

3rd BATTALION THE RIFLES

Liam Maughan was born in Doncaster on 6 July 1991. He attended Hatfield Visual Arts College before joining the Army on 6 January 2008 when he was sent for initial training at the Army Foundation College in Harrogate. Upon completion of his course, he was sent for phase two training at the Infantry Training Centre in Catterick, completing this in March 2009.

Rifleman Maughan arrived with 3rd Battalion The Rifles in Edinburgh on 30 March 2009 and joined B Company for their pre-deployment training. He deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan with 5 Platoon in September 2009 where he was employed as a sharpshooter in his patrol. His Platoon are based out of a new Patrol Base in central Sangin and have been conducting regular patrols and operations to bring reassurance and security to the local population.

Rifleman Maughan was shot and killed while in a position of overwatch, providing protection to his platoon as they engaged with the local population. He leaves behind his parents, girlfriend and new born son.

Rifleman Maughan's family said:

"Liam was a tall, handsome six-footer, with looks to melt the heart of any girl and make men envious, but he was also a son and a brother, a fiance and a father to his own son who he will now never meet.

"This cruel and premature departure from us leaves dreams unfulfilled, potentials unrealised and a massive irreparable hole in the lives of everyone who knew him."

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Kitson, Commanding Officer, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"The loss of such a keen, dedicated and promising Rifleman is a devastating blow to the Battle Group. Rifleman Maughan, at the age of eighteen, had already ably demonstrated his clear potential. Capable, enthusiastic, courageous and loyal, he had all the attributes of the best kind of Rifleman. He has been an absolute credit to his family and our nation, typical of the young men of today who are putting their lives on the line in the service of their mates, their country and a better future for this region.

"Selfless and committed, he died working tirelessly to provide security and hope for the local people of Sangin who may never know nor understand the great sacrifice that he has made on their behalf. Rifleman Maughan was loved by those who stood alongside him and will be sorely missed by us all, his comrades.

"Our thoughts and prayers are very much with Rifleman Maughan's infant son, as they are with the rest of his family, and we hope that he may grow up to understand just how great a sacrifice his father made in the service of his country. We pray also that both family and loved ones may find comfort in the memory of such a selfless, courageous and dedicated Rifleman. We shall

carry on his good work undaunted as he would wish."

Major James Richardson, Officer Commanding, B Company 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan arrived with the Company at the end of March last year, just as we started pre-deployment training in earnest. He was a little daunted by the prospect of the training and the upcoming deployment. During the summer it became clear that he was to become a father, another daunting prospect. The combination, after the initial shock, appeared to galvanise him and he steadily progressed both in terms of his professional confidence and his all round maturity.

"Both belied his tender age, and by the time we deployed he was really starting to show the hallmarks of a Rifleman with a bright future. A development that continued in Afghanistan and that saw him forge the type of friendships in his Platoon we all join the Army for.

"It is particularly tragic that his son, Jaden, was born last month and that he has not had a chance to get to know his father. He, undoubtedly, would have made him proud. My thoughts and those of us all are with Jaden and his mother Michaela, and the remainder of Rifleman Maughan's family who will be feeling his loss keenest of all."

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Lieutenant Tom Vila, Officer Commanding 5 Platoon B Company 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"I always thought that Rifleman Maughan seemed a bit stunned, but from the year that I have known him, I now know this was down to his un-flappable composure.

"Thrown into the most extreme situations on Operations after only five months with the Battalion he oozed contagious serenity indicative of one far more experienced. He always be-calmed his fellow soldiers. His ability to shoot straight was quickly picked out (for he rumored that he could shoot straight often enough) such that he was chosen to be the Platoon's sharp shooter. In this role he exemplified everything that was best in a thinking rifleman, selecting his own targets and timelessly hunting down a fleeting enemy through his scope, this man required little leadership.

"His boy band good looks led the rest of the lads to nick name him 'Princess'; on the battlefield he was anything but. He thrived on soldiering and was proud to be a Rifleman.

"I was lucky enough to 'chew the fat' with Rifleman Maughan over a brew the day before he died. He was telling me about his new born son Jaden, of whom he had not yet even seen a photo. He had a look in his eye that said that he was a man that any son would want for a father. That he himself was barely out of childhood mattered not a bit. This quality was inspiring but unsurprising as time and again in Afghanistan he put the needs of others before his own. Ultimately he placed himself in the line of fire, giving his own life for those of his

comrades.

"Intelligent, naturally fit, fearless and sickeningly handsome, Rifleman Liam Maughan has been robbed of the opportunity to make the most of his endless talents, and only 8 months after his 18th Birthday. This is a tragedy with no comparison. His brothers in arms will bear his loss, not lightly, for ever.

"This has been a dark day for 5 Platoon but our thoughts are firmly with his girlfriend Michaela, son Jaden and his parents Andrea and David.

"The bravest of the brave, Swift and Bold."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Paul Kelly, Company Serjeant Major, B Company, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan was a Rifleman's Rifleman, confident, professional, diligent with a great sense of humour, the evidence of this is was with the acceptance of his nickname 'Princess'. He stood tall not only in height, but in stature amongst the Riflemen in his platoon.

"He had specialist training as a sharpshooter and took the responsibility of this task in his stride. He was an ambitious young man who wanted the responsibility of command which in time he would have achieved. We have lost a bright star of the future to the insurgents but we as a company will be strong together as he would have wanted and will continue with the courageous work that he and his Platoon have achieved so far this tour.

"His loss has hit every one very hard but we will be thinking of his family who have lost a proud loving son. Our thoughts go to his family at this devastating time."

Sergeant Ian Lamming, Platoon Serjeant, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Liam Maughan, known as princess by the platoon due to his good looks was always saying "that I'm better looking than you". Rifleman Maughan was a grade one soldier whose passion was to become a sniper once back in the UK. He was professional in everything he did and he always put his mates first before himself.

"Sadly Rifleman Maughan has never seen his newly born son and he will be missed by the Platoon, but most of all his loved ones at home. Rest in Peace mate."

Corporal Jonny Walker, Section Commander, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Liam Maughan was a great, top quality soldier who took his job very seriously. He took great pride in being my section's sharp shooter, and one day would have been an excellent section commander which he aspired to be. His soldiering skills were of the highest standard and he loved the job he was in, he always remained calm when under pressure.

"He had an excellent sense of humour and was known as the Platoon princess, he was a father

to his new born baby at only a few weeks old but which he loved something true. It is a great tragedy that Rifleman Maughan was taken from us, when he was so young.

"I offer my condolences to his girlfriend and parents, who have lost a great son and boyfriend and would have been an excellent father to his son. He will be sorely missed, father, son, boyfriend and friend."

Lance Corporal Joe Petrie, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said of him:

"Rifleman Maughan was a good hearted friend with his pretty boy looks. A good soldier with a promising career in what ever he chose to do. Keen to get his hands on the sniper rifle he was chuffed to bits to be 5 Platoon's sniper which showed in his enthusiasm to do the tasks he was given.

"Always up for a joke and a laugh with the rest of us and took it well when the joke was on him.

"He was also a proud father of a baby boy although he hadn't seen him yet. Without a doubt he would have been a good dad, and my heart goes out to his fiancée, son and the rest of his family and friends. He has left a mark on all of us that will stay forever."

Lance Corporal Jonathon Robson, of 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group said:

"Rifleman Liam Maughan was without a doubt one of the best soldiers I have worked with, he was a keen LMG Gunner but even more keen to become a sniper. When he passed his sharpshooter's course he was over the moon. I would like to say I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with and command such a soldier and also know him as a friend. My thoughts are with his family and friends at this sad time.

"I would just like to say goodnight princess he will know what I mean, well mate rest in peace and one day we will be reunited."

Lance Corporal James Taylor of 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan was a true legend within the platoon his confidence and banter made him stand out. He was a true professional and always at the top of his game whilst out on a patrol or any task he was given.

"My thoughts are with his girlfriend and son who he was so proud of and also to his family. I will miss him when I return home to Doncaster as the town has lost a legend."

Rifleman Kyle Allison, also of 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan was a top bloke, a great friend and father to his son. Anything he was asked to do he would do it no questions asked. This is how committed he was to his job and I'm sure he would be as committed if not more to being a father. RIP mate."

Rifleman Niall Carter, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, paid this tribute:

"Although I knew Maughan for a short time he was a gleaming lad. I got on very well with him. My heart goes out to his family and girlfriend and new born son. Rest in Peace mate."

Rifleman Lee Clarke, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan was a brilliant lad he always had a smile or cracked a joke. He always helped if someone was in need and put others before himself. He will be missed and our thoughts are with him and his family, RIP mate."

Rifleman Jean De Clerk, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Rifleman Maughan was a young good spirited man, he was one of the best liked lads in the Platoon because of his friendly character. He was always in high spirits because of his job as Platoon sharpshooter and I am confident he would have been a fine sniper which was his aspiration."

"I truly count him as my friend, my heart breaks for his girlfriend and his son which he was so excited to see for the first time, but he never will. I will always remember the good banter between both me and him, but most of all I will remember him."

Rifleman Christopher Handley, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group said of him:

"Rifleman Maughan always used to say "I'm better looking than you" I used to say this to him too, he would simply say "but you aren't though are you?" Rest in Peace mate."

Rifleman Gavin Hardman, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"We have lost a true warrior, friend and soldier. Maughan 'princess' you will be missed by us but never forgotten. Liam was a mans man and always up for a good laugh, he never shied away from a task, we have lost a great soldier."

Rifleman Lee Hodge, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"I only knew Maughan for a short period of time but in that time he was always there if I needed help with anything and was always happy to do so. A true friend who will be sadly missed, sleep peacefully mate."

Rifleman Ian Pearson, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, said:

"Maughan or princess as we called him was an awesome person who thought of the lads before himself. He will be missed loads; our thoughts go out to his family and child, RIP mate."

Rifleman Robert Rees, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group said:

"Rifleman Maughan known as princess, when I first rocked up to the Battalion he was the first lad I had spoken to, I also shared a room with him. He was always full of laughter and had a heart of gold. My thoughts go out to his family and his fiancée and his new born son."

Rifleman Luke Slater, 5 Platoon, 3 RIFLES Battle Group, added:

"Rifleman Maughan was a good lad. He was my room mate in Edinburgh and we always had a good laugh. Things we did were good fun and I'm going to miss not doing them things with him. He was a good soldier who took his job seriously. I send my greatest regards to his family because we have lost a great soldier they have lost a great son.

"Rest in Peace mate, obviously God needs you more."