

Private Johnathon Young,
The 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's)

Private Young was killed after two explosions while on foot patrol. The patrol was taking place in Sangin District, Helmand Province on the morning of Thursday 20 August 2009.

Private Johnathon Andrew Young was born in Hull on 19th September 1990. He joined the Army on 24th February 2008 and completed his training at Catterick, North Yorkshire, in September 2008 before joining the 3rd Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) based in Warminster, Wiltshire. Private Young made an immediate impression for his easy going nature, good humour and faultless manners. In the short time he was in Burma Company he was recognised by all as a popular, capable soldier with great potential.

Burma Company Group were tasked to provide Battle Casualty Replacements for 19 Light Brigade in July 2009 and Private Young was quick to volunteer. He deployed with the rest of his platoon, 6 Platoon, to 2nd Battalion the Rifles on 2nd August 2009.

Since arriving in Sangin, where he and his section reinforced a Platoon still suffering from losses earlier in the tour, he demonstrated all the tenacity and no-nonsense bravery that one would expect from a Yorkshire soldier. Private Young was killed on the Afghan Election Day, 20th August 2009, on patrol near Forward Operating Base Wishtan whilst trying to secure a vital thoroughfare for the people of Sangin.

He leaves behind his mother, Angela; his brother, Carl; his sister, Leah; and his girlfriend Nicola.

Lieutenant Colonel Tom Vallings, Commanding Officer 3 YORKS.

"Private Johnathon Young joined us at the 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment in October 2008 just after his 18th birthday. He had already set his mark as a robust and determined soldier who always put his friends first. He had a strength of character that forced him to be at the very centre of events and it was no surprise that he volunteered to deploy at Afghanistan at short notice. Private Young had only been in Afghanistan for three weeks when he was tragically killed on patrol in Sangin. Once again, he was selfishly at the forefront of the action a true Yorkshireman: proud, tough and honest. In his 18 years he has made a big impact on those who knew him and served with him. His loss is felt by us all, but none more so than by his family."

Lieutenant Colonel Rob Thomson MBE, Commanding Officer 2 RIFLES Battle Group:

"Private Young is a hero in my book. A soldier from the Yorkshire Regiment, he volunteered to

come to Afghanistan to reinforce my Battle Group. I will always be in his debt. He died on Election Day, helping to give democracy a chance in Sangin. He had quickly made a mark in C Company - a bright enthusiast who was a natural soldier, he was right in the mix in his tragically short time here. We will miss him greatly and salute his service. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, whose loss is immeasurably greater than ours."

Major Sam Humphris, Officer Commanding Burma Company 3 YORKS.

"The death of Private Young has come as a devastating blow to Burma Company. He was a committed and extremely diligent young soldier who, in his short time in the Company, had made a real mark. He was most definitely a Regimental star in the making.

"He was utterly personable, a delight to be in the company of, and his infectious sense of humour made him an exceptionally popular member of 6 Platoon and Burma Company. That he managed to marry this sharp sense of humour with a polite and caring nature was to his absolute credit.

"He had a strong sense of duty with energy and enthusiasm in abundance. It came as no surprise to me when he volunteered to serve his country on operations in Afghanistan. That he was killed on the day of the Afghanistan elections marks the sacrifice he has made as particularly poignant.

"I feel honoured to have served with, and commanded, someone of his singular quality. He will be sorely missed by all of us in Burma Company, but never forgotten. God rest."

Major Rupert Follett, Officer Commanding C Company 2 RIFLES Battle Group:

"Private Young had only been under my command for 2 weeks. He was part of a group of soldiers from the 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment who had flown out to Afghanistan at short notice to act as replacements for soldiers already killed or wounded. Private Young had one of the most dangerous roles in Afghanistan. As lead man for patrols he was responsible for finding and confirming Improvised Explosive Devices. As an 18 year old soldier, this was an enormous responsibility to bear on such young shoulders. He was fully aware that IEDs have accounted for the bulk of our casualties, and yet the bravery and courage he displayed was humbling. Private Young was part of my close knit band of proud Yorkshiremen and although his time in Afghanistan was short, he made a lasting impression. Our sorrow at his tragic loss will be nothing compared to the grief of his family and friends and my thoughts and prayers are with them at this darkest of times."

Captain Doug Hayton-Williams, Second in Command Burma Company, 3 YORKS.

"Although Private Young was new to Burma Company, he quickly impressed his peers by showing outstanding commitment to his job through his professionalism and unflinching reliability. He particularly impressed me with his positive attitude when faced with deploying to one of the most notorious areas of Helmand province, by volunteering to go with his comrades - such was his loyalty. His strong personality was evident from the moment he arrived, fitting in

well with the soldiers and rapidly establishing himself as an effervescent and affable young man within the Company.

"He was killed doing the job he loved amongst his mates and proudly serving our country. He will never be forgotten. My deepest sympathies are extended to his family and to his friends."

Lieutenant Rob Taylor, 6 Platoon Commander.

"A hugely capable and conscientious soldier, Private Young was relatively new to Burma Company and had just missed out on deploying to Baghdad with Alma Company. He was very much looking forward to deploying to Afghanistan with his friends. His easy going polite nature and quick sense of humour made him very popular in the Platoon. Fit and strong, Pte Young was a keen sportsman who enjoyed his football and rugby league. Youngy treasured the friendships he made in the Army and was incredibly loyal.

"He will be missed by all in 6 Platoon and in Burma Company. A genuine and sincere man, Youngy will leave a huge gap in the lives of all who knew him."

2nd Lieutenant Rob Hilliard, 10 Platoon Commander:

"Private Young arrived in theatre and came to reinforce 10 Platoon after losses earlier in the tour. Along with his colleagues from the 'Yorks' he impressed with his enthusiasm, strong work ethic and willingness to adapt to a challenging new environment and ever evolving tactics at very short notice.

"Private Young stood out amongst his peers in terms of aptitude, skills and concentration and was in turn given the responsibility and burden of clearing routes in an IED heavy patch. In the course of fearlessly carrying out these duties he was tragically killed.

"Private Young was another young soldier indiscriminately targeted by this most evil of enemies. I know his loss will be sorely felt by his fellow Yorkshiremen and his fortitude long remembered and respected by the Riflemen of C Company. Our thoughts and prayers rest now with his family and friends."

WO2 Mick Clarke, Company Sergeant Major Burma Company, 3 YORKS.

"Pte Young joined Burma Company prior to our deployment to Afghanistan. He had been disappointed to miss out on deploying with Alma Company to Iraq.

"From the very start of our pre-deployment training he demonstrated himself to be a very robust, bright and talented young soldier with a great deal to offer. He displayed a huge amount of enthusiasm, was very eager to deploy on operations and serve his country and enjoyed the respect of his commanders and peers alike.

"He had a first class sense of humour and had settled in very quickly to the Company. He clearly had the ability to go far in the Army and his loss is deeply felt by everyone in the

Company. We will miss him. Our thoughts are with his family at this very difficult time."

Sergeant Steven Harrison, Section Commander:

"Private Johnathon Young was an enthusiastic and bright soldier. Although he was originally in Alma Company, his infectious personality attracted friends immediately. After only a few days in Burma Company, Private Young had fitted in with the rest of the Burma Lads and wherever you heard laughter, you could be sure to find Private Young in the middle of it, which is where he loved to be - with the guys who had come to respect him, not just for his love of life but also for his professionalism.

"Private Young had volunteered to be the lead man for his section, possibly the most dangerous job out here in Afghanistan. He put the lives of his comrades before himself, clearing the routes of IEDs in alleyways and compounds so the rest of the men could advance safely. He displayed immense courage every time he stepped out the gate.

"Private Young will be missed by every one of my men. He loved life and lived it to the full with energy and enthusiasm. I hope he can now find peace. The thoughts of all our men here in Wishtan are with his family and friends at the passing of Jonathon Young.

"Rest in peace brother."

Corporal Paul Whitting:

"Private Young, or Heinz as some people knew him, was a character who always tried his hardest to make your morale higher whatever the situation and I know he would have done this until he couldn't do it any more."

Private Sam Granger.

"The first time I met Youngy was in Bristol; we had both missed the train to get back to Battlesbury Barracks. We got on straight away. He was great fun to be around and was always a good laugh. We were both looking forward to going on holiday when we got back from the tour with some of the other lads from Burma. He was a good mate right from the time I knew him and he will be really missed by all the lads in 3 YORKS."

Private Sam Williams.

"I have known Private Johnathon Young all his Army career, he started off in A Company and we hit it off straight away. He was a well mannered lad from Hull who didn't have an aggressive bone in his body. We would always go down town and he would make me laugh with his 'chicken dance' which he couldn't do! He was a young, bubbly lad with a random sense of humour. We both moved to B Coy together, carried out Pre-Deployment Training together and couldn't wait to go on tour. When we got out here Youngy was made the Lead Scout and, although nervous on his first patrol, he told me after that he got a buzz from doing it. That's Young's sense of humour coming out. He was a decent bloke both in and out of work and

always sensible - he kept me out of trouble a lot! I feel for his family and friends and girlfriend who have lost someone so great and fun loving. I will miss Youngy massively, and I'm sure that all of B Company will miss him too. We've lost a great friend and a great soldier.

"Rest in peace Youngy."

Private Tom Clews:

"Private Johnathon Young, or Youngy as he was known to all the lads, was a proper lad within our Platoon and Company, although he had previously been in Alma Company with my twin brother. This is where I first saw his big smile and instantly got on with him. He was always smiling no matter the situation and was a real inspiration to be around. When you were down Youngy would always pick you up and do anything for you. He would go out of his way to ensure everyone around him was OK. When he got here and was told he would be the Lead Scout, in typical Youngy style he cracked on and didn't bat an eyelid. He stepped up to the most important role in the Section and even used his own time to perfect his skills and drills in the evening to ensure he was properly prepared. He would never do things by half and that attitude made him a good soldier. My thoughts and prayers go out to his friends and families at this time and I will never forget his big smile and his weird sense of humour. I will treasure the memories I have of him and the laughs we had. You will be sorely missed Youngy but never forgotten."

Private Lawrence Hill:

"Youngy was new to Burma Company. He had been in Alma Company for about a year and a half, when he moved to Burma and he instantly made friends. A real good lad who loved to have a laugh and a good time, loved to go out drinking and socialising with the lads. He was an amazing bloke. Never without a smile on his face and extremely brave. He was loved and will be missed by everyone."

Private Chris Higgins:

"Private Johnathon Young, but known amongst the lads as 'Youngy'. We did not know Youngy for that long due to the fact he moved to our Company a few months ago, but in those few months we knew him I can tell you that Youngy really was one in a million. He had a weird sense of humour, would always make you laugh and the fact he would do anything for his friends and we know he died doing the job he loved. I know everyone says that but he actually did. He was a Lead Scout with all the responsibilities that gave him and he did it brilliantly. We still cannot believe he has gone but he knew that he was loved and will be missed by all, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Private Young."