

## **Lance Corporal Christopher Roney**

3rd Battalion The Rifles

Lance Corporal Christopher Roney of A Company, 3rd Battalion The Rifles died of his wounds following an engagement in Sangin, Northern Helmand, Afghanistan. At the time, his platoon was working out of Patrol Base Almas, providing security, reassurance and freedom of movement for the local population in support of the Government of Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal Roney was born in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, on 3 February 1986. He worked as a Drayman before joining the Army and, following initial training at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick, he joined 3 RIFLES in Edinburgh in May 2006. He qualified as a Class One Infantry soldier in October 2007 and was promoted to Lance Corporal in March 2009, following successful completion of the Junior Non

Commissioned Officers' Cadre. He deployed to Afghanistan with the 3 RIFLES Battle Group in October 2009 and has since played a key role as a junior commander during the numerous patrols and operations that are bringing increased security and prosperity to the population of Sangin.

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Kitson, CO 3 RIFLES Battle Group said:

"Lance Corporal Roney was an utterly professional Rifleman who was held in the highest regard by all around him, his seniors, peers and subordinates alike. A strong, robust, tried and tested soldier, his mission was to serve the regiment, the battalion and his mates. New to command and responsibility, he was not one to shy away from the unpopular decisions and was respected all the more as a result. Such was his quality, compassion and depth that he was loved as much as he was respected. A fighting soldier who would fight to be at the front, he died doing exactly that. Despite having recently stepped onto the first rung of the promotion ladder, his men unhesitatingly looked up to him. His confidence, knowledge and sense of humour inspired them to do their very best. His loss is a tragedy. His talent, commitment and contribution live on in his men and their unstinting determination to carry on from where he left off.

"The Battle Group has lost a brave warrior for the current fight and a talented prospect for the future. He would undoubtedly have gone onto bigger and better things all too quickly. Here in Helmand he was doing what he enjoyed most: soldiering as part of a team, a team that he commanded expertly. His memory will be revered and celebrated by us all in the battle group and in this proud regiment. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Lorna, his son William, his family and his friends."

Major Tim Harris, Officer Commanding A Company 3 RIFLES, said:

"Lance Corporal Christopher Roney joined the Army in 2005. He was a tough, experienced and professional soldier and I was glad that following his promotion to Lance Corporal he came to A Company. A true grafter, he was the kind of man you knew you could throw any task and he

would do it well.

"He had a dry sense of humour and a razor sharp wit. He was loved by his platoon and the whole Company are devastated by his loss. He was a strong contender to attend the Section Commanders' Battle Course in Brecon in 2010, which would have seen him begin to realise his enormous potential. Sadly, that is not to be.

"Christopher Roney was a bright and engaging man; even at his relatively junior rank I trusted his advice. He was a proud family man; his new born son William was his pride and joy. He doted on him. That he was taken from his family so early in his son's life is particularly cruel.

"I see, in the eyes of my men, just what his loss means to them; they are hurting badly. But they are now even more determined to take the fight to the enemy and to free the local population from their intimidation. While we mourn Christopher's loss, our pain can only be a fraction of that felt by his beloved family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time."

Lieutenant Palmer Winstanley, Platoon Commander, 2 Platoon, said:

"Lance Corporal Christopher Roney was one of the strongest characters in the platoon. His example was second to none, inspiring his platoon to achieve ever higher standards.

"He has been a rock that in any given situation the platoon and I could rely on. He was never shy or withdrawn. During the most dangerous situations when most would dig with their eyelids, I found myself having to pull him back. He was extremely proud to be serving next to his mates and in the end paid the highest price doing just that. During a fierce attack, some of the riflemen were injured when he immediately leapt into the Sangars to man the weapons with his mates. I know from fighting beside him he would not have wanted to be in any other place. When all was quiet, he was not. Given half the chance he would steer the conversation onto his beautiful first baby boy, William Roney, born only months before deployment and his incredibly supportive wife Lorna. Both the platoon's and my own thoughts and prayers are with them both and his family. We will miss you but rest assured your passing is not in vain. The platoon remains even more resolute to achieve our mission. We will hold you in our thoughts, knowing you will be looking over us."

Serjeant Dean Holgate, Platoon Serjeant, 2 Platoon, said:

"Where do I start? Lance Corporal Christopher Roney was my section 2IC and was one of my right hand men. Roney was a professional soldier and a top lad, hard working and full of morale. He was a very funny lad always making me laugh and joking around. Roney will be missed and there is a gap that will never be filled. On the night that he was wounded he was fighting the enemy doing something he loved, always one of the first to get stuck in. He will be missed."

Corporal Ben Hall said:

"Being asked to describe Roon in writing automatically becomes an impossible task but certain words will always spring to mind when I hear his name. Such as extremely funny, sarcastic,

morale, quick witted, professional and highly motivated. Our section would not be as strong as it is without his input and leadership. The lads looked up to him as both a friend and commander I am sure the lads will never forget when Roon fired up a smoke shermuley as I was talking to some locals who immediately hit the deck and began to dig in with their eyelids, or winding him up about not being there when the pipe burst. Our hearts go out to Roney's family, I will never forget you mate."

Lance Corporal David Hopkinson said:

"I first remember when Roney, or as all the lads knew him, Road Dog, came to the Battalion and joined 5 Platoon, B Company 2 weeks before we all deployed on Op TELIC 8/9 and he fitted in straight away and was liked by everyone. He will always be remembered because he loved his job and was a 22 year old man but he also liked to have a moan about his job. We both went on the Junior Non Commissioned Officer's Cadre together and we were really close and helped each other through it. The memory that will stay with me forever is when we were in the Falkland Islands and it was a Friday night and we had been down to the NAAFI and had a few beers. When we came back to the block we decided it would be a good idea to do a full section attack on Lance Corporal Pendall and Lance Corporal Rees and our ammunition was issued talc and because of all the dust it set all the fire alarms off. He will be missed by everyone and all thoughts are with his wife Lorna and their little boy William."

Rifleman Sam Glasby said:

"A tragic loss to all of us, he will be missed so much by all the lads and our thoughts will always be with him and his beloved wife back home. He loved his job and everything about it, basically getting down and dirty but most of all the morale. If any joking was going on he was always in the middle of it. I will always remember the nickname he gave me "flybot" and it still sticks now. If you were feeling down he would always come and cheer you up. What a lad he was, he will never be replaced, rest in peace mate. Love and miss you."

Rifleman Justin Grevatt said:

"Lance Corporal Roney was a fantastic NCO, always on the ball and always keeping morale up. I will miss him so much. I always called him Road Dog because of his aggressive fighting; a true soldier. Lance Corporal Roney would always talk about his family and how much he missed them. My heart goes out to William and Lorna. His family will miss him so much."

Rifleman Paul Fisher said:

"Roney was a born leader always at the top of his game, nothing seemed to faze him. Amongst other things he was a good friend and I will always remember when he first joined A Company, always pushing the blokes hard. He will be deeply missed."

Rifleman Daniel Coop said:

"In loving memory of Lance Corporal Roney, he was a well loved member of the platoon who

kept morale going throughout the tour. Roney was always thinking of funny names for the platoon members and it is a tragic loss and our thoughts are for all of his loved ones, especially his little one and his wife. He always talked about his young one and said he would grow up to be just like him. Lance Corporal Roney will be missed throughout. RIP Lance Corporal Roney AKA Road Dog."

Rifleman Thomas Robson said:

"Lance Corporal Roney's death is a tragedy. He was an awesome soldier and an excellent Junior Non Commissioned Officer. You noticed straight away that he had a promising career within the RIFLES. We have lost a great soldier and a great friend. Our thoughts are with his wife Lorna and his son William."

Rifleman Jerome Cupid said:

"Lance Corporal Roney was a good section commander, a leader and a friend. He was very keen when he joined his section, he told us 'Lads, kit inspection, you better have all your kit or you will be banging them out', but he knew we were all over it. He loved the Army and he loved being in charge and I am proud to have had him as my section 2IC. He will be sadly missed."