

**VIETNAM WAR US ARMY HELICOPTER PILOT'S FLIGHT HELMET, RELIC TAIL ROTOR BLADE AND INSIGNIA TO A LT COLONEL WHO WAS TAKEN PRISONER DURING THE KOREAN WAR AND WENT ON TO DO TWO TOURS OF VIETNAM**



1) Lieutenant Colonel Conrad J. Provencher's SPH-4 Flight Helmet which has his name painted across the front and rear of the helmet, the first letters of his name to each side of the foam padding and Lt Colonel rank insignia either side of the visor cover. The visor is missing and there is a split at the lower front visor cover. The foam inside the left headphone has flaked away but condition otherwise is good. The internal webbing system and chinstrap is complete, and the wiring appears complete for the headphones and microphone with the intercom connection socket at the end. Helmet retains the original Gentex Corporation manufacturers label and has a contract number DAAG25-69-C-0881, indicating it was made in 1969 which was first year these helmets were issued. Helmet retains its carrying bag, which has a stain the one side

2) The rear rotor blade from a military helicopter, the tip of which appears to have been damaged by a bullet or flak, with a small section ribbed away from one side. Another section is damaged further up the blade. The identification plate giving '206-016-201-111' which is believed to be for a Bell 206, better known by its US Army designation Bell OH-58 Kiowa. This scout helicopter saw service in Vietnam from 1969. Blade retains its olive drab finish, but one side has paint flecks. These I have not

attempted to remove. Presumably their was a story to why Provencher kept this particular relic. Size 74 x 14cm



3) Various items of insignia: Several uniform name plates, US Army combat uniform tag and name ribbon, flight suit name tag, named US Army Visitor badge, Lt Colonel collar insignia. Presidential Unit Citation, Bronze Star, Armed Service Reserve Medal, Korea Service Medal with two stars, Air Medal (looks like two clusters missing), Army Commendation Medal, Purple Heart, UN Korea, National Defence Service, Korea Service Medal (two stars missing). Also a Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (star). These would only be some of Provencher's entitlement; the bottom bar certainly his pre Vietnam bar. A copy photograph of Provencher in old age wearing his uniform has many more awards. Note; the name plates, medal ribbon bars and insignia have their rear pins but are lacking their uniform clips



4) Additionally a small black 34mm camera case with 'VIETNAM SAIGON' in gold letters to front.. Inside is a 35mm film the contents of which are unknown. After the group was purchased this was found by Jager Medals in the front pocket of the helmet bag and had not been noticed previously!







**Lieutenant Colonel Conrad J. Provencher**, United States Army served as a helicopter pilot in both the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam Wars. As Second Lieutenant during the Korean War, he was captured on 19 February 1953, remaining a Prisoner of War until released on 31 August 1953. He later served two tours of duty in Vietnam and for his service was awarded both the Purple Heart and a Bronze Star medal and various other medals and distinctions. Colonel Provencher's service remains unresearched so it is unknown what conflict each award was made for and his exact service.



One online source briefly notes that during the Vietnam War, Provencher reportedly served with the 162<sup>nd</sup> Assault Helicopter Company (The Vultures) 1965-66 and 120th Assault Helicopter Company (The Deans and Razorbacks) in 1966. Though his obituaries note 2 tours of Vietnam, dates are not given and it may be only partially correct or that he started his tour with 162<sup>nd</sup>, joined 120<sup>th</sup> during the same tour and at a later date doing a second tour. Provencher's helmet is dated 1969 and the damaged rotor blade would be from, around then also. This suggesting if he was in Vietnam in 1965-6 he was there again circa 1969-70.

Provencher's Obituary:

<https://www.thetimes-tribune.com/obituaries/conrad-j-provencher-greentown-pa/>

A Fine group of items to a US Army helicopter pilot who served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.