

CATALOGUE OF FIELD MARSHAL MONTGOMERY'S PERSONAL MESSAGES TO HIS TROOPS, 1942-1946

(v. November, 2018)

Source: www.fieldmarshalmontgomery.com

This is a catalogue of all the personal messages written by General / Field Marshal B.L. Montgomery to his troops during 1942-46 that I have come across. If a reader knows of a message that should be in here but isn't, or if you'd you like to get in touch, please let me know at Vistafjord@gmail.com.

For more information on Montgomery's personal messages, please visit: www.fieldmarshalmontgomery.com.

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31 August, 1942 (typed in, no date on printed copy):
To Officers and Men of Eighth Army
SPECIAL MESSAGE

1. The enemy is now attempting to break through our positions in order to reach CAIRO, SUEZ, and ALEXANDRIA, and to drive us from EGYPT.
2. The Eighth Army bars the way. It carries a great responsibility, and the whole future of the war will depend on how we carry out our task.
3. We will fight the enemy where we now stand; there will be NO WITHDRAWAL and NO SURRENDER.

Every officer and man must continue to do his duty as long as he has breath in his body.

If each one of us does his duty, we cannot fail; the opportunity will then occur to take the offensive ourselves and to destroy once and for all the enemy forces now in EGYPT.

4. Into the battle then, with stout hearts and with the determination to do our duty.

And may God give us the victory.

B.L. Montgomery,
Lieutenant-General.

[NOTE: Not in "A collection of General Montgomery's Personal Messages to the Eighth Army"]

23 October, 1942

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the ARMY COMMANDER

1. When I assumed command of the Eighth Army I said that the mandate was to destroy ROMMEL and his Army, and that it would be done as soon as we are ready.
2. We are ready NOW

The battle which is now about to begin will be one of the decisive battles of history. It will be the turning point of the war. The eyes of the whole world will be on us, watching anxiously which way the battle will swing

We can give them their answer at once: "It will swing our way"

3. We have first-class equipment; good tanks; good anti-tank guns; plenty of artillery and plenty of ammunition; and we are backed up by the finest air striking force in the world.

All that is necessary is that each one of us, every officer and man, should enter this battle with the determination to see it through – to fight and to kill – and finally, to win.

If we all do this there can be only one result – together we will hit the enemy for "six", right out of North Africa.

4. The sooner we win this battle, which will be the turning point of the war, the sooner we shall all get back home to our families.
5. Therefore, let every officer and man enter the battle with a stout heart, and the determination to do his duty as long as he has breath in his body.

AND LET NO MAN SURRENDER SO LONG AS HE IS UNWOUNDED AND CAN FIGHT.

Let us all pray that "The Lord mighty in battle" will give us victory.

[BL Montgomery]

Lieutenant-General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: Written on the eve of the Battle of Alamein, the turning point of the North African war. Superb text. One wonders how many of today's commanders (military or political) could muster such eloquence].

12 November, 1942

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the Army Commander

TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. When we began the Battle of Egypt on 23 October I said that together we would hit the Germans and Italians for six right out of Africa.

We have made a very good start and to-day, 12th November, there are no German and Italian soldiers on Egyptian territory except as prisoners.

In three weeks we have completely smashed the German and Italian Army, and push the fleeing remnants out of Egypt, having advanced ourselves nearly 300 miles up and beyond the frontier.

2. The following enemy formations have ceased to exist as effective fighting formations:

Panzer Army – 15 Panzer Div.	20 Italian Corps –	Ariete Armd
21 Panzer Div.		Littorio
90 Light Div.		Armd. Div.
164 Light Div.		Trieste Div.
10 Italian Corps Brescia Div.	21 Italian Corps --	Trento Div.
Pavia Div.		Bologna Div.
Folgore Div.		

The prisoners captured number 30,000, including nine Generals.

The amount of tanks, artillery, anti-tank guns, transport, aircraft, etc. destroyed or captured is so great that the enemy is completely crippled.

3. This is a very fine performance and I want, first, to thank you all for the way you responded to my call and rallied to the task. I feel that our great victory was brought about by the good fighting qualities of the soldiers of the Empire rather than by anything I may have been able to do myself.
4. Secondly, I know you will all realise how greatly we were helped in our task by the R.A.F. We could not have done it without their splendid help and co-operation. I have thanked the R.A.F. warmly on your behalf.
5. Our task is not finished yet; the Germans are out of Egypt, but there are still some left in North Africa. There is some good hunting to be had further to the West, in Libya,; and our leading troops are now in Libya ready to begin. AND THIS TIME, HAVING REACHED BENGHASI AND BEYOND, WE SHALL NOT COME BACK.

6. On with the task, and good hunting to you all. As in all pursuits some have to remain behind to start with; but we shall all be in it before the finish.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

Christmas 1942
EIGHTH ARMY

Personal message from the Army Commander to all officers and other ranks

1. The Eighth Army has turned the enemy out of the famous AGHEILA position and is now advancing into TRIPOLITANIA. It is wonderful what has been achieved since the 23rd October when we started the Battle of Egypt.

Before the battle began I sent you a message in which I said: -
Let us pray that "the Lord mighty in battle," will give us the victory.
He has done so, and I know you will all agree with me when I say that we must not forget to thank Him for His great mercies.

2. It is now Christmas time and we are all thinking about our families and friends in the home country.

I want to send you all my very best wishes, and my hope that 1943 will be a very happy year for each one of you.

3. I have received a Christmas greeting from Hull, in Yorkshire. It is quite the nicest that I have ever received; my only regret is that I cannot answer it, as the writer gave no address. But I shall treasure it all my life. It is intended for you as well as for me, and is as follows: --

"Dear Sir,
To wish you and our lads of the EIGHTH ARMY a very happy Christmas.
Good health. Good luck. And by the Grace of God VICTORY IN 1943.
Keep 'em on the run Monty. Best wishes from a Yorkshire lass with a lad in the Eighth Army."

4. What better Christmas greeting can I send on to you than the one from the Yorkshire lass? I would like to tell her, from us all, that we will do our best to "keep 'em on the run."
5. Good luck to you! And in the words of Tiny Tim, in Dickens' "Christmas Carol" : --
"God bless us all, each one of us."

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: One can just imagine the good-natured ribbing soldiers may have given to the Yorkshiremen in their ranks “hey mate, is that your girl writing Monty”. This message must have had a larger print run or been more sentimental to the troops, as these were saved as mementos more than the other messages. Monty may have misquoted Dickens.]

12 January, 1943
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
To be read out to All Troops

1. The leading units of Eighth Army are now only about 200 miles from TRIPOLI. The enemy is between us and that port, hoping to hold us off.
2. THE EIGHTH ARMY IS GOING TO TRIPOLI
3. Tripoli is the only town in the Italian Empire overseas still remaining in their possession. Therefore we will take it from them; they will then have no overseas Empire.

The enemy will try to stop us. But if each one of us, whether front-line soldier, or officer or man whose duty is performed in some other sphere, puts his whole heart and soul into this next contest – then nothing can stop us.

Nothing has stopped us since the battle of Egypt began on 23rd October, 1942.
Nothing will stop us now.

Some must stay back to begin with, but we will all be in the hunt eventually.

4. ON TO TRIPOLI!

Our families and friends in the home country will be thrilled when they hear we have captured that place.

B.L. Montgomery
General, G.O.C-in-C, Eighth Army.

[NOTE: Not in “A collection of General Montgomery’s Personal Messages to the Eighth Army” or in “Forward to Victory”]

23 January, 1943

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the Army Commander

To be read out to All Troops

1. To-day, 23 January, exactly three months after we began the battle of Egypt, the Eighth Army has captured Tripoli and has driven the enemy away to the West towards Tunisia. By skillful withdrawal tactics the enemy has eluded us, though we have taken heavy toll of his army and air forces.
2. The defeat of the enemy in battle at Alamein, the pursuit of his beaten army, and the final capture of Tripoli – a distance of some fourteen hundred miles from Alamein – has all been accomplished in three months. This achievement is probably without parallel in history. It could not have been done unless every soldier in the army had pulled his full weight all the time. I congratulate the whole Army, and send my personal thanks to each one of you for the wonderful support you have given me.
3. On your behalf I have sent a special message to the Allied Air Forces that have co-operated with us. I don't suppose that any Army has ever been supported by such a magnificent Air Striking Force. I have always maintained that the Eighth Army and the R.A.F., Western Desert, together constitute one fighting machine, and therein lies our great strength.
4. In the hour of success we must not forget the splendid work that has been done by those soldiers working day and night in back areas and on the lines of communication. There are many soldiers quietly doing their duty in rear areas who are unable to take part in the triumphal entry into captured cities; but they are a vital part of our fighting machine and we could gain no successes if they failed to pull their full weight. I refer especially to stevedores at our bases, to fitters in the workshops, to clerks in rear offices, and so on. I would like to make a special mention of our R.A.S.C. drivers; these men drive long distances by day and night for long periods; they always deliver the goods. The R.A.S.C. has risen to great heights during the operations we have undertaken, and as a Corp it serves the grateful thanks of every soldier in the Army.
5. There is much work still in front of us. But I know that you are all ready for any task that you may be called on to carry out.
6. Once again I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

[BL Montgomery]

General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: This is one of thanks and recognition to the "unsung" heroes of the rear echelon].

3 March, 1943 (typed in, no date on printed copy. Forward to Victory says 6 March, Tunisia)

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the Army Commander

To be read out to All Troops

1. The enemy is now advancing to attack us. This is because he is caught like a rat in a trap and he is hitting out in every direction trying to gain time to stave off the day of final defeat in North Africa.
2. This is the very opportunity we want. Not only are we well equipped with everything we need, but in addition the soldiers of the Eighth Army have a fighting spirit and a morale which is right on the top line.
3. We will stand and fight the enemy in our present positions.

There must be NO WITHDRAWAL anywhere, and of course, NO SURRENDER

The enemy has never yet succeeded in any attack against a co-ordinated defensive layout, and he will not do so now.

We have plenty of tanks, and provided the defended localities hold firm then we will smash the enemy attack and cause him such casualties that it will cripple him; we will, in fact, give him a very "bloody nose."

4. IT WILL THEN BE OUR TURN TO ATTACK HIM.

And having crippled himself, he will be unable to stand up to our attack and we will smash right through him.

5. This attack of the enemy therefore really helps US, and is one more step forward towards the end of the war in North Africa.

I did not expect for one moment that the enemy would attack us; it seemed absurd.

But he has done it, and we must show our gratitude in no uncertain way.

6. Let us show him what the famous Eighth Army can do.
7. Good luck to each one of you, and good hunting.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

19 March 1943

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the Army Commander

1. On 5th March ROMMEL addressed his troops in the mountains overlooking our positions and said that if they did not take MEDENIN, and force the Eighth Army to withdraw, then the days of the Axis forces in North Africa were numbered.

The next day, 6th March, he attacked the Eighth Army. He should have known that the Eighth Army NEVER WITHDRAWS; therefore his attack could only end in failure – which it did.

2. We will now show ROMMEL that he was right in the statement he made to his troops.

The days of the Axis forces in North Africa are indeed numbered.

The Eighth Army and the Western Desert Air Force, together constituting on fighting machine, are ready to advance. We all know *that* means; and so does the enemy.

3. In the battle that is now to start, the Eighth Army:
 - a. Will destroy the enemy now facing us in the MARETH position;
 - b. Will burst through the GABES GAP;
 - c. Will then drive Northwards on SFAX, SOUSSE, and finally TUNIS.
4. We will not stop, or let up, till TUNIS has been captured, and the enemy has either given up the struggle or been pushed into the sea.
5. The operations now about to begin will mark the close of the campaign in North Africa. Once the battle starts the eyes of the whole world will be on the Eighth Army, and millions of people will listen to the wireless every day – hoping anxiously for good news. We must not let them be anxious. Let us see that they get good news, and plenty of it, every day.

If each one of us does his duty and pulls his full weight, then nothing can stop the Eighth Army. And nothing will stop it.

6. With faith in God, and in the justice of our cause, let us go forward to victory.
7. FORWARD TO TUNIS! DRIVE THE ENEMY INTO THE SEA!

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: Monty's reference to "Faith in God...". His father was a bishop.]

8 April, 1943

EIGHTH ARMY

Personal Message from the Army Commander

(TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS)

1. On 20th March, in a personal message before we began the battle of Mareth, I told you that the Eighth Army would do three things:
 - 1) Deal with the enemy in the Mareth position.
That was done between 21st and 28th March and we took 8,000 prisoners.
 - 2) Burst through the GABES GAP.
That was done on 6th April. The enemy was so unwise as to stand to fight us on the Akarit position. He received a tremendous hammering and we took another 7,000 prisoners.
 - 3) Drive Northwards on Sfax, Sousse and finally Tunis.
That is now in process of being done; and if we collect in the prisoners at the present rate the enemy will soon have no infantry left to hold his position.
2. I also told you that if each one of us did his duty and pulled his full weight, then nothing could stop us. And nothing has stopped us.
You have given our families at home, and in fact the whole world, good news, and plenty of it, every day.
3. I want now to express to you, my soldiers, whatever may be your rank or employment, my grateful thanks for the way in which you have responded to my calls on your and my admiration for your wonderful fighting qualities.

I doubt if our Empire has ever possessed such a magnificent fighting machine as the Eighth Army; you have made its name a household word all over the world.

I thank each one of you for what you have done.

I am very proud of my Eighth Army.

4. On your behalf I have sent a message of appreciation to the Western Desert Air Force. The brave and brilliant work of the squadrons and the devotion to duty of all the pilots have made our victories possible in such a short time.

We are all one entity – the Eighth Army and the Western Desert Air Force – together constituting one magnificent fighting machine.

5. And now let us get on with the third task.

Let us make the enemy face up to, and endure, a first-class DUNKIRK on the beaches of TUNIS.

6. The triumphant cry now is:
FORWARD TO TUNIS! DRIVE THE ENEMY INTO THE SEA!

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: Monty follows up on goals of prior messages / thanks to RAF and others...].

28 April, 1943
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
(TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS)

1. On 20th March, before we began the Battle of Mareth, I told you that the Eighth Army would do three things.
2. On 8th April I told you that that all these things had been done except the final one of securing Tunis – or whatever area the enemy chooses for his last stand. We are now getting on with this last task.
3. We have joined up with the Allied Forces in Northern Tunisia and we no longer operate as an independent Army. The operations are co-ordinated by Army Group Headquarters and it is very necessary that the Allied thrusts all along the front be kept up; the enemy has not sufficient resources to meet all our thrusts and that will be his undoing.
4. I call on every commander and every soldier to give of his best and to keep up the pressure. No one must relax for a moment. Keep the tempo of the operation at a high level. The enemy is caught in a trap and will resist desperately. But bit by bit, and part by part, we will fight him to a standstill and will “eat the guts” out of him. It may be difficult, but we will do it.
5. When we have done our duty, and the task is finished, then we can relax. And you will all well deserve it.
6. And so to every officer and man I say:
FORWARD TO BATTLE!
DO NOT RELAX!
KEEP UP THE PRESSURE!
7. And in God’s good time we will finish the third and final task.

8. Good luck to each one of you. You can rest assured that I am watching over the battle carefully and together we will finish the job.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: Monty follows-up on goals of prior messages.]

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14 May, 1943 TUNISIA
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. Now that the campaign in Africa is finished I want to tell you all, my soldiers, how intensely proud I am of what you have done.
2. Before we began the battle of Egypt, last October I said that together, you and I, we would hit Rommel and his Army "for six" right out of North Africa.

And it has now been done. All those well-known enemy Divisions that we have fought, and driven before us over hundreds of miles of African soil from Alamein to Tunis, have now surrendered.

There was no Dunkirk on the beaches of Tunisia; the Royal Navy and the R.A.F. saw to it that the enemy should not get away, and so they were all forced to surrender.

The campaign has ended in a major disaster for the enemy.

3. Your contribution to the complete and final removal of the enemy from Africa has been beyond all praise.

As our Prime Minister said at Tripoli, in February last, it will be a great honour to be able to say in years to come: --

"I MARCHED AND FOUGHT WITH THE EIGHTH ARMY"

4. And what of the future? Many of us are probably thinking of our families in the home country, and wondering when we shall be able to see them.

But I would say to you that we can have to-day only one thought, and that is to see this think through to the end; and then we will be able to return to our families, honourable men.

5. Therefore let us think of the future in this way.

And whatever it may bring to us, I wish each one of you the very best of luck, and good hunting in the battles that are yet to come and which we will fight together.

6. TOGETHER, YOU AND I, WE WILL SEE THIS THING THROUGH TO THE END.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: This message seeks to build esprit d'corps].

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9 July, 1943
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. The time has now come to carry the war into Italy, and into the Continent of Europe. The Italian Overseas Empire has been exterminated; we will now deal with the home country.
2. To the Eighth Army has been given the great honour of representing the British Empire in the Allied Force which is now to carry out this task. ON our left will be our American Allies. Together we will set about the Italians in their own country in no uncertain way. They came into this war to suit themselves, and they must now take the consequences; they asked for it, and they will now get it.
3. On behalf of us all, I want to give a very hearty welcome to the Canadian troops that are now joining the Eighth Army. I know well the fighting men of Canada; they are magnificent soldiers, and the long and careful training they have received in England will now be put to very good use – to the benefit of the Eighth Army.
4. The task in front of us is not easy. But it is not so difficult as many we have had in the past, and have overcome successfully. In all our operations we have always had the close and intimate support of the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., and because of that support we have always succeeded. In this operation the combined effort of the three Fighting Services is being applied in tremendous strength, and nothing will be able to stand against it. The three of us together – Navy, Army and Air Force – will see this thing through. I want all of you, my soldiers, to know that I have complete confidence in the successful outcome of this operation.
5. Therefore, with faith in God and with enthusiasm for our cause and for the day of battle, let us all enter in this contest with stout hearts and with determination to conquer.

The eyes of our families and, in fact, the whole Empire, will be on us once the battle starts; we will see that they get good news and plenty of it.

6. To each one of you, whatever may be your rank or employment, I would say:

GOOD LUCK AND GOOD HUNTING IN THE HOME COUNTRY OF ITALY.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: One tends to see more of this message available than usual. Its print run may have been bigger and/or more troops may have had a sentimental attachment to keeping their copy. Interestingly, this comes in two sizes (the smaller of which was distributed to invasion troops in July alongside a personal message from Eisenhower)].

30 July, 1943 SICILY
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. The Allied Armies landed in Sicily, on Italian soil, on 10th July, magnificently supported by the Royal Navy and the Allied Air Forces, and are, today, in possession of the whole island except for the north-east corner, where the enemy is now hemmed in.
2. I want to tell all of you, soldiers of the Eighth Army, that this has been a very fine performance. On your behalf, I have expressed to the Commander of the Seventh American Army on our left the congratulations of the Eighth Army for the way the American troops have captured and cleaned up more than half the island in record time. We are proud to fight beside our American Allies.
3. The beginning has been very good, thanks to your splendid fighting qualities and to the hard work and devotion to duty of all those who work in the ports, on the roads, and in rear areas. We must not forget to give thanks to "THE LORD MIGHTY IN BATTLE" for giving us such a good beginning towards the attainment of our object.
4. And now let us get on with the job. Together, with our American Allies, we have knocked MUSSOLINI off his perch. We will now drive the Germans out of SICILY.
5. Into battle with stout hearts. Good luck to you all.

[BL Montgomery]
General, G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army

[NOTE: One tends to see more of this message available than usual. Its print run may have been bigger and/or more troops may have had a sentimental attachment to keeping their copy].

18 August, 1943 SICILY
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. The campaign in SICILY is over. We landed in the island on 10 July. By 20 July, together with our American allies, we had driven the enemy into the north-east corner of the island.

On 30th July, I told you we would now drive the Germans out of SICILY

And by 17th August the Germans had been driven out, and the Allied Armies, American and British, were in possession of the whole island.

2. In February last, the Italian Overseas Empire has ceased to exist.

To-day, 17th August, 1943, we have captured our first slice of the Italian home country.

In these tremendous events, you, the soldiers of the Eighth Army, have played a very notable part. By your splendid fighting qualities and devotion to duty you have helped to change the whole course of the war.

3. It is difficult to find words to tell you my true feelings. Since I assumed command of the Eighth Army, in August 1942, exactly one year ago, you have given me your confidence, and you have never failed to respond to all calls I have made on you.

I thank you all. And I say to you:

WELL DONE. WELL DONE, INDEED. TOGETHER, YOU AND I, WE WILL SEE THIS THING THROUGH TO THE END.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

[NOTE: Date in "A collection of General Montgomery's Personal Messages to the Eighth Army" is Aug 17, 1943]

3 September, 1943 SICILY
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. Having captured SICILY as our first slice of the Italian home country, the time has now come to carry the battle to the mainland of Italy.
2. To the Eighth Army has been given the great honour of being the first troops of the Allied Armies to land on the mainland of the continent of Europe.

We will prove ourselves worthy of this honour.

3. I want to tell all of you, soldiers of the Eighth Army, that I have complete confidence in the successful outcome of the operations we are now going to carry out.

We have a good plan, and air support on a greater scale than we have ever had before.

There can be only one end to this next battle, and this is: ANOTHER SUCCESS.

4. Forward to Victory!

Let us knock ITALY out of the war!

5. Good luck. And God Bless you all.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

23 October, 1943
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS
ANNIVERSARY OF ALAMEIN
23 OCTOBER, 1943

1. To-day, 23 October, 1943, is the first anniversary of the Battle of ALAMEIN – that great battle that was fought and won by the soldiers of the Empire one year ago.

In the message which I issued to the Eighth Army before the battle began, I said: --

“The battle now about to begin will be the turning point of the war; it will be one of the decisive battles of history”,

And it was so.

The decisive victory gained at ALAMEIN was the first episode in events that have altered the whole structure of this war.

2. I am speaking from my H.Q. in ITALY. And to-day, my thoughts and your thoughts are with the fighting men who won that great battle one year ago.

Many of them are still fighting in ITALY.

Some of them are carrying on the good work in other theatres of war; for instance, the magnificent 9th Australian Division of General MORESHEAD is now fighting the Japanese.

Some of them gave their lives in order that we might win this world war.

3. The tremendous events of the past year are probably without parallel in the history of war.

Following the victory at ALAMEIN, the Eighth Army fought its way across EGYPT, across CYRENAICA, across TRIPOLITANIA, and across TUNISIA.

It then crossed the seas and fought its way across SICILY.

It then invaded ITALY and fought its way up that country to its present position, which is North of an East and West line through ROME.

It has swept everything before it in fighting its way across some 3,000 miles of country since October, 1942; during all this time it has never had a setback, and has never known defeat.

4. This is, indeed, a fine and a wonderful record.

Every soldier in the Eighth Army, whatever may his rank or employment, has played a part in these historic events; and every soldier can have a feeling of pride that he has pulled his full weight, and has never failed to answer the call of duty.

And to all of you, wherever you may be, I send my greetings in this, the first anniversary of ALAMEIN. And I send my greetings to your families, who are waiting so patiently for this war to finish so that we can all be together again.

5. And what of the future?

If ever anything is certain in this life, it is now clear that we shall win this war. The magnificent victories of those splendid Russian Armies, and the activities of other Allied Armies all over the world, have made this quite certain.

The end is now in sight. The final phases may be long and difficult; but in the distance we can now see complete and absolute victory. Only one thing is

necessary. And it is that every one of us, workers at home in the factories and mines, and soldiers on the battle fronts, we must all continue to pull our full weight in the national war effort; not one of us must stop work, or cease fighting, till we have received the unconditional surrender of the enemy. We owe this to those who have given their lives in order that we might win the victory; we must not let them down, nor will we.

6. Good luck to you all, soldiers of the Eighth Army, wherever you may be, and to your families.

And good luck to all those splendid workers on the home front, whose good work and devotion to duty in the factories and in the mines makes it possible for use to win our battles.

Together we began this business, and together we will see it through to the end.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

8 November, 1943 ITALY
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. The Allies have conquered about one-third of ITALY since we invaded the country on 3rd September. But the Germans still hold the approach to ROME, and that city itself.
2. The time has now come to drive the Germans North of ROME. The Eighth Army is not advancing on the direct ROME axis; it is the Fifth American Army which is on that line. But our help is vital if the Fifth Army is to secure ROME. And we will do our part in a manner worthy of the best traditions of the Eighth Army and the Desert Air Force.
3. The enemy has been outfought by better troops ever since we first landed in SICILY, and his men don't like what they are getting.

The Germans are, in fact, in the very condition in which we want them.

WE WILL NOW HIT THE GERMANS A COLOSSAL CRACK.

4. Good luck to you all. And good hunting as we go forward.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

Christmas, 1943 Italy
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander
CHRISTMAS, 1943
TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. Once again the Eighth Army spends Christmas in the field.
This time last year we were in Tripolitania, having just broken through the famous Agheila position; now, we are well North of an East and West line through Rome. And I would say to you, soldiers of the Eighth Army, that you have every right to be very proud of what you have achieved during the past year; every officer and man has done his duty in a manner that is beyond all praise.
2. And so this Christmas, 1943, I send to every officer and man in the great family of the Eighth Army, my best wishes and my hearty greetings. And I send greetings from us all to your loved ones and friends in your homelands; they are, indirectly, part of this great Army in that their courage and fortitude is essential to the morale of the Army itself.

And I know you will wish me to send our greetings also to all the workers on the home front; without their hard work in the factories and mines, we could win no victories in the field.

3. And to-day we recall the Christmas message : --
GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON
EARTH PEACE, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN.

Surely this describes exactly what we are fighting for?

Let us, therefore, take it as our battle cry and our motto; and in doing so let us affirm that between us, you and I, we will see this thing through to the end.

4. And when peace has come, I like to think that the spirit of the Eighth Army will be a factor for good in the unsettled and difficult days that will lie ahead.

Wherein lies the strength of this great Army?

It lies in its team spirit, in the firm determination of every man to do his duty, and in its high morale.

This Army is a great family, with an ARMY "esprit de corps" and spirit the like of which can seldom have been seen before.

When the war is over and we all scatter to our various tasks, let us see to it that the spirit of the Eighth Army lives on; may it be a great and powerful influence in the rebuilding of the nations.

The Christmas message will be our battle cry, not only now, but also in the years to come.

5. A Happy Christmas to you all and to your families wherever they may be.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

January, 1944 Italy
EIGHTH ARMY
Personal Message from the Army Commander

TO BE READ OUT TO ALL TROOPS

1. I have to tell you, with great regret, that the time has come for me to leave the Eighth Army. I have been ordered to take command of the British Armies in England that are to operate under General Eisenhower – the Supreme Commander.
2. It is difficult to express to you adequately what this parting means to me. I am leaving officers and men who have been my comrades during months of hard and victorious fighting, and whose courage and devotion to duty always filled me with admiration. I feel I have many friends among the soldiery of this great Army. I do not know if you will miss me; but I will miss you more than I can say, and especially will I miss the personal contact, and the cheerful greetings we exchanged together when we passed each other on the road.
3. In all the battles we have fought together we have not had one single failure; we have been successful in everything we have undertaken.

I know that this has been due to the devotion of duty and wholehearted co-operation of every officer and man, rather than to anything I may have been able to do myself.

But the result has been a mutual confidence between you and me, and mutual confidence between a commander and his troops is a pearl of a very great price.

4. I am also very sad at parting from the Desert Air Force. This magnificent air striking force has fought with the Eighth Army throughout the whole of its victorious progress; every soldier in this Army is proud to acknowledge that the support of this strong and powerful air force has been a battle-winning factor of the first

importance. We owe the Allied Air Forces in general, and the Desert Air Force in particular, a very great debt of gratitude.

5. What can I say to you as I go away?

When the heart is full it is not easy to speak. But I would say this to you :

“YOU have made this Army what it is. YOU have made its name a household word all over the world. YOU must uphold its good name and its traditions.”

“And I would ask you to give to my successor the same loyal and devoted service that you have never failed to give me.”

6. And so I say GOOD-BYE to you all.

May we meet again soon; and may we serve together again as comrades in arms in the final stages of this war.

[BL Montgomery]
General, Eighth Army

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END OF EIGHTH ARMY MESSAGES, BEGINNING OF 21 ARMY GROUP MESSAGES

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Forward to “A collection of Field-Marshal Montgomery’s PERSONAL MESSAGES to 21 Army Group, Normandy to the Baltic, 6 June 1944 – 8 May 1945

This is a collection of all the personal messages issued by Field-Marshal Montgomery during the campaign in North-Western Europe in 1944 and 1945. They trace the course of the campaign from D-day, the 6th June, 1944, when the Allied Expeditionary Force assaulted over the beaches of Normandy, to its arrival on the shores of the Baltic early the following May. This led to the culmination of the campaign: the signature by the Germans of the Act of unconditional surrender in Berlin on the 8th May, 1945. These messages did much to inspire the soldiers of 21 Army Group, and all the different nationalities which fought under its command, and to weld this force into the great fighting team which made victory certain. [signed “C.P.D”]

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5 June, 1944
21 ARMY GROUP
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. The time has come to deal the enemy a terrific blow in Western Europe.

The blow will be struck by the combined sea, land, and air forces of the Allies – together constituting one great Allied team, under the supreme command of General Eisenhower.

2. On the eve of this great adventure I send to you my best wishes to every soldier in the Allied team.

To us is given the honour of striking a blow for freedom which will live in history; and in the better days that lie ahead men will speak with pride of our doings. We have a great and righteous cause.

Let us pray that “The Lord Mighty in Battle” will go forth with our armies, and that His special providence will aid us in the struggle.

3. I want every soldier to know that I have complete confidence in the successful outcome of the operations that we are now about to begin.

With stout hearts, and with enthusiasm for the contest, let us go forward to victory.

4. And, as we enter the battle, let us recall the words of a famous soldier spoken many years ago: --

“He either fears his fate too much
Or his deserts are small,
Who dare not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all.”

5. Good luck to each one of you. And good hunting on the mainland of Europe.

[BL Montgomery]
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

[NOTE: Quote is attributed to James Graham, 1st Marquess of Montrose (1612-1650). Scottish nobleman and soldier. These four lines, taken from Montrose's poem 'My Dear and Only Love', are perhaps the most often recited of all Montrose's writings and they underline the clearness of vision and the single minded purpose of Montrose as he struggled against overwhelming odds to support the failing cause of his sovereign Charles 1st (Source: Montrose Society website)]

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This is message that may have been issued at same time as above, mainly to officers.

No mention of who wrote it (it has Anglicized spelling, so I assume a Brit), but I include it here as it is well-written and germane to D-Day invasion. I can imagine the atmosphere in which this was read to the troops before they were to hit the beaches.... It has a montgomery-esque feel : clipped, clear and to the point, and outlines objective in first

section. Very professional. If any visitors to this site know more about this document, please let me know

SECRET

The following message from the Supreme Commander will be read to troops by an officer after embarkation if prior to 0001 hrs. D + 1, and only when no postponement of the operation is likely; alternatively, when briefing prior to embarkation after 0001 hrs. D + 1.

“ You are soon to be engaged in a great undertaking – the invasion of Europe. Our purpose is to bring about, in company with our Allies, and our comrades on other fronts, the total defeat of Germany. Only by such a complete victory can we free ourselves and our homelands from the fear and threat of the N*** tyranny.

“ A further element of our mission is the liberation of those people of Western Europe now suffering under German oppression.

“ Before embarking on this operation, I have a personal message for you as to your own individual responsibility, in relation to the inhabitants of our Allied countries.

“ As a representative of your country, you will be welcomed with deep gratitude by the liberated peoples, who for years have longed for this deliverance. It is of the utmost importance that this feeling of friendliness and goodwill be in no way impaired by careless or indifferent behavior on your part. By a courteous and considerate demeanor, you can on the other hand do much to strengthen that feeling.

“ The inhabitants of N***-occupied Europe have suffered great privations, and you will find that many of them lack even the barest necessities. You, on the other hand, have been, and will continue to be, provided adequate food, clothing, and other necessities. You must not deplete the already meagre local stocks of food and other supplies by indiscriminate buying, thereby fostering ‘Black Market,’ which can only increase the hardship of the inhabitants.

“ The rights of the individuals, as to their persons and property, must be scrupulously respected, as though in your own country. You must remember, always, that these people are our friends and Allies.

“ I urge each of you to bear constantly in mind that by your actions not only you as an individual, but your country as well, will be judged. By establishing a relationship with the liberated peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect, we shall enlist their wholehearted assistance in the defeat of our common enemy. Thus shall we lay the foundations for a lasting peace, without which our great effort will have been in vain.”

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10 June 1944 FRANCE

21 ARMY GROUP

Personal Message from the C-in-C

To be read out to all troops

1. After four days of fighting the Allied Armies have secured a good and firm lodgment area on the mainland of France.
2. First, we must thank Almighty God for the success we have achieved and for giving us such a good beginning towards the full completion of our task.
3. Second, we must pay a tribute to the Allied Navies and Air Forces for their magnificent co-operation and support; without it, we soldiers could have achieved nothing.
4. Third, I want personally to congratulate every officer and man in the Allied Armies on the splendid results of the last four days.

British, Canadian, and American soldiers, fighting gallantly side by side, have achieved a great success and have placed themselves in a good position from which to exploit this success.

5. To every officer and man, whatever may be his rank or employment, I send my grateful thanks and my best wishes for the future.

Much yet remains to be done; but together, you and I, we will do it, and we will see the thing through to the end.

6. Good luck to you all.

[BL Montgomery]
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

[NOTE: In this message, Montgomery's first response is to be grateful to God..]

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11 July 1944 FRANCE

21 ARMY GROUP

Personal Message from the C-in-C

To be read out to all troops

1. A great deal has happened since my last message to you on 10 June – one month ago; the battle in Normandy has been fierce and hard since then, and much has been achieved.

2. Our gains have been definite and concrete; and we have held everything we have gained, despite the desperate efforts of the enemy to push us back into the sea.
On the west flank – CHERBOURG
On the east flank – CAEN
And much territory in between.

And all the time a tremendous struggle with a skillful enemy, whose good fighting qualities and tenacity in battle cannot but attract our admiration. The pace has been hot, and it was clear that someone would have to give ground sooner or later; it was equally clear that the Allied soldiers would see the thing through to the end and would never give up; and so the Germans have been forced to give ground -- which is very right and proper.

3. And to-day, the Allied Armies fighting in Normandy have good grounds for solid satisfaction.

We have taken over 54,000 prisoners. We have given the enemy forces a tremendous pounding, and we know from prisoners what great losses they have suffered.

And we have enlarged and extended our lodgment area, and in all that area we are very firm and secure, and we are developing our offensive operations in accordance with our plans.

4. And so, to every Allied soldier in Normandy I say:
“Well done. Well done indeed. You have performed a great task in a manner which is fully in keeping with the great traditions of the fighting stocks from which we all come. And your families and friends in the homeland may well be very proud of their menfolk serving overseas.”
5. It is the earnest desire of every Allied soldier in Normandy to finish this business off as quickly as possible, and to pull his full weight and do his duty until it is so finished off. That we all know. And I cannot do better than to conclude this message by quoting the favourite prayer of Sir Francis Drake:

“O Lord God, when Thou givest to Thy servants to endeavor in any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory.”

6. Let us fight on to victory in the spirit of that prayer.
7. Good luck to each one of you.

[BL Montgomery]
General
C.-in-C.

21 Army Group

11 August, 1944

21 ARMY GROUP

Personal Message from the C-in-C

1. At this time of great opportunity I feel that I want to speak to the officers and men of the Allied Armies in France. We are a great team – American, British, Canadian, and also the soldiers of Fighting France and of Poland – all knit together into one fighting machine, and all working to one plan.
2. We have been through some difficult times since D-day and, on occasions, great patience and confidence were necessary if we were not to falter. When the struggle was in its most critical stage there were some who had doubts as to whether we would win through. But you and I had no doubts – not one; we knew that so long as we did our duty all would be well; and to-day, all *is* well.
3. What a change has come about in the last few weeks. The whole of the Cherbourg peninsula is in our hands, and most of Brittany also; our armies are moving relentlessly eastwards into France; many hundreds of towns and villages have been liberated.

The prisoners taken are well over 100,000, and great quantities of enemy equipment and war material have been captured or destroyed.

4. And, best of all, the great bulk of the German forces in NW Europe are in a bad way; we are round behind them in many places, and it is possible that some of them will not get away. They will fight hard to avoid disaster; that we know.

But let each one of us make a tremendous effort to “write off” this powerful German force; it has caused us no small trouble during the last two months; let us finish with it, once and for all, and so hasten the end of the war.

5. Across the water in England, the starting point for this great adventure, our families and friends are playing their part and are bearing up well against the flying bomb nuisance and other troubles. Our thoughts are with them; we are all in this business together, we all bear the burden equally, and we are all determined to see the matter thoroughly finished.
6. In these hot August days, amidst the dust of the battlefield, it is not always too easy to keep up the pressure.

But these are momentous days, and complete victory lies ahead, and is certain – so long as we do not relax.

7. Let us therefore continue the battle with renewed and ever greater energy; and we must remember to give the honour and praise where it is due.

Before the battle of Bosworth Field, the Earl of Richmond used these words as part of his prayer:--

“O Thou! Whose captain I account myself,
Look on my forces with a gracious eye;
Make us Thy ministers of chastisement,
That we may praise Thee in Thy victory.”

8. Good luck to you all.

[BL Montgomery]
General
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

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21 August, 1944 France
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. On the 11th of August, I spoke to the offices and men of the Allied Armies in NW France. I said we must “write off” the powerful German force that was causing us so much trouble we must finish it, once and for all, and so hasten the end of the war.
2. And to-day, ten days later, it has been done.

The German armies in North-West France have suffered a decisive defeat; the destruction of enemy personnel and equipment in and about the so-called “Normandy pocket” has been terrific, and it is still going on; any enemy units that manage to get away will not be in a fit condition to fight again for months; there are still many surprises in store for the fleeing remnants.

The victory has been definite, complete and decisive.

3. As soldiers, we all want to pay our tribute to the Allied Air Forces. I doubt if ever in the history of war, air forces have had such opportunities, or have taken such good advantage of them. The brave and brilliant work of the pilots has aroused our greatest admiration; without their support, we soldiers could have achieved no success.
4. Where all have done so well, it is difficult to single out any for special praise.

As a British General, I can speak for all the soldiers of the Empire, and can express our high admiration for the brave fighting qualities of the American Armies in the opening stages of the “break-in” battle on 25 July and following days; and we followed with tremendous enthusiasm their great achievements during the wheel of the right flank almost to the gates of Paris. We never want to fight alongside better soldiers.

As an Allied Commander, and the overall Commander of the land forces under General Eisenhower, I can praise the fighting qualities and tenacity in battle of the British, Canadian, and Polish troops on the eastern flank; they fought the enemy relentlessly, and took heavy toll of him during the whole of this great battle.

5. But surely it matters little who did *this*, or *that*.

All that matters is that it was well and truly done by the whole Allied team.

The proper motto for Allies should be:

“One for all, and all for one”

And that is our motto.

I want to thank you all for the way you responded to the call.

6. The victory in NW France, south of the Seine, marks the beginning of the end of German military domination of France.

Much still remains to be done, but it will now be done the more easily.

7. And what next?

Having brought disaster to the German forces in NW France, we must now complete the destruction of such of his forces as are still available to be destroyed. After knowing what has happened to their armies in NW France, it is unlikely that these forces will now come to us; so we will go to them.

8. “The Lord mighty in battle” has given us the victory.

The news is very good from the war fronts from all over the world.

The end of the war is in sight; let us finish off the business in record time.

[BL Montgomery]
General
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

17 September, 1944 Belgium
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. I want to-day, 17 September, to speak to all soldiers in the Group of Armies under my command.
2. What a change has come over the scene since I last spoke to you on 21 August. **Then** we were moving up towards the SEINE, having inflicted a decisive defeat on the German armies in Normandy. **To-day** the SEINE is far behind us; the Allies have removed the enemy from practically the whole of France and Belgium, except in a few places, and we stand at the door of Germany.

And by the terrific energy of your advance northwards from the Seine, you brought quick relief to our families and loved ones in England – by occupying the launching sites of the flying bombs.

We have advanced a great way in a short time, and we have accomplished much.

The total of prisoners captured is now nearly 400,000; and there are many more to be collected from those ports in Brittany and in the Pas de Calais that are still holding out.

The enemy has suffered immense losses in men and material; it is becoming problematical how much longer he can continue the struggle.

3. Such a historic march of events can seldom have taken place in history in such a short space of time.

You have every reason to be proud of what you have done.

Let us say to each other:

“This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”

4. And now the Allies are closing in on N*** Germany from the east, from the south, and from the west; her satellite powers have thrown the towel into the ring – they have had enough of the N***s, and they know fight on our side. Our American Allies are fighting on German soil in many places; very soon we shall all be there.
5. The N*** leaders have ordered the people to defend Germany to the last and to dispute every inch of ground; this is a very natural order, and we would do the same ourselves in a similar situation.

But the mere issuing of orders is quite useless; you require good men and true to carry them out.

The great mass of the German people know that their situation is already hopeless, and they will think more clearly on this subject as we advance deeper into their country; they have little wish to continue the struggle.

6. Whatever orders are issued in Germany, and whatever action is taken on them, no human endeavours can now prevent the complete and utter defeat of the armed forces of Germany; their fate is certain, and their defeat will be absolute.

The triumphant cry now is:

“Forward into Germany.”

7. Good luck to you all, and good hunting in Germany.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

23 October, 1944
21 ARMY GROUP
Personal Message from the C-in-C
Anniversary of Alamein

1. This day, the 23rd October, is one that will never be forgotten by those of us who fought at Alamein.
On this day in 1942 a great operation was launched, and during the following days a great battle was fought. That battle was won decisively, and the victory was the turning point of the war for the Allies; since then the soldiers of the British Empire, of America, and of Russia, have flung the enemy back on every front; they have liberated whole countries, and countless towns and villages, from N*** tyranny; the end cannot be very far distant.
2. The Eighth Army at Alamein was a truly Imperial Army; it contained fighting men from every part of the empire; only those splendid Canadian soldiers were not there, and that was because they were helping to guard England and could not be spared. And the men of that great Army that fought at Alamein have scattered all over the world. Some still serve in the Eighth Army in Italy; some are fighting the Japanese; some are fighting here in the armies that landed in Normandy in June last.
3. I am speaking from my HQ in Western Europe, where armies of the allies are now fighting on German soil.

And I send my greetings and my best wishes to that great family of the Eighth Army; wherever you may be, to every officer and man that fought with me at Alamein, I want to say:

Good luck to you, and God bless you

4. We have been through some bad times in this war, and we have had to face up to some great disasters. There was a time in the early days when the British Empire stood alone against the combined might of the Axis powers. But we stood firm, and we pulled through; and we acquitted ourselves like men. To-day the disasters are behind us; our armies stand triumphant at the door of Germany.

Let us still acquit ourselves like men.

Let us remember the words of Kipling:

“If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat these two imposters just the same...
Yours is the earth, and everything that’s in it,
And which it is more, you’ll be a man, my son.”

5. We many need to remember Kipling’s words during the next few years. Some difficult days lie ahead; and when the fighting is over other problems will arise, problems which will call for all our skill, and fortitude, and patience.

Let us first see to it that we thoroughly finish this matter. And then, out of the comradeship of the great armies in this war will be born a new factor, and that will carry us through any trials that may lie ahead.

6. Good luck to you all, wherever you may be.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

Xmas, 1944 Belgium
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. The forces of the British Empire in Western Europe spend Christmas 1944 in the field. But what a change has come over the scene since last Christmas.

The supreme Battle of Normandy carried with it the liberation of France and Belgium.

Last Christmas we were in England, expectant and full of hope; this Christmas we are fighting in Germany.

The conquest of Germany remains.

2. It would have needed a brave man to say on D-day, 6 June, that in three months we would be in Brussels and Antwerp; having liberated nearly the whole of France and Belgium; and in six months we would be fighting in Germany: having driven the enemy back across his own frontiers.

But this is what has happened.

And we must not fail to give the praise and honour where it is due:

“This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”

3. At Christmas time, whether in our homes or fighting in the field, we like to sing the carols we learnt as children; and in truth, this is indeed a link between us and our families and friends in the home country; since they are singing the same verses. The old words express exactly what we all feel-today:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

That is what we are fighting for, that is what we desire; on earth peace, good will toward men.

4. And so to-day we sing the Christmas hymns, full of hope, and steadfast in our belief that soon we shall achieve our hearts’ desire.

Therefore, with faith in God, and with enthusiasm for our cause and fro the day of battle, let us continue the contest with stout hearts and with determination to conquer.

5. And at this time I send to each one of you my best wishes and my Christmas greetings. Wherever you may be, fighting on the front line, or working on the lines of communication or in the ports, I will all of you good luck and a happy 1945. We are all one great team; together, you and I, we have achieved much; and together, we will see the thing through to the end.

6. Good luck to you all.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

[Note: The hard copy of this message uses a colored 21 Army Group insignia at the header of this Xmas message. Helps to provide a bit of holiday cheer]

December 28, 1944

Holland

28.12.44

THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE COLONEL COMMANDANT

1. Having been appointed by His Majesty The King to be Colonel Commandant of the Parachute Regiment, I want at once to send my personal greetings to all officers, warrant officers, NCOs and men of the Regiment.

And I also send greetings to the Airborne Forces Depot and the Army Air Corps I.T.C., which are both linked with the Parachute Regiment

2. I have served with units of the Regiment in many places in this war, and I have the highest admiration for the high standards and good fighting qualities of our parachute battalions. It was a proud day for me when I was appointed Colonel Commandant of the Regiment.
3. The record of the Airborne Forces in the Mediterranean theatre, and in the campaign in North-West Europe, has been quite outstanding; it will be a sure foundation on which to build for future generations.

When the maroon beret is seen on the battlefield it at once inspires confidence, as it is well known that its wearers are good men and true and have the highest standards in all things.

I shall regard it as a great honour to wear the maroon beret.

4. I have met many of you at various times. But it may be some little time before I can meet you in my new rank : as your Colonel Commandant ; I know you will understand this.

Meanwhile I wish you all the very best of luck.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
Colonel Commandant, The Parachute Regt.

[NOTE: Not included in A collection of General Montgomery's Personal Messages to the 21 Army Group"]

7 February, 1945 Holland
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C

To be read out to all troops

1. The operations of the Allies on all fronts have now brought the German war to its final stage. There was a time, some years ago, when it did not seem possible that we could win this war; the present situation is that we cannot lose it; in fact that terrific successes of our Russian allies on the eastern front have brought victory in sight.
2. In 21 Army Group we stand ready of the last round.

There are many of us who have fought through the previous rounds; we have won every round on points; we now come to the last and final round; and we want, and will go for, the knock-out blow.

3. The rules of the last round will be that we continue fighting till the final count; there is no time limit. We know our enemy will; we must expect him to fight hard to stave off defeat, possibly in the vain hope that we may crack before he does. But we shall not crack; we shall see this thing through to the end.

The last round may be long and difficult, and the fighting hard; but we now fight on German soil; we have got our opponent where we want him; and he is going to receive the knock-out blow; a somewhat unusual one, delivered from more than one direction.

4. You remember the poem written by a soldier of the Eighth Army in Africa before going into battle, in one verse of which he described what he considered we were fighting for:

“Peace for the kids, our brothers freed,
A kinder world, a cleaner breed.”

Let us see to it that we achieve this object, so well expressed by a fighting man of the British Empire.

5. And so we embark on the final round, in close co-operation with our American allies on our right and with complete confidence in the successful outcome of the onslaught being delivered by our Russian allies on the other side of the ring. Somewhat curious rules, you may say. But the whole match has been *most* curious; the Germans began this all-out contest and they must not complain when in the last round they are hit from several directions at the same time.
6. Into the ring, then, let us go. And do not let us relax till the knock-out blow has been delivered.
7. Good luck to you all – and God bless you.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

February 1945 Holland
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. I want to send a personal message of warm greeting and welcome to all troops that are coming to join me from Italy and the Mediterranean theatre. I am delighted to think that I shall meet again many old friends.
2. I left the Eighth Army in Italy in December 1943 and ever since then I have watched your operations with great admiration. And while you have been doing your stuff in Italy we on this front have pushed the Germans back into their own country; we now fight on German soil.
3. And what is the situation to-day?

The operations of the Allies on all fronts has brought the German war to its final stage. Our great Russian Allies are thrusting into Germany from the east, while in the west we have breached the Siegfried Line in many places and are lining up on the Rhine. German is ringed round and at bay, and the final round is just starting. This round will continue until final and complete victory has been won, and that day cannot be too far off.

4. I shall take an early opportunity of paying you a visit so that we can meet each other again.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

Date listed in book: 12 February, 1945
Date issued: 19 March, 1945
21 Army Group
Message to "Soldier"

1. I am glad to have this opportunity of being able to speak to all soldiers in the BLA through the first number of "SOLDIER". You and I have come a long way together; we have been through some very bad times and some very good times

2. And what is the situation to-day?

By no possible conceivable chance can Germany win this war; victory for the Allies, absolute and definite victory, is certain. All that now remains is the conquest of Germany itself.

We are fighting on German soil and we have entered the ring of the last round; there is no time limit for this round; we shall continue until our opponent has had enough.

3. And what are we fighting for?

You remember the poem written in the Desert by a soldier of the Eighth Army, in one verse of which he gave his views as to what we were fighting for:
"Peace for the kids, our brothers freed,
A kinder world, a cleaner breed."

That seems to describe it very well.

4. I like to feel that out of the comradeship of the great armies that are fighting in this war will be born a new factor; a factor for good, which will be a powerful influence in the difficult days that will lie ahead when the fighting is over.

We must see to it that this will be so.

5. On your behalf I send our greetings to our comrades serving in other theatres of war. There are many of our friends in Africa, in Italy, in Burma, and in other places; to all of them we send our best wishes, and to the many thousands who garrison and maintain the lines of communication throughout the world.

We salute our comrades in the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy, and in the RAF; we soldiers know well that without their efforts we could have achieved little.

We send friendly greetings to the soldiers of the Allied nations fighting with us.

And to our families and friends in the home countries we send a very special word of greeting.

6. I have often wished "Good Luck" to soldiers.

I do so now to "SOLDIER".

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

[NOTE: This message was printed on cover of "Soldier" Issue #1, March 19, 1945 and not distributed as a standalone message]

23 March, 1945 Germany
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. On the 7th February I told you we were going into the ring for the final and last round; there would be no time limit; we would continue fighting until our opponent was knocked out. The last round is going very well on both sides of the ring – and overhead.
2. In the WEST, the enemy has lost the Rhineland, and with it the flower of at least four armies—the Parachute Army, Fifth Panzer Army, Fifteenth Army, and Seventh Army; the First Army, further to the south, is now being added to the list. In the Rhineland battles, the enemy has lost about 150,000 prisoners, and there are many more to come; his total casualties amount to about 250,000 since 8th February.
3. In the EAST, the enemy has lost all POMERANIA east of the ODER, an area as large as the Rhineland; and three more German armies have been routed. The Russian armies are within about 35 miles of Berlin.
4. Overhead, the Allied Air Forces are pounding Germany day and night. It will be interesting to see how much longer the Germans can stand it.
5. The enemy has in fact been driven into a corner, and he cannot escape. Events are moving rapidly. The complete and decisive defeat of the Germans is certain; there is no possibility of doubt on this matter.
6. 21 ARMY GROUP WILL NOW CROSS THE RHINE.
The enemy possibly thinks he is safe behind this great river obstacle. We all agree that it is a great obstacle; but we will show the enemy that he is far from safe behind it. This great Allied fighting machine, composed of integrated land and air forces, will deal with the problem in no uncertain manner.
7. And having crossed the RHINE, we will crack about in the plains of Northern Germany, chasing the enemy from pillar to post. The swifter and the more energetic

our action the sooner the war will be over, and that is what we all desire: to get on with the job and finish off the German war as soon as possible.

8. Over the RHINE, then, let us go. And good hunting to you all on the other side.
9. May "the Lord mighty in battle" give us the victory in this our latest undertaking, as he has done in all our battles since we landed in Normandy on D-day.

[BL Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C.-in-C.
21 Army Group

[NOTE: One tends to see more of these messages than the others. One version for sale with "Montgomery of Alamein" signature had "23 March" in his hand.

All Ranks Main and Rear Headquarters

I am circulating a message I have received from the Commander-in-Chief which should be brought to the notice of all ranks of both Main and Rear Headquarters. My reply is also circulated.

I would like to take the opportunity to say how grateful I am for the way all ranks have responded to the heavy demands that have been made upon them all. The Commander-in-Chief's message, and the way operations are going, are indeed fitting rewards for our efforts.

[FW de Guingand]
Major-General
Chief Of Staff

Main Headquarters
21 Army Group
30 Mar 45

Message received from Commander-in-Chief

I would like to express to you personally, and to all my staff that work under you, my great appreciation for all the work that was done before we launched the Battle of the Rhine. I know well the amount of work that had to be done, and it had to be done in a short time. It could have been done in the time only by a first-class staff.

I always feel that at 21 Army Group we have the best staff in the world. Will you please let all the staff know how grateful I am.

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal

Tac HQ
28 Mar 45

Reply sent by Chief of Staff

To: Commander-in-Chief
30 Mar 45
(personal from Chief-of-Staff)

Your very kind message to the staff is greatly appreciated by us all. We hope to continue serving you to the limit of our ability until your great task is completed.

[NOTE: This is not in the "A Collection of Field-Marshal Montgomery's Personal Messages to 21 Army Group"]

29 March, 1945
21 ARMY GROUP
SPECIAL ORDER
Issued on behalf of
FIELD-MARSHAL
SIR BERNARD L. MONTGOMERY, K.C.B, D.S.O.
Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group
by
Major-General Sir Fancies W. De Guingand
K.B.E, C.B., D.S.O.
Chief of Staff, 21 Army Group

Headquarters,
21 Army Group
29th March, 1945.

MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY THE KING

1. The following telegram from His Majesty the King has been received by the Commander-in-Chief:--

"To you personally and to all in 21 Army Group I send my warmest congratulations on the outstanding success of your recent operations. Your triumphant passage of the Rhine into the heart of enemy territory has stirred

us all very deeply, and I am more proud than I can say of the gallant part that my Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen have played in it.”

2. The Commander-in-Chief replied:--

“With humble duty I thank Your Majesty for the telegram you sent to us all. The great team under my command will strike hard for Victory in the West.”

3. The Commander-in-Chief desires that the above messages be published to all troops.

21 A.Gp./3757/6/A(PS).

M.W.A.P. GRAHAM, Major-General,
i/c Administration.

[NOTE: This is not in the “A Collection of Field-Marshal Montgomery’s Personal Messages to 21 Army Group”]

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“MESSAGE FORM”
TAC Second Army
Main Canadian Army
HQ L of C
5 May 1945

[NOTE THIS IS COPY OF TELEGRAM, not a “personal message” as such]

M1121(.) Personal for Army Commanders from C-in-C(.)
The German armed forces facing 21 Army Group have surrendered unconditionally to us(.)
At this historic moment I want to express to Army Commanders and to the Commander L of C my grateful thanks for the way they and their men have carried out the immense task that was given them(.) I hope to express myself more adequately later on, but I felt that I must at once tell you all how well you have done and how proud I am to command 21 Army Group(.) Please tell your commanders and troops that I thank them from the bottom of my heart(.)

MOST IMMEDIATE

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8 May 1945 Germany
21 Army Group
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. On this day of victory in Europe I feel I would like to speak to all who have served and fought with me during the last few years. What I have to say is very simple, and quite short.
2. I would ask you all to remember those of our comrades who fell in the struggle. They gave their lives that others might have freedom, and no man can do more than that. I believe that He would say to each one of them:
 “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”
3. And we who remain have seen the thing through to the end; we all have a feeling of great joy and thankfulness that we have been preserved to see this day. We must remember to give the praise and thankfulness where it is due:
 “This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”
4. In the early days of this war the British Empire stood alone against the combined might of the axis powers. And during those days we suffered some great disasters; but we stood firm: on the defensive, but striking blows where we could. Later we were joined by Russia and America; and from then onwards the end was in no doubt. Let us never forget what we owe to our Russian and American allies; this great allied team has achieved much in war; may it achieve even more in peace.
5. Without doubt, great problems lie ahead; the world will not recover quickly from the upheaval that has taken place; there is much work for each one of us. I would say that we must face up to that work with the same fortitude that we faced up to the worst days of the war. It may be that some difficult times lie ahead for our country, and for each one of us personally. If it happens thus, then our discipline will pull us through; but we must remember that the best discipline implies the subordination of self for the benefits of the community.
6. It has been a privilege and an honour to command this great British Empire team in Western Europe. Few commanders can have had such loyal service as you have given me. I thank each one of you from the bottom of my heart.
7. And so let us embark on what lies ahead full of joy and optimism. We have won the German war. Let us know win the peace.
8. Good luck to you all wherever you may be.

[BL Montgomery]
 Field-Marshal
 C.-in-C.
 21 Army Group

[NOTE: This have been most sweet to compose!]

30 May 1945
Germany

Personal Message
From the Commander-in-Chief
To the population of the British Zone in Germany

1. I have been appointed by the British Government to command and control the British Zone in Germany.
This area will be governed for the present by Military Government under my orders.
2. My immediate object is to establish a simple and orderly life for the whole community.
The first step will be to see that the population has:
 - (a) Food
 - (b) Housing
 - (c) Freedom from disease.The harvest must be gathered in.
The means of transportation must be re-established.
The postal services must be re-started.
Certain industries must be got going again.
All this will mean much hard work for everyone.
3. Those who have committed war crimes according to international law will be dealt with in proper fashion.
The German people will work under my orders to provide the necessities of life for the community, and to restore the economic life of the country.
4. There are in the British Zone a very large number of German soldiers, sailors and airmen, and all these are now being assembled in certain areas.
The German WEHRMACHT, and other armed forces, will be disarmed and disbanded.
All German soldiers, sailors and airmen are being sorted out by trades and occupations. In a few days they will start to be discharged from the armed forces so that they can get on with the work. The most urgent need is the harvest; therefore workers on the land are going first; men of other occupations and trades will be discharged to work as soon as it can be arranged.
5. I will see to it that all German soldiers and civilians are kept informed by radio and newspapers of how the work is going on. The population will be told what to do. I shall expect it to be done willingly and efficiently.

(Sgd) B.L. Montgomery,
Field Marshal,
C-in-C British Zone.

[Note: in English and German. Written 3 weeks after the German surrender.]

10 June 1945

Germany

Personal Message

From the Commander-in-Chief

(to the population of the British Area in Germany)

You have wondered, no doubt, why our soldiers do not smile when you wave your hands, or say “Good Morning” in the streets, or play with the children. It is because our soldiers are obeying orders. You do not like it. Nor do our soldiers. We are naturally friendly and forgiving people. But the orders were necessary; and I will tell you why.

In the last war of 1914, which your rulers began, your Army was defeated; your Generals surrendered; and in the Peace Treaty of Versailles your rulers admitted that the guilt of beginning the war was Germany’s. But the surrender was made in France. The war never came to your country; your cities were not damaged, like the cities of France and Belgium; and your Armies marched home in good order. Then your rulers began to spread the story (legend) that your Armies were never really defeated, and later they denied the war guilt clauses of the Peace Treaty. They told you that Germany was neither guilty nor defeated; and because the war had not come to your country many of you believed it, and you cheered when your rulers began another war.

Again, after years of waste and slaughter and misery, your Armies have been defeated. This time the Allies were determined that you should learn your lesson not only that you have been defeated, which you must know by now, but that you, your nation, were again guilty of beginning the war. For if that is not made clear to you, and your children, you may again allow yourselves to be deceived by your rulers, and led into another war.

During the war your rulers would not let you know what the world was thinking of you. Many of you seemed to think that when our soldiers arrived you could be friends with them at once, as if nothing much had happened. But too much has happened for that. Our soldiers have seen their comrades shot down, their homes in ruins, their wives and children hungry. They have seen terrible things in many countries where your rulers took the war. For those things, you will say, you are not responsible – it was your rulers. But they were found by the German nation; every nation is responsible for its rulers, and while they were successful you cheered and laughed. That is why our soldiers do not smile at you. This we have ordered this we have done, to save yourselves, to save your children, to save the world from another war. It will not always be so. For we are Christian forgiving people, and we like to smile and be friendly. Our object is to destroy the evil of the N*** system; it is too soon to be sure that this has been done.

You are to read this to your children, if they are old enough, and see that they understand. Tell them why it is that the British soldier does not smile.

(Sgd) B.L. Montgomery,
Field Marshal,
C-in-C British Area.

[Note: This message was produced in German and English. Above is the English version text]

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June, 1945
Germany
21 Army Group
Personal Message
from the C-in-C
to
HEADQUARTERS, SECOND ARMY

6. The Second Army ceases to exist as a Headquarters in the field on 25th June, 1945, and returns to England.

I cannot let this fine Army leave my command without a message of appreciation for all it has achieved, and without a word of farewell to all those who gave of their best that we might win the German war.

7. First, I must mention your Commander : Lieut-Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey.

Shortly after the Battle of Alamein I asked the War Office that General Dempsey might be sent from England to take command of a Corps in the Eighth Army. He has been at my side ever since; in the campaigns in Sicily, in Italy, and in north-west Europe. I have never regretted my choice. And I feel sure that all of you have enjoyed serving under such a skillful soldier and fine leader. Your well-being has always been his great concern and he never spared himself on your behalf.

8. To the Officers and men of Headquarters, Second Army, I would say this : You have done your job in a way that is beyond all praise ; I have always had complete confidence in you and your Commander ; your deeds will live in history.

A great task has been accomplished with an unfailing spirit, and, in accomplishing it, the Second Army never failed to do what it set out to do.

Such are the rewards which fall to the brave when led with unwearying energy and great skill.

9. I would send you this message from myself, and from all formations and units in 21 Army Group :

“Goodbye, and good luck to each one of you. You were good comrades and good soldiers, and you will always be remembered with affection by those who served in the Second Army in the campaign in Western Europe in 1944/45.”

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C-in-C, 21 Army Group.

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Personal Message
From the Commander-in-Chief
(to the population of the British Area in Germany)
Germany
16 or 18 June 1945

[NOTE : I do not have the text ready. This may have been printed in two sheets (one German, one English) or one long sheet in English and German]

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C-in-C British Area

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1 July, 1945
Tac HQ,
21 Army Group

TO ALL PADRES IN 21 ARMY GROUP

10. Now that hostilities have ceased in Europe, I want to take this opportunity of thanking you all, the Padres of all denominations in 21 Army Group, for the magnificent work which you have done during the past year's struggle.

You have inspired us with that spirit of high endeavor which has enlivened all our actions, and you have constantly made us bear in mind from whence cometh our strength.

“If it had not been the Lord who was on
Our side, when men rose up against us,
Then they had swallowed us up quick.”

The tremendous consciousness among all ranks of the greatness of our task, which has now been blessed with complete victory, is largely the result of your labours.

11. I firmly believe that every enterprise which man undertakes, if it is to achieve any lasting success, must have a strong spiritual basis; if we attempt any great thing for solely material reasons, the results cannot be good. Today our task is greater and more complex than ever before. We have won the war in Europe; we have now to rebuild a new civilization; a new world in which all nations may live in peace and prosperity.

We cannot achieve success in this great task unless we have a firm spiritual basis on which to build. Today we look to the Churches to give us a clear and simple lead on those spiritual issues which are always important, and over which we must never compromise.

12. You, Padres, can look back on a year of great undertakings, which have been crowned with complete success; you must also look forward to a period in which we shall need all the help and guidance you can give us. With your guidance and inspiration we shall tackle the problems that lie ahead with complete confidence in our ability to solve them : whatever the difficulties that lie in our path.

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
C-in-C
21 Army Group.

[NOTE: Not in "A collection of General Montgomery's Personal Messages to the 21 Army"]

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June 27, 1945

Germany

Printed copy of handwritten letter. Facsimile was distributed to troops

I would like to pay a compliment to the gunners, and I would like this to be passed on to every gunner.

The gunners have risen to great heights in this war; they have been well commanded and well handled. In my experience the artillery has never been so efficient as it is today; it is at the top of its form. For all this I offer you my warmest congratulations.

The contribution of the artillery to final victory in the German war has been immense. This will always be so; the harder the fighting and the longer the war, the more the infantry, and in fact all the arms, lean on the gunners. The proper use of the artillery is a great battle-winning factor.

I think all the other arms have done very well too. But the artillery has been terrific and I want to give due weight to its contribution to the victory in this campaign.

B.L. Montgomery
Field-Marshal
C-in-C
21 Army Group

[NOTE: Not in "A collection of General Montgomery's Personal Messages to the 21 Army"]

END OF 21 ARMY GROUP MESSAGES, BEGINNING OF BAOR MESSAGES

25 August, 1945
British Army of the Rhine
Personal Message from the C-in-C
To be read out to all troops

1. On Saturday, 25 August, 1945, the 21st Army Group will cease to exist and the British forces in north west Europe will be known as "the British Army of the Rhine".
2. I cannot let this moment pass without a reference to the past achievements of 21 Army Group. This Group of Armies fought on the left or northern flank of the Allied Forces that invaded Normandy in June, 1944; these forces liberated France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and Denmark; they invaded Germany, and fought their way to the centre of that country where they joined hands with our Russian allies; and thus ended the German war.

The Army Group completed its active operations by gathering as captives on the northern flank, in the space of a few days, upwards of two million of the once renowned Germany Army.

The fame of the Army group will long shine in history and other generations besides ours will honour its deeds.

3. Officers and men of the Army Group are now scattered throughout the world; many are serving in other theatres; many have returned to civil life.

To all of you, wherever you may be, I send my best wishes and my grateful thanks for your loyal help and co-operation.

4. To those who still serve in Germany I would say that, though our name is changed, we still have the same task.

As a result of this war much of Europe has been destroyed, and the whole economic framework of the continent lies in ruins. We have a job to do which will call for all our energy and purpose; we have to help to rebuild a new Europe out of the ruins of the old.

It is a gigantic task.

But we must face up to it with that same spirit of service to the common cause of freedom which has so strengthened us during the stress and strain of war.

Together we have achieved much in war; let us now achieve even more in peace.

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
Commander-in-Chief
British Army of the Rhine

Germany
Sept., 1945
THE ROYAL TANK REGIMENT
PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM
FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY
Germany
Sept., 1945

1. Having been appointed by His Majesty The King to be Colonel Commandant of the Royal Tank Regiment, I want at once to send my personal greetings to all officers, warrant officers, NCOs and men of the Regiment.
2. It is a great honour for me to be given this appointment. My connection with the R.T.R. have been very close since the days of Alamein; during which battle I was given your beret and your badge by a Sgt. In the Regiment who commanded my tank. I have proudly worn your beret and your badge ever since that day.
3. I have served with many units of the Regiment throughout the war years. From my own experience in this war I can say that The Royal Tank Regiment has carried on with much distinction the great traditions which were so deservedly won in the Great War of 1914/18; its units have fought magnificently in every theatre.
4. During the last six years battalions of the Regiment have been called upon to serve in every type of armoured formation, and with every type of tank and specialized equipment. But whatever has been their task, they have carried it through with distinction. The Regiment has made a great name for itself. Let us see that that name flourishes in the years that lie ahead.

5. I have met many of you from time to time. I look forward to meeting you again in due course. You can rest assured that I will serve the Regiment to the best of my ability, and will endeavor always to promote its interests.
6. Good luck to you all.

[B.L. Montgomery]
Field-Marshal
Colonel Commandant, The R.T.R.

[NOTE: I am looking to purchase an original copy of this message. If you have one, please email me at Vistafjord@gmail.com]

“The British Zone Review”
“A fortnightly Review of the Activities of the Control Commission for German (B.E.) and Military Government”
Vol. 1 No. 1
Saturday, September 29, 1945

[on cover of this newspaper]
Introductory Message
By the
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
British Zone

Before launching my troops into battle it has always been my custom to issue them a Personal Message. This is intended to define the common objective and thereby foster unity of purpose.

Some of you who are now administering and reconstructing Germany in the Control Commission and Military Government have served with me in the past in the Mediterranean and European theatres, other are serving with me of the first time. To these newcomers, who bring specialist knowledge indispensable to the fulfillment of our great task, I offer a special welcome.

Some time before hostilities came to an end in Europe five months ago, plans were being prepared for the post-war task, which may be summarized as the permanent eradication of N***ism, and the administration of Germany according to the principles which we hold to be right.

Before the task of reconstruction can be undertaken, the complicated machinery of a war-making race has to be carefully pulled apart. Furthermore, twelve years of N*** rule and nearly six years of war have resulted in more than material destruction.

For five months we have been clearing the ground, and the task of sweeping clean is still proceeding. As we approach its completion we shall be entering, in concert with our Allies, the second stage, the stage of reconstruction. Much of the responsibility for guiding and supervising this reconstruction rests with you. The defeated enemy must be made to put his house in order. He must learn to feed himself. Also he must be made to pay for the war which was of his making. At present he cannot sustain himself, far less repay what he owes. First he must be raised to his feet, and then made to work in such a way that he will not only be able to liquidate his debts but finally find his own salvation. We shall try to be wise conquerors. As we were strong in battle so shall we be just in peace.

You are here in Germany to help with the administration and reconstruction of the most ravaged country the world has known. On you will depend the shape of the future Germany.

I hope this fortnightly review will serve as a forum of instruction and expression. As a means of acquainting you with the problems, aims and achievements of your colleagues it should prove useful.

You have been chosen for a task the magnitude of which you must all realise. May you succeed in your endeavours.

[B.L. Montgomery
Field-Marshal
C-in-C British Zone]

Christmas 1945 Berlin
Personal Message from the C-in-C
Christmas 1945

1. On the first Christmas Day since the war in Europe and the Far East has been won, let us look back with gratitude on the great victories and achievements which have been granted to the Allied arms.
The evil which we set out to destroy has been destroyed; the world is at peace once more.
Let us give thanks to

“The Lord mighty in battle”

For sustaining us during the past six years.

2. Christmastide has always been the festival of

“peace, goodwill towards men”,

Today we join with our families and friends all over the world to give thanks for the gift of peace which has been given to us. And today we all sing the old carols we love so well ; and which have a fuller meaning now that the war is ended.

3. But Christmastide is also the festival of the family. We in Germany cannot just yet be reunited with our families; this must be a great sadness to one and all. In your name I would like to send them a message from all of us in Germany. I should like to wish them

“Good luck, and a Happy Christmas”.

4. We must also remember today all those who have given their lives in the winning of this war. They have paid the heaviest price of all; which was not asked of us who remain. They leave behind many for whom the joys of Christmas are full of sadness and the sense of loss. We will remember them always. And we will be determined to build a future which shall be worthy of those who fell.
5. And so I should like to wish all of you who are with me in Germany today

“A MERRY CHRISTMAS”

and best wishes for the New Year that will shortly be on us. Let us pray that our efforts to build a fair and lasting peace will be crowned with as great success as was granted to our arms in war.

[Montgomery of Alamein]
Field-Marshal,
Military Governor and C-in-C,
British Army of the Rhine

1 May, 1946

Personal Message from the C-in-C

1. The time has come for me to give up my command in Germany and return to England to prepare myself for the post of Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
2. When I think back to the day I took over at 21 Army Group in January 1944, at that time getting ready to start its great adventure, I feel amazed at what has been achieved. We crossed the Channel, won a great victory in Normandy, advanced through France, Belgium and Holland, and after a winter of bitter fighting with a long L of C, were rewarded by the unconditional surrender of our enemy. We had at last gained the long awaited victory.
3. A new task then faced us.

We had landed in Normandy with an organization known as Civil Affairs. When we entered Germany this name changed to Military Government; even that name is now no longer suitable as the Army has recently withdrawn from any function of Government.

With the invaluable help of civilians from England, men and women, we have gradually built up a Control Commission worthy of our country, which, working alongside the Army, Navy and Air Force, has successfully overcome so many of the initial problems and is marching forward with confidence.

4. Sailors, soldiers, airmen, civilians – men and women – we have all been in this business together. I would like to thank each one of you for the support you have given me in my task. The great results that have been achieved have been due to the united effort of a magnificent team, of which I can justly say each one of us can be proud to have been a member.
5. And so with a sad heart I say goodbye, wishing all of you on your return to England, whether it be now or later, the happy home you deserve.

[Montgomery of Alamein]
Field-Marshal,
Commander-in-Chief
and Military Governor

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6 June, 1946

Personal Message from Field-Marshal The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein to The Army Physical Training Corps

I have been appointed by H.M. The King to be Colonel Commandant of the Army Physical Training Corps. This is a great honour of which I shall endeavor to prove worthy.

I want immediately to send my greetings to all in the Corps.

Some of us know each other; some of us have never met.

But I know well the sterling work performed by the Corps during the war years in preparing the Army for the struggle and in helping to mould our recruits into splendid soldiers by making them physically and mentally fit to face up to our enemies in the battle, to triumph over all dangers and discomforts, to get on with the job, and finally to conquer.

I wish the best of luck to all in the Corps.

[Montgomery of Alamein]
Field-Marshal,

NOTE: This is a one-off handwritten message that is now in the APTC Museum

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LEAVING SERVICE POSTCARDS

NOTE: Three versions: BLA 1945, BAOR1945, BAOR 1946. Identical text except for date at bottom left.

I feel I cannot let you leave 21 Army Group on your return to civil life without a message of thanks and farewell. Together we have carried through one of the most successful campaigns in history, and it has been our good fortune to be members of this great team.
God Bless you and God speed.

[B.L. Montgomery]
FIELD-MARSHAL
COMMANDER IN CHIEF

=====-END=-====-