



Press Release

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Contact: Georgia Ann Conner
334.328.9088

ARCHITREATS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION *THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU IN ALABAMA, 1865 - 1867* BY JASON J. BATTLES

ArchiTreats: Food for Thought continues another year of interesting and informative talks on Alabama history at the **Alabama Department of Archives and History** on **Thursday, July 16, 2015 at noon**. Jason J. Battles will present *The Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama, 1865 - 1867*.

The end of the Civil War brought with it the abrupt end of the slave-based plantation system at the heart of Alabama's agrarian economy. At the same time, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, aka the Freedmen's Bureau, was created to assist blacks in the transition from slaves to citizens. During the critical post-war years of 1865 to 1867, the Freedmen's Bureau in Alabama was led by Brigadier General Wager Swayne. Under his leadership, the Bureau provided essential oversight to keep farms operating and helped prevent economic collapse and starvation. The length of his tenure provided a level of stability and consistency in Bureau activities and policies in Alabama that were unmatched elsewhere in the South. This month, Jason J. Battles will discuss how Swayne and the Bureau made significant, although short-lived, improvements in the legal and economic position of black Alabamians.

Jason Battles is the Deputy University Librarian at the University of Georgia. An Alabama native, Jason holds an undergraduate degree from Jacksonville State University and Master's degrees in History and Library Science from the University of Alabama. His research into the Freedmen's Bureau began over two decades ago. He revisited and built on that effort as part of his recent contribution to the collection of new historical essays in Dr. Kenneth Noe's 2014 edited work, *The Yellowhammer War: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*.

This ArchiTreats presentation made possible by the Friends of the Alabama Archives and a grant from the Alabama Humanities Foundation, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The public is invited to bring a brown bag lunch. Complimentary beverages are provided. **Admission is always FREE!** To view the full 2015 ArchiTreats schedule visit www.archives.alabama.gov.

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Alabama Department of Archives & History
624 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL 36130
www.archives.alabama.gov