IMAGE DESCRIPTION:
Born in Westmoreland County, John White Geary (1819-1873) was a colonel in the Mexican-American War, the first mayor of San Francisco, California, territorial governor of Kansas, a major general in the Union Army at the end of the Civil War, and governor of Pennsylvania from 1867-1873.

This pocket diary, which spans 1846-1848, details Geary's experiences serving as a brigadier general of the American Highlanders of the Cambria Legion, which joined the 2nd Pennsylvania Infantry during the Mexican-American War. The American Highlanders were from Summit, Pennsylvania and the surrounding area of Cambria County and were mustered into Federal service on January 3, 1847; Geary and the other field officers of the 2nd Regiment were mustered in four days later. During their tour of duty, the 2nd Regiment participated in the battles of La Hoya, Chapultepec (during which Geary was wounded), and Garita de Belen. During the battle of Mexico City, the regiment was responsible for garrisoning the citadel, with its stores of military equipment. Geary was elected colonel in November 1847 after the death of Colonel William B. Roberts.

Geary's pocket diary begins with a few pages of miscellany, including grocery lists and notes on physics, and diary entries begin on December 31, 1846. After embarking from New Orleans in January 1847, Geary reached Vera Cruz, Mexico in April. Throughout the diary, Geary describes various Mexican towns and battlefields, sometimes in vivid detail, and his entries are peppered with Spanish phrases and interesting anecdotes about army life, including the funeral of a fellow soldier. While Geary describes few battles in great detail (the Battle of La Hoya is one exception), his entries relate news from other camps and give a general sense of the progress of the war. The diary ends with a blank entry on February 11, 1848, while Geary was still in Mexico.

FORMAT:
Manuscripts

ARTIST:
John W. Geary, 1819-1873