Dear Mum and Dad,

25th of April 1915

I hope you are well and coping with me being away in the war. War is cold and unforgiving. I am constantly hearing gun shots soaring over my head and my ears are ringing because of it. I have several minor gunshot wounds, though thankfully, they are not fatal. It also smells terrible here.

A couple of days ago I had to sit there and watch my best mate die, it’s very hard to watch a friend die when you can’t do anything. It’s a horrible, horrible feeling, but most of my mates are either dead or injured. I constantly feel like my life is in danger, I have never been so afraid in my life. Even the bravest of men would still be terrified here in the war.

When we landed on the shore of Gallipoli, late in the spring, the climate was at its most pleasant. When summer came along the temperatures rose and it was very hard and uncomfortable for all of us soldiers to sleep. Snow has begun to fall now and the wind is strong we don’t have many warm clothes because we wore them out in the earlier months of war, we have to huddle together in dirty old blankets. A few of the other soldiers have died because they have just been so cold and developed frost bite.

I don’t want to complain too much, at least I have my life and seventy percent of the soldiers who came to Gallipoli with me are dead. We can’t have funerals for any of the dead soldiers, so we just bury them in ditches.

I’ve completely forgotten what it is like to feel the warmth of lying in my bed without being scared to get up in the morning. I’m afraid to open my eyes to see the gunshot wounds on my legs and arms. Whenever I feel very sad and I think that I want to go home I just remind myself that am I fighting for my country and that one day all of the suffering will be worth it.

The only food we get is rationed. Nothing is fresh and any food they we try to save is eaten at by flies and other insects. All we have for dinner is square biscuits. I am dying for some good food. I dream about beef stew with roast vegetables. The water is not very fresh either and I haven’t had a cup of
tea for five months. You just don’t appreciate how lucky you are. Every little scrap of food you dare not waste because, when you are starving, every little morsel counts.

Anyway, enough about the food, when we first arrived here on the boat as we ran over the hill we were all shot at. A friend of mine died two weeks ago, the shot came from a big tank and the Ottoman who shot the bullet escaped unharmed. Thousands of Australians died here including Christopher Michael and William Collinear. Do you remember me going to school with them?

I miss you all so much. How is Molly? Is she coping? Tell her I miss her and I love her. I love all of you.

I pray every day that I will come home to you and see your faces again.

Till the next time I hopefully see you, good bye Mum and Dad.

Lots of love from your son,

Henry xoxo