



Private Daniel Steven Prior, from 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, was wounded by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan on 17 March 2011 and died of his wounds in the UK the following day. He was the 360th UK casualty in Afghanistan.

Private Prior deployed to Afghanistan with D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, on 13 October 2010 and was based at Patrol Base 1 in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province.

On 17 March 2011, Private Prior's multiple was tasked to provide fire support for his fellow paratroopers and the Afghan National Army during a reassurance patrol in a small village in Nahr-e Saraj.

At 1242 hours Private Prior was wounded by an improvised explosive device and, despite medical care in Afghanistan and in the UK, he died of his wounds on 18 March 2011 in the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Queen Elizabeth NHS Hospital, Birmingham.

Private Prior was born in Brighton on 31 December 1983 and attended Tideway school in Newhaven. His hometown was Peacehaven but he lived in Colchester with his wife Emily and their new-born son Logan. Private Prior had flown back from Afghanistan four weeks ago just in time to be present for the birth of his son, Logan and spent two weeks with his wife and baby before his return to active duty.

Private Prior completed his basic training in January 2008 and was subsequently posted to the 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment where he showed to be an exceptional soldier. He was a hugely valued member of the Battalion during his service in both the United Kingdom and Afghanistan and was immensely popular with all who knew and worked with him.

Private Prior had a very bright future ahead of him and had been identified as one of the next tranche of Non Commissioned Officers to be trained.

He leaves behind his father Ian, mother Gillian, his wife Emily and their son Logan.

Private Prior's family said:

"Dan was a lively young man with an amazing sense of humour. He was a wonderful son, husband and father. We are all tremendously proud of him and he will be sorely missed by his family and friends."

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Harrison MBE, Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Dan Prior died surrounded by his family in England. Two days before, he had been mortally wounded, four thousand miles away, whilst patrolling to bring lasting peace to the village of Char Coucha in Helmand Province. The village has recently made headlines for its remarkable return from Taliban devastation; Private Prior was one of those incredibly brave young soldiers who made that happen.

"This bright, inspiring and able Paratrooper knew the risks of war more than almost anyone; his uncle died the year before Dan was born fighting for this great Battalion at the battle of Goose Green in the Falklands Conflict. Dan had accompanied his family to receive the Elizabeth Cross in his memory only last year.

"On the anniversary of the battle last May he sat with me to honour his uncle. They both fell aged only twenty seven. Twice in two years his family will receive an Elizabeth Cross. For a second time the Prior name will be carved into the Battalion's memorial.

"Dan Prior's sacrifice has cost a joyful future with his wife Emily and his three week old son, Logan. It is the smallest consolation that he passed away having seen Logan on a recent trip home. He talked of little else during the intervening weeks. Logan will one day be proud to learn what a bright star his father was, how he was loved by his mates, how great a soldier he had become and how good a friend he was.

"Every one of those innumerable friends has said what a great dad he would have been. Every one of the thousand troops in this Battle Group will mourn this irreplaceable loss and can only pass on their deepest condolences to Emily and all of Dan's family. None of us will ever forget him.

"Utrisque Paratus."

Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Alan Armstrong, Regimental Sergeant Major, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Prior was a proud member of D Company 2 PARA. Their main effort has been to

provide security for the growing population of Char Coucha. His section has been battle hardened by countless engagements with the Taliban. While courageously defending the village from insurgents, Private Prior was seriously injured as his section provided fire support to allow other members of his Platoon to manoeuvre around enemy fire.

"Private Prior was an intelligent, level headed and mature young man who had a bright and prosperous future ahead of him. His sheer determination saw him battle for his life to the very end. Private Prior served his country with distinction and his loss will be felt by all soldiers across the 2 PARA Battle Group. He will be deeply missed by the men of D Company who fought by his side.

"My thoughts at this time are particularly with the men of 10 Platoon, his wife Emily and his new born son Logan.

"Private Prior; a Paratrooper who will be truly missed, but never forgotten."

Major Matt Taylor, Officer Commanding D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Dan Prior was without a doubt the best soldier in D Company. He was at the top of our list to attend the Potential Junior Non Commissioned Officers' Course after this tour and he was clearly destined for great things in the Regiment. During our tour in Afghanistan Private Dan Prior was an example to his fellow Paratroopers.

"He was calm and collected in a fire fight, diligent and professional in his duties. As a bloke we will always remember him for his sense of humour and his consideration for those around him. He was awesome that the young Toms looked up to and who made the lives of his commanders easier.

"As a Paratrooper he followed in the footsteps of his uncle Steve Prior, who served with the same Battalion during the Falklands war. Like Dan, his uncle died whilst serving his country in the most difficult of circumstances but surrounded by his brothers in arms.

"We shall all miss Private Dan Prior greatly. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and the friends he leaves behind."

Warrant Officer Class 2 (Company Sergeant Major) John Hulme, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Dan Prior was one of the senior Toms in D Company, someone that I would rely on daily to get things done. I will remember him being utterly dependable, completely unflappable, and always perfectly calm and collected under fire. He was a true asset to the Company, and a perfect ambassador for the Parachute Regiment.

"He was a mature, level headed and supremely fit soldier, who had been handpicked to work as part of a multiple with a difficult and testing task. He handled this without breaking stride. He

was never found wanting, and never gave anything less than 100%.

"He had a great sense of humour which helped everyone around him especially through some of the more grim times here, I remember a few days before his death, as we were evacuating one of our wounded, I saw Dan caked in mud, soaking wet and looking pretty exhausted, I asked how he was, and he gave me his trademark grin, and said "Good, but it's a bit wet here Sir", as he took up a fire position to provide cover for us, as we set off back to camp.

"Dan will be sorely missed by everyone within the D Company family, but foremost our thoughts go to his family, especially Emily and their new born baby, Logan.

"Rest in peace Dan, you were a role model to the rest of the Toms, and you will never be forgotten."

Lieutenant Jonny Mortimer-Hendry, 10 Platoon Commander, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Dan Prior was an outstanding Paratrooper and inspirational member of my team. His exceptional work whilst deployed was always carried out with ultimate professionalism and awesome ability. He was the rock of our multiple that always had a positive attitude on the challenges that we faced. Constantly proving strong and cheerful under adversity, Dan was an experienced Paratrooper whom the rest of the men looked up to. He was humble, yet the rod of iron in the backbone of D Company.

"It is a great loss to The Parachute Regiment to lose someone who personified the remarkable qualities of a Paratrooper. Personally, he was the man I relied on in the harshest of circumstances to produce the goods. I am devastated to lose one of my men, a true friend, who was so close to all of us.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, his wife Emily and his son Logan, who he was so proud of.

"He will forever be Utrisque Paratus."

2nd Lieutenant Joe Greenwood, 11 Platoon Commander, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Private Daniel Prior was a Paratrooper through and through. Dan's unwavering professionalism out on the ground, combined with the humility, friendship and humour he extended to all around him, meant that Dan left his stamp on everything he touched. He brought so much to the Platoon and Company and it was a pleasure to have him under my command. I shall truly miss him.

"In the short time that I knew Dan as his commander, I found him quite simply one of the most likable blokes I have met. He was a genuine father figure and a true companion to the 'Toms'; he always found the positive in any situation. I will forever remember him not just for his

professionalism and ability, but also for his sense of fun and his zest for life.

"My thoughts are now with his family, especially his wonderful wife Emily and beautiful baby son Logan; may his spirit live on through him. He has left an enormous gap that will be impossible to fill, we will never forget him. We all, your Airborne brothers, owe you our eternal debt for your actions that protected us from danger, for whom you sacrificed your life. Take care my friend and God speed."

Sergeant Ritchie Morton, 10 Platoon Sergeant, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"I have had the privilege to be Dan Prior's Platoon Sergeant for the past two years. During this tenure Dan was someone that impressed me from the outset with his professional attitude, tenacity and work ethic. Dan was an affable and popular member of the Platoon.

"His professionalism and tactical awareness made him an example to the more junior Private soldiers and this earmarked him for early promotion. Moreover, he was my best Tom and was due to complete a junior NCO cadre on the completion of this tour of Afghanistan.

"Dan's legacy will be cemented by his professionalism, his courage and his attitude; simply, he was my go-to man. Whatever task I needed completing he would be my point-of-contact and would accomplish the task at hand without chunter and to a high standard; no commander can ask more from his men. He will be missed."

Corporal Louis Smit, 12 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Coming from a proud military family background, Dan's uncle served with 2 PARA during the Falklands war and lost his life in Goose Green. Dan Prior was an inspirational soldier and he died like he lived, with his head up high and proud like a Paratrooper, leading from the front. Having him under my command made my job easy. He will be missed."

Lance Corporal Chris Wilmott, 10 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"It was a great honour for me to serve with Dan Prior especially after serving with his uncle Steve Prior who was my section commander in the late seventies. He was tragically killed in the Falklands war of 1982 at the age of 27 while trying to save the life of a colleague at Goose Green.

"Dan passed away at the age of 27, the same age as his uncle. We will all remember Dan for his professionalism and dedication. He was without doubt focussed, conscientious and destined for great things. Dan leaves behind a loving wife Emily and a baby son Logan who was born whilst he was recently on R&R.

"For me he will never be forgotten nor will his uncle Steve. They will always be just next door in another room or adjacent tent. I will always speak freely of him and ensure his memory and that

of others will live on."

Private Scott Saunders, 12 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Dan was a lad I always looked up to and I learned everything I could off him. He was always switched on even at the most difficult of times. He was an awesome Paratrooper and proud of what he was. I am very proud to have fought beside him and my memories of him will never go away. My thoughts are with his family, his wife Emily and new-born son Logan.

"Rest in peace, mate."

Private Andrew Goldsmith, 12 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Dan was a soldier a cut above the rest. He was respected by all and although he was still a Private soldier, everybody was comfortable with him in command."

Private Benn Woodman, 12 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Dan was a mega bloke and one of the most down to earth blokes I've met. He was a perfect example of a Paratrooper and I am honoured and proud to have been able to work alongside him. He was loved by me and all his fellow Paratroopers.

"My thoughts are with his wife and family. RIP Dan. We will never forget you mate."

Private Matt Postlewaite, 12 Platoon, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Dan was always there to drive the blokes forward. A bloke who will be missed and who will stay in my heart forever."

Private Neill Aitken, Intelligence cell, D Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, said:

"Dan was an outstanding soldier and close personal friend. He was always there for his friends. He was incredibly astute to the inadequacies of the world and I will always remember fondly the times we spent criticising the situation which we always used to find ourselves in.

"I have no doubt that he was destined for a long and prosperous career. He died giving essential protection to his fellow Paratroopers and has left this world a sadder place. Dan you will be greatly missed."