

RIFLEMAN MARTIN JON LAMB

RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON, 1st BATTALION THE RIFLES - COMBINED FORCE NAHR-E-SARAJ (SOUTH)

Rifleman Martin Lamb deployed to Afghanistan in April 2011 as a member of A Company, Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion The Rifles. A Company were operating out of the newly established Temporary Check Point ZARAWAR in the contested area of Alikozai in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province.

The Check Point is an area of known insurgent activity, to the north of Nahr-e Saraj, and Rifleman Lamb was supporting the local people in the fight against that insurgency. On the afternoon of 5 June 2011, Rifleman Lamb was killed by an Improvised Explosive Device.

Rifleman Martin Lamb was born on the 26 April 1984 in Gloucester. He joined the Army in September 2003 after attending Rednock School in Dursley.

During his Combat Infantryman's Course at the Infantry Training Centre in Catterick, he won an award for his exceptional physical fitness. On completion he was posted to 1st Battalion The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire & Wiltshire Regiment.

In 2005 Rifleman Lamb deployed with the Battalion to Afghanistan where he excelled as a Rifleman. On his return, he passed the All Arms Commando Course before taking up post in the newly formed Regiment of The Rifles. His passion for soldiering never wavered and he successfully completed a challenging operational tour of Iraq in 2008. A natural soldier, he was identified for promotion and served with distinction in the prestigious Reconnaissance Platoon of 1 RIFLES.

Rifleman Martin Lamb was energetic, bright and full of ambition; second best was not good enough. Sparky and quick-witted, he was the focal point within his unit.

Outside the Army, he was also a loving husband and doting father. Rifleman Lamb now occupies a proud place in The Rifles' Regimental story.

His loss leaves a gaping hole in our ranks and we will honour his sacrifice.

He leaves behind a loving wife Melissa and 2 year old daughter Rosie.

Lieutenant Colonel James de Labillière DSO MBE, Commanding Officer 1st Battalion, The Rifles, Coalition Force Nahr-e-Saraj (South) said:

"Rifleman Lamb was one of my very best. Talented, capable and naturally gifted as a most professional soldier. As a reconnaissance operator he had made it to the elite

of the elite within the Battalion. And he occupied a very special place in 1 RIFLES as one of our Army Commandos.

"Rifleman Lamb was killed by the blast from an Improvised Explosive Device whilst conducting a foot patrol near the village of ALIKOZAI within the 1 RIFLES area of Nahr-e-Saraj (South). He had been operating there for just under two weeks as part of a large scale Battlegroup operation - OMID HAFT. He and his patrol had made some extraordinary gains against a most resilient insurgency. His own personal contribution, courage and sacrifice will be forever remembered as the price paid for this significant success.

"But 'Lamby' will also be remembered for his energy, zeal and commitment - he was a man with many friends and others naturally gravitated to him. He was one of life's real characters, and he was due to be promoted soon.

"Rifleman Lamb now steps up to take a unique place in our Regimental History. His name joins a list of those from whom we all draw on for both inspiration and courage. At this most difficult time our thoughts and prayers go to Melissa, young Rosie and to his Mother and Step-father in Gloucestershire.

"Swift and Bold: You will never be forgotten."

Major Paul Kyte, Officer Commanding Support Company, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Rifleman Lamb was an outstanding member of the Reconnaissance Platoon - a truly dedicated and professional soldier who loved his job. Amongst his peers within the Platoon of Riflemen, selected from across the Battalion, Rifleman Lamb stood out. He was a bright character with real personality and flair that drew his fellow Riflemen to him. He had recently completed a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer's Cadre and was soon to be promoted to Lance Corporal which came as no surprise: he had already shown that he possessed the outstanding qualities of a commander during last year's tough patrols competition on Exmoor. He revelled in the poor weather and arduous conditions that challenged most others, and was fundamental in his Platoon's final victory.

"This was Rifleman Lamb's third operational tour. He was an extremely experienced operator and was utterly professional in his approach to Pre-Deployment Training. During the course of Operation HERRICK 14, Rifleman Lamb had been deployed right across the Battalion's area of operations and was directly responsible for supporting and executing operations to rid our given area of insurgent presence. His tragic death, whilst patrolling with his tight knit band of friends and fellow riflemen, is a loss to S Company of a fine future commander and it has stolen the Rifles of a brother and role model. Our loss is nothing compared to that of his loving family, and our dearest thoughts are with his wife Melissa, his daughter Rosie, and his

parents Avril and Lloyd at this impossibly difficult time.

"Once a Rifleman, always a Rifleman."

Major Carl Boswell, Officer Commanding A Company, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Rifleman Lamb was one of the liveliest and determined men I have had the privilege of commanding. He was phenomenal; loved by his Brother Riflemen and a role model for those aspiring to be a Rifleman. He was kind and caring, and gave others courage during their darkest hours. Outstandingly brave, if there was a fight to be had he was always at the front. But he was not only a warrior, he also had a unique ability to force a laugh from anyone with his dry and wicked sense of humour which could set a crowd alight. Representing everything that was good about the future of the Regiment, he played a huge part in our lives and in our work out here; he was indeed a beacon of inspiration to us all and we will continue to draw strength from the finest example he set in life. Swift and Bold."

Captain Mike Tattersal, Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Lamby was a perfect example of a father, husband and Rifleman. While at work he could not stop talking about his daughter Rosie and how proud he was to be a father. He was always to be found with a fag wedged between a cheeky smile whether he was in an Observation Post or whilst helping complete Base improvements. He was always the first to volunteer for any job and eager to help his teammates and lighten the load for all. Lamby was known for his determination and fitness overcoming several injuries to complete the Commando Course and the Junior Non-Commissioned Officer's Course. Lamby was honest, trustworthy and completely reliable; he would have made an excellent addition to the Corporals' Mess on return from Afghanistan. Our thoughts and prayers go to his beloved wife Melissa and his cherished daughter Rosie at this tragic time."

Captain Bob Atherden, Second In Command B Company, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"I was lucky enough to have Rifleman Lamb in my platoon when we were deployed to Iraq in 2008/9. To most he was known as 'Lamby', but to my platoon he quickly became 'Lambo' in deference to him being the only member of the platoon to have completed the All Arms Commando Course.

"He was one of those quiet West-Country men; polite, loyal and tough as old boots! I always found him kind, humble and dedicated, whether that be to his job or his young family, he was always the man in which fellow Riflemen confided. He really was a pleasure to command.

"As a testament to the respect in which he was held by those around him, I remember a Royal Marines Major in Iraq trying to get Lambo to transfer. Lambo simply replied; "No thanks, I enjoy soldiering!"

"Swift and Bold!"

Warrant Officer Class 2 Toby North, Company Serjeant Major, B Company, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Martin joined the Royal Gloucester Berkshire & Wiltshire Regiment in 2004 in Hounslow and he came to 4 Platoon B Company. I always remember the professional attitude with which he conducted himself. From day one his conduct was excellent. He wanted to just get on with his new career. Martin was a naturally fit guy, and it came as no surprise when he passed the Commando Course.

"Martin was a very polite man, he would engage in conversation, but had a little shy side to his character. The 1st Battalion has lost a real gentleman and professional soldier."

Corporal Chris Wallace, Section Commander, Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Lamby was always at the forefront of Platoon banter. His sheer presence would raise morale instantly. He was always the first to run out of cigarettes but we were always happy to sort him out after a quick ribbing. Lamby was a key part of his team and we will miss him here in Afghanistan but our loss is nothing compared to that of his family."

Rifleman Martin Ashley, Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"His goal was to have abs like Bruce Lee. He was there already and I never used to tell him because he kept on working at it. We will miss him dearly."

Lance Corporal Dennis Taylor, Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Dear friend. You always saw the good in everything and everyone, even your old Ford Escort held together with Black and Nasty. You would never have a bad word said about it, but I bet the car cost you more than it was worth in repairs. You will be sorely missed but never forgotten."

Lance Corporal Stuart Howell, B Company, 1st Battalion, The Rifles said:

"Martin lived most of his life in Dursley, which is a typical West Country town, this reflected in his personality, not just the broad Country accent. But Martin would do anything for anyone. He had achieved a lot in his Army career; he was one of 1 RIFLES first Army Commandos. In Belize he was a section Second in Command in 3 Platoon where he showed massive potential. He completed a tour of Iraq and on his return was selected for the Reconnaissance Platoon from which he completed the Junior Non-Commissioned Officer's Cadre in Germany. Martin helped me in my early career, from setting up my webbing to naming every waterproof bag I owned.

"I could only find one fault in the man, his taste for music, and the fact that he played it as loud as possible in his car, which would usually wake up my whole street when he came to pick me up for work. But he was never late, always on time.

"Martin was the sort of man you could tell anything, I confided a lot in him and he would always have some sort of advice to give; even though he was young he had a lot of life experience. I will always remember him."

The Riflemen of Operations 1 Company at Observation Post STURGA sent this message over the radio:

"Rifleman Martin Lamb, or 'Lamby' as he was known to his mates was a caring family man who was always looking for chances to spend extra time with them. Lamby was often seen with a 'rolly' hanging out of his mouth, especially when fixing his car - which usually involved duct tape and several members of the Platoon to assist him.

"Rifleman Lamb was a grafter, always first to volunteer and giving 100% in everything that he did. Extremely fit he passed all fitness tests with ease including the All Arms Commando Course.

"Lamby would always go out of his way to help out his mates to ensure they sorted out whatever problem they had. He was always keen to show off his carpentry skills, something which came in handy at the start of the tour when he built an array of furniture.

"Lamby will be missed by every member of the Platoon. He was a true character who raised moral during tough times. Our thoughts are with his wife and family at this difficult time.

"Swift and Bold."