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### Gardner, Samuel R. (1943-1968), Collection, 1943-2002

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Papers, artifacts, and photographs collected by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Samuel R. Gardner and his family. These materials primarily pertain to the early childhood, high school years, military service, and posthumous memorial activities involving Gardner. The collections includes: correspondence, visual materials, documents, clippings, artifacts, miscellaneous materials, and scrapbook pages.

## **DONOR INFORMATION**

The contents of this collection were donated by the family of Lt. Samuel R. Gardner, Pam Geer and Jerry Gardner. The items contained in this collection were received in two shipments, Accession 7-24 and Accession 7-25.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Samuel R. Gardner was born in 1943. He was an accomplished high school athlete in area of track and field. Gardner graduated from South High School in Wichita, Kansas in 1961. He enrolled at Wichita State University in 1961 where he received a 4-year track scholarship. At WSU, Gardner majored in education with a minor in mathematics.

At WSU, Gardner enrolled in the R.O.T.C. program. He graduated in 1966 and received a commission in the US Army with the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. Gardner was selected for the helicopter program and attended the United States Army and Aviation School at Ft. Rucker, Alabama. Upon completion of the program he earned his wings and was deployed to Vietnam in December of 1963.

During his service in Vietnam, Gardner was promoted to the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. and became a squadron commander in the 176th AHC, 14th AVN BN, 16th AVN Group. Gardner's unit was noted with providing transportation and support for the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division.

On the May 5, 1968, Gardner and his unit volunteered for a mission where they were to provide transportation and extraction for E Co, 1st Bn, 6th Infantry operating in Quang Tin province. At 10:30am, Gardner's aircraft, 66-17075 "The Inserter" was hit by ground fire from NVA forces, losing its main rotor at an altitude of 2,500 ft. All four crewmen including 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Samuel R. Gardner and 6 men of the 6<sup>th</sup> infantry were killed in the crash. Allied forces on the ground secured and held the crash site until the following day, May 6, when the bodies were recovered.

Gardner's body was laid to rest in Wichita, Kansas on June 10, 1968. He was posthumously awarded the Silver Star, the Air Medal with 18 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, National Order of Vietnam (5<sup>th</sup> Degree), and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Gardner Collection contains correspondence, visual materials, documents, newspaper clippings, artifacts, miscellaneous material, and scrap book pages. These items in this collection pertain to the life of Samuel R. Gardner, the events surrounding his death, and subsequent events related to his legacy. This collection also contains a handful of items not directly related to Samuel R. Gardner, but concerning the Gardner family.

The **Correspondence Series** is comprised of letters, cards, sympathy cards, and an audio tape pertaining to the life of Samuel R. Gardner. The letters include correspondence between Samuel Gardner and several universities prior to his service in Vietnam. This series contains extensive correspondence between Gardner and his parents during his military service up until the day he was killed. Included in this series is an audio tape recorded by Gardner a few weeks before his death intended for his family a few weeks. Also included are holiday cards, graduation cards, and various other cards sent to the Gardner family as well as over one-hundred sympathy cards. Material related to this series can also be found in the Scrap Book Series.

The **Visual Material Series** contains photographs, drawings, rubbings, prints, and posters accumulated by or pertaining to Samuel R. Gardner and the Gardner family. The photographs in the series include childhood photographs of Gardner, photographs of Gardner's college years, and photographs taken by and of Gardner during his military training and deployment to Vietnam. The drawings in this series are childhood drawings of Samuel Gardner. This series also contains rubbings of Gardner's name from the Vietnam memorial in Winfield, Kansas, as well as the Vietnam memorial in Washington D.C. The prints contained in this series include a team photograph of the 1954 St. Louis Cardinals, two prints of the Winfield Vietnam memorial, and a print of a helicopter. Material related to this series can also be found in the Scrap Book Series.

The **Documents Series** contains certificates, contracts, receipts, reports, documents, and programs pertaining to Samuel R. Gardner and the Gardner family. The certificates contained in this series include awards given to Gardner as a child, his high school and college diplomas, and the certificates related to the medals that were posthumously awarded to him. The contracts and receipts found in this series include monthly bill for Samuel Gardner and the contracts and receipts related to his funeral and burial. Included in this series are programs for high school and college functions and graduations, military balls, musical recitals, the funeral of Samuel Gardner, and functions associated with Wichita State University. The reports and documents found in this series include all government and military documents, casualty reports, and subsequent documentation associated with Samuel Gardner's death and posthumous awards. Material related to this series can also be found in the Scrap Book Series.

The **Clippings Series** contains newspaper and publication clippings associated with Samuel Gardner. Included this series are clippings related to Gardner's academic and athletic accomplishments, his military career, death, and subsequent legacy. Material related to this series can also be found in the Scrap Book Series.

The **Artifacts Series** contains physical artifacts belonging to or associated with Samuel Gardner. Included in this series are several items associated with Samuel Gardner's track and field accomplishments such as several patches and medals as well as a medley baton. Also included in this series are several artifacts related to the military career of Samuel Gardner. These items include the Silver Star, the Air Medal with 18 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart,

the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, National Order of Vietnam (5<sup>th</sup> Degree), and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and all accompanying ribbons. Also included is a 1964 R.O.T.C. yearbook.

The **Miscellaneous Series** contains artifacts and material that do not pertain to any of the subjects or categories of the other series in this collection. Included in this collection are two luggage tags, a baby book for Samuel R. Gardner, loose pages of math homework, Rachel Gardner's graduation program and diplomas from Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Sig Ep Song Book.

The **Scrap Book Series** contains the pages of two scrap books. The first of these scrap books contains photographs, clipping, and material relating to the athletic career of Samuel R. Gardner. The second scrap book contains photographs, clippings, correspondence, and documents relating to Gardner's death.

## FOLDER LIST

### Correspondence Series

- f. 1 Telegram, date unknown, likely late 1940s to early 1950s; 15 letters, date unknown, after May 1968.
- f. 2 3 letters, date unknown, after May 1968; letter, November 20 1949; postcard, April 1 1961; letters, June 21 1962, September 25 1962; postcard, September 1, 1963; letters, May 2 1966, June 21 1966, May 4 1966, July 22 1966, July 27 1966, August 7 1966, October 29 1966.
- f. 3 Letters, January 28 1967, February 8 1967, March 17 1967, March 24 1967, May 11 1967, May 18 1967, June 5 1967, July 11 1967, July 31 1967, August 21 1967, August 30 1967, October 11 1967; postcard, November 28 1967.
- f. 4 Letters, December 21 1967, January 5 1968, January 10 1968, January 10 1968, January 28 1968, February 4 1968, February 13 1968, February 15 1968, February 28 1968, April 6 1968, April 14 1968, April 16 1968, May 1 1968, May 1 1968; telegram; letters, May 14 1968, May 23 1968, May 23 1968; telegram, May 26 1968, May 26 1968; letter, May 27 1968; telegram May 27 1968; letter, May 28 1968.
- f. 5 28 letters, May 28 1968
- f. 6 Letters, May 31 1968, June 2 1968, June 2 1968, June 7 1968, June 3 1968, June 5 1968; telegram, June 6 1968; letters, June 6 1968, June 6 1968, June 7 1968, June 7 1968, June 8 1968, June 10 1968, June 11 1968, June 12 1968, June 12 1968, June 13 1968, June 13 1968, June 14 1968, June 14 1968.
- f. 7 Letters, June 15 1968, June 15 1968, June 18 1968, June 25 1968, June 25 1968, June 26 1968, July 6 1968, July 8 1968, July 11 1968, July 19 1968.

- f. 8 Letters, July 21 1968, July 23 1968, July 26 1968, July 26 1968, July 28 1968, July 31 1968, August 2 1968, August 5 1968, August 9 1968, August 14 1968, August 15 1968, August 16 1968, August 28 1968, September 17 1968, September 20 1968, October 14 1968, December 7 1968, December 7 1968, December 30 1968, January 4 1969, January 8 1969, January 11 1969, September 18 1969, September 24 1969.
- f. 9 Letters, October 29 1970, December 14 1970, April 16 1971, March 26 1973, April 2 1973, August 10 1975, November 14 1979, January 31 1976, May 3 1976, May 12 1976, April 3 1977.
- f. 10 Letters, December 18 1985, May 13 1986, May 25 1986, May 27 1986, July 28 1986, February 10 1989, December 15 1989, November 3 1990, December 13 1990, January 31 1992, February 10 1992, January 11 1993, December 15 1993, December 15 1993, December 1 1994, December 30 1995.
- f. 11 Letters, October 27 1995, November 12 1996; postcard, February 7 1996; letters, December 2 1997, December 15 1997, January 14 1998, December 12 1998, September 8 2000; postcard, March 12 2001, August 10 2001, August 31 2001, September 19 2002.
- f. 12 5 business cards, date unknown; cards, undated, June 1 1961, June 1 1961, May 21 1967, June 15 1967, July 1 1967, December 6 1967, May 5 1968, October 15 1970, October 28 1970, November 11 1989, February 6 1990, May 29 1996.
- f. 13 14 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 14 16 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 15 24 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 16 18 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 17 19 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 18 18 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 19 19 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 20 26 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 21 20 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 22 14 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 23 20 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 24 17 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 25 53 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 26 4 sympathy cards, 1968.
- f. 27 Audio tape with DVD duplicate, Lt. Sam Gardner, Mid to late April 1968.

### Visual Material Series

- f. 28 24 photographs, childhood of Samuel Gardner, early 1950s to 1960.
- f. 29 25 photographs, late high school through Vietnam years of Samuel Gardner, early 1960s to 1967/1968.
- f. 30 18 photographs, Vietnam, 1968.
- f. 31 21 photographs, Vietnam, 1968.
- f. 32 9 photographs, Vietnam Memorials (DC & PSU,) Between 1982-2007.
- f. 33 2 Valentine's Day Cards, undated; 2 typewriter drawings, May 23 & 27 1958; 2 rubbings of Samuel R. Gardner's name, 1975.

**Visual Materials Series** continued

- f. 34 1 portion of a war bond poster, 1942; St. Louis Cardinals team photograph, 1954; poster of Hughes Th-55A, 1960s; map of Vietnam, Stars and Stripes magazine, 1967-1968; blank postcard, Ft. Rucker Alabama, 1967; calendar page, May 1968; Vietnam Memorial print, after 1968; Vietnam Memorial print, Winfield Kansas, after 1968; blank postcard, Winfield Kansas, after 1968.

**Documents Series**

- f.35 Certificate, "The American's Creed, undated; birth certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, May 1943; war bond, December 8 1944; war bond, October 17 1945; School Patrol Citation certificate, March 18 1943; copy of birth certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, June 25 1955, unspecified certificate, July 8 1957; emblem certificate, February 20 1958; Solo Music Test certificate, 1958; National Piano Playing Auditions membership certificate, 1959; Boys' State certificate, early 1960s; Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity certificate, February 9 1961; high school diploma, Samuel R. Gardner, June 1 1961; Military Training certificate, May 31 1963; Camp Hyde achievement award, 1964; Bachelor of Arts in Education, Samuel R. Gardner, Wichita State University, August 7 1966; graduation diploma, Samuel R. Gardner, U.S. Army Artillery and Missile School, November 18 1966; certificate of training, Samuel R. Gardner, United States Army Primary Helicopter School, June 23 1967; diploma, Samuel R. Gardner, United States Army Aviation School, October 24 1967; commercial pilot's license, Samuel R. Gardner, October 26 1967; temporary airman certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, October 26 1967; Honorable Service certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, May 5 1968; Air Medal certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, August 30 1968; Silver Star certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, August 30 1968; Purple Heart certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, August 30 1968; Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Samuel R. Gardner, December 12 1968; Jewish Nation Fund certificate, Samuel R. Gardner, after May 1968.
- f.36 Wage and tax statement, Samuel R. Gardner, 1967; soldier's deposit ticket, Samuel R. Gardner, January 1 1968; receipt, Old Mission Cemetary Inc., May 29 1968; headstone application, Cochrane Mortuary, June 22 1968; telephone bill, Samuel R. Gardner, June to July 1968; settlement receipt, July 30 1968; telephone bill, Samuel R. Gardner, July to August 1968; memorandum, Cochran Mortuary, July 7 1968; acknowledgement of gift, Wichita State University, August 6 1968; acknowledge of gift, Wichita State University, April 24 1970.
- f.37 2 poem (possibly from funeral service), undated; school report cards, Samuel R. Gardner, 1948-1961; Star Scout Scoreboard, Samuel R. Gardner, 1956; second class scout certification, Samuel R. Gardner, January 23 1956; first class scout certification, Samuel R. Gardner, July 18 1956; star scout certification, Samuel R. Gardner, April 8 1957, driver's education certification document, Samuel R. Gardner, late 1950s to early 1960s; semester reports, Samuel Gardner, WSU, 1964-1966; active duty documentation card, Samuel R. Gardner, July 20 1964; grade card, Samuel R. Gardner, Fort Hays Kansas State College, July 19 1966; travel voucher, Samuel R. Gardner, November 21 1966; installation clearance record, Samuel R. Gardner, October 27, 1967; funds transfer

**Document Series** continued

- document, July 11 1968; acknowledgement of military funeral funding, Cochran Mortuary, July 13, 1968; life insurance notification, July 18 1968; record of personal property, Samuel R. Gardner, July 18 1968; award of Air Medal notification, July 28 1968; balance report, Quiring Monument Company Inc, July 29 1968, 3 reports of casualty, Samuel R. Gardner, August 5 1968; 4 statements of casualty, August 5 1968; Silver Star notification, Samuel R. Gardner, September 17 1968; first through eighteenth Oak Leaf Cluster notification, late 1968; Samuel Gardner Scholarship Fund list of donors, after 1968.
- f.38 Recital program, undated; funeral program poem book, undated; biography of Samuel R. Gardner, undated; 2 baccalaureate sermon programs, May 28, 1961; 2 graduation commencement programs, June 1, 1961; high school autograph book and program, May-June 1961; WSU Military Ball program, April 3, 1964; high school graduation commencement program, May 26 1964; Texas Relays program, April 2 1965; WSU Military Ball program, April 23, 1965; 2 Wichita State University commencement program, August 7 1966; United States Army Primary Helicopter School graduation program, June 23 1967; United States Army Aviation School graduation exercises, October 24 1967; sermon outline, May 28 1968; funeral food record, June 10 1968; funeral bible companion, June 10 1968.
- f.39 Funeral book, June 10 1968, funeral program with newspaper clipping, Samuel R. Gardner, June 10 1968; funeral program, Samuel R. Gardner, June 10 1968; poetry book on loss, June 10 1968; poem, June 10 1968, "Consecration of Sorrow," June 10 1968; Vietnam Memorial directory of names, after 1968; Fort Hays State University Memorial Union Rededication program; October 1 1983; Arbor Day Observance and Vietnam Memorial Presentation program, Hay Kansas, April 11, 1986; Vietnam Memorial Dedication program, November 11 1989.

**Clipping Series**

- f.40 72 newspaper clippings relating to the childhood, athletics, college years, military service, posthumous memorial activity of Samuel R. Gardner, early 1950s and after (most undated); 7 journal pages, Samuel R. Gardner, November 28-December 19 1967.

**Artifacts Series**

- f.41 880 yard relay plaque (1<sup>st</sup> place,) Samuel R. Gardner, 1962; track name tag, Samuel R. Gardner, May 6 1965; 4 letter jacket patches, 1960-1961; 4 track signs, approximately 1961.
- f.42 2 letter jacket patches, 1960-1961; Sigma Phi Epsilon patch, 1961; 8 track medals, 1960-1963.
- f.43 Golf plaque, Samuel R. Gardner, June 18 1967; Kansas State track meet baton, 1961; 3 letter jacket patches, 1960s; cub scout patch, undated.
- f.44 4 patches, U.S. Army Artillery and Missile School, 1966; patch, USARV, 1967-1968; black chord, undated, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant uniform bar, sheet of army aviator wing decals; R.O.T.C. Summer Training, Company H, 1964; Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (Brigade Citation), 1968; Silver Star ribbon, 1968; National Defense ribbon, 1968; Air ribbon (3 Oak Leaf Clusters,) 1968; Air ribbon (15 Oak leaf clusters,) 1968; Vietnam Service

**Artifacts Series** continued

ribbon, 1968; Purple Heart ribbon, 1968; Army Aviator badge, 1967; prop and wings lapel pin, undated; weapon qualification badge-expert (autorifle qualification bar attached,) 1966-1967; 2 unidentified ribbons (1 bronze service star); unidentified ribbon (2 bronze service stars); 4 unidentified ribbons; 176<sup>th</sup> AVN Co. emblem plaque, 1967-1968; last rites flag, May 1968; small American flag, date unknown; wooden display case containing: Silver Star, Air Medal with 18 Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart, National Defense medal, Vietnam Service medal, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (Individual citation,) National Order of Vietnam (5<sup>th</sup> Degree), Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (Regiment/Brigade Citation.)

**Miscellaneous Series**

f.45 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree Masonic medal, Sam Gardner, undated;; baby book, Samuel Gardner, 1943; 16 pages of math homework, undated; leather diploma folder, Rachel Gardner, 1963; Greek alphabet reference card, undated; song book, "Sig Ep Sings," early 1960s; graduation commencement program, Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Rachel Gardner, August 8 1963; Master of Science diploma, Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Rachel Gardner, August 8 1963; 2 customs declaration tags, Mr. & Mrs. Sam Gardner, December 4 1969; prize voucher, January 16 1970; invitation, July 10 1987; certificate of appreciation, Rachel Gardner, Wichita State University, April 5 2002.

**Scrapbook Series**

f.46 16 pages from a scrap book containing photographs and newspaper clippings associated with the athletic experiences of Samuel R. Gardner

f.47 5 pages from a scrap book containing newspaper clippings, certificates, documents related to the death of Samuel R. Gardner.

**INDEX LIST**

Air Medal	f. 35, 44
Fort Hays Kansas State College	f. 37
Fort Hays Kansas State University	f. 39
Gardner, Rachel	f. 4-26, 45
Gardner, Samuel	f. 4-26, 45
Gardner, Samuel Ray	f. 1-47
Kansas State College of Pittsburg	f. 45
National Defense medal	f. 35, 44
Purple Heart	f. 35, 44
Silver Star	f. 35, 44
Vietnam	f. 4-8, 27, 29-32, 34-35, 38-40, 44, 47
Vietnam Service medal	f. 35, 44
Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry	f. 35, 44
Wichita State University	f. 8-12, 35-38, 45