



**Richard
Cole**

Army Air Corps

Richard Cole

Feb 10, 1915 - Apr 9, 2019

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Lt. Col

DIVISION: Army Air Corps

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Jun 14, 2022 - Jun 14, 2022

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Richard Cole was a member of the daring Doolittle Raiders who bombed Japan during an aerial raid in World War II. He was one of 80 U.S Air Force personnel who took part in the raid in April 1942, dropping bombs on seven cities in Japan. Cole was the co-pilot in the lead B-25 with pilot Jimmy Doolittle that bombed Tokyo. Running out of fuel on their return, they had to bail out over China and were helped by Chinese troops. The raid did little damage but was a major morale booster for the country during the beginning of the war, occurring only four months after Pearl Harbor. Cole continued to serve in the China-Burma-India Theater until 1943. Cole recalled, "The crews of the 16 planes were "very Quiet" as they neared Japan. Cole remarked his role next to Doolittle was to "be seen , not heard...You didn't speak until spoken to. The Song Wabash Cannonball started running through Cole's head and he unconsciously began tapping his toe, which caught Doolittle's attention. He shot Cole a look. Soon Doolittle ordered bomb bay doors opened and the attack was on against what turned out to be limited anti-aircraft fire in the the surprise attack. The group headed to China running out of fuel. Cole said Doolittle gave the command to prepare to bail out as they neared the coast, adding, "I wish you all good luck." Cole said it was very scary to parachute into dark "unknown" in rough weather. His parachute caught in a tree, leaving him dangling but safe. Chinese partisans helped lead him and other Raiders to safety. "Courtesy of The Associated Press"