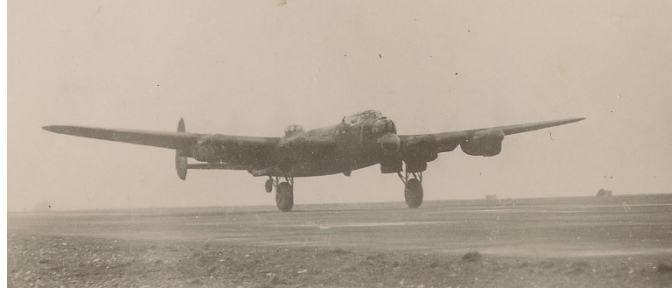


**P/O Gilbert Ernest
Adams DFC 54003 RAF**



Gilbert Adams was a decorated Lancaster wireless operator who died along with five of his crew when their aircraft was shot down by a night-fighter on the approach to Berlin.

His aircraft, Lancaster III LM424 CF-B, of No. 625 Squadron, had taken off from RAF Kelstern at 1621 hours on the afternoon of 16 December 1943 as part of an all-Lancaster force of 483 bombers heading for the German capital. 625 contributed 17 aircraft, the highest for the squadron since it came into operation in October.

At 1907 hours LM424 was intercepted outbound by a Bf night-fighter flown by Luftwaffe ace Major Helmut Lent and shot down in flames, crashing on farm buildings in the German village of Wetschen. Six of the crew died along with two people on the ground. The only survivor of the crew was the bomb-aimer, Sgt. W Pallett, who parachuted to safety and became a prisoner.

Gilbert's aircraft was one of 25 lost during the raid while a further 32, including one from 625 Squadron, crashed on their return when fog and mist shrouded many airfields in eastern England.

Gilbert, and most of the crew, had originally served with 100 Squadron before transferring to 625 when it was formed and was on the fourth operation with their new squadron. The announcement of both his award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and promotion came not long after he was killed. Gilbert, who was 23, was born in Camberwell in London and was one of five children of Ernest and Annie Adams.

The others who died were the pilot WO Donald Baker, flight engineer Sgt. Clifford Robinson, navigator P/O George Batchelor, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Kenneth Watmough and rear gunner (and 625 Squadron's gunnery leader) Flt. Lt. William Crimmins DFC RCAF.

His name can be found on panel 001.

Sources: 625 Squadron records/625 Squadron Association/Aircrew Remembered/London Remembers/Surbiton War Memorial.