



R. A. M. C. MESS,  
RAWALPINDI.

26. 2. 41.

My dear Eileen,

How can I thank you enough for your letter which reached me to day. I have read it and re-read it so very many times. Why are you so decent to me and why have I neglected you so much in return. How I could kick myself for not telling you long ago what I am now going to tell you in a letter - and the sad part of it is that this is in the nature of a farewell letter too. It is so very important that it must fly all the way to you, Eileen; I cannot leave anything to chance - no submarine can send it to the bottom of the sea! You did not ask for a quick reply and I am sending one because you ask it and because I want you to know something before I leave India.

Yes, Eileen, I am leaving India in the near future and going off to the war. I do not know where I am bound for and you will understand that if I did know I would not be allowed to tell even you. So you will not be able to answer my letter for some time. When I reach my new abode I shall send you a cable, if possible giving you my address. I was expecting to be sent overseas long ago, so that it is no surprise to me now. I have been training very hard during the past few months - camp life, marching 20 miles a day and never feeling weary, actually using a pick and shovel (voluntarily!). It was all grand fun for me but I enjoyed the games best of all - football, base-ball, cricket, tennis etc.. Also I have not taken to your game, Eileen, in India - I was much too fond of my tennis, cricket and football. I am No. 1. at tennis and cricket in



Rawalpindi. I promise to take <sup>up</sup> Golf seriously when the war is over, and I promise to beat you after a couple of weeks practice!! If one did not play games in India one would go crazy and yet there are so many young lads who seem to do nothing all day.

I have not been happy in India, Cateen, and am not a bit sorry to be leaving it. There is no place like home and nobody knows that better than I do now. Life among Europeans in an Indian station is so terribly artificial, the people are artificial and insincere. There is that queer Victorian custom of calling on Mrs. So-and-So by stopping one's card in her NOT-AT-HOME box outside the garden gate. Then there are those eternal drink parties which people really abhor - everyone trying to make them informal but they only succeed in making them very formal! You may be sure I am not a morning success at these functions! I have only 3 real friends in India and those are - Major Paul Gleadell, his wife Mary, and their daughter, Virginia (aged 3). They are wonderful ballistics and so very proud of it; he is an old boy of Downside Abbey though he was born in America (Virginia). They are quite young (30) and have been all over the globe. My Christmas night was spent with them and it really was the next best thing to home! We had real turkey and Christmas pudding! Paul is my idea of what a man should be and Mary is an ideal wife besides being the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. I do envy them - their love, their home, their happiness; and that is why I feel a bit sad at times when I have visited them.

And now maybe I shall have enough courage to tell you what has been locked away within me all these years. I have



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thought of you and prayed for you every day since I first met you at a *Leichke* in Ranafast so very long ago. I have loved you every day since then. May be it was a childish sort of love at the beginning and even at *Queen's* it was still childish and romantic for the first two years. My dear Eileen surely you must have known how I felt about you - I followed you around everywhere, meeting you "accidentally" - on purpose - so many times. Everyone seemed to know that I loved you - everyone except you, Eileen. You had strange ideas in those days and probably thought it all very wicked and did your best to discourage me. Now on earth could it be wrong for me to love you. Then came *Castlewellan* and our rare meetings at parties there. Frances was a grand person and understood. I am not blaming you, Eileen, for not understanding. And then you gave me a "lecture" in *Castlewellan* one evening and advised me not to be so foolish. I know I deserved that lecture because I was behaving very peculiarly and you were justified in warning me off, but it was my way of showing you how much I loved you even though it was a queer way. Do you remember the Friday morning we had poached eggs at *the habits* and then went off with Frances to a nearby wood to gather nuts? That was the morning after the lecture and though I would have given anything to gather nuts by your side and tell you all the things that were in my mind, I had to keep away from you. Eileen, my dear, what conclusion could I draw from what you told me and how you behaved towards me. You could not know what it meant to me to know that the love was all one-sided. I saw you later at a dance in *Hemington* but you were away up in the clouds somewhere and



being Frank Murray and very much in love with you I would not allow myself to ask you for a single dance! In fact I was very jealous of a lad called Sean Bowe! And another day as we walked from Chempvale to Castle Junction with Sean Fitzsimons - how I longed to talk to you alone that day in spite of the apparent one-sided love! And then I made up my mind to leave Belfast and never come back again to live in it ~~over~~ - that is as soon as I was qualified. I could have had heaps of jobs at home but I wanted to get away and I didn't stop to think of what I was running away from. Then came two years in Birmingham and all its sorrows. I did have some happiness in working for those poor patients but that was the only happiness I had. Oh, how could I be happy ever again. I had a girl friend in Birmingham - went to pictures, dances etc - but she was only a friend because I was lonely in a strange city. My father had a terrible shock when told by Rev. J. Macaulay that I was unmarried. Why must people say such things when it was the last thing in the world I could do. I am so glad, Eileen, that you did not believe it - and yet how could you know that many, many years ago I vowed that I would never marry any woman except one and if it could not be, I would not marry at all. Do you think that was a wrong thing to do, Eileen? I knew that I could never be happy without you and it would be madness to marry anyone else - it would not be fair. Then the war came and I joined up immediately; I knew it was my duty and I was still running away. I did want to go to France but instead I set out for India on January 9th 1940. How utterly lonely and sad I was that cold night as we set out in the darkness from Southampton to cross



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the Channel. Then the cold journey in a cold train across France to  
Marseilles; a glorious trip down the blue Mediterranean to Malta and Port  
Said; the Suez Canal; the Red Sea (which really is Red); Aden and its  
Orabs and quaint old bazaars; Indian Ocean to Bombay - I think you  
would have loved it, Eileen. I spent hours watching the flying fish, the  
porpoises, and an occasional shark. Then came my train journey of  
1,200 miles to Rawalpindi through desert storms and semi desert country.  
Arrived here about 2nd February and worked at the Military Hospital  
until April 20th; then came to lovely mountain in a small hill station  
10,000 ft. high. I was M.O. to a Battery of Royal Artillery and I enjoyed  
every moment of it even though it was very lonely. The scenery was  
magnificent - snow-capped mountains all along the horizon etc. I came  
down to Pindi in 20th October and have been here since.

The above, dear lady, is a concise autobiography of  
a very awkward and shy young man whom you would know! I am  
not so shy now and have changed a bit since 1930; I have seen a bit  
of life and a bit of the world and now it seems I am destined to  
see more of the latter. My great fault was that I almost lost hope and  
that was fatal. That's why we are so far apart today, Eileen, even though  
I still love you with all that I am. It is rather ironical that I should  
have waited until now before telling you all of this - now that I might  
never even see you again. Your letter today made me happier than I  
have been for many years; it has only made me love you more than  
ever. Eileen dear, how could you imagine that your letters have  
annoyed me - I treasure every word you wrote, but can't you see how



hopeless everything seemed to me. I have not changed, Cecil, since I wrote that letter to Frances so long ago and I never shall change. Today has made such a difference to me, that folk around here just can't believe I am the same person. Please don't worry about censors; they are very different people to what you think. They never read personal matters and only look for names and places. Will you be terribly annoyed if the censor should read this letter? He would not have the patience to read it through. It has only occurred to me at this very moment to wonder what will you think of this letter and will you read it right through to the end! I have so many more things to say to you yet that I don't know when I shall have finished.

You know that your letters will always give me pleasure, Cecil, so please write as often as ever you can. I shall meet you with me always whenever I am going now. No matter where I may be sent the following address will always get me somehow:-

C/o D.M.S., Army Headquarters, New Delhi, INDIA. I shall send you my exact address when I reach it. Your letters to me will not be censored, so please write to me soon. I have written 6 long pages full of "ego" and never a word about you and your friends. I want to send you a fable to-morrow and yet I don't know where to send it in case you should be embarrassed at the content by its arrival.

I am sorry about poor Sr. Bernadette being so utterly cut off from you all; you must have missed her terribly at your Christmas gathering. It will be wonderful to have Fergus a priest, but please Cecil do not run off and become a nun because if you do



I should be lost. It was awful to hear about your uncle (R.I.P.); I do remember you speaking of him often. It is very good of you to pray for my mother even though you never meet her. You are lucky to be near all your relatives and friends and know that you have their love. I cannot believe that I shall never see my mother again and I shall look for her when I return home again.

I am glad Felix has got a hospital job; it is so very important to do that kind of work before venturing forth into the wilderness. I met an R.A.M.C. Officer called Fletcher in Rawalpindi about a month ago who qualified with Felix. He was in France, Denmark, and Norway - so you may be sure he had some adventures to relate. I met a Dr. McLaughlin and his wife here recently; he comes from Derry City and she from the Glen Road. Her name was Cora and she has a sister in St. Dominick's, Falls Road. She knew the Bowe family very well. ~~Yes~~ It is a very small world, Cilem, but I do wish I could meet you somewhere in the Western Desert or in Palestine or in Cochin or in Somaliland or whenever I am going! When you see Frances again please give her my very best wishes and tell her that her words have come true. Many moons ago she told me that you would change and that all would be well in the end. I hope she has all the happiness that she deserves and all that I wish her.

I cannot tell you how much longer I shall be in India but I shall write to you again soon before I leave. I am penning this in my tent and it is now 12.15 P.M.! Aren't you ashamed

26 February

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VIII



Of yourself, Eileen O'Hane, keeping me out of mine bed! I did want to write to you to day and I wanted to tell you so many things and now that I have nearly finished I have told you very little. I could have written all these pages in one line - "I love you and I shall always love you and nobody but you, Eileen."

I am not living at the R.A.M.C. mess now but out in camp. I am not allowed to give you the name of my unit or what goes on here. I shall tell you all about it some day. "Oh, to be in Ireland now that Spring is here. Oh to see some green grass again; Oh, to see my Donegal hills, and my Atlantic waves again. Should I never see them all again, Eileen, please go and see them for me and tell them that I have loved them too. You know I shall pray for you and love you every day of my life. I did need your love so much in the past and now I need it more than ever with 3,000 miles between us. What more can I say to you, Eileen, except God bless you and keep you safe from all harm. May we meet soon again and may we know each other when we do meet. Please don't let me go away again."

Ever yours,

Frank.

P.S. This is the longest epistle I have ever written in my life!

Shall send you some snaps later.

Love Frank.