



## **Kirby-Ridgway-Lightholder Family Papers (C4404)**

**Collection Number:** C4404

**Collection Title:** Kirby-Ridgway-Lightholder Family Papers

**Dates:** 1845-1996, 2003

**Creator:** Lightholder, Ellwood K., 1881-1968, collector

**Abstract:** Correspondence, photographs, wills, military records, leases, contracts, and miscellaneous material of the Kirby, Ridgway, Lightholder, and related families. The papers document the lives of a Quaker family from Shelltown, New Jersey, and the life of Col. Ellwood Kirby, who moved westward to Missouri.

**Collection Size:** 2.4 cubic feet, 14 oversize items  
(48 folders, 1 volume, 5 artifacts)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia](http://www.shsmo.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at [columbia@shsmo.org](mailto:columbia@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** The donor has given and assigned to the State Historical Society of Missouri all rights of copyright, which the donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Kirby-Ridgway-Lightholder Family Papers* (C4404); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Roger Ellis Lightholder on November 19, 2013 (Accession No. CA6360).

**Processed by:** Processed by Laura Jolley on August 26, 2020.

**Historical Note:**

The Kirby-Ridgway-Lightholder family papers represents the story of a New Jersey family who eventually had members move west to Missouri and then further west to the state of California. James and Maria Kirby were Quaker farmers living in Shelltown, New Jersey, during the 1800s. Their children were Robert, Mary, Anna, Edgar, Henry, and Ellwood.

The majority of the papers pertain to Ellwood Kirby, born in 1830, and later known as Col. Ellwood Kirby. He followed his brother Robert to Philadelphia and in 1850 was a bricklayer. By 1860, he had moved to Forest City, Missouri, in Holt County, and had become a civil engineer, mostly working on bridges. He enlisted in the Civil War in Buchanan County and was commissioned as a major and then lieutenant colonel for the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Missouri Infantry Volunteers. After the war, Ellwood moved from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Jefferson City, and changed careers once again to work for the *Missouri State Times*. In 1867, he was commissioned by Governor Thomas Fletcher to be the Missouri State Printer.

While working for the paper in Jefferson City, Ellwood began courting Florence Ridgway in St. Louis. Florence was born on April 15, 1846, in Wayne County, Illinois, to Caleb and Jane Ridgway. This relationship unfolds throughout the correspondence. On April 15, 1868, the two married and settled down in Jefferson City. By 1878, the family moved to St. Louis and Ellwood became the editor of the *Globe Democrat*, covering legislative affairs for the newspaper. Ellwood and Florence had four children: Anna (who died at the age of four in 1874), Ella, Robert, and Ellwood. Col. Ellwood Kirby was involved in an accident on July 5, 1881, and he succumbed to his injuries on July 18. A daughter, named Ellwood, after her father, was born after his death on September 24, 1881. After her husband's death, Florence made ends meet by renting rooms to boarders.

Ellwood Kirby grew up in St. Louis and attended the Sacred Heart Convent in St. Charles, Missouri. She married Joseph Lightholder on March 23, 1905. By 1910, Ellwood, Joseph, and Florence were living in Los Angeles, California. Ellwood and Joseph had two sons, Ellwood and Ridgway. Florence lived with her daughter until her death on February 10, 1926. Joseph Lightholder was born on July 25, 1879, in St. Louis. After moving his family to California, he became a salesman. He died on August 24, 1952, and Ellwood, his wife, died on June 9, 1968.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following seven series:

Correspondence  
Family papers  
Genealogy  
Photographs  
Scrapbook  
Artifacts  
Oversize

**Scope and Content Note:****Correspondence**

The Correspondence series includes letters to Ellwood Kirby in Missouri from his family in Shelltown, New Jersey. The letters include information about the family and opinions about the Civil War, including President Lincoln's assassination. By 1867 the letters are largely written by Ellwood Kirby to Florence Ridgway in St. Louis during the courting phase of their relationship. He repeatedly expresses his feelings for her and talks about his life in Jefferson City, the people he visits with, and his work for the *Missouri State Times*. Many letters were written to Florence to express condolences regarding the death of Ellwood Kirby in July of 1881. Later letters are to and from Florence and her children Robert "Bob" and Ellwood "Woody."

**Family Papers**

The Family Papers series includes the legal and personal papers documenting the lives of the Kirby, Ridgway, and Lightholder families, including military commissions earned by Ellwood Kirby and his business agreements, deeds, leases, and insurance policies of different Kirby family members; baptismal records, death records, wills, and marriage records of the Lightholder family, including the citizenship record of James Lightholder in 1867; the will of Caleb I. Ridgway; and records pertaining to Ellwood "Woody" and Joe Lightholder.

**Genealogy**

This series consists of genealogical information compiled by the Kirby, Ridgway, and Lightholder families such as family charts, census indexes, notes, correspondence between family members, printouts of Ancestry family lists, and a photocopy of *Lightholder of Ireland and America*. Also included is a folder of miscellaneous obituaries; wedding announcements and calling cards; Woody's illustrated envelopes sent to her husband, Joe Lightholder, 1902-1904; two diaries of Ellwood Kirby; and three recipe books of Florence Kirby, dated 1863-1875. The Ellwood Kirby diaries document some of his professional life and some of his personal musings, but are not in-depth writings.

**Photographs**

The Photograph series includes a wide range of images of the Kirby, Ridgway, and Lightholder families along with photographs of their extended families. The photograph series contains examples of a wide range of photographic formats. The bulk of the images are from the 1860s and 1870s when the carte de visite, or visiting card, was very popular to hand out to friends and relatives. Also included are cabinet cards, popular in the 1880s and simply a large version of the carte de visite, and tin types. Of special interest is a series of Civil War portraits of unidentified soldiers in uniform.

**Scrapbook**

The Scrapbook series contains one scrapbook created by Delia Ridgway, the sister of Florence Ridgway Kirby, and contains newspaper clippings of poetry and some engravings. It is undated.

## Artifacts

The Artifacts series contains memorabilia kept by Ellwood Kirby.

## Oversize

The Oversize series contains records kept by Col. Ellwood Kirby, as well as Ella Kirby's certificate of scholarship in 1890. The bulk of the series pertains to Kirby's muster in and out rolls during his time in the Civil War, plus his commissions to major and lieutenant colonel.

## Container List:

f. 1-15		Correspondence
Box 001	f. 1	Undated
	f. 2	1860-1861
	f. 3	1862-1863
	f. 4	1864-1865
	f. 5	1866
	f. 6	1867
	f. 7	1868 January-February
	f. 8	1868 March-October
	f. 9	1869
	f. 10	1870-1879
	f. 11	1880-1887
	f. 12	1892, 1897
	f. 13	1901-1913
	f. 14	1926-1931
	f. 15	1982, 1985
f. 16-21		Family Papers
Box 001	f. 16	Ellwood Kirby, 1846-1881
	f. 17	Kirby family, 1868-1953
	f. 18	Florence Kirby, 1876-1914
Box 002	f. 19	Lightholder family, 1864-1952
	f. 20	Joseph and Ellwood K. Lightholder, 1905-1968
	f. 21	Ridgway family, 1845-1897
f. 22-30		Genealogy
Box 002	f. 22	Kirby family, n.d.
	f. 23-24	Correspondence, Lightholder family, 1981-1996
	f. 25	Ridgway family, n.d.
	f. 26	Calling cards, death notices, and wedding announcements, 1860s-2003
	f. 27	Woody's illustrated envelopes to J. S. Lightholder, 1902-1904
	f. 28	Diaries and recipe books of Ellwood and Florence Kirby, 1863-1875 (5)
Box 003	f. 29	Sketch book, Ellwood Kirby, n.d.
	f. 30	Sketches by Robert Kirby, n.d.
f. 31-		Photographs
Box 003	f. 31-32	Cased photographs, 1850s
	f. 33	Uncased ambrotypes, 1850s
	f. 34	Florence Ridgway photo album, 1860s

	f. 35	Unidentified Civil War soldier portraits, 1860s
Box 004	f. 36	Unidentified photographs, 1870s-1880s
	f. 37	Ridgway family, 1860s-1890s
	f. 38-39	Related families, 1860s-1950s
	f. 40	Kirby family, 1860s-1880s
Box 005	f. 41-42	Kirby family, 1880s-1900s
	f. 43	Robert H. Kirby cased photograph
	f. 44	Lightholder family, 1860s-1900s
	f. 45	Lightholder family, 1940s
	f. 46	Kirby, English, and Berry families, 1890s
	f. 47-48	Kirby, Lightholder, and Ridgway families, 1870s-1920s
v. 1	Scrapbook	
Box 006	v. 1	Delia Ridgway scrapbook, n.d.
Artifacts #1-5	Artifacts	
	#1-3	Col. Ellwood Kirby's braid and tassel worn during the Civil War; two officer insignias
	#4	Joseph Lightholder's meat inspector badge
	#5	Col. Ellwood Kirby's railroad pocket watch
Items #1-14	Oversize	
	Item #1	Ellwood Kirby drawing, Projection of an eclipse of the sun to occur on the 7 <sup>th</sup> of August 1869 (date of drawing is 1846)
	Item #2	Projection of an eclipse of the sun that will occur on the 25 <sup>th</sup> of the 4 <sup>th</sup> month, 1846
	Item #3	Elements for projecting the eclipse to occur 4 <sup>th</sup> month 25 <sup>th</sup> , 1846
	Item #4	Ellwood Kirby's commission to major of the 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Infantry Volunteers, Oct. 4, 1864
	Item #5	Ellwood Kirby's commission to lieutenant colonel of the 48 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Volunteers, Nov. 25, 1864
	Item #6	Muster in roll of Ellwood Kirby, 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Mo. Infantry Volunteers, commanded by Col. Blodgett, Oct. 28, 1864
	Item #7	Muster out roll, 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Mo. Infantry Volunteers, Col. Blodgett commander, Sept. 1, 1864
	Item #8	Muster out roll, Ellwood Kirby Major, 48 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Mo. Volunteers, Col. Blodgett Commander, Sept. 1, 1864
	Item #9	Muster out roll, Ellwood Kirby Major, 48 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Mo. Volunteers, commanded by Col. Blodgett, Dec. 1, 1864
	Item #10	Muster out roll, Ellwood Kirby Lt. Col., 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Mo. Infantry Volunteers, commanded by Col. Blodgett, June 29, 1865
	Item #11	Muster in roll, Ellwood Kirby Lt. Col., 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Infantry Mo. Volunteers, commanded by Col. Blodgett, Dec. 2, 1864
	Item #12	Muster in roll, Ellwood Kirby Lt. Col., 48 <sup>th</sup> Regt. Infantry Mo. Volunteers, commanded by Col. Blodgett, Dec. 2, 1864
	Item #13	Ellwood Kirby's commission to Public Printer for State of Missouri, Jan. 29, 1867
	Item #14	Ella Kirby certificate of scholarship and admission to high school, June 13, 1890

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Berry, Florence	38, 39	Yes	
Berry, Harold R.	38, 39	Yes	
Blodgett family	38	Yes	
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Blodgett, Harry	38	Yes	
Blodgett, Maggie	38	Yes	
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Bowman, Florence R. B.	39	Yes	
Bowman, John R.	39	Yes	
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Cooper, Mary E.	38	Yes	
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