

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed the death of Guardsman Jamie Shadrake of the Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards. Guardsman Shadrake died of gunshot wounds when his checkpoint was attacked by insurgents in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province on Friday 17th August 2012.

Guardsman Shadrake joined the Army as an 17-year-old in 2009. Upon completion of the Combat Infantryman's Course at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick he moved to Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards, in London where he conducted public duties at the Royal Palaces and participated in state ceremonial tasks. In April 2010 he moved to 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards in Aldershot, joining his elder brother in The Queen's Company. So competent was his performance on a training exercise in Canada in the summer of 2011 that he was placed into the battalion's elite Reconnaissance Platoon. He subsequently completed Mission Specific Training and deployed with the Platoon to Afghanistan on his first operational tour.

Guardsman Shadrake was born on the 14th of August 1992 in West Bromwich and brought up primarily in the Cardiff area. His family subsequently moved to Wrexham in 2011. He played rugby for his local team at Llanharan and was looking forward to playing for the Battalion team at the first opportunity. A keen sportsman, he also enjoyed kayaking and rifle shooting. He was an impressive soldier with a huge number of friends, who had a promising future in the Army and will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Guardsman Shadrake leaves behind his parents, Cathryn and Philip, brothers Carl, Kieran and Shane, and sister Kerry-Anne.

Guardsman Shadrake's family have paid the following tribute: "Jamie was a tremendous son and brother. He was proud to be a soldier and died doing a job that he loved. We are all devastated by the loss of Jamie who was such a loving son and brother. We are very proud of the fact that Jamie was prepared to do his duty in helping the people of Afghanistan. Jamie lit up any room with his infectious smile. He will be sorely missed by so many who loved him."

His Commanding Officer, Lt Col James Bowder MBE, said:

"Guardsman Shadrake was an extraordinary young man. Bright, committed and imbued with boundless energy, his enthusiasm and lust for life were infectious. He was a talented soldier with a huge amount to offer and would have gone a long way in the Army. Indeed, he was determined to do so, not least in order to impress his elder brother who is a Platoon Sergeant in the Battalion.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his parents and siblings at this extremely difficult time. Guardsman Shadrake's death is a bitter blow to

the Battalion and the Regimental family more broadly. He will never be forgotten and we are determined to finish the mission that he so courageously helped to start."

His Platoon Commander, Capt Mike Dobbin, said:

"Having celebrated his 20th birthday days before, Guardsman Shadrake was among the youngest in the Platoon. Full of energy, enthusiasm and a sense of humour, he was a key ingredient in this tight knit unit. Having spent his operational tour conducting many dangerous missions, he had risen to every challenge with his usual bright spirit. Losing both a soldier with so much potential and as a man with such a personality has left a gaping hole in the platoon. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this most difficult time."

His Platoon Sergeant, Sgt Vandell McLean, said:

"The Platoon has lost an outstanding soldier with the loss of Guardsman Shadrake. On the door-step of becoming a Junior Non Commissioned Officer, I could see him having an extremely successful career. I will always remember him as the bloke that would catch me off guard with his one-liners. My deepest sympathy goes out to his family and particularly his older brother, a fellow Sergeants' Mess member."

Guardsman Thomas Yearly said:

"I miss you dearly Jamie. I have so many great memories of you. A great mate, a great soldier and a great wingman; I will never forget you Jamie."

Guardsman Mark Knott said:

"Jamie and I joined the Battalion together and were put in the same room. What a mistake that was, as we spent many nights out together and they were some of the best ever. He was the greatest mate and I will miss him loads."

Guardsman Anthony Talbot said:

"Jamie was such fun to be around, always smiling and having a laugh. He was extremely confident and this shone through in everything he did. He was an excellent soldier and an even better person. Everyone who knew him will sorely miss him."