

27th Field Ambulance,

1/0 Army Base Post Office,

Singapore,

Tuesday 25th November.

My own dearest Eileen,

It is a very hot November afternoon and though I am "sneezing" I must write to you now while there is time today. Later in the evening I have to play in a football match and that always means a late dinner and late to bed. Can you possibly imagine such heat in mid winter? Only another month to Christmas and there is so much to look forward to - even though nothing will happen! Today is my brother's tenth anniversary of his death (R.I.P.). Do you remember your first term at Queen's in 1931 and what a change it all was from school? Do you remember me, the very shy schoolboy who pursued you so relentlessly and frightened you so much by my attentions to you? How I wish you had met Charlie in those days; he was a saint and everyone loved him. He was my favourite and we had grand fun together; I missed him terribly when he died. He knew all about you, Eileen, and I know he was pleased about it all even though he could not speak.

I have not recovered from your surprise birthday letter which reached me on Sunday morning. Really my dearest one I cannot describe the happiness that it has brought to me - the doll and the polyfoto Snap are treasures which I shall keep near me until my dying day. You are too good to me Eileen and I wish I deserved it at all, but I don't. My poor love seems so small in comparison with all that you have given to me; you know that you have all of it and that I am yours forever and ever. It is so easy for me to love you so much because I have always loved you and you are the

most lovable person I have ever known - or ever shall know. I have given my all to you and I know my heart is in good hands. All I ask in life is to be able to make you a very happy wife and that is all that I shall live for. Surely it augurs well for our future when we find ourselves so happy today with so many thousands of miles between us. There never was and there never shall be any room in my heart for anyone but you. I have often wondered what kind of life I would have led if I had never met you, Eileen; I know that I would have been utterly lost without your good influence. I would have been without my ideal to live up to; you have guided my every action since the first day I met you and I know it will be the same for the rest of my life. My darling, don't you see how completely I am dependant upon you for everything - you are the source of all my happiness and my business too, because these two must go together always. Am I boasting when I tell you that no man has ever loved a woman so much as I love you, Eileen; I could not live unless I were loving you - it has become so much a part of me. What more could we ask of God who has given us this great love and has made it so holy and pure; it is true love and in every way it is so perfect as He would like it to be. The longer we are apart the stronger it grows in depth and holiness. How lucky we are in every way; we were spared a very painful separation and parting at the outbreak of war - it would have broken our hearts, my dearest one; and today we would be miserable instead of being happy and hopeful. There is so much happiness ahead of us, that the present is bearable - in fact you have made it pleasant for me. In both our hearts is that yearning to see each other again and then we shall know happiness beyond our expectations and fondest dreams.

I started out with the good intention of telling you in simple language that I loved you with all my heart, but alas I wandered off into the future again and it must have wearied you to read it all! I am as happy as

the day is long and today had only a twinge of sadness when I said goodbye this morning to an old friend - Hanuldas Prasad Singh; he really was my friend and how I did not want him to leave - I wanted to go with him to the north. However I still love this Field Ambulance and everyone in it and I could not bear to leave it ever. I have told my C.O. long ago that I would rather remain here as a Captain than go elsewhere on promotion. I came back from football not long ago and oh it was grand even though we were beaten! I became tired of Goalkeeping and wanted action, and I got plenty at ~~last~~^{not} back against a team of black-bearded Sikhs! I re-lived my school and Queen's days over again; in fact I can run faster nowadays. I must go off to dinner lest I bore you any more to night. My leave is indefinitely postponed, but sometimes next year I have hopes of a few days somewhere; I may even do a locum here somewhere because we need the money for our bottom drawers. A month's locum in Malaya would earn me £200! I do not want it for myself and news shall; it will always be for you, my darling, and only you. Good night and God bless you, Celine.

WEDNESDAY - 26th NOVEMBER - We had a big inspection today by the head of the Army Medical Services in Malaya. He is a grand little man, grey haired, vivacious, and a dynamic personality; no shaking of hands at introduction! And now I shall give you the conversation piece, when I had been introduced by my C.O. "Murray, you have been with this Field Ambulance since it began?" "Yes, sir!" "You were second-in-command at one time; but look, you lost that but your turn will come again." These are words of great hope coming from the man who makes all the appointments in the medical branch of the Army in Malaya. It was he who said it was grossly unfair that I should lose my promotion, but the damage had been done (inadvertently) and could not be undone at that time. I have never sought after promotion; I have never conversed directly or indirectly; I have kept out of the line light - I just worked quietly and happily no matter what.

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my rank was. Need I tell you that I would welcome promotion again for your sweet sake alone; I want you to feel proud of me; I want to save more money for you and for our home. Also I do not know the value of money, and in this respect I am like my dear mother and very unlike my father! You have so many things to teach me, Helen; you will find me a very willing pupil. I shall listen to you all day long and never grow weary - even though you imagine yourself to be a real chatterbox! We shall have so much to talk about when we meet again, that we shall be busy chatting for many weeks after my return home to you. I am frightened when I think of the round of visits we shall have to make then - Beechwood, Spring Villa, Killouga, Ballynahinch, Omagh, Castleblain, Dungannon, Dublin, a special tour of Belfast - Falls Road and Andersonstown, University Square, Brumby Road! I think you had better arrange with Thomas Cook to fix us up with a special circular tour of Ireland. I will not be a bit shy so long as you are at my side - everything in life will be so easy for me while you are there. My darling, when we do meet again would you be willing to waive all convention once more and always walk beside me on my left hand side - I want you to be always near to my heart. If you think this is just stupid or childish, just tell me so, Helen, and we shall forget about it - it won't hurt me in the least. Now I do thank God that we have a perfect understanding between us, my dearest one; we agree on all things that really matter; about other subjects we shall always come to a solution which will please us both. Above all we shall be honest with each other; we can always be candid. And now I want you to promise me something when you reply to this letter. The only thing I dread is hurting you in any way; my love will never allow me to hurt your feelings, but if it should ever happen (and God grant it never shall) through inadvertence, then you must not conceal it from me - you must promise me now

that you will always tell me that I have hurt you and how it has happened. I would rather die than cause you to suffer in the smallest thing - and even that would not be enough to atone for my thoughtlessness. I was standing on parade today with all my men and I was thinking of you and how much I loved you. So I looked at simple Indian lads I realized for the first time that I would gladly die for any one of them; and then another gust of love came from my heart for you, Cilem, and I knew that if I would give my life for these men, there was no sacrifice on earth that I would not make for you. That is how I love you today and yet 'ere the sun shall set to-morrow I shall be loving you even more than now.

I wrote to Anne last night after Annie and told her once more how happy I was. I told her not to worry about things at Baschwood; that everything would turn out well in the end. I am glad that you have made Anne your favourite; she is a grand child, so sweetish, and so holy. I heard Margaret admit one day that Anne had more character and wisdom at 15 years of age than any of her sisters ever had at 20! I also wrote a letter of thanks last night to Father Girard. I was looking at some old snaps this evening and discovered a lovely one of myself taken in John Frank's room in Rawalpindi. I had a large hail on my cheek at the time and as you see I was swathed in bandages and looking very miserable! All my snaps and negatives are being slowly destroyed by this awful climate; so thank heavens I have sent all the good ones to you. Now I hope and pray that they have reached you safely by this time. I had a letter this morning from the jewellers in Bombay who say they have called London about your ring; they gave me no definite news as to whether it was sent yet. My own thinking, you must have the ring before Christmas as I promised you and it will break my heart if you do not receive it in time.

Good night and God bless you my Cilem. (Lover) It is still Wednesday night

I cannot leave you, my darling. I wanted to tell you that during this war I am a non-combatant and have special privileges under Article 21 of the Geneva Convention and am under the protection of the International Red Cross. I am not allowed to fight, nor is the enemy allowed to fight me; I can be taken prisoner but the enemy must treat me and pay me as an officer. They can only use me as a doctor in whatever way they wish but they cannot compel me to do any other work. However it remains to be seen whether the enemy will carry out all these things to the letter; the said enemy will never come to Malaya.

My darling, would you be very surprised to hear that there is one tune which can bring tears to my eyes; it is an Irish hornpipe tune that I heard in Rangoon, I don't know its title but I have always associated it with you. They were not tears of sadness but rather of love. When I was a fourth year medical student at the Univer and hadn't much work to do, I spent many pleasant evenings in the visitors room listening to that tune being played on the piano by your namesake - Jackie O'Hane. It was badly played but it was heavenly for me to hear it; I think the said player knew why I insisted on the same tune over and over again. How'd you during all those years of my student life; you were always before me as my ideal. I have been humming my tune this evening and now it brings tears of love mingled with joy. Some day I shall sing it for you, my darling, and you will recognise it immediately. God bless you, Ellen.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28th

I had a grand surprise today when your birthday greetings telegram arrived. You have done everything possible to make my birthday a happy one, and I know that you will have made it the happiest of my whole life. Do you know that last year I scarcely realised that I had a birthday at all - it passed by almost unnoticed; it was anything but a happy one. And now you have changed everything in my life; I feel like a different person altogether - I am so terribly happy and contented. That is why I say that I can never hope to love

You know. Your telegram read "59, 120, 32 Eileen O'Hane!" I rushed away to the office and rang up the Bullage P.O. and they de-coded the message; I was amazed that these three numbers could mean so much (I had used "32" often and so I know what it meant). Each time you send your love to me, my darling, I feel so very happy and proud, too, that I should be so lucky to have your love which I prize above all else in the world. You have done everything and sent me everything to make me the happiest man alive; I wish you could put a stamp on yourself and post yourself by Clippis to me! However I love you too much to allow you to risk anything for me - besides you would not be allowed to leave Ireland. We are not really separated and never shall be - we are always together; you are ever in my heart and in my thoughts so that you spend the whole day with me! I still say "good morning" and "good night" to you, Eileen - do you always hear me? I have been counting up all my treasures this evening - seventeen letters, one post card, the miraculous medal (which I am pressing close to my heart), your polyfoto, your precious lock of hair, and your four Snaps + the wedding group. We should be so thankful to God who has guided our letters safely on their long journey over land and sea. This evening I read an essay on "delight" and really, Eileen, we both have known to the full what delight is. My next-door neighbour has lent me his "Oxford Book of English Prose" and I am swelling in it; needless to say I did not ask him for this grand book, he just offered it to me. Did you know that I have a very awful failing - I never borrow anything from anyone nor do I ever ask any favours from my superiors. You will find me too independent and in this respect I am like my father; it is not a good thing to be too independent. Many a time I walked from Queens to Beechwood rather than borrow 'kuppence' from any of the lads! Is it very selfish of me not to want our land things to others; I like having my own stores of personal wear and things for my room. I do not mind lending anything to my friends but when others come along casually and ask for things on loan, I do not

refuse but I am furious and cannot understand such people. I know from sad experience that they are careless with things I lend them and it just kills me; I am always doubly careful of other people's things when handling them. Now this evening along came a certain officer to my room to borrow my chappis (Indian sandals); he wants them while on leave for 3 weeks! I meekly handed them over, even though I have scarcely worn them as yet; but I would rather do this than cause unpleasantness. I was seething within but I managed to say - "You are welcome to them, sir"! My darling, it is selfishness on my part; but I shall miss those sandals from my room and shall not rest until they are back again with me. This officer has borrowed constantly from me, and it maddens me because he has thousands of pounds in his bank while I haven't got a cent (scarcely!)! And now my Gilem, I want you to give me a stern lecture about my faults; do you still love me in spite of my meanness? Can you solve my problems for me - there is something wrong in me and I want your help.

The C.O. told me this evening (after he had borrowed my sandals!) that I must spend several days in Kuala Lumpur at Christmas and said it would be useless only having one day there. He is very anxious to know why I am going at all; he thinks I want a gay time at dances, cabarets, and pictures but all I want is Mass on Christmas Day and nothing must stop me. When I have had my wish I want to get back again quickly to my job because Kuala Lumpur is not a health resort but is much hotter than this station. It is not so far away (270 miles) and I can easily be back on the evening of 26th. I forgot to mention that your telegram was sent on 14th November and took 12 days en route; and I read in the papers that I shall have to send my Christmas telegram to you before 5th December - only 20 days in advance! And off I must go to bath and change for dinner. All my heart and all my love are with you this night. God bless you and keep you safe.

FRIDAY - NOVEMBER 28th :- Eileen, my darling, I am so very sorry now that I wrote you
 such a frightful thing yesterday, but I had to get it all off my chest. Why you should
 have to listen to any tale of woe I do not know; it is unkind of me to burden such
 thoughts on poor you - and I did express myself so very badly. Do you remember in one
 of your letters telling me to always get things off my chest and that you would listen and
 understand. Now would you like someone to come along to your room and "pinch" your
 nicest pair of shoes!! I am a terrible person and you should not love me at all - if you
 had any sense. My own darling, if only you knew how very, very much I love you; you are
 live in my thoughts - they are all for you, everything I do is for you. My day is just one
 round of happiness; dull things are now interesting and exciting - and you have made
 all of this possible. This morning at breakfast I was so very happy - I was at Southampton
 and you were in my arms; I whispered in your ear "Eileen, my darling, never, never leave
 me." That is the day that I live for and dream about always; and oh what joy it can
 bring to my heart. Please do not think that I dream too much, I must dream about you
 otherwise the present reality of life in Malaya would finish me off completely! You know
 that no matter where I may go, no matter what may happen to me or to the world in this
 awful war, I shall never change - I shall always love you, Eileen. Our love and our happiness
 and peace of mind are such priceless gifts; we would not exchange them for all the
 glory and wealth of the world. We have a glory that the world knows so little about. I know
 that we shall be the happiest couple on earth; we shall live in a little kingdom of our very own
 but our love and our happiness will reach far beyond the confines of our kingdom to others. We
 shall spend our lives making others happy - this is one of the secrets of life.

Malaya is many thousands of miles away from home and yet
 today I shook hands with a very famous surgeon in this camp - a man who examined me
 in surgery for my final in 1937 in Belfast! I remember it all so well - Julian Taylor

(his name) standing facing me across a bed in the Walter Hospital; I saw his kindly face, his sunken cheeks; so very neat and slim and with such delicate tapering fingers. I was not afraid, I was not nervous - in fact I was cheeky enough to wink at my friend who crowded around the glass door of the ward entrance! Today he looked older, thinner, and grayer but he is still a kindly man and so very charming. He did not recognize me of course so he only saw me for 5 minutes in 1957, but he asked if I had ever been examined by him and was very interested in my career. He is now Col. Taylor but he is a Colonel in name only!! He will never be a soldier but he will always be a Surgeon - one of the greatest ever produced by England.

I am longing for your photograph to come - I miss the one you were to have enlarged from the polyfoto. It will be lovely having it on my table; the miniature has made me so very happy. My darling, you must not have any more photographs taken; I only need one, Lileen; I know you are thinking of me when you suggest this, but you must not undergo any more torture by posing for the camera. I always think it is so unnatural sitting before a camera trying to appear natural - and failing miserably! And now for a lecture on telegrams! I am much happier when you send ~~EPAN~~ EFM telegrams; I do not want you to waste your money on expensive ones - it worries me. It is the same with letters; I am much more contented with your ordinary air mail letters than clipped ones. I love all the thoughtfulness and goodness in you that prompts you to spend money on me to make me happy, but I do understand you and know how you feel. Also I have made a bundle of this and have explained my meaning so badly. By the way, darling, your EFM telegrams come much quicker than NLT (express) telegrams even though they are $\frac{1}{2}$ the price!

Your ring is worrying me, Lileen; how I have prayed that it will reach you safely before Christmas comes. The Jewellers have not called me yet as they promised to do when everything was finally settled. It will break my heart if anything

should happen to it and if you should not like it. Please please have it changed if you do not like it, Eileen. If only I were at home now we could select it ourselves and our chairs would please us both. But I know that God will not let me down and that you will be blessing that precious ring before this letter arrives.

Good night and God bless you, Eileen. May He keep you safe.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 24th - It is peaceful evening here among the rubber trees in far off Malaya; everything is so very still and calm - not a leaf stirring anywhere. Yet it is a very momentous evening for me and for you too, my darling. Also I cannot tell you a single thing about it all, but it is another big day and you must ask me (when we meet again) about 29th November 1941. I want you to write this down in your diary of that date and make the following entry: - "Frank has loved me today more than he has ever loved me in his life before, he will love me unto death itself and not even death can ever separate us." Yes, my darling, it is true and you must know it all so well already. Eileen dearest my love for you has grown so much in the past year that you would not recognise it; thank God it has grown in holiness too. How futile and hopeless our love would be unless it were so holy. Our joint prayers will always keep it good in the sight of God; we could never hope to be so happy unless our love were founded on prayer. Every since I first met you and loved you, Eileen, I have wanted to pray harder while loving you more and I have kept that love the most sacred thing of my whole life. It has saved me over and over again from disaster and all the time you were with me and kept my head above water. Two years in England and one in India were not without temptations and dangers to a young man, but somehow I could not let you down, Eileen; you made it hard for me to keep good. How often have I thanked God for allowing me to meet you and fall in love with you at such an early age; you have been my guiding star. How can I ever love you enough; what can I do to make you happier, what can I do to love you even more. I pray and pray to the Sacred Heart each day and ask

Him to send peace to this unhappy world and share all, to bring us together again. I only
 want to see you again and speak to you and tell you how much I love you. Then our
 happiness would be complete. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a miracle really did happen
 and we were to meet again in the near future; we would not worry about a very
 uncertain future because we would be together always, ready to meet anything that may
 come. If it is God's holy will that this war should continue then we are resigned to wait
 but I always think that this waiting is so hard on you, Ellen. Still in God's own time
 we shall meet again never to be parted from each other again and then we shall know
 and love each other as never before. Thank God that waiting can only strengthen and purify
 our love still more; we should be so very proud of it because there has never been a
 love like it before in the world.

As usual I have no news to give you about today's events in
 camp. The C.O. went off this morning on leave but also I had the unpleasant duty of
 sending him a telegram to return to camp immediately. I have had my old job of second
 in command for a whole day and I was not terribly troubled with it. I need some
 exercise badly and so I was compelled to do some physical jobs this evening and some
 weight throwing. We had a hockey match arranged for yesterday but it was washed
 out! Our usual picnic for Sunday has been cancelled too as the C.O. is away and
 our waiter is ill in hospital. However, Capt. Buckley and I have arranged a dinner
 for to-morrow afternoon - I mean to get out of camp at least once a week for some fresh
 air! I have been on duty today and so I have had heaps to do even though it is Saturday.
 Unlike you I do not steam and wash and mend on Saturdays; my orderly does all my
 steaming and mending - I gave it up as a bad job!

I love you, I love you and nothing can change me, Ellen. Good night and
 God bless you my dearest one.

SUNDAY - NOVEMBER 30th : My very own darling, what can I say to you to-night? You whom I love and adore so much, it may be a plain "good-bye" for many a long day. The situation in this part of the globe could not be more serious and soon I may be involved in a war. Should it really come, you must not worry about me, Eileen; worrying unduly can only do harm to us both. All we can do is pray and leave everything to God. I shall take good care of myself and I shall pray as usual before; I shall ask Him to give you courage to face whatever the future may hold. My darling child, we love each other as two people have never loved before and we love our good God who has been so generous to us. We know a happiness and a joy that two people have never known before. Oh Eileen, can anything else matter very much? We were meant for each other and our marriage was made in Heaven above; God will bring us together again but we shall always be resigned to do His holy will.

Now I hope and pray that this will not be my last letter to you. You know that should the war start here, sending air mail letters will be impossible and all air mail will cease. Sea mail too will almost certainly cease or be greatly restricted & very uncertain. However, I shall write to you every day as usual and then when the chance comes you will have dozens of letters all at once! But may be war will not come and you shall have your "loisirs" letters as usual. All leave has been cancelled and that is an awful disappointment for me - it means that I shall not have Mass on Christmas Day in Kuala Lumpur as I had planned. May be Fr. Grand will not come here on December 21st so arranged. I am praying hard that I shall have at least one Mass in the near future; it will be awful without it. Need I tell you that I am in the state of grace, thank God, and that has given me new strength and courage. My own darling, I shall always love you, you will always be in my thoughts and prayers. We have known great happiness during these past months but

it is nothing to what lies ahead of us. Never worry about the present, think only of the past and the future and then you will not falter in your courage. You can thank the Good God that He moved me from my station in the mountains - today it is infinitely more dangerous than my present station. Never fear, Eileen, I shall do my job well; I shall pray well and how I shall love you in the fateful days that are coming.

Please tell mother that I love her as if I really were her son. You cannot imagine what it means to me to have her as my mother in times like these. Your daddy too I love because he is your, Eileen, and because he is so like my own father in his ways. Tell Josephine and Mairead that I am really in love with them and not Eileen! I would marry the former for her good cooking; the latter for her assistance to me in my practice!! And here I am engaged to marry their sister Eileen who cannot cook or nurse!!! My darling, you know that love never thinks about cooking or nursing; I love you for your own dear self - I love everything about you. Ask Fergus to pray for us and tell him to hurry up and become a redemptionist - we want him to marry us. Tell Hugh that I shall beat him at handball when I come home, do not let him study too hard - "he is only a young fella!" (I used have this said to me at home very often). And last but not the least is Frances; you are lucky to have such a friend in life. I always loved her and I put my confidence in her. Tell her that I still love her and am praying for her happiness. Give my regards to Felia and Mona at Ballynabinnich and wish them every success and joy from me. You will see my father and Anne quite a lot; they will always be happy to see you. My father loves you and all my sisters love you too, but their brother Frank loves you best of all. Good bye my own darling Eileen, and may God bless you and keep you safe from all harm.

All my love,

Ever your loving
Frank.