

# A Guide to the A Guide to the John Early Papers 1800-1856

The John Early Papers  
1807-1813

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A Collection in the Archives and Special Collections Department of the McGraw-Page Library Methodist Vertical  
File Early 1

Archives and Special Collections, McGraw-Page Library, Randolph-Macon College  
2004

## History

**Processed by:** Special Collections Staff

## Title Statement

A Guide to the A Guide to the John Early Papers 1800-1856

**Subtitle:** Early, John, Papers

**Collection:** Methodist Vertical File Early 1

## Publication Statement

**File size:** [ca. ## Kilobytes]

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word 6.0, created by Judee Showalter, July 5, 2004

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

**2013-11-21** Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

## Descriptive Summary

### Accession number

Methodist Vertical File Early 1

### Language

English

### Physical Characteristics

The collection contains 63 folders in 6 linear feet.

### Repository

Archives and Special Collections, McGraw-Page Library, Randolph-Macon College

## Administrative Information

## **Access Restrictions**

Collection is open to research.

## **Use Restrictions**

There are no restrictions.

## **Acquisition Information**

The collection is a combination of Randolph-Macon College materials, Virginia Conference materials and donated materials. Much of the collection was presented to the college by J. Rives Childs, October 1930, in connection with the celebration of the centennial of the college. Additional materials were donated in December 1945. Mr. Childs was the great-grandson of Bishop Early and a 1912 alumnus of the college. Other donors include Miss Fanny Early, Dr. L.R. Littleton and Frank J. Merryman.

## **Preferred Citation**

The John Early Papers, Methodist Vertical File Early 1, Archives and Special Collections, McGraw-Page Library, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA.

# **Biographical/Historical Information**

Born January 1, 1786 in Bedford County Virginia, the thirteenth child of Joshua and Mary Early, Bishop John Early joined the Methodist Church following his conversion in April of 1804. Licensed to preach after 1806 - 1807, he began his ministry at Poplar Forest in Bedford, Virginia ministering to Mr. Jefferson's slaves. By 1811, he was traveling the Greenville Circuit and received more than 500 persons into the church. A stirring preacher, he attracted the attention of church leaders and became a Presiding Elder in 1813. Although he held many important positions in the church he was not elected to the Episcopacy until 1854, due to his connection to slavery. In 1821 he married Elizabeth Rives. He was offered several positions in the federal government, which he declined, feeling they would be in opposition to his ministerial calling. He was instrumental in the local government of Lynchburg, VA, and supported various causes and enterprises, such as the James River and Kanawha Canal and the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad Company. He was also instrumental in the founding of Randolph-Macon College and served as President of the Board of Trustees for nearly 40 years, as well as serving as College Agent. He died on November 5, 1873 and is buried in Spring Hill Cemetery in Lynchburg, Virginia.

## **Scope and Content**

The collection primarily contains information bearing on Randolph-Macon College and the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Church. Diaries cover 1807 to 1813. Correspondence beginning in 1800 includes family and other prominent Methodists (William McKendree and Leonidas Rosser). Methodist materials include General Conference information from 1830, 1836, 1840 and 1844, ordination certificates and sermon notes.

## **Arrangement**

Correspondence is arranged chronologically by folder, other material is arranged by subject.

## **Contents List**

### **Series 1: Diaries 1807-1813**

#### **Diary 1807**

folder 6

#### **Diary 1808**

Folder 7

#### **Diary 1810**

Folder 8

**Extent**

2 volumes

## **Diary 1811**

**Folder** 9

## **Diary 1812**

**Folder** 10

## **Diary 1813**

**Folder** 11

## **Series 2: Administrative 1940**

**Folder** 5

### **Administrative Correspondence 1940**

**Folder** 5

### **Index**

**Folder** 3

### **Index**

**Folder** 4

## **Series 3: Narratives**

### **Traveling Preacher, The Story of Bishop John Early by William K. Thomas 1964**

**Folder** 1

### **An Account of the Experience and Travels of John Early from 25 May 1807-June 8,1814 Transcribed by Deborah Pugh 2002**

**Folder** 2

### **Memorial Discourse 1873**

**Folder** 37

#### **Extent**

1 item

#### **Scope and Content**

On the death of John Early delivered by Bishop Doggett

### **Portraits of John Early**

**Folder** 40

#### **Extent**

2 items

### **Later Articles about John Early 1879-1972**

**Folder** 43

#### **Extent**

2 items

## **Obituaries**

**Folder** 53

**Extent**

10 items

## **Obituaries**

**Folder** 54

**Extent**

12 items

## **Lynchburg Magazine Nov/Dec 1972**

**Folder** 55

**Extent**

1 item

## **Correspondence 1800-1874**

### **Miscellaneous Correspondence 1800-1840**

**Folder** 12

**Extent**

13 items

### **Correspondence of John Early and William McKendree 1821-1829**

**Folder** 13

**Extent**

8 items

### **Correspondence of John Early and Elizabeth B. Early 1823-1857**

**Folder** 14

**Extent**

96 items

### **Letters bearing on Randolph-Macon 1825, 1827**

**Folder** 15

**Extent**

2 items

**D. Dempsy to John Early, proposing Leaksville N.C. April 16, 1827**

**Gabriel Disoway to John Early, written on printed circular, Address to the Members and Friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church January 17, 1825**

### **Correspondence of John Early and J. Emory 1829-1832**

**Folder** 16

**Extent**

6 items

**Letters bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1830-1831**

**Folder** 18

**Extent**

7 items

**Letters bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1832-1833**

**Folder** 19

**Extent**

22 items

**Correspondence of John Early and Eleazer Early 1833-1834**

**Folder** 20

**Extent**

9 items

**Letters Bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1834-1835**

**Folder** 21

**Extent**

29 items

**Letters Bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1836-1837**

**Folder** 23

**Extent**

10 items

**Letters Bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1838-1839**

**Folder** 24

**Extent**

15 items

**Letters Bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1840**

**Folder** 25

**Extent**

16 items

**Miscellaneous Correspondence 1841-1846**

**Folder** 26

**Extent**

12 items

**Letters Bearing on Randolph-Macon College 1841-1861**

**Folder** 28

**Extent**

41 items

## **Correspondence of John Early 1847-1850**

**Folder** 30

**Extent**

22 items

## **Correspondence of Thomas Early (son of John Early) 1850-1894**

**Folder** 32

**Extent**

18 items

## **Correspondence of John Early 1851-1856**

**Folder** 33

**Extent**

5 items

## **John Early - Leonida Rosser Correspondence 1853-1854**

**Folder** 34

**Extent**

4 items

**Scope and Content**

given by Dr. I. R. Littleton

## **Miscellaneous Correspondence 1861-1874**

**Folder** 36

**Extent**

9 items

## **Envelopes**

**Folder** 38

**Extent**

6 items

## **Letters and Papers Bearing on Randolph-Macon College**

**Folder** 49

**Extent**

13 items

**Scope and Content**

Given by Miss Fanny Early

## **Correspondence 1857-1860**

**Folder** 52

**Extent**

13 items

## **Correspondence**

**Folder** 4-2

**Extent**

60 items

## **Methodist Materials 1830-1849**

### **Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1830**

**Folder** 17

### **General Conference 1836**

**Folder** 22

**Extent**

1 item

### **Appointment Book- Lynchburg 1841-1844**

**Folder** 27

**Extent**

2 volumes

### **Pamphlets -Church Engaging in Merchandise 1849**

**Folder** 31

### **Miscellaneous items**

**Folder** 44

**Extent**

45 items

### **Methodist Episcopal Church, South Conference**

**Folder** 3-2

**Extent**

miscellaneous papers

## **6: Randolph-Macon Material**

### **Promissory Note 1846**

**Folder** 29

### **Subscriptions to the College**

**Folder** 41

**Extent**

40 items

### **Collections to Endorse a Professorship in R.M. College 1838**

**drawer** 2

### **Account Books of RMC Agent Jn. Early 1833-1838**

**Physical Location** Drawer 2

## **Family/Personal Material 1822-1857**

## **Papers concerning Thomas Early 1859**

**Folder** 35

### **Extent**

4 items

### **Scope and Content**

include Deacon's Orders,1859

## **Confederate Materials**

**Folder** 39

### **Extent**

10 items

## **Sermon Notes**

**Folder** 42

### **Extent**

3 volumes

## **Miscellaneous Items**

**Folder** 45

### **Extent**

47 items

## **Miscellaneous Items**

**Folder** 46

### **Extent**

21 items

## **Miscellaneous Items**

**Folder** 27

### **Extent**

19 items

### **Scope and Content**

Includes "On Baptism" and information on Spring Hill Cemetery

## **Personal Papers**

**Folder** 48

### **Extent**

11 items

## **Miscellaneous Items**

**Folder** 50

### **Extent**

12 items

## **Miscellaneous Items**

**Folder** 51

**Extent**

4 items

**Day Book 1822**

**Folder** 1-2

**Executor's Account (Thomas H. Early)**

**Folder** 2-2

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