

11-29-2017

Evening Honoring Frank and Virginia Williams

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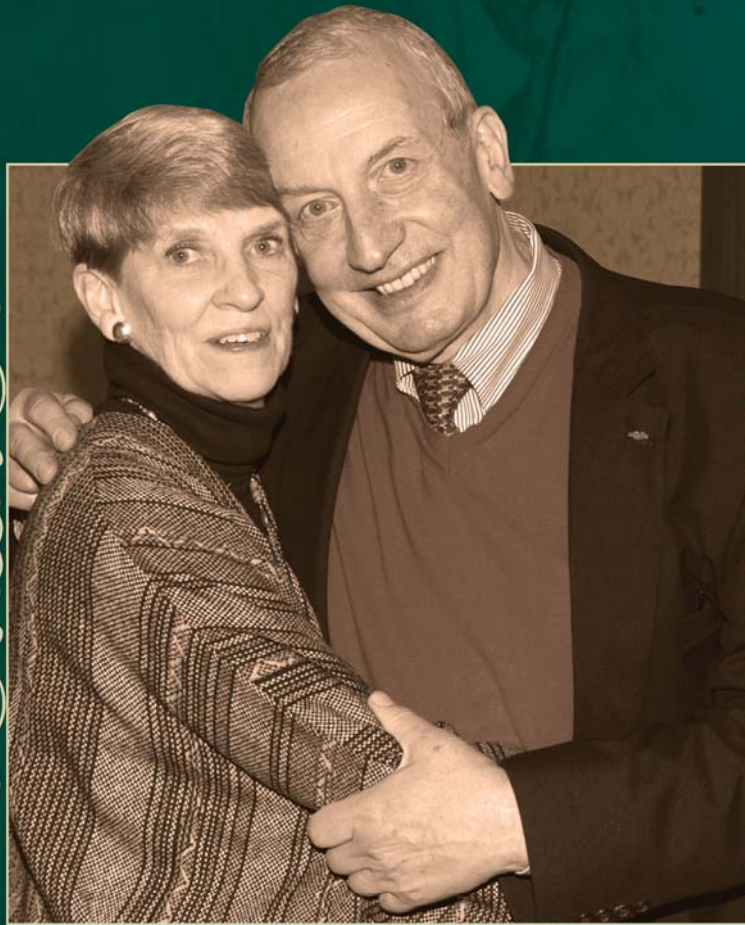
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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

present an
Evening Honoring



FRANK AND VIRGINIA WILLIAMS

NOVEMBER 29, 2017 5:30 P.M.
HUNTER HENRY CENTER
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Good Evening,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this evening's dinner and program honoring Chief Justice Frank and Virginia Williams. We are honored to have you with us as we express our appreciation to Frank and Virginia for their magnificent gifts of their Lincolniana Collection as well as for their establishment of the Frank and Virginia Williams Lecture Series. These magnificent gifts to the University and the University Library will provide untold opportunities for students, faculty, and researchers – for now and in the times to come.

An additional honor this evening is to have with us, Ronald Chernow, eminent author, historian and Pulitzer Prize Winner. Mr. Chernow will be sharing with us from his most recent comprehensive biography, *The Many Myths of Ulysses S. Grant*.

This evening's special program honoring Frank and Virginia for their outstanding contributions and the official opening of the U.S. Grant Presidential Library are monumental times for Mississippi State University and the University Library. We greatly appreciate your being with us to share these special times.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Keenum
President
Mississippi State University



Dedication Program
Honoring

Chief Justice (Ret.) Frank and Virginia Williams

Upon their donation of the Lincolniana Collection

November 29, 2017 5:30 p.m.
Hunter Henry Center
Mississippi State University

PROGRAM

Presiding.....	Sid Salter Chief Communications Officer Mississippi State University
Welcome.....	Frances N. Coleman Dean of University Libraries Mississippi State University
Invocation.....	Stephen Cunetto Associate Dean of Libraries Mississippi State University

DINNER

Significance of Occasion and Remarks.....	Dr. Mark E. Keenum President Mississippi State University
Response.....	Chief Justice Frank Williams (Ret.)
Introduction of Speaker.....	Dr. John F. Marszalek Executive Director and Managing Editor Ulysses S. Grant Association
Address.....	Ron Chernow Pulitzer Prize Winner and Author “The Many Myths of Ulysses S. Grant”
Closing.....	Sid Salter

Book Signing and Private Tour of the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library
and the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana Gallery will follow dinner.

A shuttle service will be available to take guests to and from the library.



Frank and Virginia Williams

Frank J. Williams

Chief Justice Frank J. Williams (Ret.), a Rhode Island native and veteran of the United States Army, graduated from Boston University, Boston University School of Law and Bryant University. He served as a trial justice on the Rhode Island Superior Court from 1995 until 2001 and served as Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court from 2001 until 2009. He is the founding chair of The Lincoln Forum and a long-time president of the Ulysses S. Grant Association.

Williams is an Abraham Lincoln scholar whose books include *Judging Lincoln*; *Lincoln as Hero*; *The Emancipation Proclamation: Three Views*; and *Lincoln Lessons: Reflections on America's Greatest Leaders*. Chief Justice Williams is a member of the United States Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation, the Rhode Island Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission and chair of the United States Ulysses S. Grant Bicentennial Commission.

In 2007, the Pre-law Society of Mississippi State University awarded Justice Williams its prestigious Jurist of the Year Award. Williams is also an accomplished amateur chef, having appeared as a guest on the cooking show, *Ciao Italia*, with Mary Ann Esposito.



Virginia Williams

Virginia Williams was born and raised in Texas, and graduated from North Texas State University. She taught overseas for the Department of Defense, and then taught kindergarten in Cranston, Rhode Island, for 29 years. In so doing she acquired an interest in outhouses, about which she lectures all over the country.

She served as President of the Museum of Primitive Art in Peacedale, RI, and as Deacon of Dunn's Corners Presbyterian Church in Westerly, RI.





R on Ch now

An honors graduate of Yale and Cambridge, Ron Chernow is one of the most distinguished commentators on history, politics, and business in America today. He has won virtually every major prize in American letters. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* has hailed him as “one of the pre-eminent biographers of his generation” while *Fortune* magazine has called him “America’s best business biographer.” In September 2017, President Obama conferred upon him a National Humanities Medal at the White House.

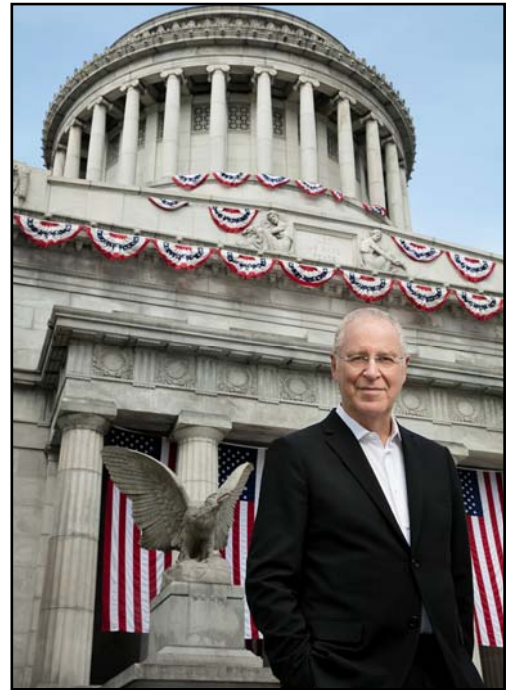
Mr. Chernow’s first book, *The House of Morgan*, won the National Book Award as the best nonfiction book of 1990 and is considered a modern classic. His second book, *The Warburgs*, won the prestigious George S. Eccles Prize for the best business book of 1993 and was cited by the American Library Association as one of the year’s ten best works. His 1998 biography of John D. Rockefeller, entitled *Titan*, was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award for biography. Both the *Times* and *Time* magazine voted it one of the ten best books of the year.

Mr. Chernow’s much anticipated biography of Alexander Hamilton was published in April 2004 to extraordinary acclaim. *The New York Times* praised it as “moving and masterly...by far the best biography ever written about the man.”

In October 2010, Mr. Chernow’s biography of George Washington, *Washington: A Life*, appeared to outstanding reviews. Writing in *The New York Review of Books*, Gordon Wood praised it as “the best, most comprehensive, and most balanced single-volume biography of Washington ever written.” In March 2011, the New-York Historical Society gave the book its coveted American History Book Prize for the best volume about American history published in 2010, endowing Mr. Chernow with the honorary title of American Historian Laureate. In May of that year, *Washington: A Life* was honored with the Pulitzer Prize in Biography, the highest honor reserved for a writer in the field.

Starting in 2008, Mr. Chernow began working with Lin-Manuel Miranda as the historical consultant on the sensational Broadway musical *Hamilton*, inspired by his biography of Alexander Hamilton and considered the biggest Broadway hit of the past fifty years. In May 2015, as a member of the show’s creative team, he received the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Musical. In November 2015, Mr. Chernow and Mr. Miranda jointly received the History Makers Award of the New-York Historical Society for their work together on the acclaimed show. That same month, Mr. Chernow’s biography of Alexander Hamilton returned to *The New York Times* bestseller list, where it stayed for more than a year, selling more than a million copies. His work has been translated into fifteen languages.

Chernow has recently continued his journey into the lives of historical figures with *Grant*, a biography of President Ulysses S. Grant that received rave reviews from numerous media outlets including *The New York Times*.





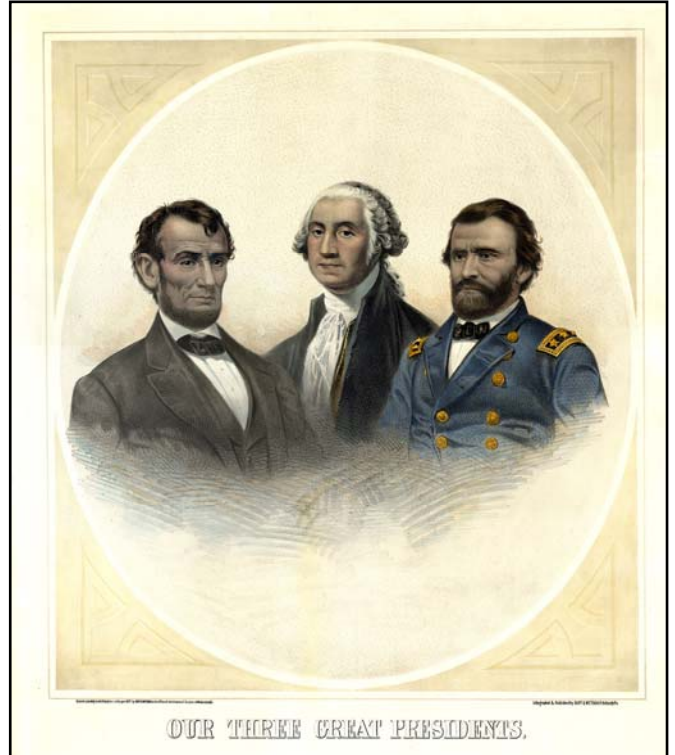
About the Collection

Mississippi State University and the University Libraries are the proud recipients of The Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana.



The Williams donated the collection which contains over 30,000 items to Mississippi State University in 2017 and transferred the collection to the University in May 2017.

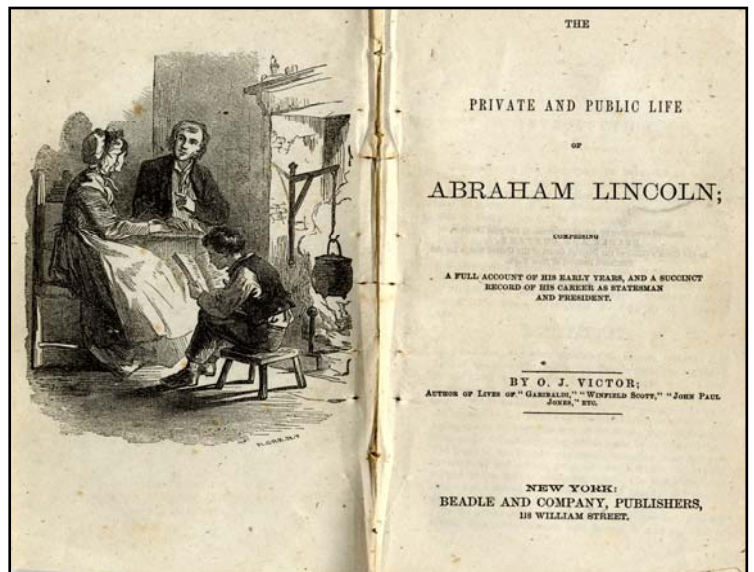
Considered the nation's largest privately owned holding of Lincoln research and display material as well as the country's most

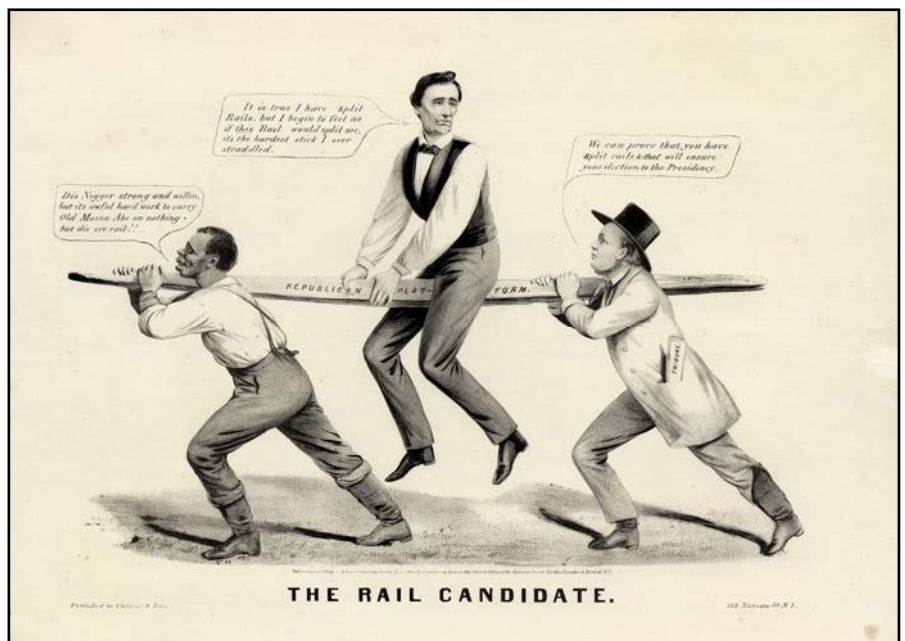
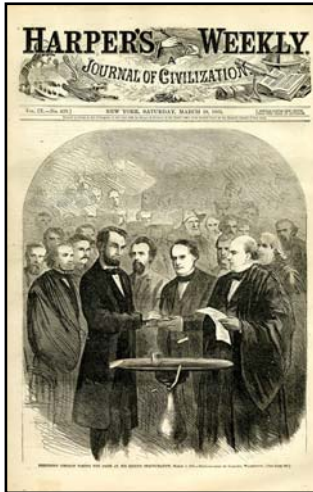
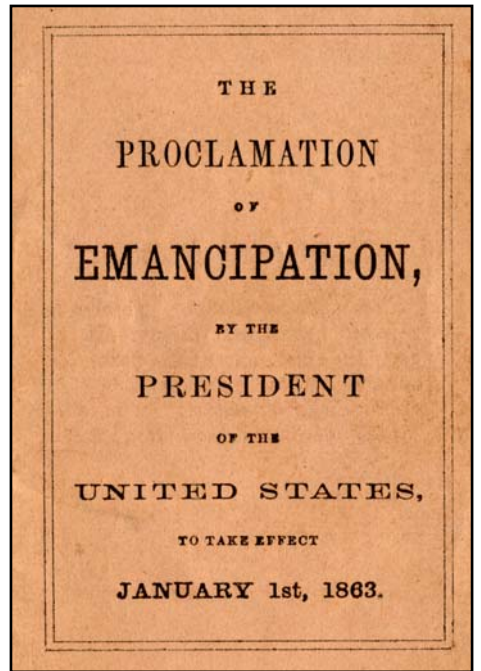
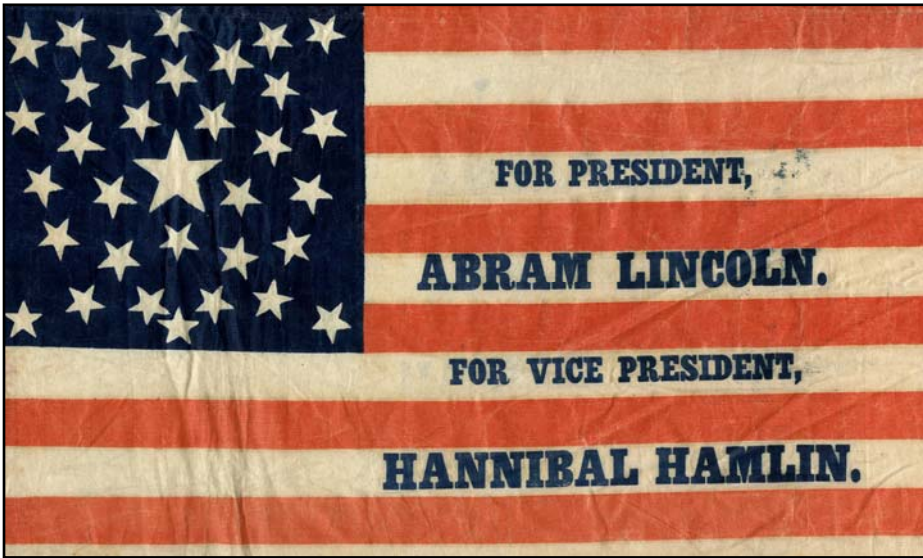


comprehensive privately owned Lincoln and Civil War library, the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection contains rare historical memorabilia; priceless artifacts; signed documents; ephemera; and both original one-of-a-kind and early mass-produced artwork relating to Lincoln and the Civil War era.

The collection includes nearly 100 original manuscripts and the entire Claude Simmons Collection, which consists of a dozen boxes of Lincoln-related materials and scrapbooks. The gift contains over 12,000 published volumes (many of them exceptionally rare), separated into two collections – the Lincoln Book and Pamphlet Collection and the Civil War/ Collateral Book and Pamphlet Collection – which cover historical writing on the Civil War era from 1860 to the present and include nearly every title ever published on Lincoln.

The Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana has been valued at nearly \$3 million.







THE FRANK AND VIRGINIA WILLIAMS LECTURE SERIES
ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND CIVIL WAR STUDIES

NOVEMBER 30

10:00 AM

TURNER A. WINGO AUDITORIUM
OLD MAIN ACADEMIC CENTER

GUEST SPEAKER

HAROLD HOLZER

Jonathan F. Fanton Director
Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College
“The General vs. the President:
Lincoln, Grant, and the Battle for Civil War Memory”

OPENING CEREMONY

of the

ULYSSES S. GRANT PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY



THE FRANK AND VIRGINIA WILLIAMS
COLLECTION OF LINCOLNIANA



CONGRESSIONAL AND POLITICAL RESEARCH CENTER

NOVEMBER 30

2:00 PM

GRANT PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY
4TH FLOOR, MITCHELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY



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