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Corporal Steven Thomas Dunn from 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, attached to 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, was killed in Afghanistan on Tuesday 21 December 2010.

Corporal Dunn deployed to Afghanistan on 19 September 2010 as part of 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (2 PARA) Battle Group. He was based at Patrol Base 2 in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province.

On 21 December 2010 he was working with 2 PARA Patrols Platoon on a deliberate operation to interdict insurgents in the Bowri desert. He was travelling in a Jackal vehicle which hit an improvised explosive device at 1722 hours local time.

Corporal Steven Thomas Dunn

Corporal Dunn was born on 4 October 1983 in Gateshead where he grew up and attended Saint Joseph's School, Hebburn. On joining the Army in September 2000, he successfully completed Basic and Trade Training before serving with 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron as a Communications System Operator. Following a brief spell at 2nd Signal Regiment, he returned to 216 and to the environment in which he felt most comfortable.

With a tour in Iraq and two previous tours of Afghanistan already under his belt, he relished the opportunity to deploy again on Op HERRICK 13. He thrived in the challenging role of providing communication support at battlegroup level and was in his element when deployed forward on the ground with his infantry counterparts. He led by example and was a rock to his Rear Link Detachment.

Corporal Dunn's future was bright and he was already earmarked as a man that would return to 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron as he promoted through the ranks.

His passion for Newcastle United FC knew no bounds and his thirst and excitement for life was apparent in everything he did. Thoroughly dedicated to his family, his job and to those he served with, this potent blend won him the highest accolades and the respect of all.

He leaves behind his wife Cheryl and daughter Emily.

The Family of Corporal Dunn have made the following statement:

"Steven was a loving husband to Cheryl, son to Vicky, and doting dad to Emily. He has left a huge hole in the lives of those he has left behind including his brothers Christopher and Michael. He will also be sorely missed by Kevin, an important person in his life and all his aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends.

"He lived for the Army especially 216 Parachute (Signal) Squadron and worked hard to get his wings of which he was very proud, it was his first love after Cheryl and Newcastle United.

"We are all immensely proud of all that he achieved in his short life. He died doing a job he loved and excelled at."

Major Alistair Fawcett, Officer Commanding 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron said:

"Corporal Steven Dunn died doing a job he loved while supporting 2 PARA Battle Group, a unit he had already served alongside on a previous Op HERRICK tour. 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron was a richer place for his presence and he is missed deeply already.

"At every turn he strove to improve the lot of his men. He was always in the thick of it and his time in Afghanistan was no exception; with a spark in his eye and his devilish Geordie sense of humour, he tackled his work with a sense of purpose and in the pursuit of making a difference.

"His support of the 'Magpies' was equally potent - a good man to share a beer with and an excellent barometer of unit life.

"He will be sorely missed and he leaves a void that will be extremely challenging to fill. His untimely passing marks a black day in 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron's proud history but he was not the timid type or one to shy away from the challenges that our profession presents.

"We have lost a gifted soldier

and a son of the Squadron and, although this loss cuts extremely deep, we remember him with the utmost fondness, as the courageous and professional signaller he was. Our loss will be nothing compared to that of his family; at this extremely difficult time, the thoughts of the entire Squadron go to his new bride Cheryl, his young daughter Emily, and his family and close friends. *Certa Cito*. Corporal Dunn had a dry, piercing sense of humour that never faltered. Loved by all, he was a father-figure to his signallers and a mate to his peers. Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Harrison MBE, Commanding Officer 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said: "Corporal Steven Dunn was the 2 PARA communications detachment commander responsible for all critical radio and satellite links in both my Patrols and Sniper Platoons. As such he was employed in one of the most dangerous and demanding jobs in the Battlegroup. He was a courageous, fit and deeply professional soldier who knew his duty lay in the van of battle. He eschewed the desk-bound opportunities of the headquarters to accompany his colleagues into the very heart of enemy territory, to reconnoitre options for those who followed. At this level, and in the wider context of his service in Afghanistan and Iraq, Corporal Dunn sacrificed himself for others. This was his third tour into this blighted country. On the last occasion 2 PARA were again the beneficiaries of his expertise, dedication and selfless soldiering skills. But those skills were only one aspect of this airborne Geordie's personality. A passionate supporter of Newcastle and the proud owner of one of the worst Magpie tattoos one could imagine, Corporal Dunn had a dry, piercing sense of humour that never faltered. Loved by all, he was a father-figure to his signallers and a mate to his peers. He was on the cusp of promotion to Sergeant and would have gone all the way; the brightest stars burn the shortest. Cheryl, Emily and all Corporal Dunn's family have lost a deeply loved husband, father, son and friend; they will be irreparably heart-broken. The thoughts and prayers of a thousand of his colleagues accompany this tragic eulogy; we are forever proud to have served with Steven Dunn." Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Steve Spink, Regimental Sergeant Major 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said: "Corporal Steve 'Dunny' Dunn was a larger than life person. He was the epitome of an airborne signaller who lived life to the full. A professional operator who loved the Army and a veteran of Afghanistan with this being his third tour; he imparted his operational experience to the junior soldiers in his troop and they looked up to him as a father figure - a natural leader. Dunny had a promising career ahead of him, there is no doubt of that. A strong character and I expected him to make the Sergeants' Mess before too long. It was a privilege to have known him. He leaves a huge gap, which will take some time to fill. A popular lad, he will be sorely missed by all and will never be forgotten in the Squadron. Words cannot express what his family are going through. My thoughts are with them and his friends at this tragic time. Rest in Peace - every man an emperor." Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Alan Armstrong, Regimental Sergeant Major 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said: "In the short time I have known Corporal Steven Dunn he has emitted an aura of kindness and professionalism. His reputation was one of a selfless dedicated soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice in lifting the shadow of the Taliban from the small rural communities of Nahr-e-Saraj who simply want to live and work the land free from intimidation and Taliban rule. His loss will be felt across the Brigade and my thoughts are with his family and fellow soldiers who he lived and served with." Major Mike Shervington, Chief of Staff 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said: "Corporal Dunn epitomised all that is best in our soldiers and all

that is best about Newcastle and the North East. Especially friendly, suitably aggressive and absolutely loyal, Corporal Dunn was itching to leave the confines of the Patrol Base, get out on patrol and help others.

"His only yellow (never red) card - anything that clashed with him watching his beloved Newcastle United. I will really miss our chats about football, families and past escapades. Whilst little comfort, the small crumb of solace is the memory that he loved his job, and he loved being an integral member of the 2 PARA Battlegroup; I often joked that there was more blue than white in his 216 Signals Drop Zone flash.

"All our thoughts are with his family, his new bride Cheryl and his young daughter Emily. Words like 'you won't be forgotten' have tended to sound a little hollow in recent years; nothing could be further from the truth now."

Corporal Steve 'Dunny' Dunn was a larger than life person. He was the epitome of an airborne signaller who lived life to the full. Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Steve Spink

Sergeant Christopher Swan, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, Rear Link Detachment Commander to 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said:

Corporal Dunn will live long in my memory for many reasons; the awe he had in and around his work place, a very fit and robust individual, and his love of football.

"His love of football will be my fondest of memories as he was a true Geordie lad. He loved his Newcastle Utd and despised the Mackems (Sunderland). We use to sit over a cup of tea and discuss how much he disliked Mike Ashley (Newcastle Utd Chairman) and the love of King Kevin Keegan.

"A story that he once told me; when Newcastle were in the Championship, he travelled to Bristol City, it was around April time and Steve with a few mates decided to go to a pub before the game.

"By the time the game started Steve and his lads were on the fifth or sixth pint of the finest ale, they agreed that come the end of the next beer they would travel to Ashton Gate, however, they couldn't remember where the ground was, so instead of getting a Taxi they decided to walk to the ground.

"After been navigationally embarrassed for the last 60 minutes they decided to forget about the football and try another alternative. Now after seven or eight pints of the finest ale a lot of people that I know would call it a day and turn back and head off home, that's where Corporal Steven Dunn is different he turned to his men as a true leader and said lets go find another pub.

"For the record I believe that Newcastle won two-nil and they didn't even see a ball get kicked. What a legend.

"Without a doubt he is a massive loss to us all, I will miss our chats and his leadership. We have lost a soldier, a brother and a friend; my thoughts are with his wife and his rest of his family."

Sergeant Craig Fitzsimmons, Lashkar Gah Helicopter Landing Site operator, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:

"Dunny I will miss you, who will I hang out with on PT now? You were a big character and will sorely be missed. I could always count on you when I needed you; you were always an airborne warrior, part of the maroon machine and a true professional. My deepest condolences go to your wife and family."

Sergeant John Miller, Main Troop Sergeant Head Quarters Task Force Helmand, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:

"Corporal 'Dunny' Dunn was a real character and life and soul of the group. He always had something to say, be it for the better or worse. However, everyone listened, as he commanded great respect amongst his peers and superiors.

"He was a professional soldier of the highest calibre who never shied from his responsibilities as a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer or friend, and therefore was an asset to the Squadron and the British Army. He will be missed by everyone and my condolences go out to his wife and family. Every man an emperor!"

Corporal Steve Stopforth, Power Management Team, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:

"Dunny was through and through an airborne soldier who loved everything and anything about

being airborne. He was physically robust and switched on and loved parachuting. This was never more apparent than jumping out of a C-130 over Arnhem during the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. After exiting the plane he was entangled with another parachutist and accepted quite a heavy landing. After rushing over to find out if he was ok, with a smile he replied, 'these things happen'. He was never afraid to speak his mind and would always make sure he put his point across if ever a matter needed resolving. An avid Newcastle United supporter and a proud Geordie; Dunny was always driving home to watch his team whether the results were good or bad. His subordinates admired him, his peers respected him and his friends and family loved him! Dunny was a true friend and will be missed by us all. We are all better people for having known him and the world is a darker place without him. Rest in Peace my airborne brother.

Corporal Dunn epitomised all that is best in our soldiers and all that is best about Newcastle and the North East. Especially friendly, suitably aggressive and absolutely loyal, Corporal Dunn was itching to leave the confines of the Patrol Base, get out on patrol and help others.

Major Mike Shervington
Lance Corporal Liam Ibbetson, Rear Link Detachment, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:
"Corporal Steve Dunn was a good friend and a good soldier. He was a professional in every respect of his job, whether it was his trade or in soldiering he was always the subject matter expert. Corporal Dunn was extremely passionate about the Army and took great pride in 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron. He shall be sadly missed by all members past and present."

Lance Corporal Antonio Farigu, Rear Link Detachment, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:
"Corporal 'Dunny' Dunn, he was a well loved bloke, one of the lads. Always had good banter, even in bad situations, he'd keep the lads' morale high. Loved his football and he was passionate about his club Newcastle United."

A true professional at his job, a person you could go to for advice. Will be missed massively by family, friends and the Squadron.

Signaller Ryan Davies, Fire Support Team Signaller, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron attached to 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery Rear Link Detachment, said:
"Corporal Dunn was known to everyone as 'Dunny'. He was excellent at his job and very professional when it came to comms. He has been my 'go to' man this tour if I've had any questions about comms. He was a huge character with his big smile and strong Geordie accent. He always got involved with Ops Room banter and discussions. He was a huge football fan and a die hard Newcastle fan! He loved a good drink ('sesh') with the lads and would come in for a 5 o'clock start still smiling and happy as Larry. He will be missed and loved by all."

Signaller Chris Reay, Main Troop Head Quarters Task Force Helmand, 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron, said:
"Dunny was an inspiration to a lot of people, he was known to the Squadron as true airborne blood - a true hero that will be missed by all, a friend I'll miss so much. An old Charlie Troop saying: not arrogant, just better. My thoughts go out to his family."

Captain Murray McMahon, Officer Commanding Patrols Platoon 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said:
"Corporal Steven 'Dunny' Dunn joined my platoon as an attachment from 216 (Parachute) Signals Squadron prior to our deployment on Op HERRICK 13. He immediately filled me with confidence in the knowledge that I had an expert in his field of communications. His thoroughness and breadth of knowledge was accompanied by a canny, dry sense of humour and easy going nature. Dunny was set seemingly impossible tasks to enable us to operate more effectively and on every occasion he surpassed my expectations. His calm, collected style was always welcomed on the radio and his professional diligence was obvious when he deployed on patrol. Above all, Dunny

was part of our team. He brought a smile to my face with his quick wit and I was comfortable in the knowledge that he had my back when we worked together.

"My thoughts go out to his family, Wife Cheryl and daughter Emily. We are all better for having known Dunny. He will be sorely missed but never forgotten. Rest in Peace my friend."

Sergeant Jamie Weaver, Platoon Sergeant Patrols Platoon 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said:

"Steve has been a very big part of our Platoon on all our pre-deployment training and during the tour.

"I first met Steve just before a company test exercise, and he fitted in straight away as the Platoon Signaller, he was such a laid back person and even when the going got tough and operational problems occurred he still had a smile on his face and made a joke just to break the ice.

"I only knew Steve for a short period, and in this time Steve fitted in as one of the blokes. He was the most professional Specialist I have ever worked with and will be a great loss to his squadron and us. He was a Paratrooper, a Comrade and a friend.

"My thoughts go out to his close friends and family, and his wife Cheryl and daughter Emily at this sad time.

"Steve you will always be a part of this Platoon and never forgotten. Never had a chance to say thanks for all your hard work.

"Rest in Peace mate."

"Dunny I will miss you, who will I hang out with on PT now? You were a big character and will sorely be missed. I could always count on you when I needed you."Sergeant Craig Fitzsimmons

Sergeant Marty Wilson, Platoon Commander Sniper Platoon 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment Battle Group, said:

"Dunny took a pride in his work that was an example to all, an excellent signaller, he quickly established himself as a core member of the Platoon and an all round team player. Ever cheerful, with an infectious smile, he was a pleasure to work with and always up for some banter.

"My thoughts go out to Cheryl and Emily at this distressing time.

"Rest in Peace Steve."◆</p>