

Corporal Simon Hornby

Second Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

Corporal Simon Hornby, aged 29, was wounded in action on 19th December 2009 following an IED strike in the Nad-e-Ali district of Helmand province. Despite every endeavour by those around him to save his life, he died of his wounds. He had deployed to Afghanistan as a Section Commander with Arnhem Company, 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (who are the Theatre Reserve Battalion) as part of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards Battle Group.

Corporal Hornby was stationed in Patrol Base Shamal Storrai and, being the most senior of the Non-Commissioned Officers present, he administered the patrol base for his Platoon Commander. He thrived in this challenging role whilst also commanding his Section with tenacity and a gritty determination. Always leading by strong example he was also able to see the funnier side of life during any downtime.

Corporal Hornby was born on 13 November 1980 in Liverpool where he grew up and attended Halewood Comprehensive School. On joining the Army in September 2000, he successfully completed Basic Training and had no other wish than to join his local Regiment, The 1st Battalion The Kings Regiment.

Cpl Hornby, known almost universally as 'Si', was a popular, friendly, sociable and selfless man. He loved life and was a passionate Liverpool FC fan. A strong performance on his Section Commander's Battle Course secured his promotion in 2008. Cpl Hornby had a bright future ahead of him and after the tour he was due to instruct in a Recruit Training establishment - a role in which he would have excelled.

Lieutenant Colonel Robbie Boyd, Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment said:

"Corporal Hornby was one of the most courageous men in my Battalion. He was a professional and a highly respected leader of my soldiers. Always happy, always chirpy, he - as did we - lived for his sense of fun, humour and his infectious zest for life; now so sadly taken from him and us. He was a highly motivated young Junior Non-Commissioned Officer with his priorities fixed firmly around the welfare of his soldiers and the welfare of his wife, Holly, who we will support as a Regimental family throughout her tragedy. He loved his wife, he loved the Army and his Regiment, and he loved his football team; Liverpool FC.

"As a young non-commissioned officer he had served bravely on operations with Chindit Company and Arnhem Company in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He had already demonstrated the courage needed to lead Lions of the North West in battle. As a Lance Corporal, he was awarded a commendation for services in Iraq for discovering an Improvised Explosive Device and for spoiling an insurgent ambush. In Afghanistan, he had won over the full confidence of Officer Commanding Arnhem Company, as well as his soldiers, and had stepped up to

effectively act as a Platoon Sergeant, taking on the administrative challenge brilliantly, yet with the same sense of humour that we all knew and loved. He was a real character. He will be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers, particularly at this difficult time of year, lie with his wife Holly.

"The Lions of England have lost one of their most courageous."

Major Jon Elliott, Officer Commanding Arnhem Company, 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment said:

"Cpl Si Hornby was fiercely loyal to his family, his Regiment and his home town. He was a lively character with a natural tendency to see the lighter side of life, one which he lived to the full. A constant source of morale for his Platoon he was greatly respected by his colleagues and friends.

"On visiting his Patrol Base his innovation never failed to impress me as he selflessly worked to improve the living conditions for his men. He was a compassionate leader who understood and nurtured his subordinates into a formidable fighting force. In battle his own personal courage was an infectious source of inspiration to those around him and he formed the backbone of his platoon.

"We will continue the good work that he started as a tribute to him and those who have fallen before him. Our thoughts are very much with his wife Holly and his family back in the UK. Whilst our Company is a much poorer place for his loss, our resolve is strengthened in his honour."

Lieutenant Mark Whishaw, Cpl Hornby's Platoon Commander said:

"Cpl Si Hornby was a dedicated Section Commander who I will sorely miss. His thorough professionalism contributed directly to the smooth running of our Patrol Base and his overriding concern was always to the safety of his Kingmen.

"His courage in the face of adversity was an example to us all - and I will always remember his cheeky grin."

Captain Jon Muspratt, a former Platoon Commander said:

"He was a typical Kingsman, strong and loyal. You always heard him before you could see him."

Sgt Lee Vout, Int Sgt for Arnhem Coy said:

"I will miss Si especially the banter about our love of football, he was a true red as I am a blue. Rest in peace."

Lance Corporal Sean Bateson, a close friend said:

"A determined leader of men that always lead from the front. Always the first to volunteer and loved his job dearly."

Kingsman John Cree, a member of his section said:

"He lived for admin! Always cleaning and caring for our welfare. Constant kit checks, thorough and professional. His catchphrase: "No stone unturned, No water bottle empty." "