

## MARINE NIGEL DEAN MEAD LIMA COMPANY 42 COMMANDO ROYAL MARINES COMBINED FORCE NDA(N)

Marine Mead was born on 9th October 1991. He lived with his mother, Amanda, and sister in Carmarthen. He studied at Queen Elizabeth High School in Carmarthen until he joined the Royal Marines.

He joined the Royal Marines on 27th October 2008, aged 17. It was Marine Mead's first employment after leaving school, and he enjoyed the demanding rigour of the Royal Marines. He passed fit for duty as a Royal Marines Commando on 3rd July 2009, as an original member of 977 Troop. He was the youngest Marine to pass out from his Troop.

On completion of training he joined 8 Troop, Lima Company, 42 Commando based in Plymouth. He was involved in a number of high tempo and demanding tactical training exercises, including a 2 month amphibious deployment to the United States. He also enjoyed wider training activities such as Mountain Training. He completed the full pre-deployment training package for Operations in Afghanistan and in addition the Long Range Rifle course.

During the morning of Sunday 15 May 2011 Lima Company were conducting a cordon and search operation, partnered with the Afghan National Security Forces, of compounds suspected of being associated with Improvised Explosive Device facilitation in the Loy Mandeh Wadi in the Nad-e Ali District of Helmand Province. The location of these compounds is outside of the influence of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan which allows insurgent commanders to operate from them with a degree of impunity. Lima Company landed in a helicopter and began to move towards the compounds of interest. Shortly afterwards, Marine Mead was fatally injured in an Improvised Explosive Device blast.

Dean's Mother Amanda said:

"I could never write enough words that would truly say how much I loved and thought of you, you're not a one in a million son you are one in a hundred million.

"You had the most wonderful and warming personality, one that I have never seen in anyone else, nor will ever see again. You gave me strength when I most need it and you were the rock that supported me through my life."

"Although you turned out to be a proud and heroic Royal Marine you will always be my little blue-eyed boy."

"The consequences of never hearing you say the words: "I love you mam"

or never again having one of your loving and comforting 'cwches' and never hearing your cheeky laugh will leave me with a broken heart for the rest of my life."

"You will remain in my thoughts for every second of every day my most wonderful son, rest in piece my darling little soldier xxxxxx Your loving and forever Mami."

Dean's Father Philip said:

"Our Dean, our boy, our little Big Man, our hero always wanted to be a Royal Marine and he turned out to be one of the best.

"I am speechless at our tragic loss, but until we meet again you will forever be in our hearts. All our love Dadi and Del xxxxx."

Dean's Teenage Sister Jessica said:

"You were the most amazing brother ever, the best friend you could ever wish for and a personality you couldn't even imagine existed.

"You found the silver lining in everything you did, you had such a carefree spirit. "

"You always told me to live my life to the full every day no matter what risk it may hold because tomorrow could be my last."

"You told me you never wanted to grow old because you wanted a young life forever."

"You are my big brother, my hero and you will have that young life forever captured in the wonderful photographs you have left behind for me."

Dean's Grandparents said:

"Dean you were a wonderful Grandson who made us very proud, we will always remember you and cherish your wonderful sense of humour and gentle nature. Nana Jones and Gramps xxxxx."

"Dean Bach, Our darling Grandson, we can now only send you all of our love and promise we will miss you always, a promise we will always keep." Nana and Grumpy xxxxx."

Other Family Members said:

"I wish you could be here so I could thank you for letting us become part of your family. You were like a son to me and a brother to Joe. We shall remember you forever." Captain Julio and Joe 'Pimps'

"Dean you were an inspiration to others. You were always so full of energy, always on the go with a cheeky but polite attitude and always a delight to be around. We all know that you would have had a fantastic career ahead of you but sadly your second family the Royal Marines have had that torn away from them. We are so proud of what you have achieved in such a short but full lifetime, you are a huge loss to all of us." Nige, Zoe, and Jasmine.

Dean's Best Friend, Tom Boodeny, said:

"You were my best friend for 13 fantastic years always there when I needed help or just someone to talk to. You were the one person in the whole world that I could trust I could tell you anything and you would keep it a secret like a best friend should.

"You were not just a good mate of mine you were befriended by everyone that you met, you were an entertainer, a peacemaker and fantastic company to be around at all times."

"I know it's hard to lose a member of your family, but Dean, losing a friend like you is just as painful for me. It was a great privilege for me to know that I was your pal. Missing you so much."

Lieutenant Colonel Ewen Murchison MBE RM, Commanding Officer 42 Commando Royal Marines, Coalition Force Nad-e Ali (North) said:

"Mne Nigel Dean Mead was the epitome of a Royal Marines Commando. A young man with considerable inner strength, he was selfless, warm hearted, utterly professional and took enormous pride in his job. Despite this being his first tour of Afghanistan, he was a marksman of note and an inspiration to those who worked closely with him. At the moment his life was cut tragically short, he was operating deep in insurgent controlled territory, where the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices was high, demonstrating characteristic bravery and unwavering loyalty to his fellow Marines.

"Deano, as he is known to his friends, has made the ultimate sacrifice. The loss of such a fine young man is felt deeply across the whole of the Commando and shows the high regard in which he was held; indeed he was a truly valued, charismatic and popular member of Lima Company and the wider 42 Commando family. In giving his life he saved others and joins an illustrious list of legends; he will be sorely missed, but his memory

will live on. He died on the front line, doing the job he loved, alongside his friends who will love him forever. Our thoughts and prayers are with his mother, Amanda, his father Phil and his sister Jessica."

Major Aleck Burrell RM, Officer Commanding, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"A quiet professional who was brave to the very end. Mne Mead died amongst friends doing what he loved to do. A bitter loss to the Company."

Lieutenant Simon Maxwell RM, Officer Commanding Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Nigel 'Deano' Mead was a first class Marine who embodied the very meaning of a professional 'Bootneck'. He was moved to Fire Support Group on account of his professional soldiering skills and his maturity which transcended his relative youth. He was without doubt one of the finest Marines in the Company and was a bright hope for the future. Always quick with a joke and a smile, he was a constant source of morale in the Troop. Deano was the sort of Marine everyone felt at ease with, and he managed to be both liked and respected in equal measure. His Oppos [opposite numbers] in the Troop's reaction to his death highlighted the high regard in which he was held in. He tragically died doing a job he loved doing. Keen, always widely respected, Bootneck to the core and professional to the very last. He will be sorely missed and always remembered by Lima Company."

Warrant Officer Class 2 (Sergeant Major) Scott Brant RM, Sergeant Major, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine Deano Mead wasn't a tall man but managed to walk tall in whatever duty he carried out. Quiet by nature, but loud in stature, he impressed all around him with his endless enthusiasm and zest for the Corps of the Royal Marines. A great shot with a rifle and undoubtedly a future sniper within the Corps. Never did Mne Mead complain about any task, whether dirty, clean, good or bad, which added to his unmistakable manner of the happy go lucky man. A First class Marine and a true friend to all who served with him. He will be sorely missed by all, but never forgotten."

Sergeant Rick Sheer, Fire Support Group Troop Sergeant, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Marine Deano Mead was a very special member of my Troop. His

relentless professionalism and commitment to the Royal Marines was a shining example to all who serve in the Corps. His loss is a bitter blow to the Troop, Company and Unit. Despite extreme danger he faced that day, he displayed utter courage, bravery and selflessness. Deano showed all the command qualities day after day. Our sincere condolences and thoughts are with his family and friends at this difficult time. We will continue with our deployment with him at the forefront of our memory. Rest in Peace Deano."

Sergeant Chris Hunter, 8 Troop Sergeant, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal marines said:

"Mne Mead affectionately known as Deano, was an exceptional Royal Marine and an inspiration to all who knew him. I will remember him as an unselfish, trustworthy Royal Marine who every man counted as a friend. His courage was without question. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this time."

Corporal Al Morrell, Fire Support Group Section Commander, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"It was a pleasure to have known Deano; he was an awesome guy with a great sense of humour and a shocking dress sense. As his Section Commander I couldn't have asked for a better Marine. He threw himself at everything he did, a crack shot and probably the best Marine at Close Quarter Battle within 42 Commando, having been a demonstration man for the last two years, displaying slick drills to the rest of the Unit. Physically fit, always the first man to the top of the Dewerstone Rock, closely followed by his side kick Ranners. The duo had been together since training and were doing all they could to pull one another through at the end. Deano displayed the finest qualities of a Royal Marine: the smallest man in the Section with the largest bergan and an even bigger grin on his face. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. We will miss him dearly."

Lance Corporal Martin Walsh, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Mne Nigel Dean Mead (Deano) joined the Fire Support Group Lima Company and went onto complete the Long Range Rifle Course conducted at 42 Commando. Deano was a keen Marine and very professional even though he was only 19 years old. The youngest in a Troop of senior Marines, he was made at home instantly with his quick witted humour and professional attitude towards a job that he loved. He was always up for a run ashore and was normally the instigator, walking around the accommodation looking for lads to go ashore with. He will be sorely missed by all of

us. A true friend and outstanding Marine."

Lance Corporal Mike Collins, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Although one of the younger members of the Troop, Deano was one of the more capable Marines who was also very skilled in pretty much every aspect of his job. Not only was he an extremely dependable Marine, he also managed to do the most mundane of jobs with the utmost level of professionalism. As part of such a tight knit Troop he will be sorely missed. Sleep well Deano."

Lance Corporal Harry Price, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Mne Mead or Deano as we knew him was an exceptional Oppo, very quiet and hugely respected. A hoofing shot with a rifle, and quite pesty at times with his kit. He was also a whiz at Call of Duty. Deano was the kind of lad you could ask to do something, and he would get on and do it. I have no doubt that Deano would have gone on and done great things. I am truly touched to have known him, and I know I will miss him along with the rest of the lads in the Fire Support Group. Deano, you will be truly missed but never forgotten."

Lance Corporal Yan Pavlovic, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Putting pen on paper could never fully explain Deano as the professional, perfectionist, keen, hard working, skilful and all round good-egg Bootneck that he was. I first met Deano after returning from Iraq to find 2 new members in my 4 man room. Deano and Scott (Ranners) were joined at the hip and together brought a whirl wind of devastation and destruction. It was incredible to see Deano, the once fresh faced quiet and introverted member of our room, rapidly turn into a loud, mischievous, constantly busy, awesome Bootneck. Never shy of a run ashore so long as he had ID and an odd pair of trainers. Deano quickly made a name for himself within the Company. I can't imagine how hard this must be for his family. Working along side Deano has been a huge privilege which will never be forgotten. He could never be replaced, he will never be outshone."

Marine Chris Stanton, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"My very best mate in the Corps, he was a young man with an enormous personality. He was dedicated and hard working and took a huge amount

of pride in everything he did. I have so many memories of Deano which I will cherish forever, from the times in America or snow boarding in France. I was privileged enough to have him attend my 21st birthday where he became the life and soul and everyone grew to love him. He was a lad you could not fail to get along with. Always cracking funnies and making sure everyone else was smiling. There was no challenge too hard, and he aspired to be the best by looking to join Recce Troop as a sniper. He was a man who would not back down if he believed someone was wrong, and he would always be the first to volunteer, as that was who he was; he was always looking out for others. An extremely generous giver, he will be remembered by us for his taste in music, obscene fashion ideas and the fact he was unbeatable in Call of Duty. I will never forget hearing Deano whistling the Wurzels when he thought nobody was listening. Above all I remember him for being my best mate. The lad who could make me laugh no matter what mood I was in. Nothing was too much hassle, he loved his friends and he loved his job. Dean 'Deano' Mead, you will never be forgotten."

Marine Stewart Shuttleworth, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Me and Deano first met back in 2009 when we joined Lima Company. We became good Oppos straight away and ended up in the same Troop and Section. He was a genuinely nice bloke and was liked by everyone. Words cannot describe how much he will be missed, he will always be in my thoughts. My thoughts and prayers go out to Deano's family, who can definitely take pride in what he did, becoming a Royal Marine Commando. He will always be part of the Royal Marines family and will never be forgotten."

Marine Phillip Spencer, 7 Troop, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Deano was one of my best mates, we all knew him for his love of Dub-step and his crazy shoes. I remember once he ordered two pairs of the same trainers just so he could have a different colour on each foot, but that was him all over. Full of life and always up for a laugh. He was a great run ashore and a hoofing Bootneck. I don't know a single person who has ever had a bad thing to say about him. He was a little man with a giant heart and is going to be missed by every one in Lima Company. For me I don't think it will fully sink in until that first run ashore when we're back in the UK and I look around for Deano and he's not there. But, if he was I'd imagine he'd probably be in a Deadmouse T-shirt doing back flips in the middle of the dance floor. Deano was our Oppo and I loved him like a brother. I will never forget you mate."

Marine Andrew Tattershaw, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"I considered Deano as one of my best Oppos, a young man who was happy and proud. Deano would do anything for anyone, a nice lad that everyone loved and thought was the most genuine lad you could meet. I consider myself privileged to have had him as a close friend. We will never forget you Deano. We will miss you always."

Marine Chris Boot, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Ever since getting to know Deano properly on our Long Range Rifle Course last year I've always had an Oppo who I could rely on, especially when a run ashore was involved. He was a lad who would go out of his way to help others both in and out of work, unless he was playing Call of Duty; then you were in for a thrashing! I can't think of anyone who would have a bad thing to say about him. I look forward to the day where I get to meet you again. Rest in Peace brother."

Marine Kit Haddon, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Deano was a character that everyone got on with, a keen young lad who was hoofing at his job and I am proud to say I have worked with. He displayed all the qualities you would expect in a Bootneck from witty banter, to being one of the lads ashore, and on the same note a professional Marine. Fire Support Group has suffered a big loss today and it has been felt throughout the Company. You will be greatly missed Deano, Rest in Peace Royal."

Marine Jim Wootton, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Deano, too young to die, would have grown into a legend, always kit fiddling and aspiring for perfection. He would have been a sniper, and I could see him living out the dream job he always wanted for years. I called him 'Pop' in the last few days after I took the mick out of him for poorly applied sun lotion. I only knew Deano for five months, but I have lost a brother today, I will carry his smiling face with me every day."

Marine James Latham, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Mne Nigel 'Deano' Mead. Deano was a friend, close colleague, always

had a smiling face, never said a bad word about anyone and nobody had a bad word to say about him. Deano had an aspiration of being a sniper, and loved his .338 Rifle. Always someone to talk to just across the hallway, he was loved as a brother amongst the Troop and will be greatly missed."

Marine Jo Cottle, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Mne Nigel Deano Mead, Lima Company Fire Support Group. I knew Deano as a keen-as-mustard Bootneck with great potential. Always messing with his kit for hours at a time, and always going on about shooting which he loved, hence his love for sniping. As a Long Range Rifleman he was very professional and was due to be on the next sniper course, which he thoroughly deserved. He was only 19 and a young 19 at that, but at work he was one of the lads and hoofing at what he did. Always up for a run ashore in his daft bright T-shirts and crazy shoes, cracking back flips in the middle of the dance floor. LEGEND! We will all miss him dearly as a mate and as a hoofing Bootneck. RIP Royal."

Marine Frank Ridgway, Fire Support Group, Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines said:

"Mne Deano Mead was only 19 years old and still young and eager to progress his career. He loved his shooting and couldn't wait to start his snipers course. He was proud and so enthusiastic with his fellow Marines and his mates. Always happy to join in with everything that was put in front of him. He will be sorely missed but we should be proud to have known him, and that he was here with us."