**Marcus Luttrell Biography**

Marcus Luttrell is a retired United States Navy SEAL. He received the Navy Cross for his actions in 2005 facing Taliban fighters during Operation Red Wing.

Born and raised in Texas, Luttrell attended Sam Houston State University. He began training for the SEALs at age 14 with former United States Army soldier Billy Shelton, who lived nearby.

On June 28, 2005, Luttrell and SEAL Team 10 were assigned to a mission to kill or capture Ahmad Shah (nom de guerre Mohammad Ismail), a high-ranking Taliban leader responsible for killings in eastern Afghanistan and the Hindu-Kush mountains. The SEAL team was made up of Luttrell, Michael P. Murphy, Danny Dietz and Matthew Axelson. Luttrell and Axelson were the team’s snipers; Dietz was in charge of communications and Murphy the team leader.

A group of goat herders stumbled upon the SEALs, the four SEALs immediately took control of the situation and discussed what to do with the herders. If they let them go they could be connected to Taliban but if they kill them the United States media would be livid because they killed innocent civilians. Then they could be persecuted. After taking a vote and basing their decision on ROE, Michael Murphy made the final decision to let them go.

The herders were subsequently released and disappeared over the mountain ridge. Luttrell believed they immediately betrayed the team’s location to local Taliban forces and within an hour, the SEALs were engaged in an intense gun battle. In the ensuing battle, the rest of the SEAL team were killed. Team leader Michael P. Murphy was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in the battle. Danny Dietz, Matthew Axelson, and Marcus were awarded the Navy Cross. A MH-47 Chinook helicopter was dispatched with a force consisting of SEALs and 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment “Nightstalkers” to rescue the team, but the helicopter was shot down by an RPG. All 16 men on the Chinook were killed.

Luttrell was the only survivor. Badly wounded, he managed to walk and crawl seven miles to evade capture. He was given shelter by an Afghan tribe, who took care of him and made it their duty to make sure that he would be brought back to safety. When they were bringing him to American forces they ran into Ahmad Shah. He wanted the Afghan tribe to hand Luttrell over. Marcus and Shah glared at each other and the tribe kept Luttrell. They eventually alerted the Americans of his presence, and he was finally rescued by American forces six days after the gun battle.