

Montgomery of Alamein

Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, 1st Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, KG, GCB, DSO, PC (1887-1976), nicknamed "Monty" and the "Spartan General", saw action in the First World War as a junior officer in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He took part in the battles of Arras and Passchendaele before finishing the war as chief of staff of the 47th (2nd London) Division. In the inter-war years he commanded the 17th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers and, later, the 1st Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment before becoming commander of 9th Infantry Brigade and then General Officer Commanding 8th Infantry Division.

During the Second World War he commanded the British Eighth Army from August 1942 in the Western Desert until the final Allied victory in Tunisia. This command included the Battle of El Alamein, a turning point in the Western Desert Campaign. He subsequently commanded the British Eighth Army during the Allied invasion of Sicily and then during the Allied invasion of Italy. He was in command of all Allied ground forces during Operation *Overlord* from the initial landings until after the Battle of Normandy. He then continued in command of the 21st Army Group for the rest of the campaign in North West Europe. As such he was the principal field commander for the failed airborne attempt to bridge the Rhine at Arnhem and the Allied Rhine crossing. On 4 May 1945 he took the German surrender at Lüneburg Heath in northern Germany. After the war he became Commander-in-Chief of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) in Germany and then Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

His memoirs were published in 1958 and among his other books are EL ALAMEIN TO THE RIVER SANGRO, FORWARD TO VICTORY and THE PATH TO LEADERSHIP.

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