

CORPORAL MICHAEL JOHN PIKE

A COMPANY, THE HIGHLANDERS, 4TH BATTALION, THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Corporal Michael John Pike deployed to Afghanistan on 3 April 2011 as a Multiple Second-in-Command in 2 Platoon, part of A Company, 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland. He was based at Check Point PEGASUS with Combined Force Lashkar Gah attached to B Company, 3rd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment (The Staffords) in Maiwand Province.

Corporal Pike was from Huntly, Scotland. He joined the Army as a Junior Soldier in 2002. After a tour of Iraq, he served with B Company, 4 SCOTS in Helmand Province in 2008, when they were deployed as the Armoured Infantry Company. A tough and respected field soldier, he sailed through his Section Commander's Battle Course and qualified as a Physical Training Instructor in 2007; a qualification he used to the full as he put his Company through a demanding period of physical training prior to deployment.

On 3 June 2011, Corporal Pike deployed with his multiple in the area of Pupalzay along the main route of Highway 601. He was taking part in an operation to prevent the insurgents from intimidating the local population and attacking the Afghan Police Check Point. Corporal Pike was leading the patrol in a contact with a group of insurgents when he was killed in action.

Corporal Pike was the perfect example of a Highland Soldier - loyal and fiercely courageous. Due to be posted to train the next generation of recruits at the end of the tour, he was a role model to his soldiers and a marvellous leader. He had been marked out for a bright and successful career.

He was a hugely popular figure, a dedicated father to Joshua and Evelynn and a loving husband to Ida; he will be greatly missed by all. Corporal Pike's wife, Ida, said:

"My husband would want everybody to know that he died doing a job he loved and that he loved our children with all his heart and soul"

Lieutenant Colonel A J Aitken MBE, Commanding Officer of Combined Force Lashkar Gah and The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"The loss of Corporal Mike Pike has been felt deeply by all ranks of the Battalion. He was an enormously popular, charismatic and engaging character; a natural leader in every way. As a junior commander he was entirely dedicated to his soldiers, leading from the front with every step and they would follow him anywhere. A natural practical joker, his innate sense of fun was a constant source of amusement and relief for the whole Platoon. He was marked out by his constant wry smile whether leading his company from the front at PT or pushing his section on when under pressure; simply unflappable.

"As one of the brightest stars in the Battalion, he had already been earmarked for having potential for the very highest promotion. Whether as a commander or as a friend he was the perfect role model. As a soldier, he was one of the most professional I have known, and he was the very epitome of a Highland soldier: fierce in battle, compassionate to all and unswervingly loyal to his friends - a code he lived by to the very end.

"Our thoughts and prayers are entirely for his family, and especially Ida, Joshua and Evelynn in Germany; above all else he was a deeply loving and caring family man. His loss has left a hole in the Battalion, in his company and especially his platoon. However, I have a strong suspicion that he would not want us to dwell on his loss, I suspect that he would simply put his kit on, make a joke about it and carry on in the same dedicated, professional manner."

Major Neil Tomlin, Officer Commanding A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike's death is a huge loss to all those who knew him. He was a loving father to Joshua and Evelynn and a dedicated husband to Ida. We cannot comprehend their loss but consider ourselves very fortunate to have had such a good friend and colleague. As a soldier he was highly professional, motivated and an inspirational leader."

Captain Phil Morgan, Operations Officer, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was an outstanding individual. Having served with him on Operation HERRICK 8 and now on Operation HERRICK 14 we shared many fine moments. It is a tragedy that his life has been taken from his family and the Battalion on his second tour of Afghanistan. An infectious personality which won over his peers and all ranks; he will be truly missed by all. His professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm to teach younger members of the platoon and company were a tribute to his ability. His courage and valour will always be remembered. May his body and soul rest in peace. My deepest condolences and sympathy to his family."

Captain Angus Steele, Regimental Career Management Officer, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Mike Pike was a calm, confident Highland soldier who was highly respected by all those under his command and indeed by those that had the pleasure to command him. A model professional soldier to his subordinates, he led his men from the front in all aspects of command. Fit, enthusiastic, highly motivated and full of humour, he was destined for a very bright future within The Highlanders and indeed The Royal Regiment of Scotland. He had recently been selected to train recruits in the Infantry Training Centre post HERRICK 14, a post he desired to undertake and would have

relished as a gifted and knowledgeable Instructor. I regarded him as one of the best section commanders of his generation; he was undoubtedly a Company Sergeant Major of the future. His loss will be felt across the Regimental Community but mostly by his wife and family, our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time."

Warrant Officer Class 1 Euan Philbin, Regimental Sergeant Major, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"I was fortunate to have had Corporal Mike Pike in my Company as a Sergeant Major and as a Junior Non Commissioned Officer within the Battalion as the Regimental Sergeant Major. Corporal Pike was the epitome of a Section Commander; he was often the one I would ask to get things done. He was respected by all ranks within the Battalion and will be sorely missed. He was a true professional and a great character who had a wicked sense of humour. He was the heart and soul of his Platoon, a good friend and dedicated leader to the Jocks and Junior Non Commissioned Officers that he worked alongside on operations. My lasting memory will be the image of him at the front of the Company during PT, leading his section and looking after the Jocks. He loved the job and maintained an infectious level of enthusiasm and team spirit that will be irreplaceable. He was a family man at heart who lived to spend time with them. My deepest sympathy goes to his wife Ida and his children Evelyn and Joshua.

"Corporal Pike was a Battalion character who will be missed by all; the list of friends and well wishers will be endless. A true Highlander."

Captain Dave Robertson, Company Second in Command, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"When I first arrived in the Battalion, Corporal Pike quickly proved himself to be one of the shining stars under my command in 5 Platoon. Intelligent, professional, supremely fit and motivated, he took no time to prove his abilities, whether in the field or in barracks, in the turret or on his belt-buckle. I was fortunate enough to command Corporal Pike on Operation HERRICK 8, when B Company, 4 SCOTS deployed to Musa Qal'eh in 2008. Hugely capable and confident in his own abilities, Corporal Pike spent most of the tour as my, and the Company's, point vehicle commander; unfazed by the responsibility and utterly dependable throughout. Calm and confident under fire, he set the standard to his juniors and seniors alike, helping 'The Mighty One-Zero' scrape itself out of countless dangerous situations.

"Gifted with a mischievous and razor sharp sense of humour, Corporal Pike could always be relied on to keep his comrades' spirits up, even if it was at his Platoon or Company Commander's expense. Whether it was teaching the local kids the 'Fast Food dance' from his turret, or nurturing the platoon chicken all the way into the cooking pot, I will never forget his enthusiasm and boundless energy. Unfazed by anything that was thrown at him: blown up, bogged in and under heavy fire

Corporal Pike never let any of the Jocks down once. He was a pleasure to have known and a privilege to have commanded; a true professional and a dedicated husband and father. His death is felt by all who knew and served with him and our thoughts at this time go out to his family. Words cannot express their loss."

Lieutenant Robert Grant, 2 Platoon Commander, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"The loss of Corporal Pike, one of the funniest, most life affirming and professionally diligent men I have ever had the privilege to meet, strikes deep in to the heart and soul of all those who knew him. An exceptional soldier and inspirational leader, Corporal Pike will be forever missed. His death, saving the lives of the men he was devoted to, marks the tragic end of a life that has touched so many, so deeply that it seems almost unreal. At this awful time, the thoughts of every member of 2 Platoon are with the young family he leaves behind; the family to which he was eternally devoted. For as long as I live it shall be my greatest honour and privilege to say that 'I knew Corporal Michael Pike, my colleague and my friend.'"

Warrant Officer Class 2 Gary Main, Company Sergeant Major, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"A gentleman in all respects. Well respected by all those who served with and knew him. A genuine character who was a very capable individual and had a great future ahead of him. He thrived on educating and training those who had the pleasure of serving alongside him. He will be sorely missed."

Sergeant Lee Smith, 2 Platoon Sergeant, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"A brother, best friend, and comrade. Michael Pike was easily the funniest guy in the Battalion; like a mischievous, adopted little brother. It goes without saying that he was the prankster of the Platoon. The Platoon will no doubt still have some bricks in daysacks or shower gel in toothpaste tubes yet to be found. He will be sorely missed and can never be replaced. The lads from 2 Platoon will miss you mate."

2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said collectively:

"Corporal Pike will be sadly missed and is a great loss to the Battalion. He passed away doing the job he loved but he didn't go down

without putting up a fight. He was suppressing the enemy in order to cover the lead wagon, the ground call sign and to allow other callsigns to manoeuvre out of immediate danger. As well as a soldier, he was a great father, loving husband, a best friend and a great leader of men. Mike was always good for morale, keeping all of us happy and when it came to the serious stuff, he was 100% professional."

Corporal Ian Marr, Multiple Second in Command, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"The first friend I made in the Highlanders when I arrived from 3 SCOTS. He was warm, friendly, easy to get along with and a notorious character; among the best practical jokers I know and I will miss torturing the Platoon Commander with him. A 'Call of Duty: Black Ops' master, I will miss the battles we had. A true leader of men and he will be sorely missed and never replaced."

Lance Corporal Steven Teale, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was an inspiration to the men he led. He was the epitome of what you'd expect of a soldier and of a section commander. He led his men by example in a professional manner. Held in the highest regards by his subordinates and superiors, he thrived in his role as a section commander, always getting the best out of his men, and himself. Even during the hardest stages of pre-tour training he always maintained the highest degree of professionalism and maintained morale the only way he knew. Mike will be missed by all; I classed him as the best mucker both in and out of work. My sincerest condolences go to Ida and his two children. I hope we did you proud, Mike. See you in the re-org."

Highlander 'Davo' Davidson, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Not only was Mike a good commander, he was also my good friend. He was one of the most professional and brave people I have ever had the pleasure of working with. As a commander he taught me everything I know. He also helped me through difficult times in my Army career. When the contact happened, his reaction probably gave myself and Rhys Fraser enough time to react and I thank him for that. My condolences to his family, his wife and kids who had the bravest father and husband in my eyes. Mike will never be forgotten, and will be massively missed by all."

Highlander Calum Fraser, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike, you were my first Section Commander. I had always looked up to you as a great commander, a leader, a mate and a brother. When my morale was low I looked to you to lift my mood and you always made me laugh. He was always playing pranks on the Platoon Commander and Platoon Sergeant. Everyone always thought highly of him. He was easily the heart and soul of 2 Platoon. He will be truly missed. Goodbye mate, you will never be forgotten."

Highlander Daniel Chisholm, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike was easily the life and soul of the Platoon - always making people laugh and bringing us together at work. He was always there to help and out of work, at home, was a brilliant friend: 'Thank you for everything Mike, keep your chin up Ida and I'll be thinking of you, Jay-Jay and Evelyn and will be there if you need anything.'"

Trooper Raymond Arnold, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards attached to 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike was different to everyone I met whilst attached to 4 SCOTS. His family came first. He is the only person from 4 SCOTS that I knew that spoke nearly fluent German. His wife was like him; always funny, always trying to get a laugh out of every situation. I made the mistake of making good coffee and therefore I always had to make him one. He wasn't just a neighbour; he was also a friend and I trusted him with my life. I will miss him and never forget him."

Highlander Mark Osborne, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike Pike was a good friend, a great Section Commander and someone who was never low on morale, regardless of the situation and always looked to play practical jokes. My great regrets go to his family and kids; it couldn't have happened to a funnier man."

Highlander Ian Burns, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was an excellent leader and just an all-round good guy. He was quite the joker, a great personality who was always trying to raise the spirit of the people around him whilst upholding immense professionalism and ability to get the job done. There aren't many words that can explain what he meant to people and how greatly he will be missed. I am sure we will be finding out the pranks and jokes that

made up a lot of his personality for a while to come, and his memory and the role he played in most of our lives, especially mine, will last forever. I know his kids and wife will be proud of what he has done and I wish them all the best for the future. So, to such a good guy that was Corporal Mike Pike, rest in peace."

Lance Corporal Matthew Hayward, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was the chief organiser of shenanigans in Check Point PEGASUS. He always had a smile on his face and was always thinking of tricks to play to keep the morale of the boys high. He will be sorely missed by anyone who knew him: Cheers mate for making my time at PEGASUS with you enjoyable."

Highlander Alexander Wishart, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was a good Junior Non Commissioned Officer who always looked out for the Jocks. He loved playing pranks on the Jocks and other Non Commissioned Officer's, even the Platoon Sergeant and Platoon Commander, and was always up to something. He will be missed everyday."

Highlander John Reid, 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike was a great man who always listened to the needs of his men, and they were truly his men. One of the last things he said to me was: 'you're on the Junior Non Commissioned Officers' cadre, and anything at all you need come and see your old da'. That basically sums up the fun-loving and courageous leader he was. Mike, mate, I am going to miss you but we'll never forget you. RIP Mike Pike."

Corporal 'Watty' Watson, Multiple Second-in-Command, D Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike Pike; good friend, excellent soldier. You will be sorely missed brother, and will forever remain in all our thoughts."

Trooper 'Scouse' O'Neill, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards attached to 2 Platoon, A Company, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike made me smile all the time. He always gave our Section morale. In the short space of time I knew him, I found him to be a commander who cared for his lads. We came first, he put himself second. Right up

until the end he put his life on the line for our safety. There are no words you can put on paper to say how much of a hero he is to us. He will be truly missed by his section and by the whole Regiment. One thing I can say is: 'What a leader'."

Corporal Michael Barr, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mikey Pike was my friend and colleague for many years. His loss is a sad day for the Battalion. He was a great guy both in and out of work, and I will miss his laugh and smiles. He was a professional of the highest calibre and I am proud to have been his friend. My thoughts go out to Eda, JJ and Evelynn. Cuidich 'n Righ."

Corporal Ben DeJonge, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike has been my best friend now since Operation HERRICK 8. I will always remember Mike by his mischievous personality, like when he put Laxatives in a guy's juice on Juniors who then suffered severely. He was also a great family guy, I went with him on his son's, JJ's, first camping trip. He loved the German summers and always wanted to get out and do something. You will be truly missed pal - I miss you so much already."

Lance Corporal Ryan Grant, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike is one of my best friends and it's heart breaking to know he's gone. I've known him since I was a pad brat in Fally and he helped me settle into the Battalion when I arrived; mainly taking me out drinking. He was a ringleader, always up to something and always winding people up and blaming others, mainly me. He was on Operation HERRICK 8 with me in the same platoon where he proved himself as a good soldier and commander. My thoughts go out to his wife, JJ and Evelynn. Mike will be sorely missed and never forgotten."

Corporal Brian Genter, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"I have known Michael Pike for many years, we were Jocks together. He was always bright and hardworking, and pushed himself at everything he did. We used to get up to all sorts of antics and he loved to make all those around him smile. He knew exactly what he wanted in life and had great potential. He took pride in everything he did. We did loads of courses together and I have happy memories of all of them. Michael Pike

was a good man who will be missed and remembered through all my life.
RIP mate. Cuidich 'n Righ."

Lieutenant Dan Herlihy, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal
Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Michael Pike was a hardworking, inspirational leader who
inspired confidence in those under his command and in those who served
alongside him. Whilst dedicated to the Army, he was utterly committed
to his family, and a devoted father to his two children. Our thoughts
and prayers go out to our fallen brother and his loving family. Rest
now, your work is done. Cuidich 'n Righ."

Private Matthew Noakes, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal
Regiment of Scotland said:

"Being a reservist from a different Regiment can sometimes be tough;
settling in to another to go on tour with. From day one Mike made me
feel so welcome and part of the team. I was lucky enough to meet his
wife and children, to whom my heart goes out. Mike was a good friend in
the short time that I knew him, someone you could trust and confide in.
He will be missed by many, especially me. Thanks Mike. Rest in Peace."

Lance Corporal Matty Burns, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal
Regiment of Scotland said:

"I first met Mike when I joined the Battalion two years ago. He was an
instructor on my Non Commissioned Officers' Cadre but became a friend
when I came to A Company. Whether we were on a night out or playing
Call of Duty, he was the centre of the shenanigans and always a source
of morale. He will be sorely missed by everyone."

Corporal Dean Devine, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment
of Scotland said:

"Alright Brother, take care of yourself up there, say hello to Scott
Bain for me. I will pop down and see you when I get back and will make
sure to see the family. Gone but never forgotten."

Lance Corporal Steven Wilkinson, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The
Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Mike was not only a work colleague but a friend. He will be missed by
everyone, my thoughts are with Ida and the children. Keep Strong."

Corporal Kevin Milne, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment

of Scotland said:

"I've known Corporal Pike many years. He was a tremendous soldier and colleague. His death is a great loss to 4 SCOTS, but most of all to his wife and his children. My thoughts are with his family and always will be for him. Cuidich 'n Righ."

Lance Corporal Steven McPhee, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Michael Pike was a character loved by all his colleagues and friends. It is a sad loss to his family and the Regiment. He was the life and soul of any social gathering. It was a great honour knowing him as a colleague and close friend. My thoughts go out to his family, his wife Ida and two children."

Highlander Vinny Spiewak, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was the heart and soul of 2 Platoon. There was never a dull moment when he was around. He will be sadly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family throughout this tragic time."

Captain Ben James, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was a truly professional soldier and a devoted family man. I first met him when I joined the Battalion and he was my team second-in-command for the DORD Patrol Competition. He was fit, yet smoked like a chimney; respectful, but able to point a young officer in the right direction. He was a big part of the team's success. I also worked with him on the Pre Junior Non Commissioned Officers' Cadre where his instructional abilities and expertise were first rate. The Jocks shared my huge respect for the man. My thoughts and prayers are with Ida and his young family at this time. A man who encapsulated the essence of being a Highlander, he will be hugely missed, but never forgotten."

Highlander Steven O'Neill, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"Corporal Pike was a great Corporal and someone to look up to for a young Jock like myself. It is tragic that he has passed away and he will be truly missed. My thoughts are with his family."

Captain Steve Harrington, Regimental Administration Officer, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland said:

"I only had the pleasure of knowing Corporal Pike for a short period of time. But during this time I was struck by his cheerful, mischievous nature and also his total professionalism. I knew him to be a devoted husband and father, a natural leader, a key member of the 4 SCOTS Corporals' Mess and a rising star within his Battalion. Sadly, he was taken from us whilst conducting offensive operations against a ruthless and determined enemy. He was wounded doing the job he loved - taking the fight to the enemy and leading his men in contact. His tragic loss has been a massive blow to both his Platoon and to the Company. However, we will continue with our mission as we know he will be watching over us. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones during this very difficult time."