



Patton, Montgomery, Rommel: Masters of War

Terry Brighton

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In *Patton, Montgomery, Rommel*, one of Britain's most accomplished military scholars presents an unprecedented study of the land war in the North African and European theaters, as well as their chief commanders—three men who also happened to be the most compelling dramatis personae of World War II.

Beyond spellbinding depictions of pivotal confrontations at El Alamein, Monte Cassino, and the Ardennes forest, author-scholar Terry Brighton illuminates the personal motivations and historical events that propelled the three men's careers: how Patton's, Montgomery's, and Rommel's Great War experiences helped to mold their style of command—and how, exactly, they managed to apply their arguably megalomaniacal personalities (and hitherto unrecognized political acumen and tact) to advance their careers and strategic vision.

Opening new avenues of inquiry into the lives and careers of three men widely profiled by scholars and popular historians alike, Brighton definitively answers numerous lingering and controversial questions: Was Patton really as vainglorious in real life as he was portrayed to be on the silver screen?—and how did his tireless advocacy of "mechanized cavalry" forever change the face of war? Was Monty's dogged publicity-seeking driven by his own need for recognition or by his desire to claim for Britain a leadership role in postwar global order?—and how did this prickly "commoner" manage to earn affection and esteem from enlisted men and nobility alike? How might the war have ended if Rommel had had more tanks?—and what fundamental philosophical difference between him and Hitler made such an outcome virtually impossible?

Abetted by new primary source material and animated by Terry Brighton's incomparable storytelling gifts, *Patton, Montgomery, Rommel* offers critical new interpretations of the Second World War as it was experienced by its three most flamboyant, controversial, and influential commanders—and augments our understanding of each of their perceptions of war and leadership.

From the Hardcover edition.

Patton, Montgomery, Rommel: Masters of War Details

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From Reader Review Patton, Montgomery, Rommel: Masters of War for online ebook

Mike Calabrese says

I learned something new about WW2 from this book.

I've read a number of WW2 books but never knew about the friction between the US and British generals. My dad was in Normandy and Bulge and he never mentioned this. You'll have to read the book to find out what that friction was all about. This was a good read.

Charlie Shaw says

Very informative read distinguishing between the very real personalities of these three individuals.

Ravi Singh says

Definitely the three most celebrated generals of WW 2 if not the best. Here's a book that tackles all three and their individual characteristics together for the reader to compare. The author uses a parallel narrative starting from their childhood and builds it up. Their most famous battles are discussed in sufficient detail to identify their personal traits and strategies. The book has been written in a objective way which is a refreshing change from the usual eulogizing manner most others are on these three. It is clear that these three performed a far greater role as celebrated heroes for their respective nations than just their generalship. Arguably Rommel was truly brilliant for having achieved so much with so little, while Patton was ahead of his times and done in by his own inability to suffer fools. Meanwhile Montgomery owes much of his fame more to the British need for a hero and all that was done for him rather than any individual brilliance. Which is not to say he wasn't a great general, but probably not in the league of the other two. A must read read for military men as it is packed with wonderful nuggets on leadership and personal traits and charisma which can make all the difference.

Joe Oaster says

Great book about three of the biggest personalities in the ETO. I have read much on all three, love Patton and never liked Montgomery who I found to be an obnoxious glory seeking stuck-up leader. This book did not sway my argument at all. I found Montgomery to be a little short of a pompous A\$\$\$. Rommel, a genius who fought gallantly with the little support but his loyalty to Hitler will always give me black marks in history.

Patton, an effective leader with non-traditional methods is not perfect but was well loved by his men.

Great book on the conflicting personalities.

Joy says

Very interesting book about three genuine prima donas. Amazingly, Rommel was my favorite.

Terri says

Fascinating collateral biographies of three of WW II's most famous generals. I enjoyed this book very much.

Christian J says

This analysis started off with the idea that Rommel was enamored with Hitler, and the author attempted to back this up throughout the book. It was well written, and I would recommend it to all.

Steven Kaminski says

Interesting combination of personalities in this book. The three generals in this book are in many ways revered by the countries they represented and this book gets into their successes as well as their failures for many of them personal. The each had their own ego & if I took something away from the book it's that ego can bring you down a notch just as quickly.

- Rommel as an officer was known for his leadership in training but was decorated for his courage in WW I. He often made decisions contrary to what commanders told him when he saw opportunities on the ground to win the battles. He was very lucky in his youth to have made smart decisions and was seen by his peers as a fighting officer.

- Patton as a young officer was sent to Mexico to hunt for Pancho Villa. He was sent as the aide to his mentor General 'Black Jack' Pershing. Pershing was very much seen as an asskicker and Patton modeled himself after Pershing. Following him later to Europe.

- Bernard Montgomery as a young officer was leading a unit in WW I. In a single battle the British generals ordered his army into battle and he lost 30% of his unit and 19,000 troops were killed. The experience absolutely horrified Montgomery. He was so taken aback by this that when he was later promoted he would make the care of his soldiers his first priority. He was very cautious in making advances which would later frustrate his fellow allies in WW II.

- The first time Patton was wounded in battle he was reprimanded for leading his men from the front & leaving his headquarters. Patton very much grew addicted to the adrenaline of being on the front lines and towards the end of WW I was promoted to colonel. After WW I he was posted to Fort Meade where his neighbor was none other than Dwight Eisenhower.

- Rommel was not a member of the Nazi Party but his name kept coming forward to Hitler because he was a teacher of many of the young officers who would support Hitler. Known for his knowledge & skills Hitler finally interviewed him & made him his personal head of security. Rommel bonded with Hitler in many

ways because he was not an aristocratic officer but someone who was promoted on his own merits. After serving Hitler for a few years he asked for & was granted a tank battalion where he really became known.

- During WW II Montgomery became someone who with every success started to get a HUGE ego. Every victory fed into his image & he spent considerable energy to cultivate his image. When it came to the battles he did not want to go forward unless he could be absolutely certain of success & he wanted command of everyone of the allied forces creating tension with Eisenhower.

- Patton really had two sides. To his soldiers he was profane and blunt often to the point of offending others as he did on multiple occasions. When in quiet company he was often a listener, polite and showcasing his education. In many ways he wanted to embody the romantic ideas of a soldier.

- Rommel would be told to commit suicide by Hitler after he was suspected of participating in Operation Valkyrie. Patton after the German defeat would die as the result of all things a auto accident which left him paralyzed & then dead of an embolism.

- Montgomery would go on to write an autobiography trumpeting his own achievements. He pissed off many of his fellow 'allies' so much that they went on to sue him. He would later die of natural causes.

All three generals in the book are fascinating characters & this brings them to life...

Lloyd Hinkle says

Good summary of the interaction of these 3 generals.

Eric J. Hartsfield says

Fair description of the three

Not a bad bio of the three men who all played a major role in the war but I only give it 3 stars as it has no maps.

Rick Davis says

Very good book comparing the personalities and characteristics of all three generals. The author details many of the problems that Eisenhower faced with Patton and Montgomery.

Steven Peterson says

This book has an interesting premise--the interactions among three generals in World War II--George Patton (USA), Bernard Montgomery (UK), and Erwin Rommel (Germany). The juxtaposition of their jousting with one another provides a useful takeoff point for analysis. More interesting--the jousting is also within an

alliance, with Montgomery and Patton not on the best of terms.

The book traces the backgrounds of each of the three generals, including their experience during World War I and in the inter-war period. But the centerpiece is the interactions among them in the Second World War.

The book does a nice job of describing their combat experiences, their wins and their losses. The author is scrupulous about examining each of the three in a fair manner. The warts show up as well as the strengths.

One point. The author creates a sense that these are three very special generals. Certainly, they have received much publicity over time and have been generally looked at positively. But there were other generals--some superior to any of these three--that seem to get rather short shrift in this work. Germany? Rommel certainly did well in Northern Africa, but this was a rather minor theater with relatively small forces, compared with other theaters. Other generals, such as Guderian and Manstein, were better.

Overall, the book is pretty well written and the narrative moves along. On its own terms, it does a pretty nice job of juxtaposing the three generals.

Glory says

A very interesting, revelatory book! The mingling of the three biographies was a nice mix, and I felt good about myself for having learned about three important figures in WWII in one book. It taught me more about the general timeline of the European theater than any history textbook or article I'd read. A personal perspective, such as those found in biographies like these, always aids in the learning of the big picture.

Calzean says

There are much more detailed autobiographies on these three Generals. By covering their lives and military achievements the author focuses on a few key points. What made them stand apart from their contemporaries? Why it was important for them to have big egos. And the professional classes between them - not on the battlefield but for bragging rights.

Each man had tremendous will power, charisma and carried a particular mystique. Monty is characterised as aloof, arrogant, self-righteous and willing to take credit for the work of others. Patton was colourful, but racist, anti-semitic and failed to acknowledge the damage of war on the mental state of his men. Rommel was the trail blazer who put into place the tactics of using modern weaponry on the battlefield. All three were ruthless in sending men to their deaths; sometimes Monty did this for the weird reason to prove his argument right or to prevent Patton from achieving a certain victory.

The book has many sliding door moments. What if each man had died in WWI from their wounds, what if a car accident, an aircraft accident or Patton had not been a neighbour to Eisenhower....?

An easy book to read and one that gives a picture of what did happen or could have happened in WWII.

Michael Shaoul says

Great historical summary

Really pulls together these 3 great military men exposing their skills, flaws and failures. Learned a great deal and enjoyed the writing too.
