

Lance Corporal James Fullarton
2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (2 RRF)

Killed in Afghanistan on Sunday 16 August 2009.

Lance Corporal James Fullarton, or 'Fully' to his mates, was born in Coventry in April 1985. He joined the Army in November 2003 and on successful completion of his infantry training at ITC Catterick, was posted to the Second Battalion the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

Lance Corporal Fullarton joined the Battalion in Palace Barracks, Belfast, as the Resident Battalion based there. He patrolled the streets of the city and was involved with public order incidents keeping the streets safe during the marching season. In the summer of 2005 Lance Corporal Fullarton deployed to Iraq for the first time. In late 2005, Lance Corporal Fullarton moved with the Battalion to Cyprus as part of the Theatre Reserve Battalion commitment. During this time he deployed on Exercise Saffron Sands in Jordan and again on Operations to Iraq.

Lance Corporal Fullarton distinguished himself early earning his place on a JNCO cadre and subsequent promotion to Lance Corporal in 2006. His love of sport and fitness saw him drive to undertake and pass the Physical Training Instructors cadre, he was never happier than when he was taking imaginative and demanding training sessions. In March 2008 Lance Corporal Fullarton moved with the Battalion to Hounslow, West London. Here, Lance Corporal Fullarton was to stand proudly outside the Royal Palaces as part of the Public Duties commitment.

In March 2009 Lance Corporal Fullarton was called upon to deploy to Sangin, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, first as a Section Second in Command and latterly as a Section Commander. He was a shining example to his men who all admired and respected him. In June 2009, whilst on leave, Lance Corporal Fullarton got engaged to fiancée Leanne, whom he loved and adored, he was planning to marry her in June of 2010.

Lance Corporal Fullarton's life was tragically cut short in an IED blast on 16 August 2009. He was tasked with leading the Company on a patrol. Lance Corporal Fullarton died doing what he loved and leading, as always, from the front.

His Commanding Officer Lieutenant Charlie Calder, CO 2 RRF, said:

"Lance Corporal James Fullarton had established an enviable reputation as a section commander and section 2IC. He inspired confidence in all the Fusiliers around him when operating under the most demanding of circumstances. He will be sorely missed in the Battalion by his many friends. However, it is to his family and in particular his fiancée, Leanne, that every Fusilier in Afghanistan sends their heartfelt condolences."

Lieutenant Colonel Rob Thomson MBE, CO 2 RIFLES Battlegroup, said:

"Lance Corporal Fullerton was a rock to his men. Full of fun, he kept the load out here light by finding mischief around every corner. A pre-eminent soldier, he has been standing very tall under fire and under IED attack. Loyalty was his thing and no-one loved 3 Platoon more than he. He is sorely missed but our first thoughts and prayers are with his family and Leanne, his fiancée, whom he was heart-breakingly due to marry next year."

Major Jo Butterfill, OC A Company Group 2 RRF, said:

"Lance Corporal Fullarton was an excellent soldier and a committed and highly capable junior commander. Monstrously fit, strong and focussed, he had a dry wit and a robustly disdainful attitude to operational hardship and danger that always put him at the very centre of his platoon's collective sense of humour.

"He was a character, liked and admired by all, who could always be relied on to summarise the worst of situations in a few choice words, generate a smile from tired, sometimes frightened men, and then resume the charge with renewed energy. He led, in the best traditions of the infantry, from the very front and by personal example.

"His tragic and untimely death is a terrible loss both to the Company and the wider Battalion. We shall miss him hugely during the remainder of this tour and in the future. All our thoughts and prayers are with his loving family and fiancée."

Lieutenant Alan Williamson, Platoon Commander Three Platoon, A Company, 2RRF, Attached 2 RIFLES, said:

"Lance Corporal Fullarton, Fully, was one hell of a good soldier whom I would have trusted with my own life. A man of immeasurable morale and physical courage he was an inspiration to all who knew him. Fully was fiercely loyal, he loved Three Platoon and was so proud to be a part of this very special group of young soldiers. Fully's soldiers would have followed him anywhere, he was their rock and inspiration during some very testing days out here in Afghanistan.

"So often trusted with the most difficult of tasks, I could always depend on him to back me up and get the job done to the highest of standards. He led from the front providing the most outstanding example to his men, if any young infanteer is looking for a role model then Fully should be it!

"His loss has left a massive hole within our Platoon that will never quite be filled. However, this is nothing compared to how his beloved fiancée Leanne must be feeling; he was so excited at the prospect of marrying her next year. My thoughts are with her and his family during this most difficult of times."

Sgts Matthew Palmieri, Mark Taylor and Cpl Wayne McNamara said:

"Ful-Dog... a strong man who was fit as a butchers dog and a great soldier, at a junior rank

commanded respect from all and also gave the respect back. Will be sorely missed by all, our thoughts go to his family. Fallen but not forgotten. Good memories of another great man and... once a Fusilier always a Fusilier. Rest in peace..."

Corporal Scott O'Connell, Section Commander 11 Platoon A Company Group, said:

"I have known Lance Corporal Fullarton for about 4 years but became close friends with him at the start of the Cyprus Tour when I moved to C Company. We instantly became good friends and we had a small group from all over the Midlands that would be partying in Ayia Napa. At every chance, myself, Fully, Shane Hurley and George Cardwell would be on it the second we finished work, and you could guarantee Fully would be the life and soul of the party.

"Fully was one of the most professional soldiers I have ever seen, always happy, loved his job and no matter how hard things got he was never phased he would just say 'I'm not arsed', Fully's famous quote. He had total respect from everyone around him. Fully was loved by everyone because of his attitude to life, no matter if you were a mate he had known all his life or the youngest Fusilier he had never met before, he still made the effort to give you the time of day and help in anyway he could. He was a model soldier and a model friend. He will be sorely missed especially that distinctive laugh! My thoughts go out to his fiancée and all of his family at this hard time. RIP Fully mate, I will never forget you. God Bless x."

Corporal Paul Whiting, 3 YORKS, said:

"Lance Corporal Fullarton, Fully, to me he was a bloke I couldn't say a bad word about, in the little time I knew him, he was an extremely professional soldier and he was an inspiration to all he worked with, and everyone around him looked up to him. He is a tribute to his family and a true hero in the lads eyes. Rest well Fully, God knows, you deserve it."

Lance Corporal Phil Gibbons, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"Fully, known to his mates as "Fullydog", was a tough, genuine, strong and courageous man. He was a fantastic soldier, who feared little and always led from the front. If I was to sum Fullydog up – it would be that he was a loyal friend who would be behind you whatever the situation. My heart and sympathy go out to his beloved fiancée Leanne, who he adored so much, his mum, dad and two sisters, family and friends. Fully, you are and will always be a true legend and there will always be a place in my heart for you. I will never forget you – I hope one day we can meet again. RIP friend."

Lance Corporal Callum Davies, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"Fully aka 'Fullydog', was an absolute legend and a true friend. He was a great leader and I had the pleasure serving as his 2IC. Everything that was asked of him, he did with 100% commitment. Fully will be sorely missed and my thoughts are with his fiancée Leanne, who he loved dearly, and his family and friends. He will always be in our hearts, and he will never be forgotten."

Lance Corporal Kielan Walker, 2 Platoon A Company Group, said:

"I've known Jay all my life since I started Primary School, he was a typical lad's lad always up for a laugh. We used to finish school, then go down the park in Profit Avenue and play football. He was always a very competitive sportsman and wanted to be a winner in everything he did. We lost touch for a while when I moved away, then in training in Catterick we met up again after eight years. It was like we never separated. We both joined the Battalion near enough the same time and since then I've watched him grow into a perfect soldier, proud of his cap badge, proud of his job and glad to be in the Army.

"Fully would always welcome the newest Fusilier to his room for a drink because he never wanted to leave anyone out, this was just typical of him. He classed his Section as his family and brothers in arms. As he used to tell me, I can honestly say he died doing what he loved and all that knew him will miss him dearly. I won't forget you mate all my love to you, your family and your future wife. You were a true Sky Blue fan, CCFC 'til I die. God Bless mate, Love Kielan."

Lance Corporal Nike Thomas, 10 Platoon C Company, said:

"James was one of the best lads I have ever met. He was always there for his friends. My thoughts go out to all of his family and his girlfriend Leanne."

Fusilier Martin Nolan, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"To sum Fully up in a paragraph or two is not easy, for the simple fact, there are just too many things to say about him. I remember when I first got to Battalion, he gave me a tour of the barracks, introduced me to his closest friends and made me feel comfortable in my new surroundings. He then said "Do you want a brew kid" a phrase that he would use again, many times as he was a true 'Brew Monster'.

"Fully showed me the ropes and taught me a lot about the Army, he was an excellent soldier and JNCO. J was family, a cousin who became a best friend and a best friend who became a brother, but not just to me, to all who knew him. He hasn't left my side and will never leave my thoughts and heart, we will meet again my friend. Stay strong Leanne, he is watching over you now, protecting you as he always did. RIP Fully, Love Chubbz."

Fusilier John Jones, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"Fully was great commander, I always looked up to him from the first day I met him, he didn't mess about when it counted on soldiers' lives, he was a professional soldier and always got himself and the section to practise drills, until it became second nature. He always said that he always learnt new stuff, even off the newest Fusiliers in the Platoon. It is a shame we will never have that drinking bet, but when we all go to Cyprus for decompression, we will all have a drink on you. Rest in peace Fullydog. Specky."

Fusilier James Burke, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"Fully or "Fullydog" to all that new him was one of my closest mates. From the day I got to Battalion, he took me under his wing and called me "Boy Blue". Its been an honour to have worked and known Fully as well as I have and he is the soldier all of Three Platoon wanted to be. Funny, awesome at his job and always first to speak up for the lads. Fully, you'll never be forgotten mate."

Fusilier Tom Swann, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"How can you sum up Fully on a piece of paper? He was a fearless warrior and a loyal friend. Every Fusilier in the Platoon looked up to him. I spent the majority of the tour in his section and I have witnessed what an awesome soldier he was. It's a tragic shame we'll never get to see him fulfil his dream of being RSM.

"As a mate you couldn't ask for more, he was always there, either having a laugh or talking about home, he was always there to make you feel better. He was unique. The pain felt in the Platoon by his loss cannot be matched by that of his beloved fiancée Leanne, his parents and sisters, my thoughts and prayers are with you all. Full, I love you mate. You're in a better place. See you at the Re-Org."

Fusilier Stanslaus Zvirawa, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"I have known the distinguished soldier for over one year in the Battalion. He was a mentor, an exemplary soldier, who led from the front. Throughout this Op Herrick 10 Tour, he has been my Section 2IC and when he unfortunately passed away, we were together on the ground. My deepest thoughts go to his family fiancé. May the Lord accept your soul into his hands."

Fusilier Andrew Evans, 3 Platoon A Company, said:

"Fully was a strong, fearless and smart soldier, that could do any task he was given, whether it was Section 2IC , Section Comd or even Valon man, which he did on this tour. He lead from the front and was such an inspiration to the people below him. As a person, he was always cracking jokes and having a laugh with all the lads, he will be sorely missed by everyone that new him and someone that I and many more would follow anywhere. Our thoughts and love now go to his family and fiancée."

Fusilier Tez Scanlon, a close friend from B Company Group, said:

"James was a popular bloke both in 2 RRF as well as back home in Coventry. He was a friend who cannot be replaced. James was big bloke with a big heart to match who always smiled no matter what. He cared a lot about his family and friends. I am finding it hard to come to terms with the loss of a true friend like Fully, knowing when I return he won't be there. I can't imagine how his loved ones are feeling at this time back home. My thoughts and prayers are with his family back at home. Rest in Peace my friend."

Fusilier Matthew Cleaver, Mortar Section, A Company Group, said:

"I have known Fully for over 4 years. When I joined A Company in Belfast he became a really good friend. Not long after he was promoted he joined C Company on OP Telic 6, he rejoined A Company half way through Cyprus and we got even closer. He was one of my best friends, I asked him to be my best man at my wedding. I was in his section on Exercise Saffron Sands in Jordan and I believe one of the best soldiers in the Battalion. My stag and wedding weekend was the best weekend of my life, he said an amazing speech on the day. My thoughts are with his wife to be Leanne. Rest in peace James, I'll never forget you."

Fusilier Hooley, 2 Platoon A Company Group, said:

"Fully as he was called by his friends was a strong and determined man who cared for people and especially those under his command. He was a role model for many of the Fusiliers, an excellent NCO. He always kept things running smoothly, he always had time for a person in need. He will be missed by all."

Fusilier Robert Clark, 10 Platoon C Company, said:

"James, otherwise known to his friends as "Fully" was an extraordinary bloke and everyone's best friend. When I first arrived in Battalion Fully took me under his wing along with his best mate Shane Hurly. Seeing them together was like watching brothers playing. For anyone that knew, loved or looked up to James, this is a hard time to go through, he will be missed dearly and will remain forever in our hearts."

Fusilier Liam Poole, 10 Platoon C Company, said:

"Fully was an outstanding bloke, he was a laugh and had an all round great character. He loved going out with the lads. Whether in work or at home you could always count on Fully to brighten and cheer your day up. You would not ask for more from a friend or colleague. He will always be in our thoughts and so will his family. You will be missed Fully."

Fusilier Tony Manuel, 10 Platoon C Company, said:

"When I first arrived in Battalion, James made it as easy as possible for me to settle in to the Platoon and welcomed us with a barbeque and some beers. He will be missed and I will never forget him."

Fusilier Lewis Collins, 10 Platoon C Company, said:

"I met Fully on my first day in Battalion, he told me he would be in his platoon. I spent the best part of two years working with him. We went on exercise in Jordan together, followed by a tour to Iraq. We were also in the company boxing team together. Fully was very professional, but he would always keep the section or the platoon on their toes and alert because of his pranks and practical jokes.

"He brought smiles and laughter to everyone around him. I will sorely miss you mate and I will never forget you."