

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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BOOK TALK AND SIGNING,  
*THE NATIONAL ANTHEM OF SECESSION: DIXIE, ALABAMA, AND THE  
CONFEDERACY* PRESENTED BY CHRISTIAN MCWHIRTER  
AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Join us at **noon** on **Friday, April 20, 2012** as Christian McWhirter presents ***The National Anthem of Secession: Dixie, Alabama, and the Confederacy***. This informative talk and book signing will be held at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. This presentation is in conjunction with the statewide *Becoming Alabama* initiative.

Music was everywhere during the Civil War. Tunes could be heard ringing out from parlor pianos, thundering at political rallies, and setting the rhythms of military and domestic life. With literacy still limited, music was an important vehicle for communicating ideas about the war, and it had a lasting impact in the decades that followed. In his book *Battle Hymns: The Power and the Popularity of Music in the Civil War*, Christian McWhirter draws on an array of published and archival sources to analyze the myriad ways music influenced popular culture in the years surrounding the war. In this presentation McWhirter will focus on the song "Dixie" famously played at Jefferson Davis's inauguration in Montgomery.

Born in Toronto, Ontario, Christian McWhirter received his bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto – Mississauga and his master's and Ph.D. at The University of Alabama. He currently works for the Papers of Abraham Lincoln project at the National Archives in Washington, DC and lives in Arlington, VA. McWhirter's book, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War*, published by the University of North Carolina Press will be available for purchase from the Friends of the Alabama Archives.

This commemoration event is one in a series of programs affiliated with *Becoming Alabama*, a statewide partnership of state agencies, historical groups, and cultural organizations to commemorate the coinciding anniversaries of the Creek War and War of 1812, the Civil War, and major events in the civil rights movement. For more information on *Becoming Alabama*, visit <http://www.archives.alabama.gov/BA/>.

The public is invited to bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bit of Alabama history. The event is free and is sponsored by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. For more information, call (334) 353-4726.

[www.archives.alabama.gov](http://www.archives.alabama.gov)