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John Bidwell letter, 1892

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John Bidwell letter

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository	Arkansas State Archives
Title	John Bidwell letter
Date	1892
Extent	0.02 Cubic feet 1 folder
Language	English
Language of Materials	Materials entirely in English.
Microform [Reel]	MG.00210

Preferred Citation

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Biographical/Historical Note

John Bidwell (1819-1900) settled in California in 1841. In 1860, he founded the town of Chico and donated land for public schools, a church of each denomination, and the Northern Branch Normal School, which is now the Chico State College founded in 1887. On his ranch in Chico, he developed an experimental orchard that contained over 400 varieties of fruit. He is known as the father of the raisin industry. The Sir Joseph Hooker Oak Tree was found on his property.

He was active in politics and served as a state senator in 1849. In 1860, he was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. He switched parties and in 1864 was the delegate to the Republican National Convention and served as a Republican congressman, 1865-1867. In 1875, he ran for California governor on the Anti-Monopoly ticket, and in 1880, he ran again for governor, but this time on the Prohibition ticket. In 1892, he was the Prohibition presidential candidate and garnered 2.3% of the vote, the most any Prohibition candidate has ever won. His home is now the Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park.

William S. Thomas (1828-1910) was a native of New York and was a well-known horticulturalist and geologist. He came to Arkansas in 1876 as a consultant for a privately-backed mineral resources company. He liked the area so much that he decided to move to Arkansas. He settled in Alexander, Saline County, at Midland Farms, the former home of Governor Henry M. Rector. He became a consultant for geological and scientific investigation for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railway. He organized the Arkansas State Horticultural Society in 1879 with G.P.C. Rumbough. Thomas became president of the society in 1894-1895. In 1900, he established the publication "Arkansas Forest and Farm."

Scope and Contents

This letter written by John Bidwell gives W.S. Thomas information about the Sir Joseph Hooker Oak Tree in Chico, California.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Arkansas State Archives 3/21/2011

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use. The ASA possesses the material listed in this finding aid in the original format, but due to preservation concerns this collection is accessible to the public through microfilm format.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Benton Courier, Benton, Arkansas, 1950.

Collection Inventory

John Bidwell, San Francisco, California, to W.S. Thomas, Little Rock, Arkansas 1892 October 14