

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ **Steven Pecsénye Collection, 1942-1983**◀

MSS-084

Size: 2.2 linear ft.

Provenance: Hungarian sketches received from Steven Pecsénye in January and February, 1992. World War II sketches and correspondence received from LaDonna Pecsénye November 1998.

Access: Open

Collection Summary: This collection contains 300 original ink, pencil, pastel, and chalk drawings depicting people, customs, wildlife, and buildings of Hungary, many of which were made into postcards, included in Pecsénye's "Hungarian Coloring Book," or intended for other projects that never went to publication. Additional works represent other European countries as well as Toledo, Ohio ca. early 1900s. In addition to these drawings, a large amount of correspondence in the form of V-Mail, news clippings, and other memorabilia dating from Pecsénye's service in Europe during World War is included in the collection. These materials chronicle in both words and pictures the events of the war from Pecsénye's perspective.

Subjects: [Ethnic Culture](#), [Music](#), [Art](#), [Drama](#), [and Theatre](#), [War](#), [Soldiers](#), [and Veterans](#)

Related Collections: MSS-086 Joseph Bistayi Hungarian Sound Recordings, MSS-111 Hungarian Sound Recordings

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Completed by: Kerri Hagan and Judith M. Friebert, February, 1996. Addition completed by Benjamin Grillot, November 1998; last updated: June, 2014.

Steven Pecsénye
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Biographical Sketch

Steven Pecsénye (d. 1995) was a second-generation Hungarian who was born and lived in Toledo, Ohio. He attended Macomber High School, studied at the Toledo Museum of Art and also in Salzburg, Austria.

Upon his graduation from High School, he entered the Army and served from 1945 to 1947 as a scout in the 7th Infantry. This allowed him to travel extensively throughout Italy, France and Germany. During this time he wrote his parents, niece, and girlfriend (future wife) almost every day, often including descriptive drawings of local sights and people.

He worked at Jeep briefly but spent much of his career assembling anesthetic equipment for McKesson Appliances. After the McKesson family left Toledo, he worked in the shipyards until the early 1970's when he was diagnosed with cancer.

Through the influence of his mother and father, Pecsénye became interested in his Hungarian ancestry and the town of his parents' birth, Felső Méra, Abaúj Megye (county). For over sixty years, he pictured Hungarian folk life as related to him by his family as well as through extensive research. He also found interesting the comparison between life in Toledo with the life in Hungary and drew scenes of his native city as well.

He created the Hungarian Coloring Book in order to preserve Hungarian traditions for future generations. His work has been exhibited extensively in Ohio and in Europe.

Pecsénye is survived by his wife, LeDonna Pecsénye, his sons, Steven and Timothy, and his grandchildren, Magda and Steven.

**Steven Pecsénye
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Scope and Content Note

The Steven Pecsénye Collection is divided into four series. The first series, Sketches, consists of several hundred drawings dating from 1943-1983, the majority of which depict the people, customs, wildlife, and sights of Hungary but also include several sketches made by Pecsénye during World War II.

The second series, Scrapbooks, is made up of four Scrapbooks dated 1942-1945 compiled by Pecsénye and his relatives during his period of service in the Second World War. These scrapbooks contain photographs, sketches, V-Mail, photostats of V-mail, postcards and memorabilia.

The third series, Correspondence, is comprised of various pieces of correspondence dating primarily from 1943-1944 but also includes a letter from 1974.

Wartime Publications, the title of the fourth series, is made up of various published items dated 1944-1945, collected by Steven while in Europe during World War II. These items include newsclippings, books, and books of cartoons by Bill Maudlin.

Series List

S1 Sketches

1943-1983, .7 linear feet

Arranged according to subject matter

Consists of over 300 original drawings, the majority of which depict the people, customs, wildlife, and sights of Hungary. Additional works represent other European countries, particularly France and Germany. There are also a few scenes of the city of Toledo ca. early 1900s. A number of the drawings are preparations for his Hungarian Coloring Book that was published. (Two copies of this publication are included.) Also included are numerous images of Hungarian scenes that the artist created to be made into postcards. Some samples of the postcards and other photographic reproductions of the scenes are contained in the collection as well as designs for a "Churchmouse Cookbook."

Also included in this first series are sketches Steven Pecsénye did of the members of his unit as well as sketches of people and places that he encountered in Europe during World War II. Most of the works are in pen and ink and marker; some are pencil drawings; and a few were created in other media such as pastel and chalk.

S2 Scrapbooks

1942-1945, .6 linear feet

Contains four scrapbooks completed while Pecsénye was in the Army. The first scrapbook (1943-1944) contains postcards, photos and newsclippings from this period, sent by Pecsénye to his family in Toledo. The second scrapbook, (1943-1945) consists of Photostats of V-Mail sent by Steve to his family. The third scrapbook (1942-1944) mostly consists of postcards collected by Steven on the front depicting natural rural scenes of the mountains. The fourth scrapbook (1943-1944), consists of V-Mail, Photostats of V-Mail, Sketches, newsclippings, photos, and postcards sent by Steven to his family.

S3 Correspondence

1944-1944, n.d., and 1974, .1 linear feet

Arranged Chronologically

Consists of V-Mail, Photostats of V-Mail, letters and a telegram dating primarily from his period of service in World War II, with the sole exception of a letter dating from 1974.

S4 Wartime Publications

1944-1945, .1 linear feet

Arranged Chronologically

Is made up of various newspapers and books put out by the U.S. Government during the war. These include such publications as "The Front Line" and "Road to Rome" as well as two books of cartoons by Bill Mauldin.

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Folder List

(Note: Boxes 1 and 2, as well as Portfolios 1 and 2 are located in the Oversize area.)

Box	Folder	Folder Title
		S1. Sketches
		Hungarian Sketches
1	1	Miscellaneous sketches/writing (31)
	2	Photocopies and reproductions of marker/pen and ink drawings
	3	Exhibition Labels
	4	<i>Hungarian Coloring Book</i> (2 Copies)
	5	<i>Hungarian Coloring Book</i> sketches (30; missing #11, 13, 23)
	6	Churchmouse Cookbook sketches (22)
	7	Postcard sketches and Postcards(33)
	[8] [9]	Slides of art work (2 boxes, 66 slides)
2	1	Sketches: people (86)
Portfolio		
1	1	Sketches: Hungarian birds (20), Hungarian fish (19), Hungarian flowers (11), places (48).
	2	Sketches: People (17), Place (1), Fish (2), Birds (2), Flowers (1), Hungarian Coloring Book (1; oversize).
2	1	Shield Design (1; oversize)
Box		Wartime Sketches
3	1	Wartime sketches, 1943-1944
		S2. Scrapbooks
	2	First Scrapbook, 1943-1944
	3	Second Scrapbook, 1943-1945
	4	Third Scrapbook, 1942-1944
	5	Fourth Scrapbook, 1943-1944
		S3. Correspondence
	6	Various Correspondence, 1943-1944, n.d., and 1974
		S4. Wartime Publications
	7	Various Publications, 1944-1945