

# The Sharpe Brothers

## 1914 to 1918 and beyond

There were six Sharpe brothers namely: George (1883 to 1940), Hugh Strang (1892 to 1915), John (1894 to 1947), James (1897 to 1915), Robert McAllan (1899 to 1918) and Charles Strang (1903 to 1974) and two daughters called Helen McAllan (1885 to 1967) and Agnes (1889 to 1985). Three of the brothers fell during the Great War and these were Hugh Strang Sharpe and James Sharpe and Robert McCallan Sharpe. Their year of death is marked in red above.

### George Sharpe 1883 to 1940

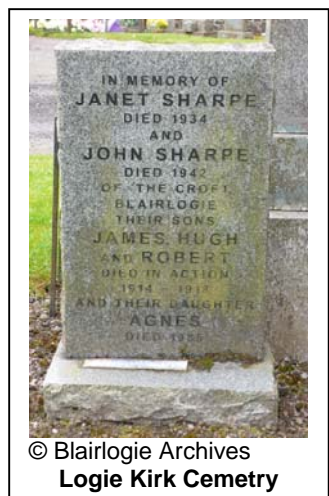
Little is known about George Sharpe during the war and it is unlikely that he served in the Great War. He was probably too old for enlistment being about 31 years of age at the start of the war. References to him in his brothers' letters from the front seem to indicate that he was not in the forces. George was born<sup>1</sup> on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1883 at Brechin where his father was a gamekeeper. George married<sup>2</sup> Janet Whitehead Cramb on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1918, at which time he was a distillery clerk and staying at New Orchard, Blairlogie. His wife Janet was a weaver and staying at 70 Priory Lane, Dunfermline. Janet was born on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1878 in Bonnar Street, Dunfermline.

George passed away<sup>3</sup> at his home in Main Street, Menstrie at 8.45 am on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1940 at the relatively young age of 56 years due to having a coronary thrombosis. George was a widower at this time and had been working as a night watchman in a yeast factory.

### Agnes Sharpe 1889 to 1985

Agnes was born<sup>4</sup> on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1889 and died in 1985, she was buried beside her mother and father in Logie Kirk yard. It is interesting to note that the three brothers who were killed in the First World War were mentioned on the gravestone, but not the surviving brothers or sister. The gravestone is easily found in the church yard as it is practically the first that you come across on entering the cemetery. Agnes was well liked by her brothers and it was thanks to her correspondence with them that we have some extra detail of their army lives. The Archives holds only one photograph of Agnes and she is part of a larger group.

Agnes passed<sup>5</sup> away on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1985 in Bannockburn Hospital.



### Hugh Strang Sharpe (1891 to 1915)



The first to die in battle was Hugh Sharpe who lost his life on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915 whilst serving in the 10th Bn Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. His body was not found and his memorial is on the France 1914 -18 Memorial in the Somme where it holds the names of 236 War dead<sup>6</sup>. Hugh was aged 22 years and 10 months when he joined the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1914<sup>7</sup>. His medical records indicate that he was a gardener five foot seven inches in height with a

chest size of 35 ½ inches with an expansion of 3 inches and that he weighed 144 pounds.

Hugh was promoted to unpaid Lance Corporal on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1914. Clearly he showed promise as a soldier and stood out. Records<sup>7</sup> show that his acting rank was confirmed as a paid post from 21<sup>st</sup> March 1915 and was shortly after sent to France on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1915. Hugh had no charges made against him during his short military career and records show that he was regarded as having a Very Good Character. His time in France was to be short and Hugh's Army form B 103 indicates that he was "*Missing in the field 27-9-1915*", on 25<sup>th</sup> September. His record contains the following comment: "*In accordance with the decision of the Army Council this soldier is to be regarded for official purposes as having died on or since 25-9-15*". Hugh had served 1 year and 33 days and at the time of his death he was serving in D Company 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders.

On 17<sup>th</sup> August 1915, Agnes received a letter<sup>8</sup> from Hugh, it is a most touching letter thanking her for the scones and butter that she sent to him and also commenting that he had received a letter from his brother George and asks his sister Agnes to ask George to send him some paper as he is overdue with a number of letters. He also comments on receiving toffees and how popular they were. As a gardener, it is no surprise that he makes comment of the weather, which had been raining. Hugh asks after his brother Bob and whether he is thinking of enrolling and if he does he should not join the infantry. The letter was four pages in length and was signed off as "*Your loving brother Hugh*"

George sent Agnes another letter on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1915<sup>9</sup>. In this letter he mentions his sadness at a friend's death and mentions that he was back in the trenches and comments that the war should be over by the end of the year. He mentions the good weather in France and enquires about the harvest back home. He asks after the folk at Blair and especially asks if Cathy was pleased with his short note. Hugh signs off as "*Your ever loving Bro Hugh S Sharpe*". It was not long after these letters that George met his fate.

Hugh's medals<sup>10</sup> were sent to the parents around 1921 and he received the following medals: British War Medal, Victory Medal and the 1914 – 15 Star.

On 12<sup>th</sup> September 1917, Mrs Sharpe received a letter informing her about a War Pension<sup>11</sup> that she would receive in respect of her deceased son, Hugh. She received a grand total of eight shillings per week from 9<sup>th</sup> October 1917.

Dependants' Form P.  
MINISTRY OF PENSIONS  
(Widow and Dependents Branch),  
LONDON, S.W. 1.  
12/9/1917  
N. 10/533 Aug 25/15 (19)  
Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to—  
The Secretary,  
Ministry of Pensions,  
10, Whitehall Road,  
London, S.W. 1.  
and the following number quoted.  
DEPENDANT'S PENSION.  
Madam,  
I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that a pension of Eight Shillings a week has been approved for you in respect of the late Hugh S. Sharpe, Argyle & Sutherland Highlanders 10<sup>th</sup> Bn, who died on 27/9/15.  
with effect from 9/10/17.  
(in the first instance).  
The enclosed Life Certificate should be completed and returned to this office in the enclosed envelope as quickly as possible, in order that the necessary instructions for payment may be issued.  
Yours faithfully,  
Margaret S. Sharpe,  
Mrs. Sharpe,  
Blairlogie,  
Perthshire.  
I am, Madam,  
Your obedient Servant,  
for the Secretary.

© Blairlogie Archives      Dependant's Pension

### John Sharpe 1894 to 1947

John Sharpe joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Bn Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders<sup>12</sup> on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1915 at the age of 21 years and 10 months and just days before his brother Hugh's death in the field and he later transferred to the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Argyles. On enlisting John's height was recorded as 5 foot 6 inches and his chest





measurement was 38 inches with an expansion of 4 inches. John was promoted to unpaid Lance Corporal in December 1916 and then to paid Lance Sergeant in September 1916. John was discharged on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1919 and received the British War Medal and Victory Medals in 1920. At a later date he would also receive the 1914 -18 Star.

It is interesting to note that John Sharpe's records<sup>12</sup> show that his specialist military qualification was "*Shorthand Typist*". This may have been gained prior to joining the army as John Sharpe had been a law clerk before he enlisted. John's "*Casualty Form – Active Service*" contains lots of entries, but due to their poor legibility the details cannot be unearthed. John received his discharge at Ripon in England on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1919.

After being demobbed John married<sup>13</sup> Isabella Duguid on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1927 and was listed as a law clerk at the time of his wedding. He continued to stay in Blairlogie, setting up home in Struan and passed away at his home on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1947<sup>14</sup>. The causes of death were listed as: Cerebral embolism ~ Cancer of Prostate Gland ~ Ulcer of Duodenum.

### James Sharpe 1897 to 1915

Sadly we do not have many military records concerning James as so many were destroyed during the blitz in World War 2. We do not know his date of enlistment but his death<sup>15</sup> is clearly documented as 14<sup>th</sup> December 1915. At the time of James' death he was serving in the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Black Watch and is buried in Grave VIII C 68 at Boulogne Eastern Cemetery in France.



© Blairlogie Archives  
Causewayhead War Memorial



© Blairlogie Archives  
Causewayhead War Memorial

## Robert Sharpe 1898 to 1918

Sadly no Army records could be found for Robert Sharpe and this is a great pity as he seems to have had an interesting time up until his sad demise. What records that do exist are mainly letters that he sent from the trenches in 1918 and these make fascinating reading and give a real insight to his nature and character as well as his life. Unfortunately we do not know when Robert enlisted or what regiment that he joined.

The first letter<sup>16</sup> that we have from Robert is from his billet in "*King Street, Hutments, Aberdeen*" and is dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1918 and was addressed to his Mother. Robert had arrived very early in the morning and had a good feed before getting some sleep. He informed his mother that "*This place is in a bubble of excitement as every available man is under orders for drafting. Of course quite to be expected, I am amongst them.*" He then goes on to explain that "*Tomorrow morning, if I get a chance I will parade sick*" He also mentions that "*One fellow I know has been sick for a fortnight through the effects of an operation for appendicitis and he is under orders to go and without a leave at that. He is quite cheery and says he won't get across the water. So don't worry mother I don't think that they will pass me after they see what is wrong.*" It is more the shock of no leave rather than the orders to go that seems to upset Robert and he is optimistic that he will not be sent to France.

Robert's next letter<sup>17</sup> is to his sister Nan and is dated Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 1918. The first part of the letter is giving Nan his new address as 41359 Pte. RS No 10 Platoon, C Company, 1/6<sup>th</sup> Black Watch, BEF France. He mentions "*I have been transferred, we are all very sorry to leave the Gordons but we still retain our "Bumbee Tartan" and the "By Dand" cap badge.*" He also mentions that he has been passed fit and that his foot is much better.

The next letter<sup>18</sup> was to his brother George and was dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 1918 and it is headed "*On Active Service WITH THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE*" and has the YMCA logo on top as well. In this letter Robert thanks his brother George for a recent letter from him. Robert describes the weather as "*bitterly cold these last few days with showers of sleet and snow*". He mentions seeing Mr Henderson of Logie Villa and comments on him looking A1 and that he is in motor transport. Interestingly, Robert mentions that he was in the Scottish Horse and that lots of his pals are there with him. He also asks after his father and about his potato crop. He particularly mentions the steading where he was staying and that it was very modern with electricity, even in the outbuildings. Just before signing off his letter, Robert mentions that "*The boys here are all very cheery and I am enjoying myself immense*".

The last letter<sup>19</sup> that we have from Robert is dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1918, France and is addressed to his sister Nan. Robert mentions that the 1<sup>st</sup> of May was very cold and jokingly suggests that not many soldiers washed their face in the May dew in the morning. He reports that it was so cold that they had to resort to physical activity to bring back the circulation to their bodies. Luckily the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May was much warmer and Robert and his mates were basking in the sun. It is in this letter that Robert gives his new address as Private R Sharpe, No 11 Platoon, C Company, 1/6 Black Watch, BEF France. Robert was writing his letter from a nice village surrounded by farmland. As a country boy he also mentioned that the farmers were very busy in the fields. Robert mentions that he had a long talk with James Hepburn the previous day and that he was in a different platoon now. He reported that James had seen Robert Jamieson and Edward Gentles and comments on how many local lads he sees in France. Before signing off Robert mentions that he had heard that W Goldie of Airthrey had been transferred from an Internment Camp in Germany to Holland and that he had been a prisoner of war for the last 2 ½ years.

The date of Robert's death<sup>20</sup> was 28<sup>th</sup> July 1918 and he was killed in action on the Western European Theatre whilst serving in the 6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Bn., Black Watch (Territorial). He is buried in Chambrecy British Cemetery and his grave reference number is VIII. C. 4.

### Charles Sharpe 1903 to 1974

Charles was too young to join the army and he would have been only 15 years old at the



© Blairlogie Archives Charles Sharpe 1914  
Rear Row ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> from Right

end of the Great War. After losing 3 sons to war, his parents must have been delighted not to have to risk young Charles in the field of battle.

Charles was born<sup>21</sup> in Blairmains Cottages on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1903 and was 20 years younger than his eldest brother George.

After leaving school, Charles was apprenticed<sup>22</sup> as an engineer working for Henderson Brothers in Stirling, he also worked in the motor trade and was a

recognised agricultural engineer. During the 1939/45 war, George worked as a Government specialist in agriculture. During the 1930s George went into business on his own and after the war he went into business with a Mr Miller to become a main Ford Dealer. He later became the first Managing Director and later Chairman of Millar's Garage of Drip Road, Raploch. He remained chairman until his retirement in 1968.



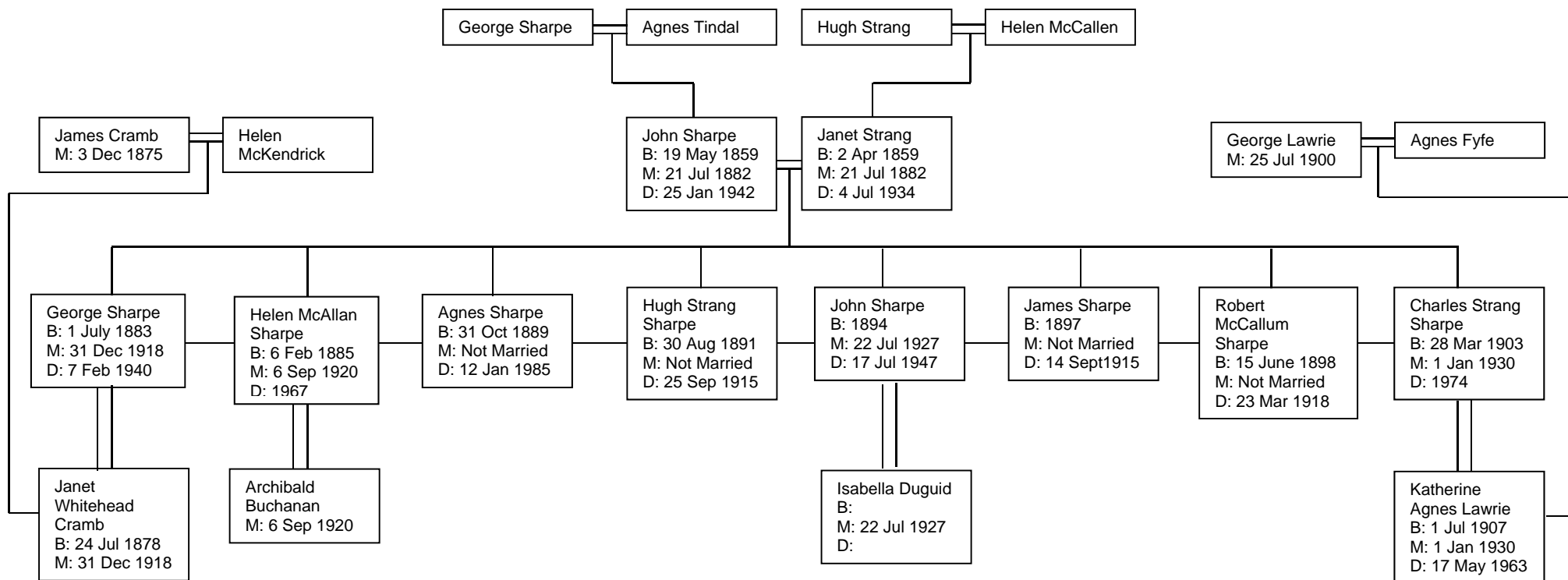
© Blairlogie Archives  
Charles and  
Katherine Sharpe  
1930

Charles met Katherine Agnes Lawrie and they were married<sup>23</sup> on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1930 in Old Philipstoun, Abercorn. At the time of their wedding, Charles was a Motor Salesman and Katherine was a Civil Servant in the Ministry of Labour. Charles was living with his parents<sup>22</sup> in The Croft, Blairlogie when he married but soon moved out to live with his new bride in Blairlogie Park. Charles died<sup>24</sup> in 1974 in Stirling and Katherine died<sup>25</sup> on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1963 in the Royal Infirmary, Stirling.

### Helen McAllan Sharpe 1885 to 1967

Little is known about Helen Sharpe and she does not appear in the 1901 or the 1911 census with her family. We do know that she was born<sup>26</sup> on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1885 and that she married<sup>27</sup> Archibald Buchanan on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 1920 and that she passed<sup>28</sup> away in Perth in 1967. The Archives have no photographs of Helen or any further information about her or her family.

# The Sharpe Family Tree



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