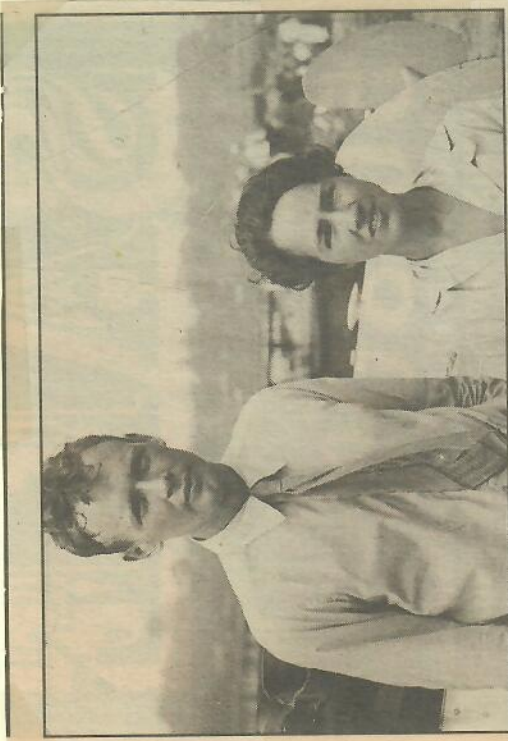


HE DIED - AUG. 26, 1974. PAGE = 427.



Wide World Photos

Anne Morrow Lindbergh with her husband, Charles, in 1931. They logged 40,000 miles of flying together in the early 1930s.

**Anne M. Lindbergh, Writer  
and Widow of Aviator, Dies**  
*LOS ANGELES TIMES, 2-8-2001.*

SHE DIED - FEB. 8, 2001.

*George Washington*  
1988

LEONARD MOSLEY

# LINDBERGH

A BIOGRAPHY

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## FOREWORD

In the winter of 1934-35 I was broadening a youthful mind, if hardly elevating it, by working as a replacement reporter and editorial handyman for the New York *Daily Mirror*. It is too long a story to explain how an eighteen-year-old Briton from the English provinces had got himself associated with this raucous American tabloid at one of the shillest moments of its career, except to mention that it involved a cat-the-boat trip from Manchester to Canada, jobs on the Montreal *Star* and backstage at Minsky's Forty-second Street burlesque theater, and an introduction to the *Mirror's* editor by an amiable Irish aristocrat named Viscount (Valentine) Castlerosse. I bring it up here simply to show why, when the *Daily Mirror* moved a considerable portion of its staff to Flemington, New Jersey, at the beginning of January 1935, to cover the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for the murder of the Lindbergh baby, I was a member of the team, and thus saw Charles Augustus Lindbergh in the flesh for the first time. Thereafter, it always seemed as if I were running into him or following in his footsteps.

Not only to young Americans was Charles Lindbergh the greatest hero of the nineteen twenties and thirties. In Britain, too, we pinned his picture over our beds and made fretwork models of the *Spirit of St. Louis*. I remember that in 1927, the year of the famous nonstop flight from New York to Paris, we were living in a Manchester suburb not far away from a great newspaperman of the day, C. P. Scott, owner-editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. I often used to see him cycling to his office in Cross Street, a tweedy, gray-bearded, patriarchal figure, and never failed to tip my school cap to him and say, "Hello, Mr. Scott." One day he hopped off his bike and asked me who I was and what I planned to do when I grew up.



"I'd like to be a great journalist like you, sir," I said.

He then asked me whether I had ever been in a newspaper office, and when I said no, he told me to report to the *Guardian* offices a couple of days hence, and he would arrange to have me shown over. The date fixed was May 22, 1927, which, as it turned out, was the day after Lindbergh's arrival in Paris. Even the staid editorial offices of the *Guardian* were in a tizzy over the reports flowing in from Paris—his hysterical reception by the crowd, detailed accounts of his flight, his first press conferences.

I came away clutching an early edition of the *Guardian* on which Scott had written: "For Leonard Mosley. Perhaps you too will have an article in the *Manchester Guardian* one day." When I got home I wrote in my journal: "Lindbergh has flown the Atlantic. I have been to the *Manchester Guardian*. An auspicious event for both of us."

After that, I always felt I had a sort of family interest in him, and I started a clippings book about his travels and activities, as if I were charting the progress of a hero who was also a favorite brother. I vicariously shared his triumphs and suffered with him over his experiences with public and the press. Among the thousands of letters which were written to him after the kidnaping of his child was one from me and twenty-five of my schoolmates.

To see him in person in court at Flemington, New Jersey, was an emotional experience for me, and what I saw raised him even higher in my estimation. It was part of my job to slip into the courthouse several times during the day to pick up copy from my seniors reporting the trial. He was always there, towering physically and symbolically over all the other performers and spectators at this execrable circus, a rock of rectitude and solidity in a seething, bubbling sea of hysteria and cheap sensation.

I had thought that when I first saw him there, it would be pity that I felt for him in his sorrow. I found myself admiring him, instead. To pity him would have been to insult him. Here was a man to be saluted for his courage, for he was manifestly a man who would always bear what came to him with greater dignity and fortitude than most other men.

Shortly after the end of the trial, I sailed back to England aboard the liner *Berengaria* and discovered that, quite by accident, I was a fellow passenger with Betty Gow, the young Scots girl who had been the Lindbergh baby's nurse. She had been bullied and browbeaten during the trial by the ineffable Edward J. Reilly, chief attorney for the defense, and was in a condition of considerable distress as a result of her ordeal. There followed one of those short, shipboard friendships which was re-

warding for both of us, I think (I had my own problems). She knew I had been at the trial and was probably the only person aboard who knew what it had been like, and we talked as two people who have shared a harrowing experience (because I, too, had been profoundly shocked at what I had seen going on in a supposed tribunal of law and justice).

She talked to me about her life with the Lindberghs, and I remember something she said, in her quiet, soft, melodious Scottish voice.

"Colonel Lindbergh is the most honest man I have ever met," she said. "Do you know, he cannot tell a lie, even if he knows the truth is going to hurt—and even if the person he hurts is very close to him? He just has to tell the truth, and he expects other people to tell the truth to him. It would never occur to him that anyone would ever lie to him. He once caught one of Mrs. Lindbergh's aunts telling a tall story, and when he taxed her with it, she said, 'But I was just fibbing, Colonel.' 'Aunt Agnes,' he said, 'there are no such things as fibs, only lies.' She looked quite crushed, poor lady."

I thought of those words in 1938 and 1939. By that time, I was in Germany as a correspondent and was following with some apprehension Charles Lindbergh's visits there. We heard in various roundabout ways what the Nazis were telling the famous flier. Did he realize that they were lying to him? When my friend, Paul Stehlin, who was then an air intelligence officer at the French embassy in Berlin, told me that Lindbergh was happy about the Anglo-French capitulation at Munich and that, later, with war only weeks away, he was trying to promote a Franco-German aircraft deal, I said that what he was probably doing was double-bluffing the Nazis. Stehlin shook his head, but I stayed optimistic.

I flew into Paris from Germany in 1945 just about the time when Charles Lindbergh arrived there with the U. S. Naval Technical Mission, and my office asked me to check the rumors that he was in the city. If so, would I contact him and ask him how Paris in the aftermath of World War II compared with the capital which he had known in 1927. I eventually heard from General Mark Clark (I had been a correspondent with the U. S. Fifth Army, which Clark commanded, in Italy) that he and Lindbergh were lunching that day with Ambassador Jefferson Caffery at the American embassy, and I was there when Lindbergh came in. War correspondents still wore uniforms in Germany in those days, and I had brought no change of clothing with me to France, and I guess it was because he thought I belonged to the military that he stopped and listened to me when I went up and spoke to him. But when he realized I was a newspaperman, the smile disap-



peared from his face, and he said brusquely, "I have absolutely nothing constructive I could say."

He was about to pass on when his glance caught the paratrooper's wings I was wearing, and in a slightly more amiable tone he asked where I had dropped. I said I had gone in with British 6th Airborne paratroopists into Normandy on D day, June 6, 1944. He asked what height we had dropped at, and I said 250 feet. He grinned then, and said that was a sight too low for his liking. He preferred to have height to float around in.

"Not if the air's full of bullets and flak," I said.

He laughed. "I guess not," he said. He reached out his hand, and I shook it. "Glad to have met you. Sorry I can't help you." He passed on. He hadn't asked my name.

I didn't see him during his tour of Germany, but when I went to see Willy Messerschmitt, who built the Me109s, 110s, and 262s for the Nazi Luftwaffe, he said that Lindbergh had been to see him a couple of days before and had given him chocolate, coffee, and cigarettes.

"He is a great gentleman," he said. "He made me feel like a human being again." He paused, and then added: "Do you know, I think he hates the Russians more than we do."

In the postwar years, I still kept tag on Charles Lindbergh's progress. I suppose I had always known in my bones that I would one day write his life story, and what had begun as a youthful fan's souvenir book was now building up into a kind of dossier. Items of this kind found their way into it:

Cannes, August —, 1973. Had dinner last night at Dolly's villa. Sitting across from me was Sir Charles Wheeler, who sees a lot of the Aubrey Morgans (she's Anne Morrow Lindbergh's sister) in Wales. He said last time he dined there Lindbergh was visiting. Seemed very morose and worried about something. Sir Charles asked him about Nixon, and practically had his head snapped off. Lindbergh said he never talked American politics with Englishmen. He was later told that Lindbergh still feels very constrained when he comes to Britain. Even after all these years, he fears someone will attack him (verbally or physically?) over his behavior toward England in WW2.

Or:

New York, Feb. 1970. Curious experience today. I came

into Grand Central Station and suddenly had a feeling that there was someone near me that I knew. When I looked around, I saw Charles Lindbergh staring into a bookshop window, but when I came closer to him I realized that he was not looking at the books, but was using the reflection of the light on the window to watch the people behind him hurrying by. He looks a lot older than when I saw him a couple of years ago. He looked slightly annoyed by something, which, I'm told, he does a lot these days, but God, he's still handsome and you can still see the shape of that tall, vital kid we once knew underneath the aging. While I was covertly watching him, with the sort of rueful, mixed emotions I have for him nowadays, I felt the wind of Anne Morrow L.'s passing as she rushed up to him. "Oh, my!" I heard her say. "I know someone who's going to be good and mad. I'm sorry I'm late, Charles." She was wearing a purple suit, a deeper purple sort of jersey, red shoes, and handbag. She nearly always wears purple. Come to think of it, whenever I've seen her, she never wears anything else! He looked down at her, and then the irritated expression cleared and he smiled at her. The smile hasn't changed! They went off—toward the New Haven R.R., I expect.

I practically decided then and there that it was about time I got down to writing about Charles Lindbergh. If he was getting into my bones to the extent that I sensed when he was around, the moment had arrived. But since there were other projects in hand, it was not until 1973 that the dossier on Charles Lindbergh moved to the front of my files. He and it have been with me ever since. On August 26, 1974, the day he died, I was in a small plane flying toward the Eiffel Tower and then turning toward Le Bourget airfield, in imitation of his 1927 flight. News was just coming in from Hawaii as we drove back into Paris in the summer twilight.

"The French people will be very sad," said my companion, a young French pilot. "He was a great hero to them. That flight was a sort of link between us and America, you know, and despite everything, I don't think it has been broken." We drove on in silence, and then he said, "Something went wrong with him later, didn't it? Not just that terrible kidnaping, I mean. Other things. What happened?"

I told him he would have to wait for this book to find out.

At the end of this book, the reader will find a bibliographical essay



giving in detail the sources consulted for this biography, the journeys made, the friends and associates to whom I have talked. Here I would like to say how grateful I am to the editors of the *New York Times*, and in particular to my old friend and colleague, James L. Greenfield, for allowing me the facilities of their splendid organization during the researches into Charles Lindbergh's background. I would also like to single out for special thanks Mr. Nigel Nicolson for giving me free access to his father's unpublished diaries and letters and for interrupting his many pursuits to entertain me on two occasions at Sissinghurst Castle; Mr. Tom Harrison, of the World Wild Life Fund, for his help and hospitality in England, Brussels, and the South of France; and finally, my editor, John Ware, for proving such an amiable godfather to this creation.

# Prologue: The Wound Reopened



emotional letter he had received from him on January 27, 1967. But that was because he had decided upon another method of securing vindication from the American people. He abandoned conservation for the moment, and went over to Yale University instead to immerse himself in his papers and go through the diaries which he himself had kept from 1938 through 1945. After reading them through again, he rang up his friend and publisher, William Jovanovich, of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. It was agreed that except for certain excisions of names and events, and an editing for length, the diaries would be published as they had been written.


They appeared in the fall of 1970 under the title *The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh*, and as an exercise in justification they could hardly be called a success. There was an air of defiance about Lindbergh's introduction which seemed almost deliberately intended to ruffle the feathers of his onetime opponents and provoke them into fighting him all over again. He pointed out that he found he still held the beliefs which he had set down in the journal's pages, and there was still not a word of criticism of the Nazi Government whose crimes he might have missed during his stay in Germany, but the horrors of which were now documented and proved.

He had not budged from his contention that the war had been wrong and that it had been fought against the wrong nation. In a challenging passage, he even denied that we had won World War II. Unfortunately, Lindbergh's literary executors have refused permission for the reproduction of this particular passage, which attracted much attention in the United States when the book was published, and was widely quoted.

In it Lindbergh maintained that the Allied victory had been one in a military sense only, and that otherwise none of the causes for which the war was waged had been won. In opposing Germany and Japan, we had aggrandized the Soviet Union and China. Poland had been lost. The British Empire had crumbled. France was in the grip of "a mild dictatorship."<sup>†</sup>

If there was a rigidity in the opinions he expressed in his introduction, there were also some curious prejudices and *idées fixes* in the pages of the journals themselves which critics immediately seized upon. Jean Stafford in the *New York Review of Books* called him a "goony bird" about whom "the murk of prejudice and warmly nursed grievances obfuscates the message, unless the message is one too sinister to contemplate." Reed Whittemore's review in the *New Republic* was,

<sup>†</sup> For the full text, see *The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), p. xv.



40. Among the most important of Lindbergh's activities in his later years was a directorship with Pan American Airways, on whose behalf he traveled most of the world aboard the company's aircraft. The great aviation pioneer had come a long way.



Mikael, then chief of the Ethiopian Imperial Archives, who was present at the interview with Haile Selassie; and from friends of Dr. Michael Wood, of Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. The passage he wrote about "lying under an acacia tree" appeared in *Reader's Digest*, July 1964.

André Turcat, chief French pilot of the Anglo-French supersonic plane, the Concorde, has been asked not to release the correspondence which he carried on with Lindbergh after the latter turned against supersonic travel. The letter to Congressman Sidney Yates was issued shortly before the appearance of the article against commercial supersonic planes which Lindbergh wrote for the *New York Times* on July 7, 1972.

Details given here of the Lindbergh family come from friends and those close to them.

Lindbergh explained how he came to join the World Wild Life Fund in a statement to the *New York Times* on May 23, 1971 (though he joined the WWF in 1965). The article which he wrote on the environment for *Life* appeared in that magazine's Christmas issue, 1967.

Lindbergh's remarks about the cost of the first lunar program and Goddard's estimate of it were made at a meeting of the Airline Pilots Association in 1969.

The information about Anne Lindbergh's chalet in Switzerland and the family sojourns there comes from sources close to them. Dr. Karl Burckhardt, who died in 1974 but was a friend for many years, told the story about Lindbergh when I was consulting him for information for my biography of Hermann Göring. Tom Harrison is another old friend, and his stories of his association with Lindbergh were told me during talks at his home in Brussels, and during visits to my home in the South of France.

The exposition of his standpoint on World War II as he saw it in the light of what has happened since ("We won in a military sense but") come from Lindbergh's introduction to *The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh* (op. cit.). The riposte from the *New York Times* appeared on September 6, 1970.

#### Chapter Twenty-Eight Last Adventure

Charles Lindbergh recounted the incident when he was locked in the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Building in a letter to Russell Fridley, of the Minnesota Historical Society, dated December 27, 1969.

The account of his trips to the Philippines come from various

sources: from the bulletins of the Survival Service Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, from Survival International, from Elizalde's own accounts in his long reports to Panamin, from Lindbergh's own statements to the *New York Times*, from various articles and magazines, and from a splendid book about the Stone Age tribes of Mindanao, *The Gentle Tasaday*, by John Nance (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975). An introduction to this book was the last published work that Lindbergh wrote. He finished it in Hawaii five months before he died.

## HIS DEATH

### Chapter Twenty-Nine Eagle's Nest

William Benton's attempts to get his friends to agree to become members of the National Institute of Art and Letters are detailed in his papers, and Lindbergh replied to him on November 17, 1972. The Lindberghs' visit to Falaise on the day of its opening as a museum was described by my neighbors at Glen Head, Long Island, where I was living during the researching of this book. They were also there at the invitation of Nassau County.

Lindbergh's remarks about the urban sprawl that America was becoming ("few men have seen with their own eyes") were made to visitors and guests invited to the opening ceremony of the new Center at the Lindbergh home in Little Falls. Details of his illness come from informants at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, and his attitude to death appeared in an item he wrote in his journals while on a trip to Russia in 1938.

The burial service was conducted by the Reverend John M. Tincher, of the United Methodist Church of Burlingame, California. It took place a few hours after Lindbergh died, on August 26, 1974, when Rev. Tincher read the words:

"We commit the body of General Charles A. Lindbergh to its final resting place, but his spirit we commend to Almighty God, knowing that death is but a new adventure in existence and remembering how Jesus said upon the cross, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'"

Tincher talked with Anne Lindbergh about her husband's death and wrote later, in a letter to me, "Mrs. Lindbergh helped me to understand the tremendous grasp of death and the willingness to accept the



inevitable, both of which were expressed in the last few days of Charles Lindbergh's life."

Anne Lindbergh wore a plain simple dress to the funeral ceremony and a single string of pearls. The color of the dress was purple, her favorite color and, when she wore it, his.

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LEONARD  
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LINDBERGH

DOUBLEDAY



CHAPTER 24

HENRY FORD AND

LINDERGH ~

WORTH READING ~ IN FACT

THIS ENTIRE BOOK IS ~!