

Constantinople
July 12th 1915

My Dear Family:-

I am afraid that the military authorities will have let you know that I was missing on June 28th.

It is a great relief to me to find that I am allowed to write to you and able to say I am in good health and receiving excellent treatment as a prisoner of war.

We were taking part in an attack on June 28th and received the order to retire. I went out to take the order to a squadron which had gone further out. The way out was pretty "unhealthy" and I crawled into an old machine gun pit to collect some wits and breath. I collected a "frozen spine" instead, for our own machine gun spotted me and insisted with monotonous accuracy that I was of the opposition. There was nothing for it but to duck for an old half filled trench further out with good overhead cover. That machine gun's mistake was excusable. I had been only twenty or thirty yards from the enemy and now I was in the middle of him. I was excused the ignominy of laying down my arms – they were promptly laid down for me. And here I am, a prisoner of war, having failed in my mission and no longer able to serve my country, but in good health and looking forward to the day when the war ends and I can go home. With the Australians it is considered a disgrace to be captured. It was bad soldiering on my part to get within the enemy's advanced lines, but I know you will understand it is not lack of courage makes a man do that.

I saw Bert the day before the attack and had letters that day from Jessie, Nell, Madeleine, Aunt Katie and Ella Warner. Will you please thank the writers. I hope to be able to write again and it is possible that letters addressed "Headquarters, Prisoners of war, Constantinople, may reach me. These letters (mine) are of course censored and it is therefore advisable not to write at length.

With Fondest Love
Maurice.