



~~SECRET~~
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27th Field Ambulance,
Malaya,

7.6.41.

My dearest Ellen,

I am still here in my jungle home and I am still liking it. We are still in the process of settling down and soon all will be put in order. I have even got a very nice blue bed-cover; a table cloth to match; and a small bedside mat - in fact my wooden hut is quite luxurious now! As I look out into the night I can see the moonlight streaming through the trees; everything is very eerie and the tall trees look like Giant Gnomes. The same animal and insect noises are in full blast and sometimes I wonder why the poor creatures never grow weary of making noise the long night through!

I have had a pleasant evening listening to the band of the local regiment playing on the village green. My O.C. and I then went to dinner at the local regiment's mess, and of course the Colonel of the regiment comes from Waghshafelt! I met a Wicklow Major who talked of Dublin, Galway, Donegal, Cushendall, Cushendun and Ballycastle for the whole evening!! Imagine meeting such people in the wildest part of Malaya! The local "King" was also at dinner and he left Dublin 50 years ago; he has promised me to have a very ancient tennis court fixed up! It would be grand fun to play again under these strange conditions and it seems that many officers are longing for a game. The trouble is that I won't have time to play any games except on Sundays. To surmount



will be Sunday and how I shall miss going to Mass - the nearest Church is 50 miles away. I don't like it a bit, Celine, so you must pray harder for me. I always had so many special favours to pray for at Mass and Communion and I always prayed so much harder for you, my darling. I loved you so much more and felt so much nearer to you than - and now I must continue to spend the same time with you on Sundays and pray more for you. I do love you, Celine, and nothing can ever change that love. I can only love you more and more as long as I live and I could never, never love anyone but you. Loving you is so easy to me, Celine, and it has always been the same. You will always be away up on that pedestal I placed you upon so many years ago except that now you are not inaccessible! Celine, when are you going to write to me?? You know that all air mail letters have been stopped except those going via America. I have been waiting and hoping for your letters to come and still nothing happens; again and again the post brings nothing and yet I know that your letters are lying in some mail bag and being delayed en route. One letter from you, my darling, would make me happy for weeks to come.

I have a date to-morrow morning with the local Colonel - we are going to tramp through the jungle for a few miles - at least we shall hack our way through. As it is fast approaching midnight I must leave you to sleep in peace and I must get abed 'early'. Good night my darling and God bless you.

JUNE 25th - Celine, I want to tell you something very important - I am always telling you important things? - but please listen carefully to what I have got to say. You would never guess what it would be - -



I love you with all my heart and I cannot help loving you! It is so much more today and I know it will always be the same no matter what the future holds for us. It is too wonderful to know that I have not been loving you in vain, my darling; I thought you would never love me. I hope you have started making plans for us when the war is over. I want to know what you would like me to do; what you would like to do, where you would like to live - it will help a lot if you would do this, my darling. We are so very far apart (in distance only) and the war may drag on for years; things seem so hopeless just now as far as you and I are concerned, Celeen - but they are not really so bad because we have got something to live for, something more precious than all the money in the world, something we must always cling to, something which will keep us always so very near to each other. We should be very happy even though we are separated by thousands of miles. I must tell you again - I can never love you enough, Celeen, no matter how hard I might try.

Well, my first Sunday here has come and gone. It was really better than I ever hoped it would be. We spent three wonderful hours in the jungle this morning - we only covered about 7 miles in that time but I shall never forget it. Jungle is much more exciting and interesting than any other place on earth for trekking in. It is dark, and hot and sticky; but it is all rubbish to say that jungle is impenetrable in places. You have no idea of the density of the undergrowth but most of it is Miconia vegetation and that makes the going very easy. Still we had to crash our way through it this morning, but it was good fun. We were in a bully spot and did a lot of climbing. We must smell for the first



half of the journey and suddenly our leader proclaimed solemnly that we were lost. After careful compass and map reading we discovered a small stream nearly completely hidden by vegetation. We followed it for three miles - we stumbled, we fell, we crawled, we climbed through that vegetation covering the river bed - and all the time we walked in water ankle-deep! I led the way for this part of the journey and I had to fight my hand with hands, arms and legs to make a passage for the others. I loved it all, Cecil, but I did not want you to be in such a place. We met no wild animals even though we heard them in the depths of the jungle; however I did emerge with two leeches clinging to my legs. My shirt was torn and so were my stockings; my hands were scratched. There were four of us - the two Colonels, a Captain and myself, and we must have looked a sorry sight when we emerged on to the main road again! I wish I could describe it all properly to you, Cecil; you would long to walk in a jungle! We have got to learn all about it - the secret paths etc..

I have just been sewing a button on to my sole remaining shirt - and this is Sunday; all my things are being washed somewhere by the Shoby (washerwoman). Everything is so damp here - my clothes are unheated of - and worst of all is the wet towel that I try to stay myself with in the mornings. I was out trying to fetch a chicken and a few eggs this evening - I was successful at a Chinese farmhouse but I had to pay for them. They would starve in this mess were it not for me!! Still, Cecil, I refuse to do the shopping when we get married! I do want you to be the Queen of our castle; we could not be anything else but very happy together.



I have fixed up a mens double at tennis to tomorrow evening after work, and I expect to play awful stuff, it has been so long since I have played.

Good night, my own darling, and God bless you.

JUNE 9th:- I am beginning to wonder if you are bored, Eileen, with my egotistical letters - they seem to be all "I" and I never seem to mention you at all! Unfortunately in a many-letters "I's" are very common and inevitable but you are not forgotten my darling for one moment. My letters must seem very, very disappointed and I would hate to be you (poor you!) having to read them! Oh, Eileen, how I long to see you once again and how mad I have been not to have seen you oftener in the past - and yet I could ^{have} not march bodily up to Spring Villa and demanded to see you! I would have crept it because I did not know how exactly I stood with you - and yet all the time you were trying to tell me that we should be friends and I was stupid and stubborn enough not to realize this. Can you forgive me for all of this, Eileen? I do not deserve your love at all and yet I need it and want it more than anything else in the world. You know how much I love you and how long I have loved you; I would do any mortal thing for you, Eileen, and dying for you would be the least of all. I know we can be so very happy together - nothing could go wrong between us because we have a very powerful love to keep us together. When I was in practice and when I was in India, I met many unmarried people and visited them professionally and I have found a lot of unhappiness in their homes. There were a few exceptions but they were very few. The reason for all of this is obvious - they never loved each other and so when trouble came they were lost, because there was nothing to keep them together. My darling, this could never happen to us while we have our love - and we shall



Always have that. You know that I can never change, Eileen, except to love you more than I do now. I only need your love - nothing else in my life matters because everything depends on our love. I do not pretend to be good but loving you, my darling, has made me better in every way.

Today has been a routine day in the Field Ambulance except for the game of tennis I had at 5.30 p.m. I had three long sets almost without a break and I wasn't a bit tired after it. In my last station in this country, tennis was not possible because it was too hot - besides I had no time for it. It was quite cool playing here and almost like a summer evening at home. My partner (an Indian Medical Officer) and I beat our local opponents rather badly 6-1; 6-2; 6-3 (he is boasting again!). We have cleared a space among the rubber trees and made an open-air badminton court for the officers and a volley ball court for the troops. We have arranged a football match with the local regiment for Wednesday evening but I am doubtful about the result as we have so few men to choose from. Everyone needs this exercise because this living under trees makes one rather depressed if one allows oneself to think about it. Whenever I have got you to think about and you to love, Eileen, and I know that I shall always love you. We expect to do some marching to-morrow morning and so you must get to bed by 11.30 p.m. at least. I don't want to stop writing to you, my darling, but I shall make amends for this and pray much harder than usual for you - and may be I shall dream much harder than usual about you. And just now you are enjoying a summer evening in Ireland and how I envy you. I must now creep under this mosquito net and try to get some sleep. Good night and God bless you.



10th JUNE (Tuesday) :- Well, my shopping, may be you do not realize how completely I am cut off from the outside world here - I am 50 miles away from the nearest town! There is a local village here and in many ways it resembles a rural Irish village - they seem to sell everything in very small shops and yet they really sell nothing. The shopkeepers are usually Chinese and a few can speak pigeon English. I have not so much shopping to do recently as we had in a good store of food a couple of days ago - including a dozen live chickens. It is quite like a farm to see the chickens trotting around the huts! We are lucky to be living on the edge of the jungle which is comparatively near to a few wide open spaces where one can see real sunshine and breathe real air - and unless one visits the said wide open spaces at least once a day one is liable to go crazy! This morning I went out with the men on training and we spent two glorious hours poking about a very lovely lake near our camp. The surroundings are very pretty - lakes, wooded hills, Green Grass, palm trees, and beautiful flowers. It is quite a contrast to the gloom of the forest where everything is so stuffy and dark. I do not miss pictures or dances or shows because I know I have to do without them and so I am happy in my own way. So many of the lads are inclined to miss town life and all its gaiety, that they have become quite miserable here already.

I did not have any tennis today because the work did not finish till late in the afternoon. However I managed a game of Badminton with 3 other officers. I have never played before until I came here and I find it is a grand game. To amuse the troops I joined in their game of Volley ball; it is a queer game but the Indians are expert at it for some unknown reason.



Sid I tell you today that I love you? Well, Celine I have been telling you this all day long and you dont appear to hear me at all. How can I help but love you. I was meant to love you from the very first and you were meant to be loved by me, Celine. I should have loved you much more in the past but I am making up for lost time now; it is so very different now that I know you have changed. Things are so different; I am so much happier. If I were to love you ten times more day by day for the rest of my life I could never love you enough. I wonder did our parents love in the same way as we do or did they have a different love; does Frances love her Ronald in the same way as you love ^{me} Celine? Somehow I think there is no other love in the world quite the same as ours. I shall always be so very proud to tell anyone that I loved Celine O'Hane and come what may I shall always love her.

There have not been any air raids on Belfast recently and for that I am thankful. They were awful while they lasted. In some ways the raids may do some good but I am sorry for the many homeless people of the city. Will you please pray that I may be sent home in the near future. I am not in any way here in Malaya and I could be doing some work at home. I long for that one day when I shall meet you again, Celine; I live only for that day and I cannot be really happy until I see you again and tell you what I have wanted to tell you for so many years now. It will not be too late even when the war is over. I can only love you more when that happens. And now I must away from my oil lamp and my cramped position and go to dinner. Good night and God bless you, Celine.



JUNE 11TH (WEDNESDAY) - Today has been glorious in -----!

I cannot even give you the first letter of the place, Calcutta! I spent my morning with the troops running up and down a nearby hill. Though it is only a small hill of a couple of hundred feet high it commands a very fine view from its summit. Can you picture it, my darling? A tiny road winds along the foot of the hill, passes away to the left to the village, a mile away. A green plain stretches straight in front of you and is about 2 miles square. A very pretty lake runs parallel to the road for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile near the village; and enclosing all are those wonderful trees - they really are nice to look at from above but alas not so nice to live under! Trees everywhere as far as the eye can see.

It must have been tough work for the troops carrying "patients" up and down that hill; it was bad enough for me going up and coming down without any burden (except my 125t 10 lbs!). However I gave them plenty of rest and a smoke occasionally. They sat and gazed at the peaceful scene below - Indians can sit for many hours on hilltops and look down into valleys without moving a muscle. I used to study their impenetrable faces when I worked in the hill stations of India, but I could never quite fathom what they were thinking of. You would have loved this morning here, the quietude of the little valley on your right where a dozen cows were browsing quietly. When they saw the men descending upon them, they all stampeded away down the valley, they must have seen me! Anyhow they heard me yelling orders to the sketch-beavers! The men were happier than usual because they had forgotten the darkness of the forest for awhile. I make all my men write home to India very often



because I know how anxious their mothers and wives are about them. I know that every man in the unit sends $\frac{1}{10}$ th of his pay home to some relative or other. Some of the men are very lovable characters; many are plain, stupid lads from Indian villages; others are clever boys and have actually matriculated. We had a grand football match today with the local regiment and drew with them 1-1. We have entered the local cup competition and we mean to win it!

Yet another disappointment today; another mail and nothing from my Cileen. It has only made me love you all the more and made me look forward to a letter in the near future. My darling, you know that I am all yours, that I belong to you as no man has ever belonged to a woman before or ever will. I don't imagine that I love you, Cileen - it is real and it will last. I shall never regret loving you so much no matter what is to come. You and I have changed with the years, but I know that we shall be happy together always and nothing can ever mar our happiness. We must always love each other as we do now, Cileen, and nothing can go amiss with us. You do know that I shall always worship you and everything about you - as I have done in the past. Some day all this endless waiting and suspense will cease and you will find yourself in my arms. Never again could I allow you to leave me and never again could I leave you. I think I shall long you around with me when we meet again; I am so scared of losing you! And yet I would trust you as I have never trusted a human being before - and our trust will be mutual. Please, Cileen, I must go to bed and dream. Good night and God bless you, my darling.



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JUNE 12th (Thursday) - Another letter nearly finished and still I love you more than when it started. Eileen O'Hane, are you not ashamed of yourself making me love you and making me write to you every day! I cannot help loving you as much as I do and I must write to you often because I love you so much. If you know of any way in which I should love you more than I do now, will you please write and tell me all about it because I want to love you more if that is possible.

I should not have any time to write to my best girl nowadays - I should be too busy! My official jobs are - Second in Command, Adjutant, Officer Commanding H.Q. Company, Quarter Master, Sports Officer, Press Secretary and general handy man! I have actually been painting today because no one else can do it - it was really painting sign boards for our small hospital. I am no expert and the brushes were awful - the results were none! Today was a half holiday but I was working all afternoon on my painting. I had some tennis from 5-6 P.M.; badminton from 6-7 P.M. You may not realise that it becomes quite dark in these countries at 7.15 P.M. Malaya is queer - no reason; this is said to be the "dry" season but of course it rains every day!

I am due for another trek in the jungle in the near future and next time I am taking the troops with me. Would you have laughed very much if you had seen the Press Secretary searching the local bazaar (village) for at an early hour this morning for eggs for our breakfast. I have got some queer jobs to do, Eileen, and food-hunting is the queerest and most heart-breaking of all! I shall be quite a help to you some time when you need eggs for breakfast!!



Cileen, my darling, for the second time will you marry me? I have asked you once already and I know it is an awful way to propose to anyone but it is the best I can manage now, Cileen; No please understand. Do you ever receive any of my letters at all? I write every day and send off a letter every 6 to day. Do you can easily check up on them and see if any one missing. I dont expect you have received that rotten old photograph yet - it will be many months yet before you get it. And please Cileen, send me your photograph. I want to have it on my camp table in my wooden hut.

And off I go again still wanting to write and write to you and never growing weary of it. May God speed this letter on its way to you, Cileen; may he always bless you and keep you safe from all harm.

Yours yours,

Frank. x x x

P.S. Love to Frances and regards to Felix and all at home.

Frank.