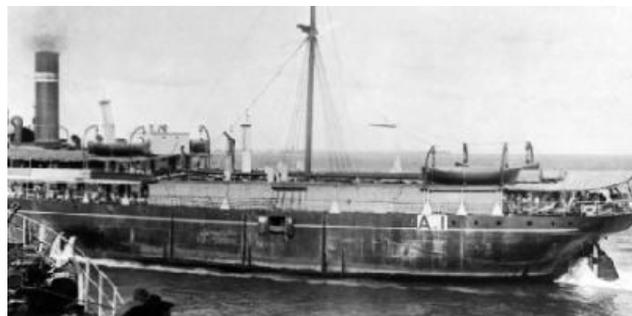


Wallace Sharpe did not follow the family tradition of farming. Instead, he worked with his Uncle, Will Nelson in his Gerringong general store. Often riding his horse to outlying parts of the district, Wallace was very popular and likeable, of good moral character, and fine manly qualities. He also played tennis with the Gerringong Tennis Club.



Fern St, Gerringong. Will Nelson, Wallace Sharpe, George Wilson

Enlisting on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 1915, Wally, as he was familiarly called, joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment, 16<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement, embarking from Sydney on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1916 on HMAT Hymettus, leaving his home, "Aorangi" in Gerringong forever.



HMAT Hymettus

The First Battle of Amman aimed at cutting the Hejaz railway line running south from Damascus. The operation began on 22 March 1918 with the building of bridges across the River Jordan. Rain made going extremely difficult, but by the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup>, the village of Es Salt had been taken. On the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>, the attack began on Amman. About 3,000 Allied soldiers faced 4,000 Turks in well prepared positions, supported by machine-guns and fifteen artillery pieces.

The Turkish resistance, bolstered by the German Asia Corps, proved impossible to overcome. By 2nd April, the Allies had withdrawn. The venture had cost 118 killed and 55 missing from the Mounted Division. (Ency. Of Australia's Battles. Coulthard-Clark)



Tired Light Horsemen returning from the Amman Raid, April 1918.

According to the Red Cross wounded and missing report:

“Informant states that on the 28/3/18, the Regiment was in action against the Turks at Annam east of the River Jordan in Palestine. During the advance, Sharpe was hit by machine gun fire, together with two or three others. Informant was about 50 yards away, and saw all the men hit, lying on the ground. He recognised Sharpe who was still alive.”

“I knew Sergeant Sharpe by sight. He was a tall man standing about 6ft. of big build, dark, clean shaved. He went out with Liet. Ridgway’s party, when they made an unsuccessful attack on Aman. We were in support; Ringrose was the only man of the party who returned. He reported that everyone of them had been hit. This was on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1918. Another attack was made on Annam 6 months after this and the place was taken. Some of us went out to see the place where Liet. Ridgway’s party had been attacked. The dead bodies were lying there just as they had fallen, and we buried them. Sharpe was identified by some of the men. Sharpe was one of the most popular men in the Regiment – He was a great leader of men.”



Sergeant Wallace Sharpe. SN2377.

Back on the home front, for nearly a year the family lived in anxiety and suspense, not knowing whether 27 year old Wallace was alive or dead. Finally they received the bad news – previously he was reported missing.

### SERGEANT, WALTER SHARPE.

We regret very much indeed to hear the bad news came through to Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Sharpe, "Aorangi," Gerringong, on Tuesday evening, their son, Sergeant Walter Sharpe was posted as missing on March 28th. Their many friends, in Gerringong especially will feel for them in the long anxiety that generally follows such tidings, but we sincerely trust, the news will yet come he is a prisoner of war, which, while it is bad enough, gives hope of a happy re-union when the war is over.

Sergt. Sharpe's personality and fine soldierly qualities earned the esteem and affection of his comrades and gained for him the promise of promotion, and a recommendation for a Commission, just as it did the whole-hearted liking respect and esteem of his friends and associates in civilian life, which it is yet hoped will again be his. May good news speedily come to that effect.

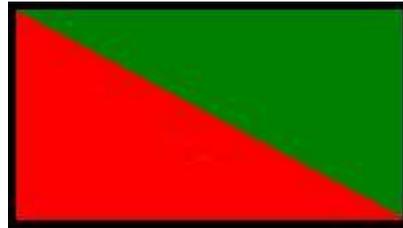
Kiama Independent. 13 April 1918

Wallace was a general favourite with his comrades who found him gallant and brave, kindly, loyal and considerate.

The memorial Service to Sergeant Sharpe was conducted by the Rev. W.T. Hooker in the Gerringong Congregational Church. The rostrum was draped with the Union Jack and Australian flag. In the centre was placed a large wreath of white flowers with streamers of Sergt. Sharpe's Battalion colours (red and green). The whole service was uplifting, a note of triumph ran through it all, in prayers, readings, anthems, hymns and address from Romans 14:7-8.



Congregational Church, Gerringong



6th Light Horse Regiment Colour Patch

Wallace has a memorial inside the Gerringong Uniting Church and a plaque at the Jerusalem Memorial. Panel 58.

