



**Flt. Sgt. Gilbert Harry Agar DFM
1503655 RAFVR**

Gilbert Agar was one of three sons raised by Hubert and Amelia Agar at their home in Albemarle Street, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester. After leaving school he worked for Metropolitan Vickers in Manchester and then, at the age of 19, he joined the Royal Air Force and trained in Canada as a navigator before being posted to 103 Squadron at RAF Elsham Wolds.

Gilbert Agar and PM-X, the aircraft lost on the Hasselt raid

There, he was part of the crew of Belgian P/O Florent van Rollegam and by the late spring of 1944 had finished his tour of operations. With their skipper confined to hospital with an ulcer, the crew volunteered for one extra trip on the night of 12 May 1944 with the squadron's new commanding officer, Wg. Cdr. Hubert Goodman, who had taken over at Elsham six days earlier.

The target was the rail yards and depot at Hasselt in Belgium and they left Elsham on board Lancaster III ND700 PM-X at 2148 hours. There was a thick haze over the target area and the Master Bomber called off the attack and PM-X headed back to England with its bomb load intact. However, shortly after leaving the target area it was intercepted by a Me110 flown by Hptmn Werner Baake and the bombs exploded in mid-air, wreckage of the aircraft falling over a wide area around Hallaar, north of Antwerp. There were no survivors.

Gilbert had been awarded his Distinguished Flying Medal in October 1943 following a raid on Turin and it was eventually presented by the King to his two brothers.

Killed with him were the pilot Wg. Cdr. Goodman, flight engineer P/O Philip Vickers, bomb-aimer F/O William Vanderdasson DFM RCAF, wireless operator Sgt. Clifford Finighan, mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. Richard White and rear gunner F/O Roy McLeod RCAF. All are buried in Schoonselhof Cemetery.

Gilbert's name can be found on Panel 001.

Photographic source: 103 Squadron Association.