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PRESS RELEASE

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION ON OCTOBER 18 AT NOON
THE GIRL THE WILDCATS LEFT BEHIND: IRENE PIERCE & TALLASSEE'S SOLDIERS IN WWI
PRESENTED BY MARTIN T. OLLIFF

Montgomery, AL (10/03/2018)- *Food for Thought* continues another year of fascinating lectures on the rich history of Alabama at the Alabama Department of Archives and History on **Thursday, October 18 at 12:00**, when Martin T. Olliff presents ***The Girl the Wildcats Left Behind: Irene Pierce & Tallassee's Soldiers in WWI***.

In May 1918, a group of young men from Tallassee, Alabama, departed together for the battlefields of World War I. Left behind was seventeen-year-old mill hand Irene Pierce. Over the following months, Pierce wrote letters to the soldiers as a volunteer pen pal, sharing news of home and encouraging words with her friends overseas. Her correspondence, now located at Troy University's Wiregrass Archives, provides a compelling glimpse of life both at home and on the front lines of the Great War. During this presentation, Olliff will share the stories found in this unique collection of letters and photographs.

Martin T. Olliff is a professor of history and the director of the Wiregrass Archives at Troy University Dothan Campus. He is the editor of *The Great War in the Heart of Dixie: Alabama during World War I* (University of Alabama Press, 2008), and author of *Getting Out of the Mud: The Alabama Good Roads Movement, 1898-1928* (University of Alabama Press, 2017). Olliff has served as the president of the Society of Alabama Archivists, the Alabama Association of Historians, and the Alabama Historical Association.

Admission to *Food for Thought* presentations is always **FREE**. The public is invited to bring a brown bag lunch. Complimentary beverages will be provided. **For additional information call (334) 353-4689.**

Food for Thought 2018 is sponsored by the Friends of the Alabama Archives and made possible with support from the daughters of Judge Alex A. Marks, in his memory.

The Alabama Department of Archives and History is the state's government records repository, special collections library and research facility, and is home to the Museum of Alabama, the state history museum. It is located in downtown Montgomery, directly across the street from the State Capitol. The Archives and Museum are open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30. The EBSCO Research Room is open Tuesday through Friday and the second Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 4:30. To learn more, visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 242-4364.

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