

## **To celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013, new online records of the Dambusters Raid are now available on TheGenealogist**

To coincide with recent commemorations on the RAF raid on the industrialised areas of the German heartland, TheGenealogist is pleased to announce the availability of full online records of one of the most daring bomber raids of World War Two.

Prior to the start of the war, the British Air Ministry identified Germany's heavily industrialised Ruhr Valley and especially the dams as important strategic targets. Repeated air strikes with large bombs could be effective but Bomber Command had struggled for accuracy in the face of heavy enemy fire.

Finally 'Operation Chastise' was devised using a specially designed 'bouncing bomb' invented and developed by Barnes Wallis.

The operation was tasked to No 5 Group RAF, which formed a new squadron to undertake the mission. Led by 24 year-old Wing Commander Guy Gibson, a veteran of over 170 bombing and night-fighter missions, twenty-one bomber crews were selected from existing squadrons in 5 Group. These crews included RAF personnel of several different nationalities, as well as members of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF). The squadron was based at RAF Scampton, about 5 miles north of Lincoln.

### **Full details of the Operation Record Book now online**

The new records on TheGenealogist provide an in-depth analysis of the mission which went on to achieve legendary recognition. The fascinating information includes an account of each aircraft's flight, including full crew list and details of the awards made to each of the crew members after the mission.

Operation Chastise was a success: two dams were breached and one was damaged, severely impacting German resources in the summer of 1943. However this success came at a high price. Of the 19 Lancaster Bombers that took part in the operation, 8 were shot down, with 53 aircrew killed and 3 taken prisoner. With the new records added to TheGenealogist, it is now possible to look at every airman involved in the raid, including all the brave aircrews and how they fared in this unique bombing raid.

### **The factual story of the brave men involved in the Dambuster raids**

Flying very low in ever worsening weather conditions, the Operations Record Book of 617 Squadron provides us with an in-depth account of Operation Chastise. Commencing the story with their last training flight, to the operation itself, to the visit by the King and Queen to congratulate the surviving aircrews, all the details on the famous 'Dambuster raids' are now online. This new resource is ideal if you had a relative involved with 617 Squadron, or if you are interested in one of the most iconic RAF missions of World War Two.

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For more information please contact us.