



Guide to the Perkins Family United States Armed Forces Collection, 1938-2000 (bulk 1938-1970)

Processing Information

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Collection Number

2001.008

Biographical Note

Originally from the North Shore of Massachusetts, Kenneth Clifton Perkins Sr. (1919-2002) was born in Lynnfield to Mary Bertha Bagley (1896-1983) and Percival Leon Perkins (1893-1966), afterwards moving to Saugus. Kenneth Sr. served in the United States Navy during World War II from 1938 to 1945, and in that latter year married Virginia “Ginny” Mary Pickering (1924-2013), also of Saugus. Kenneth Sr.—a graduate of Northeastern University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—went on to become an electrical engineer and authored patents. In 1962, the couple moved to 60 Barton Drive in Sudbury, where they raised three children: Kenneth Clifton Perkins Jr. (1946-1982); Jeanne Mary, later Knox (born 1947); and Diane Lesley, later Hirshon (born 1967).

Kenneth Jr. was born in Cambridge and raised in Sudbury. He graduated from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School in 1965 and was on the track team. A year later, Kenneth Jr. enrolled at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, remaining there until 1967 upon enlistment in the United States Army. He rose to the rank of Chief Warrant Officer until 1970, piloting helicopters in the Vietnam War and eventually being awarded the Air, Bronze Star, and Good Conduct Medals. Upon returning to civilian life, Kenneth Jr. worked in cinema management and later married Kristin Tulis (born c. 1959) of Maryland in 1979. Three years later, he passed away from cancer in Washington D.C.

The Perkins Family became actively involved in the Sudbury community as members of the First Parish of Sudbury and through each of the children graduating from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. Upon retirement in 1986, Kenneth Sr. continued his personal interest as a jazz guitar player in the area. Ginny worked as an administrative assistant for the Sudbury Public Schools from the 1980s and into the 2010s. The couple were actively involved with the Sudbury Players, a local theater group.

Scope Note

The Perkins Family Collection primarily contains material related to the military careers of Kenneth Clifton Perkins Sr. and his son, Kenneth Jr., respectively. Kenneth Sr. was in the United States Navy during World War II (1938-1945), while Kenneth Jr. was in the Army during the Vietnam War (1967-1970). Items include correspondence, photographs, military uniforms, and other documents and materials.

Acquisition Information

This collection was donated to the Sudbury Historical Society by Virginia M. Perkins in 2001.

Separated Materials

For preservation purposes, two American flags (.0029 and .0084) from this collection are housed separately in the Sudbury Historical Society American Flag Collection box, as well as the briefing map of Southeast Asia (.0038) and a drawing by Kenneth Clifton Perkins Jr. (.0085) in Flat File Storage.

Collection Arrangement

Series I: Kenneth Clifton Perkins Sr. United States Navy materials (1938-1945)

This series contains correspondence, documents, photographs, postcards, and the uniforms of Kenneth Sr. from his time in the United States Navy and on the USS Herndon and Regulus during World War II. Correspondence was sent from Kenneth Sr. to his parents, Mary Bertha Bagley and Percival Leon Perkins of Saugus. Some letters include photographs (1/10/1941; 5/29/1943; 7/13/1944; and 7/22/1944).

Series II: Kenneth Clifton Perkins Jr. United States Army materials (1967-1970)

This series contains correspondence, documents, awards, and the uniforms of Kenneth Jr. from his time in the United States Army at Forts Rucker and Wolters during the Vietnam War. Correspondence was sent primarily from Kenneth Sr. to his parents, Virginia Mary Pickering and Kenneth Sr. of Sudbury.

Series III: Perkins Family miscellaneous materials (1939-2000)

This series contains various documents and items of the Perkins Family of Massachusetts. Items include clothing, documents, photographs, and other miscellaneous materials.

Collection Content

Series I: Kenneth Clifton Perkins Sr. United States Navy materials (1938-1945)

Box 1

Folders 1-9: Parental correspondence, 1938-1945 (.0039)

Folder 10: Continuous Service Certificate booklet (.0040)

Folder 11: Boston American newspaper, September 5, 1940 (.0041)

Folder 12: St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands photographs (.0042)

Folder 13: Travel postcards (.0043)

Folder 14: United States Naval Training Station documents (.0044)

Box 2

Belt (.0014)
Beret (.0012)
Gob hat (.0010)
Pants (.0009,.0032)
Scarf (.0011)
Uniform jackets (.0006-.0008)

Series II: Kenneth Clifton Perkins Jr. United States Army materials (1967-1970)**Box 1**

Folder 15-16: Parental correspondence, 1967-1968 (.0045)
Folder 17: Lynn Bleiweiss correspondence, 1968 (.0046)
Folder 18: Tina DeBye correspondence, 1968 (.0047)
Folder 19: Sybil Gutman correspondence, 1968 (.0048)
Folder 20: J.M.P. correspondence, 1968 (.0049)
Folder 21: Ron Morrison correspondence, 1968 (.0050)
Folder 22: Jeanne Mary Perkins correspondence, 1968 (.0051)
Folder 23: Sara correspondence, 1968 (.0052)
Folder 24: Sandy Snook correspondence, 1968 (.0053)
Folder 25: Armed Forces Officer Handbook, 1967 (.0054)
Folder 26: Booklets, 1967-1968 (.0055-.0061)
Folder 27: Handouts, 1967-1968 (.0062)
Folder 28: Financial documents, 1968 (.0063)
Folder 29: Newspaper clippings (.0064)

Box 3

Ace caps (.0025-.0027)
Air Medal (.0033)
Bronze Star Medal (.0031)
Cobra backpack (.0015)
Dress uniform jackets (.0003, .0005)
Dress uniform pants (.0004)
Fatigue (.0002)
Good Conduct Medal (.0034)
Identification tag (.0030)
Jumpsuits (.0017-.0018)
Pants (.0021, .0023-.0024)
Shirts (.0019-.0020, .0022)
Uniform jacket (.0001)
United States pin (.0037)
Visor (.0016)
Warrant Officer eagle patches (.0036)
Warrant Officer eagle pins (.0035)

Series III: Perkins Family materials (1939-2000)

Box 1

- Folder 30:** Katherine Raynoka to Mary Perkins letter, 1939 (.0065)
- Folder 31:** Kenneth Perkins Sr. Order of the Odd Fellows certificate, 1941 (.0066)
- Folder 32:** Kenneth Perkins Sr. National Service Life Insurance Policy, 1942 (.0067)
- Folder 33:** United States Navy to Percival and Mary Perkins letter, 1945 (.0068)
- Folder 34:** Kenneth Perkins Sr. and Virginia Pickering wedding photograph, 1945 (.0069)
- Folder 35:** Virginia Pickering photographs (.0070-.0072)
- Folder 36:** Kenneth Perkins Jr. YMCA Camp Rotary certificates, 1957-1959 (.0073)
- Folder 37:** Kenneth Perkins Jr. National Rifle Association junior diplomas, 1959 (.0074)
- Folder 38:** Kenneth Perkins Jr. photograph (.0075)
- Folder 39:** Kenneth Perkins Jr. motorcycle documents (.0076)
- Folder 40:** Diane Perkins Lincoln-Sudbury High School graduation program, 1985 (.0077)
- Folder 41:** First Parish of Sudbury programs, 1998-2000 (.0078)

Box 3

- Kenneth Jr. leather floppy hat (.0028)
- Kenneth Jr. Lincoln-Sudbury High School shorts, c. 1953 (.0013)
- Letter openers (.0080-.0081)
- Sealing wax (.0082)
- Yamaha motorcycle key (.0083)