

Charles Lindbergh: roots, aviation career, and legacy

[Business](#)



Introduction Most aviation technology and some medical tools we have today came into being with the help of Charles Lindbergh. His life was enjoyable before his historic flight, with being raised in Little Falls, Minnesota, and mostly so after his historic flight.

He was awarded various aviation awards, tried to help with World War II, and had to suffer through the kidnapping and murder of his first-born son. He had a fascinating aviation career from when he started as a barnstormer to when he flew across the Atlantic Ocean. He left some legacies in the forms of books that he wrote and co-authored and medical advancements for open-heart surgery. Charles Lindbergh was a leader in aviation and contributor to modern technology and healthcare. Roots Charles Lindbergh had a pleasant early life and came from a variety of backgrounds.

He was born in Detroit in 1902. Charles' parents, Charles August Lindbergh and Evangeline Lodge Land, came from two very different professions (CHARLES A. LINDBERGH - BIOGRAPHY, 2009, p. 1). His father was a Swedish immigrant who moved to Little Falls, Minnesota when Charles was two months old.

There the elder Charles practiced law and served as a congressman from 1907-1917. (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). Charles' mother was a chemistry teacher from Detroit and a University of Michigan graduate (CHARLES A. LINDBERGH - BIOGRAPHY, 2009, p.

1). Charles spent most of his early life on his family's farm in Minnesota (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1).

The Lindbergh family had a fairly good standard of living and was moderately wealthy. Lindbergh was at the "...University of Wisconsin majoring in engineering when he became fascinated by flying machines" (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1). He attended the University of Wisconsin from 1920-1922, but dropped out to go to a flying school in Lincoln (Charles A.

Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). After his historic flight across the Atlantic Ocean, Lindbergh was busy with tours of the United States and other countries. While touring in Mexico, Lindbergh met his wife, Anne Morrow, and the two married in 1929 (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p.

1). She was the daughter of the United States ambassador in Mexico. They traveled to Europe where Lindbergh toured German aircraft factories, piloted modern bombers, and noticed a plethora of German airfields (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d., p. 1).

When he was touring the plants, Lindbergh was awestruck by the German aircraft industry (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1). While in Germany; he was awarded the Service Cross of the German Eagle in October of 1938 for his aviation contributions (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d.

, p. 1). When he returned to the United States " He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Calvin Coolidge" (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p.

1). Together the Lindbergh's had a son in 1931. In 1932, their son, Charles Jr., was kidnapped from their home, held for hefty ransoms, and found dead ten days after being kidnapped (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J.

, 2000, p. 1). The suspect that was tried and electrocuted on April 3, 1936 for the kidnapping and murder was Bruno Richard Hauptmann (The Lindbergh Kidnapping, 2010, p. 3). The kidnapping ordeal lasted for three years and forced the Lindbergh's to leave the United States (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d.

, p. 1). The Lindbergh's fled to Europe to find privacy and safety from photographers and reporters after the kidnapping and murder of Charles Jr. (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J.

, 2000, p. 1). Before they left, Lindbergh said to a friend that "' We Americans are a primitive people. ...Americans seem to have little respect for the law or the rights of others'" (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d.

, p. 1). While in Europe, Charles Lindbergh constantly urged America to stay out of all theaters of World War II (WWII) and to stay neutral (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d. , p.

2). He was backed by a few supporters who shared his views. Lindbergh decided to name names about the groups that were pushing the United States (U. S.) into WWII.

He said:" The three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish, and the Roosevelt

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Administration” (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d., p. 3).

After this statement, among others, Lindbergh was denounced as an anti-Semite and was publicly opposed by his mother-in-law, sister-in-law, civic and corporate organization. All of which cut their ties with him (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n.

d., p. 3). Charles Lindbergh wanted to fight for the U. S. in WWII, but President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said that “ You can’t have an officer leading men who thinks we’re licked before we start...” (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n.

d., p. 3). In 1943, Lindbergh convinced United Aircraft to send him to the Pacific as an observer during WWII (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d., p.

3). He flew more than fifty combat missions. During one of them he brought down an enemy fighter (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d., p. 4).

With the refusal by President Roosevelt and being hated by many people, Lindbergh began speaking on the misuse of power being the biggest threat to people (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the 1940s, n. d., p. 4). Charles Augustus Lindbergh died of cancer in 1974 at his home in Hana, Maui, Hawaii.

Which is also where he is buried (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 2).

Aviation Career→→ Charles Lindbergh’s first flight was as a passenger and it was on April 9, 1922 (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p.

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1). In 1924 Charles signed up for flight training at Brooks Army Base in San Antonio, Texas (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). He went on to become a Second Lieutenant in the Army Air Service Reserve (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1). With less than eight hours of instruction, Lindbergh was barnstorming in Nebraska. Barnstorming is the art of flying around and performing stunts in the air. Usually the pilot has an assistant who performs various stunts like wing-walking.

The barnstormers really invented several of the flying stunts we have today. He made his first parachute jump in June of 1922. Lindbergh bought his first plane for \$500 from Army Surplus and made his first solo flight in April of 1923 (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). Lindbergh really started his aviation career as a barnstormer traveling to fairs and air shows around the U.

S. giving flying demonstrations (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1).

“ In 1926 he flew the inaugural flight of a new airmail route between St. Louis and Chicago” (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1).

Lindbergh wanted to go for the second offering of the \$25, 000 Orteig Prize for anyone who could fly non-stop over the Atlantic Ocean from Paris to New York in either direction (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). To do this flight, Lindbergh convinced businessmen from St. Louis to fund the production of the Spirit of St.

Louis (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1). Lindbergh went to the Ryan Air Craft Factory in San Diego, California to have his plane built according to his specifications (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p.

1). His plane had to be lightweight, mono-engine, have no radio, and have extra fuel tanks. If Lindbergh considered something as extra weight, it did not go on The Spirit. The plane had the bare minimum number of instruments. Charles Lindbergh went through sleep deprivation training and had to stay awake for 24, 30, 35, and 40 hour stretches (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p.

1). When The Spirit of St. Louis was ready, he flew it from San Diego to New York in 20 hours and 21 minutes. Charles Lindbergh took off from Curtiss Field in New York at 7: 52 A. M.

on May 20, 1927 (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). When he took off he was facing a headwind and a storm (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p.

1). Charles Lindbergh “ Flew the first non-stop solo flight in a powered machine over the Atlantic Ocean...” (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1).

Lindbergh faced other pilots who had bigger and more powerful planes. His flight from New York to Paris took 33 hours and 30 minutes and he covered 3, 600 miles (Schlager, N. & Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1).

During his flight, he dozed off several times and awoke once just above the ocean waves. Having no radio and having to make his own navigation calculations he had to quickly adjust where he was and get back on track

(Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). Charles Lindbergh had a very precise flight plan for his trip.

It involved going up the New England Coast and Nova Scotia, over the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Newfoundland, past Cape Race, over the North Atlantic, over southern Ireland and Normandy (France), to Paris and landing in Le Bourget Field (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 1). “ Thirty-three hours and 30 minutes later he landed at Le Bourget Airport in Paris in the dark” (Schlager, N.

& Lauer, J., 2000, p. 1). When he landed, Lindbergh was greeted by thousands of people at Le Bourget. There were so many people in fact; that he thought that there was something wrong with the field or his plane so he circled around before landing.

After he landed he was taken from his plane and praised for his major accomplishment. Legacy During his life Charles Lindbergh wrote a few books. In 1927, Charles wrote *We*. It is a “ short autobiography and account of his Paris flight, written immediately afterward. A best-seller when published, it has remained popular with young readers” (Rosenbaum, 1992, p.

62). A few years later, in 1953, Lindbergh also published *The Spirit of St. Louis*. As an expansion of *We* and a record of his flight to Paris, this book won a Pulitzer Prize (Rosenbaum, 1992, p. 62). Charles Lindbergh also contributed to modern medical technology.

As Charles was a mechanical wizard, he was able to come up with a perfusion pump for open heart surgery (Fallen Hero: Charles Lindbergh in the

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1940s, n. d., p. 1). Lindbergh got the idea to design and invent the perfusion pump from a friend of Anne's who was going to have surgery.

Lindbergh worked with Dr. Alexis Carrel, famed biologist, to design the pump and it was originally used in zoological experiments (Charles A. Lindbergh, 2004, April 27, p. 2). The perfusion pump is used to keep organs alive outside of the body during operations.

Both Lindbergh and Dr. Carrel published a scientific book on organs and anatomy. Conclusion Charles Lindbergh was a leader in aviation and contributor to modern technology and healthcare. He had a long life filled with many twists, turns, fortunes, and misfortunes. This includes everything from being raised on a Minnesota farm, to having his first son kidnapped and murdered, to being disliked by some of his own family and country. He was a successful pilot and aviator with many successes throughout his entire aviation career.

This is everything from riding as a passenger on his first flight, to flying non-stop across the Atlantic to Paris by himself. In the end, he left several legacies through, aviation, books, and the medical field. There is probably nobody living in these times that can do anything remotely close to what Charles Augustus Lindbergh did for the people of today.