

# PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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## Sgt. James W. Cockerill Collection

**Creator:** James W. Cockerill  
**Dates:** 1972-2007  
**Quantity:** 2 linear feet, 1 box  
**Acquisition:** Donated by James W. Cockerill, July 13, 2012  
**Identification:** PMML ID# 800122, OCLC# 808631732, Call# PAPERS 00112  
**Citation:** [Document Title], The Sgt. James W. Cockerill Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Pritzker Military Museum & Library, Chicago, IL.  
**Language:** English  
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*Archival collections are stored at a remote archival facility. Please contact the Museum & Library at least 48 hours in advance of your visit to view an archival collection.*

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## Biographical Note

Born August 2, 1951, James W. Cockerill was a military son. Attending Vanden High School in Fairfield, CA near his father's base, it was here that Cockerill found his calling: photography.

After graduating, Cockerill joined the Air Force and distinguished himself as an Aerial Combat Photographer on an HH-53C Rescue Helicopter, aka the "Jolly Green Giant," during the Vietnam War. Because of his acts of valor, Cockerill was the recipient of three Silver Stars, four Air Medals and one Distinguished Flying Cross all in a period of five months. Cockerill served for three years during the war and continued his career working as a medical photographer.

## **Scope and Content of the Collection**

This collection contains photographs, papers, decorations, personal narratives, and newspaper articles related to Sgt. Cockerill's service with the Air Force during the Vietnam War.

### **Arrangement**

The scrapbook was kept in its original order while the papers and loose photographs were arranged by the PMML staff according to best practices. These papers were organized in to five series:

#### **Series One: Missions**

This series contains Cockerill's accounts of the missions in which he participated.

#### **Series Two: Awards**

This series contains Cockerill's accounts of the missions in which he participated.

#### **Series Three: Department of the Air Force papers**

This series contains papers from Cockerill's proposal for a 10% retirement pay increase and letters of recommendation for decorations.

#### **Series Four: Correspondence**

This series contains correspondence with a fellow soldier, newspaper clippings and emails with a Jolly historian.

#### **Series Five: Scrapbook**

The scrapbook contains photographs, mission summaries, papers and newspaper articles related to Cockerill's rescue missions.

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## **Rights**

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## Related Collections

Wayne Fisher, UH-34D Helicopter pilot, Vietnam, Oral History interview 2012

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## Separations

Call Number	Description	Date
	<b>Decorations</b>	
800122040	Silver Star medal	
800122041	Silver Star ribbon	
800122042	Silver Star lapel	
800122043	Silver Star, First Oak Leaf Cluster medal	
800122044	Silver Star, First Oak Leaf Cluster ribbon	
800122045	Silver Star, First Oak Leaf Cluster lapel	
800122046	Silver Star, Second Oak Leaf Cluster medal	
800122047	Silver Star, Second Oak Leaf Cluster ribbon	
800122048	Silver Star, Second Oak Leaf Cluster lapel	
800122049	photo board of PJ Dan Nyngesser, Motion 02 rescue mission, receiving medical attention	8/26/1972
800122050	photo of PJ Dan Nyngesser, Motion 02 rescue mission, his hand over his eye	8/26/1972
800122051	photo board of Cpt. Kenneth Thaete and Maj. Norbert Maier, Bobbin 05 rescue mission	11/19/1972
800122052	photo of Cpt. Thamas Wiles with Sgt. Jim Walsh, AIC John Mcgee, and SSgt Kenneth Mynski from Ragtop 01 rescue mission	1/7/1973
800122053	photo board of Cpt. Thamas Wiles (on stretcher) and AIC John Mcgee and SSgt. Kennet Mynski from Ragtop 01 rescue mission	1/7/1973
800122054	photo of Thia crash at NKP	11/1/1972

800122055	photo board of 794 LNRS Chopper and F.E. Jim Walsh	n.d.
800122056	photo board of PJ Don Goodlet, "Army Chopper"	9/3/1972
800122057	photo board of NKP Sunset	10/1/1972
800122058	photo board of NKP	2/20/1973
800122059	photo of man covered in foliage	n.d.
	Slideshow	
800122060	slide one: 4 Months at NKP	n.d.
800122061	slide two: Heard a radio beeper go off on my first flight	n.d.
800122062	slide three: The low bird went in first...	n.d.
800122063	Slide four: We landed at a Lima Site to pick-up...	n.d.
800122064	slide five: This was just my third mission	n.d.
800122065	slide six: Can you see the guy on the ground?	n.d.
800122066	Slide seven: Bobbin 05 Alfa & Bravo	n.d.
800122067	slide eight: photos inside chopper	n.d.
800122068	slide nine: Kansas 01 RF-4	n.d.
800122069	slide ten: Jackel 33 F-111	n.d.
800122070	slide eleven: Crewmen from a B-52 crashed near base	n.d.
800122071	slide twelve: Ragtop 01 F-4	n.d.
800122072	slide thirteen: patches	n.d.
800122073	slide fourteen: medals	n.d.
800122074	slide fifteen: Silver Star, August 26, 1972	8/26/1972
800122075	Slide sixteen: Silver Star, November 18, 1972	11/18/1972
800122076	Slide seventeen: Silver Star, December 27, 1972	12/27/1972

### **Photographs**

800122077	photo of seated gunman	n.d.
800122078	photo of side gunman (standing)	n.d.

800122079	photo of three men surrounding missile	n.d.
800122080	photo of two men wheeling in bomb	n.d.
800122081	photo of gun hanging from straps	n.d.
800122082	photo of group of men standing outside by planes	n.d.
800122083	photo of two men walking out of helicopter	n.d.
800122084	photo of man sleeping	n.d.
800122085	photo of man concentrating (two copies)	n.d.
800122086	photo of man with gun walking out of helicopter	n.d.
800122087	photo of man working with electrical wires	n.d.
800122088	photo of two men in the back of copter	n.d.
800122089	photo of plane getting refueled	n.d.
800122090	photo of man recording in log	n.d.
800122091	photo of man getting out of plane	n.d.

## Key Subjects

### Names

James W. Cockerill

### Subjects

Aerial photography.

Military helicopters -- Vietnam.

United States. -- Air Force -- History.

United States. -- Air Force -- Pictorial works.

Vietnamese Conflict, 1961-1975 -- Pictorial works.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975

Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Aerial operations, American.

Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Search and rescue operations---Vietnam.

War photography.

## Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Item ID #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>
1	1		<b>Series One: Missions</b>	
		800122001	Missions Flew	n.d.
		800122002	Mission Crew Vietnam 71-72	n.d.
		800122003	Motion 02 Bravo	n.d.
		800122004	Volunteer 538	n.d.
		800122005	Kansas 01B	n.d.
		800122006	Jackel 33B	n.d.
		800122007	Ragtop 01B	n.d.
	<b>2</b>		<b>Series Two: Awards</b>	
		800122008	Silver Star certificate	02/23/73
		800122009	Silver Star citation	n.d.
		800122010	Dept. of the Air Force award recognition	03/04/74
		800122011	Office of Information Home Town News Release Data	n.d.
		800122012	Copy of newspaper article about Cockerill's third Silver Star	n.d.
		800122013	Silver Star (First Oak Leaf Cluster) certificate	03/28/73
		800122014	Silver Star (First Oak Leaf Cluster) citation	n.d.
		800122015	copy of Silver Star First Oak Leaf cluster citation	n.d.
		800122016	list of Silver Star recipients	03/28/73
		800122017	Silver Star (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) certificate	12/27/72
		800122018	Silver Star (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) Citation	n.d.
		800122019	list of Silver Star recipients (four copies)	11/27/73
		800122020	Air Medal certificate	11/07/72
		800122021	Air Medal (First Oak Leaf Cluster) certificate	01/06/73

800122022	Air Medal (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) certificate	03/07/73
800122023	Air Medal (Third Oak Leaf Cluster) certificate	05/11/73
800122024	Air Medal (Third Oak Leaf Cluster) citation	n.d.
800122025	Copy of Air Medal (Third Oak Leaf Cluster) citation (four copies)	n.d.
800122026	List of Air Medal recipients (two copies)	05/11/73
800122027	List of Air Medal recipients	11/04/72
800122028	List of Air Medal recipients	03/07/73

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### **Series Three: Department of the Air Force Papers**

800122029	Letter to 25 SOSq/DPMS from Cpt. F.M. Seger, Jr. regarding 10% increase retired pay	10/30/73
800122030	Recommendation for Decoration	02/08/73
800122031	Letter from Maj. Sandy Clarke to 40th ARS/CC regarding heroism of Cpt. John Gillespie during the rescue of Bobbin 05	n.d.
800122032	Letter to HQ PACAF from Lt. Col. Hubert Berthold regarding recommendation approval	n.d.

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### **Series Four: Correspondence**

800122033	Letter to James Cockerill from Bill Wilson regarding the rescue mission for Bill.	09/27/73
800122034	Silver Star (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) citation for rescuing Bill Wilson	n.d.
800122035	Newspaper clipping "Cockerill Wins Silver Star"	n.d.
800122036	Copy of newspaper article about Cockerill's third Silver Star	n.d.
800122037	Newspaper clipping "Wounded Pilot Tells of Ordeal in Koh Tang Island Invasion"	05/25/75

800122038	Emails between Cockerill and "rlapointe@gci.net" regarding information for Jolly combat photographers	05/05/07
800122039	<b>Series Five: Scrapbook</b>	
	Page one: summary of Motion 02 F-4 mission and three photographs	08/26/72
	Page two: three photographs from Motion 02 F-4 mission	08/26/72
	Page three: Volunteer 538 mission summary and three photographs	09/03/72
	Page four: three photographs from Volunteer 538 mission	09/03/72
	Page five: newspaper article "2 Fliers Saved As Reds Close In"	11/20/72
	Page six: two photographs of flying planes	n.d.
	Page seven: Bobbin 05 F-105 mission summary with three photographs	11/18/72
	Page eight: three photographs from first combat loss of B-52	11/01/72
	Page nine: Letter from John D'Angelo from Sikorsky Aircraft regarding rescue certificates	11/07/72
	Page ten: 2 Helicopter Rescue Award certificates	8/26/72, 9/3/72
	Page eleven: newspaper clipping "Rescue Copters Ambushed in N. Viet" and Kansas 01 RF-4 mission summary with two photographs	12/10/72
	Page twelve: five photographs including inside copter, bullet damage and copters in flight	n.d.
	Page thirteen: newspaper articles "But Rescue Failed: U.S. Violated Bomb Halt in Attempt to Save F111 Pilot," "2 More B52s Downed" summary of Jackel 33 F-111 and photograph of flying copters	n.d.

Page fourteen: "In Memory of" with two photographs	n.d.
Page fifteen: Ragtop 01 F-4 summary with two photographs	01/03/73
Page sixteen: newspaper articles "Former VHS Student Reports His Activities" and "New Ha.: USSAG in Thailand"	n.d.
Page seventeen: newspaper articles "'Golden BB' Downed Our F111-Pilots" and "'Golden BB' Got F111-Pilots" and photograph of two men in doorway of copter	n.d.
Page eighteen: newspaper comic "I am Authorized To Say, 'What Whale?'" , newspaper articles "Silver Stars Given to 3 A7D Fliers" and "Cambodia Crash Kills 2 on Copter" with photograph of two men walking in from crash	n.d.
Page nineteen: Awards for Decoration Data, newspaper article "Thai Bases News Blackout Continues" and letter from Det 12, 601 Photo Sq/DO to Sgt. James Cockerill regarding documentation of the Air Police	n.d.
Page twenty: photograph of copters flying with copy of newspaper article "Some Thoughts on Our Grooming Standards"	n.d.

800122092 CD of photographs