

Jimmy Doolittle

Dr. James Harold Doolittle

Lt Gen. James Doolittle

Nickname	"Jimmy"
Born	December 14, 1896 Alameda, California
Died	September 27, 1993 (aged 96) Pebble Beach, California
Place of burial	Arlington National Cemetery
Allegiance	United States of America United States Air Force United States Army Air Forces United States Army Air Corps United States Army Air Service Aviation Section, U.S. Signal Corps
Years of service	1917–1959
Rank	General
Commands held	Twelfth Air Force Fifteenth Air Force Eighth Air Force Mexican Border Service World War I (Stateside Duty) World War II * Pacific Campaign ** Doolittle Raid * Mediterranean Campaign * European Campaign Cold War * Korean War (Stateside Duty) Medal of Honor Distinguished Service Medal (2) Silver Star Distinguished Flying Cross (3) Air Medal (4)
Awards	Shell Oil , VP, Director
Other work	Space Technology Laboratories, Chairman

[General](#)/Doctor **James Harold "Jimmy" Doolittle**, [USAF](#) (December 14, 1896 – September 27, 1993) was an American [aviation](#) pioneer. Doolittle served as an officer in the [United States Army Air Forces](#) during the [Second](#)

[World War](#). He earned the [Medal of Honor](#) for his valor and leadership as commander of the [Doolittle Raid](#) while a lieutenant colonel.

Early life and education

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Doolittle was born in [Alameda, California](#). He spent his youth in [Nome, Alaska](#) where he earned a reputation as a boxer. His parents were Frank Henry Doolittle and Rosa (Rose) Cerenah Shephard. By 1910, Jimmy Doolittle was attending school in Los Angeles. When his school attended the [1910 Los Angeles International Air Meet at Dominguez Field](#) Doolittle saw his first airplane.^[1] He attended [Los Angeles City College](#) after graduating from [Manual Arts High School](#) in Los Angeles. He later won admission to the [University of California, Berkeley](#) where he studied in The [School of Mines](#). He was a member of [Theta Kappa Nu](#) fraternity. Doolittle took a leave of absence in October 1917 to enlist in the [Signal Corps Reserve](#) as a flying cadet. He did his ground training at the [University of California](#) School of Military [Aeronautics](#) where he later received his doctorate. His flight-training was done at [Rockwell Field, California](#). Doolittle received his [Reserve Military Aviator rating](#). He was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Signal Officers Reserve Corps on March 11, 1918.

Honors and awards

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Military honors

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Medal of Honor citation

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Citation:

For conspicuous leadership above the call of duty, involving personal valor and intrepidity at an extreme hazard to life. With the apparent certainty of being forced to land in enemy territory or to perish at sea, Gen. Doolittle personally led a squadron of Army bombers, manned by volunteer crews, in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland.^[2]

Army Distinguished Service medal citation

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Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Army Distinguished Service Medal to Major General James Harold Doolittle (ASN: 0-271855), United States Army Air Forces, for exceptionally meritorious and distinguished services to the Government of the United States, in a duty of great responsibility as Commander of the Northwest African Strategic Air Force since its organization. Under his guidance and direction, this Force has developed a high degree of efficiency and accuracy and brought about, in great measure, a critical reduction in the supplies and reinforcements needed by the enemy. General Doolittle's energy, good judgment, exceptional qualities of leadership and wholehearted cooperation were primary factors in the ultimate success of air operations during the Tunisian Campaign. ^[3]

Distinguished Flying Cross citations

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

1st Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 2, 1926, takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Flying Cross to First Lieutenant (Air Service) James Harold Doolittle (ASN: 0-271855), U.S. Army Air Corps, for extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight. On September 4-5, 1922, Lieutenant Doolittle accomplished a one-stop flight from Pablo Beach, Florida, to San Diego, California, in 22 hours and 30 minutes elapsed time, an extraordinary achievement with the equipment available at that time. By his skill, endurance, and resourcefulness he demonstrated the possibility of moving Air Corps units to any portion of the United States in less than 24 hours, thus reflecting great credit on himself and to the Army of the United States. ^[3]

2nd Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 2, 1926, takes pleasure in presenting a Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Second Distinguished Flying Cross to First Lieutenant (Air Service) James Harold Doolittle (ASN: 0-271855), U.S. Army Air Corps, for extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight. During March 1924, at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, Lieutenant Doolittle, piloting a Fokker PW-7 pursuit airplane, performed a series of acceleration tests requiring skill, initiative, endurance, and courage of the highest type. In these test a recording accelerometer was mounted in the airplane and the accelerations taken for the following maneuvers. Loops at various air speeds; single and multiple barrel rolls; power spirals; tail spins; power on and power off; half loop, half roll, and immelman turn; Inverted flight; pulling out of dive at

various air speeds; flying the airplane on a level course with considerable angle of bank; and flying in bumpy air. In these test the airplane was put through the most extreme maneuvers possible in order that the flight loads imposed upon the wings of the airplane under extreme conditions of sir combat might, be ascertained. These test were put through with that fine combination of fearlessness and skill which constitutes the essence of distinguished flying. Through them scientific data of great and permanent importance to the Air Corps were obtained.
[\[3\]](#)

3rd Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 2, 1926, takes pleasure in presenting a Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Third Distinguished Flying Cross to Colonel (Air Corps) James Harold Doolittle (ASN: 0-271855), United States Army Air Forces, for extraordinary achievement as Pilot of a B-25 Bomber and Commanding Officer of the 1st Special Aviation Project (Doolittle Raider Force), while participating in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland on April 18, 1942. Colonel Doolittle with 79 other officers and enlisted men volunteered for this mission knowing full well that the chances of survival were extremely remote, and executed his part in it with great skill and daring. This achievement reflects high credit on himself and the military service.
[\[3\]](#)

Silver Star citation

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Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1948, takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Major General (Air Corps) James Harold Doolittle (ASN: 0-271855), United States Army Air Forces, for gallantry in action. Since February 19, 1943, when he took command of the Allied Strategic Air Force (Northwest Africa), General Doolittle, by his untiring energy, initiative and personal example has inspired the units under him to renewed successful efforts against the enemy. On April 5, 1943, the strategic air force was responsible for the destruction of forty eight enemy planes in the air and approximately 100 on the ground. This extraordinary achievement under the leadership of General Doolittle reflects great credit to himself and the armed forces of the United States.
[\[3\]](#)

Other honors

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Doolittle was also awarded the Bolivian [Order of the Condor of the Andes](#), now in the collection of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.^[4]

In 1972 James H. Doolittle was awarded the Horatio Alger Award which is given to those who are dedicated community leaders who demonstrate individual initiative and a commitment to excellence; as exemplified by remarkable achievements accomplished through honesty, hard work, self-reliance and perseverance over adversity. The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. bears the name of the renowned author Horatio Alger, Jr., whose tales of overcoming adversity through unyielding perseverance and basic moral principles captivated the public in the late 19th century.^[5]

In April 1985, Doolittle was awarded a fourth star making him a full ranked general. He received the award from [President Ronald Reagan](#) and [U.S. Senator Barry M. Goldwater](#).

The [Society of Experimental Test Pilots](#) annually presents the [James H. Doolittle Award](#) in his memory. The award is for "outstanding accomplishment in technical management or engineering achievement in aerospace technology".

The city of [Doolittle, Missouri](#), located 5 miles west of [Rolla](#) was named in his honor after World War II.

In popular culture

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- [Spencer Tracy](#) played Doolittle in [Mervyn LeRoy](#)'s 1944 movie *[Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo](#)*. This portrayal has received much praise.
- [Alec Baldwin](#) played Doolittle in [Michael Bay](#)'s 2001 movie *[Pearl Harbor](#)*. This portrayal caused much outrage amongst those who knew the general.
- [Bob Clampett](#)'s 1946 [cartoon *Baby Bottleneck*](#) briefly portrays a [dog](#) named "Jimmy Do-quite-a-little", who invents a failed rocketship.

Related pages

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- [List of Medal of Honor recipients for World War II](#)

References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Notes

1. [↑] Berliner 2009, p. 37.

2. [↑] "[World War II \(A-F\); Doolittle, Jimmy entry](#)". *Medal of Honor recipients*. [United States Army Center of Military History](#). August 3, 2009. Archived from [the original](#) on June 16, 2008. Retrieved January 2, 2013.
3. [↑] [3.0 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4](#) "[Jimmy Doolittle](#)". *Hall of Valor*. [Military Times](#). Retrieved January 2, 2013.
4. [↑] <http://www.nasm.si.edu/mobile/objdetail.cfm?id=A19600093000> Archived 2020-05-05 at the [Wayback Machine](#) accessed January 2, 2013
5. [↑] "[James H. Doolittle](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on September 13, 2012. Retrieved January 2, 2013.

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- James H. Doolittle (1995). *[I Could Never Be So Lucky Again](#)*. ISBN 9780887407376. ISBN 0-88740-737-4, 0553584642
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- Berliner, Don (December 2009 – January 2010). "[The Big Race of 1910](#)". *[Air & Space](#)*. **24** (6): 34–39.
- "[The 1925 Schneider Trophy Race](#)". *[Flight](#)*. London: 703. October 29, 1925.

Other websites

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Wikimedia Commons has media related to *[James Harold Doolittle](#)*.

- "[Arlington National Cemetery Website – James Harold Doolittle](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on April 2, 2003. Retrieved January 2, 2013.
- "[Travis Air Museum, supporting the Jimmy Doolittle Air & Space Museum](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on February 2, 2011. Retrieved January 2, 2013.
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- "[Interview with granddaughter Joanna Doolittle Hoppes at the Pritzker Military Library](#)". Retrieved January 2, 2013.
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