people of the South, to a new
and ^{an} ingenious system of bondage.
Then followed the adoption of the XV
amendment and Reconstruction that
established a Republican form of State
government for the South. Learning nothing,
still burning for revenge, the old planters
blindly remain loyal to their old Bourbon
Rulers. Then came on a reign of terror
by the Ku Klux Klans, White Leagues, and
other organized bands of conspirators. The
old planters stood by, and ^{coolly} saw, their colored
laborers and tenants murdered by re-
tail and wholesale, day by day. Where they
did ^{not} directly aid in these infernal deeds, they
gave food, shelter aid and encouragement to the
assassins who perpetrated these inhuman
atrocities. One by one the Republican
state governments fell in ^{to} the bloody hands

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

of the Democracy. As they fell, Democratic constitutional conventions have wiped out the Republican State constitutions of the South and made and adopted new constitutions under which legislation has been made easy, whereby laws have gradually been, and are still being enacted, to reduce the colored people to an absolute system of bondage or Peonage. Still Democratic success has been attended by misfortune. Terrible overflows of Southern rivers, the unprecedented ravages of the cotton army worm and the fraud, violence and tyranny heaped upon colored labor, has demoralized such labor untell ~~of~~ ^{with all of these} ~~of these~~ combined misfortunes, has taken away the prosperity of that was returning to the old planters during Republican supremacy in the South. Added to these misfortunes, epidemics of yellow fever have inflicted untold misery and suffering upon our citizens. The power of the old Bourbon leaders has been restored to them, and the National government itself seems to be within their grasp. But can or will these leaders give back to the planters of the South, that prosperity and confidence between capital and labor, which has been sacrificed to secure Bourbon rule and revenge. Will the \$5000 ^{per} ~~per~~ annum paid to Confederate leaders and other Bourbon members of Congress, from the Na-



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

9
tional Treasury, help the broken fortunes
of ruined plant^{ers} and restore their lost labor.
No. but \$5000⁰⁰ per annum will help Ben
Hill, & Co. wonderfully.

I have written enough upon this sub-
ject, and will say in conclusion, that I will
do all that lies in my limited power, to aid
the colored people to colonize, but what-
ever is done in that direction, should be
done upon a well organized system found-
ed upon sound principles and rules.

If your Excellency should think that
I can give further information, or be of ser-
vice to you in this matter, you may com-
mand me, and I will be happy to hear
from you. Hoping that your Excellency
will give me an early reply to this com-
munication.

I remain very respectfully,

Your Obedt. Servt.

Stephen A. Hackworth,

To his Excellency,

— St John,

Governor of the State
of Kansas, Topeka,

P.S. If you should see proper to publish
this withhold my name, and place of residence
for the present. S.A.H.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

BRENHAM,
Washington County, Texas, February 10, 1879.

DEAR SIR :

Your name having been given me, and learning that you would perhaps take some interest in an effort I am making to induce colored people to buy homes of their own, and settle in large communities together, where they can enjoy the fruits and rewards of their own labor, build their own churches and schoolhouses, and maintain permanent schools for the education of their children, I herewith take the liberty of informing you of what I have done during the past five years, and am still doing to enable colored people to make systematic and organized efforts to accomplish these results and objects viz : In 1874 I began the enterprise of buying and selling lands to colored people, since that year I have sold and bargained nearly twelve thousand acres of land to colored people, in Fort Bend County, many of whom are now living upon good homes of their own. This colony is located on the left side of the East San Bernard river, and their lands begin some four miles below where the Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad crosses said river. I have several thousands additional acres of land on the Bernard river, which I am prepared to sell upon the following terms viz : In 50 and 100 acre tracts, at prices ranging from two to three dollars per acre, one third cash, and balance of purchase money to be paid in three or four yearly payments. These lands are both prairie and bottom lands, black loess and sandy loam, with an abundance of cypress and other timber for fencing and building purposes. The titles to all lands I offer for sale are perfect, and before any one pays me one cent for any lands I sell him. I will furnish him with my chain and record of title, which he can have investigated by any lawyer. I have been selling lands during the past five years and no man has yet lost land I sold him for the want of a good title, and I shall pay special attention to the question of title, because I hope to follow this business successfully for many years to come, and were I to sell lands with bad or doubtful titles it would ruin my enterprise. I invite you to form a club, or a body, of twenty or more of your neighbors, whom you know to be honest and industrious men, and begin correspondence with me at once as to how you should organize and proceed with your efforts to obtain homes. After the crops are laid by, I shall appoint a time for all clubs formed in the various counties, to meet me at the colony where they can see the progress made by those who have already settled there, ascertain the productiveness of the lands by the crops growing upon them, and examine and judge the country for themselves. All clubs satisfied with the opportunities I offer them for obtaining homes, to select the body of lands they want, and in the fall to pay first payment, send representatives from each club to aid in laying the lands surveyed up into small tracts. By this plan each purchaser will know the lines and corners of his land. After the land is surveyed out into small tracts and one third cash paid I will make each purchaser a warrant deed to his land, and where any member of a club fails to pay for his land it shall not effect or involve others who do pay for their homes. By the club system, men who know each other, friends and relatives, can settle near each other, and the ties of friendship and kindred remain united and unbroken. It is absolutely necessary that colored people should settle in large communities together, this will alone enable them to build good churches, schoolhouses, and maintain good permanent schools, where their children can be educated, and where they will be able to control their own affairs. The present plan pursued by the colored people, in buying lands here and there, scattering and separating themselves over poor uplands will always prove detrimental to their best interests and general good. The Germans and other classes of white people generally settle in large communities, and all of the Western States were rapidly filled up by the club or colony system, and our great territories are now being settled upon the same plan, and in a few years these wild territories will be formed into prosperous States of the Union. The thrifty and prosperous Germans of our State furnish us with striking examples and convincing evidence of the soundness of the theory of every class or race of people settling themselves together in communities, because, by this they can aid each other, and their manners and customs, and mutual interests do not come in conflict with the interests of others. Again we never see Germans remain tenants more than two or three years, and though they come to this country poor, knowing nothing about our language nor the culture of cotton, yet within a few years we find them prosperous and owning good farms and houses of their own. It is not because the Germans work harder than others that they are in a more prosperous condition, but their economy and industry combined with their system of aiding and encouraging each other, maintaining their own schools, educating their children and guarding the common interests of all, tends to the mutual good of all. No race or class of people who follow the practice year after year, of renting lands, and paying the greater part of what they raise on such rented lands for rents, can ever become a prosperous people, and to educate their children. For this and many other sound reasons, every intelligent colored man should not only strive to get a good home for himself, but he should do all in his power to encourage others of his race to follow his example. It is no excuse to say that the Blacks cannot be made prosperous and self sustaining, because that is untrue. All that is wanting to accomplish this, are unremitting and practicable efforts, to be made in the right direction, and sure and beneficial results will follow. There are millions of acres of river bottom and other alluvial lands in our State, which can never be cultivated by white labor, and the Blacks are the only class of laborers, that can live upon and cultivate them—the richest and most fertile of all lands—and it is worse than folly, for them to continue the practice of renting poor uplands, when they can buy alluvial lands which will produce twice as much per acre, and cost less than the rents per acre which they pay every year. The rent of 25 acres of land costs at least one hundred dollars, and this rent has to be paid even if it takes the greater part of what is made upon the lands to pay it. Men who have lands to rent, pay high taxes and expenses of keeping fences and houses in good repair, consequently they are compelled to charge rents and to collect the same. Now I can sell fifty acre tracts of better lands than you usually rent, at three dollars per acre—fifty dollars down and the balance of one hundred dollars to be paid in three yearly instalments—so in three years you will pay only one hundred and fifty dollars, with interest on one hundred dollars, and if you pay it you will own fifty acres of good land, while on the other hand if you continue renting, twenty-five acres of land will cost you in three years, three hundred dollars. Now what is there to prevent any industrious sensible man from more easily paying one hundred and fifty dollars in three years in order to have a good home of his own, then to pay three hundred dollars during the same period of time, for the rent of half the number of acres, he buys or can buy? Now I have partly explained to you all the outlines of my plan of selling lands and encouraging industrious and honest colored people in organizing and buying good homes upon the colony system, and I hope you will take an active part in aiding me in my efforts in this matter. Now is the time to organize and to form clubs, so that men who want homes will keep out of debt, or at least to contract no unnecessary debt—during this year, and so that they will be able to make their first payment next fall, and be preparing for moving upon good homes of their own. I will ensure all honest and industrious colored men who secure homes in Fort Bend county, peace and prosperity and that they will find no cause in the future to regret taking my advice in selecting homes in that county. I will be glad to hear from you at any time, and will promptly reply to all inquiries you may make in regard to forming and organizing colony clubs, and such other information as you may desire in regard to buying lands.

RESPECTFULLY,
S. A. HACKWORTH.

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

THE BLACK MAN'S HOPE.

Homes! Homes! we want for our down-trodden race,
Homes! Homes and farms, by God's favor and grace.
For these we'll hope and labor with zeal's holy fire.
For them we'll work day by day and never tire.

Our former masters will sell us their river lands.
To the river lands, we'll go in strong brotherly bands.
There united, we'll raise cotton and sugar cane.
And our own churches and schools maintain.

God in His wisdom, has made us the only race.
That can conquer the miasm's deadly embrace.
And fertile lands alluvial cultivate and reclaim.
From wild nature's sway and her broad domain.

O Brothers come away, from the poor upland and town
Let us gather in the vallies where riches abound.
Beside the River, where our labor will repay tenfold,
And give us farms richer than mines of gold.

Who will remain a poor tenant and a slave,
When millions of rich acres, for labor strong and brave,
Lie waiting and idle, to yield up treasures untold.
More boundless than Californian mines of Gold.

Our despised and persecuted race must unite.
Not for vengeance or retribution, but for progress light.
Our own civilization and prosperity to advance.
For these our mutual rights and interests to enhance.

We must reap the rewards of our own industry.
To make our race honored and progressive, we will try.
Not by persecution, nor by the old dogmatic cry.
That "niggers" are brutes, and by that rule dealt by.

By God's laws of justice and humanity alone.
We'll progress and for our low condition atone.
But tyranny, oppression and man's bitter spite and hate
Can never redeem us from degradation's low estate.

O white man for you we've been patient slaves.
All of our labor you have reaped, we know you are brave
Then be just and generous too, and remember this.
That the Black man's low condition is no sin of his.

Remember too, that when war's wild desolation
Laid waste your fair land with fire, death and desecration
Your wives and children to our charge and mercy left.
We never our trust betrayed, or you of your families
[bereft.

For our long service to you, our fidelity and devotion
We to your humanity and justice appeal with emotion.
O help and encourage! we are poor and ignorant, dont
[deny us

Your River lands sell us, we'll pay you, just try us.

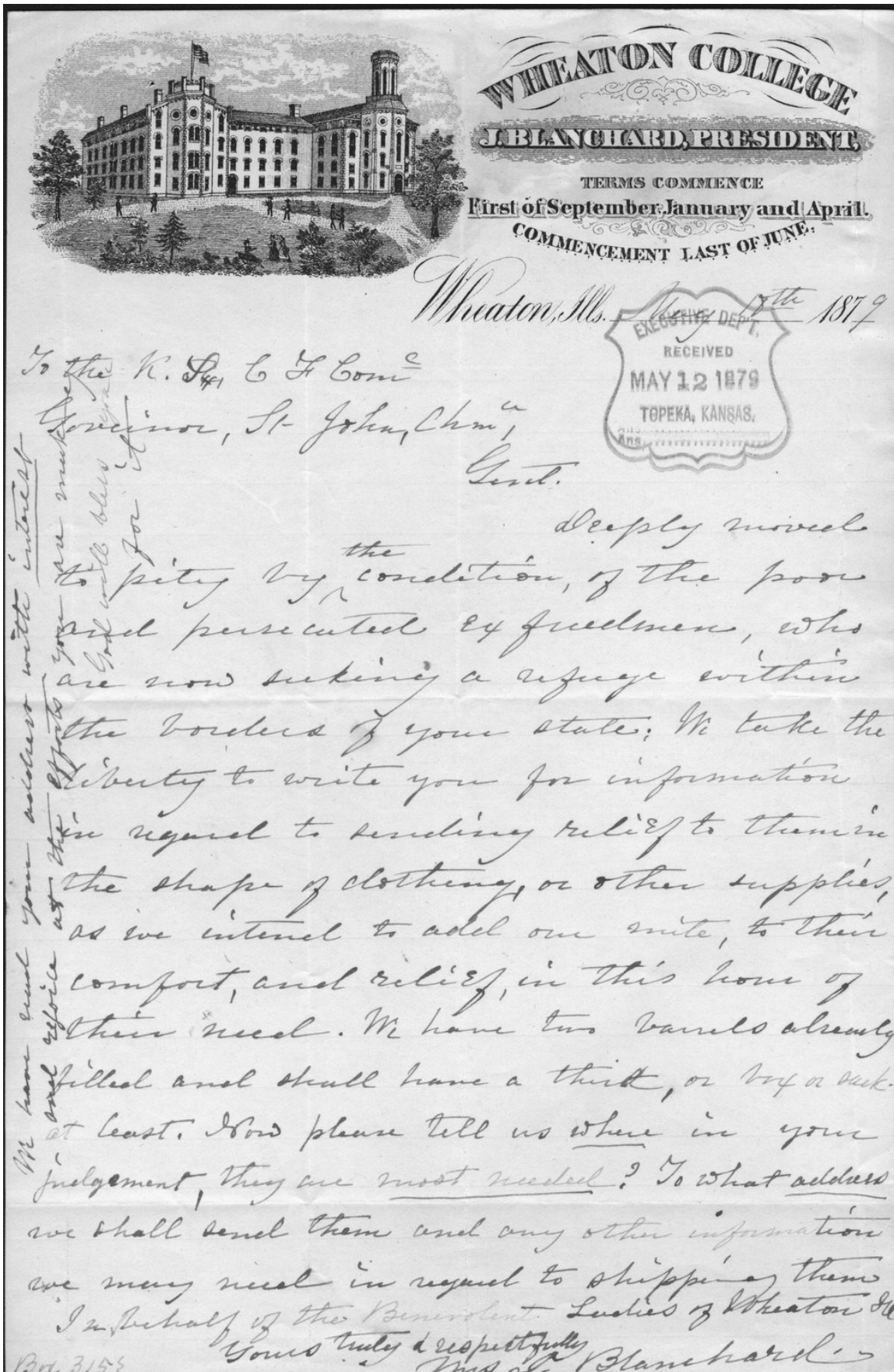
This is the better way for former master and slave to
[forget.

The master, that he lost his slave, the slave that he is yet
Poor and despised, and can never hope to see
His race made prosperous, and from prejudice made free

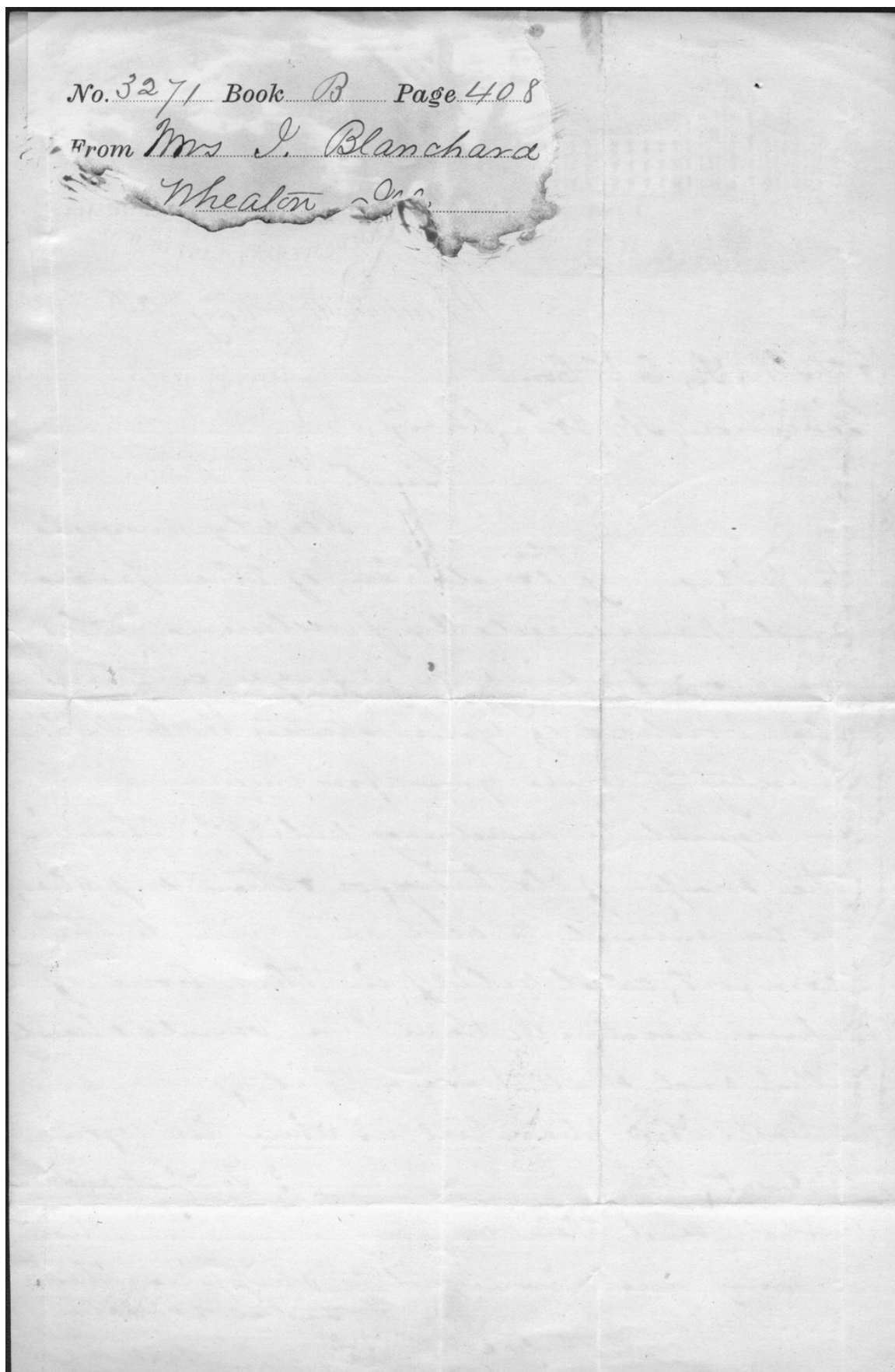
Then let the white man on his uplands remain.
The black man hasten to the river lands broad domain.
The white man to manufacture and raise small grain.
And the black man to raise cotton and sugar cane.

Then O Brothers! let us unite, O come right away.
Come! there are homes for us, and make no delay.
By our own strong arms, we'll pay for our farms.
Then come along and fear no false alarms.

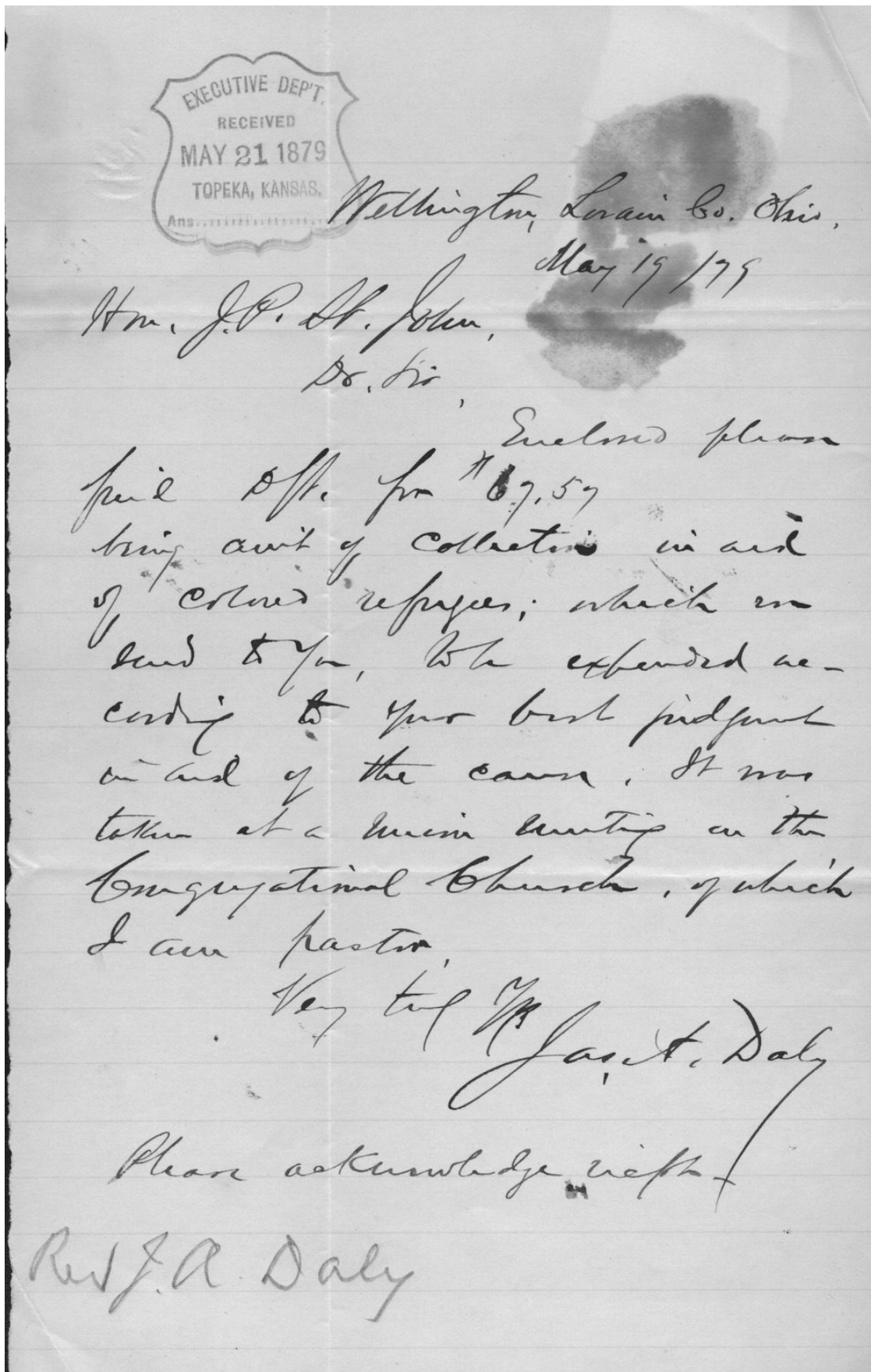
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



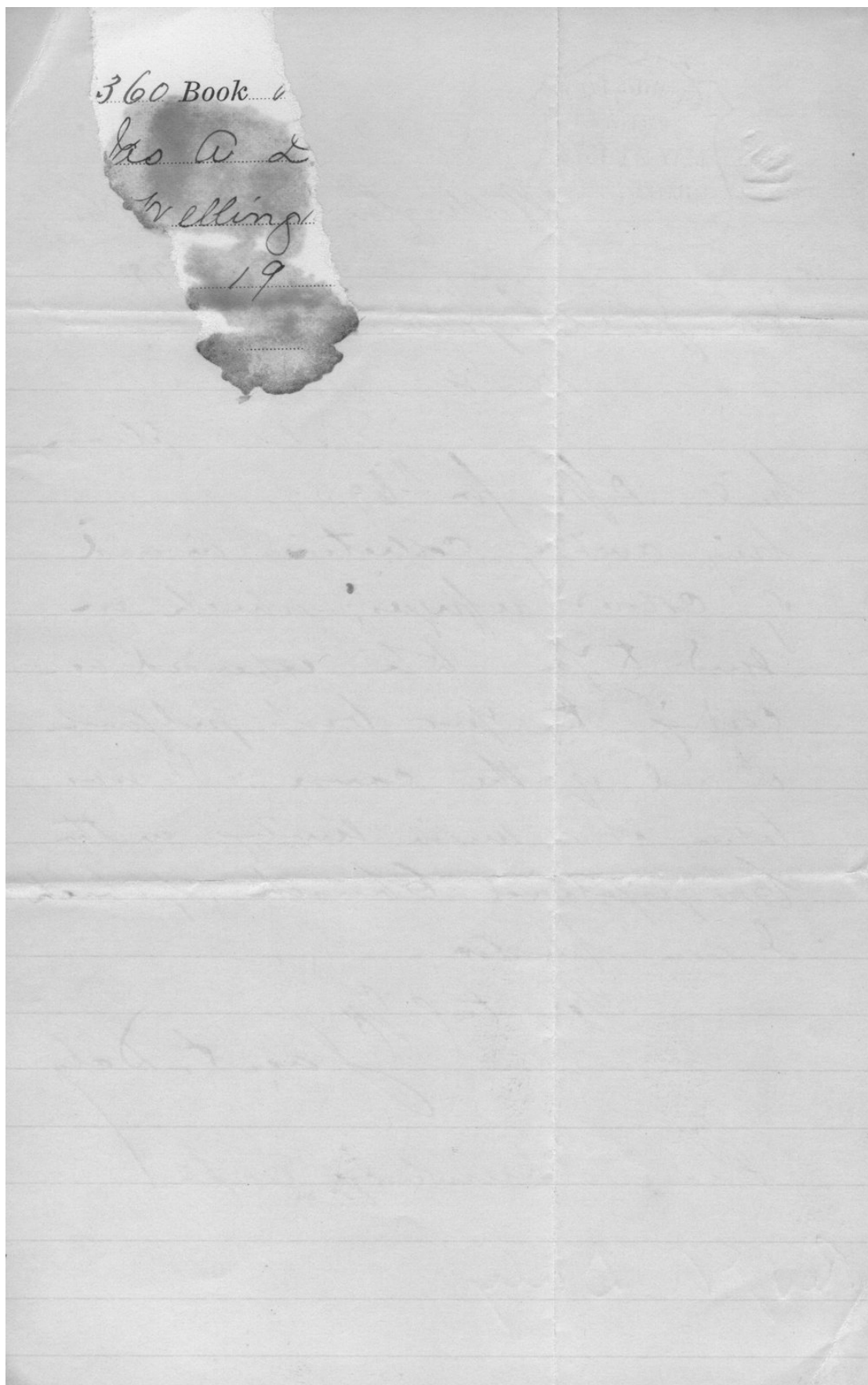
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Lawrence Kans. May 19-1879.
Gov. J. R. St. John
Topeka, Kans.

I enclose herein a draft for sixty five dollars, endorsed to your order, which has been transmitted to me for the relief of colored emigrants to this State. It was forwarded by the Freedmen's Committee of the Society of Friends of Oskafoosa, Iowa, and its disbursement was left to my discretion, for the purpose named. Upon careful inquiry, I have concluded that the best thing we can do is to turn it over to you as Chairman of the State Central Committee on Freedmen, Refugees &c & request you to use it according to your best judgment. Please acknowledge its reception & acceptance for the purpose alluded to -

Having represented the Society of Friends for eight years in their work amongst the Indians, and having thus the personal acquaintance of many representative men of the Society in all the Yearly Meetings of this Country, it is natural that I should have received inquiries as to the necessity for aid to the refugees in Kans. - and also that I should be acquainted

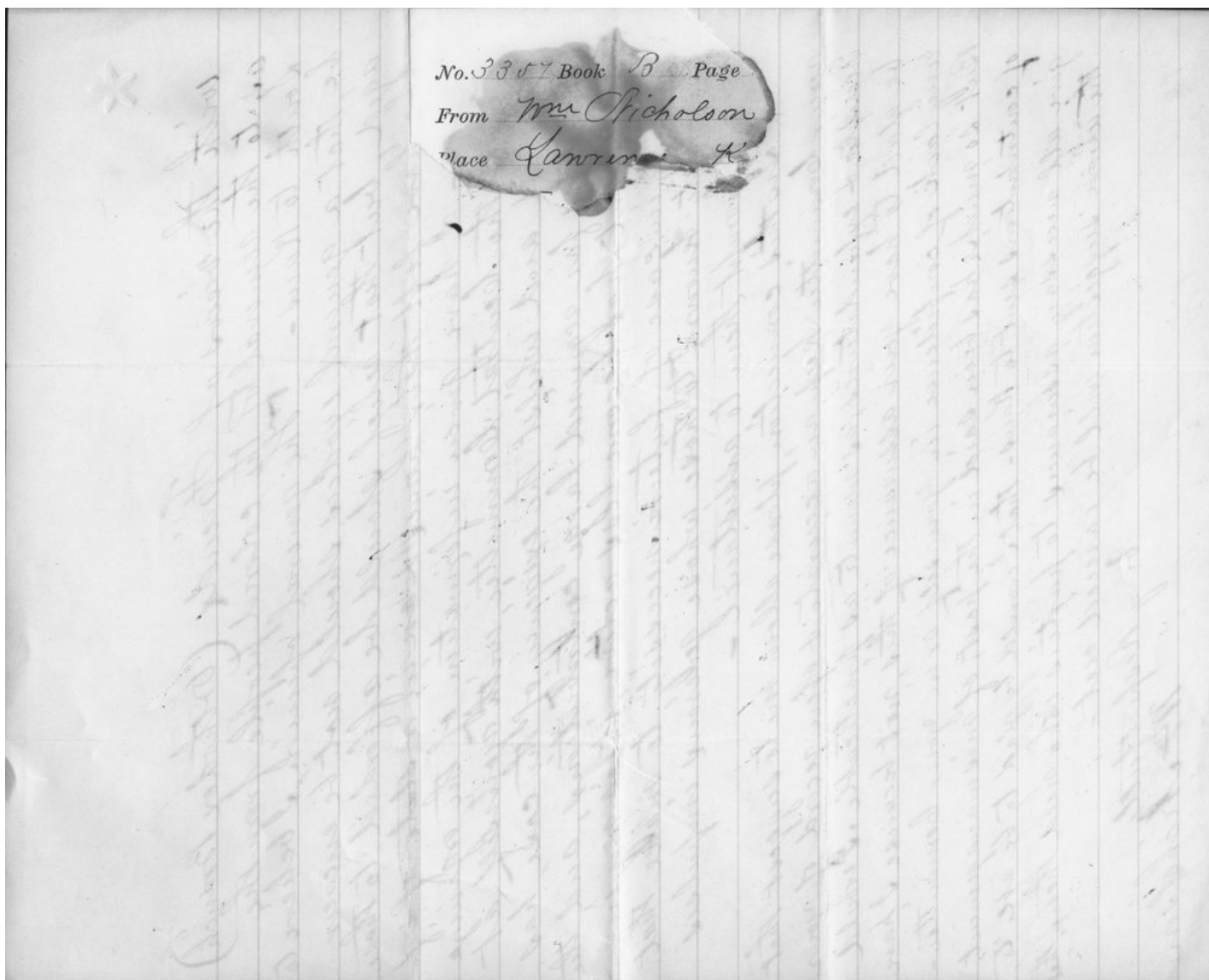
Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

with the views of Friends (Orthodox Branch) as to the removal of the colored people from the South to Kans. The general opinion I believe to be, that a general exodus should not be encouraged, but that relief should be afforded to those who have left their homes & are in a state of suffering - I have given information of the organization of the Central Committee, with yourself at the head and whilst the exigency of the case has not thus far required large contributions, and the movement has become less active, it is my intention, in case of future necessity, to make that necessity known to those whose generous impulses will prompt them to assistance -

In this connection, please allow me to suggest that your Committee keep an accurate & open record of your receipts & expenditures, as minute as practicable. I would be glad to have your assurance of this, not because I have any lack of confidence in yourself or in your Committee - But so much has been said in the past, of mismanagement of contributions sent to Kans. that I would be glad to be able to give all necessary assurances to parties who need them, that the above suggestion will be carried out -

Very Respectfully,
Wm. Nicholson

Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence



Governor John St. John, Exoduster received correspondence

EXECUTIVE DEPT.
RECEIVED
MAY 26 1879
TOPEKA, KANSAS

May 19th 1879

Hillsboro Union Co. Ark.

your excellency Governor, Kansas
Topeka Kansas,

Dear Sir, I desire some information of you,
Concerning the Colored people's immigration to
Kansas. We have been informed that government
lands, money, and means of living, are freely
given us in that State. Such is promulgated to us,
Which have caused a great excitement. Many of
my people would go immediately if they had the ability.
But I have my doubts. Some of us are living indepe-
-ndently here and don't wish to immigrate there unless
those reports are true. If you will be so kind as
to give me the above information, it will oblige
me and many of my friends.

R. H. Whitney, Col.
Hillsboro
Union Co
Ark.