

P.S. As this is only a 4-day letter
and there are 10 pages here, you
have gained 2 pages more than
usual!
Oh, my beloved, I do love you so
very, very much.
Frank

27th Field Ambulance,
c/o Base Postal Depot,
Bombay,
29th August.

My own dearest Eileen,

Here I am again worrying you with another letter - how on earth you will read it I cannot imagine. I sent you a telegram and a 10 page letter this morning - the former to tell you that all your letters and snaps had arrived safely and the latter to tell you how much I love you. Love is a strange thing; it makes me want to give you everything that I have, everything that I am, and every good thing that I do. I shall never grow weary of giving all to you - as yet I have only given you my love and myself. If writing to you ten times daily instead of once would give you any pleasure I should write ten times a day and each time you would read of how much I love you. If the smallest thing that I can do will make you happy, you have only to say the word and it shall be done. I am so completely and entirely yours, that doing things for you and sending you things bring me the greatest joy. Everything that I think and do and see and hear - I must send them all to you in my daily letter. My whole day is for you; it is always you - in my work, my play, and my hobby. I do know a little about my job now and I put all my heart into it; I put my heart and soul into everything that I do - and oh, what satisfaction it can bring. You know all about my games - I only wanted to be a success at them for your sake so that you might feel proud of me. (Is this vanity?). You know that I am keen on photography; well, immediately I spot a pretty scene, I think of you, and wonder if you would like a snap of it. It is always the same. I have 30 more snaps in envelopes all ready to send to you; this

make the total sent from Malaya well over 100! It nearly broke my heart when many of my snaps were lost in the post about a month ago here - I wanted them so badly for you, my dearest. I had a special snap taken for you - of myself - a few days ago; I am seated at the wheel of my Austin 7; I am expecting it to arrive and you shall have it in this letter if it is good.

Did you know that my full names are "Francis Mary Joseph". My father chose Francis (of Assisi) because he loved that saint; my mother chose Mary; and I chose Joseph (in confirmation). I could never understand the "Mary" part of me but it seems that it is quite common as a second name for boys in Ireland. I do pray hard to all three - to Francis for humility, to Mary for purity, and to Joseph for grace to make us always true. Eileen, my dearest, have you any idea of the happiness you have brought to me? I never dreamed that there could be so much happiness on earth, and you have given all to me. You asked me in your letter if there is anything you could send to me in Malaya - I only want your love and your letters. I did mention an 'Irish Weekly' once but what does a paper mean compared with your wonderful letters. I had your grand long letter yesterday by Trans-Pacific Air Mail and though I announced it last night I am still reading it and still replying to it. What did you feel like at Felix's wedding on 27th? I hope you kept your eyes wide open and made mental pictures of everything because soon you will have to pass through the same ordeal! My darling, you must never be afraid or worry about marriage and its responsibilities. God knows that I shall try hard enough to dispel all your fears and make you the happiest wife in the world. I cannot bear to see people unhappy and I just have to do something. Yesterday afternoon there was great excitement in camp because of the great football match we were to play at 5 P.M. with the local regimental team. Curragh was scrambling into

a lorry to go to town and see my green-and-white team (beaten 5-0!). As I was passing the Carpenter's work shop I heard Bob coming from within. Our Carpenter is only a lad of 17 years and then he sat huddled in a corner crying as if his heart would break. Someone had been thoughtless and said hard things to him. He would not look up. He is our most faithful football supporter and he would not come to the match. It made me doubly sad when I knew that I had to leave him there and have ^{his} good sweep. He is himself today and I give him lots of encouragement about his work and told him not to heed anyone else or what they said because I was his official. My dearest, why have I told you this at all?

Today has been grand for us because it was a day in the field with all our men. It meant a drive in the country, a sandwiches lunch by the sea, and a swim - and lots of work too! And now that the bewitching hour has come I am ready for bed and a dream of you. I have shared my day with you and you have been with me the whole day through.

Good night and God bless you my dear Helen.

SATURDAY - AUGUST 30th:- I wrote you a short two-page note this evening and posted it (or sent it rather for seasoning) with one lot of enlarged snaps. My very special snap has not arrived yet but it must come to-morrow and you shall have it with this letter. Will you be very annoyed if this letter should be shorter than usual; I have just read about the Blipper leaving on Wednesday next - that means I shall have to send this on Monday. You know that I never want to annoy you or disappoint you even in the smallest of things. I live only for you and for the day when we shall be reunited again. A thousand times a day I say to myself - "is it grand to be alive"; many times I speak my thoughts aloud and the others are amazed because life in England to them is not so grand! It is you and you alone who have done all

of this for me, and yet I have not even thanked you for it. Oh, my dearest, if we are so
 kindly happy now, what will it be like when we meet again. You will always
 find that my love will be tender and true towards you. We shall emulate your
 Daddy and Mamma by growing old together but ever loving each other more and
 more as the years roll by. Your Guardian Angel was right when she said that everything
 would be all right - things will always be all right in future for us. You have a very
 wonderful Guardian Angel who made you write to me last December and I wish I
 could thank her enough for that. When I read your letter, my heart just leaped
 for joy at the very possibility of you loving me - and yet you did not say so,
 directly; but it was enough for me to know that there was some hope. How I prayed
 that my reply would reach you in time for you to make your big choice. And
 now that we love each other and understand each other so never before - isn't it too
 wonderful for words to express your feelings. Cileen, my dearest, you have been grand
 and so full of pluck; you give me your love and devotion without question, even
 though you have not seen me for so many years; you do not even stop to think that
 I might be changed a lot, grown older and very wicked. I shall not disappoint you
 my dear one. You shall ever be the most important person in my life - you shall
 come before self and friends and relatives; I shall ever treasure your love as a
 very precious and rare gem. I know how fortunate I am to have a love like yours,
 Cileen; so holy and pure and true. I have always loved you for yourself - everything
 about you, your character, your nature, your temperament, and above all your
 holiness. I knew that you were good - I could not love you otherwise. The things
 that you loved in life, I loved them too - the simple things of life, love of games
 and the open air, love of nature, and love of God. Yes, He did make our marriage
 in Heaven and that's why it will be such a happy one. We shall have to spend

most of our days thanking him for everything that he has given to us. He has been over-generous with us and we shall not forget.

My dearest, you must never neglect your games because of me. My letters can wait for the rainy day but you must have your golf and fresh air when you have the chance. Besides I want you to produce many more cups when I return home again - two are not enough! Do you mind those awful lectures from me? If so just forget that you have ever read this one. I am about to make your poor mouth water very much - in Malaya there are more sweets and chocolates and other dainties that the people know what to do with! How I wish I could send you some, but alas they would be ruined en route. Would you believe that in this land of chocolates and sweets, I have only tasted them once; they are not very suitable fare in tropical countries.

You think I did not know that you were an outdoor girl and that dressing up was not in your line! I shall ever be careful that we shall choose a non-fashionable seaside place for our holidays. I want to walk with you for miles each day along the coast arm-in-arm; I want you to wear an old pair of shoes, your little American print frock, ~~no~~ hat, and no stockings; I want to feel your hair blowing in the wind; I want to see you smile always and be happy with me. We shall just walk and walk and I shall say to myself - "Is this really my Helen, whom I have always adored?" and my heart will answer gladly "Of course it is; that's why you feel so happy." It will always be the same with us, my dearest, no matter where we may go, we shall be happy together. Imagine you liking Mollie O'Hare because she knew me in the olden days! Do you know that I liked her too because she knew you! Poor Mollie must have been fed up meeting me at all sorts of queer places in and around Springfield Road and being asked to convey messages to you!

How many queries may I have, please, at what the "one thing" is that you are praying
to have for? You will have to tell me in the end!

I do not remember meeting Mop O'Kelly at Upper Fitzwilliam
St., but Comac was there the day on which I called many years ago. He seemed a
grand type of chap. My father wrote to me about a year ago and told me of his
marriage and that he was living in Cork. He (my father) has always taken a
keen interest in the O'Kelly family. I have only been at Broadway once and have
very faint recollection of the folk there. Eileen, my dearest, how many people are
praying for us and our intentions?? Thank God you are doing all of this, it makes
doubtly seem that all will be well with us and our love. Sometime I shall come
back to you safely with so many prayers to guide me home.

I am watching the post steadily for your three July letters which
you sent by ordinary air mail. I have just read your July 30th letter all over
again and I think it is even nicer now than when I first read it. Today has
been very hot and sticky, so after a hard morning's work the C.O. took me along
with him for a swim in the sea. I was thinking how brave one can be about
jumping into the sea in Malaya - the water is always warm, so it is not very
refreshing. How I wish I could be at Kellough with you now, Eileen; it would be
heaven for us. I do not deserve all the love that your Mamma and Mamma have
given to me - and all on your word alone. I know that I love them already better
than if they were my own. I am longing to read your dear mother's note which you
told me about. Opening woman, it is midnight again and I am still here! Good
night to you, my own dear me, and may God bless you.

SUNDAY - AUGUST 31st - Do you know what my happiest thought was
today and always will be on Sundays - that you heard a complete man for me and

Shared another one with me. You have no idea of the joy that you brought to me today - you are so good and thoughtful. My dearest, I do need your prayer and those all precious names, but you must not pray too much for me. I should hate to think that by attending two masses on Sundays you were injuring your health or raising blisters on your poor knees! I am selfish enough to ask for all your prayer but do not spoil me Helen. Please understand that my only reason for asking you not to overdo the praying, is you and your precious 8 stones odd. It seems that I shall have to make you drink a quart of cream daily when we get married! You have been nearer and closer to me today than you have ever been before. I fell asleep this afternoon for five minutes - and there you were before me. I dreamed of our last meeting in Belfast and how you left Fitzsimons and me standing at Castle Junction. How I longed to speak with you alone and tell you again that I loved you still. And then I awoke and just kept very quiet but I should break the spell. Oh, my dearest, if only I had had more courage and asked you long ago to marry me, but I thought you did not care for me that you did not love me. I have been thinking that if this was the way God wished us to find each other, it must be the right way - He is always right. It was His holy will that it should all happen when it did, so please never say again that it was your fault that we did not know each other like this long ago. You were a child before your illness, so how could you know anything of love; and when love did come how on earth could you be expected to write to any man and tell him that you loved him. It would not be quite the right thing to do and yet my dear one, if you had been cheeky enough to write such a letter, you would have found me on your door-step within 36 hours!

I want so much to read all about your visit to Breckwood, all the details - your ascent, your meeting father, Anne, and Philip. You will find father a

very Stenard man; he must have read poor Helen like a book during the first few minutes of meeting you; he is a business man and work always came first - and the work was all for us his children; he is very cautious with money but he is not mean; he has a sentimental strain very deep down in his heart and I am one of the few who has ever had a glimpse of this; he is the greatest "prayer" I have ever met - he never grows weary. Did you find Anne^a very matter-of-fact person; sophisticated, but with a sense of humour - I bet she made you feel at home. What did you think of Philip who takes life so seriously and has not a penny in the world; we nick-named him "Huckleberry Finn" once upon a time! I have prayed, cursed and bribed him to work hard if only for father's sake as well as his own future, but somehow he just remained listless and did not study. Sometimes I was successful in dragging him out to games or out for a walk, but more often he preferred his easy chair by the fire! He is a strange lad and just will not be hustled! There are such grand possibilities for him because he is clever. He has been a sore disappointment to father, but the latter has promised me that Philip shall have every chance to be a success. If only he were keen on games, I would not mind so much. I want to meet Hugh who loves his football and handball so much. I pray that he will be successful in his 'Junior'. He is so young; you should be happy that he is so keen on his games and less keen on study - it is the most natural thing in the world for a young boy to feel this way. It always annoyed me intensely to see young lads at school with their noses always in a book with never a thought for anything else! I did not study for Junior or Senior or during my first year at Queens - after that I found the happy medium between study and sport! You distracted me far too much to allow much work to be done! I have given you a dissertation on young boys - and it has bored you I am sure! Why do you lie bothered with me at all?? I shall never know.

Young lady, how can you expect me to tell you all about today when nothing happened. I did not move outside the camp today - spent the morning and afternoon on the Miss Accounts (except for 5 minute sleep!). A mail came today but no letters for me and no snaps from my photo dealer yet. I wrote you another two page note this evening to accompany some enlargements I am sending you. And now I am going to bed (early) as it is 11.25 P.M. and I have a big day ahead of me tomorrow. That piece of raw dough, which our cook gave us as a pudding to night is beginning to make its presence felt - it was never meant for a human stomach! Good night and God bless you - see you in the morning.

MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 15th My own dearest, do I ever have anything of interest to tell you? I cannot tell you about local people because there are none; you cannot hear about my local friends because there aren't any; you cannot hear much about me or my job or my whereabouts because it is secret - so what on earth is there left to write about except you and my love for you, my thoughts and my hopes. You must be tired reading the same thing always but never anything fresh or new to read about. Today has been the same as yesterday - a whole day in camp with plenty of work to do. It is so much better to get out of the rubber (plantation) at least once daily. At long last my swap has arrived and it was not worth waiting for or even sending to you. I may have a slight enlargement made and sent to you if you would like it. May be it is all vanity sending you snaps of myself but I know how much I love to see a snap of you my beloved one. They say that I am a funny sight in my doorless curtain with my long legs almost reaching to my chin; but I don't care how funny I look - I am happy and I love you, Kileen. I am totally oblivious to people who laugh at me and when I do notice them they receive a cheery wave of my hand in reply! I, the very self-conscious young student of former days, am now as brazen as brass!! I have

warned you of the terrible person I now am and how much I have changed! Thank God I have not changed my love for you, my dearest, and I never shall. I could not live without your love, Kileen, so please love me always. Nothing must ever happen to you my dearest; you know how precious you are to me. I should just die if you were even hurt in any way, so please take good care of yourself. Nothing shall happen to me Kileen, there are so many prayers ascending to Heaven daily for me. I shall come back to you soon my dearest and we shall never be parted again - I shall never leave you. We shall go everywhere together and do everything together; we shall always be happy together. Love makes one so very selfish. Why you can love me at all I shall never understand; I have never done anything to deserve such a love as yours. I, too, shall do all and give all to make you the happiest lady in the world.

Are you very disappointed with a mine 10 pages? I had to catch the 'Clipper' before it leaves Singapore this week - the same clipper that brought Mr. Duff Cooper to these parts! And now I send you all of me and all of my love to you. I am yours for ever and ever. I enclose a special message to your Mamma and Daddie - tell them that I love them as if they were my own parents and that although I am stealing you away from them, they will never have any cause to regret losing you. Give the little Frances my love too and tell her that we shall be married before her!

May God and His Holy Mother shower their blessings upon you and protect you from all harm. May my friend, St. Francis, bless you too in a very special way.

Ever and ever yours, my darling,

All my love, Frank