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# MOTHER OF A GENERAL

## The Montgomerys Are Tough

A FEW days ago, after the Eighth Army began to drive Rommel out of Egypt, a representative of the Londonderry "Sentinel" called on the mother of General Montgomery. By the courtesy of A. J. Cavanagh, of Wellington, we are able to print some of the things the "Sentinel" printed the next day.

**I**N an old-world house, built in 1776, overlooking Lough Foyle, where British and American warships go in and out to and from the great Atlantic convoy routes, lives the mother of General Sir Bernard Law Montgomery, whose Eighth Army is sweeping on to victory in the Western Desert. Lady Montgomery is "the woman who has never grown old," despite her 78 years. Her saintly beauty years ago caught the imagination of George Joy, the painter, and he made her sit for him as Joan of Arc. A photograph of the painting is one of the many pictures at New Park.

### In Love With Ireland

She came on her honeymoon as a 16-year-old bride to New Park, the home of the Montgomerys, who came out of Derry many generations ago, and since then she has been in love with Ireland and the Irish. Since she made her permanent home here over 20 years ago, she, like her late husband, the Rt. Rev. Sir Henry Hutchinson Montgomery, K.C.M.G., who died 11 years ago, has been surrounded by the love and affection of all the people in the district.

Lady Montgomery opened the door herself to the interviewer.

"It takes the Irish," she said. "I am proud of him and all my sons, and prouder still that it is Irishmen who are leading. Give me an Irishman every time."

Lady Montgomery, who spent 12 years in Tasmania while Sir Henry was bishop there from 1889 till 1901, added, "Once you have lived in the Colonies, you don't want to live in England. I would rather have this lovely Irish place now. England would be too stuffy and stodgy. I don't like England now, although I go back once a year to see my daughters. I think all the nicest men are Irishmen. When I was in Canada if I asked who any outstanding-looking man was, I usually found he was Irish."

### A Westminster Abbey Bride

Sixty-one years ago, on July 28, 1881, she stood as a bride in the Henry the Seventh Chapel in Westminster Abbey. Dean Farrar, of Canterbury, at one time headmaster of Marlborough, had four daughters and four curates, and each daughter married a curate, Maud, now Lady Montgomery, was the fourth daughter.

"I was engaged when I was 14, and had school lessons the day before I was married," she said. "I celebrated my seventeenth birthday during my honeymoon."

Dean Stanley, to whom the bridegroom was secretary, on hearing of the engagement, declared that they must be married in Westminster Abbey and by himself. Never had a Henry and



GENERAL MONTGOMERY wearing his famous Digger hat with badges from various units he commands

Maud been married there since King Henry and Queen Maud, and he said he would insist on the bridegroom dropping his second Christian name for the occasion. He also said he would read the Beatitudes instead of the usual address from the Prayer Book. Dean Stanley died two weeks before the wedding day, and they were married by Archbishop Tait. Later, Lady Montgomery went to live at Kennington, where her husband was rector of St. Mark's for 10 years, and there in Kennington were born five of their children.

### Twelve Years in Tasmania

"General Montgomery wears a Digger hat in memory of the 12 years he spent in Tasmania," said Lady Montgomery. "He does not drink or smoke. He rises at 6.30 and goes to bed at 9.30. He is keen on iron rations and discipline. He used to run a mile before breakfast. He likes bubble and squeak. A crême caramel is his favourite dish. His stepson, Captain Dick Carver, is on his staff in Egypt. His wife died a few years ago. His son David, aged 14, is at Winchester."

In a book entitled "The Generations of the Montgomerys," printed for private circulation during the years the family lived in Tasmania, Bishop Montgomery appealed to his children: "Carry on the holy traditions of Godliness and humility, steady labour and true piety, so that the name of Montgomery, as it has borne no stain in the past, may receive no injury when it is chiefly in your keeping." He was made a Prelate of the Order of St. Michael and St. George by King Edward VII. in 1906.

Lady Montgomery has five sons and two daughters—Mr. Harold Montgomery, Director of Manpower and Womanpower in Kenya; Mr. Donald Montgomery, C.M.G., a barrister in

Vancouver; General Montgomery, Commander of the Eighth Army; the Rev. Colin Montgomery, a chaplain on a hospital ship, who recently met his brother, the General, for half an hour in Egypt, their first meeting in seven years; Lieutenant-Colonel Brian F. Montgomery, who was awarded the M.B.E. last week for gallantry and distinguished service with General Alexander in Burma, and now at a staff college in India; Mrs. Holden, Scotland, and Mrs. Holderness, Guildford.

Lady Montgomery last saw General Montgomery when she was in England a year ago. "I go there once a year to see my daughters," she said: "Their husbands are also in the Middle East."

### His Grave Was Dug

Lady Montgomery told the story of how the General was once nearly buried alive by mistake in France. She pointed to a photograph showing her son leading a charge by his men to clear the streets of the village of Meterin. He was waving a sword (it was the last occasion on which officers carried their swords into battle), and he was shot through the lung and his batman fell on top of him. He was discovered later apparently lifeless, and a doctor, after looking at him, said: "That man has only half-an-hour to live." Orders were given to have a grave dug. A lorry was brought to take away the body, when somebody saw a slight movement, and he was taken to hospital, where he eventually recovered. That was in October, 1914.

### She Farms Seventeen Acres

Lady Montgomery's day is a busy one from her rising at 8.30 till she retires at 10 o'clock, and one which women 30 years younger would scarcely tackle. She rarely wears a coat to walk into the village or while supervising the work on her 17-acre farm.

Up to this summer, when the petrol was cut off in Eire, she regularly drove herself into the Maiden City, the traditions of which have always inspired the Montgomerys.

"If I had the petrol I would still be driving," she said. "But maybe after the war I will be able to get some. I finished my last drop coming from Greencastle one day."

### "Not a Jitterbug"

She likes dancing, and only a short time ago stayed till the early hours of the morning at a function in aid of the Nursing Society, of which she is a leader. "I like a nice waltz, but I am afraid I will never get on to the jitterbugs now."

Recently she started a bridge club in the village. Bridge is one of her great pastimes, and she plays almost every evening.

She reads the Bible, and has prayers every day in the private chapel, in which is a cross from the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.