

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
P.O. Box 300100
624 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130-0100

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Sherrie Hamil
334-353-4726

Release Date: Immediately

ARCHITREATS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION
WILLIAM LOWNDES YANCEY AND THE COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR
BY ERIC WALTHER
AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

ArchiTreats: Food for Thought continues another year of informative talks on Alabama history at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Join us at **noon** on **Thursday, April 15** as **Eric Walther** presents *William Lowndes Yancey and the Coming of the Civil War*.

Eric Walther's talk, based on his recent biography of William Lowndes Yancey, could easily be titled "the making of a fire eater," or "the Yancey that nobody knows." Professor Walther will detail the many profound and troubling incidents in the early years of Yancey's life in order to explain how this man transformed from a die-hard Unionist into Alabama's premier secessionist. Family turbulence and violence combined with the hypocrisy and duplicity of his Northern step-father, resulting in Yancey's early rejection and distrust of Northern society and his belief in the innate superiority of the slaveholding regime of the antebellum South. As disunion grew close in the 1850s, in a speech to students at the University of Alabama, Yancey all but pronounced himself the embodiment of the South and its leading defender.

Eric Walther teaches U.S. History at the University of Houston. His specialty is the Antebellum South and the coming of the Civil War. He received a B.A. in History and American Studies from California State University, Fullerton and M. A. and Ph.D. degrees from Louisiana State University. Walther is the author of three books, numerous articles, and book reviews. *Shattering of the Union: America in the 1850s*, won a *Choice Magazine* book award in 2004. *William Lowndes Yancey and the Coming of the Civil War* was published by the University of North Carolina Press in the spring of 2006 and has received the *James Rawley Award* from the Southern Historical Association and the *Jefferson Davis Award* from the Museum of the Confederacy.

This program is part of the statewide *Becoming Alabama* initiative to commemorate three landmark events in the development of Alabama: the Creek War of 1813-1814, the Civil War and Emancipation, and the Civil Rights Movement.

ArchiTreats: Food for Thought lecture series is made possible by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. The public is invited to bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bit of Alabama history. Coffee and tea will be provided by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. For more information, call (334) 353-4726.