

Jim Todd remembers his Grandfather Samuel Todd, his father Frank Todd and his uncle Jim Todd

My Grandfather Samuel Todd was Honourably Discharged from the Royal Scots Regiment on 2nd January 1918 having been disabled in the Great War through the loss of an arm. He returned to Scotland and married my Grandmother. In due course they had two sons, Jim (who I am named after) born in 1924 and my father Frank born in 1925. Tragically my Grandmother died a short time after giving birth to my father.

Samuel Todd was then left on his own to look after the two children and found with his disability he could not cope. In the circumstances he decided to emigrate to Canada to live with his sister taking Jim with him, leaving Frank to be brought up by his Aunt. Frank grew up considering his Aunt as his Mother and it was only when he was well into his teens that he was told the whole story.

During the Second World War Frank tried to enlist in the Royal Navy but was rejected as he was deaf in one ear and instead joined the Merchant Navy. In the meantime, Jim had joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and was appointed a Pilot Officer in February 1944. Later that year he was posted to England and was based at various airfields, the final one being Middleton St George where 419 Sqdn, The Royal Canadian Air Force was part of Bomber Command. From there he flew missions as a Lancaster Bomber Navigator.

During Jim's time in England he and Frank were reunited. However, this was only for a brief spell as Jim died on 31st March 1945, aged 21, when his plane was shot down. Jim is Remembered with Honour at the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, sometimes known as the Air Forces Memorial. The Memorial commemorates more than 20,000 airmen and women who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe who have no known grave.

On display are my Grandfather's Honourable Discharge Document, Jim Todd's Certificate of Appointment as an Officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force, his Medals, his Flying Log Book written up until 30th March 1945, the day before he was shot down, and his Wings together with various pieces of Royal Canadian Air Force correspondence.

Jim Todd
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