

But to get back to the New Order trend of the popular theatre in Japan, let us remember that its effect has been startling even for those whose faculty for being surprised has been numbed by years of residence in various parts of East Asia. Since the outbreak of the Pacific War several cases have been reported where young Japanese, moved by a popular military stage theme, have killed their wives and children before proceeding to the front. Their excuse, nationally applauded, was that they could not concentrate whole-heartedly on the war if they were disturbed by domestic preoccupations.

And the modern Komatsu has not been wanting. Japanese women are still mortgaging and selling themselves to give male relatives the patriotic face that goes with a classical sabre of Old Japan or an extra piece of superior equipment. And the playwrights continue plugging out stories for stage and radio, all designed to strengthen those medieval samurai codes without which a militarist Japan could not survive.

The militarists have brought the Japanese stage into its own—as a war weapon.

## CRACKING THE GERMAN DAMS

By Wing Commander GUY P. GIBSON, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1942



THE FLAK OVER France wasn't bad. It was coming up all around in spasmodic flashes as some straggler got

off his course and struggled through a defended area. Otherwise the night was lovely. There was a three-quarter moon which shone brightly into my Lancaster, lighting the cockpit up almost as if it were day.

I was feeling pleased because this was going to be my last raid before going on a few days leave; for now I had done 173 sorties without having had much rest. It was almost too good to be true that after this raid on Stuttgart I should be able to go down to Cornwall with my wife and have the time of my life.

We dropped our load, and my poor Lancaster on its three engines jumped into the air as the bombs fell out of its belly and I banked around and dived for the deck.

During these moments there had been little talk, but once we were clear of the target area all the boys on board started talking.

"Leave to-morrow."

"To-morrow we go on leave."

"I'm going fishing."

"I'm going to sleep."

"To-morrow we go on leave."

"Report to C. in C. immediately." It was early when I was waked up and given this message.

The Air Marshal was very nice to me, and as I went into his room he said, "Hello, Gibson. Sit down." Then he told me quietly that I wasn't going to have any leave. He told me that I was to form a new squadron, a special squadron picked out of the best crews in the Bomber Command, the squadron which would have to undertake a most important mission. He told me that if this mission was successful, we should have succeeded in dealing to Germany in one night the most damaging blow of the war.

He spoke to me about the Möhne Dam and about the Eder Dam. He spoke to me for a long time and told me of their importance and of the difficulty which we should have in destroying them.

It took me an hour to pick my squadron. I wrote the names down on a piece of paper and gave them to a man with a red moustache who was sitting behind a huge desk. Then I got in touch with my wife and told her that our leave was postponed because I had one or two things to do before I could get away.

Next morning I got them all together. There were 25 crews, which means 175 men—pilots, navigators, wireless operators, bomb-aimers, engineers, and gunners,