

Lieutenant Andrew Robert Chesterman of the 3rd Battalion The Rifles died as a result of wounds sustained by enemy action in the Nad-e Ali district of Helmand Province on 9 August 2012. He was commanding a vehicle patrol when the lead vehicle struck an improvised explosive device. As he moved forward to take control of the situation the patrol was engaged by insurgent small arms fire and Lieutenant Chesterman was shot.

Despite the best efforts of his fellow Riflemen at the scene, the medical emergency response team and the staff at the Bastion hospital, Lieutenant Chesterman could not be saved.

Lieutenant Andrew Robert Chesterman

Lieutenant Chesterman deployed to Helmand Province, Afghanistan on 7 April 2012. As a Platoon Commander in C Company, 3rd Battalion The Rifles, he initially worked in the Nad-e Ali district as part of 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment Battle Group. In June 2012, as part of an increased focus on mentoring the Afghan National Police, Lieutenant Chesterman was given a new task of forming a Police Advisory Team, working for 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Battle Group.

Born on 14 January 1986 in Guildford, he studied Mechanical Engineering at the University of Southampton before attending the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth and then the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He commissioned into The Rifles in December 2010 and after completing the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course, joined the 3rd Battalion.

Lieutenant Chesterman was quite simply an exceptional Rifles officer. He was popular, utterly professional, dependable and naturally gifted. Through his inspiring leadership he had earned the respect of his fellow Riflemen on operations under the toughest of circumstances. He had a very bright future ahead of him. His authoritative leadership and determined approach would have carried him far. The swiftest and boldest of Riflemen, he will never be forgotten.

He leaves behind his father Paul and sisters Anna and Olivia.

Lieutenant Chesterman's father, Paul Chesterman, paid the following tribute:

"We have lost a fine young man. It was readily apparent that Andrew gave himself fully and wholeheartedly to his career in 3 Rifles.

"At a Battalion Dinner shortly before Op Herrick 16, I was proud to see his easy, close and well accepted rapport with his fellow young officers.

"Andrew was accomplished in many areas. He developed a skill to play both the trombone and piano, graduated with a Masters Degree in Engineering, qualified as a Mountain Leader,

enjoyed working as team yacht racing and was proficient on skis. His family are immensely proud of him and will carry him very dearly in their hearts."

Lieutenant Colonel Charlie Maconochie, Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Andrew Chesterman will be remembered by all Officers and Riflemen of 3rd Battalion, The Rifles as an outstanding leader of men who epitomised what it means to be a Rifleman. Professional excellence, self-discipline, integrity and loyalty are characteristics that immediately spring to mind when I think about Andrew. He was always extremely personable, charming, and very charismatic with an ever present sharp sense of humour and wit. We are all the richer for having had the privilege and honour to have served alongside such a talented and popular young Officer.

"His Riflemen clearly adored and utterly respected Andrew not least as he always led from the front, was fiercely fit and set the highest possible personal example. And he did all this in the most challenging of combat environments here in Helmand Province. It was clear he put his Riflemen first and he directed all his energy into developing and making them even more effective. I also admired the way he would passionately fight their corner, no matter what the issue. Tactically astute and meticulous in his planning of operations, he was developing extremely quickly. It was easy to think he had actually been in the Army for much longer, such was the maturity and intelligence present in his approach to soldiering.

"Andrew Chesterman will be remembered as a hugely charismatic, completely dedicated and thoroughly professional Officer who was destined for a great career in the Army. Of that I have no doubt. He will be greatly missed by his brother officers and Riflemen alike and his sacrifice never forgotten. Our huge loss is nothing compared to that of his family and our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this very difficult time."

Lieutenant Colonel Dino Bossi, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Andrew Chesterman was a young man of significant talent who died leading from where he always led - the thick of the fight. Always considering others before himself he was the epitome of a modern junior officer. Professional in all that he did and constantly thinking about how to do things better, he commanded his Riflemen with assurance and panache.

"He came to the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group late in the tour and trained his men hard and intelligently to ensure that they became an efficient and highly effective Police Advisory Team in short order. He coped naturally with the demands of the role, revelling in its complexity which, in turn, allowed him to demonstrate his own multi-faceted character. Andrew was a young man of many parts, sporting, artistic and intellectual; he was also an instantly likeable character whose obvious and rather old-fashioned decency shone through immediately to all who encountered him. He brought all these aspects of himself to bear in Afghanistan in the service of the mission and his men and in all that he did he lived the Rifles' motto, "Swift and Bold!"

" Andrew's loss is a heavy blow to all of us in Afghanistan, but however hard we feel its impact

our thoughts and prayers must now concentrate on his family to whom we extend our heartfelt sympathies at this most dreadful of times."

Major Bob Hobbs, Officer Commanding C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Andrew Chesterman was a natural infantry officer and leader of men. I feel that he was part of our lives in C Company for much longer than the 15 months he served alongside us; such was his positive impact on us all. He was an officer of considerable talent, drive, energy and commitment who strove to do the best for his Riflemen no matter the situation. He was a thoughtful and intelligent man who dedicated time and academic rigour to understanding the challenges that we faced and he always saw a solution to them. He always led from the front – he was ruthlessly fit and I have many memories of seeing him quickly disappear over the brow of a hill at the front of the pack while I still laboured up the climb. He was a pleasure to be around and a thoroughly decent man.

"During this summer, Andrew was selected to fulfil one of the most demanding of tasks in serving as a Police Advisory Team commander and he set about this task with the vigour and tenacity I had come to expect but never tired of being impressed by. He saw through the obstacles that would deter a lesser man and dedicated himself and his team to the betterment of the Afghan Police; they have lost a brother in arms as well. He was right to pride himself on the level of professionalism he asked of his Riflemen, underwritten by the highest personal standards that he set and exceeded himself. This legacy will endure with them, and us all, beyond his service and sacrifice. I will miss Andrew hugely and we will re-commit ourselves for the remainder of this operation and beyond to emulate the example set by him.

"My deepest sympathies, thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones whose heartache and loss greatly eclipses ours. We were blessed and privileged to have been able to share his life with them."

Acting Major Naim Moukarzel, Officer Commanding Nad-e Ali District Advisory Team, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, said:

"Lieutenant Andrew Chesterman moved across to the role of police advising in June 2012, having initially deployed as a ground holding platoon commander with C Company, 3 RIFLES. His transition to his new role could not have gone better, thanks largely to his energy and intellect. From the first day he embraced the role and showed himself to be an imaginative and confident platoon commander. He was in charge of a tight team of men who were clearly highly motivated and eager to deliver for their platoon commander, it is always a genuine pleasure to command such talent and enthusiasm.

"It is utterly devastating to suffer the loss of such an excellent young man. In the short time he had been with us it was clear that Andrew had so much to offer to those around him, not just in the operational environment, but in the widest possible sense. Working with the Afghan National Police is always a challenge, particularly in the rapidly transitioning area of Nad-e Ali where Andrew was working. It takes patience, imagination and care, and Andrew showed, in a short space of time, that he had all these skills in abundance. At the same time he was a firm and

decisive commander who was keenly aware of his responsibilities and dedicated to delivering the very highest of standards in all he did.

"The whole of the Nad-e Ali Police Advisory Team, and all of Support Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, send our deepest sympathies and condolences to our comrades in arms in 3 RIFLES, but most importantly to Andrew's family and friends at this time. We will remember him."

Captain Rob Fellows, Company Second-in-Command, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Andy Chesterman was a highly capable and determined officer and a good friend. Andy was extremely fit, putting the rest of the Officers' Mess to shame with his dominant performance on all Company sporting events. The only way I could find to beat him at Cross Country was to get him to organise the event and man the stands. It was still a close run thing!

"Not only was Andy supremely fit, he also had a great intellect which he applied to the demanding problems of Counter Insurgency and Police Mentoring. I will miss our discussions on everything from UK politics to the future of Afghanistan.

"Andy was utterly committed to his men and not afraid to stand up for them to anyone he felt he needed to, regardless of rank. His selflessness was typified by the way he died moving forward to support his men following an IED Strike.

"Andy achieved a great deal during his short time in Helmand. Initially responsible for the security of local nationals in Shaheed Kalay, which he helped make more secure, he was the obvious choice to lead the new Police Advisory Team we generated in June. We knew this task would be challenging and as the

Brigade's Main Effort it would need our best. This could only be Andy.

"With his combination of intellect, fitness and determination he had great potential for the future and it is a tragedy to have a bright star snatched from us in this way. I will never forget Andy and the contribution he made to the whole company. I know that the pain we feel at the loss of a fellow Rifleman and brother officer will be as nothing to the hole it will leave in his family. My thoughts and those of the whole company are with them."

Lieutenant James Cowen, Intelligence Officer C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"There is no worse feeling than having to write in this way about a friend but there is no greater privilege than to have the opportunity to explain to those that did not know him what a great man Andy was. I have known and worked with Andy for nine months and throughout that period he never failed to set the absolute standard for the other young officers working in C Company. He was diligent and caring whilst also ferociously protective when it came to the men under his command, something I know they are extremely grateful for. Amongst his many good traits this is the one I admire the most, as there is nothing more honourable than absolute loyalty to the

men you fight alongside.

"Young officers are always taught that the first battle they will fight is that for the respect of their men. No battle has ever been so decisively won than in Andy's case. I think the words his soldiers have written illustrate this in a way I never could.

"The ferocity with which he defended his men was only equalled by that with which he pursued the enemy. He felt a real responsibility to the people of Afghanistan and was proud to be working towards a better future for them. His work with the Afghan National Police was something he took great pride in. He forged extremely strong bonds with the Afghan National Police and was regarded by them, in a culture where bravery, honesty and loyalty are held in the highest regard, as a great leader. The sadness at this loss is therefore felt not just amongst ISAF but by all those who worked with him including his interpreter and the patrol men of the Nad-e Ali police.

"Personally I will miss a great friend, the man that you share that late night brew with before climbing under your mosquito net; the man who set the bar so high and through example demanded it be met by all of his peers. He has made me a better man in the few short months I have known him and I will always be grateful to him for the lessons he taught me, the laughs we shared and for the friend I will always remember."

Lieutenant Tom Brown, Officer Commanding 6 Platoon, B Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"There are no words to fully encapsulate the life and loss of Lieutenant Andrew Chesterman. My brother officer, and good friend, "Chesty" and I have shared our careers together from selection, through training to our home in the 3rd Battalion. He has remained consistently professional in all areas. His fitness, diligence, and general ethos all epitomize that of The Rifles, and his death marks not only a great loss to the Regiment, but to the British Army. He would have excelled.

"Andy's passion for his career, his Riflemen and ruthless pursuit of the highest standards must be remembered. He is an example future Rifles Officers must strive to emulate, and to serve with him was an honour. My thoughts are with his men as the loss of such a leader will be colossal.

"Andy's professionalism can only be matched by his relentless adoration for his family and friends. A beloved son, brother and comrade, Andy loved his family and friends so very much. All who knew him should take solace in how remarkable a young man he really was, and how much he loved you all.

"I will remember you for the great man you are and for what I am certain you would have become."

WO2 (CSM) Gavin Paton, Company Serjeant Major, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Andy Chesterman was not your typical Rifles Platoon Commander. Yes he was bright, intelligent and came with a sharp wit, but this is all to be expected of an Officer in our beloved Regiment. He had more than that.

"From day one in the Company when he first came to my office, I could feel him analysing every aspect of me and my surroundings, asking difficult questions from the off and offering his opinion freely. This was different from a new Platoon Commander in the Company but refreshing none the less and we clicked instantly. He would purposely rub me up the wrong way for reaction or throw in a sarcastic comment in order to gain a bite and a minor victory; this challenge I relished with every conversation.

"I would torment him regularly for his dress, manner and hobbies, rest assured the treatment was mutual and I have some very fond memories of the banter which was had with him both in Edinburgh and here in the sand. Just two days ago we were building a training lane together in Patrol Base Folad and the sharp wit and sarcastic comments were flowing freely.

"To his men, Andy Chesterman was a true leader. Supremely fit, selfless and courageous. He would always put his men first, and I mean always; there was never a time where he was found wanting. His love for the job was clear and this radiated to all that worked with him, his professional attitude and need to spray all of his kit with a washing bag was infectious.

"His skills as a Rifleman were second to none. He has led a platoon here in Afghanistan and re-rolled to train the local Police force seamlessly. Nothing stood in his way; he would not allow it to.

"The news that has reached us today here in C Company has really shocked us all. Lieutenant Andy Chesterman was idolised by his platoon and hugely respected throughout the Company, he has left a huge hole that will never be filled and his name will live on.

"It has been a real pleasure to work with a man like Lieutenant Andy Chesterman and it is a tragedy that his life has been cut short. Our thoughts now lie firmly with the family that he has left behind.

"He was an outstanding Rifleman with an infectious persona who fell doing what he did best, leading from the front in combat."

Serjeant Andy Hill, Platoon Serjeant, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Andy Chesterman, I still remember meeting him for the first time, a headstrong determined Platoon Commander with lots of drive and extremely passionate about his role. A very good operator in the field, he believed in the ability of his Riflemen and his Junior NCOs; a respect that went both ways.

"Lieutenant Chesterman was a member of the 8 Platoon family and was one for the Riflemen. He would fight their corner at every opportunity for the maintenance of morale, no matter how trivial it may have seemed to anyone else.

"It has been an honour and a privilege to have served with Lieutenant Chesterman during the 17 months we worked together. Through the good and bad times we always managed to get through any obstacle. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

"My thoughts go out to you and your family."

Corporal Carl McAvoy, Section Commander, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"Lieutenant Chesterman was a vibrant, inspiring and charismatic man, just what you would expect a Rifles Officer to be. He had a balance of compassion and understanding with those around him and all those that he came in contact with. No task was ever too much for him, even after taking his turn as the Duty Watchkeeper and being tired, he always had time for his blokes. He also hated the idea of any officer having bad admin, taking pride in his neat, tidy and organised professionalism.

"He was an inspirational leader and one that the Platoon would follow without question, safe in the knowledge it was the right thing to do. He will be missed so much, but never forgotten. His personality is a credit to his family and our thoughts are with them at this time."

Corporal Kevin McDelling, Section Commander, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"The "BOSS" Lieutenant Chesterman.

"Still fresh in my memory the day you sat in my living room and your feet dangling off the sofa looking all smart in your regimental tie and blazer, my wife asking me who this posh guy is! And then you tried explaining to my five year old daughter that you are her dad's Platoon Commander and I had to cut you off and say "he's Daddy's boss". A feisty and professional rifleman, robust and diligent, always concerned about the welfare of his men and their loved ones. A member of my family, 8 Platoon and the bigger Rifles family you have left a massive gap in our lives but by no means will you be forgotten.

"I am so proud to have fought beside you and thankful to you for entrusting me to lead one of your sections in your fine platoon. I have so much to say about you as a person and a platoon commander but I'll save that for the many times I'll mention your name in the future."

Lance Corporal Lee Wengradt, Section Commander, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"We will remember you, Mr Andrew Chesterman. Dear Boss, I still can't believe you're gone. You are a true inspiration to us all and will be dearly missed by all of us. A true leader you have led and we have followed you every step; a true commander and a fine leader. You will never be forgotten Boss. Rest in Peace."

Lance Corporal Chris Morton, Section Second-in-Command, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd

Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"I only arrived with C Company in January. From the moment I arrived, Mr Chesterman made me feel part of his 8 Platoon. Fit, supremely professional and always in the pursuit of perfection from his blokes, we in 8 Platoon were very much his men, he was always asking us how we were doing, enquiring about our families back home and generally having our best interests at heart. He will be sorely missed by everyone in 8 Platoon.

"My deepest sympathy goes to his family and friends."

Rifleman Morris, Simpson, and Ratcliffe. Rifleman, 8 Platoon, C Company, 3rd Battalion, The Rifles, said:

"He will be missed by all of 8 Platoon and his Police Advisory Team. An avid rugby fan, he encompassed everything it was to be part of The Rifles; a Rifleman through and through he always adopted the Regimental motto "Swift and Bold". He led from the front and by example, always keen to give his uttermost to the cause; he would always stand up for what was right and what he believed in. Keen to make sure all his men knew exactly what they were doing he trained us hard in pre-deployment training so that we could fight easy on tour; his quest to better us all never ended. A man with a good sense of humour, he was never shy of cracking a joke with the lads whilst maintaining his incredible professionalism and dedication to his job. We all know him from when he first came to the Battalion and watched him change on tour from our "Boss" to our friend, someone who if you needed to you could always chat to about anything. We have all lost a competent commander, but more than that, a friend. Stand easy Boss, we will remember you."

Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, said:

"I was immensely saddened to learn of the death of Lieutenant Andrew Chesterman. We have lost an extremely talented and well thought of young man and my thoughts are with his family at this very difficult time. Lt Chesterman made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting Britain's national security and the nation will always remember him."