



THE ROYAL DRAGOON GUARDS

Sergeant David Thomas Monkhouse, from the Royal Dragoon Guards, serving as part of Combined Force Nahr-e Saraj (North), was killed in an explosion in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province on Saturday 17th July 2010.

Sergeant David Thomas Monkhouse, known as Bob to everyone in the Regiment, was 35 years old. He was born in 1974 in Carlisle and raised in his home town of Aspatria. He attended Beacon Hill Secondary School and on leaving school at 16 he joined the Junior Leaders' Regiment in Bovington.

On 31 July 1992, he joined The 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards as a Chieftan Gunner, shortly before it was amalgamated into The Royal Dragoon Guards.

Throughout his colourful career he served on four tours in Northern Ireland and in Iraq in 2007. He qualified as a Regimental Combat Medical Technician Class 1. He has been the stalwart of the Regimental Medical Centre, providing enthusiasm and initiative in keeping the Regiment medically fit.

On Saturday 17 July 2010, the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) was conducting a patrol to reduce the intimidation of the local population. At 0445hrs Sergeant Monkhouse was struck by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and killed in action.

He leaves behind his mother, Bobby, his sister Deborah and the love of his life, his daughter, Daisy-Twinkle.

The family of Sergeant Monkhouse said:

"For David, the Army was his life, second only to his daughter. He was the ultimate father and friend to Twinkle, more proud of her than anything else. His devotions were equally divided between his beloved Twinkle and his beloved Regiment, the Royal Dragoon Guards.

"He was an exceptional soldier and loving and devoted parent. He would not have changed his life for anything. David was also a loving son and brother and leaves behind his Mum, sister and extended family as well as his daughter."

Lieutenant Colonel James Carr-Smith, Commanding Officer The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"I have known Sergeant 'Bob' Monkhouse for 18 years. When he first joined the Regiment he was a right character; he was routinely in front of the Regimental Sergeant Major for all the wrong reasons, but about 10 years ago he decided to really make a go of the Army and aspire for the higher ranks. He was a Royal Dragoon Guard who had a passion for combat medicine. He became the Regimental Medical Sergeant and he was respected by us all. He was one of the few people in the Regiment that everyone knew.

"He had completed tours in Iraq and Northern Ireland, and he made no secret of his desire to deploy to Afghanistan. He volunteered to become the principal medic within the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, a hand-picked bunch of men drawn from across 4th Mechanized Brigade.

"Selection was fierce but Bob was more than up to the challenge and he deployed to Helmand Province in March 2010. I saw him only a month ago; he was clearly having the time of his life, and we chatted and laughed as old friends do.

"But whilst Bob's passion for soldiering and medicine was significant, it did not come close to his love for his daughter Twinkle. He talked of her incessantly. She was his everything. She will be distraught and devastated by her father's death but she can be hugely proud of her father, for he was a great man.

"Sergeant Bob Monkhouse died on a patrol that was providing security to enable new roads and security bases to be constructed to the north-east of Gereshk. Our thoughts and prayers are with his mother, sister, girlfriend and beloved daughter. We will miss him hugely but his sacrifice will never be forgotten. Quis Separabit."

Major Marcus Mudd, Officer Commanding The 4th Mechanized Brigade Reconnaissance Force said:

"Sergeant Monkhouse was a man mountain; our medic, a father figure and to all of us he was a true friend. A larger than life character, his ready smile and hearty laugh belied an exceptionally robust and efficient core. He loved his job and his role within the Brigade Reconnaissance Force; he was a consummate professional.

"Cool and effective under fire, Sergeant Monkhouse continually placed himself where the fighting was at its fiercest in order that he could best treat the Squadron's casualties. His

presence on operations gave the men of the squadron enormous confidence and he set a fine example for the younger soldiers of the BRF, always putting the needs and welfare of others before his own safety.

"Sergeant Monkhouse died on the frontline of an operation which was designed to bring peace and security to the people of Nahr-e-Saraj. His loss will be keenly felt within the Squadron that he was so much a part of and yet the grief of his comrades cannot compare to that of his family and it is with them, in particular his daughter Daisy, that all our thoughts and prayers are at this time. He was an exceptional soldier and he will not be forgotten."

Major Elspeth De Montes, Regimental Medical Officer, The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"Sergeant David Monkhouse, known to all as Bob, found out I was going to be Regimental Medical Officer, The Royal Dragoon Guards before I did - a good Medical Sergeant knows everything and is a step ahead of his 'Boss'. Bob was a real character, legendary within the Regiment and proprietor of a unique ability to source kit through his many connections.

"Sergeant Monkhouse welcomed me into the Regiment with an RDG rank slide, a history lesson about his Regiment and a sign for my door in Regimental colours. He was immensely proud of two things; The Royal Dragoon Guards and his daughter.

"Bob was thrilled when he was chosen to be a medic on the front line in Afghanistan as he relished the opportunity to show his skills both as a soldier and medic. He was courageous, assured and willing to risk himself to look after others. Bob was much more than my Medical Sergeant or a colleague, he was my friend. The Royal Dragoon Guards have lost one of their own today and the Regiment will be forever altered. Bob was unique and will not be forgotten."

Major Graeme Green, former Officer Commanding The Prince of Wales's Squadron, The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"Sergeant "Bob" Monkhouse was a doting father, loving son and uncompromising soldier. The love for his daughter Twinkle, was only matched but never surpassed by his passion for soldiering and his utter professionalism as a Combat Medical Technician, for which he was at the very pinnacle of his career.

"His volunteering for and subsequent selection by the Brigade Reconnaissance Force to be their medic provided Bob with all the professional challenges he wished for. He relished the austerity and danger his role provided. The expectation and responsibility he felt to his colleagues was only matched by his desire to make his daughter and family proud.

"Even as a fresh faced trooper volunteering to serve in Northern Ireland, he never lost any of his youthful enthusiasm. Fatherhood only spurred him on and it is testament to his stoic resolve, that he managed the pressures of soldiering and the complexities of being a single parent. "Fare thee well" old friend as you enter Valhalla with sword in hand."

Captain Dominic Davey, Operations Officer, The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"Sergeant Monkhouse was a character. From the moment I met him, I saw his infectious enthusiasm for soldiering reflect in everything he did. He would pop into the play-pen for a chat; you could never have a chat with Bob, there was always a sales pitch. I can't fault him; stubborn as he was, he was always trying to make someone or something better.

"Whether he was teaching soldiers to be Team Medics or using my arm as a pin cushion, he was consummately professional. When I asked him, "Why so keen?" there was only one answer, "Twink." His loyalty to his daughter was unflinching. His determination to succeed and make his daughter proud of him was inspiring. There is a huge Bob shaped hole in the Regiment that we will not even attempt to fill. We will remember him fondly. Fare thee well."

Warrant Officer Class 1 William Kelly, Regimental Sergeant Major, The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"I have known Sergeant 'Bob' Monkhouse since he joined the Regiment. He loved the Army, The Royal Dragoon Guards and being part of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. He was never short of a story when you had the pleasure of his company; his large character and presence will be sorely missed by all that knew him.

"He was ideally suited to his role in the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, helping others with his superior medical skills on the front line where he wanted to be.

"Deepest sympathy from the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess and myself go to his daughter Twinkle and his family. He will not be forgotten. Quis Separabit."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Anthony McCormack, Squadron Sergeant Major, D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Royal Dragoon Guards said:

"Dave 'Bob' Monkhouse was a giant of a man, and had a story for every occasion. He was very proud to be a Royal Dragoon Guard, and particularly so to be a member of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess.

"He was a noble man, and it is fitting that his job was to treat injured soldiers and civilians on the battlefield. Everyone who knew him understands that he had at last found his niche in life, working in the Brigade Reconnaissance Force. He was very proud of what he'd achieved with them, and so were we all. It is true to say that he made a very real difference in Helmand, to the people and to the soldiers he worked alongside on a daily basis.

"However, the focus of his life was his daughter 'Twink'. He gave up everything he had for her and to be with her, he loved her deeply.

"He died a brave man, and that is how he will be remembered by everyone in the Regiment, now and forever. Quis Seperabit."

Staff Sergeant Steve McKinley RDG, Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant, 4th Mechanised Brigade Reconnaissance Force said:

"Bob always had a story to tell, most of which would involve drinking and his blackberry. Bob fancied himself as a bit of a wide boy, a player, but to his close friends he was just Bob, a soldier like many of us that refused to grow up.

"He was outgoing and full of life and took deep pride in everything he achieved. Bob was very much the regimental man; he loved his Regiment and was very proud to be a Royal Dragoon Guard with tattoos over his body, and his home being like a regimental museum proved it.

"Bob joined the Brigade Reconnaissance Force as a medic, to which he played his role well. He was a first class medic and the years of experience under his belt made him an invaluable asset. I just knew that if I had ever become wounded that I was in safe hands with Bob in the team and I know the troop felt the same.

"Making it into the BRF was, for Bob, the single and best thing he had ever managed to achieve. Only a few weeks ago, on R&R, Bob said that making it into the BRF was the best thing he had ever done. Regimental life just wouldn't be enough for him now, such was his ambition.

"My heart goes out to Bob's family and daughter who he leaves behind. Bob was a loving father. He always put his daughter first and made sure she wanted for nothing; only the best would do for his princess."