Operation Market Garden: Arnhem

Following the initial successes of D Day the Allied advance began to develop supply problems and eventually halted at the Dutch/Belgian border at the beginning of September 1944.

In order to break the deadlock, Field-Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery, commanding Twenty-First Army Group, the northern ‘prong’ of the Allied advance, proposed early in September, 1944, using airborne troops to make a daring leap over the German defences and open up the way for a mass advance by the Allied armour into Germany. British and American parachutists and glider-borne troops would land in strength behind the German lines in Holland, capture bridges over the Meuse, Waal and Lower Rhine, and hold them while Lieutenant-General Miles Dempsey's British Second Army, led by XXX Corps, poured through Holland into Germany. Montgomery persuaded Eisenhower to support his plan, which went ahead under the codename MARKET GARDEN".

If successful the operation would establish an extended supply line as far as the last bridge at Arnhem. The great natural barrier, the Rhine, would have to be crossed, and the Ruhr and the rest of Germany would lie open to the Second Army with no more natural obstacles in the way.

Despite an outstanding valiant and heroic attempt by the British they were unable to ‘hold until relieved’ by the Second Army and, in the name of Cornelius Ryan’s famous book and subsequent Hollywood movie, it tragically proved to be .... “A Bridge Too Far...”

On this trip MHT starts at the initial bridge crossed by XXX Corps and follows “Hell’s Highway” all the way up to Arnhem taking in all the Drop and Landing Zones and bridges on the way as this epic story unfolds.
Guests are met at Eindhoven airport, the heart of “Market Garden”, by the MHT Team. Guests are driven down to “Joe’s Bridge” where XXX Corps started their long drive up Hell’s Highway. On the way up to Arnhem guests have this fascinating, heroic and ultimately sad story told.

**Day One** sees various Drop and Landing Zones of the 82nd and 101st US Airborne Divisions along with various stories of XXX Corps advance. The group stops off at all the key bridges such as Son and Grave and we have lunch at a little restaurant in Son Forest at a 101st DZ as well as afternoon tea at Beverijdings Museum, Groesbeek, an 82nd DZ. The Day ends at Nijmegen bridge where we cover the bitter fighting against entrenched SS troops. We then retire to our hotel in Nijmegen woods, used by US officers during the battle.
Day Two sees us cross Nijmegen bridge and we cover the US river crossing as well as XXX Corps bitterly fought rush across the bridge. We visit the initial British DZ’s and LZ’s and cover the main battle plan and movements towards Arnhem as well as relive smaller engagements and also VC actions. This is a really personal tour where we truly walk in the footsteps of heroes. Our day ends at Arnhem bridge itself where we cover all the key positions and battle tactics before making our way tour hotel in Arnhem.

Day Three we see the British reinforcement DZ’s, take in various small engagements, follow routes into town, VC actions, the Arnhem railway bridge battle the Oosterbeek Perimeter Defence positions. After lunch at the Oosterbeek crossroads we visit the Hartenstein Hotel which is now a wonderful museum. We then see the Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery at Ooesterboek before finally visiting the location of the evacuation across the river after the collapse the Ooesterbeek pocket thus bringing to an end a truly memorable trip.

For more information on this, or any other MHT tour, or to make a booking please call us on 0845 835 0644. Alternatively you can email us at info@militaryhistorytours.co.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.