

## 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

It is with deepest regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of Kingsman Sean Dawson of 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (2 LANCS) in southern Afghanistan on Sunday, 14 February 2010.

Kingsman (Kgn) Dawson was killed as a result of small arms fire during a contact with enemy insurgents in the Musa Qal'ah district of Helmand province.

Kingsman Sean Dawson was born in Ashton-Under-Lyne, Manchester on 28th December 1990. He attended the Army Training Regiment Bassingbourne, before completing his basic training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick in August 2008. He joined the 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment 'Lions of England' in September 2008 and served in Catterick and Cyprus. The Battalion is based in Episkopi in Cyprus and is undertaking the Theatre Reserve Battalion role. It provides acclimatised soldiers for reinforcement of UK operations and has been deployed in Afghanistan continually since August 2009.

Kingsman Sean Dawson deployed with Chindit Company, in support of the Household Cavalry Regiment Battle Group in the Battle Group North West area of operations. He was based at Patrol Base Minden approximately 7km to the south of Musa Qal'ah. He was employed as a Sharpshooter within a Sniper pair and was responsible for identifying and engaging insurgents that posed a threat to both Afghan and British soldiers as well as Afghan locals. This work was often done at long ranges and demanded judgement, patience and excellent marksmanship, all qualities he held in spades.

On Sunday 14th February 2010 Kingsman Dawson was part of a Battle Group North West ambush set up approximately 300 metres north-west of Patrol Base Minden. The ambush engaged suspected insurgents with small arms fire. During the resulting contact Kingsman Dawson suffered a gunshot wound and was killed.

Kingsman Sean Dawson leaves behind his father Sean, his mother Karen, his brothers Jack and James and sisters Anna, Danielle and Summer, and his girlfriend Sadie.

Lieutenant Colonel Robbie Boyd, Commanding Officer 2 LANCS, said:

"I have lost one of my most promising young fighters, and Kingsman Sean Dawson was in every way a fighter, an English fighter extraordinaire; a true Lion of England.

"I watched Kingsman Dawson fight with genuine admiration back in November at my Inter-Company Novice Boxing competition in Cyprus. He was a Light Welter Weight and winded, but his courage, fitness and determination made him fight his opponent back time and time and time again.

"I have never been so impressed with a young fighter's courage in the Boxing ring. His skill, determination and fighting spirit summed up everything The Duke of Lancaster values in her English Infantry soldiers. I awarded him the trophy of a silver lion, henceforth to be known as 'The Dawson Trophy', as the most courageous fighter on the night. Against tradition I gave it to the winner. Kingsman Sean Dawson was a fighter and was that winner.

"In Afghanistan he fought with the same tenacity. He fought for the people of Afghanistan, he fought for his friends in Chindit Company and he fought for England. My heart and all of my prayers go out to his parents, his girlfriend Sadie, as well as to his brothers and sisters at home and in the family regiment he loved.

"One of my fittest and finest fighters. He was one of England's Lions."

Major Alan Sweeney, Company Commander, 2 LANCS, said:

"Kingsman Sean Dawson was a thoroughly professional soldier who was dedicated to his profession, his colleagues and his family. He had served with Chindit Coy from September 2008, first as rifleman and then as a sharpshooter.

"Soldiering was his life and he threw himself into all aspects of the military, keen to follow in the footsteps of his father, Sean, whom he described as his best friend.

"His primary aim was to become a sniper and he was well on his way to achieving his ambition when in January 2010 he successfully passed a Sharpshooter's Cadre, gaining awards for Best Shot and Best Student. His quiet manner, ready smile and gentle sense of humour disguised a courageous and unflappable young man.

"Whether boxing in the Battalion's Inter-Coy Boxing competition, during which he was awarded the Most Courageous Boxer title, or under effective enemy fire he displayed the same coolness and efficiency.

"His devotion to the Army and his mates was only matched by his love of his family. He adored his girlfriend Sadie and her daughter Millie. His loss leaves a gap in the Company that cannot be filled. The thoughts of all Chindit Company personnel are with his family, loved ones and friends."

Captain Charlie Whitting, Officer Commanding Chindit Fire Support Group, said:

"Kingsman Dawson was a truly courageous young soldier. The epitome of everything I would ask for in a sniper – his aim was true, his position rock steady and his desire to lead from the front unquestionable. A dedicated sniper, who was thoroughly devoted to his craft, he constantly looked to improve his knowledge, technique and ability. On operations he had already proven himself under fire. He was a loving partner to Sadie and her daughter Millie. He will be sadly missed by all who served with him."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Anthony Zyda, Company Sergeant Major, said:

"Kingsman Dawson was a very professional and competent soldier. He loved his job and this showed itself in his excellent attitude and dedication. His good humour was a morale boost for

all within the Company. He will be sorely missed."

Kingsman Adam Clarke said:

"He will be greatly missed by me and all the Platoon. I met him when I first turned up to the Battalion and we were great friends from the start. He was one of those people who never had a bad thing said about them. He was a very sociable lad and popular amongst everyone. If it wasn't for Dawson I would never have met my Fiancée. He was like a younger brother to me. I will never forget him for as long as I live."