Heliopolos
April 6 1915

Dear Aunt

I received your letter to night I have written to Mum and Grace, by this mail, Our time in Egypt is nearly up, We are all packed up ready to go at a moments notice, I won't be sorry to leave Egypt anyway, We are all fairly full up of the Sand and flies, I saw Walter last week in Heliopolos he looks well on it, He was at Abbasieh for a while but has gone to Mena I was over to see Frank last night, he is not going the same time as us the mounted troops are remaining behind for a time, I suppose you hear plenty of tales about the Australians in Egypt. There was a riot in Cairo on Good Friday, I was in Cairo that day but did not see the row, I was at a theatre, and when we came out at half past eight, another chap and I were walking up the Street and were Stopped by an armed picket, and was told by them that there had been serious trouble, Some Australians ~~got~~ [illegible] to assist a Maori who had been taken down, one of the [illegible] was Stabbed by a native, Some Military Police came along "English" and tried to disperse them, by this time a big crowd had gathered around, The police I think became a bit frightened and drew their revolvers, one of them threatened to fire, but our chaps were not easily bluffed, One of the police did fire, and as soon as he did, the crowd closed in on them, The police did not stop to see it out but got away for their lives, they were mounted and as they gallopped away they fired behind them into the crowd.

I dont know how many men were hit, the Officeal report of the riot said that only 4 men were wounded and several others injured," As soon as the shots were fired, a lot of the crowd went mad altogether they were up stairs in the houses and started to tear the place down, they threw furniture and clothes everything they could get their hands on, down into the street where the others gathered them together and made bonfires of them, they had 4 fires going and set fire to the curtains in one place, Some of them threw a piano down, a beercart that was coming down the street was tipped up, and thrown on the fire, a native carriage received similar treatment, Three Squadron's

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of The Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry came into the City and restored Order, They are New Zealand chaps and as they were passing The Army Service camp some of the chaps asked them what was doing; They replied its all right boys", There will be no Red caps left. They call the English Military police Red Caps on account of a red band they wear around their Caps. But the Redcaps had gone long before the NewZealanders got there, The New Zealanders were very much excited over the row One Chap who is in the Same Company as Frank, and is an old South African man told me that he was very close to the police when they fired, he declared that he saw one man shot dead and another so seriously wounded, that he could not Live, he seems a pretty Level headed sort of chap and I don't think he would tell a lie over it

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Our Leave is all stopped over the riot even Heliopolis is out of Bounds, we are confined to the Camp, An enquiry is being held into the cause of the trouble, and it is rumoured that the Military police who fired are under arrest, about 50 Australians and New Zealanders are under arrest awaiting trial I think the police are mostly responsible for the riot, it would have been a very small affair had they not fired on the Crowd. We have been doing nothing this week I suppose on account of our going away One Company has gone down to Alexandria as an advance Guard, and we will probably go in a day or two Well I will close this now I remain your

Affect Brother
E Ross

Mr A Ross
Tarwin
South Gippsland
Victoria
Australia

CAIRO
[illegible]

Somewhere in France
12/7/1916

Dear Mum

Just a line to let you know I,m still in the land of the living. I have been in France now nearly three weeks but have not had a chance of writing before, as we have been shifting about a good deal We had a fine trip over from Alexandria to Marseilles. It took us a fortnig to come across. We were four days anchored in the Bay at Alexandria & then got as far as Malta where we anchored for two days & then went on to Marseilles, where we disembarked & went straight on to the train bound for a 60 hours ride, which I can safely say, was the most enjoyable train ride, I have ever had. The scennery was grand, especially going through the Rhone Valley It was like one big Garden The reception we got, you can imagine when I say that from nearly every house along the line there was someone waving & at stopping places we got tea & coffee. I can't describe what I think of Frane, but, after the burning sands of Egypt this place will do me & I,m dead flash I havent seen Ewen over here yet but hope to see him shortly. "Frank" I think, is still in Egypt, same with Walter "Well Mum"! I hope things are going on alright at home. I suppose Arol will be busy again by the time you get this. Tell him I will write him a long letter one of these days, also Grace, & Lil. "Well Mum"! I will ring off now. Remember me to all I know

I am your loving son
Roy

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