

**OPERATION
MARKET-
GARDEN WAS A
TOTAL FAILURE.**

**BUT WHO WAS
MONTGOMERY
?**



THE FOLLOWING BRIEF SUMMARY OF HISTORY OF MARKET-GARDEN AND THE FAILED LEADERSHIP OF MONTGOMERY IS FROM THE WEBSITE “HISTORY AND HEADLINES.”

On March 24, 1976, Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, 1st Viscount of Alamein, hero of World War II, died at home in England. Along with Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, Montgomery is the most celebrated of British generals and had the ego to match, or even exceed, his reputation. Awarded medals and honors from his own country, “Monty” was also decorated with high honors from many other countries as well, including the U.S., France, Denmark (they made him a Knight of the Order of The Elephant), Belgium, Ethiopia and others. As great as he thought he was, Monty was not without fault, and so, in this article, we list some of the many criticisms that his various detractors have leveled against him.

10. He looked like a boy scout in his short pants and not like a warrior!

He strutted about like a bantam rooster. Although Montgomery professed to be homophobic, at least one biographer is convinced Montgomery was gay and there is a documented relationship that he had with a 12 year old Swiss boy. Even if it was not “improper,” it was odd for the time to say the least. He was also regarded by some as kind of prissy, and arguably just did not look the part of a great warrior, but does it really matter how a soldier is dressed? One could argue that there is a practical reasons for why someone fighting in the hot, sunny desert would wear shorts. Moreover, plenty of soldiers in various world cultures have worn even flashy and colorful uniforms while still being brave warriors. Finally, while a possible relationship with an underage boy would be problematic, if Montgomery was indeed homosexual and had any relationships with other consenting adult men, that by itself should in no way diminish his reputation as a soldier, given that history is full of examples of formidable soldiers who also happened to be homosexuals. Moreover, we have to wonder if this allegation is even true as Montgomery was married and had a son. Thus, for these reasons, we consider the criticisms that authors have leveled against Montgomery about he looked or dressed to be among the weakest, which is why this entry ranks only tenth on our list.



9. His enormous ego led to his failure as Chief of the General Staff after WWII.

Whenever something went wrong, he pointed fingers and blamed other people, not taking responsibility like a real leader of men. Was he an egomaniac? Well, he did have a Rolls-Royce for a staff car! Contrast that to American general George S. Patton riding around in a Jeep. And for the US, Patton was considered egotistical!



8. He tried to steal credit for winning the Battle of the Bulge.

He claimed in 1945 that he alone was responsible for the Allied victory when General Patton and the change in weather had a lot more to do with it.



7. He won in North Africa because of superior numbers, supply, and air cover, not *him*.

After earlier Allied losses, by the time Montgomery took over the North Africa campaign, German resupply was almost totally cut off by Allied air and sea power, and of course, ultimate victory came when throngs of American troops and supplies showed up.



6. *Wikipedia* claims Montgomery was the inspiration for the name of *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, but was he?

He is also the namesake of the Montgomery cocktail, a martini mixed at a ratio of 15 to 1 (gin to vermouth) as he was said to refuse to attack unless he had a 15 to 1 advantage. Moreover, Montgomery actually supported Apartheid in South Africa. What a legacy!

5. He demanded the loyalty and devotion he would not give his superiors.

Montgomery was something of a dilettante, petty and demanding, while thinking nothing of undermining his own superiors. He ran staff meetings like a petulant school marm, ordering that there should be no coughing, no smoking, no anything that would detract from attention being paid to himself.



4. He moved so slow in Sicily that Patton took over the island for him.

Of course, Montgomery pouted and whined about it as well, behavior that his detractors again considered unbecoming for such a celebrated hero.



3. The “Bridge Too Far” debacle was his plan and thus his fault.

The one time Montgomery came up with a bold and aggressive plan, it resulted in the debacle at Arnhem and failed to accomplish its goals.



2. Actual heroes do not snidely criticize their peers, but he certainly did.

Instead of having a good thing to say about other leaders, Montgomery continued to criticize American general Dwight Eisenhower after the war, and then even after Ike (as Eisenhower was also known) became president, Montgomery criticized that! Montgomery kept up the verbal attacks into old age, severely criticizing the U.S. military effort in Vietnam. Eventually, Montgomery, Alabama stripped him of his honorary citizenship. Even his enemies did not really admire him. For example, an Italian officer challenged him to a duel!



1. He came close to losing Normandy by hesitation and inaction.

He almost got fired by Eisenhower who was at wits end trying to get the notoriously cautious Montgomery to get up and move out of the beachhead.

