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Award-winning journalist donates papers

Tirranny Nettles

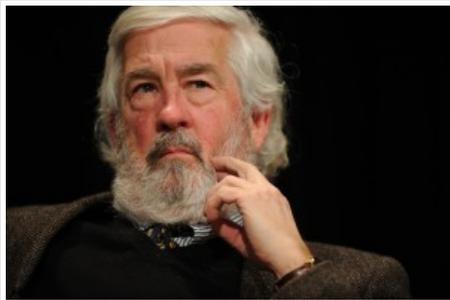
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Award-winning journalist donates papers



Curtis Wilkie. Photo by UM photographer Robert Jordan.

Curtis Wilkie, award-winning journalist and author, is giving back to the University of Mississippi through donations to Archives and Special Collections.

"I've donated my papers to the J.D. Williams Library because of my loyalty to my alma mater and my love for Ole Miss," said Wilkie, Kelly G. Cook Chair and associate professor of journalism.

Wilkie has given around twenty boxes of papers to Special Collections. His collections contain material from his years as a journalist for The

Boston Globe and drafts from his books: *Dixie: A Personal Odyssey Through Events That Shaped the Modern South* and *Arkansas Mischief: The Birth of a National Scandal*. The Boston Globe papers cover seven of the eight presidential elections Wilkie reported on during his time at that paper. Wilkie also donated information on his observations during James Meredith's integration of the university.

"Some of the earliest materials in the collection date from his time as a student here at the university," said Jennifer Ford, head of Special Collections.

With the 50th anniversary of the integration approaching in October, Wilkie said he believes that one of his maps may be of use. "Ole Miss has been able to use my drawn campus map and diagram of violent incidents during the riot here, when I was a student," Wilkie said. "I made a map for a letter to my parents the day after the trouble.

"The library also has notes and articles from my years as a journalist, as well as work-in-progress notes, drafts and manuscripts of my books, which show how I developed the story lines."

Born in Greenville in 1940, Wilkie graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1963 with a B.A. in journalism. Since then, he has reported for several papers including the Clarksdale Press Register, Wilmington (Del.) News-Journal and The Boston Globe. Wilkie coauthored *Arkansas Mischief*, authored *Dixie* and coauthored with six others on *City Adrift: New Orleans Before and After Katrina*. Wilkie is also the author of a 2010 best-seller, *The Fall of the House of Zeus*. He plans to donate to the library most of the documents, notes and recordings of secret FBI wiretaps he collected while researching the book.

Wilkie said he was pleased to give his papers to the university.

"When Jennifer Ford – whose work at the Special Collections is so outstanding – inquired about the availability of my stuff, I was delighted to turn over the material," he said.

Ford said that Wilkie's collection, once opened, will be of interest to many.

"Once the collection is opened, I believe people will get a sense of the importance of Mr. Wilkie's work and his dedication to telling the whole story of things," Ford said.

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