H.L.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

Statement made by Escaped Prisoner of war.
Taken at London. 29.12.1918.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.

2.1.19.

Rank. Captain.

Name. WHITE. T.W.

Unit. Australian Flying Corps.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

(a). 13.November.1915.

(b). FELUJAH-BAGHDAD ROad. (Mesopotamia).

I was gazetted Captain (C.M.F) on October 10th.1913, and on A.I.F. Regimental Lists date as Captain A.F.C., from November 1st.1913.

On April.19th.1915, I left MELBOURNE as Captain and Adjutant with a half-flight of A.F.C., for Active Service with an Indian Expeditionary Force. This half-flight was sent in response to a request from the Indian Government, and consisted of four officers and 45 other ranks with necessary material, and motor and mule transport. A reinforcement of 13 mechanics was sent on later. The Indian Government had agreed to provide the requisite aeroplanes..

At BOMBAY the drivers of mule transport were left behind, the Officers and mechanics proceeding to BASRA to join Indian Expeditionary Force, "D", then operating in Mesopotamia. The pay of Officers was raised to 700 rupees per mensem, and that of mechanics was also raised.

At BASRA, the Officers were gazetted into the Indian Army (temporarily) with the ranks they held at the time, but dating from August 4th.1914, or date of subsequent appointment. Two Indian Army Captains, one of whom was junoir to me were at the same time made temporary Majors, and were made Deputy Assistant Director of Aviation and Flight Commander, respectively.

The Australian Officers, and one Officer sent from New Zealand were gazetted into the Royal Flying Corps, with their respective ranks, from June 11th.1915, and the Flight,(which then consisted of Australians British, and Indian native mechanics) was called "The Mesopotamian Flight of the Royal Flying Corps". I was appointed Adjutant and when not actually flying, acted as O.C., Flying Park.

Only three aeroplanes (one Maurice-Farman Shorthorn, and two Maurice-Farman Longhorns), were available at first. Two of them were bought, we were told, with the money, donated by the Maharajah of Gwalior for two up-to-date aeroplanes. The other had been bought from Egypt. They were fitted with 70 h.p. Renault engines. The engines, however, were not new, and (partly owing to the great heat in Mesopotamia) gave considerable trouble; and forced landings in country overrun with hostile Arabs, were frequent. An attempt was made to convert one of the Longhorns into a Seaplane, as, at that time, Lower Mesopotamia was flooded by the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. But the attempt was not a success. The aeroplane was re-converted and used as a land machine.

Statement continued

Two Caudron aeroplanes with 80.h.p. Gnome engines arrived about a month afterwards. Lieut. G.H. MERZ of the Australian Officers, and Lieut. W. BURN, New Zealand Forces, were killed by Arabs after a forced landing caused by engine failure, when returning on one of these machines from the battle of NASIRIYEH. Lieut. MERZ had done much useful reconnaissance work at Nasiriyeh, and, being a medical man, had been of great assistance in helping the inadequate medical staff at NASIRIYEH on the night after the fighting, prior to his last flight.

About September 1915, six Martinsyde scouts with 80.h.p. Gnome engines arrived. But there was a shortage of spares and only two could be kept in flying trim.

The motor transport spares brought from Australia were exceedingly useful, though, owing to extensive floods, most of the transport was by water. The mechanics brought from Australia were, without exception, capable and reliable.

Lieut. W.H. TRELOAR with his observer Capt. H.S. ATKINS, Indian Army were made prisoners on September 16th.1915, through engine failure, while flying a Caudron aeroplane and reconnoitring an enemy position at KHAN, near KUT-el-AMARA.

The records of all flights were kept in log books with the Flight. Copies of all observation reports were sent weekly to the Base at BASRA.

The following decoration was made.-

Staff Sergeant C. HEATH. (D.C.M.) For devotion to duty and exceptional ability.

The following were mentioned in despatches of General TWONSEND.-

Captain. H.A. PETRE. for conspicious Service.
Captain. T.W. WHITE. " " "

I was made prisoner by the Turks on November 13th.1915., while destroying enemy telegraph lines near BAGHDAD. A separate report is attached; also report required on treatment of Prisoners of War in Turkey.

The following mechanics of the Australian Flying Corps, were made prisoners in KUT-el-AMARA.

Corporal.	McK. SLOSS.	now repatriated.
Corporal.	T. SOLEY.	died at NISIBIN about June.16th.
Air Mechanic.	HUDSON.	now repatriated.
" "	WILLIAMS.	died in ADANA about Aug.16th.
" "	MUNRO.	" " " Hospital with abcess of throat.
" "	ADAMS.	" in or near ADANA about Aug.16
" "	RAYMENT.	do. do.
" "	CURRAN.	Died in NISIBIN about June.16th.
Private.	W.H.LORD.	" " or near ADANA.

In the cases of these men who died in ADANA, I was told by other soldiers who had been in hospital with them, that these men were being well treated in an American Hospital at ADANA at the time of their deaths. Miss. DAVIES, an American lady, who assisted at the hospital, and who may have returned to ADANA since, or Mr. NICHOLAS PIPKHOGLOU. an English speaking Greek, cotton-mill proprietor in that town, may perhaps, be able to give further information regarding their deaths. or the location of their graves.

It is doubtful if the graves of Cpl. SOLEY and A.M. CURRAN who died at NISIBIN, will be marked, as Nisibin is one of the worst halting places on the line of march from Mesopotamia to ANATOLIA and was the scene of scandalous treatment of sick prisoners, and the last resting place of many of the KUT-el-AMARA garrison.

All the deaths may be justly attributed to the inhumanity of the Turks, who forced all soldier prisoners taken in Mesopotamia including the Kut-el-Amara garrison(who had already been weakened by the five months of seige) to march the long stretches of desert and mountainous country between Mesopotamia and Anatolia. These

Statement continued.

marched total about 800 miles. On this march they were starved , in many cases robbed of their boots and clothes, and when any were forced to drop out through exhaustion, were left to die. Of 44 mechanics of the "Mesopotamia"Flight and "B" Flight, (an English R.F.C. Flight, which arrived later) taken in Kut-el-Amara only six survived the march, though there had been no mechanics killed during the whole of the siege. These figures are merely representative of the deaths through ill-treatment, neglect and the headships of the march, that were suffered in all the British and Indian Regiments that were captured in Kut-el-Amara.

Corporal SLOSS was made Flight Sergeant during the siege of Kut-el-Amara, for devotion to duty and efficiency. Unfortunately no Australian Officers were in Kut-el-Amara at that time, consequently no entry was made in his Pay Book. But Captain WINGFIELD-SMITH. R.A.F. W.O. was senior Flying Officer in Kut-el-Amara could, on application, give further particulars regarding Cpl.SLOSS, should his service deserve recognition.

(Signed). T. White. Capt.

LONDON. 29.12.1918.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Statement No.2 made by Escaped Prisoner of War.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Forces,
"B" Records Section.

Rank. Captain. 1st January 1919.

Name. WHITE. T.W.

Unit. Australian Flying Corps.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

(a) Date. 13th November 1915.

(b) Place. FELUDJAH - BAGHDAD Road. (Mesopotamia)

At the time of my capture November 13th 1915, I was serving with the 6th Division of the Indian Army in Mesopotamia.
The Divisional Commander, Maj-Gen. TOWNSHEND, had ordered that the telegraph lines in rear of the Turkish position before BAGHDAD, should be destroyed, so as to cut off the Turk's communication with Constantinople. An aeroplane was to land behind the Turkish lines and carry out this task.
Volunteers w re called up by the O.C. Flight, and with Capt. F.YEATS-BROWN, 17th. Indian Cavalry (who had been with me as observer on a previous occasion when I had had a forced landing behind the enemy lines) I volunteered for the task.
We were then in camp at AZIZIYEH. The distance to the nearest possible landing place was about 60 miles, so, owing to the slow speed of the aeroplane (a Maurice-Farman Longhorn, with 70 h.p. Renault engine) tins of petrol and oil had to be carried. On the only available maps the telegraph lines were shown as running at some distance from the road, BAGHDAD to FELUDJAH. But on arriving there, I found that the line followed the road, and that bodies of troops of all arms were marching along this road, and to BAGHDAD. For this reason I had to land on a small piece of difficult ground, bounded by canals about 8 miles from the city, where there appeared to be only a few Arabs. We thought it possible to land and blow up the telegraph lines before the Arabs quite realized our intentions. But a Turkish horseman, who suddenly appeared beneath me, disconcerted my landing and, in trying to land as close as possible to the objective, I swerved after landing and struck a telegraph pole ~~seen after landing~~, breaking the longeron and several of the ribs of my lower left plane. Some Arabs immediately opened fire on us from about 300 yards. I filled my petrol tank, however, while Captain YEATS-BROWN blew up a telegraph pole with a gun cotton necklace. I found the aeroplane unflyable, so replied to the fire of the Arabs also to a party of Turks who had just arrived, as well as I was able, with the rifle that we carried in the aeroplane. The Turks had come from what we supposed to be a deserted building close by. But it was really a gendarmerie barracks and its inmates had been quickly brought out by the cavalryman I had seen whilst landing. My fire was of little use against so many men, especially as they had good cover and were able to advance on us along the canals. Had the aeroplane been furnished with a machine gun, I might have been able to attempt some repairs under cover of its fire. Although we started the engine after the lines had been demolished by a second charge, an attempt was made to taxi the machine we were quickly taken prisoners. The Arabs struck us with riflebutts, and wanted to shoot us, and but for the interference of the Turks, would have done so. When my helmet was knocked off, one of them struck me a blow on the head with an adze, which left a bad wound, and another struck

me several blows with a sword, which however, was so blunt that he was unable to cut off my flying coat. We were taken to the barracks, and under the charge of a Turkish Colonel and a strong mounted guard were sent in a gharry to BAGHDAD.

A large body of mounted Arabs however, pursued us, and after a long chase, held up our guards. Their Sheik said that he wanted our heads to take to the Turkish Army Commandant for a reward. After a long parley with the commander of our guards the Arabs accompanied us to BAGHDAD. The people of the Arab quarter in Baghdad had been warned of our capture, and turned out with sticks to meet us. We were struck and spat upon, in spite of our guards, by all who could approach near enough, and attempts were made to stab us by two Arabs who climbed into our conveyance.

At Baghdad we were sent to hospital, and after twelve days there (including one week's solitary confinement which I believe I received for not satisfactorily answering questions when interrogated) we were sent to MOSUL.. Our treatment at MOSUL was bad and after 2½ months in a prison there, with nine other Officers and some 500 British and Indian soldiers we were sent via NISIBIN, ALEPPO and TARSUS to AFION-KARA-HISSAR.

After 2 years three months at Afion-Kara-Hissar, I was sent to Constantinople and escaped ~~at~~ on August 24th 1918, to Russia, reporting for duty at Varna on November 5th 1918.

(Signed). T.W.White. Capt. A.F.C.

Witness. (Signed) 517. A.O.Paul L/C.

NAME: WHITE. T.W. Statement No.3

RANK: Captain.

REGIMENT: Australian Flying Corps.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF ESCAPE FROM TURKEY.

In May, 1918, whilst at the prisoners of war Camp at AFION KARA HISSAR, in Turkey-in-Asia, and after 2½ years captivity, I was medically examined by the Turkish medical authorities. The examination was made in response to a request from Constantinople, and was I believe, on account of a cabled enquiry from Australia regarding my health. For though the Turks did little or nothing for the health of their prisoners, they would usually carry out an examination, such as it was, when an enquiry was made. I was in moderately good health, but decided to feign illness, as I intended to escape from Constantinople if I should be sent there. I had planned escape from Afion Kara Hissar, and had already made the necessary preparations, but as a Turkish Commission was then enquiring into the conduct of the Turkish Commandant at Afion Kara Hissar, I decided to postpone the date in deference to the wish of the Senior British Officer there. Though I spoke French, I took a French Officer with me to the examination to act as interpreter so that I could gain time for replies when questioned. I convinced the Turkish Medical Board that an old injury to my foot, which I had kept tightly bandaged for some days, and a scar on my ankle, the result of a burn, were evidences of tuberculosis. From this date I had naturally to always walk with a limp, and, a month after I was examined, I was sent to Constantinople for treatment.

I was sent to two different hospitals, in the second of which I found four other British Officers shamming sickness, and one feigning madness in hopes of being exchanged. Whilst in hospital I met a Bosnian Flying Officer in the Turkish service who had been wounded whilst flying in Palestine. He was anxious to leave the Turks, and agreed to take Captain A.J.Bott "M.C", R.A.F. and myself in his Aeroplane from San Stefano, the German Aerodrome near Constantinople, to Lemnos, if we could escape and reach the

Aerodrome when he was on duty. But the Turks suspected him and forbade him to speak to us, I decided therefore that it would be best to attempt to reach Russia. The Germans, after overrunning Ukrania had allowed a Ukranian steamer, and three Schooners to come to Constantinople to trade. After we were discharged from hospital, and confined in an Armenian school at PSAMATIA, near Constantinople, preparatory to being returned to the concentration camp at Afion Kara Hissar, I arranged a plan of escape to the Russian ship, through a Ukranian Officer, and a Greek waiter in a restaurant. We were to escape as best we could from the school where we were kept closely guarded, and, at a certain German beer garden in Galata, would search for a man who would carry a cigarette behind his ear, and who, when we made ourselves known to him, would find us a hiding place until we could get aboard the Ukranian ship.

On August 24, we got our opportunity when four of us were being sent under escort from PSAMATIA to Constantinople by train. Four Turkish soldiers accompanied us, whilst a Turkish Officer of the Garrison travelled in a compartment close by. We had decided to make a bolt for it at the railway terminus in Constantinople, in hopes that more than one soldier might chase one of us, and perhaps someone might succeed in getting away. We also agreed to make the most of any opportunity of escape which might present itself en route. Captain Bott was to come with me to Russia, while the two other Officers Lieutenant Fulton, Royal Flying Corps, and Lieut. Stone, Worcesters who had no plans of their own, had decided to make the most of our abandoned Aeroplane scheme of escape. We had given them full particulars and a sketch of the German Aerodrome at SAN STEFANO.

I had accumulated 150 Liras, about £100, in cheques that I had surreptitiously cashed from various people whilst in hospital, and at Psamatia. I had bribed a Turkish soldier to turn these into big notes for me, and had sewn them into my braces, and the tightening band of my trousers, so that if I was retaken, the Turkish soldiers or Gendarmerie, might not be

able to find them. We were in civilian clothes (as most long service prisoners had worn out their uniforms) and besides being unshaved for some days, I carried a felt hat in an inside pocket of my coat, in hopes that it might be useful as a disguise in replacing the cap that I wore. I had also a miniature Russian dictionary, and two small bags made from handkerchiefs, filled with biscuits and chocolate from a parcel I had recently received.

Whem nearing Constantinople our train collided with another on a viaduct close to KUM KAFU station. A number of people were hurt, and all were thrown violently, from their seats. As I had purposely remained standing, so as to be able to make the most of my opportunity, and as I was holding on to hhe parcel rack at the time, I was not thrown down. The passengers were mostly Turkish Officers and soldiers, with a sprinkling of civilians, Whilst calming a very terrified wommm, partly out of pity for her, and partly to deceive any soldiers who might have been watching me regarding my intentions, I put on the hat I was carrying, and calling to Captain Bott that I was going, made for the exit. It was a corridor train, and there had been a mad rush to get out, so that undue haste on my part did not seem out of place. Our guard had been suspicious of us, however, from the outset, and I was chased by one soldier while another siezed Captain Scott.

Jumping down on to the line, I found that I could not get along the viaduct owing to the crush of excited people, so accordingly boarded another railway carriage and ran through that, with the Turkish soldier a few yards behind me. Jumping down to the railway track again, I ran to the abutment of the viaduct and jumped into the street below. In this way I gained about fifteen or twenty yards on the soldier, who preferred to run down the railway embankment, to jumping from the abutment, which was not a high one. I ran round the nearest street corner with the soldier in hot pursuit, and running at top speed round every subsequent turning and not knowing where they led, endeavoured to shake him off. He shouted to passing Turks to stop me, but the people shouted to, were either more interested on

hurrying the other way to see the railway smash, or did not realise what was wanted till I had passed them. Though I took as many turns as possible so that he seldom had a good chance of shooting me, I had, in one street, to run past a barracks where twenty or thirty Turkish soldiers were standing outside, looking stupidly at me through an iron fence, and not realising quickly enough what was going on. The soldier who chased me, however, was big and athletic, and realising that he would be bastinadoed and imprisoned if I succeeded in escaping from him, ran his hardest. (I had left some money for him at Psamatia on his return, so that he could buy sufficient food for himself during the months' imprisonment he would get, for the Turks give very little food to such prisoners). I was not in good condition myself though, after having taken very little exercise, and walked with a limp for so long. After running about half a mile I was quite exhausted, and decided to take the only alternative to run into a house immediately after turning a corner, and take the chance whether the inhabitants were Turks, or friendly disposed Christians. I accordingly rushed through the first open street door that I saw, considerably startling two old Greek ladies who were in the front room of the house. I told them to say nothing about me if they were questioned, and going through the house, I found a cupboard in which I hid myself. The soldier evidently ran on, for the house was not searched. I told the inhabitants of the house, who I was, and a young Greek woman who was present said she would help me if she could. From her husband, who arrived soon afterwards, I bought a Turkish fez and an old chesterfield coat as a disguise, leaving my own coat there, as the chesterfield was too small to wear over my own. My hair had been clipped short, so that a wound scar at the back of my head showed up plainly. I covered this identification mark with boot polish, and clipped off my moustache, then, going to the nearest tramway, went to Galata to search for the man who had promised to find me a hiding place. By taking this tram I avoided crossing Galata Bridge, which spans the Golden Horn, on foot, for numerous inquisitive gendarmes may always be seen there.

There were several German and Austrian soldiers, and a few Turks in the beer garden. Although I placed many cigarettes behind my ear and pretented to sleep whilst watching the crowd for about two hours, I left, as I thought a longer stay might draw unwelcome attention to me, I walked to GUMUSH SUYU, buying some cigarettes for my next visit to the beer garden, on the way. As I knew only a little Turkish, and as owing to the costume I wore, I would be expected to speak Turkish well, I made my purchases at street stalls, choosing the moment to buy when heavy traffic was passing so that though I only moved my lips and pointed to what I wanted, the stall keeper imagined I had asked for what I wanted.

At the steps alomgside the Sultan's palace of DOLMA BATCHE, I hired a caique (a kind of canoe) and went for a row on the BOSPHOROUS, deeming it safe there, as I should be out of sight of over-zealous gendarmes who might demand to know why I was not on military service. The old caiquechi who rowed the boat however, preferred talking to rowing, sothat I had to pretend to be deaf. He was not easily deceived however, and would stand up and shout in first one ear and then the other. Sometimes, when he had repeated a statement several times, I could understand his meaning, and when I thought it advisable, I would answer with an "Evvet" (Yes) or a "Yok" (No), or one of the many signs which the Turk employs to show his approval, or disapproval. The old man was so persistent, however, that, as the sea was rough, I pretended to be seasick, at which he propped me up with the boat's cushions and made me feel quite comfortable After he had rowed me backwards and forwars for two hours, close to the walls of the Palace, with its sleepy looking guards, I left him, after arranging that he should take me for a longer row next morning. I had of course no intention of seeing him in the morning; but made this appointment merely so that if he suspected me, he would not inform on me, nor have me followed.

I then made my way to Pera in search of a cafe, and a place to passthe night, deciding to re-visit the beer garden in the morning. On the way I was stopped by a gendarme who, however, merely wanted a light for his cigarette. No conversation is

necessary in a case of this sort. The policeman proffered his unlighted cigarette, I gave him mine, at the same time trying to convey the impression that I was in a hurry. He took a light; salaamed by touching heart, lips and brow; (a habit we had acquired through mimicking the Turks). I returned the salaam, and proceeded on my way. I looked in at many Cafes before I found one that suited me, for I was by no means well dressed. I found one eventually where practically all the other diners were drunk with "rakki", a Turkish absinthe. Here I was able to eat in peace, over an evening newspaper, applauding their unmusical high pitched singing when expected to do so. I found it more difficult to find a resting place for the night however, as I had no passport of any kind. I explored a Mahommedan cemetery, and the ruins of a burnt-out house and decided on one of these two places failing any better accommodation. Seeing a party of five or six men in what I took to be Russian uniform, and overhearing a remark made by one of them in Russian, I took them to be Russian (perhaps Georgians, some of whom, owing to the foundation of a Georgian State by the Germans, had been released), who might help me. I entered into conversation with them in Russian, and finding that they were Bulgarians who, had they known who I was would have taken charge of me, I left them hurriedly. I only learnt afterwards that many colloquial phrases of Russian are identical with Bulgarian.

There were many German and Austrian soldiers in the streets, and after spending some two hours in the Grand Rue de Pera, and the bazaars in the vicinity, searching and occasionally asking for a home for the night, I decided to visit the Cinema to pass the time. Seeing an electric Turkish sign over a street door, I took this to be a Cinema, but found on getting inside that it was a hairdressers, and boot-cleaning establishment, and although I could have stayed with advantage, I considered it safer to leave.

The next place was a Cinema Theatre all right, but I found after buying a ticket and getting inside that I was the first

to arrive, and that I was 1½ hrs too early for the show. It must have been obvious to the proprietor that I was a stranger so I decided to leave, and half an hour later visited another Cinema Theatre, where I sat in the same row with a Turkish Officer, two military cadets and a few soldiers. After the pictures, I could not find the cemetery so asked a shop girl who was going home if she knew where the Hotel Imperiale was, as I had heard of a Greek there who might help me. But she was alarmed at my appearance, and took to her heels. Late at night however, I found a Greek lodging house where I convinced the proprietress that I was a Georgian Musselman named Kakaoridse Berodse, and that I had lost my passport.

Next morning I went by the Underground Railway to Galata, and visited the German beer garden again. After a wait of some hours an old man wearing a battered panama hat entered and I noticed that he had a cigarette behind his ear. I attracted his attention, and placed a cigarette behind my own ear. As he would take no notice of me, I went across to his table and addressed him in Russian. He was very agitated and told me afterwards that he thought I was a Turk who had got hold of our plans. I convinced him that I was a British Officer however, and after ostentatiously bidding him goodbye, told him I would wait for him outside. When he came out, I followed him to a disused carpenters workshop in a back street in Galata. He promised to bring me food each day, and said that he would tell me when the Ukranian steamer "BATOUM", which lay in the harbour, would be ready to sail.

I was joined here by Captain Bott, on the evening of the second day. He was being returned with other British Officers and soldiers, to AFION KARA HISSAR, the day after my escape, and whilst waiting at Galata Bridge for a boat to take them to the Asiatic side, he slipped away whilst his guard was not looking, and reached the quay, took a caique to the Ukranian ship. He was concealed for the night by the third mate, and then in the uniform of a Russian sailor, was sent ashore to the

place where I

place where I was hiding.

The workshop in which we remained for about a week messured about 20' x 10' and was almost dark when the iron door was shut. A Turkish officer lived immediately above us, and his orderly's room on the ground floor was only separated from us by a thin partition, which had numerous gaps on it. We had consequently to remain very quiet and wear no boots, though fortunately for us there were numerous rats that scampered about amongst the shavings that littered the floor, so that any unavoidable noise we made was no doubt attributed by the Turks to the rats. This was useful too in a way, in that when sometimes we were about to smoke, we would make a rustling among the shavings to drown the familiar sound of a match being struck. We were very amused to find too, that a tame rabbit gave us quite a lot of unnecessary alarm for about four days, by a rattling of plates and tins close to the partition, whilst eating food that had been left for it, by the Turkish soldier. Frequently people in the street would knock at the door and there were two British air-raids whilst we were there, but otherwise nothing exciting happened, the old Russian bringing us food each morning and night. We were eventually discovered however by a Turk who climbed the street wall, and saw us from over the top of the window shutters. We accordingly left, and going to the quay, where two gendarmes were standing on duty at the steps, took a caique to the Ukranian steamer.

We got on board safely without being seen by the Captain and went below to the Third Mate's Cabin. It measured only 7 ft x 7 ft, and most of that space was taken up with a bunk and a divan. We were told that if the Turkish police were to search the ship, we were to hide, one in thedrawer under the divan, and the other in a small cupboard measuring about 2 ft 6 in x 2 ft x 2 ft. beneath the bunk. The mate had scarcely left us when we heard the signal, three raps on the deck, given very loudly. Captain Bott being the smaller of us got in the drawer which I closed after him, then I pulled the mattress off the bunk, squeezed into the cupboard beneath, and put the mattress

place where I was hiding.

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back over my head. There was a quantity of very dirty linen in both hiding places, and in this we wrapped ourselves. After remaining in this cramped and tremendously hot and stuffy state for an hour or so, we were forced to come out. When we had hidden thus on four or five subsequent occasions, I discovered that the supposed signal was given by the wash of waves from passing ferry steamers, which lifted the gangway, and struck it heavily against the ship's side.

There was difficulty about getting a cargo for the ship, and its date of sailing was being constantly postponed. The Chief Engineer too wanted us to leave the ship, but we had bought (brought?) revolvers, and I told him that I would not allow him to go back on his promise, and that if we went ashore, I would take him with me. Eventually however, the ship was chartered by a Turkish merchant, and loaded with tobacco, figs, raisins etc. The crew were a scoundrelly lot, who stole large quantities of the cargo, taking it to Constantinople for sale, and buying vodka with it instead. The ship's Officers also borrowed money from the Turkish merchant to buy cocaine, which they smuggled into Russia.

We had difficulty in obtaining enough money to carry on with, and we both went ashore twice to Constantinople in connection with money matters. At other times we were dressed in old sailors clothes and hidden in various parts of the ship, except one day when I helped to paint the ship. We were told that a Greek waiter in the city, who had passed on some of our cheques to an Englishman in Constantinople, had been taken by the police. I went ashore to investigate, dressed, as nearly as possible, like a Russian civilian. I found several gendarmes and soldiers inside the cafe, and others standing about outside. I learnt however, from another waiter there, that the man I wanted, with his Mother and sisters, had been arrested a day or two before through sheltering three British Officers in his house. Two of these Officers had been on the train with me at the time of my escaping, and had made a second attempt. Captain Bott was unsuccessful on two occasions

when he went to see the Englishman to whom we had sent our cheques, so I again went ashore and called on him at his office in the Prisoners' of War Bureau, attached to the Dutch Legation. This department was supervised by Turkish Officials. I told the Turkish Commissionaire at the door or the building in answer to his questions, that I was an American named Henry O'Neill, that I was from TARSUS, and that I did not have a card. I said that Mr.Sykes (the gentleman I wanted to see) was an old friend of mine, and would come down at once if he knew that I was there. After some demur, and then pretending to enquire if I could be admitted, I was allowed upstairs. I found four? from Turkish cavasses outside Mr.Sykes office/door. One of them asked me if I was a Russian and I answered that I was. Soon afterwards, I noticed that one of the cavasses was a man I had often seen and spoken to when I was in hospital. He was a Levantine Jew, whose sentiments were always with the people who paid him best, and he had no particular reason for liking me. I had asked a young Dutchman who was present if he would tell Mr.Sykes that I regretted that if I could not see him soon, I should have to leave, and unfortunately I would be leaving Constantinople in a few days, when the Jew who had been listening approached me, and asked me where I had learn English. I replied "In Turkey". He answered: "You speak English just like an Englishman". I told him then, as if in confidence, that I had purposely deceived the other cavasses as as I did not wish to satisfy their curiosity. He was satisfied and amused at this, and, after I had told him that my guard was waiting in the stret outside, he brought me a chair and a cigarette. I greeted Mr.Sykes as an old friend when he appeared, as there were several strange Turks and Greeks in the room watching me. I confided to him who I was, and was able to arrange for momentary help through his kindness.

When the Turkish police searched the ship, which they did on six different occasions, we had to go into hiding in the ballast tanks, which are small iron compartments, about thirty in number, situated at the bottom of the ship below the

propeller shaft tunnel, and which measure only about 2 ft x 2 ft x 6 ft. We were in these tanks for periods varying from one to thirteen hours at a stretch. They were exceedingly uncomfortable however, as it was impossible to sit up, the air was foul, it was perfectly dark, and we had to be all the time in some inches of dirty water. Water constantly dripped in from the pumps too, and until I had marked the walls, and timed the rise of the water we had suspected some of the Bolchevist members of the crew of letting some water in. There was only one place of entry or exit, that was a manhole always screwed down, and carefully covered with planks and lumber, after we had entered.

We were thirty-three days on the ship before she sailed, during all of which time, except the occasion already mentioned, and at night when we sometimes came out to promenade in the well deck, we remained below. Through want of exercise and light, and the discomfort of the tanks we both became very thin and emaciated, while Captain Bott developed jaundice.

Before the ship sailed a motley party of Greeks and Jews, came om board as passengers, and lived on the hatches. Nothing exciting happened on the voyage except that there was trouble between the fireman, some of whom were Bolchevists, and the emgineers. Therewas some drawing or revolvers and knives but no damage was done, and in the end the third engineer, worked as a fireman, whilst the firemen did practically, nothing else but drink Vodka. The very old Captain too, of this very old and very rusted ship lost his bearings; but managed eventually to reach ODESSA on the night of the third day.

We landed from a boat the next morning, and as I saw an Austrain officer picqueting the jetty with soldiers at the place whe e we intended to land, the boat was steered to a public landing place where, fortunately, some passengers were landing from another steamer. Austrian and German troops were in occupation in the town, and owing to recent trouble with Bolshevists the docks were heavily guarded. We were not molested however, and hiring a drosky, we drove to an address that had

us. The Russian gentleman there could not help us, but he gave us the address of an English civilian in the town; and from two friends of the Russian who had recently come from PETROGRAD, we obtained passports. My passpost stated that I was a Russian subject and native of Turkistan, by name Sergay Feordovitch Davidoff, with a wife named Anastasia, aged 19 years. Captain Bott's stated, that he was a German speaking Lett, named Gerrcoff, These passports were afterwards very useful as we were able to obtain bread and sugar from the Austrians at a cheap rate, as Russian subjects.

The Englishman whom we met was in partnership with a German a Jew, and a Greek, and ran a small tannery. For a short while I worked there, cutting up hides etc., Captain Bott being too ill to work, and I also sawed wood as part payment for our food, for which we paid. Food was very expensive but fortunately we were able to borrow some money from the Dutch Consul there. Most food supplies had been "cornered" by Jewish Speculators, and speculation, more than scarcity, was responsible for the high prices. A good dinner cost from £10 to £11, and a suit of clothes from £80 to £100.

The Bolshevists were still giving trouble in ODESSA. About 20,000 were supposed to be in the town, ready to break out at any moment, and an army of 25,000 Austrians and 10,000 to 12,000 Germans was kept in the town to maintain order. The Bolshevists had issued a manifesto that the killing of Officers and rich Citzens was to re-commence on the 26th October, and there was a good deal of excitement among the civilians and Officers. Guns were kept trained down several of the main streets by the Austrians; a fort had been constructed outside the town where the Russian Officers hoped to make a stand if the Austrians should be withdrawn from the town, and the Austrian gendarmerie patrols and Ukranski police had orders to shoot anyone who was found with arms. As we occupied a room in the Bolshevist quearter, we always carried our revolvers, and it was mainly because we owned

pistols that we were able to find a place to sleep. The English residents there had to ~~find~~ report regularly to the Austrians, and were afraid to do much for us, whereas a Ukranian Officer who greatly feared the Bolshevists, gave us shelter partly because we owned pistols, and might be able to help him, if the Bolshevists called at night. The room was used as an office by day, so consequently we spent the day in the streets, and cafes, observing what was going on, and as Captain Bott could speak German, and I had learnt Russian whilst in Turkey, we got a good deal if useful information about the Austrians, and Germans there, and the situation generally, which I was able to hand in afterwards to the British Intelligence Officers at VARNA, SOFIA, and SALONICA.

Through making a number of arrests and executions the Austrians prevented a recurrence of the atrocities that had occured in ODESSA in March 1918, but there were many robberies, frequent shooting in the streets at night, and 225 Austrians soldiers, and 60.000 waggons of ammunition were blown up by the Bolshevists.

We had intended to attempt to reach Archangel, where a British force was operating, or to travel East to BAKU, but the British force had recently evacuated BAKU, and we were told by travellers that the Archangel route was impossible. We were arranging to travel to YASSY in ROUMANIA, where we heard that there was an English Military Commission, when we received offers to go as aviators to the Russian Volunteer Army, which was operating in the region of the DON country, against Bolshevists. They promised that, after some service with them, to see that we joined up with the Ententist Forces in SIBERIA. In any case we would have flown there had they been unwilling to let us go, but we missed a train that we should have caught, and a few days afterwards, we heard of the Bulgarian armistice.

Through a Russian mercantile Captain whom we met, we went on board the Euphrates, a Russian ship which the Austrians were sending to VARNA to bring back released Ukranian prisoners. We went on board at night unnoticed by the Austrian sentries, and

and remaining hidden till the steamer left port and reached VARNA on November 5th.

At VARNA the ship was given five days quarantine m but with a Russian General and two Naval Captains of the Russian fleet who had also got ob board unknown to the Austrians, we evaded the quarantine and managed to get ashore.

The town had been occupied only a few days by an advance party of British soldiers and French Sailors. We went to the French Headquarters, and were taken by them to the British. Brigadier-General ROSS, with about ten Officers and about fifty men were im occupation of the town, and we reported to the General for duty. But as we had no uniforms and were both suffering from the effects of Spanish Influenza, for which we had had no medical attention and as we had no place to lie up in, In ODESSA, we were sent by train via BUCHAREST to SOFIA. From SOFIA we were sent by car through the STROUMA Valley to SALONICA. We were objects of much suspicion to the Officers and orderlies at Headquarters there, for I had a coat that had been given me in ODESSA, and which was much too big, a fancy waistcoat with green stripes (also a gift), trousers that I had received in a clothes distribution in Turkey, and a broad brimmed felt hat.

We obtained uniforms in SALONICA, but unfortunately were detained in that town for two weeks awaiting transport, during which time the German armistice was signed.

From SALONICA, we were sent to Port Said and thence to Cairo, being subsequently sent from PORT SAID to MARSEILLES, arriving in London on December 21st 1918.

Captain
Australian Flying Corps.

London
9th January 1919.

I.J.

REPORT F

Captain Thomas W. White, Australian Flying Corps.

Home address. 14, Alexandra Mansions, Beaufort Street, Chelsea.

I was taken prisoner near Bagdad on November 13th, 1915. I left Bagdad for Mosul on November 25th, reaching there on December 1st. I left Mosul on February 19th, 1916 for Aleppo, arriving there about ten days later. I remained almost two weeks in Aleppo, and four or five days in Tarsus, reaching Afion Kara Hissar on March 29th, 1916. I remained for two years and three months in Afion Kara Hissar and was then sent to Constantinople. I escaped from Constantinople on August 24th, 1918 and, travelling via Russia and Bulgaria, reached Salonica.

During my captivity I saw, and heard of, many instances of neglect and cruelty to British and Indian prisoners of war. During the retreat to Kut-el-Amara in November 1915, about 40 British troops and 500 Indians were taken prisoners on barges that had run aground in the River Tigris. Three officers, Lt.Cmdr. C. Goad, R.I.M., Capt H. Brodie (since deceased in Turkey), 103rd Mahratta Light Infantry and 2/Lt. G.Crosby-Flynn were among the prisoners. The British prisoners were stripped by Arabs, and without clothes or boots, were forced to march eighty miles to Bagdad, the officers only receiving a few old clothes from the Turks. At Bagdad they were miserably quartered and, after receiving a pair of slippers each, but no clothes, they were sent on a further long march to Mosul via Kirkuk, a detour which lengthened the journey by 75 to 100 miles and cost a few more lives. When what was left of the party arrived at Mosul, after after about a month's constant marching and after having covered about 350 miles, they were in a pitiable plight and would not have been recognised by their closest friends. A few verminous rags that they had stripped from sepoys who had died in the march were tied about their dirty and horribly emaciated bodies. They were utterly exhausted and disspirited and some were in a dying state with dysentry.. A few donkeys accompanied the

melancholy procession and carried some semi-conscious sick, and the corpse of an Indian. The Indian had been wound by his putties to the donkey's back by his comrades and in this position had died. A description of Air Mechanic Pass, R.F.C.,(who died on the next march) would be descriptive of several others in the party. He had no trousers, though it was winter and he must have felt the cold severely, instead, he had only a piece of filthy blanket around his loins, the remnants of an old cotton shirt about his shoulders, and a cap that he had taken from a dead sepoy. He had the remains of an old pair of slippers on his feet - or rather on his toes, for his heels had been so lacerated with the rough marching over all kinds of country that his feet were swollen even above the ankles so that he could only walk on tip-toe. The blanket too had so chafed him that it had formed large sores, and he was forced to hold it away from his body as he walked. He was so miserable then too, that when he waved his hand to me on entering the prison I did not recognise him. On arrival at Mosul a few were sent to hospital and the remainder put in large bare cells on the ground floor. Two hundred and twenty-five prisoners of ranks and grades from Indian sweepers to British warrant officers were shut up together in one cell. Some days afterwards some grass mats were put on the stone floor. But no bedding or clothes were issued them, though it was winter, and they were so crowded that they could not move about, but had to remain sitting or standing on the same spot all day. The sanitary arrangements were disgusting and they were not allowed to visit the latrines when they had need, but were taken en masse at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. As many of the prisoners were suffering from dysentry and diarrhoea this restriction caused a great deal of further unnecessary suffering. Numbers of Arabs, tied together and handcuffed in pairs would be brought in daily.by gendarmes. Those that could afford it would buy a position as one of the prisoners' guards from the third-in-command at the prison. The others would remain hand-

handcuffed and in some cases chained to the wall for some weeks in pestilential cells where they had only sitting room. Those that lived through were then drafted off for service, still handcuffed and tied in pairs.

I have witnessed some amazing acts of cruelty perpetrated by the Commandant, Abraham Hackey Bey on three men. They were frequently bastinadoed and at the inspection before being sent on service sick men would usually be dragged down the flight of stone steps to the barrack square where the Commandant would attack them with ferocity of a wild beast, and with kicking, spitting and swearing at them, and a liberal application of his riding whip would bring them to their feet and declare them fit. It was not surprising then, that with guards chosen from among such men who were little more than savages, and whose promotion seemed to depend on their propensities for brutality, that the guards followed the example of the Commandant and meted out similar treatment to the unfortunate prisoners. If one of the guard fancied the boots, putties or any article of clothing that a prisoner had managed to obtain, he would perhaps make him an offer of a few piastres for the article. If however the prisoner refused to part with it - for want of it on the next march might cost him his life - the guard would not allow that man to march out on the latrine parade till he had parted with it. Prisoners were frequently struck with sticks, and I once saw an unconscious sepoy taken to hospital, who had been felled with a rifle butt because, through weakness, he was walking too slowly when returning from the latrine parade.

The food supplied to the prisoners was so scanty and of such poor quality, that when the Indians, who ordinarily require much less food than British troops, grew daily thinner and died from absolute mal-nutrition. The food consisted of two small cakes of coarse bread and a handful of boiled wheat in the morning and some kurrawanna, a watery stew , in the evening. A dish of kurrawanna was divided between ten men. And it was noticable how almost all of the meat was usually to be found in those dished provided

for the guard. The prisoners, except one party of about ten, who by some mischance were allowed to have a bath on their arrival, were not able to wash even their faces and hands during the whole of the time they were in Mosul. And though the river Tigris was only about one hundred yards away, yet even drinking water was scarce Without being able to wash their faces and hands, the repulsivly filthy condition of the prisoners can be imagined when it is remembered that they had to adopt the Mussulman methods in regard to sanitation. Complaints on our part regarding the treatment of the men were either ignored by the Commandant or threatening answers sent back to us. At no time would he ever come to see us if asked to do so or did he even visit us. The conditions under which we nine British officers were confined were certainly better than those accorded the men, who were treated like so many beasts. But our treatment was certainly bad. We were in cells immediately above the men, so that on those rare occasions when, by persuading the one well-disposed N.C.O. of the guard to let the men out of their dens and they were allowed to sit in the courtyard to gain a little warmth and kill some of the vermin that swarmed in their rags, we were able to throw food to them and when we had it, a little money. We were quartered five in one cell and four in another; our cells leading off in both cases from guard rooms, where strong guards of verminous Arabs slept in sheepskins on the floor. Our cells measured about 10 x 10. ft. We were given grass mats to cover the floor. But, except for the first two officers to arrive and who were given Arab bedsteads we received no beds, bedding or furniture. We were allowed to promenade on twenty-five yards of balcony outside our door. But owing to the stench of latrines at either end and the at all times filthy condition of the balcony because our guards, Turkish soldiers quartered in the prison, preferred to use the balcony to the indescribable places of sanitation, our exercise was notcarried out under the not pleasant circumstances. We received no food from the Turks, but received instead paper money which was supposed to be at the rate of 4/6 per day. We were not allowed

to make our own purchases of food, nor in fact, did we see the outside of our prison except about once a fortnight when after many applications we would be allowed to visit the bath. We were told that if we were paid in full we would bribe someone to assist us to escape. We therefore would receive only one week's pay about every two or three weeks; this was always still further reduced as we had to pay exchange on the notes. We nevertheless managed to save some money for the men and surreptitiously to bring one or two each night to our quarters for a meal; but among so many we could do little and there were many deaths. Among the officers two had the jaundice during the time we were there, another had fever and others suffered from dysentry. One officer who attended hospital to have a bandage put on a sore on his leg, found no less than forty lice on the second-hand bandage that had been applied.

A second batch of men who had been taken in the retreat to Kut-el-Amara arrived about two weeks after the others. They had been brought in carts from Kirkuk, in Kurdistan, as they were too ill to walk. It was a mere chance that they were brought on in this way, as the carts had been sent to Kurkuk to bring in some Armenian women who in some mysterious way had disappeared.

On arrival at Mosul some of the men were too weak to stand and lay huddled up on the ground. The prison guards in a most brutal manner commenced to kick them, but none of them could rise. I shouted to them from the balcony to desist; for three of our number saw this outrage. We then sent to the Commandant to say that if he could not provide stretchers for these men, we would carry them to the hospital. He sent back a reply, that we could carry them if we chose. About six of some fifteen or so were British, and some of them were unconscious and in a dying state. We carried them to the hospital and left them lying outside to be admitted after dividing what money we had amongst them.. They were in the last stages of dysentry, and one man whom I carried to the hospital (Pte. Atkins, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry) had found it necessary to tear away the seat of his trousers owing to weakness and to avoid the constant necessity of taking them down. As far as I know all the men of this party except a Sgt. Johnson

Indian Supply and Transport Corps, died in hospital.

The hospital treatment was atrocious, though most of the men agreed that the doctors did their best. But they were understaffed and the patients were left to the tender mercies of callous inhuman Arab wardsmen. As I never visited hospital myself in Mosul I cannot vouch for the truth of the statements made. But I never doubted what was told me by the British soldiers, who had all become very dispirited and after so much suffering seemed rather to welcome than to fear death. And the fact that whilst I was in Mosul I know of only about six men who were discharged from hospital out of some scores of admissions seems eloquent enough testimony. The Indians preferred to die among their comrades to suffering loneliness and cruelties in hospital. There is no doubt that the unnatural state in which the prisoners were kept pent up in their cells made their cases almost hopeless before being admitted to hospital. But , except in one ward, the wardmen made no scruple of selling the food intended for one patient to any other who might possess money. In addition to this, if any patient through weakness soiled his bed, or in any was displeased the wardmen, he would be brutally cuffed about the head and spat upon; which treatment put the feeble and emaciated patient in such a state of mind that he died of sheer despondency. Pte. Atkins, aforementioned, was one of four such cases. It was only by chance that we heard and were able to keep a list of these men who had died. When we complained about this, the Commandant informed us that it was none of our business, and that they (the Turks) kept all necessary lists. Sometimes men, who could not gain admission to hospital would die in their cells. I was informed by two men that whilst on the march from Kirkuk to Mosul, no less than forty prisoners, both British and Indian, were shut up for the night in a roomsmeasuring only 12 ft x 12 ft., with a low ceiling. Only a few were able to sit down, though they had marched twenty-five miles and had to do a similar march the next day. The majority had to remain standing all night; the air was hot and fetid, but fortunately only one man died during the night, though Sgt. Welsh, Indian S.& T. Corps died next morning. Air Mechanic Bass

Air Mechanic Pass (since deceased) in Turkey) reported to me that whilst on the march between Bagdad and Kurkuk, an unoffending sepoy who was marching beside him had his shoulder broken by a blow delivered by on of the guard with a rifle butt, and died not long afterwards. In this case of offender was punished as the Turkish officer in charge was a humane man, who, unfortunately left the column at Kirkuk.

Besides the prisoners taken during the retreat to Kut-el-Amara fifty sepoys and a Subardar of the 102nd King's Grenadiers who formed the Consul Guard to Bagdad prior to the outbreak of war, were also imprisoned in Mosul and had been shut up in this same prison since December, 1914. On arrival in Mosul warm clothes were taken from them and in consequence some of their numbers had died of cold. By April, 1916 after what was left of the prisoners had arrived at Aleppo, only the Subardar and one sepoy were alive. The Subardar died soon afterwards of typhus at Afion Kara Hissar, and I believe, though I am not certain, that the solitary sepoy has died too. At Mosul, the Consul Guard with ~~them~~ some odd sepoys captured at various intervals, a few Russians and Persians and a British sergeant were confined in the one cell. The Britisher, Sergt. Blaker of the Indian Telegraphs, was taken while carrying out repair work behind the British lines near Sheikh Saad, by a force of Arab and Turkish cavalry. He informed me that after landing from the steam launch, "Shat-el-Akab", his party was attacked and he and two natives were taken prisoner. The launch moved off and its guard of a Navildar and six sepoys put up a running fight. The skipper of the launch was killed however and the launch ran aground. The wounded sepoys were killed by the women of the village who pelted them with debris; the navildar was put to death. Sgt. Blaker and the two natives also were with him had then to accompany the enemy cavalry back to their own lines, and they had to run through the whole of the ensuing day. One of the natives who had received a knife wound from an Arab who attempted to extort money from him, died through mortification of his wound after reaching Mosul.

About February 16th, 1916, two hundred and fifty odd British

and Indian prisoners started out on a march of over two hundred miles to Ras-el-Ain, the terminus of the unfinished Constantinople - Bagdad railway line. Thirty-six donkeys were supplied to carry the sick. Many of the Indians were without boots and so were so weak that they had to be mounted on donkeys at the outset. We had written to the Commandant saying that he must provide boots or at least slippers for those men who had no footwear, but our letter was ignored. We understood that we were to accompany the prisoners in carts. We were told that we were to pay about £12 for the carts, but we refused to do this, and said that we would march with the men though two of our number were really too weak to march. The carts were provided however; but we were taken away from the men.

Only thirty of the two hundred and fifty prisoners survived the march. They had practically no bedding, they received scarcely any food, they slept out at nights in pouring rain and in temperates which froze the ground. One by one they dropped out exhausted and were despatched by the guard. A British Warrant Officer told me that Air Mechanic Pass, who had been left behind in a village to be picked up by a cart that accompanied the column had been killed by the guard who, when questioned, denied that they had ever seen him. There were eleven Britishers in the party, but only one, Sergt. Blaker, reached Aleppo. Two of the Britishers who went mad, died at Nisibin. They were Pte. Cottle, of the Black Watch; and I think Pte. Freeman who belonged to the Oxford and Bucks L.I. Cottle was one of five men of the Black Watch and the Seaforth Highlanders, who were captured while serving with the force which attempted to relieve Kul-el-Amara. One died in Mosul and the others died on the march from Mosul. They reported that a Color-Sgt. Jessup of the Black Watch, who was captured with them, was shot by the Turks soon after his capture.

A few prisoners who were left behind at various hospitals en route between Mosul and Aleppo were discharged and came on later, though they would not have been more than twenty in number; making a total of fifty out of two hundred and fifty who survived the

march to the foot of the Taurus Mountains. In crossing these rugged ranges more men were lost, and W.O. (now Lieut) Sly, S.A.T. Corps, who was one of three Britishers who came on from hospital, dropped out on the road from utter exhaustion. He was kicked about the head by his guards, who wished to assure themselves that he was not shamming, and he was then left by his comrades for dead. When he came to, he found himself in an Arab road mender's camp, while the occupants were obviously disputing regarding the distribution of his clothes. But seeing a Turkish officer passing, he made a sudden rush from the hut and, protected by the Turkish officer he was taken back to Aleppo, and subsequently came on to the concentration camp.

Camps for prisoners were situated at Brusa (for Generals, Staffs, Colonels and a few Majors) Kastamoni (mostly officers of the Kut-el-Amara garrison) Yoshgard (Kut-el-Amara and a few other odd prisoners) and Afion Kara Hissar, where the Gallipoli, a few Kut-el-Amara and other Mesopotamians and most Flying Corps officers were kept. On our way to Afion Kara Hissar from Aleppo, we were in charge of a Turkish Lieut. who was always under the influence of rakki (the Turkish absinthe). The soldiers of the guard however were very vigilant as they were intimidated by him - so vigilant indeed that they would not let us purchase food unless the officer was present. And as he was usually sleeping or could not be approached we had several hungry days. In fact for fine days, with the exception of a meal given us by a young German officer. we had only a very little bread, though two of our party were seriously ill. We arrived at Afion Kara Hissar about 2 a.m. and were marched carrying our belongings and supporting the sick, with the thirty odd survivors of the men's party about two miles to the local barracks. We found on arrival that a Sikh sepoy had been struck on the head with a rifle by one of the guard as he was leaving the train andhad been dragged along all the way to the town on a blanket by Sgt. Blaker and one of the sepoy's comrades. I thought the man was dead; and I reported the matter to an English speaking Turkish Naval Officer there and told him also of the sufferings of the men and of the

brutality of the guards. He said that the offenders would be dealt with; but I do not know if anyone was punished, though the sepoys was taken to hospital subsequently recovered.

After being two days in an empty house in Afion Kara Hissar undergoing quarantine, we were taken to an Armenian Church in the town with about eighty other Officers, most of whom were Russian.

We were confined in this church for six weeks as a punishment we were told, because three officers of the garrison had attempted to escape. A new Commandant arrived who made the treatment of prisoners much more rigorous than before.

Practically all soldier prisoners were sent to work on roads or to tunnel the Taurus Mountains for the Bagdad railway. In some of the camps the death rate was high owing to malaria and typhus. In those supervised by Germans, however, the treatment was better and there was less disease.

Whilst confined in the Armenian Church which had a small graveyard alongside, a Russian officer and a British soldier died of typhus. For the first two weeks we were not allowed outside the door of the church, latrines being erected in the vestry. But afterwards we were permitted to walk in the small graveyard outside. The graveyard measured about thirty yards by fifteen yards, and the Armenians who had been buried there had evidently been put in very shallow graves, or they had been dug up again, for their bones littered the ground. A Russian doctor among the prisoners said that an eye disease which I contracted whilst shut up in this place, was due to septic dust from the graveyard. After the escaped officers, Cudro Lts/Stoker and Cochrane and Lt. Price R.N. (since deceased in Turkey) were retaken, the British prisoners were put into four Armenian houses near the town, the Russians and French being quartered in others in the Armenian quarter. There were many houses such as these for there had been a general muster of Armenians, and the men had been marched off - no doubt to be massacred, for in every town that I visited I heard stories of the awful atrocities committed against these unfortunate Christians. The houses were large enough, so that we were not unduly overcrowded. But as the Turks supplied no beds,

no bedding, no furniture, firewood nor lighting, and, as we had actually to pay rent for about the first nine months there, and as practically all houses there were infested with vermin, in other respects we were not so well off.

We received paper money ostensibly at the rate of 4/6d. per day, but the value of paper money was always depreciating and the price of food rising, so that as time went on, it became more and more difficult to live. The 4/6d. per day was debited against the British Government who stopped the amounts from our pay accounts.
Had it not been for a fund started by the American Ambassador in Constantinople, from which we received payments in addition to our Turkish pay, it would have been impossible for us to have bought sufficient food. After America's entry into the war, this fund was administered by the Dutch Ambassador. Commencing about May 1916 with payments to each officer and man of about 60 piastres each (10/-) per month, it was gradually increased to 5 liras (about £4.10 face value) for each officer; three for each British soldier and two for each Indian. Payments at this rate lasted till about March 1918, when with the extraordinary rise in the prices of food, the rates were gradually increased to 15 liras per officer and eight liras per man, and, I believe, from about the date I escaped, August 1918 till the armistice, eighteen liras per month for each officer. Even with this useful monetary assistance we were by no means able to live well. European stores of course were practically unobtainable, and the price of food of the country, which is ordinarily so low in times of peace, had soared to unheard of limits.
Our staple articles of food were bread and peckmez.
The bread was seldom good, being a coarse brown variety, and usually very stodgy and, towards the end of the season, containing a quantity of husks, straw, and grit.

For these cakes of bread which weighed about 1½ lbs. we had to pay 1/5d. each. Peckmez is a kind of molasses made from the residue of grapes after wine-making. Costing at first about 10d. per lb., it quickly rose to 10/- per lb. Beef, usually buffalo, cost 6/6 per lb. Mutton (goat) cost 8/6. The meat was usually so tough that we always minced it; and of course we could afford only a little. Though we had seen in the papers of the Berne Conference that Turkish prisoners in British hands were receiving quarters, lighting, rations and fuel, our representative was evidently not alive to the deception in the Turkish part of the agreement. The Turks had undertaken to give us quarters, lighting, fuel, firewood, etc. the same as supplied to Turkish officers. Anyone who possessed the slightest understanding of the Turk character should know that deceit and cunning are two of his main characteristics, and that such an agreement on his part was worse than useless. For he could always point to some one of his officers who received nothing at all. During the winter of 1917-18 when the thermometer recorded for weeks at a time temperatires of from 10° to 14° below zero, Centigrade, we had the greatest difficulty in obtaining firewood. In the particular house in which I was the senior officer, we had to chop up the ground floor of the house, where the original inhabitants had kept their cows, to cook our food. Firewood at that time cost as much as 6d. per lb; so that we could not afford to buy much for heating purposes.

Our pay and the money from the Embassy too, was often held in reserve by the Turks (and we suspected that the Turks made use of it) for sometimes a month at a time. On such occasions we found the greatest difficulty in obtaining food, as the shopkeepers would only allow us about a week's credit. The Turkish Red Crescent officials too, informed

the British Red Cross that prisoners in Turkey, did not require parcels, but that money was of more use. As a natural consequence the Turk made money by giving us a low rate of exchange; so that for the value of a parcel which in England would cost 10/- and which was worth to us about £30, we would receive 60 piastres (10/-) from the Turk, which was only sufficient to buy a pound of peckmez. Tea cost from £20 to £40 per lb., kerosene cost 15/- per quart, so that we could not afford such luxuries.

Had we consented to give our parole, we could have had a much pleasanter time during our captivity. After the escape of three officers from Kastamoni, about September 1917, that camp was broken up and those who would give parole were promised good treatment while those who refused were assured of bad treatment. Unfortunately, contrary to regulations, seventy-four (74) British officers gave their parole to the Turk, that they would not attempt to escape for the duration of the war, provided they received in return certain good treatment. These officers were then sent to Gedis, where they received the promised treatment; they had almost complete liberty; they were able to buy food and firewood at a cheaper rate, and they were situate in a town where the winter was not so severe. By their action in giving parole these officers made conditions worse for those of us who would not. Whenever we complained about the price of food, the impossibility of obtaining firewood, restrictions regarding exercise, etc. we were told that we should follow the example of the others and give parole. The ~~way~~ very severe winter did induce others from our camp to give parole, but by giving parole, escape was made more difficult for the remainder of us, as there were fewer of us to guard. Apart from the fact that it is an officer's duty to endeavour to rejoin his fighting prices again, an officer who gives parole that he will not

attempt to escape for the duration of the war, in a way, in my opinion, assists the enemy, as the enemy is enabled to send those troops who would otherwise be employed in guarding prisoners of war, to join the fighting pforces, whilst such an action must be derogatory to British prestige.

About July 1916, men of the Kut-el-Amara garrison began to arrive at Afion Kara Hissar. Although they had surrendered through shortage of food these already enfeebled men had to march those enormous distances between Mesopotamia and Anatolia where no railways had been laid. No less than about eight hundred miles (800) has to be marched over mostly desert country in addition to a long railway journey. All the horrors of the march of the five hundred sick and wounded men taken on the retreat to Kut-el-Amara, and already described here, were repeated on a larger scale. The 500 odd men had felt the severity of the winter, but the men of the surrendered garrison did this same march during the burning heat of the summer. Forty-four Flying Corps mechanics were taken in Kut. None had been killed nor died during the siege, but thirty-eight died on the march. Regiments were reduced to forty or fifty men. These unfortunates who dropped out on the march near a town or village that possessed a hospital, usually dropped out to die. Corp. Sloss, Australian Flying Corps reported to me that at Nisibin where he was in hospital with many others suffering from dysentery and exhaustion, there were three tents for the prisoners patients. All the severity of the sun was felt in these tents as they were absolutely unshaded. In one tent, he told me, those men able to walk about were kept. In another, those who were weaker still, and in the third, those who were so far gone that they were too weak to go to the latrines , and in some cases too weak to lift what food was placed there for them. They were put there to die, yet some of them lay there for as long as two weeks, unattended, weltering in their own ordure, covered with

flies and undergoing the suffering of dysentery under a semi-tropical sun, before they died. On one occasion Sloss saw a man being carried out to be buried, who showed signs of life. With some other patients who were too weak to rise he told the Turks that the man was not dead. But sooner than take the dying man back again, the inhuman wardsman fetched some water which they poured down the unconscious man's throat till he choked and died.

On arrival at Afion Kara Hissar the survivors presented a pitiable spectacle. They were ragged, indescribably dirty and haggard, miserably thin and disspirited and they staggered along the road like drunken men, tottering from side to side, stumbling and falling and occasionally being assisted by comrades not quite as exhausted, as they struggled along on their way to the barrack. About two hundred died in Afion Kara Hissar in about six weeks, as a result of their terrible experiences. Daily we would see four or five dead men, without coffins and simply wrapped in a rag which was taken off before the man was buried, being carried through the streets near our camp en route for burial in the Armenian cemetery. No service was held, and though we had both a Catholic and a Wesleyan chaplain as prisoners in our camp, they were not allowed, though they repeatedly applied, to officiate at the burials. The corpses were always carried by other Kut men who staggered along and seemed much too weak for such work. British, Russians, and Indians were at first buried indiscriminately in the same graves, till a strong protest from the men was listened to by the Turkish Commandant. Though there were three, and at one time, four British doctors in our camp, they were not allowed to attend to the soldier prisoners. An Indian Mussulman, Fuzel Ahmed, an assistant surgeon in the Indian Subordinate Medical Sercice, attended to the soldiers. This man was on parole and could do as he pleased, and with his Mussulman orderly was suspected of spying on the British officers, and it was strange that

the Turkish Commandant usually had good information when an escape was contemplated.

The Commandant Musloum Bey was a brutal ruffian, who believed in terrorism and intimidation. Floggings of soldier prisoners were frequent, and, just before the Armistice the Commandant was found guilty by a Turkish Commission of forcible unnatural offences against four British soldiers. On one occasion he ordered a Russian officer who had tried to seize the Commandant's sword when the Commandant went to strike him, to two hundred strokes with the dyak ( ). The officer was beaten at the Armenian Church, where some British and Russian soldiers were quartered, in the presence of British soldiers. The Commandant beat the officer till the officer became unconscious and he himself exhausted. In punishment of this sort the bare feet are held up from the ground by a pole to which they are attached by tightly wound loops of wire, and the strokes are delivered on the bare feet, calves and backs of the thighs. Thirty strokes are usually sufficient for an ordinary Arab, yet that officer was beaten three times into unconsciousness by three different persons, the Commandant, English interpreter and the Borch Chaoush (Sergt-Major) of the guard. After this he was thrown into a dungeon below the Commandant's office where his face was severely burned through lying on a heap of lime for some time, and where he remained for three days. During this time he received no food or water from the Turks, but survived only because British soldiers lowered food and drink to him. He was unable to walk for some time, and was three months in hospital.

On another occasion Pte. McKay, 15th Batt., A.I.F., who had been badly wounded in the back with shrapnel and had been a year in hospital, was struck on the back with a whip by a Turkish officer who said he was not walking quickly enough. He protested that his back was still bad, but received another blow, at which he knocked the Lieut. out and felled three of the guard who came to the officers assistance. There were rumours

that he was to be shot, but we then heard that he was to be beaten each day for a period of twenty-two days. Two of these beatings had been already administered before we knew, but a strongly worded and threatening protest on our part caused the sentence to be annulled. On another occasion seventeen British N.C.O's and P.O's were beaten by a Turkish Naval Officer whose name I have now forgotten. Beatings are very common among the Turks and their own soldiers receive quite a lot of it. On an occasion when three Russian soldiers attempted to escape. the remaining Russians were beaten each day till the three men were caught. To give an idea of our Commandant's idea of humour the following will suffice. He called late one night on some of the senior British officers in our camp and told them that he intended to hang two British soldiers and a Turkish soldier who had assisted them whilst excaping, in the town bazaar the next morning. The officers were horrified and protested against such action. But next morning, the British orderlies who made the purchases in the bazaar, reported that three men had been hanged there alright and that the bodies were still hanging (a frequent occurence in Turkey). After having the camp in suspense for some hours longer the Commandant sent the interpreter to say that the men who had been hanged were not British soldiers but only some bandits that had recently been caught.

I could expatiate on the evil doings of this man for many more pages but as my report is by now quite lengthy enough, I will close it with these observations.

(1) Officers just taken prisoner have often received courtesy and chivalrous treatment from Turkish officers of good fighting regiments and have at once written to their friends to say that they were well treated.

(2) That any subsequent letters written by them to say that their treatment was bad, were destroyed.

(3) That no doubt officers on parole said that they were well-treated, and thus created false impression at Home, where proples did not know one camp from another; for it is not likely that these officers would admit that their treatment differed from that in other camps, moreover their letters would more readily pass the Turkish censor.

(4) That the Turks took care not to exchange prisoners or wounded until the war had almost ceased. In this way

no first hand information regarding treatment reached our authorities, further, nobody escaped from Turkey till the end of 1917.

The Turk is so practised in deceit that he deceived our authorities and our Red Cross.

I should mention too that five officers were sent from Afion Kara Hissar to Constantinople as a reprisal, because of alleged ill-treatment of Turkish officer prisoners in Cairo. These officers were confined without exercise in an underground cell for three months, and one died.

The three officers Lts.-Comdrs. Stoker and Cochrane, R.N. and Lt. Price, R.N. (since deceased) received ten months gaol for their attempted escape.

Officers in Afion Kara Hissar received gaol for the most trivial of alleged offences, and five British officers were closely confined in their house and allowed outside their door for only half-an-hour each day during a period of seven months, because they were suspected of wanting to escape, and would not give their parole.

Four Russian officers who had attempted to escape from Beusa, were shut in their house for seven or eight months, and were not once allowed outside.

(COPY)

NAME. WHITE, T.W.

RANK. Captain.

REGIMENT. Flying Corps (Australian).

CIRCUMSTANCES OF ESCAPE FROM TURKEY.

In May, 1918, whilst at the prisoners of War Camp at AFION-KARA-HISSAR, in Turkey-in-Asia, and after 2½ years of captivity, I was medically examined by the Turkish medical authorities. The examination was made in response to a request from Constantinople and was, I believe, on account of a cabled enquiry from Australia regarding my health. For though the Turks did little or nothing for the health of their prisoners, they would usually carry out an examination, such as it was, when an enquiry was made. I was in moderately good health, but decided to feign illness, as I intended to escape from Constantinople if I should be sent there. I had planned an escape from Afion-Kara-Hissar, and had already made the necessary preparations, but as a Turkish Commission was then enquiring into the conduct of the Turkish Commandant at Afion-Kara-Hissar, I decided to postpone the date in deference to the wish of the Senior British Officer there. Though I spoke French, I took a French Officer with me to the examination to act as interpreter, so that I could gain time for replies when questioned. I convinced the Turkish Medical Board that an old injury to my foot, which I had kept tightly bandaged for some days, and a scar on my ankle, the result of a burn, were evidences of tuberculosis. From this date I had naturally to always walk with a limp, and, a month after I was examined, I was sent to Constantinople for treatment.

I was sent to two different hospitals, in the second of which I found four other British officers shamming sickness, and one (Lt. Hill, of "Road to En-dor" fame) feigning madness in hopes of being exchanged. Whilst in hospital I met a Bosnian Flying Officer in the Turkish Service who had been wounded whilst flying in Palestine. He was anxious to leave the Turks, and agreed to take Captain A. J. Bott, M.C., R.A.F., and myself in his aeroplane from San Stefano, the German Aerodrome near Constantinople, to Lemnos, if we could escape and reach the Aerodrome when he was on duty, but the Turks suspected him and forbad him to speak to us. I decided, therefore, that it would be best to attempt to reach Russia. The Germans, after overrunning Ukrania had allowed a Ukranian steamer, and three schooners, to come to Constantinople to trade. After we were discharged from hospital, and confined in an Armenian school at PSAMATIA, near Constantinople, preparatory to being returned to the Concentration camp at Afion-Kara-Hissar, I arranged a plan of escape to the Russian ship, through a Ukranian officer, and a Greek waiter in a restaurant. We were to escape as best we could from the school where we were kept closely guarded, and, at a certain German beer garden in Galata, would search for a man who would carry a cigarette behind his ear, and who, when we made ourselves known to him, would find us a hiding place until we could get aboard the Ukranian ship.

On August 24th we got our opportunity when four of us were being sent under escort from PSAMATIA to Constantinople by train. Four Turkish soldiers accompanied us, whilst a Turkish officer of the garrison travelled in a compartment close by. We had decided to make a bolt for it at the railway terminus in Constantinople, in hopes that more than one soldier might chase one of us, and perhaps someone might succeed in getting away. We also agreed to make the most of any opportunity of escape which might present itself en route. Captain Bott was to come with me to Russia, while the other two officers, Lieutenant Fulton, Royal Flying Corps, and Lieut. Stone, Worcesters, who had no plans of their own, had decided to make the most of our abandoned aeroplane scheme of escape. We had given them all particulars and a sketch of the German Aerodrome at San Stefano.

I had accumulated 150 Liras, about £100, in cheques that I had surreptitiously cashed from various people whilst in hospital, and at Psamatia I had bribed a Turkish soldier to turn these into big notes for me, and had sewn them into my braces and the tightening band of my trousers, so that if I was retaken the Turkish soldiers or Gendarmerie might not be able to find them. We were in civilian clothes (as most long service prisoners had worn out their uniforms) and besides being unshaved for some days, I carried a felt hat in an inside pocket of my coat, in hopes that it might be useful as a disguise in replacing the cap that I wore. I had also a miniature Russian dictionary, and two small bags made from handkerchiefs, filled with biscuits and chocolate from a parcel I had recently received.

When nearingConstantinople our train collided with another on a viaduct close to KUMKAFU station. A number of people were hurt, and all were thrown violently from their seats. As I had purposely remained standing, so as to be able to make the most of any opportunity, and as I was holding on to the parcel rack at the time, I was not thrown down. The passengers were mostly officers and soldiers, with a sprinkling of civilians. Whilst calming a very terrified woman, partly out of pity for her and partly to deceive any soldiers who might have been watching me regarding my intentions, I put on the hat I was carrying and, calling to Captain Bott that I was going, made for the exit. It was a corridor train and there had been a mad rush to get out, so that undue haste on my part did not seem out of place. Our guard had been suspicious of us, however, from the outset, and I was chased by one soldier while another seized Captain Bott.

Jumping down on to the line, I found that I could not get along the viaduct owing to the rush of excited people, so accordingly boarded another railway carriage and ran through that, with the Turkish soldier a few yards behind me. Jumping down to the Railway track again I ran to the abutment of the viaduct and jumped into the street below. In this way I gained about fifteen or twenty yards on the soldier, who, preferred to run down the railway embankment to jumping from the abutment, which was not a high one. I ran round the nearest street corner with the soldier in hot pursuit, and running at top speed round every subsequent turning and not knowing where they led, endeavouring to shake him off. He shouted to passing Turks to stop me, but the people shouted to were either more interested on hurrying the other way to see the railway smash, or did not realize what was wanted till I had passed them. Though I took as many turns as possible so that he seldom had a good chance of shooting me, I had, in one street, to run past a barracks where twenty or thirty Turkish soldiers were standing outside looking stupidly at me through an iron fence, and not realising quickly enough what was going on. The soldier who chased me, however, was big and athletic, and realising that he would be bastinadoed and imprisoned if I succeeded in escaping from him, ran his hardest. (I had left some money for him at PSAMATIA on his return, so that he could buy sufficient food for himself during the months imprisonment he would get, for the Turks give very little food to such prisoners.) I was not in good condition myself though, after having taken very little exercise and walked with a limp for so long. After running about half a mile I was quite exhausted, and decided to take the only alternative to run into a house immediately after turning a corner, and take the chance whether the inhabitants were Turks or friendly disposed Christians. I accordingly rushed through the first open street door that I saw, considerably startling two old Greek ladies who were in the front room of the house. I told them to say nothing about me if they were questioned, and going through the house I found a cupboard in which I hid myself. The soldier evidently ran on, for the house was not searched. I told the inhabitants of the house who I was, and a young Greek woman who was present said she would help me if she could. From her husband, who arrived soon afterwards, I bought a Turkish fez and an old chesterfield coat as a disguise, leaving my own coat there, as the Chesterfield was too small to wear over my own. My hair had been clipped short, so that a wound scar at the back of my head showed up plainly. I covered this identification mark with

boot polish, and clipped off my moustache, then, going to the nearest tramway, went to Galata to search for the man who had promised to find me a hiding place. By taking this tram I avoided crossing Galata bridge, which spans the Golden Horn, on foot, for numerous inquisitive gendarmes may always be seen there. There were several German and Austrian soldiers, and a few Turks, in the beer garden. Although I placed many cigarettes behind my ear and pretended to sleep whilst watching the crowd for about two hours, I left, as I thought a longer stay might draw unwelcome attention to me. I walked to GUMUSH SUYU, buying some cigarettes for my next visit to the beer garden, on the way. As I knew only a little Turkish, and as, owing to the costume I wore, I would be expected to speak Turkish well, I made my purchases at street stalls, choosing the moment to buy when heavy traffic was passing so that though I only moved my lips and pointed to what I wanted, the stall keeper imagined I had asked for what I wanted.

At the steps alongside the Sultan's palace of DOLMA BATCHE, I hired a caique (a kind of canoe) and went for a row on the BOSPHORUS, deeming it safe there, as I should be out of sight of over-zealous gendarmes who might demand to know why I was not on military service. The old caiquechi who rowed the boat, however, preferred talking to rowing so that I had to pretend to be deaf. He was not easily deceived, however, and would stand up and shout in first one ear and then the other. Sometimes, when he had repeated a statement several times, I could understand his meaning, and when I thought it advisable I would answer with an "evvet" (Yes) or a "Yok" (No) or one of the many signs which the Turks employ to show their approval or disapproval. The old man was so persistent, however, that as the sea was rought I pretended to be seasick, at which he propped me up with the boat's cushions and made me feel quite comfortable. After he had rowed me backwards and forwards for two hours, close to the walls of the palace, with its sleepy looking guards, I left him, after arranging that he should take me for a longer row next morning. I had, of course, no intention of seeing him in the morning; but made this appointment merely so that if he suspected me he would not inform on me, nor have me followed.

I then made my way to PERA in search of a cafe, and a place to pass the night, deciding to revisit the beer garden in the morning. On the way I was stopped by a gendarme, who, however, merely wanted a light for his cigarette. No conversation is necessary in a case of this sort. The policeman proffered his unlighted cigarette. I gave him mine, at the same time trying to convey the impression that I was in a hurry. He took a light, salaamed by touching heart, lips and brow (a habit we had acquired through mimicking the Turks), I returned the salaam, and proceeded on my way.

I looked in at many cafes before I found one that suited me, for I was by no means well dressed. I found one eventually where practically all the other diners were drunk with "rakki", a Turkish absinthe. Here I was able to eat in peace over an evening newspaper, applauding their unmusical high pitched singing when expected to do so. I found it more difficult to find a resting place for the night, however, as I had no passport of any kind. I explored a Mahommedan cemetery, and the ruins of a burnt-out house, and decided on one of these two places failing any better accommodation. Seeing a party of five or six men in what I took to be Russian uniform, and over-hearing a remark made by one of them in Russian, I took them to be Russian (perhaps Georgians, some of whom, owing to the foundation of a Georgian State by the Germans, had been released), who might help me. I entered into conversation with them in Russian, and finding that they were Bulgarians who, had they known who I was, would have taken charge of me, I left them hurriedly. I only learnt afterwards that many colloquial phrases of Russian are identical with Bulgarian.

There were many German and Austrian soldiers in the streets, and after spending some two hours in the Grande Rue de Pera and the bazaars in the vicinity, searching and occasionally asking for a home for the night, I decided to visit the cinema to pass the time. Seeing an electric Turkish sign over a street door, I took this to

be a cinema, but found on getting inside that it was a hairdresser's and boot-cleaning establishment, and although I could have stayed with advantage, I considered it safer to leave.

The next place was a Cinema Theatre all right, but I found after buying a ticket and getting inside that I was the first to arrive, and that I was 1½ hours too early for the show. It must have been obvious to the proprietor that I was a stranger and so I decided to leave, and half an hour later visited another Cinema theatre, where I sat in the same row with a Turkish officer, two military cadets and a few soldiers. After the pictures I could not find the cemetery so asked a shop girl who was going home if she knew where the hotel Imperiale was, as I had heard of a Greek there who might help me, but she was alarmed at my appearance and took to her heels. Late at night, however, I found a Greek lodging house where I convinced the proprietress that I was a Georgian Musselman named Kakaoridse Berodse, and that I had lost my passport.

Next morning I went by the Underground Railway to Galata, and visited the German beer garden again. Aftera wait of some hours an old man wearing a battered panama hat entered and I noticed that he had a cigarette behind his ear. I attracted his attention, and placed a cigarette behind my own ear. As he would take no notice of me, I went across to his table and addressed him in Russian. He was very agitated and told me afterwards that he thought I was a Turk who had got hold of our plans. I convinced him that I was a British officer, however, and after ostentatiously bidding him goodbye told him I would wait for him outside. When he came out I followed him to a disused carpenter's workshop in a back street in Galata. He promised to bring me food each day, and said that he would tell me when the Ukranian steamer "BATOUM" which lay in the harbour would be ready to sail.

I was joined here by Capt. Bott, on the evening of the second day. He was being returned with other British officers and soldiers to Afion-Kara-Hissar, the day after my escape, and whilst waiting at Galata bridge for a boat to take them to the Asiatic side, he slipped away whilst his guard was not looking and, reaching the quay, took a caique to the Ukranian ship. He was concealed for the night by the third mate and then, in the uniform of a Russian sailor, was sent ashore to the place where I was hiding.

The workshop in which we remained for about a week measured about 20' x 10' and was almost dark when the iron door was shut. A Turkish officer lived immediately above us, and his orderly's room on the ground floor was only separated from us by a thin partition, which had numerous gaps in it. We had consequently to remain very quiet and wear no boots, though fortunately for us there were numerous rats that scampered about amongst the shavings that littered the floor, so that any unavoidable noise was no doubt attributed by the Turks to the rats. This was useful too in a way, in that when sometimes we were about to smoke, we would make a rustling among the shavings to drown the familiar sound of a match being struck. We were very amused to find, too, that a tame rabbit gave us quite a lot of unnecessary alarm for about four days, by a rattling of plates and tins close to the partition whilst eating food that had been left for it by the Turkish soldier. Frequently people in the street would knock at the door and there were two British air-raids whilst we were there, but otherwise nothing exciting happened, the old Russian bringing us food each morning and night. We were eventually discovered, however, by a Turk who climbed the street wall and saw us from over the top of the window shutters. We accordingly left, and going to the quay, where two gendarmes were standing on duty at the steps, took a caique to the Ukranian steamer.

We got on board safely without being seen by the Captain and went below to the Third Mate's cabin. It measured only 7' x 7' and most of that space was taken up with a bunk and a divan. We were told that if the Turkish police were to search the ship we were to hide, one in the drawer under the divan, and the other in a small cupboard measuring about 2'6" x 2' beneath the bunk". The mate had scarcely left us when we heard the signal, three raps on the deck,

given very loudly. Captain Bott, being the smaller of us, got into the drawer, which I closed after him, then I pulled the mattress off the bunk, squeezed into the cupboard beneath, and put the mattress back over my head. There was a quantity of very dirty linen in both hiding places, and in this we wrapped ourselves. After remaining in this cramped and tremendously hot and stuffy state for an hour or so, we were forced to come out. When we had hidden thus on four or five subsequent occasions I discovered that the supposed signal was given by the wash of waves from passing ferry steamers, which lifted the gangway and struck it heavily against the ship's side.

There was difficulty about getting a cargo for the ship, and its date of sailing was being constantly postponed. The Chief Engineer too, wanted us to leave the ship, but we had bought revolvers and I told him that I would not allow him to go back on his promise, and that if we went ashore I would take him with me. Eventually, however, the ship was chartered by a Turkish merchant, and loaded with tobacco, figs, raisins, etc. The crew were a scoundrelly lot, who stole large quantities of the cargo, taking it to Constantinople for sale and buying vodka with it instead. The ship's officers also borrowed money from the Turkish merchant to buy cocaine, which they smuggled into Russia.

We had difficulty in obtaining enough money to carry on with, and we both went ashore twice to Constantinople in connection with money matters. At other times we were dressed in old sailor's clothes and hidden in various parts of the ship, except one day when I helped to paint the ship. We were told that a Greek waiter in the city who had passed on some of our cheques to an Englishman in Constantinople had been taken by the police. I went ashore to investigate, dressed, as nearly as possible, like a Russian civilian. I found several gendarmes and soldiers inside the cafe, and others standing about outside. I learnt, however, from another waiter there, that the man I wanted, with his mother and sisters, had been arrested a day or two before through sheltering three British officers in his house. Two of these officers had been on the train with me at the time of my escaping, and had made a second attempt. Captain Bott was unsuccessful on two occasions when he went to see the Englishman to whom we had sent out cheques, so I again went ashore and called on him at his office in the Turkish Prisoners' of War Bureau, attached to the Dutch Legation. This department was supervised by Turkish officials. I told the Turkish Commissionaire at the door of the building, in answer to his questions, that I was an American named Henry O'Neill, that I was from TARSUS, and that I did not have a card. I said that Mr. Sykes (the gentleman I wanted to see) was an old friend of mine, and would come down at once if he knew that I was there. After some demur, and then pretending to enquire if I could be admitted, I was allowed upstairs. I found four Turkish cavasses outside Mr. Sykes' office door. One of them asked me if I was a Russian, and I answered that I was. Soon afterwards, I noticed that one of the cavasses was a man I had often seen and spoken to when I was in hospital. He was a Levantine Jew, whose sentiments were always with the people who paid him best, and he had no particular reason for liking me. I had asked a young Dutchman who was present if he would tell Mr. Sykes that I regretted that if I could not see him soon I should have to leave, and unfortunately I would be leaving Constantinople in a few days, when the Jew who had been listening approached me and asked me where I had learnt English. I replied "In Turkey"; he answered "You speak English just like an Englishman". I told him then, as if in confidence, that I had purposely deceived the other cavasses as I did not wish to satisfy their curiosity. He was satisfied and amused at this, and, after I had told him that my guard was waiting in the street outside, he brought me a chair and a cigarette. I greeted Mr. Sykes as an old friend when he appeared, as there were several strange Turks and Greeks in the room watching me. I confided to him who I was, and was able to arrange for momentary help through his kindness.

When the Turkish police searched the ship, which they did on six different occasions, we had to go into hiding in the ballast

tanks, which are small iron compartments, about thirty in number, situated at the bottom of the ship below the propeller shaft tunnel, and which measure only about 2' x 2' x 8'. We were in these tanks for periods varying from one to thirteen hours at a stretch. They were exceedingly uncomfortable, however, as it was impossible to sit up, the air was foul, it was perfectly dark, and we had to be all the time in some inches of dirty water. Water constantly dripped in from the pumps, too, and until I had marked the walls, and timed the rise of the water, we had suspected some of the Bolshevik members of the crew of letting some water in. There was only one place of entry or exit, and that was a manhole always screwed down, and carefully covered with planks and lumber, after we had entered.

We were thirty three days in the ship before she sailed, during all of which time, except the occasion already mentioned and at night when we sometimes came out to promenade in the well deck, we remained below. Through want of exercise and light, and the discomfort of the tanks, we both became very thin and emaciated, while Captain Bott developed jaundice.

Before the ship sailed a motley party of Greeks and Jews, came on board as passengers, and lived in the hatches. Nothing exciting happened on the voyage except that there was trouble between the firemen, some of whom were Bolsheviks, and the engineers. There was some drawing of revolvers and knives but no damage was done, and in the end the third engineer worked as fireman, whilst the fireman did practically nothing else but drink vodka. The very old Captain, too, of this very old and very rusted ship, lost his bearings, but managed eventually to reach ODESSA on the night of the third day.

We landed from a boat the next morning, and as I saw an Australian officer picqueting the jetty with soldiers at the place where we intended to land, the boat was steered to a public landing place, where, fortunately, some passengers were landing from another steamer. Austrian and German troops were in occupation in the town, and owing to recent trouble with Bolsheviks the docks were heavily guarded. We were not molested, however, and, hiring a drosky, we drove to an address that had been given us. The Russian gentleman there could not help us, but he gave us the address of an English civilian in the town; and from two friends of the Russian who had recently come from Petrograd, we obtained passports. My passport stated that I was a Russian subject and a native of Turkistan, by name Sergay Feodovitch Davidoff, with a wife named Anastasia, aged 19 years. Captain Bott's stated that he was a German-speaking Lett, named Genkoff. These passports were afterwards very useful as we were able to obtain bread and sugar from the Austrians at a cheap rate, as Russian subjects.

The Englishman whom we met was in partnership with a German, a Jew and a Greek, and ran a small tannery. For a short while I worked there, cutting up hides, etc., Captain Bott being too ill to work, and I also sawed wood as part payment for our food, for which we paid. Food was very expensive, but fortunately we were able to borrow some money from the Dutch consul there. Most food supplies had been "cornered" by Jewish speculators, and speculation, more than scarcity, was responsible for the high prices. A good dinner cost from £10 to £11, and a suit of clothes from £80 to £100.

The Bolsheviks were still giving trouble in ODESSA. About 20,000 were supposed to be in the town, ready to break out at any time, and an army of 25,000 Austrians and 10,000 to 12,000 Germans were kept in the town to maintain order. The Bolsheviks had issued a manifesto that the killing of officers and rich citizens was to recommence on the 26th Oct., and there was a good deal of excitement among the civilians and officers. Guns were kept trained down several of the main streets by the Austrians, a fort had been constructed outside the town where the Russian officers hoped to make a stand if the Austrians should be with-

drawn from the town, and the Austrian gendarmerie patrols and Ukranski police had orders to shoot anyone who was found with arms. As we occupied a room in the Bolshevik quarter, we always carried our revolvers, and it was mainly because we owned pistols that we were able to find a place to sleep. The English residents there had to report regularly to the Austrians, and were afraid to do much for us, whereas a Ukranian officer who greatly feared the Bolsheviks gave us shelter partly because we owned pistols and might be able to help him if the Bolsheviks called at night. The room was used as an office by day, so consequently we spent the day in the streets and cafes, observing what was going on, and as Captain Bott could speak German, and I had learned Russian whilst in Turkey, we got a good deal of useful information about the Austrians and Germans there and the situation generally, which I was able to hand in afterwards to the British Intelligence Officers at Varna, Scfia and Salonica.

Through making a number of arrests and executions the Austrians prevented a recurrence of the atrocities that had occurred in ODESSA in March, 1918, but there were many robberies, frequent shooting in the streets at night, and 225 Austrian soldiers and 60,000 wagons of ammunition were blown up by the Bolsheviks.

We had intended to attempt to reach Archangel, where a British force was operating, or to travel east ~~xx~~ to BAKU, but the British force had recently evacuated BAKU, and we were told by travellers that the Archangel route was impossible. We were arranging to travel to YASSY in ROUMANIA, where we heard that there was an English Military Commission, when we received offers to go as aviators to the Russian Volunteer Army, which was operating in the region of the DON country, against Bolsheviks. They promised that, after some service with them, to see that we joined up with the Ententists Forces in SIBERIA. In any case we would have flown there had they been unwilling to let us go, but we missed a train that we should have caught, and a few days afterwards we heard of the Bulgarian armistice.

Through a Russian mercantile Captain whom we met, we went on board the Euphrat, a Russian ship, which the Austrians were sending to VARNA to bring back released Ukranian prisoners. We went on board at night unnoticed by the Austrian sentries, and remaining hidden till the steamer left port, reached Varna on November 5th.

At VARNA the ship was given five days quarantine but with a Russian General and two Naval Captains of the Russian Fleet, who had also got aboard unknown to the Austrians, we evaded the quarantine and managed to get ashore.

The town had been occupied only a few days before by an advance party of British soldiers and French sailors. We went to the French Headquarters, and were taken by them to the British Brigadier-General ROSS, who, with about ten officers and about fifty men were in occupation of the town, and we reported to the General for duty, but as we had no uniforms and were both suffering from the effects of Spanish influenza, for which we had had no medical attention and as we had no place to lie up in, in ODESSA, we were sent by train via Plevna to SOFIA. From SOFIA we were sent by car through the STROUMA Valley to SALONICA. We were objects of much suspicion to the officers and orderlies at Headquarters there, for I had a coat that had been given me in ODESSA, and which was much too big, a fancy waistcoat with green stripes (also a gift!), trousers that I had received in a clothes distribution in Turkey, and a broad brimmed felt hat.

We obtained uniforms in SALONICA, but unfortunately were detained in that town for two weeks awaiting transport, during which time the German armistice was signed. From Salonica we were sent to Port Said and thence to Cairo, being subsequently sent from Port Said to Marseilles, arriving in London on December 21st, 1918.

LONDON,
9th January, 1919.

(Sgd.) T. W. White, Captain
Australian Flying Corps.

Confidential.

O. T. 19.

Report by Captain THOMAS W. WHITE, Australian Flying Corps.

Home Address.

14, Alexandra Mansions, Beaufort Street, Chelsea, S.W.

Capture. Nov. 13, 1915.
Bagdad. Nov. 13–25, 1915.
Journey. Nov. 25—Dec. 1, 1915.

I was taken prisoner near Bagdad on 13th November 1915. I left Bagdad for Mosul on 25th November, reaching there on 1st December. I left Mosul on 19th February 1916 for Aleppo, arriving there about ten days later. I remained almost two weeks in Aleppo, and four or five days in Tarsus, reaching Afion Kara Hissar on 29th March 1916. I remained for two years and three months in Afion Kara Hissar, and was then sent to Constantinople. I escaped from Constantinople on 24th August 1918, and, travelling *viâ* Russia and Bulgaria, reached Salonica.

During my captivity I saw, and heard of, many instances of neglect and cruelty to British and Indian prisoners of war. During the retreat to Kut-el-Amara in November 1915, about 40 British troops and 500 Indians were taken prisoners on barges that had run aground in the River Tigris. Three officers, Lieut.-Commander C. Goad, R.I.M., Captain H. Brodie (since deceased in Turkey), 103rd Mahratta Light Infantry, and 2nd Lieut. G. Crosby-Flynn were among the prisoners. The British prisoners were stripped by Arabs, and, without clothes or boots, were forced to march 80 miles to Bagdad, the officers only receiving a few old clothes from the Turks. At Bagdad they were miserably quartered, and, after receiving a pair of slippers each but no clothes, they were sent on a further long march to Mosul *viâ* Kirkuk, a detour which lengthened the journey by 75 to 100 miles, and cost a few more lives. When what was left of the party arrived at Mosul, after about a month's constant marching and after having covered about 350 miles, they were in a pitiable plight, and would not have been recognised by their closest friends. A few verminous rags that they had stripped from sepoys who had died on the march were tied about their dirty and horribly emaciated bodies. They were utterly exhausted and dispirited, and some were in a dying state with dysentery. A few donkeys accompanied the melancholy procession, and carried some semi-conscious sick and the corpse of an Indian. The Indian had been wound by his puttees to the donkey's back by his comrades, and in this position had died. A description of Air Mechanic Pass, R.F.C. (who died on the next march), would be descriptive of several others in the party. He had no trousers, though it was winter, and he must have felt the cold severely; instead he had only a piece of filthy blanket around his loins, the remnants of an old cotton shirt about his shoulders, and a cap that he had taken from a dead sepoy. He had the remains of an old pair of slippers on his feet—or rather on his toes, for his heels had been so lacerated with the rough marching over all kinds of country that his feet were swollen even above the ankles so that he could only walk on tip-toe. The blanket, too, had so chafed him that it had formed large sores, and he was forced to hold it away from his body as he walked. He was so miserable then, too, that when he waved his hand to me on entering the prison I did not recognise him.

Mosul. Dec. 1, 1915 — Feb. 19, 1916.

On arrival at Mosul a few were sent to hospital and the remainder put in large bare cells on the ground floor. Two hundred and twenty-five prisoners of ranks and grades from Indian sweepers to British warrant officers were shut up together in one cell. Some days afterwards some grass mats were put on the stone floor. But no bedding or clothes were issued them, though it was winter, and they were so crowded that they could not move about, but had to remain sitting or standing on the same spot all day. The sanitary arrangements were disgusting, and they were not allowed to visit the latrines when they had need, but were taken *en masse* at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. As many of the prisoners were suffering from dysentery and diarrhœa, this restriction caused a great deal of further unnecessary suffering. Numbers of Arabs, tied together and handcuffed in pairs, would be brought in daily by gendarmes. Those that could afford it would buy a position as one of the prisoners' guards from the third-in-command at the prison. The others would remain handcuffed and in some cases chained to

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the wall for some weeks in pestilential cells where they had only sitting room. Those that lived through were then drafted off for service, still handcuffed and tied in pairs.

I have witnessed some amazing acts of cruelty perpetrated by the Commandant, Abraham Hakki Bey, on three men. They were frequently bastinadoed, and at the inspection before being sent on service sick men would usually be dragged down the flight of stone steps to the barrack square where the Commandant would attack them with ferocity of a wild beast, and with kicking, spitting and swearing at them, and a liberal application of his riding whip, would bring them to their feet and declare them fit. It was not surprising then, that with guards chosen from among such men who were little more than savages, and whose promotion seemed to depend on their propensities for brutality, that the guards followed the example of the Commandant and meted out similar treatment to the unfortunate prisoners. If one of the guard fancied the boots, puttees or any article of clothing that a prisoner had managed to obtain, he would perhaps make him an offer of a few piastres for the article. If, however, the prisoner refused to part with it—for want of it on the next march might cost him his life—the guard would not allow that man to march out on the latrine parade till he had parted with it. Prisoners were frequently struck with sticks, and I once saw an unconscious sepoy taken to hospital, who had been felled with a rifle butt because, through weakness, he was walking too slowly when returning from the latrine parade.

The food supplied to the prisoners was so scanty and of such poor quality, that even the Indians, who ordinarily require much less food than British troops, grew daily thinner and died from absolute mal-nutrition. The food consisted of two small cakes of coarse bread and a handful of boiled wheat in the morning and some kurrawanna, a watery stew, in the evening. A dish of kurrawanna was divided between 10 men. And it was noticeable how almost all of the meat was usually to be found in those dishes provided for the guard. The prisoners, except one party of about 10, who by some mischance were allowed to have a bath on their arrival, were not able to wash even their faces and hands during the whole of the time they were in Mosul. And though the river Tigris was only about 100 yards away, yet even drinking water was scarce. Without being able to wash their faces and hands, the repulsively filthy condition of the prisoners can be imagined when it is remembered that they had to adopt the Mussulman methods in regard to sanitation. Complaints on our part regarding the treatment of the men were either ignored by the Commandant or threatening answers sent back to us. At no time would he ever come to see us if asked to do so or did he even visit us The conditions under which we nine British officers were confined were certainly better than those accorded to the men, who were treated like so many beasts. But our treatment was certainly bad. We were in cells immediately above the men, so that on those rare occasions when, by persuading the one well-disposed N.C.O. of the guard to let the men out of their dens and they were allowed to sit in the courtyard to gain a little warmth and kill some of the vermin that swarmed in their rags, we were able to throw food to them, and when we had it, a little money. We were quartered five in one cell and four in another; our cells leading off in both cases from guard rooms, where strong guards of verminous Arabs slept in sheepskins on the floor. Our cells measured about 10 × 10 ft. We were given grass mats to cover the floor. But, except for the first two officers to arrive and who were given Arab bedsteads, we received no beds, bedding or furniture. We were allowed to promenade on 25 yards of balcony outside our door. But owing to the stench of latrines at either end and the at all times filthy condition of the balcony because our guards, Turkish soldiers quartered in the prison, preferred to use the balcony to the indescribable places of sanitation, our exercise was not carried out under the not pleasant circumstances. We received no food from the Turks, but received instead paper money which was supposed to be at the rate of 4*s*. 6*d*. per day. We were not allowed

to make our own purchases of food, nor, in fact, did we see the outside of our prison except about once a fortnight when after many applications we would be allowed to visit the bath. We were told that if we were paid in full we would bribe someone to assist us to escape. We therefore would receive only one week's pay about every two or three weeks; this was always still further reduced as we had to pay exchange on the notes. We nevertheless managed to save some money for the men and surreptitiously to bring one or two each night to our quarters for a meal; but among so many we could do little and there were many deaths. Among the officers two had the jaundice during the time we were there, another had fever and others suffered from dysentery. One officer who attended hospital to have a bandage put on a sore on his leg, found no less than 40 lice on the second-hand bandage that had been applied.

A second batch of men who had been taken in the retreat to Kut-el-Amara arrived about two weeks after the others. They had been brought in carts from Kirkuk, in Kurdistan, as they were too ill to walk. It was a mere chance that they were brought on in this way, as the carts had been sent to Kurkuk to bring in some Armenian women who in some mysterious way had disappeared.

On arrival at Mosul some of the men were too weak to stand and lay huddled up on the ground. The prison guards in a most brutal manner commenced to kick them, but none of them could rise. I shouted to them from the balcony to desist; for three of our number saw this outrage. We then sent to the Commandant to say that if he could not provide stretchers for these men, we would carry them to the hospital. He sent back a reply that we could carry them if we chose. About six of some 15 or so were British, and some of them were unconscious and in a dying state. We carried them to the hospital and left them lying outside to be admitted after dividing what money we had amongst them. They were in the last stages of dysentery, and one man whom I carried to the hospital (Private Atkins, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry), had found it necessary to tear away the seat of his trousers owing to weakness, and to avoid the constant necessity of taking them down. As far as I know all the men of this party, except a Sergeant Johnson, Indian Supply and Transport Corps, died in hospital.

The hospital treatment was atrocious, though most of the men agreed that the doctors did their best. But they were understaffed, and the patients were left to the tender mercies of callous inhuman Arab wardsmen. As I never visited hospital myself in Mosul I cannot vouch for the truth of the statements made. But I never doubted what was told me by the British soldiers, who had all become very dispirited, and after so much suffering seemed rather to welcome than to fear death. And the fact that whilst I was in Mosul I know of only about six men who were discharged from hospital out of some scores of admissions seems eloquent enough testimony. The Indians preferred to die among their comrades to suffering loneliness and cruelties in hospital. There is no doubt that the unnatural state in which the prisoners were kept pent up in their cells made their cases almost hopeless before being admitted to hospital. But, except in one ward, the wardmen made no scruple of selling the food intended for one patient to any other who might possess money. In addition to this, if any patient through weakness soiled his bed, or in any way displeased the wardmen, he would be brutally cuffed about the head and spat upon; which treatment put the feeble and emaciated patient in such a state of mind that he died of sheer despondency. Private Atkins, afore-mentioned, was one of four such cases. It was only by chance that we heard and were able to keep a list of these men who had died. When we complained about this, the Commandant informed us that it was none of our business, and that they (the Turks) kept all necessary lists. Sometimes men who could not gain admission to hospital would die in their cells. I was informed by two men that whilst on the march from Kirkuk to Mosul, no less than 40 prisoners, both British and Indian, were shut up for the night in a room measuring only 12 feet by 12 feet, with a low ceiling. Only a few were able to sit down, though they had marched

25 miles and had to do a similar march the next day. The majority had to remain standing all night; the air was hot and fetid, but fortunately only one man died during the night, though Sergeant Walsh, Indian Supply and Transport Corps, died next morning. Air Mechanic Pass (since deceased in Turkey) reported to me that whilst on the march between Bagdad and Kirkuk, an unoffending sepoy who was marching beside him had his shoulder broken by a blow delivered by one of the guard with a rifle butt, and died not long afterwards. In this case the offender was punished as the Turkish officer in charge was a humane man, who, unfortunately left the column at Kirkuk.

Besides the prisoners taken during the retreat to Kut-el-Amara, 50 sepoys and a subahdar of the 102nd King's Grenadiers who formed the Consul guard to Bagdad prior to the outbreak of war, were also imprisoned in Mosul and had been shut up in this same prison since December 1914. On arrival in Mosul warm clothes were taken from them, and in consequence some of their numbers had died of cold. By April 1916, after what was left of the prisoners had arrived at Aleppo, only the subahdar and one sepoy were alive. The subahdar died soon afterwards of typhus at Afion Kara Hissar, and, I believe, though I am not certain, that the solitary sepoy has died too. At Mosul, the Consul Guard, with some odd sepoys captured at various intervals, a few Russians and Persians, and a British sergeant were confined in the one cell. The Britisher, Sergeant Blaker, of the Indian Telegraphs, was taken while carrying out repair work behind the British lines near Sheikh Saad, by a force of Arab and Turkish cavalry. He informed me that after landing from the steam launch "Shat-el-Akab," his party was attacked, and he and two natives were taken prisoner. The launch moved off, and its guard of a havildar and six sepoys put up a running fight. The skipper of the launch was killed, however, and the launch ran aground. The wounded sepoys were killed by the women of the village, who pelted them with débris; the havildar was put to death. Sergeant Blaker and the two natives who were with him had then to accompany the enemy cavalry back to their own lines, and they had to run through the whole of the ensuing day. One of the natives who had received a knife wound from an Arab, who attempted to extort money from him, died through mortification of his wound after reaching Mosul.

Journey. Feb. 19—March 29, 1916.

About 16th February 1916, 250 odd British and Indian prisoners started out on a march of over 200 miles to Ras-el Ain, the terminus of the unfinished Constantinople–Bagdad railway line. Thirty-six donkeys were supplied to carry the sick. Many of the Indians were without boots, and were so weak that they had to be mounted on donkeys at the outset. We had written to the Commandant saying that he must provide boots or at least slippers for those men who had no footwear, but our letter was ignored. We understood that we were to accompany the prisoners in carts. We were told that we were to pay about 12*l.* for the carts, but we refused to do this, and said that we would march with the men, though two of our number were really too weak to march. The carts were provided, however, but we were taken away from the men.

Only 30 of the 250 prisoners survived the march. They had practically no bedding, they received scarcely any food, they slept out at nights in pouring rain and in temperature which froze the ground. One by one they dropped out exhausted and were despatched by the guard. A British warrant officer told me that Air Mechanic Pass, who had been left behind in a village to be picked up by a cart that accompanied the column, had been killed by the guard who, when questioned, denied that they had ever seen him. There were 11 Britishers in the party, but only one, Sergeant Blaker, reached Aleppo. Two of the Britishers, who went mad, died at Nisibin. They were Private Cottle, of the Black Watch, and I think Private Freeman, who belonged to the Oxford and Bucks L.I. Cottle was one of five men of the Black Watch and the Seaforth Highlanders who were captured while serving with the force which attempted to relieve Kut-el-Amara. One died in Mosul and the others died on the march from Mosul. They reported that a Colour-Sergeant

Jessup, of the Black Watch, who was captured with them, was shot by the Turks soon after his capture.

A few prisoners, who were left behind at various hospitals *en route* between Mosul and Aleppo, were discharged and came on later, though they would not have been more than 20 in number, making a total of 50 out of 250 who survived the march to the foot of the Taurus Mountains. In crossing these rugged ranges more men were lost, and Warrant Officer (now Lieutenant) Sly, S.A.T. Corps, who was one of three Britishers who came on from hospital, dropped out on the road from utter exhaustion. He was kicked about the head by his guards, who wished to assure themselves that he was not shamming, and he was then left by his comrades for dead. When he came to, he found himself in an Arab road-mender's camp, while the occupiers were obviously disputing regarding the distribution of his clothes. But seeing a Turkish officer passing, he made a sudden rush from the hut, and, protected by the Turkish officer, he was taken back to Aleppo, and subsequently came on to the concentration camp.

Camps for prisoners were situated at Brusa (for generals, staffs, colonels, and a few majors), Kastamuni (mostly officers of the Kut-el-Amara garrison), Yozgad (Kut-el-Amara and a few other odd prisoners), and Afion Kara Hissar, where the Gallipoli, a few Kut-el-Amara and other Mesopotamians, and most Flying Corps officers were kept. On our way to Afion Kara Hissar from Aleppo we were in charge of a Turkish lieutenant, who was always under the influence of rakki (the Turkish absinthe). The soldiers of the guard, however, were very vigilant, as they were intimidated by him, so vigilant, indeed, that they would not let us purchase food unless the officer was present, and as he was usually sleeping or could not be approached we had several hungry days; in fact, for five days, with the exception of a meal given us by a young German officer, we had only a very little bread, though two of our party were seriously ill.

Afion Kara Hissar. March 29, 1916—June, 1918.

We arrived at Afion Kara Hissar about 2 a.m. and were marched, carrying our belongings and supporting the sick, with the 30 odd survivors of the men's party, about two miles to the local barracks. We found on arrival that a Sikh sepoy had been struck on the head with a rifle by one of the guard as he was leaving the train, and had been dragged along all the way to the town on a blanket by Sergeant Blaker and one of the sepoy's comrades. I thought the man was dead, and I reported the matter to an English-speaking Turkish naval officer there, and told him also of the sufferings of the men and of the brutality of the guards. He said that the offenders would be dealt with, but I do not know if anyone was punished, though the sepoy who was taken to hospital subsequently recovered.

After being two days in an empty house in Afion Kara Hissar undergoing quarantine, we were taken to an Armenian church in the town with about 80 other officers, most of whom were Russian.

We were confined in this church for six weeks as a punishment, we were told, because three officers of the garrison had attempted to escape. A new Commandant arrived, who made the treatment of prisoners much more rigorous than before.

Practically all soldier prisoners were sent to work on roads or to tunnel the Taurus Mountains for the Bagdad railway. In some of the camps the death rate was high owing to malaria and typhus. In those supervised by Germans, however, the treatment was better and there was less disease.

Whilst confined in the Armenian church, which had a small graveyard alongside, a Russian officer and a British soldier died of typhus. For the first two weeks we were not allowed outside the door of the church, latrines being erected in the vestry; but afterwards we were permitted to walk in the small graveyard outside. The graveyard measured about 30 yards by 15 yards, and the Armenians who had been buried there had evidently been put in very shallow graves, or they had been dug up again, for their bones littered the ground. A Russian doctor among the prisoners said that an eye disease which I contracted whilst shut up in this place was due to septic dust from the graveyard. After the escaped

officers, Lieuts. Cedric Stoker and Cochrane and Lieut. Price, R.N. (since deceased in Turkey) were retaken, the British prisoners were put into four Armenian houses near the town, the Russians and French being quartered in others in the Armenian quarter. There were many houses such as these, for there had been a general muster of Armenians, and the men had been marched off—no doubt to be massacred, for in every town that I visited I heard stories of the awful atrocities committed against these unfortunate Christians. The houses were large enough, so that we were not unduly overcrowded; but as the Turks supplied no beds, no bedding, no furniture, firewood, nor lighting, and as we had actually to pay rent for about the first nine months there, and as practically all houses there were infested with vermin, in other respects we were not so well off.

We received paper money ostensibly at the rate of 4*s.* 6*d.* per day, but the value of paper money was always depreciating and the price of food rising, so that as time went on, it became more and more difficult to live. The 4*s.* 6*d.* per day was debited against the British Government, who stopped the amounts from our pay accounts. Had it not been for a fund started by the American Ambassador in Constantinople, from which we received payments in addition to our Turkish pay, it would have been impossible for us to have bought sufficient food. After America's entry into the war, this fund was administered by the Dutch Ambassador. Commencing about May 1916 with payments to each officer and man of about 60 piastres each (10*s.*) per month, it was gradually increased to 5 liras (about 4*l.* 10*s.* face value) for each officer; three for each British soldier and two for each Indian. Payments at this rate lasted till about March 1918, when with the extraordinary rise in the prices of food, the rates were gradually increased to 15 liras per officer and 8 liras per man, and, I believe, from about the date I escaped, August 1918 till the armistice, 18 liras per month for each officer. Even with this useful monetary assistance we were by no means able to live well. European stores of course were practically unobtainable, and the price of food of the country, which is ordinarily so low in times of peace, had soared to unheard of limits.

Our staple articles of food were bread and peckmez. The bread was seldom good, being a coarse brown variety, and usually very stodgy and, towards the end of the season, containing a quantity or husks, straw, and grit. For these cakes of bread which weighed about 1½ lbs. we had to pay 1*s.* 5*d.* each. Peckmez is a kind of molasses made from the residue of grapes after wine-making. Costing at first about 10*d.* per lb., it quickly rose to 10*s.* per lb. Beef, usually buffalo, cost 6*s.* 6*d.* per lb. Mutton (goat) cost 8*s.* 6*d.* The meat was usually so tough that we always minced it; and of course we could afford only a little. Though we had seen in the papers of the Berne Conference that Turkish prisoners in British hands were receiving quarters, lighting, rations and fuel, our representative was evidently not alive to the deception in the Turkish part of the agreement. The Turks had undertaken to give us quarters, lighting, fuel, firewood, &c., the same as supplied to Turkish officers. Anyone who possessed the slightest understanding of the Turk character should know that deceit and cunning are two of his main characteristics, and that such an agreement on his part was worse than useless. For he could always point to some one of his officers who received nothing at all. During tke winter of 1917–18 when the thermometer recorded for weeks at a time temperatures of from 10° to 14° below zero, Centigrade, we had the greatest difficulty in obtaining firewood. In the particular house in which I was the senior officer, we had to chop up the ground floor of the house, where the original inhabitants had kept their cows, to cook our food. Firewood at that time cost as much as 6*d.* per lb., so that we could not afford to buy much for heating purposes.

Our pay, and the money from the Embassy too, was often held in reserve by the Turks (and we suspected that the Turks made use of it) for sometimes a month at a time. On such occasions we found the greatest difficulty in obtaining food, as the shopkeepers would only allow us about a week's credit. The Turkish

Red Crescent officials, too, informed the British Red Cross that prisoners in Turkey did not require parcels, but that money was of more use. As a natural consequence the Turk made money by giving us a low rate of exchange; so that for the value of a parcel which in England would cost 10*s.* and which was worth to us about 30*l.*, we would receive 60 piastres (10*s.*) from the Turk, which was only sufficient to buy a pound of peckmez. Tea cost from 20*l.* to 40*l.* per lb., kerosene cost 15*s* per quart, so that we could not afford such luxuries.

Had we consented to give our parole, we could have had a much pleasanter time during our captivity. After the escape of three officers from Kastamuni, about September 1917, that camp was broken up and those who would give parole were promised good treatment, while those who refused were assured of bad treatment. Unfortunately, contrary to regulations, 74 British officers gave their parole to the Turk, that they would not attempt to escape for the duration of the war, provided they received in return certain good treatment. These officers were then sent to Gedis, where they received the promised treatment; they had almost complete liberty; they were able to buy food and firewood at a cheaper rate, and they were situate in a town where the winter was not so severe. By their action in giving parole these officers made conditions worse for those of us who would not. Whenever we complained about the price of food, the impossibility of obtaining firewood, restrictions regarding exercise, &c., we were told that we should follow the example of the others and give parole. The very severe winter did induce others from our camp to give parole, but by giving parole, escape was made more difficult for the remainder of us, as there were fewer of us to guard. Apart from the fact that it is an officer's duty to endeavour to rejoin his fighting forces again, an officer who gives parole that he will not attempt to escape for the duration of the war, in a way, in my opinion, assists the enemy, as the enemy is enabled to send those troops who would otherwise be employed in guarding prisoners of war, to join the fighting forces, whilst such an action must be derogatory to British prestige.

About July 1916, men of the Kut-el-Amara garrison began to arrive at Afion Kara Hissar. Although they had surrendered through shortage of food, these already enfebled men had to march those enormous distances between Mesopotamia and Anatolia where no railways had been laid. No less than about 800 miles had to be marched over mostly desert country, in addition to a long railway journey. All the horrors of the march of the 500 sick and wounded men taken on the retreat to Kut-el-Amara, and already described here, were repeated on a larger scale. The 500 odd men had felt the severity of the winter, but the men of the surrendered garrison did this same march during the burning heat of the summer. Forty-four Flying Corps mechanics were taken in Kut. None had been killed nor died during the siege, but 38 died on the march. Regiments were reduced to 40 or 50 men. These unfortunates who dropped out on the march near a town or village that possessed a hospital, usually dropped out to die. Corporal Sloss, Australian Flying Corps, reported to me that at Nisibin, where he was in hospital with many others suffering from dysentery and exhaustion, there were three tents for the prisoners' patients. All the severity of the sun was felt in these tents as they were absolutely unshaded. In one tent, he told me, those men able to walk about were kept. In another, those who were weaker still; and in the third, those who were so far gone that they were too weak to go to the latrines, and in some cases too weak to lift what food was placed there for them. They were put there to die, yet some of them lay there for as long as two weeks, unattended, weltering in their own ordure, covered with flies and undergoing the suffering of dysentery under a semi tropical sun, before they died. On one occasion Sloss saw a man being carried out to be buried, who showed signs of life. With some other patients who were too weak to rise, he told the Turks that the man was not dead. But sooner than take the dying man back again, the

inhuman wardsman fetched some water which they poured down the unconscious man's throat till he choked and died.

On arrival at Afion Kara Hissar the survivors presented a pitiable spectacle. They were ragged, indescribably dirty and haggard, miserably thin and dispirited and they staggered along the road like drunken men, tottering from side to side, stumbling and falling and occasionally being assisted by comrades not quite as exhausted, as they struggled along on their way to the barrack. About 200 died in Afion Kara Hissar in about six weeks, as a result of their terrible experiences. Daily we would see four or five dead men, without coffins and simply wrapped in a rag which was taken off before the man was buried, being carried through the streets near our camp en route for burial in the Armenian cemetery. No service was held, and though we had both a Catholic and a Wesleyan chaplain as prisoners in our camp, they were not allowed, though they repeatedly applied, to officiate at the burials. The corpses were always carried by other Kut men who staggered along and seemed much too weak for such work. British, Russians, and Indians were at first buried indiscriminately in the same graves, till a strong protest from the men was listened to by the Turkish Commandant. Though there were three, and at one time four, British doctors in our camp, they were not allowed to attend to the soldier prisoners. An Indian Mussulman, Fuzel Ahmed, an assistant surgeon in the Indian Subordinate Medical Service, attended to the soldiers. This man was on parole and could do as he pleased, and with his Mussulman orderly was suspected of spying on the British officers, and it was strange that the Turkish Commandant usually had good information when an escape was contemplated.

The Commandant Musloum Bey was a brutal ruffian, who believed in terrorism and intimidation. Floggings of soldier prisoners were frequent, and, just before the armistice, the Commandant was found guilty by a Turkish Commission of forcible unnatural offences against four British soldiers. On one occasion he ordered a Russian officer who had tried to seize the Commandant's sword when the Commandant went to strike him, to 200 strokes with the dyak. The officer was beaten at the Armenian Church, where some British and Russian soldiers were quartered, in the presence of British soldiers. The Commandant beat the officer till the officer became unconscious and he himself exhausted. In punishment of this sort the bare feet are held up from the ground by a pole to which they are attached by tightly wound loops of wire, and the strokes are delivered on the bare feet, calves and backs of the thighs. Thirty strokes are usually sufficient for an ordinary Arab, yet that officer was beaten three times into unconsciousness by three different persons, the Commandant, English interpreter and the Borch Chaoush (sergt.-major) of the guard. After this he was thrown into a dungeon below the Commandant's office where his face was severely burned through lying on a heap of lime for some time, and where he remained for three days. During this time he received no food or water from the Turks, but survived only because British soldiers lowered food and drink to him. He was unable to walk for some time, and was three months in hospital.

On another occasion Private McKay, 15th Battalion, A.I.F., who had been badly wounded in the back with shrapnel and had been a year in hospital, was struck on the back with a whip by a Turkish officer who said he was not walking quickly enough. He protested that his back was still bad, but received another blow, at which he knocked the lieutenant out and felled three of the guard who came to the officer's assistance. There were rumours that he was to be shot, but we then heard that he was to be beaten each day for a period of 22 days. Two of these beatings had been already administered before we knew, but a strongly worded and threatening protest on our part caused the sentence to be annulled. On another occasion 17 British N.C.O.'s and P.O.'s were beaten by a Turkish naval officer whose name I have now forgotten. Beatings are very common among the Turks, and their own soldiers receive quite a lot of it. On an occasion when three Russian soldiers attempted to

escape, the remaining Russians were beaten each day till the three men were caught. To give an idea of our Commandant's idea of humour the following will suffice. He called late one night on some of the senior British officers in our camp, and told them that he intended to hang two British soldiers and a Turkish soldier who had assisted them whilst escaping, in the town bazaar the next morning. The officers were horrified and protested against such action. But next morning the British orderlies who made the purchases in the bazaar, reported that three men had been hanged there all right, and that the bodies were still hanging (a frequent occurrence in Turkey). After leaving the camp in suspense for some hours longer the Commandant sent the interpreter to say that the men who had been hanged were not British soldiers, but only some bandits that had recently been caught.

I could expatiate on the evil doings of this man for many more pages, but as my report is by now quite lengthy enough, I will close it with these observations:—

(1) Officers just taken prisoners have often received courtesy and chivalrous treatment from Turkish officers of good fighting regiments, and have at once written to their friends to say that they were well treated.

(2) That any subsequent letters written by them to say that their treatment was bad, were destroyed.

(3) That no doubt officers on parole said that they were well-treated, and thus created false impressions at home, where people did not know one camp from another: for it is not likely that these officers would admit that their treatment differed from that in other camps, moreover their letters would more readily pass the Turkish censor.

(4) That the Turks took care not to exchange prisoners or wounded until the war had almost ceased. In this way no first-hand information regarding treatment reached our authorities; further, nobody escaped from Turkey till the end of 1917.

(5) The Turk is so practised in deceit that he deceived our authorities and our Red Cross.

I should mention too that five officers were sent from Afion Kara Hissar to Constantinople as a reprisal, because of alleged ill-treatment of Turkish officer prisoners in Cairo. These officers were confined without exercise in an underground cell for three months, and one died.

The three officers, Lieut.-Commanders Stoker and Cochrane, R.N., and Lieut. Price, R.N. (since deceased), received ten months gaol for their attempted escape.

Officers in Afion Kara Hissar received gaol for the most trivial of alleged offences, and five British officers were closely confined in their house and allowed outside their door for only half-an-hour each day during a period of seven months, because they were suspected of wanting to escape, and would not give their parole.

Four Russian officers who had attempted to escape from Broussa were shut in their house for seven or eight months, and were not once allowed outside.