

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

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A Collection in Virginia Military Institute Archives mss 00012  
Virginia Military Institute Archives  
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## History

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## Title Statement

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

**Subtitle:** Early, John F., Papers

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**Author:** Diane B. Jacob

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## Publication Statement

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## Profile Description

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**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Revision Description

**Feb 16, 2004** PUBLIC "-//Virginia Military Institute::Preston Library::Archives//TEXT (US::ViLxV::vilxv00034::A Guide to the John F. Early Papers)//EN" "vilxv00034.xml" converted from EAD 1.0 to 2002 by v1to02.xsl (sy2003-10-15).

**Feb 26, 2004** converted to conform to eadVIVA.dtd by vivastrict.xsl

**February 6, 2008** Guide updated to reflect addition of new material to collection

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

## Descriptive Summary

**Collection number**

mss 00012

**Language**

English

**Physical Characteristics**

The collection consists of 6 items.

**Repository**

Archives, Preston Library, Virginia Military Institute

## Administrative Information

**Access**

There are no restrictions.

**Use Restrictions**

There are no restrictions.

**Acquisition Information**

The collection was donated to the Virginia Military Institute by descendants of John F. Early, in 1939 and 2006.

**Preferred Citation**

John F. Early Papers, mss 00012, Virginia Military Institute Archives, Lexington, Virginia.

## Diary-notebook Entries

## Biographical/Historical Information

John Fletcher Early, the son of Methodist Bishop John Early and Elizabeth Rives, was born in Lynchburg, Virginia on June 7, 1830. He attended the Virginia Military Institute 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 war. His military records describe him as being 5 ft. 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 in Sanford, Florida on September 28, 1894.

## Scope and Content Information

The collection consists of the letters and diary of Cadet John F. Early (b. 1830 in Lynchburg, Va.; d. 1894), who attended VMI 1848-1850. The one volume diary-notebook contains short and sporadic entries; daily routines and special events are noted; one of the earliest references to Superintendent Francis H. Smith as "Spex" (April 30, 1850); lists of cadets; room occupants; poetry of Sarah 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.