

A Guide to the John F. Early Papers, 1848-1850 MS.0012

John F. Early papers
1848-1850

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

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Unit ID

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Unit Date

1848-1850

Language

English .

Creator

Early, John F. (John Fletcher), 1830-1894

Creator

Smith, Sara Henderson, 1812-1884

Extent

6 items

Physical Location

Manuscripts stacks

Repository

Virginia Military Institute Archives

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Biographical / Historical

John Fletcher Early was born in Lynchburg, Virginia on June 7, 1830 to Methodist Bishop John Early and Elizabeth Rives. He attended VMI from August 4, 1848 through July 4, 1850, but did not graduate. Prior to the Civil War he moved to Louisiana, where he was affiliated with the Southern Methodist publishing house. In May 1862 he enlisted in Captain C. E. Fenner's Battery, Louisiana Artillery and served until the end of the Civil War. His military records describe him as being 5 feet and 11 1/2 inches and having a dark complexion, gray eyes, and dark hair. Following the War, Early was employed by railroads in Nashville, Tennessee and Sanford, Florida. He married Eliza Bostwick and the couple had four children. Early died on September 28, 1894 in Sanford.

Scope and Contents

The John F. Early papers consist of the letters and diary of cadet John F. Early (1830-1894), who attended VMI from 1848 to 1850. The one volume diary-notebook contains short and sporadic entries regarding daily routines and special events. The diary contains one of the earliest references to Superintendent Francis H. Smith as "Spex" (April 30, 1850). The diary also contains lists of cadets, room occupants, and the poetry of Sara Henderson Smith ("The Old Gray Coat") and others. The five letters were written to family members and include details of cadet life and family and personal news.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849
Virginia Military Institute—Faculty—Anecdotes
Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1852
Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1850-1859
Diaries
Correspondence
Smith, Francis H. (Francis Henney), 1812-1890

Online Access

A portion of the diary is available online.