LIEUTENANT GENERAL FRANCIS P. MULCAHY, USMC (DECEASED)

Lieutenant General Francis P. Mulcahy who earned his first Distinguished Service Medal for heroic work as a Marine aviator in France in 1918, died on 11 December 1973. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Distinguished Service Medal for his skillful leadership and outstanding initiative as Commander of the Allied Air Forces during a crucial period of the Solomon Islands campaign. He also earned the Army Distinguished Service Medal as Commanding General, Tactical Air Force, Tenth Army, made up of Army, Navy, and Marine units in the Okinawa campaign.

General Mulcahy was born on March 9, 1894, in Rochester, New York. A 1914 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he was appointed a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in June 1917. He began flight training in October of that year and flew with the Marine Corps continuously until the time of his retirement on April 1, 1945. His promotions included: first lieutenant, 1917; captain, 1918; major, 1934; lieutenant colonel, 1936; colonel, 1941; brigadier general, 1942; and major general, 1944. He was advanced to lieutenant general on retirement, having been specially commended for heroism in actual combat.

As a member of the First Marine Aviation Force, General Mulcahy was transferred to France in July 1918, where his unit became part of the Northern Bombing Group, operating from airfields in Belgium, and between Calais and Dunkerque.

In October of that year he was awarded his first Navy Distinguished Service Medal.

During the period between the First and Second World Wars, he served with Marine Aviation on many expeditionary missions, which included service in Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. During the Second Nicaraguan Campaign, General Mulcahy was in command of Marine Air from July 1931 until the departure of all Marines on January 1, 1933.

During interim periods of duty in the United States, he attended the Air Corps Tactical School, the Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Naval War College at Newport, R.I.

When the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor plunged the United States into war, General Mulcahy was serving as an observer with the British Western Desert Air Force in North Africa. He continued in that capacity until January 1942, at which time he was recalled to the United States to become Chief of Staff of the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. In August he became Commanding General of that Wing.

Under his command, the 2nd Wing moved overseas during December 1942 and January 1943. Establishing headquarters on Guadalcanal, General Mulcahy remained there from December 1942 to February of
the following year as Commander of all Allied Air Forces based on
the island, and earned his second Navy Distinguished Service Medal
in this capacity. From the latter date until April 1943, he was
Chief of Staff to the Commander, Air Forces, Solomon Islands, and
from June to September, Commander of the New Georgia Air Force, and
in this latter capacity earned the Legion of Merit.

Upon completion of his first tour of duty in the South Pacific
in early 1944, he returned to the United States briefly and served
as Commanding General, Marine Fleet Air, West Coast, from May until
September 1944. Returning overseas, he was assigned as Commanding
General of Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. As preparations
for the Okinawa campaign began, he was assigned as Commanding
General, Tactical Air Force (TAF), Tenth Army, and Commanding General,
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing—with the 2nd Wing's tactical units
augmented by Army and Navy personnel, forming the nucleus of TAF.

For his service prior to and throughout the Okinawa campaign,
he was awarded the Army Distinguished Service Medal.

In June 1945, he returned to the United States and following
hospitalization at the U.S. Naval Hospital, San Diego, was assigned
to an inactive status on December 1 awaiting retirement. He retired
with the rank of lieutenant general on April 1, 1946.

A list of his medals and decorations included: the Navy
Distinguished Service Medal with Gold Star in lieu of a second
award (France, 1918; Solomon Islands, 1942-43); the Army
Distinguished Service Medal (Ryukyus Campaign, 11-44 to 6-45);
Legion of Merit (South Pacific, 6-30-43 to 8-8-43); Special Letter
of Commendation from Secretary of the Navy (Nicaragua, 1931); Army
Letter of Commendation (Solomon Islands, 7-25-43 to 9-24-43); Marine
Corps Expeditionary Medal (Haiti, 1921-24); Second Nicaraguan
Campaign Medal (Nicaragua, 1927); American Defense Service Medal
(1939-41); Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal (1942-43, 1944-45);
European-African-Middle Eastern Area Campaign Medal (North Africa
1941); Victory Medal, World War I; Victory Medal World War II;
Nicaraguan Medal of Distinction; Nicaraguan Cross of Valor;
Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

The general is survived by his widow [redacted] Coronado, California 92118 and two children, [redacted].

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