

Private Conrad Lewis was born in Bournemouth on 21 October 1988. An active individual with a taste for adventure he joined the Territorial Army in August 2008, completing his recruit training and the rigorous Pre-Parachute Selection Course, P Company. Originally serving in 4th Battalion The Parachute Regiment (4 PARA), the Territorial Army Battalion, Private Lewis was accepted for a full-time reserve service appointment in 3 PARA in July 2009. Private Lewis was quick to integrate at his new battalion, deploying to Oman with C Company and then moving across to the Machine Gun Platoon, Support Company in the run up to the Battalion's operational deployment. Fighting as a member of a Fire Support Group, he proved an exceedingly competent soldier and was selected as lead scout for his section. A volunteer for this highly dangerous but critical position, his diligence and bravery were the first line of defence for his fellow paratroopers. An intelligent individual, Private Lewis knew the risks but, day in day out, he was still the man at the front of every patrol, coolly facing the threat and keeping his friends safe. The family of Private Lewis have made the following statement: "Conrad was an outstanding young man, with a character the depth of which you only truly find out in these sad circumstances. He was a warm-hearted, funny, kind, loving, handsome and clearly a brave young man. "It is a cliché to say that everyone loved him, but they did, from people of his own generation to adults of all generations. If you met Conrad you were touched by him and he made you feel good about life. He had a smile that literally could light up a room, change your mood for the day and a hug that made you feel loved and safe, which he never shied away from giving, regardless of the time, place or audience. "He wanted to be a soldier - he wanted to be a Para - and he served the Regiment and his nation with the spirit and vigour that he approached everything in life, full on and without fear or restraint. "He had joined the Parachute Regiment on a military gap year in 2008, but signed on for two more years to ensure he could serve with his new comrades in Afghanistan. He wanted to carry on a military career and had aspirations to join the Special Forces, something we all believe he would have achieved. "He always considered others before himself, which made him the most fantastic and loving; son, brother, boyfriend, friend and colleague. He carried this trait into his work in Afghanistan and he knew that together with his unit he was making a big difference. "He is remembered by many as an outstanding sportsman; semi-professional footballer, club swimmer, biathlon champion at a young age and county sprinter, never one to miss a moment at the gym he was an incredible athlete. "We have received incredible support from our family and his friends and tributes have poured onto a Facebook group set up by them - we thank all those supporting us, it is so good to know that someone can be around for such a short amount of time and touch so many people, he loved you all and you should be so proud of the man you made him. "He had the obligatory military tattoo - but typical of the lad his was script and it read: 'God gave me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference'. "Conrad did change things. We are all incredibly proud of him. 'Until the reorg son.' With love, the whole family." Private Lewis's girlfriend, Georgina (known as George), has made the following statement: "Con, you are leaving an enormous gap in mine and all our friends lives. Words cannot even explain how much I will miss my best friend and my soul mate. To me you are amazing and there will never be a day that goes

by that I will not be thinking of you and missing you. I feel so blessed to have had you in my life, you have made these last three years truly unforgettable. I am so proud of you Con.

"Better to have loved you and lost you, than to never have had the chance to love you at all.

Lieutenant Colonel John Boyd, Commanding Officer, 4 PARA, said:

"Private Conrad Lewis demonstrated the very finest of British society; he was a man who volunteered to serve both his country and his fiercely proud Regiment. It takes a special sort of individual to join the Parachute Regiment; it takes an exceptional individual to deploy on operations and for that he will always be remembered within the 4th Battalion The Parachute Regiment.

"Our Reservists are doing an outstanding job alongside their Regular counterparts and although Conrad died doing the job he loved, amongst his brothers in arms, he will never be forgotten. Our thoughts are with his family at this time."</p> <p>
Lieutenant Colonel James Coates, Commanding Officer, 3 PARA, said:</p> <p>"Private Conrad Lewis died during a security operation on 9 February in the Nad 'Ali province of Helmand. He was a supremely popular soldier who faced danger time and again but always put his comrades first. As a Reservist soldier, he might have chosen the easy option in life and remained a part-time soldier at home rather than deploying to Afghanistan.

"However, he aspired to serve with 3 PARA on operations and he fulfilled this ambition in spades. He was devoted to those around him and the affectionate tributes pouring in provide a real testament to his popularity; he had a big personality and people remembered him.

"He thrived on being a Paratrooper and he thrived on operations. It is a fitting tribute to his memory that his Battalion continues to significantly disrupt the insurgency, delivering a better future to the people of Helmand province. He will be sorely missed and we will never forget him or the contribution he made to the improved security situation in Nad 'Ali. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends at this distressing time. Utrunque Paratus."

Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Richard Hames, Regimental Sergeant Major, 3 PARA, said:

"Private Lewis is a Paratrooper first and a civilian second. He joined 4 PARA so he could be with the very best, on the front line, in a forward patrol base, with his fellow Paratroopers of Fire Support Group 1. Confident, with great banter and an all round character, he fitted in well.

"Despite the rigours and harsh routine of daily contacts and long patrols through the day and night he never faltered in his commitment to his fellow Airborne Brothers.

"On Operations, Private Lewis delivered, from constant banter keeping morale high, to being the first to volunteer for that not so good job that had to be done. He was respected, trusted and will be sorely missed by his Company and closest friends.

"Private Lewis, a friend to so many, a Paratrooper to us all. Our thoughts and prayers are now with his father Anthony and his girlfriend Georgina."

Major Richard Todd, Officer Commanding A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Over the last four weeks of almost daily combat Private Conrad Lewis has been a true inspiration to his fellow soldiers. Conrad was always at the front, without fear and eager to get to grips with the enemy ♦ the true embodiment of a Paratrooper.

"Aged only 22 Conrad was a friend to all and a source of help and comfort in difficult times; he was mature beyond his years and a really good man. Conrad died along side Private Lewis Hendry in the same manner in which he had lived ♦ looking out for his friends.

"The loss of Conrad is like a hammer blow to the company and he will always be remembered. Our difficult task must and will continue but our thoughts, prayers and love are with Conrad and his family through this dark time."

Warrant Officer Class 2 (Company Sergeant Major) Danny Leitch, Company Sergeant Major A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"From his Company Quarter Master Sergeant to his

Company Sergeant Major, Private Lewis had always shown me the qualities required of a 'Senior Tom'; robust, steadfast and willing to step up to the mark when required.

"Combined with his genuine care for his fellow soldiers and friends, proven in combat he was admired by all ranks from Private to Officer.

"On Operations he led from the front on patrols and under immense pressure he showed huge courage, both moral and physical. He was always first to volunteer for the tough, unpleasant and dangerous duties.

"Missed but never forgotten, summed up by General Montgomery: 'Every Man an Emperor'.

"An awesome lead scout, fearsome in a firefight, he cared about the men; always making them scoff and brews."
Private Luke Flanagan

Captain Hugo Deed, Officer Commanding Machine Gun Platoon, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Private Lewis was hugely popular within the platoon, hardly surprising since he was such a charismatic person. He came to Machine Guns keen and willing to learn, and quickly developed into a very capable and confident machine gunner.

"Strong, bright and confident - he was doing extremely well in the platoon. He transitioned over to a Fire Support Group before the tour, meaning more specialist training and responsibility - he took this and more in his stride.

"I will always remember Private Lewis for his humour and ability to uplift those around him, something that would shine through on even the most miserable of training exercises! His loss is sorely felt, we will remember him."

Private Luke Flanagan, Fire Support Group 1, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Where do I start with Conrad Lewis? He was probably the loudest bloke in the Checkpoint; he was constantly having banter with the blokes. We were called the twins, always being together and dishing out abuse and pranks on everyone. Although he did it in jest he was looked up to by all the blokes.

"An awesome lead scout, fearsome in a firefight, he cared about the men; always making them scoff and brews. He always had the guts to stand up to the blokes when he felt the need. I probably owe you my life and I will remember you for the rest of it. The Reg won't be the same without you. See you at the re-org."

Private Fraser Preston, Fire Support Group 1, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad was a big voice in the platoon, whether it be good or bad. He was well liked and always at the heart of the banter amongst us. I'm going to miss the Fire Support Group Nissan patrols through camp and the notes to re-confirm what the hell we were meant to be doing that day.

"There is a big hole in the platoon now where you will be sorely missed mate. PS 'It's up the office at two in civvies'.

Private Liam Greenhalgh, Fire Support Group 1, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad was well respected and well liked in our Fire Support Group. It won't be the same without him trying to beast blokes. You and your Nissan will be missed. Gone but never forgotten mate."

Lance Corporal Zak Dunnings, Fire Support Group 2, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Lewis was a big personality within the Machine Gun Platoon and will be sorely missed by everyone. My condolences go to his family at this extremely difficult time. Rest easy Airborne."

Private Ricky Williams, Fire Support Group 2, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad Lewis was a great soldier and a great friend. He was one of the first blokes I met in Battalion and he always stood out due to his sharp personality and his wit. Lewis, you will never be forgotten and will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with your family and friends. Rest in peace dear Conrad."

Corporal Carl Thompson, Fire Support Group 3, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"My thoughts go out to Private Lewis' family. He was a paratrooper with a massive personality; he always had a big smile on his face, was a friend to all that knew him and will be sorely missed by all. Rest in peace Airborne."

Private James Aston, Fire Support Group 3, Support Company, 3

PARA, said:

"Conrad Lewis was a brave man and loved being a paratrooper but more importantly, he was a very dear and close friend, who will be missed by all those who knew him. Forever in my heart, goodnight, God bless. Until we meet again, take care, mate, I'm going to miss you so much. Love always."

Private Paul Conner, Fire Support Group 3, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"True friend, true Paratrooper: you will be sorely missed, Lewis. My thoughts are with your family. Sleep well mate. Love always. Rest in peace Airborne."

Lance Corporal Sammy Garnham, Mortar Platoon, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Without a doubt one of the funniest Reg blokes I've ever met who always made the best of a situation. My heart goes out to his family and his loved ones. All the best mate. Take care up there."

Private David Ashton, Mortar Platoon, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad was an awesome Paratrooper and a top bloke who was always committed to the cause and never gave less than one hundred per cent. A massive loss to the Reg. Rest in peace mate, I'll never forget you. A true friend to the end. Take care up there buddy."

Private Ollie Smith, Mortar Platoon, Support Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Such a shame to lose you mate. You're an awesome bloke and you will never be forgotten. See you again some day."

Lance Corporal Mac McCallister, Royal Army Medical Corps, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad was an amazing lad who always brought a smile to those around him. He will be greatly missed, gone but never forgotten. My sympathies to his family and friends."

Private Jack Marshman, 8 Platoon, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"A good friend of mine. The life and soul of whatever group he was with and an all-round mega bloke. He will be dearly missed. Rest in peace."

Private Edward Cook, 8 Platoon, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"I went through training with Conrad Lewis. He was a mega Paratrooper, he was a good bloke bringing morale up and constantly cracking jokes. He was the most popular bloke I knew and he will be missed dearly."

Private Aaron Wheeldon, 8 Platoon, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Conrad you were full of beans, always having a laugh and a joke with the blokes. You will be missed by all the blokes in 3 PARA. Rest in peace mate."

Private Thomas Revitt, 9 Platoon, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"I remember when I first came to 3 PARA, you got put straight into 9 Platoon, C Company. We were a few days away from deploying on our overseas exercise Ex Omani Express. Once we got there we noticed that you were keen, confident and usually the loudest man in the platoon.

"It seemed that everywhere I went I'd hear you 'gobbing off' in the smoking area or trying to jump the scoff queue! One of my favourite memories of you was when we climbed Mount Jebbel. It was funny that before we even left the transport to climb it, you looked at it for a few seconds, laughed, and said to me 'there's no chance of me getting up that thing!' We set off and within 20 minutes you had me in stitches.

"Your morale carried a lot of the blokes up and back down the other side. Another good memory was when we were at the top; we both got a scoff on, you lit a fag up and we talked of how you couldn't wait to get back to England and how you could not wait to see your girlfriend, George.

"I could not believe it when I heard the news, it took a moment to sink in. I am absolutely gutted that you're gone. I know you want the blokes to crack on and that's what we are going to do. Miss you already mate. Rest in peace Lewis!"

Private Ben Simner, 9 Platoon, attached to A Company, 3 PARA, said:

"Lewis, you're one of my best mates and one of the funniest blokes I know. I'll miss our dominoes nights. Rest in peace mate."

Corporal Sean Robb, Private Gavin Lovett, Private Toby Shears, Private Darryn Fritchley, Private Simon Hanks and Private Christopher Hitchens, 2 Platoon, A

Company, 3 PARA, said:

"We only worked closely with Conrad for a couple of months and during those months Conrad was a fantastic figure of a man and a Paratrooper. His personality was one in a million and was permanently bulging with morale regardless of what was going on.

"We are all gutted by the loss and we hope he rests in peace. He will be truly missed by all that knew him."</p>