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## Perkins, John Casey, 1918-2010 (MSS 753)

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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
 Department of Library Special Collections  
 Western Kentucky University  
 Bowling Green, KY 42101-1092

*Descriptive Inventory*

**MSS 753 PERKINS, John Casey, 1918-2010**

1½ boxes. 25 folders. 152 items. 1943-2021. Originals, photocopies.

SC2023.22.1

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

John Casey Perkins, the son of Ruby Earl Perkins and Marie Sue (McGaw) Perkins, was born in Providence (Webster County), Kentucky on 15 July 1918. He graduated from Bowling Green (Kentucky) High School and attended Western Kentucky University. He entered the U.S. Army in 1941, participated in military operations in Africa, Italy, France, Austria and Germany, and earned numerous decorations. Discharged from the Army in 1947 with the rank of lieutenant colonel, Perkins returned to Bowling Green, where he pursued a career as a realtor. A dedicated preservationist, he was a founding member of the Bowling Green-Warren County Landmark Association. He married Emily Hunter (1927-2016) in 1953, and they were parents of two children. Perkins died on 17 January 2010 and is interred in Bowling Green's Fairview Cemetery (see his obituary in Box 1, Folder 1 for a summary of his life and military career).

**COLLECTION NOTE**

This collection consists mostly of military records and reports collected by John C. Perkins while serving in World War II as an officer with the Signal Corps of the U.S. Army's Third Infantry Division, 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. The most notable items in this collection are two memoranda (in German and English) dated 10 May 1945 and written by Nazi SS officer Otto Skorzeny. Called "Hitler's favorite commando," Skorzeny was the leader of several daring special operations, including the 1943 rescue of Benito Mussolini after the Italian dictator was removed from power and imprisoned in the Abruzzi Mountains.

As the war was ending, Skorzeny and his forces sought refuge in western Austria. Upon Adolf Hitler's death on 30 April 1945, Skorzeny resolved to surrender to U.S. troops. On 10 May, he traveled to the resort of Annaberg, where he announced that he would surrender in six days to the Allied command at Salzburg. His messages of surrender were passed along to Salzburg; when he arrived there, Skorzeny was placed in the custody of then-Major John C. Perkins. Skorzeny's messages, together with a narrative by his biographer Stuart Smith (*Otto Skorzeny: The Devil's Disciple*) providing background and analysis, are in Box 1, Folder 2.

The remainder of the collection consists primarily of reports of the Third Infantry's operations in Italy, Sicily, France and Germany from 1943-1946. Some of the reports are

specific to the Signal Corps, and provide detailed information about communications infrastructure, message traffic, cryptography and “lessons learned” from various campaigns. Other reports, also highly detailed, cover the Third Infantry’s operations more broadly and include topics such as intelligence, supply and evacuation, personnel, special staff, ammunition expenditures, enemy actions, casualties, and prisoner of war statistics. Also included are training and instruction memoranda (Box 2, Folder 4) and instructions regarding amphibious codes for use during initial landings on hostile shores (Box 2, Folder 8). Of particular interest are detailed accounts of the challenges facing the Signal Corps as it transitioned from supplying communications in combat to an occupational force (Box 1, Folder 16), and reports of the many tasks performed by the Third Infantry in occupied Germany (Box 2, Folders 1 and 2) such as assessing conditions in various German towns and cities, ferreting out Nazis and other dangerous persons, and seizing caches of art, gold, and documents.

A few documents personal to Perkins are in Box 2, Folder 8. They consist of leave records and a photocopy of two pages from a diary, perhaps of an airman.

### ***SHELF LIST***

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>John C. Perkins</b>	<b>1943-2021</b>	<b>92 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory; obituary; collection overview; list of 7 oversized items		4 items
Folder 2	Otto Skorzeny surrender memoranda; comments by Skorzeny biographer Stuart Smith	1945, 2021	4 items
Folder 3	Third Infantry Division – Report on Operations – Sicilian Campaign (Operation Husky, Operation Joss), July 1943	1943	1 item
Folder 4	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Lessons Learned, Operation Husky	1943-1944	15 items
Folder 5	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, September-November 1943	1943	2 items
Folder 6	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, September-December 1943	1943	6 items
Folder 7	Third Infantry Division – Operation Shingle, January 1944	1944	6 items
Folder 8	Third Infantry Division – Prearranged Amphibious Code, January 1944	1944	1 item

Folder 9	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, January-July 1944	1944	11 items
Folder 10	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, February-May 1944	1944	4 items
Folder 11	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, June, August-October 1944	1944	4 items
Folder 12	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, August-December 1944	1944	5 items
Folder 13	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Lessons Learned in Combat	1944	12 items
Folder 14	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, November 1944-January 1945	1944-1945	3 items
Folder 15	Third Infantry Division – Instructions for preparing Reports of Operations	1945-1946	3 items
Folder 16	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, January-October 1945	1945	11 items
<b>BOX 2</b>	<b>John C. Perkins</b>	<b>1944-1947</b>	<b>53 items</b>
Folder 1	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, February-April 1945	1945	3 items
Folder 2	Third Infantry Division – Report of Operations, May-September 1945	1945	5 items
Folder 3	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, October-December 1945	1945	14 items
Folder 4	Third Infantry Division – Training Memoranda (Link Sign Radiotelephone Procedure; Use of SCR-608, 610 and 628 Radios; Battle Patrols; Lessons from the Cassino Operation; Artillery Radio Nets; AA Searchlight Employment in a Ground Role; Preliminary River Crossing Training); Instruction Memoranda (The German Ardennes Offensive; River Crossings)	1944-1945	9 items

Folder 5	Third Infantry Division – Breaching of the Siegfried Line – Role of the Artillery	1945	1 item
Folder 6	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, January-March 1946	1946	8 items
Folder 7	Third Infantry Division – Third Signal Company – Report of Operations, April-June 1946	1946	6 items
Folder 8	John C. Perkins – Diary pages; Leave record	1946-1947	4 items
Folder 9	Reports – Ammunition expenditures; Signal report; Officers roster, Infantry School Communication section	n.d., 1947	3 items

### ***BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD***

MSS PERKINS, John Casey, 1943-2021  
 753 1918-2010  
 C1-D9,  
 #5 Reports of the operations of the U.S. Army, Third Infantry Division in Italy, Sicily, France and Germany during World War II. Includes reports relating to the service of Lieutenant Colonel John C. Perkins of Bowling Green, Kentucky in the Third Signal Company. Also includes memoranda of surrender written by Nazi SS officer Otto Skorzeny, taken into custody by Perkins in Austria in May 1945.  
 1½ boxes. 25 folders. 152 items. Originals, photocopies.  
 SC2023.22.1

### ***SUBJECT ANALYTICS***

Skorzeny, Otto Johann Anton, 1908-1975 B1,F2  
 World War II, 1939-1943 – Campaigns, battles, military actions – Ardennes Offensive, 1944-1945 B2,F4  
 World War II, 1939-1943 – Campaigns, battles, military actions – France, 1945 B1,F12,14; B2,F1  
 World War II, 1939-1943 – Campaigns, battles, military actions – Germany, 1944-1945 B1,F16; B2,F1,5  
 World War II, 1939-1943 – Campaigns, battles, military actions – Italy, 1943-1944 B1,F5-7,10,11; B2,F4  
 World War II, 1939-1943 – Campaigns, battles, military actions – Sicily, 1943 B1,F3,4

World War II, 1939-1945 – Communications B1,F4,6,7,9,12,13,16; B2,F3,4,6,7  
World War II, 1939-1945 – Cryptography B1,F8  
World War II, 1939-1945 – Germany – Military occupation, 1945 B2,F2  
World War II, 1939-1945 – Military training B2,F4  
World War II, 1939-1945 – U.S. Army – Third Infantry Division

Niedermeier 04/12/2023