



D (THE GREEN HORSE) SQUADRON, THE VIKING GROUP, THE ROYAL DRAGOON GUARDS

Trooper James Anthony Leverett, 'Lev' or 'Levy' to his mates, was 20 years old. He was born in Great Yarmouth and grew up in Sheffield and Rotherham. Having worked as a plasterer's labourer after leaving school, he joined the Army at 18 in May 2008, attending the Army Training Regiment, Winchester.

On completion of his time at Winchester, he attended the Armour Centre in Dorset where he qualified as a Challenger 2 tank driver. He joined D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Royal Dragoon Guards, in January 2009.

Tpr Leverett deployed on Exercise Medicine Man 2 in 2009 with D (The Green Horse) Squadron. On return from a successful exercise in Canada, he was selected as a member of the Viking Group for Op HERRICK 12.

He completed Mission Specific Training for HERRICK 12, qualifying as a Viking crewman with 1st Troop. He deployed to Afghanistan in early June 2010.

Tpr Leverett leaves behind his parents, Neville and Sharon, his three brothers, Neville, Lewis and Jack, and his girlfriend, Tiffany, who is due to give birth to their first child in September.

The family and friends of Trooper Leverett have made the following statement:

"James was strong-minded and determined. Whatever he set his mind to, he kept on trying until he achieved his goal. He was very likeable and had many friends in and out of the Army. "He was a loving son to mum Sharon, father Neville and stepdad Tony, and loyal brother to Neville, Lewis, Jack and stepbrother Shane, and being the oldest brother was someone that they looked up to. He was also the adoring boyfriend of Tiffany and proudly looking forward to the birth of his son.

"We will miss him so much and he will always be loved and remembered."

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

"Trooper James Leverett (known as Levy) was a Royal Dragoon Guard of significant potential. He had only been with the regiment for 18 months but in this short time he had more than made his mark. He was a model soldier.

"Whenever I spent time with D Squadron, Trooper Leverett was always pushed to the front as his Squadron Leader recognised that Levy had all the qualities associated with a modern-day Armoured Corps trooper.

"He was young, bright, robust, fit, brave, intelligent and tremendously popular. He was not afraid to speak his mind, but he always did so in a balanced and measured fashion. However, it was the twinkle in his eye and his quick wit that I will really remember; the fact is that he had more than enough professional attributes to get away with it. He loved the regiment and his fellow soldiers, and he also loved his family very dearly.

"Trooper James Leverett died on operations in southern Nahr-e Saraj, Helmand province. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, girlfriend and unborn child. He will never be forgotten by his many friends. We will remember him. Quis Separabit."

Major Denis James, Officer Commanding D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Viking Group, said:

"Trooper James 'Levy' Leverett was one of life's characters. He was great company, had a wicked sense of humour, and was totally suited to life in the regiment. He had been steadfast throughout our intensive training and during operations on the tour, and was an extremely tough and resilient soldier. He was a man of the highest quality and was to be recommended for promotion to Lance Corporal.

"He was a giant of an individual, and excelled at rugby in his youth. However, his focus in life was his girlfriend, Tiffany, and he spoke about her often. He was excited at the prospect of the birth of their first child and had planned his R&R [Rest & Recuperation] around it. He was also close to his mother, Sharon, and loved both of his parents dearly.

"Levy died a soldier, fighting the enemy. He was an incredibly brave man, and his spirit and deeds will inspire this squadron for the remainder of the tour, and the regiment forever. We will mourn him when we return home; our thoughts and prayers are with his family. Trooper James Leverett will always be remembered as his photograph shows him; a strong man, smiling and joking, amongst his friends in 1st Troop. Quis Separabit."

Captain Iain Monk, 1st Troop Leader, D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Viking Group, said:

"Trooper James Leverett embodied everything that it meant to be a part of 1st Troop. He was kind and caring and had an immense sense of humour that, without fail, would always raise the troop's morale during tough times. His peers looked up to him and he was respected by those above him. He would always check on me, making sure I had thought of everything, and he would always let me know how the lads were doing; he was always looking after

people.

"I will miss his infectious smile and the way he would turn down the cigarettes I offered him because they were 'officers' fags', and he would say 'not for me like', the stubborn man that he was.

"He would talk to me about his unborn baby and how he was looking forward to watching his child grow up. He was a friend to all and we will miss him greatly. A massive hole has been left in the troop which will never be filled. Quis Separabit."

Sergeant Scotty Dyer, 1st Troop Sergeant, D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Viking Group, said:

"I first met Trooper James Leverett when he arrived at the regiment in January 2009. Initially he was a quiet individual but that was not to last! Very quickly he established himself as a key character within our troop. He was every bit a 1st Troop soldier; professional, generous and always willing to help others. He also had an uncanny knack of being able to crack a joke and make people smile, particularly when times were hard.

"I have met many people in my time in the Army, but seldom people with the ability to make fun of you, and for it always to be funny, but that was Lev all over.

"We all have happy memories, from him mocking his Commander's Barnsley accent to the time we went to Catterick Races and he managed to be the only person to back a winner, something he reminded us about for the rest of the day. Our thoughts are with his family and his girlfriend Tiffany who is expecting their first child.

"There is now a void within the Troop which will be hard to fill. We have lost a friend, a comrade and an amazing soldier. Quis Separabit."

Lance Corporal Liam Hudyma and Trooper Sacha Hill, 1st Troop, D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Viking Group, said:

"Lev 'The Slammer' Leverett was the most straight down the line man we knew, but he would always make us smile. He was more than just a bit of a comedian; he was quick-witted and was a 'one phrase wonder', having you in stitches for hours. He was cheeky with all ranks, and could, at a stroke, raise morale; like asking the Squadron Leader to grease his Viking 'because I'm busy and you've being doing nowt'.

"He was always at the centre of the banter and good craic. At the same time, he was a man with an ear for problems. He was so easy to talk to that, when we were down, we would go to Lev for morale, and he would have us cheered up in seconds.

"He loved to wrestle and slam folk into the floor, no matter how big they were, and he enjoyed playing football with the lads, even with his tree-trunk legs. But it was on FIFA Football that he saw himself as a real sporting legend.

"His family was his life, and his most treasured possession was his photo album from home. He was from a big but close family and loved to talk to his troop about becoming a dad. He loved his girlfriend Tiffany. He was a key figure in 1st Troop of D (The Green Horse) Squadron, and he was proud to be a Royal Dragoon Guard. Quis Separabit."

Trooper Kieran Collinson, 1st Troop, D (The Green Horse) Squadron, The Viking Group, said:

"No matter how much you annoyed Levy he was always good to you. He had a love for using his thunderous thighs to body slam people to the ground. He had an infectious smile which always cheered me up. He was good at taking the mickey out of people and no matter how far he went it was always funny.

"He was a kind and caring person who looked after his own and would always help those in trouble. Friends come and go but Levy was more than just a friend. He is leaving Tiffany, who is pregnant with a baby. We will make sure that his child knows he was a hero.

"Wherever he was, he always had his friends around him and you knew something was about to happen, like the night before his death managing to buy a melon on 'tick' from the Afghan National Army, and then proceeded to chase me around the tank park trying to smash it over my head. I like to think that he is looking down now laughing at the fact that he never even paid for it! Levy you will be deeply missed. Quis Separabit."